



SEDP Social Audit Toolkit

Prepared by the Overseas Development Institute

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List of Acronyms

ADB	Asian Development Bank
CIEM	Central Institute for Economic Management
CRBSA	Child Rights-Based Social Audit
CRC	Citizen Report Card
CSC	Community Score Card
GA	Gender Audit
HCMC	Ho Chi Minh City
HRBA	Human Rights-Based Approach
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MOLISA	Ministry of Labor, Invalids and Social Affairs
MPI	Ministry of Planning and Investment
ODI	Overseas Development Institute
PETS	Public Expenditure Tracking Tool
SEDP	Socio-Economic Development Plan

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Audience for the Toolkit

The main audience for this toolkit are decision-makers and practitioners. The former include government officials at national and sub-national (particularly provincial) levels involved in the planning, monitoring, and evaluation of socio-economic development or sector plans. Practitioners are government employees in charge of Monitoring and Evaluation and Vietnamese research institutes that may be called upon by the government to assist in implementing the social audit tools in order to assess progress toward the social aspects of poverty reduction and reduction of vulnerabilities and disparities in Viet Nam. This document may also be of interest to UN agencies, International Financial Institutions (such as the Asian Development Bank (ADB), bilateral organizations and non-governmental organizations supporting social and economic development efforts of Viet Nam.

Background to the Social Audit Approach in Viet Nam

Over the past 15 years, rapid economic growth has improved the living standards of millions of Vietnamese people and contributed to the impressive rate of poverty reduction in their nation. While making steady progress towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), economic growth and progress on social indicators has not equally benefited all segments of Vietnamese society. In fact, disparities in living standards and related social indicators persist, and are increasing across a variety of dimensions: between the richest and poorest quintiles of the population; the Kinh/Hoa majority and ethnic minority groups; between urban and rural areas; lowland and mountainous areas; and different age groups – with child poverty rates being relatively higher than household-level poverty rates.¹

The Social Economic Development Plan (SEDP) is the Government of Viet Nam's roadmap to achieve growth, poverty reduction and social equity. These five-year plans outline goals and activities towards hunger eradication, gender equality, youth development, poverty reduction, developing a social security system and ensuring social equity and equality. In both the 2006-2010 and the 2011-2015 SEDPs, social issues play a key part in the overall economic and social development of Viet Nam, and as such provide an overarching policy framework by means of which to measure progress made towards poverty reduction and greater social equity.

The Social Audit Approach is particularly relevant in the current policy environment in Viet Nam, where ongoing 'Doi Moi' ² to create a socialist-oriented market economy have brought opportunities and challenges for social policy. Policy discussion highlights a need to improve accountability and transparency, and the government recognizes the salience of enhanced citizen participation in Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) to achieve this. Recent decisions on Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation (PM&E) reforms in the SEDP for 2011-2015 reflect these priorities.³

The stronger focus on social outcomes introduced in the 2006-2010 Socio-Economic Development Plan (SEDP) M&E framework represented a challenge in terms of formulating new indicators to measure progress towards their achievement. If not properly taken into account, monitoring may focus on the economic and physical targets of the SEDP, currently and in the future, rather than on its impact on the lives of Vietnamese men, women, girls and boys – something which may be overlooked by narrowly defined quantitative indicators. Finally, a major issue that goes beyond SEDP itself is the weak coordination and use of data and information generated by existing M&E systems.⁴

In parallel, there is the issue of adequate data collection tools and methods to inform these indicators. A third concern is the relative lack of attention to impact measurement and to the collection and use of data/information related to perceptions and opinions – either through surveys or qualitative research methods. In addition, there is a lack of adequate mechanisms for participation of various stakeholders in M&E. Programming experience and evaluations highlight,

¹ UNICEF, An analysis of the situation of children in Viet Nam 2010.

² Reforms

³ United Nations in Viet Nam (2010) "UN's Synthesis Analysis of Viet Nam's Development Situation and Medium-term Challenges in Preparation of the UN One Plan 2012-2016," *Draft Version of August 25th 2010*. Most of these are provincial decisions at this stage.

⁴ Ministry of Planning and Investment and UNICEF (2009). *Capacity Building for the Social Audit of the Socio-Economic Development Plan Project*, Draft Concept Note for the Social Audit Project Inception Workshop.

however, that redressing these shortcomings can enhance the quality and relevance of planning and strengthen implementation.⁵ Clearly, these issues are particularly germane to monitoring the social dimensions of the SEDP.

It is generally acknowledged that efforts should be intensified to make PM&E practice of the 2011-2015 SEDP more comprehensive, participatory, and policy-relevant. A key issue at hand is to generate information, complementary to what exists towards evidence-based policy, to improve outcomes for all segments of society, building on the efforts made in the formulation on desired socio-economic outcomes and indicators in the 2006-2010.

The Social Audit Approach offers tools, indicators and methods complementary to the current performance measurement and evaluation framework of the SEDP that will improve its quality and associated practices. The approach uses evidence-based participatory quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis methods to be more responsive to the needs and aspirations of Vietnamese citizens, as it involves them in assessing the quality of programmes and services and whether these are effective in meeting their needs. It can help identify programming approaches and budget allocations to decrease socio-economic disparities and bridge gaps for those facing challenges based on ethnicity, geography, physical ability, age and gender. It can also enhance government transparency, citizen participation and accountability.

This SEDP Social Audit Toolkit provides technical guidance in helping achieve these objectives, as well as possible steps that can help institutionalize their use in Viet Nam. This toolkit is part of an effort led by the Ministry of Planning and Investment (MPI) and supported by UNICEF, which started in 2009 and is now in its second phase. The initiative is designed to demonstrate the potential of the Social Audit Approach to complement existing mechanisms to plan, implement and monitor Viet Nam's Socio-Economic Development Plan. It focuses on the social dimensions of the SEDP, e.g. education, health and social protection..

In the first phase of the initiative, the Central Institute for Economic Management (CIEM), under the authority of MPI, piloted four social audit tools⁶ with the technical support of ODI, which also developed an implementation manual for each of the tools, sensitive to the Vietnamese context. Since social issues in the SEDP span a wide reach, and as the goals and objectives within each of these are varied, the initial pilots focused on three dimensions: one thematic issue – maternal and child health; one cross-cutting issue – gender equality; and one multidimensional issue – poverty. From this broad selection, provinces were consulted to identify relevant and specific policies and programs for the piloting of the social audit tools. Four provinces were selected: Dien Bien, Quang Nam, Tra Vinh and Ho Chi Minh City (HCMC), and CIEM produced a report on each of the pilots, summarised into an aggregate report.

In parallel to piloting the four audit tools to foster their adaption in Viet Nam, CIEM also undertook an assessment of the government's capacity at central and sub-national level on using participatory methods throughout the policy cycle, from planning to M&E. The findings of the capacity

⁵ Action for Social Advancement, 2005; Chambers et al., 2003; Paul, 2002; Estrella et al., 2000; Citizen Monitoring in Action, IIED, 1998; Toledano et al., 2002. The World Bank published its first technical paper on PM&E in 1993 (Narayan, 1993).

⁶ The Citizen Report Card (CRC), the Community Score Card (CSC), the Gender Audit and the Public Expenditure Tracking Survey (PETS).

assessment were used to identify steps for the institutionalization of the Social Audit Approach to improve the M&E of the SEDP.

In the second phase of the initiative, MPI and UNICEF have endeavoured to train government officials from various ministries and departments focusing on social development issues, as well as selected Vietnamese research institutes on how to implement these social audit tools through a series of workshops, conducted by ODI experts, in 2011 and 2012. These trainings provided a rare opportunity for government officials and research institutes to share and learn together on the use of the tools. It also allowed government officials from the national and provincial levels to become better acquainted with staff from key research institutes that may be called upon to implement these social audit tools on behalf of the government. In addition to the trainings, two other Public Expenditure Tracking Surveys (PETS) were piloted: one in Dien Bien in the education sector and one in HCMC on a social assistance programme.

As the social audit tools piloted in Viet Nam in Phase 1 were not child-focused and as the views of children on key issues, including health service delivery, education and gender equality, were not solicited in the application of the tools, a specific social audit tool was developed to respond to this gap as part of Phase 2. Government officials and research institute representatives had the opportunity to provide feedback on the newly developed Child Rights-Based Social Audit tool through national and sub-national consultation workshops.

Among the key findings and lessons from Phase 1 was that all of the piloted tools showed substantial potential as additional means of assessing the social performance of SEDP, based on the views of those to whom the programs are directed, as well as the government officials responsible for planning and assessing program effectiveness. The positive nature of the experience was confirmed by key national and provincial leaders at a recent workshop on opportunities and challenges in the reform of SEDP PM&E. They concluded that social audit tools are a powerful tool to collect people's feedback and assessment of service providers' performance, which can be an effective method for measuring the impacts of SEDPs in a more participatory and comprehensive manner. Introducing the Social Audit Approach has been seen as a process to solicit the views of poor, vulnerable and marginalized people to formulate better policies and programmes.

Organization of the Toolkit

The toolkit is organized as follows:

- ✚ *Background and Analytical Framework of the Social Audit Approach:* Section 1 provides an overview of the key analytical framework and concepts in relation to the Social Audit Approach, particularly the human rights-based approach (HRBA). Examples of how four of the five social audit tools have been used in Viet Nam and elsewhere are included.
- ✚ *Social Sectors that can be monitored and evaluated in the SEDP:* Section 2 describes the five social audit tools, with specific indications on how each will add value to the M&E of the SEDP - particularly through the M&E framework – in key social sectors, including health, education and social protection, with an emphasis on social groups such as ethnic minorities, children and women. It also suggests possible indicators for each of the social sectors and how these social audit tools could be used to assist in their M&E.
- ✚ *Institutionalization:* Section 3 outlines key considerations for the institutionalization of the Social Audit Approach in the Vietnamese context, using the institutional assessment conducted in Phase 1 as a backdrop as to how to best advance the integration of social audit tools into the SEDP M&E framework.
- ✚ *References:* Annex A is a list of the resources used in the development of the toolkit.
- ✚ *Other Useful Resources:* Annex B sets out a list of other resources for practitioners in social audit methods, as well as case studies from other countries.
- ✚ *Annex C: Glossary of social audit tools and participatory methods for planning, M&E (PME):* A glossary of participatory tools and methods that government agencies can select to engage citizens, in light of a specific context, information required, policy, budget available and stage of policy implementation.

Section 1: Overview of the Social Audit Approach

The Social Audit Approach refers to *“a range of tools and techniques employed to assess, understand, report on and improve the social performance of an organization, a plan or a policy.”* In other words, the Social Audit Approach helps organizations and governments *“to account fully for social, environmental and economic impact and report on performance, to acquire the information essential for planning future action and improving performance to establish channels of accountability to its key stakeholders.”*⁷ Social audit tools, which make up the Social Audit Approach, differ from traditional data collection methods, such as household surveys for example, as they provide a qualitative assessment of services and programmes from the perspective of various stakeholders, including direct users and beneficiaries. They provide an opportunity for citizens to give input on how well services function, constraints to accessing services, user satisfaction, issues of corruption, service provider and public official responsiveness and receptivity – dimensions that are largely overlooked in the current SEDP M&E framework. They are also designed to foster dialogue between users, providers and government and include immediate feedback and reporting mechanisms that allow citizens at various levels, including communities, to advocate for change and monitor progress over time.

In the context of Viet Nam’s SEDP, social audit tools can generate data that supplements regularly collected administrative and household data with qualitative assessments of service quality by the providers and users, the extent that policies are implemented – or not, or how well – and, to some extent, assess their impact. The qualitative and quantitative data generated can strengthen the PM&E of socio-economic development plans and lead to improved budgeting, and implementation of the SEDP, thereby making SEDPs (national and provincial) more responsive to the needs and aspirations citizens.

Viet Nam is currently renewing its planning process (development, M&E of plans) towards more strategic, sustainable and results-based development in the context of an ongoing transition towards a market economy and greater global integration. This presents opportunities and challenges in efforts to safeguard, promote, and advance children, women, and ethnic minorities' rights so that all citizens in Viet Nam have the opportunity to survive, thrive and realize their full potential and contribute to the ongoing development of the nation. As in other countries, the transition to a globalized market economy brings unanticipated consequences and difficulties, including growing disparities and greater risks of certain population groups being left behind. In the context of existing budget constraints and the broad structural reforms to stimulate and promote the market economy, heightened efforts are needed to ensure that those with particular vulnerabilities, as well as their potential, are heard, recognized and addressed through specific measures set out in plans and policies, and that these are effectively implemented from the macro-level through to the communal setting.

As a pragmatic management tool in line with principles of good governance, the Social Audit Approach aims not only at revealing the normative ‘good’ (how things should be) but at providing essential information and feedback on “how things really are” for improved management decision-making, allocations, and service delivery overall. Social performance can be measured and improved in a number of ways through:

- ✚ Analysis of the degree of focus on social issues in plans and policies (are social issues recognized?);

⁷ Netherlands Development Organisation (2004), Social Auditing – feedback control for organisations: <http://www.caledonia.org.uk/social2.htm>

- Analysis of the degree to which this translates into action, including the scope and quality of indicators that measure progress in stated priorities, (are social issues being addressed?);
- Assessment of the social impact of plans and policies (are we reducing social inequities?); and,
- Generation of information through participatory methods that can complement existing information (what is the perspective of users and beneficiaries on this?).

As mentioned in the Introduction, social audit tools can explore three key stages of the SEDP in order to generate a comprehensive assessment of social performance: planning, implementation and M&E. However, they are essentially designed for M&E. For instance, the findings they generate can inform future planning, make improvements during implementation or provide a summative assessment of progress made at the end of an SEDP cycle.

Figure 1: Use of Social Audit Approach at key stages of the SEDP

<p><i>SEDP Policy Design and Formulation:</i></p>	<p>Social audit tools can strengthen policy design: how well does the SEDP understand and address social sector issues, in terms of policy and budget priorities, and how well priorities are translated from the SEDP's five-year plans to annual plans. For instance, social audit tools can examine the equity in the allocation of resources and services by location and income groups and variability across geographical areas, provinces and districts.</p> <p>Gender Audits (GA) and Child Rights Based Social Audit tools (CRBSA) are particularly well suited for this. Both examine the degree to which rights, needs and interests are taken into consideration in national policies, programs and government spending from a child rights perspective (CRBA) or a gender lens (GA); identify potential gaps in plans; and, discern priorities for action to improve performance. A gender audit, for example, could determine whether policies and programs on "training to increase the supply of skilled workers for high growth industries" have used a gender (and rights⁸) lens to assess the likelihood that these programs promote greater equality between women and men. A gender audit would ask, among other things:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is data for various economic sectors disaggregated by sex? Is there an imbalance in terms of the number of men and women occupying these sectors, by age group, ethnicity, and geographic location? • Are special provisions needed to ensure equitable access (to training and jobs) and benefits for women and men in all types of jobs (not only jobs traditionally held by women or men and at all levels, including managerial positions – not just low paying jobs)? • Has the government set aside budgets to address specific gender inequities? <p>See examples of gender audits at the end of Section 1.</p>
	<p>A Child Rights-Based Social Audit on the quality of education for children may review a variety of issues from a rights-based approach, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How well boys and girls are <i>received by schools and teachers</i> and prepared to meet their needs and uphold their rights; • How <i>safe</i> the schools are as places for learning and how well they provide an overall <i>gender sensitive environment</i> conducive to learning; • The extent that <i>child-centered teaching methods</i> are embraced as good practice and standard; • How far <i>child participation</i> is encouraged as standard practice in classroom interaction as well as in the broader operation and management of the school; • The use of pedagogy that challenges and <i>dismantles discrimination</i> based on gender, ethnicity or social background. <p>Source: UNICEF (2009) Manual: Child-Friendly Schools</p>

⁸ The right to equality with men and freedom from all forms of discriminations stemming from the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discriminations against Women (CEDAW) and Viet Nam National Strategy for the Advancement of Women.

<p><i>SEDP Implementation:</i></p>	<p>Social audit tools can be used alone or in combination with other tools to monitor how well social sector policies and services are implemented. Community Score Cards, Citizen Report Cards and Public Expenditure Tracking Surveys provide an opportunity for citizens to give input on how well services function, the constraints to accessing services, user satisfaction, issues of corruption, service provider and public official responsiveness and receptivity – dimensions that are largely overlooked in the current SEDP M&E framework. Citizen Report Cards (CRC) and Community Score Cards (CSC) are particularly popular tools to monitor service delivery.</p> <p>For example, a CRC or CSC on the quality of services at community level may examine the adequacy of the following from the perspective of users (and service providers in CSC)⁹:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Infrastructure, sanitation, location (access), opening hours, equipment, waiting time, etc. • Number of doctors and nurses in the health station • Attitude of doctors, nurses and administrative staff towards patients, and information provided (fees, documentation required, treatment required, and medicine to be taken). <p><i>See examples of CRC and CSC at the end of Section 1.</i></p> <p>PETS explore the degree to which programme funds and other resources allocated to certain groups (e.g. education for ethnic minority, children, the illiterate, etc.) or activities (water and sanitation, pre-natal care) reach the intended beneficiaries as planned, and whether programs are delivered in an efficient manner to ensure that intended outcomes are maximized.</p> <p>For example, a PETS on Program 167, a dwelling improvement program for the poor, examined whether:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Households with the greatest need receive the housing subsidies? • Funds were transferred in a timely manner, managed efficiently and appropriately (i.e. for intended purposes) at all levels from central government to the commune? All eligible beneficiaries received the subsidy and if the money was used as intended (i.e. house improvement construction and materials). <p><i>See examples of PETS provided at the end of Section 1</i></p>
<p><i>SEDP M&E:</i></p>	<p>In this sense, social audit tools can help evaluate how well social sector policies have affected the target communities over the length of the five-year plan, for instance, focusing on how challenges have changed and been mitigated.</p> <p>Social audit tools can also highlight discrepancies, by geographic and social grouping, in terms of benefits to be achieved. For example, they may highlight that a certain district, or a sub-group, say women or children from a particular ethnic minority, may not have benefited from a program as intended. Gender audits and Child rights audits can provide the lens through which programs are examined.</p> <p>CRC and CSC can be repeated at different intervals during the SEDP cycle to assess whether there have been improvements in services or whether adjustments need to be made.</p> <p>Gender audits can help assess progress made in programmes to address domestic violence, trafficking of women and girls, prostitution, the growing problem of HIV/AIDS among women and violations of reproductive rights, for example.</p>

1.1 The Social Audit Approach and the Human Rights-Based Approach

As a process, social audit tools are firmly rooted in a framework of values, ethics and a focus on the community.¹⁰ In other words, there is a strong human rights focus to social audit tools. They are not simply a technical review conducted by public sector agencies or audit bodies. Rather, they have a more intrinsic link to the human-rights-based approach. Social audit tools go beyond assessments of performance (outputs) to

⁹ From a pilot conducted in Viet Nam in 2010, as part of this initiative, on the quality of health services in health stations for migrant versus non migrant/poor versus non poor users in four locations.

¹⁰ Adapted from CIET in Capacity.org, A gateway on capacity development, Advancing the policy and practice of capacity building in international development cooperation, Capacity for 'Voice'. Issue 15, October 2002, p. 2-3. <http://www.ciet.org/documents/200794114231.pdf>

determine the integrity of the process that leads to the performance and the impact of such performance (outcomes). In this regard, social audit tools can be seen through a lens of rights and applied to test the integrity of a given process through, particularly, the lens of the rights holders vis-à-vis the obligations of duty bearers. Below is a description of rights holders and duty bearers in the context of social audit tools:

- *Rights holders (the demand side)* – primarily citizens/clients (consisting of civil society members that include communities).
- *Duty bearers (the supply side)* – primarily State and service providers, but can also include CSOs, NGOs, INGOs, donors and multilateral agencies. Primary-level duty bearers such as service providers include the public sector and other frontline organizations, including government departments, municipal/other local councils, quasi-governmental agencies such as Supreme Audit Institutions (SAIs) or the auditor general, and human rights commissions.¹¹ For example, a government which has ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child and has enacted national legislation to protect the rights of the child is accountable to uphold and promote children's rights as well as to remove barriers that prevent children from fully realizing their rights. Likewise, institutions that receive funding or have delegated authority from the government are also duty bound to ensure that children are able to fully enjoy their rights.

From a human rights perspective, influencing policy planning and implementation through social audit tools relates primarily to the delivery of obligations in terms of adequate budgetary allocations and associated disbursements and use, since the manner in which a budget is planned and implemented has consequences on the poor in a society, for whom public services have actually been designed. This is also because only users themselves can judge whether service delivery is making a difference to their lives.

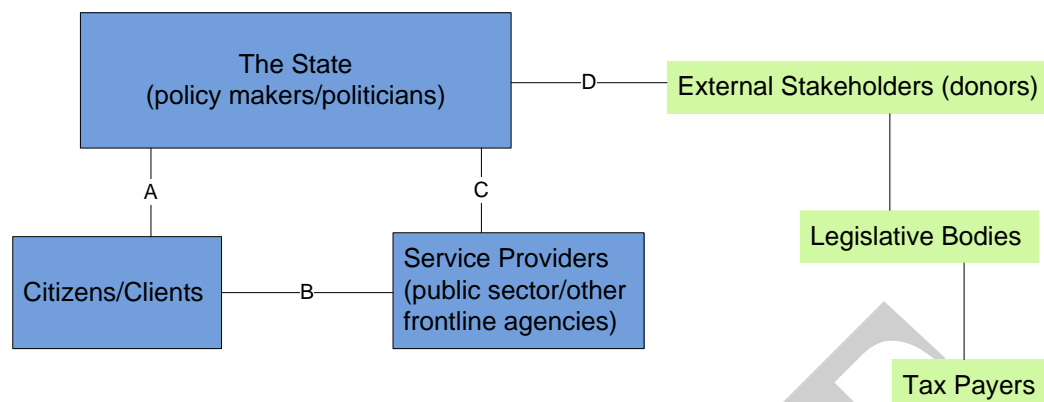
Duty bearers are accountable for fulfilling obligations in terms of public sector delivery, financial allocations, provision of speedy and fair justice remedies for all without discrimination, and abiding by frameworks as stipulated in international treaties and conventions that a country has signed and ratified. Rights holders are also accountable for ensuring that there exist universal basic human rights standards they follow when realizing various individual rights sanctioned by a country government. Hence, the "need to develop and strengthen 'voice' mechanisms through which public institutions are held to account by their own constituencies".¹²

As Figure 2 shows, the accountability framework of citizens holds the State and service providers accountable through both A and B channels. An additional dimension of this loop is created when a State relies on external resources for delivering services to its citizens/clients. However, social audit tools are not simply linear, unidirectional chains of citizens/clients conducting audits of the State for performance and delivery of obligations. Social audit techniques can also be initiated by government or civil society organizations, albeit implemented by civil society or third party agents for the government.

¹¹ Ibid, p.3.

¹² Ibid, p.1.

Figure 2: Social Audit Approach and accountability linkages¹³



A three level typology of State obligations has become a widely accepted framework for analysing obligations of the State with regard to human rights generally:

- ✿ The obligation to respect requires the State and thereby all its organs and agents to abstain from doing anything that violates the integrity of the individual, or infringes on her or his freedom, including the freedom to use the material resources available to that individual in the way she or he finds best to satisfy basic needs.
- ✿ The obligation of this protection requires from the State and its agents the measures necessary to prevent other individuals or groups from violating the integrity, freedom of action, or other human rights of the individual, including the prevention of infringements of his or her material resources.
- ✿ The obligation to fulfil requires the State to take the measures necessary to afford each person within its jurisdiction opportunities to obtain satisfaction of those needs, recognized in the human rights instruments that cannot be secured by personal efforts.¹⁴

Under this framework of analysis, 'Socio-economic rights' are no longer seen as 'needs' to be progressively satisfied at the will of governments through welfare benevolence, resource allocation, and administrative and policy planning, but 'claimable' by rights holders. Under a human rights-based approach, M&E efforts need to focus on denial of rights as well as inattention to rights, law and law enforcement, complaints procedures on infringement of rights, and monitoring of policy processes.

In practical terms, the rights-based approach is relevant in Viet Nam at all official levels, from the central government to the commune, as the government has the obligation to uphold the rights of all citizens, according to the various human rights conventions it has ratified and which are embedded in the 1992 Vietnamese Constitution, which guarantees that all citizens enjoy equal political, economic, cultural and social rights, and are equal before the law;¹⁵ and, through specific legislation focussing on the rights and needs of vulnerable groups such as children, women, ethnic minorities, people with disabilities, and their access to water and sanitation and healthcare etc.

¹³ Adapted from: *Social Audits for Strengthening Accountability: Building blocks for human rights-based programming – Practice note*. Bangkok: UNESCO Bangkok, 2007, p. 5.

¹⁴ Professor Savitri Goonesekere In Co-Operation With The UN Division For The Advancement Of Women, A Rights-Based Approach To Realizing Gender Equality, www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/news/rights.htm.

¹⁵ Government of Viet Nam (2007) National Report under the Universal Periodic Review of UN Human Rights Council.

The Government of Viet Nam is actively implementing its commitments and obligations under international agreements such as the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and Viet Nam Agenda 21. Such commitments have and are being integrated into overarching development strategies (including integration of some child-specific and related development targets into SEDPs at different levels and identification of children as key beneficiaries of social protection measures), such as free health services for all children under six years of age, as well as being translated into specific plans and programs (including the National Plan of Action on Children 2001-2010, development of the Child Protection Strategy for 2011-2020 and the draft National Program on Child Protection for 2011-2015, and various sector strategies and policies including free health care for children under six years of age and school-fee exemption policies for poor children in remote, mountainous and island areas).

Specifically for children, the five-year plan of the Ministry of Labor, Invalids and Social Affairs (MOLISA) for 2011-2015 includes both specific and cross-cutting measures for children among tasks and measures established for nine key target areas. Commitments to children are also being translated into legal documents (e.g. the Law on Child Protection, Care and Education passed in 2004 which institutionalizes five clusters of children's rights). To ensure such national commitments are applied locally, the Government has also issued Decision No.37/2010/QĐ-TTg on 22 April 2010 to define standards for child-friendly communes.

The same principles apply to gender equality. The Government of Viet Nam is implementing its commitments and obligations under international agreements such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) that Viet Nam signed in 1982. CEDAW codifies women's rights to non-discrimination on the basis of sex and equality as self-standing norms in international law. It also establishes that women and men are entitled, on a basis of equality, to the enjoyment and exercise of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural, civil or any other field. The results of these efforts are most evident in primary education and political participation at the national level. Yet, despite many positive achievements towards gender equality, discrimination against women persists in Viet Nam. Women and girls are disadvantaged in terms of access to education and training, land rights and jobs in the formal sectors of the economy, especially high value-adding socio-economic activities.

1.2 General Characteristics of Social Audit Tools

Social audit tools typically include a range of methods to gather qualitative and quantitative data such as surveys, focus group discussions, document review, interviews, etc. These tools can be used independently or combined into a comprehensive audit of any number of sectors – from waste collection to roads to social services, as well as non-social sectors such as infrastructure, natural resources, tax services, etc.

The techniques used in social audit tools feature citizen involvement to provide accurate, contextual data on citizen and community perceptions and priorities. They also enable community members to dialogue directly with government and hold local and national service providers, as well as national and local governments, accountable to policy objectives and to improved service delivery. Social audit techniques help policy makers to ensure that policies are relevant and that indicators are accurate and appropriate.

Social audit tools include public dissemination and feedback components, which serve as both a means to validate the perceptions of the sample group and to disseminate findings and create a climate of public accountability. Publishing participatory M&E findings demonstrates a government's willingness to respond to community needs and be held accountable, which can in fact help to reassert its legitimacy and generate popular support.

While social audit tools allow for participation of stakeholders and gather the perceptions of users, this is done in a rigorous and scientific manner. For instance, they should be as objective, transparent and independent as possible.

Three phases of a social audit

Phase 1: Design and data collection

- Clarify the strategic focus of the audit and audit tools to use.
- Design instruments and conduct pilot test (applicable for all tools??).
- Collect information from users, households, community representatives in a panel of representative users and communities.

Phase 2: Evidence-based dialogue and analysis

- Analyze findings in a way that points to action.
- Take findings back to the communities for their views about how to improve the situation - bring community members into discussion of evidence with service-providers/planners (this works particularly well for audit tools such as the CSC. Note that with PETS and CRCs this is not able to happen until after the findings are released.)

Phase 3: Dissemination of evidence for public accountability

- Hold workshops with government, service providers and community to present findings, recommendations and generate an action plan.
- Disseminated findings, recommendations and action plan to the wider public through the media.
- Provide regular updates to the public on the progress made on the action plan.

Figure 3 outlines the key features of a social audit.¹⁶

Figure 3: Seven key features of a social audit

1. **Obtaining the evidence:** Data from households and communities, as well as from service providers, are gathered systematically to guide planning and action.
2. **Community participation:** Communities not only co-produce the data, but, through focus groups and workshops involving community representatives, they also help identify local and national solutions.
3. **Impartiality:** A community-based audit by a neutral third party can help foster a culture of transparency and strengthen service credibility.
4. **Stakeholder buy-in:** All those who have a significant stake in service delivery are actively involved throughout the audit, from the initial design through to implementing community-led solutions.
5. **No finger-pointing:** A social audit is intended to focus on systemic flaws and programme content, rather than on individuals or organisations. Even negative findings can be framed as a starting point for improvement.
6. **Repeat implementation :** Several audit cycles are usually needed to measure impact and progress over time, and to focus planning efforts where they can be most effective.
7. **Dissemination of results:** A communication strategy, including feedback to communities, mapping and media dissemination, is part of every social audit design

Key characteristics of social audit tools include:

- A focus on **users and on qualitative dimensions** of policy and service delivery, such as user satisfaction (particularly with such social audit tools as the Community Score Card and Citizen Report Card). To the extent possible, indicators and surveys involved in social audit tools are designed with the input of citizens so as to capture the dimensions most critical to end users. This feeds into participation and accountability criteria as well.
- A **participatory approach**, especially when involving citizens, citizen groups, and communities, goes beyond household surveys. Social audit tools reveal the perceptions of users which they may not be

¹⁶ Capacity.org, *Social Audits: Fostering Accountability to Local Constituencies*, Issue 15, October 2002, p.2-3.

asked, or may not feel comfortable in expressing, in more formal settings, even via a standard household survey. By providing citizens the opportunity to come together in evaluating services or program impact – either during focus groups, or through feedback and dissemination meetings where the results of a survey or focus group discussion are shared in a larger group – participants can better express perceptions or problems if supported by a group, or realize that their concerns are shared. A participatory approach also increases buy-in, and leads to improved accountability.

- ⊕ Dynamic promotion of accountability, through **active dissemination and feedback mechanisms**, particularly through publicizing user satisfaction rates through the media and generating public discussion on user satisfaction, by bringing decision-makers, service providers and the community together.

Typically, when governments – or even donor agencies – collect information, community members are asked for data, and then the information disappears into a study or report, shared primarily at the national level. But when information is immediately shared with the community, citizens can use this information to promote accountability from service providers at the local level, to hold discussions about why certain services meet or do not meet the needs and expectations of communities, thereby allowing them to take action to make local level changes.

- ⊕ Social audit tools can **yield both quantitative and qualitative data** on user satisfaction, perceptions and expectations, or on the effectiveness of policies and programs in terms of the promotion and realization of rights (e.g. gender, children, and ethnic minorities). For instance:
 - ✓ A Citizen Report Card (CRC) includes a household survey – with indicators often defined through focus groups – that can focus on social issues, but can quantify user satisfaction and perception.
 - ✓ Similarly, a Community Score Card (CSC) uses focus groups to help users identify and score indicators for satisfaction with service delivery, yielding a percent score for local satisfaction with different aspects of that service.
 - ✓ A PETS, which tracks financial flow of funds or resources from the central level to the intended beneficiaries, provides a assessment on how public funds were used, using existing government generated quantitative data; and quantitative data through surveys of users or beneficiaries.
 - ✓ Gender audits and Child rights-based audits generate primarily qualitative data on the quality of policies and programming, based on in-depth analysis of documents, focus groups and key stakeholder interviews. However, some of the data can be quantified to facilitate comparison.

These tools can provide far more nuanced indications of user priorities and satisfaction, barriers and incentives to access than general household surveys. This in turn can both improve service delivery at the local level and provide policy-makers at provincial and national levels with key feedback and assist in setting priorities, and on funding allocations for specific geographic areas or groups of citizens (e.g. girls, boys, ethnic minorities).

Depending on how they are structured, such as how respondents are chosen, social audit tools may also be able to capture dimensions of access and satisfaction disaggregated by age and ethnicity. The examples below show how various social audit tools have been used in Viet Nam in pilots (2010) and elsewhere to assess policies and programs, and the type of information they generated.

1.3 Overview of the Proposed Tools for Viet Nam

This section provides an overview of each of the proposed tools, including a general description, of what kind of information the tool generates, potential sectors and cross-cutting themes to be monitored. The

issues covered are not exhaustive. The intent is to provide a general description and show how the tools differ in approach, methodology and type of data generated.

The Citizen Report Card (CRC)

Citizen Report Card (CRC)	
<p>Description</p> <p>The Citizen Report Card (CRC) is a simple but powerful tool to provide public agencies with systematic feedback from users of public services. A survey is designed, which includes the indicators chosen by the communities, and feedback is collected from a sample of service users. These results are then aggregated to give an overview of the service(s).</p> <p>By collecting feedback on the quality and adequacy of public services from actual users, CRC provides sound evidence and instigates a proactive agenda for communities, civil society organizations or local governments to engage in a dialogue with service providers to improve the delivery of public services. It also measures the level of public awareness about citizens' rights and responsibilities.</p> <p>CRCs measure service users' perceptions of the quality of and satisfaction with services, as well as of the challenges or problems with service provision.</p>	<p>Information generated</p> <p>The CRC can provide citizens and governments with qualitative and quantitative information about current standards and gaps in service delivery, either at national, provincial or local level, or to compare between provinces, districts, urban versus rural, etc. It can also supply information on services gaps in terms of the general population or various groups of citizens, e.g., migrant workers, ethnic minorities, women, poor versus non poor, children, etc.</p> <p>This data is provided in both quantitative and qualitative formats:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quantitative data includes statistical representations of user satisfaction along key indicators Qualitative data includes anecdotal evidence of why community members scored indicators as they did. <p>The results can be used by government to take into account the social, political and 'soft-side' considerations in planning and budgetary allocations, making the process more transparent and accountable. They can also be used by citizens to air their views, raise awareness of issues regarding service provision and hold governments to account.</p>
<p>Which policy or program phase does CRC support?</p> <p>Citizen Report Cards can be used to monitor implementation and to evaluate performance. CRCs can measure how well services are responding to community needs in terms of their implementation and outcomes. The CRC, conducted periodically, can track changes in service quality over time. For new policies or programs, a CRC can be conducted pre- and post-implementation to measure its impact.</p>	<p>For use at what level? (National, Provincial)</p> <p>CRCs can be commissioned from the national, provincial or local level. The manner the information is used in will depend on what issues are being examined and which target groups data is collected from. If the health sector is examined, this could be for an individual hospital, or health services provided by a local health authority or provided by province wide health authorities, etc. Data can be used by those involved in that particular level of health service provision (i.e. the individual hospital, the local or the province wide health authorities, as well as by the public who use that hospital or fall within the catchment of the local or province health authority). The most important thing is to be clear at the outset about how the information will be used and by whom.</p>
<p>Value added to the SEDP M&E framework</p> <p>Standard indicators can be introduced into CRCs, based on the sector being addressed. These could be included directly into the SEDP M&E framework, such as "overall user satisfaction with services," or "satisfaction with availability of maternal health services". Targets could be set for improving satisfaction on these indicators. Crucially, these indicators will reflect what is of importance to service users, and hence are a useful measure of social development.</p>	<p>Potential sectors and cross-cutting themes to be monitored</p> <p>Sectors: Health, Education, Water and Sanitation, Transport, Food Security, Governance, etc. CRCs can effectively monitor any discrete service or program of work, such as health and education services or food security projects where there is a clear service provider and a clear user or target population.</p> <p>Cross-cutting Themes: CRCs can be conducted with specific target groups (e.g. comparing general population with women, youth, ethnic minorities, poor versus non poor households) or with the population as a whole. If the correct sampling method is used, it is possible to conduct a survey that covers the population as a whole but that allows for the disaggregation of data by target group during the analysis.</p>
<p>The Citizen Report Card Implementation Guide developed as part of this initiative is available at http://.....</p>	

The Community Score Card (CSC)

Community Score Cards (CSCs)	
<p>Description</p> <p>Community Score Cards are a participatory monitoring tool in which service users and providers provide their evaluations of a given service, based on both standardized indicators and indicators of their own choosing. After each side has evaluated the service independently, both come together to discuss why they may have chosen different indicators and/or any differences in score on similar indicators (i.e., in the health service, both users and doctors may choose 'Availability of doctors' as an indicator, but may score the health centre quite differently).</p> <p>This rating and discussion facilitates improved understanding of how services are meeting user needs, but also can lead to community generated solutions for how to improve service delivery locally. In addition to generating information on service delivery, CSCs are an important tool for promoting accountability and actually effecting local change and solutions.</p> <p>CSCs measure how well services are responding to community needs, although they do not provide a good measure of the changing impacts of services. CSCs provide data on whether people feel that services (better or worse) meet their needs, and according to what specific dimensions.</p>	<p>Information generated</p> <p>Outputs of a CSC include community-generated indicators, and community and provider generate information on these indicators. Data includes both quantification of user and service provider satisfaction, as well as qualitative data on satisfaction and service quality as well as recommendations and an action plan. CSCs can also be used to track equipment and resources, to determine leakages or possible sources of corruption.</p> <p>Community score cards yield a mixture of qualitative and quantitative measurements of effectively qualitative data. This data is provided in both quantitative and qualitative formats:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quantitative data includes statistical representation of user satisfaction along key indicators. • Qualitative data includes anecdotal evidence of why community members scored indicators as they did.
<p>Which policy phase does CSC support?</p> <p>Community Score Cards are most effective to monitor and evaluate program implementation – they measure how well services are responding to communities' needs, both in their design, as well as in their implementation</p>	<p>For use at what level? (National, provincial)</p> <p>CSCs are implemented at local level (communal, district level). However, they can be implemented across a number of locations, which allow comparisons across communes, districts or province-wide.</p>
<p>Value added to the SEDP M&E</p> <p>Standard indicators can be used in CSCs, based on the sector being addressed, which could be included directly into the SEDP M&E framework, such as "overall user satisfaction with services," or "satisfaction with availability of maternal health services". Targets could be set for improving satisfaction on these indicators.</p>	<p>Potential sectors and cross-cutting themes to be monitored</p> <p>Sectors: Health, Education. Community Score Cards can be effectively used to monitor services with easily identified communities of use, such as health and education services, where there is a clear service provider and user. CSCs could also be used for other sectors, however, wherever there is a clear community of service users and providers, such as services specifically targeting ethnic minorities.</p> <p>Crosscutting themes: CSCs can be conducted with targeted focus groups to highlight the concerns of specific thematic groups, such as youth or women and girls. Targeting groups such as particular ethnic groups may be more sensitive if there is hesitation or stigma attached to identifying as a particular group, or if there are questions over who qualifies.</p>
<p>The Community Score Card Implementation Guide developed as part of this initiative is available at http://.....</p>	

While there are similarities between CRC and CSC, (e.g. participation of users, assessing satisfaction levels, etc.,) there are some key differences, summarized below.¹⁷

¹⁷ World Bank Participation & Civic Engagement Website, Dec 09

Citizen Report Card	Community Score Card
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unit of analysis: household/individual Meant for meso/macro level Main output is demand side data on performance and actual scores Implementation time is longer (3-6 months) Information collected through questionnaires Feedback mechanism is later, through media 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unit of analysis : Community Meant for local level Emphasis on immediate feedback and accountability, less on actual data Implementation time is shorter (3-6 weeks) Information collected through focus group discussions Feedback mechanism is immediate, at community level

The Gender Audit

Gender Audits (GA)	
<p>Description</p> <p>The objective of the gender audit is to determine the extent to which the needs, rights and realities of men and women, boys and girls, are theoretically and practically incorporated into policy design and implementation. Gender audits typically include a combination of document review, focus groups, interviews, and self-assessment questionnaires. Gender audits are frequently participatory, emphasizing self-assessment in order to foster change from within.</p> <p>The overall aim of a gender audit is to promote organizational learning on how to implement gender mainstreaming effectively in policies, programs and structures and assess the extent to which policies have been institutionalized at the level of the organization, work unit, individual.</p>	<p>Type of Information generated</p> <p>Gender audits are qualitative assessment tools, but as with other social audit tools, a quantitative dimension can be included to provide comparable, easy to read data.</p> <p>The main outcome of the audit is a report that includes recommendations for performance improvement and concrete actions for follow-up by the audited unit/organization through an action plan.</p> <p>The participatory approach ensures that participants learn how to critically assess their attitudes and practices and to develop ideas on improving their performance on gender equality.</p>
<p>Which policy phase does Gender Audit support?</p> <p>The gender audit primarily supports planning. Gender audits can be used to explore the extent to which gender is incorporated into policies and programs.</p> <p>Gender audits can also be used to support M&E – exploring the extent to which gender is actually incorporated into program implementation.</p> <p>However, most gender audits are more of an analytical tool than a rigorous monitoring tool, hence more of an assessment of how well gender is incorporated at the planning stage.</p>	<p>For use at what level? (National, provincial)</p> <p>Depending on the programs being surveyed, gender audits could be conducted at the national or provincial level. They are frequently used to look across programming vertically, to determine how well gender is incorporated from high level objectives downwards to the implementation stage.</p>
<p>Valued added to the SEDP M&E framework</p> <p>Gender audits can have a variety of outputs in terms of M&E. Gender audits evaluate the extent to which gender is incorporated systematically into policies and programs, at the design stage, and the extent to which it is incorporated into projects, at any stage of implementation.</p>	<p>Potential sectors and cross-cutting themes to be monitored</p> <p>Gender audits can be implemented in any sector. The more specific the set of objectives being monitored, the more straightforward the gender audit will be.</p> <p>Sectors: Key sectors identified in the SEDP can be the object of a gender audit to assess whether gender equity is being achieved (e.g. of light processing industries, private enterprises, and labour-intensive industries; training secondary professional, graduate and post-graduate education; vocational training; business development support to ethnic minorities in remote areas; (infrastructure development, social services...) support to minorities; agriculture, forestry, fishery training, vocational training for minorities; health care, including reproductive health care and HIV/AIDS, population planning services, and training of health care workers and doctors; social protection, including gender-based violence, access to social security system and government social benefits and allowances; role and participation of men and women in population, family planning and reproductive health.</p> <p>Crosscutting themes: budget allocations to address gender, youth and ethnic minority issues.</p>
<p>The Gender Audit Implementation Guide developed as part of this initiative is available at http://.....</p>	

The Child Rights-Based Social Audit (CRBSA)

Child Rights-Based Social Audit (CRBSA)	
<p>Description</p> <p>A child rights-based social audit is a specific social auditing tool that aims to maximize opportunities and development outcomes for children by assisting governments and their partners to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take stock, in a participatory fashion, of the degree to which children's rights, needs and interests are taken into consideration in national policies and programs at different levels; • Identify potential gaps in both plans and their implementation; and • Discern priorities for action to improve performance. 	<p>Type of information generated</p> <p>Child rights based audits are qualitative assessment tools, but as with other social audit tools, a quantitative dimension can be included, to provide comparable, easy to read data.</p> <p>The main outcome of the audit is a report that includes recommendations for performance improvement and concrete actions for follow-up through an action plan so that children's rights are promoted, respected and realized.</p>
<p>Which policy phase does CRBA support?</p> <p>Child rights-based social audit tools can effectively contribute at each phase of the planning cycle, with each phase reinforcing and contributing to the next. In agenda-setting, the literature review and policy assessment offered by a CRBA could help uncover gaps in existing policies and identify priorities for attention. The CRBA methodology includes extensive processes of consultation with key stakeholders, including children, which would reinforce participatory planning processes around their issues.</p> <p>During the implementation phase, an audit of key policies could help uncover the distance between what is on paper and happening on the ground.</p> <p>As such, the audit methodology contributes key insights into the overall M&E efforts, including helping to identify key domains that require intensified analysis and evaluation.</p>	<p>For use at what level? (National, provincial)</p> <p>A CRBA can be applied to a policy, plan, or program at a number of different levels, both nationally and sub-nationally.</p> <p>It can be conducted to assess both: (i) overarching legal and policy frameworks, institutional structures and capacities, resources and planning processes, as well as (ii) the particular content of policies and programs.</p> <p>It can also be used to assess, through its participatory processes, the degree to which (iii) stated program and policy goals and objectives for children are experienced on the ground. In each case, of course, the methodology needs to be adapted to include specific questions relative to the focus of assessment.</p>
<p>Value added to the SEDP M&E framework</p> <p>Ensure that indicators are sensitive to child rights (including through disaggregated data covering key child rights domains) and based on outcomes rather than outputs; feed the evidence generated back into subsequent planning processes; harmonise the evidence captured by non-governmental agencies; involve children in M&E exercises.</p>	<p>Potential sectors and cross-cutting themes to be monitored</p> <p>Sectors: Multi-sector plans; child protection; childcare and protection (Decree 67); agriculture, forestry and fisheries towards industrialization and modernization; quality of education, training, and human resources; development of scientific, technology and intellectual economy; cultural development; progress in social equity and improvement; social welfare.</p> <p>Crosscutting themes: CRBA could be used to assess whether children from ethnic minorities are more marginalized, or whether the rights of girls and boys are being addressed equally.</p>
<p>The Child Rights-Based Social Audit Implementation Guide developed as part of this initiative is available at http://.....</p>	

The Public Expenditure Tracking Survey (PETS)

Public Expenditure Tracking Survey (PETS)	
<p>Description</p> <p>PETS are techniques to assess the efficiency of public spending and the quality and quantity of services. As with other social audit tools, PETS promote accountability for public spending. PETS can show whether money that was supposed to achieve a particular outcome actually did and whether it benefited the target population as intended.</p> <p>PETS track the flow of resources through the various layers of government administration, down to the service facilities in order to determine how much of the originally allocated resources reach each level, and how long they take to get there. It can help identify the location and extent of impediments to resource flows (financial, staff, equipment). It can therefore evaluate the mechanisms and incentives that determine public expenditure leakages, and capture deployment impediments. A PETS focuses on service provider behavior, incentives, and relationships between providers, policy-makers and users.</p>	<p>Type of information generated</p> <p>Although primarily quantitative, PETS yield a mixture of qualitative and quantitative measurements to assess the effectiveness and efficiency of expenditure, including the identification of possible causes for bottlenecks and problems in the transfer of funds. This type of data is crucial for contributing to the assessment of the public finance management (PFM) system, as well as to provide information to the community to hold service providers and local officials to account.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quantitative data on expenditure flows, levels of leakage Qualitative data includes information about problems in the system in relation to the transfer and effective use of funds.
<p>Which policy phase does PETS support?</p> <p>PETS are most effectively used to monitor program implementation – they measure how well resources allocated to specific programs have been executed, which has a significant impact on program implementation.</p>	<p>For use at what level? (National, provincial)</p> <p>PETS are used to look across programming vertically reviewing financial flows from national down to the beneficiary (communal) to determine whether leakages are occurring at any particular level or stage of programming.</p>
<p>Value added to the SEDP M&E framework</p> <p>Public Expenditure Tracking Surveys can identify inefficiencies, the improper capture of funds and problems of incentives in the service delivery supply chain and to assess whether resources are reaching intended beneficiaries (e.g. by comparing budgets voted in and actual expenditures in the education and health sector).</p>	<p>Potential sectors and cross-cutting themes to be monitored</p> <p>Sectors: PETS are generally used to track resources in Health and Education. PETS are tracing surveys, ultimately intended to provide local communities, service providers and government with information about the level of resources allocated to particular services in their area; so generally the local school or health clinic. PETS are limited to an assessment of the efficiency of public spending in one discrete “unit” of expenditure, generally at the level of frontline service providers, which makes these two sectors the ‘ideal candidates’. However, increasingly PETS are being used in social protection to verify that cash or in kind transfers are reaching the target population.</p> <p>Crosscutting themes: The use of resources to address disparities across thematic areas is possible, for example, by verifying if resources spent are progressive, with higher expenditure on programs targeted to vulnerable groups; perhaps there could be an assessment of the quality of expenditure in ethnic minority areas versus other areas.</p>
<p>The Public Expenditures Tracking Survey Implementation Guide developed as part of this initiative is available at http://.....</p>	

1.4 Uses of Proposed Social Audit Tools (examples from Viet Nam pilots and other countries)

While more specific uses of the tools are featured in the toolkit to monitor specific aspects of the SEDP, below is an overview of how these tools can be used as part of a Social Audit Approach. As noted, social audit tools can be used individually, or combined. In the case studies presented below, a Community Score Card and Citizen Report Card were conducted in the same location in Viet Nam as independent pilots by two different research teams on the quality of health services for children under six. The findings on user satisfaction about health services provided to families were similar for the CRC and CSC (in terms of rating)

but also complementary (the CSC allowed for dialogue between service users and providers to take place and generated an action plan agreed on by both users and providers to improve service quality locally).

The example of Citizen Report Cards in India on the quality of public services provides an example of how CRCs, repeated periodically over a period of ten years, and brought to the attention of the public and the authorities, can help to significantly improve public services over time.

The qualitative information they generate can be used to guide governments on the reallocation of resources or to revise programs to address disparities or particular vulnerabilities faced by women. The pilot gender audits in Viet Nam in 2010, for example, identified gaps in the SEDP of two provinces (HCMC and Quang Nam) in thematic areas where gender-based inequalities and the specific vulnerabilities of women are not addressed (e.g. gender-based violence, trafficking of girls and prostitution, lack of access to social benefits and formal economic sector employment, etc.) and gaps in terms of available data (e.g. insufficient sex-disaggregated data). Another example from India shows how a gender audit of energy policies and programs helped develop strategies to take action to better meet the interests and needs of women and girls, the primary users of energy in the household (e.g. for cooking, heating and lighting) but whose needs were left out of government expenditures for the sector. This resulted in a review of the national energy policy of and a closer follow up on how the policy was subsequently implemented.

The 2010 pilot PETS of Viet Nam's Program 167, designed to provide subsidies to poor households, was undertaken in Tra Vinh province, in three specific districts with different characteristics. It assessed whether the program followed regulations and funds reached intended beneficiaries and were used as intended by government officials and beneficiaries, by following the flow of resources from the centre down. A survey of beneficiaries and building contractors and suppliers also helped examine whether costs were unduly inflated, and if beneficiaries were asked fees to access the funding that was supposed to be freely accessed.

CSC – Example from Pilots on community health care services in HCMC and Quang Nam provinces, Viet Nam, 2010

CSCs were piloted in HCMC's Tan Phu district and Tien Phuoc district in Quang Nam province, to assess the quality of health services provided by health stations to children under six and in two different settings. One pilot focused on comparing the level of satisfaction of migrant and non-migrant families on the quality of services received; the other on poor and non-poor households. Participants included service users and providers. The key methods used were a document review and focus group discussions. In each province, approximately 45 service users participated, along with 24 service providers. Participants were selected randomly, based on communal office and health station user lists. The CSC generated both quantitative and qualitative data.

Key findings for the three health stations in Tan Phu showed that 90% of government standards and norms were met or exceeded. The overall rating of service quality by users against eight indicators was between average and good, or a 76.4% satisfaction rate. Location and communication received the highest scores, and sanitary conditions, equipment and facilities the lowest. Users also said they would like to be treated more gently by doctors and receive more information on treatment. Service providers made a similar assessment of service quality but gave somewhat higher ratings. Users and providers at each station agreed on a number of recommendations that the health station could implement and jointly proposed a plan of action to be implemented locally.

Key findings for Tien Phuoc showed that, across the three health stations, 66% to 70% of government standards/norms were reached or exceeded. The rating on service quality against the indicators chosen by users was average, a 63.8 % satisfaction rate. The indicators receiving the highest ratings were location, opening hours and management capacity. However, for nearly half of the indicators, the rating was between poor and average, except for the location of Tien Ky township health station, rated as good. Service providers' assessment of service quality generally mirrored those of users but higher scores were given overall. Users and providers all agreed on a joint set of recommendations and an action plan to improve the quality of services at the local level.

Overall, the CSC exercise did not find significant differences in satisfaction with the health care quality in health stations between migrant and non-migrant families or poor and non-poor households. While comparing service quality in the different provinces was not the purpose of this particular exercise, the CSCs showed the score on meeting minimum government standards was considerably lower in Tien Phuoc than the level of 90% achieved in Tan Phu. Hence, the CSC findings can assist not only decision-makers and managers to improve services at minimal cost locally but also MPI and the Ministry of Health and provincial authorities to re-examine budget allocations for health stations in order to bridge gaps in health care provision across districts and provinces.

CRC – Example from India: Public Services

In 1993, a citizens' group in Bangalore, India, launched a survey of citizens to gather feedback on public services. The first CRC, in 1994, revealed noteworthy patterns: satisfaction levels of middle-income respondents did not exceed 25% for any of the seven service providers covered. Public satisfaction with staff behavior was a mere 25%, and over a quarter of people had to make three visits or more to agencies to solve their problems. On average, 14% of respondents had paid bribes to agency staff, and half said staff demanded bribes. Many households incurred additional costs because of the investments they had to make to compensate for the unreliability of services (e.g. generators to cope with power outages).

The report card findings were widely publicized in the Bangalore press. The government and the service providers were also kept informed of the full report card. Citizen groups were invited to debate the findings and propose ways and means to deal with the problems highlighted by the citizen report card.

The Second Report Card (1999), with a sample size of approximately 2,000 households, showed partial improvement in public satisfaction with most of the delivery agencies, but the satisfaction level was still below 50 per cent, even for the better performers. Disturbingly, corruption levels in several agencies had increased. Low income citizens continued to visit agencies more often than their middle income counterparts to solve their problems. The report cards indicated a clear link between petty corruption and inefficient service provision, and showed how difficult it was to root out the non-transparent and arbitrary procedures and mind sets of many agencies.

A Third Report Card (2003) showed marked improvement in citizen satisfaction and a comparison of the performance of these agencies over 10 years significant improvement in end user satisfaction. Of the nine agencies on which citizens of Bangalore gave feedback, all received satisfaction ratings above 70% in 2003, in contrast to less than 40% in 1999 and much lower ratings in 1993.

<http://www.sasanet.org/documents/Case%20Studies/Bangalore%20Citizen%20report%20card.pdf>

Gender Audit – Example of pilot gender audits conducted in HCMC and Quang Nam provinces, Viet Nam, 2010

The objective of the gender audits, conducted at provincial level, was to assess if gender had been mainstreamed (integrated systematically) into the 2006-2010 SEDP of HCMC and Quang Nam. The pilots queried officials at central, provincial, district and commune levels through a document review, a self-assessment survey, key informant interviews and focus group discussions. A total of 64 departmental representatives participated (interviews: 8 high level officials; focus groups: 31; survey: 25 planning and M&E staff). This generated primarily qualitative data, although an effort was made to quantify responses from the survey.

The results of the gender audit were similar for HCMC and Quang Nam province. While some gender issues are addressed in the programs, projects, and activities of the Board for the advancement of women, municipal women's union, and some departments (Education, Health, Labor), they were not reflected in the targets, duties, orientation, and strategies of the 5-year SEDP. Gender was addressed somewhat better in the 5-year Plan for HCMC but only in a separate and small section. The Audit found that the officers interviewed and surveyed as part of the gender audit believe that they have the responsibility to improve gender-related outcomes. However, in HCMC, while gender-related accountabilities within offices or institutions are present, it is not to a high degree. Gender-related issues are presented in special reports and conferences but not in departmental reports.

Accountabilities within office or institutions for gender mainstreaming in Quang Nam are reportedly not very clear, and stakeholders indicated there are no criteria for evaluating staff on how they integrate (or not) gender dimensions in programs and policies. Results from the focus group discussions, in-depth interviews, and the self-assessment indicate that the role of leaders in both HCMC and Quang Nam province is considered highly important and perceived as a prerequisite and key determinant to enable gender mainstreaming in programs and policies. In both locations, respondents indicated that an insufficient interest of leaders and superiors in gender issues, which was among the leading reasons why gender mainstreaming was not occurring.

The pilot gender audit noted that gender analysis was not systematically undertaken for all the social aspects of the SEDPs but rather was isolated in one specific and general section reaffirming general gender equality goals. The pilot gender audit identified specific areas where gender issues were insufficiently covered by the provincial SEDPs, including:

- continuing gender inequalities in access and completion of different levels of education, particularly for ethnic minority girls;
- maternal and reproductive health services, including antenatal care, maternal nutrition and youth-focused programmes in and outside schools;
- women's unequal access to land, credit, and training in the agricultural development section;
- women's lack of representation at all levels of government and program governance;
- women's unequal access to training in the formal labor sector; and,
- incorporating a gender-sensitive focus in social protection systems, such as ensuring that victims of violence can access legal, health, and support services.

Gender Audit – Example from India: Energy policies

A gender audit of the Indian Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE) in 2008 studied gender gaps in energy policies and worked with stakeholders to formulate strategies to address these and make gender and energy issues visible to wide audiences.

The gender audit found gender was not actually considered an issue in energy policy, with energy largely seen as a technical area. It revealed that traditional biomass collected and used by women, mainly for cooking, accounts for 28% of India's national energy consumption, and its percentage will continue to be high, although the level of national investment in management and conversion technology of traditional biomass is very limited. An analysis of the budget outlays of MNRE's 10th Five Year Plan calculated that only 12.67% addressed women's specific energy needs. The audit also found that women cannot benefit from modern renewable energy projects; and that none of the existing programmes collect gender-disaggregated data.

A key output was MNRE's endorsement of the report *Gender Audit of National Energy Policy in India: Present Status, Issues, Approaches and New Initiatives for Renewable Energy*. A stakeholder meeting organised by the India Planning Commission acknowledged that lack of coordination between ministries had a bad impact on women's development and well-being. Policymakers and management staff became more sensitive to the links between energy policies and women's needs, and were informed on strategies of women's empowerment and action priorities. Repeated consultations and meetings with women's organisations, civil society groups and media spread the results and advocated for gender mainstreaming of the energy sectors.

http://www.energia.org/fileadmin/files/media/en-092008_parikh_sangeeta.pdf

PETS – Pilot on Program 167, a subsidy program to build or improve housing of the poor, Tra Vinh Province, Viet Nam, 2010 *Selection of targeted beneficiaries*

The PETS found that, although Program 167 was implemented as intended, overall it did not always fully follow regulations at different stages of implementation. For instance, review and selection of beneficiaries in each phase was complicated by the number of criteria (e.g. contribution to the war, ethnic minorities, poor households in particularly disadvantaged areas) and then by changes made to the criteria during implementation. As a result, priority was not always given to households in the greatest need (based on house condition), and some households that should not have been eligible were selected to receive support.

Budget allocation

Analysis of financial flows from the centre to the household revealed no loss or leakage. However, in some communes, the list of candidates for housing support included marginally poor recipients and the allocated budget was higher than the commune's actual need. Communes with the highest budget allocations and greatest number of beneficiaries lacked administrative capacity to manage a large influx of funding. Confusion in the mode of allocation at the district level meant only one district achieved 50% of its target in 2009. The fact that the allocation was spread out, reduced and adjusted over a number of periods made it difficult to compare the district budget allocated to the communes with the budget the district received during phase 1. However, during phases 2 and 3, the district could disburse funding in one tranche, possibly because the amount to be disbursed was lower.

The PETS also found that the "price escalation factor" was not taken sufficiently into account in program design. Surveys indicated that the uniform implementation across the communes and districts of Tra Vinh increased the demand for construction materials and labor, resulting in higher costs than planned, with a notable effect on house construction costs, progress and quality.

Purposefulness and timeliness of the financial flow

Overall, financial flows occurred in accordance with regulations and were allocated only for activities of Program 167. However, during the second allocation period, the province used a part of the allocation from the centre for activities of the program steering committee, which had not been budgeted initially. Even though the committee needed a budget to operate, especially the commune and district committees, which required a great deal of household visits, inspections and reports, the use of a part of the housing support allocation reduced the amount available for housing support to beneficiaries. The PETS found that generally the transfer of funds between various levels of authorities was timely. However, at the district level, the process differed greatly depending on the amount being transferred and local administrative capacity.

At household level, financial support was mostly used for house building or improvements as intended, as households could withdraw money only on the basis of inspected products. Communes had a mechanism to inform suppliers and contractors of the times and places of disbursement so they could come directly to request materials and labour costs from households soon after they received funds. This also restrained households from using funds to fulfil other needs. The household survey confirmed this. For instance, the cost of the newly built houses was often higher than the total program support received, not lower.

The PETS did not find evidence of additional expenses being required from households beyond the material and labor costs, which increased during the program implementation due to inflation. However, in one commune, the response to a survey question regarding additional costs having to be paid was left blank for 16% of respondents.

PETS – Example from Uganda: Education

The first PETS, undertaken in **Uganda**, focused on tracking leakage or diversion of funds intended for primary schools. Between 1991 and 1995, it was found that, on average, only 13 percent of the annual per-student grant reached the primary schools. That meant that 87 percent of the funds were misappropriated or used by district officials for purposes not directly related to education. The PETS showed that while larger schools and schools with pupils from wealthier families benefited disproportionately from the annual per student grants, the smaller and poorer schools received no funds. Less than half the schools received any funds at all. The findings prompted authorities to undertake several initiatives to enhance transparency and to increase proportion of funds received. Indeed, a follow up survey showed the schools had received more than 90 percent of the capitation grant.

<http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0015/001570/157021e.pdf>

PETS – Example from Ghana: Education

The Ghana Centre for Democratic Development (CDD-Ghana) undertook a PETS on the impact of school fees abolition and capitation grant in Africa, and problems associated with implementation of school fees abolition; and to track public resources leakage in Education, with a particular focus on the capitation grant. The survey was conducted in 2008-2009 in eight public primary schools from the Western Region representing the coastal belt, 12 from Ashanti Region representing the forest belt, and 10 from the Northern Region representing the Savannah belt. It revealed poor record keeping, constant delays in the releasing of the grant, and lack of transparency in the disbursement process. The study provided empirical evidence on leakages from the Ghana Education Services (GES) through the District Education Units to the service delivery points. The leakages tended to be more pervasive with the transfer between district and schools. However, the level of leakages cut across both endowed and underprivileged schools. It also established that schools with effective Parent/Teacher Associations and School Management Committees used capitation grant resources more effectively and for the intended purposes than those with weak systems.

<http://www.cddghana.org/documents/Briefing%20P.%20Vol.%2010%20No.1.pdf>

Section 2: M&E of the Social Dimensions of the SEDP 2006-2010 and 2011-2015

This section examines how monitoring the social dimensions of the SEDP for 2011-2015 could be strengthened using a Social Audit Approach and the various tools featured in Section 1. To that end, several monitoring strategies using the social audit tools and indicators are presented.

2.1 Social Dimensions of the SEDP

The Viet Nam Socio-Economic Development Plan (SEDP) is the government's five year planning framework for economic, social, and infrastructural development and security. The current national SEDP (2011-2015) is Viet Nam's tenth. The five year SEDP is based on a broader 10 year strategy (2011-2020 SEDP), which provides a broad orientation for the country's human and economic development, and constitutes the overarching framework for the more detailed 5-year SEDPs. These SEDPs are developed at central and provincial levels, and are to include district and commune levels as well. Recent SEDP planning exercises and programming proposals from the provincial level have included consultation with a variety of government and civil society representatives, including local officials, academics, the business community, domestic and international NGOs representing various causes, and donor agencies. The Ministry of Planning and Investment (MPI) also initiated participatory research exercises in 17 sites across the country.

The 2011-2020 SEDS expresses a strong commitment to growth, poverty reduction and social equity, in order to accelerate national industrialization and modernization along a socialist model and to set the foundations for the country to become an industrialized nation by 2020. The plan is organized into economic, social, and environmental pillars, and identifies specific development challenges for Viet Nam in terms of improving the business environment, strengthening social inclusion, strengthening natural resource and environmental management, and improving governance. In response to these challenges, the SEDP outlines goals and activities towards hunger eradication, gender equality, youth development, poverty reduction, developing a social security system and ensuring social equity and equality, and includes sector-specific indicators.

In both the 2006-2010 and the 2011-2015 SEDPs in Viet Nam, there has been increased focus on social issues, and as such, these are a significant element of the SEDP's narrative of objectives and targets. Social issues can be broadly defined as those that address individual, family, and community well-being – poverty, hunger, health care, gender equality and children's rights – as opposed to more macro government priorities, such as national security, business environment, and fiscal issues.

The social section of both SEDPs is not solely outcomes focused but seeks to improve quality of services, policies and programs. For instance, *Development of Services* is a discrete sector listed in the section *Development Orientation of all Sectors and Fields* in the 2011-2015 SEDP. Also, the section lists as a specific goal the improvement of public service management, and recognizes that effective public service delivery is important to social stability. In the *Social Sector* section, there are objectives for improving *conditions guaranteed for education quality, including the teaching staff, administrators and employees; textbooks, syllabi and reference books, physical infrastructure, equipment, laboratories, libraries, playgrounds and training grounds*.

Although the two SEDPs attempt to link economic growth, industrialisation and modernisation to social progress and advancement, there remains a strong separation between the economic and social spheres in

the documents. Very rarely are social issues fully integrated into economic targets and solutions, and overall, there is a relatively heavy tilt towards economic matters, especially urban and rural industrialization. The explicit attempt to combine economic growth with social progress and equality focuses largely on poverty alleviation (from a monetary perspective) through gaining employment, with social insurance systems for the ‘needy’, rather than examining the inequitable impacts of economic growth and industrialization and adapting them towards inclusive growth.

The focus on monetary aspects of poverty could overlook important groupings that would be identified by a multi-dimensional poverty approach. Social issues – such as those outlined in the social section – also arise in other sectors of the SEDP: unemployment spans social and economic issues; malnutrition is a health issue, as well as related to poverty, unemployment, and agricultural productivity; and gender, youth, ethnic minorities cut across nearly all social dimensions.

This multi-dimensionality of social topics is one reason why static data gathering techniques often fail to adequately capture social baselines. For this reason, social audit techniques, which often allow community members to define their own indicators and to provide narrative regarding projects and services, frequently provide authorities a more comprehensive understanding of the issues.

2.2 Issues with Social Sector Monitoring of the 2006-2010 SEDP

In addition to the issues outlined above, a number of other factors contributed to weak social sector monitoring of the 2006-2010 SEDP:

- ✚ First, the 2006-2010 SEDP included a number of *different M&E frameworks*. While all are complementary, there was overlap and divergence, making reading the different frameworks somewhat confusing:
 - ✓ **Appendix 1: Poverty Reduction and Social Development Targets of Viet Nam by 2010** is a three page summary of the President’s commitment at the UN Millennium Summit, in terms of poverty reduction and social goals. It is not entirely clear how these targets relate to those in the next annexes – while there is a large overlap, some objectives appear in one annex and not others, which may be confusing for determining which indicators to focus and report on.
 - ✓ **Appendix 2: Major Policies and Measures to Achieve Goals and Targets** is the meat of the M&E framework, and includes a matrix outlining Goals, Objectives, Policies, Results, and Implementing Agencies.
 - ✓ **Appendix 4: Orientation Targets of the 5-year SEDP** provides a baseline of 2001-2005 and projected targets for a select number of indicators for 2006-2010.
 - ✓ **Appendix 5, Results-Based Mid-Term Review Report for Implementation of the Five-Year Socio-Economic Development Plan 2006-2010:** This document provides an assessment of progress towards the objectives of the 2006-2010 SEDP, albeit two years into its implementation.
- ✚ *The M&E framework was not comprehensive, and did not address all of the issues raised in the SEDP document.* Although the SEDP focused on a range of social issues, the related M&E framework was limited range, assessing relatively few of them, and they were not used as a tool by provincial authorities to measure progress against national targets.
- ✚ *The relationship between the SEDP and specific policies and programs was not made explicit, particularly as to how national priorities translate to provincial SEDPs.* This often nebulous relationship contributed to weak M&E, particularly of the more qualitative, social dimensions of the

2006-2010 SEDP – such as poverty reduction, hunger eradication, health, education, and gender mainstreaming. Several sections refer to various national plans or policies (e.g. the National Strategies of Gender Equity, the National Action Plan for Children), but only in terms of formulating and implementing them, and without clear guidance on priorities and sequencing for their implementation. For instance, mentions of children are largely absent from the document and child-related issues are inadequately mainstreamed.

Child-related issues are specifically addressed only in the sections on education, health, child care and protection, cultures, information and sport, and youth development. Children are incorporated largely as objects of programs, rather than bearers of rights, with no mention of child participation. Likewise, gender equality is not mainstreamed at all in the SEDP - there are very few gender-specific considerations or targets in any section, and the specific gender equity section is overly general and could be strengthened by a gender analysis of all sectors.

If local programs are not geared, by design, towards key objectives or national priorities, it is very difficult to use existing M&E to measure progress towards these objectives. Inadequate monitoring of progress towards objectives makes it difficult to hold service providers and government accountable, and very challenging to improve policies and programs to achieve desired outcomes.

- ✿ *Data gathering techniques were limited and indicators used to monitor the social dimensions of the SEDP were quantitatively focused.* The SEDP was monitored primarily using available administrative data and household surveys.¹⁸ While these data-gathering techniques are best suited to capturing quantitative data, they typically place or allow little emphasis on more qualitative dimensions, such as user perceptions of service quality, satisfaction, or more nuanced aspects of service usage, barriers to access, and possible differences of access and control of resources, not to mention decision-making authority within the household.

Indicators include, for instance, formal capacity of teachers or health providers, easily measurable related infrastructure, and other quantifiable measures; however, these only scratch the surface of service quality, user satisfaction, and other issues that pose barriers to socio-economic development. For example, indicators related to the objective of improving the quality of education relate only to the formal qualifications of teachers, and the school completion rates rather than measuring whether the quality of teaching methods varied across teachers or whether the curriculum reproduced stereotypes related to gender, ethnicity or other exclusionary characteristics.

These quantitative data gathering tools and indicators limit the degree that data can be used to further improve service delivery, and allow little room for citizens to be actively engaged in M&E. Such tools also do not take into account beneficiary feedback on policy implementation, and are of limited use for analyzing linkages within and between stages of the policy cycle and different policies. More active user engagement can provide more in-depth qualitative feedback, and can also strengthen accountability, decrease corruption, and improve quality of service delivery itself.

There is a myriad of other factors that might contribute to quality of education – such as the quality of the teaching itself or availability of adequate resources, or appropriateness of teaching materials. Furthermore, the demand side of the quality of education question is entirely overlooked – there is

¹⁸ Viet Nam Household Living Standards Survey, Labor Force Survey.

no measure of student or parent satisfaction, for instance. Such qualitative indicators can provide important information to the national level, as well as initiating an accountability cycle locally that can lead to improved service delivery. This gap in monitoring is not exclusive to the social sector, but improvements in that sector could set a roadmap for improving others. Failure to do so, however, makes it much more difficult to determine progress or address challenges inhibiting progress.

- ✚ *Lack of coordination between existing social monitoring tools:* There are numerous monitoring programs and instruments, both from the government and other NGOs and partners that lack a coherent monitoring framework for translating M&E into constructive policy adaptation.

2.3 Improving Social Sector Monitoring in the 2011-2015 SEDP

One key objective of introducing a Social Audit Approach is to address the gaps highlighted in the 2006-2010 SEDP for social sector monitoring, thereby enhancing the implementation and monitoring of the 2011-2015 and future SEDPs. Improved monitoring of policy design and formulation, implementation, and evaluation aspects of social performance requires improvements in quantitative data gathering – examining the existing sources of quantitative data and determining where additional information can be gathered from existing sources, or where new indicators can be incorporated for future data gathering – as well as the introduction of measurements of more qualitative, process-oriented data. Improved qualitative data may be in the form of narrative data, or quantification of qualitative data, i.e. satisfaction rates expressed as a percentage, or additional indicators measuring development outputs.

Improved monitoring techniques can include making data gathering more participatory, and include more focus on demand-side (rights holders) issues, such as satisfaction and appropriateness of certain services, to adequately capture all dimensions of the SEDP social goals. By alerting the government to successes or challenges in particular sectors, such techniques could also help improve social services and conditions at the local – and higher – level(s) through improved communication and accountability. For example, the Citizen Report Card and the Community Score Card can be used to assess the satisfaction of citizens with the quality of local health services provided. A gender audit of health services can help assess whether, and where, there are barriers specific to girls and women, based on socio-economic or cultural norms that should be removed to ensure that women and girls can realize their right to health as much as boys and men. Public Expenditure Tracking Surveys can be used to assess whether human, financial and physical resources are equitably distributed between health centres within or between districts or different populations.

As noted earlier, the analysis of the 2006-2010 SEDP (revealed discrepancies between the emphasis placed on the social issues in the narrative section of the SEDP and the attention it receives in the M&E framework. Clearly, the M&E framework of social issues does not adequately allow for measuring social issues in terms of the scope and stated objectives, given the type and quality of indicators used, and in the data gathering techniques themselves, which are lacking the participation of affected citizens.

Using the example from Figure 4 below, the “high quality” health care services in the target column is lost in the indicator/outcome column. While it would still be possible to know how many people overall had access to health care services through quantitative methods, whether or not these health care services are of “high quality” or not would be unknown unless complementary methods were used.

Figure 4: Example of SEDP result-oriented 2006-2010 M&E Framework

Target	Activity, Input	Indicators/Target		Agency responsible for monitoring, evaluating and reporting to:	
		Output	Outcome/Impact	Output	Outcome/Impact
			International standard		
Objective 2.2. Improve health protection and health care					
Reduce the incidence of diseases, improve the health and life expectancy of the population by providing high quality health care services	Provide incentives for 'socializing' health sector and enhance local health care system	Rate of Public expenditure on health care to total budget for 2006-2010: 8-10% Number of beds per 10,000 people by 2010: 26.3 Number of private hospital beds/ public beds	Proportion of population having access to health care	MOF, MOH, People's Committee of province/city	MOH, GSO, People's Committee of province/city
			Life expectancy at birth by 2010: 72 years Child (<5) malnutrition rate by 2010: <20% Proportion of maternal mortality to 100,000 safe births: 60 people Etc.		
	Prepare and implement health care services development master plan				
	Etc.	Etc.			

Taking the objective of improving health protection and health care as an example (Figure 4), Figure 5 provides an example of how the different social audit tools could be used and to what end.

Figure 5: Possible use of social audit tools to measure health outcomes

2006-2010 M&E Framework: Objective 2.2. Improve health protection and health care	
Social Audit Tool	Possible Focus or Application
Community Score Card (CSC)	<p>Assess level of satisfaction of citizens with services and improve services at local level (commune/district) by engaging users and service providers in identifying their own indicators for quality (some standards indicators, based on national or international standards would also be used). Locally designed solutions could be implemented rapidly. Comparison within and between districts could be done.</p> <p>After repeating exercise at different places and times, indicators for measuring quality from users' perspective emerge. Differences in what constitutes quality could be identified for various communities or types of users (ethnic minorities, children, the elderly). This would allow service provision to meet the needs of particular communities or groups, which could have a positive effect on outcomes for them.</p>
Citizen Report Card (CRC)	Assess the level of satisfaction of citizens with health care service, as in the pilot in HCMC and Dien Bien 2010, where community health services for poor and non-poor, migrant and non-migrant were assessed on a wider scale (district, province). Comparison between different groups of users could be made.
Gender Audit	<p>Conduct at various levels, from district to ministry, to examine if programs/measures to reduce HIV/AIDS incidence take into consideration the particular risks and vulnerabilities facing men and women, based on socio-economic conditions in the community (children, youth, adults, by occupation, etc. as well as contributing factors, e.g. culture, mobility, education level, control over own sexuality, drug use, etc.).</p> <p>Gender audits could examine not only programming on HIV/AIDS but extend to institutional and staff capacity to address such issues using a gender and rights lens.</p> <p>Gender audits on health service quality could help identify groups of women or men with particular health needs overlooked at local, provincial, national levels and identify the best approach to address these by geographic location (urban/rural, coastal/mountainous), age group, ethnicity, income, etc.</p>
Child Rights-Based Social Audit (CRBSA)	Similar to gender audits, could examine, for example, HIV/AIDS programming from the perspective of children (boys and girls) of various socio-economic backgrounds, ethnicity, location, etc. Specific needs and vulnerabilities not addressed could be identified through a child rights based audit.
Public Expenditure Tracking Survey	A PETS could determine whether funding for services of AIDS/HIV affected population e.g. parent-child transmission was actually disbursed to the intended beneficiaries. Or whether a program to raise awareness

2006-2010 M&E Framework: Objective 2.2. Improve health protection and health care	
Social Audit Tool	Possible Focus or Application
(PETS)	among youth reached beneficiaries across groups of youth, or by geographic location.

Generic Indicators That Would Warrant the Use of Social Audit Tools to Monitor Progress on the SEDP

The generic indicators listed below could apply to most objectives/activities of the SEDP 2011-2015 with corresponding tools. Sub-section 2.3.5 provides a more targeted approach to the use of outcomes, indicators and tools to complement the existing SEDP M&E framework, with specific suggestions that address a number of key disparities or issues. Regardless of the social audit tool used, all data pertaining to people should be **disaggregated by sex, age and ethnicity** in order to track who is being left out or left behind in the socio-economic development process. Other disaggregations, such as geographic location (e.g. urban/rural/remote/mountainous) and **income quintile**, should also be included, as these are crucial pieces of information that go hand in hand with the S.

Examples of Generic Indicators	Social Audit Tool
Extent to which the policy/program/activity/service is gender responsive: ¹⁹ Change in access to vocational training in high growth industry for men and women Level of improvement in quality of maternal health services in district clinics and provincial hospitals Change in quality of services to address gender-based violence	Gender Audit
Extent to which the policy/program/activity/service is child responsive: ²⁰ Percentage of schools with child-centred learning programs Percentage of ethnic minority children with access to drinking water Percentage of teenagers receiving quality HIV/AIDS education	CRBA
Level of citizen satisfaction with grievance redress mechanisms in social services	CRC, CSC
Level of participation of citizens in the design, implementation and M&E of policies, programs and budgets	CRC, Gender Audit, CRBA
Availability of, access to and usage of services	CRC, CSC, Gender Audit, CRBA
Level of satisfaction with services (health, education, etc.)	CRC, CSC
Proportion of program benefits/resources that reach intended beneficiaries	PETS, CRC
Proportion of resources reaching decentralized levels Repetition of “indicator” below. Also, again not much more information compared to what the text already tells us about what PETS can measure.	PETS
Average leakage at the provider levels: • Regional-Provider leakage (proportion of resources not received from among resources sent by the regional level)	PETS
Number of days between budget disbursement (release) at the regional level and receipt at the provider level	PETS
Level of transparency in service provisions (e.g. disclosure of service quality standards and norms)	PETS
Discrepancy between voted budget and actual expenditures	PETS
Absenteeism of service provider (doctors, nurses, teachers, supervisors, etc.)	PETS
Proportion of materials and supplies not reaching destination (in value)	PETS
% of users (e.g. patients, households, job applicants, students, etc.) reporting “extra payments” to receive services	PETS, CRC

¹⁹ Responsiveness here means promote, respect and actively work for the realization of rights as defined under CEDAW and Vietnamese law.

²⁰ Responsiveness here means promote, respect and actively work for the realization of rights as defined under the Convention on the Rights of Children and Vietnamese law. See Child Rights Based Audit Guide for details on tools to analyze and assess social protection systems using a rights-based approach.

Key Social Issues in the 2011-2015 SEDP

This section specifically reviews the goals, targets, and monitoring indicators for different social issues in the SEDP. It then outlines entry points for improving social performance, both in terms of planning, implementation, and M&E for these sectors, and suggestions for indicators and social audit tools.

The SEDP outlines the following main objectives regarding social development:

- ⊕ Strongly develop science and technology, education and training, improve the quality of human resources for the sake of the national industrialization and modernization and enhance the development of knowledge economy.
- ⊕ Create a strong move in building cultural foundation, knowledge, morality, and lifestyles, control the population growth rate; significantly improving people's health and physical fitness; and, protect and improve ecological environment.
- ⊕ Realize social progress, equity and gender equality, create jobs, encourage people to prosper in legitimate ways; alleviate hunger and reduce poverty; develop social security systems; and, prevent social problems.

These issues are addressed more specifically – in terms of specific sectors and related objectives, and policy strategy – in Part I (B) (II) (III) and Part II (B) (II) (III), and include the following themes:

Education and Training, Technology and Science

- ⊕ *Education and training*
- ⊕ *Science and technology*

Social Sectors

- ⊕ *Job generation*
- ⊕ *Hunger eradication, poverty reduction, and social security systems*
- ⊕ *Population and family planning work and protection, caring health of citizens*
- ⊕ *Culture and information activities and sport issues*
- ⊕ *Gender equality and child protection*

The others listed below are not mentioned as social sectors but grouped with the above as social fields:

- ⊕ *Implementation of the policy of respecting and ensuring freedom of religion and belief*
- ⊕ *Youth development*
- ⊕ *Implementation of gender equality, empowerment of women and child rights protection²¹*
- ⊕ *Prevention of social problems*

Since the social issues addressed span such a variety, and the goals and objectives within each of these issues are so varied, the analysis here focuses on three key issues: **health, education, social protection** and three primary cross-cutting themes – youth/children, gender and ethnic minorities. The latter are applicable across all of these issues, i.e. health (maternal and child health), education (equity in access to education from a gender perspective), social protection (ensuring equal rights and protections for men and women, boys and girls), and ethnic minorities (assuring all of the above equitably for men and women from ethnic

²¹ Now mentioned under Gender.

minorities). It offers suggestions for outcomes/indicators that could be addressed through one or more social audit tools.

Education and Training

Education and training are discussed in their own subsection, but they also cross other sections in the social sector, including youth development, minority issues, and gender, for instance. Based on text and tables relating to education, the main goals related to education include boosting development of nursery schools, universalizing access to and improving lower secondary school, and boosting the number of people attending tertiary and vocational training. Goals also include creating standardized systems for content, and promoting education amongst ethnic minorities, girls, and for other vulnerable groups, as well as improving the quality of education.

Based on various tables and texts throughout the SEDP, education and training related activities towards achieving these goals include:

- ⊕ Implement comprehensive education and modernization of the curricula;
- ⊕ Renovate tuition regimes and strengthen scholarship programs;
- ⊕ Improve quality of schools at all levels, including universities and vocational programs, and start construction of specific groups of universities and complete the construction of four universities that meet international standards by 2015;
- ⊕ Make quality assurance a critical policy focus, including developing and improving the quality of teaching staff to meet international standards; Encourage the establishment of private education, and strengthen distance education; and Increase the ratio of preschools, primary, lower and upper secondary schools which reach national standards in every province and central city.

Education sector goals focus primarily on having more people receive higher quality education. These are congruent with these goals – significant focus on quality improvement and assurance – in terms of improving relationships between schools and communities, improving the number of high performing schools, and encouraging management decentralization. However, few details are provided in terms of the specifics of these activities. Activities also need to be aligned with the target of improving the number of people educated, with an emphasis on school construction, increasing private education and distance learning.

Indicators for the 2006-2010 SEDP include specific improvements in enrolment rates, but also a number of targets are described as just ‘improved.’ There are similarly vague indicators where it comes to improving quality of education; the indicator is simply ‘Complete the improvement of primary education quality...’ These partially address the targets and activities outlined above, but leave significant room for improvement in terms of adequately monitoring progress on the goals and activities being implemented.

Social audit tools could help to significantly improve the implementation and M&E phases of education in the SEDP. In terms of improving how education programs are implemented, social audit tools such as Citizen Report Cards could help improve implementation, providing specific ideas for activities to improve satisfaction with education, as well as education quality. Community Score Cards and Citizen Report Cards can bolster family engagement in schools; provide feedback to teachers and administrators on what does, and does not, work; and, lead, promptly, to new ideas to strengthen schools. Social audit tools can also help identify, and reduce, barriers to increased school enrolment. In particular, CRCs can strengthen M&E by identifying new indicators to measure user and family satisfaction with education services, and provide

specific suggestions for curriculum development. Public Expenditure Tracking can also be used to measure implementation, to determine if resources are spent as intended.

A gender audit, for example, could be conducted on national and sub-national educational and training plans and programs, as well as vocational training available for women and men in light of meeting Viet Nam's economic growth challenges, to ensure that they offer real opportunities for women to access non traditional and high-demand sectors, as well as better paying jobs. This exercise could identify which accompanying measures or changes are needed to provide opportunities for women as well as men, e.g. change in attitudes and behaviours to reduce the burden of household chores and other family related tasks performed disproportionately by women, awareness raising among employers, incentives to hire women in non-traditional jobs, and an array of other issues. This would include examining whether there are fiscal provisions and financial incentives set aside to support women's entry into sectors that they don't usually occupy. A gender audit would raise issues such as access to credit and land rights for women in rural areas, who may wish to venture into new industries requiring capital and access to loans.

A Child Rights-Based Social Audit (CRBSA) in the education sector could focus upon whether education provides a friendly environment for boys and girls conducive to learning. For example, a CRBA could assess the implementation of child-friendly schools at the provincial level, using the analytical tool developed by UNICEF, for example.²² It would include giving voice to children so that they share their own views on the quality of schooling they receive. Techniques on how to involve children in social audit tools are outlined in the CRBA Guide. This could be complemented by CRC to assess the level of achievement in meeting child-friendly school standards at the communal, district and provincial levels. Community specific assessments could be done through CSC, where parents, school administration and teachers would discuss how to make local schools friendlier to children.

A PETS could examine whether resources and material are used for intended purposes and efficiently. PETS could assess if there is leakage of funds at different levels of delivery, particularly where school attainments are lower than expected.

Possible additional Indicators for Education:	Social Audit tool(s)
• Extent that training programs (including vocational) are gender responsive	Gender Audit, CRC
• Number of child-friendly schools	CRBA, CRC
• Absenteeism of teachers, school supervisors, etc	PETS
• Proportion of materials and supplies not reaching destination (in value)	PETS
• % of students, parents etc. reporting "extra payments"	PETS

Health

Health issues arise across many categories, including women's empowerment, environment, local government strengthening, minority issues, and sports and physical training. Goals, activities, and indicators are derived from the text and Appendix of the SEDP, but health related goals and indicators particularly are dispersed across a number of primary goals, making it difficult to identify targets and objectives.

Key goals in the SEDP for the health sector include:

- Reducing morbidity (particularly for mothers and children), improving physical health and life expectancy, but keeping the population growth rate to 1.14% or less.

²² UNICEF (2009) Manual: Child-Friendly Schools. See CRBA Guide.

- Ensuring that all are able to access basic medical services and care.
- Controlling the HIV/AIDS infection rate.
- Preventing accidents.
- Increase the figure of 65% of communal health stations serviced by doctors in 2005 to 80% by 2010, and that of mountainous communes to 50-60%. Maintain 100% of communal health stations sufficiently equipped.

Focusing primarily on increased access to care, and keeping citizens healthy, these goals include little emphasis on ensuring that services are adequate, patients are satisfied with the quality of care, services are appropriately delivered, or they are gender and child rights based.

Activities outlined to attempt to implement these goals include:

- Improve capacity to monitor, detect, and control epidemics and disease.
- State subsidizing social policy beneficiaries, the poor, ethnic minority people and children under 6 years old (rather than subsidize it for the demographic unselectively).
- Strongly develop the pharmaceutical industry.
- Renovate and improve medical financial policies to increase public financial sources.
- Carry out regular M&E of medical programs and major targets of the health sector to adjust policies in a timely manner.
- Develop the medical staff based on the requirements of improved professional skills, responsibilities, and ethics.

Activities are to focus on ensuring improved access and uptake of care, but few activities explore or decrease barriers to accessing care beyond trying to improve “public financial sources,” and changing methods of hospital fee collection. Again, several activities improve quality of care, or measure quality or satisfaction.

Indicators to measure progress against the above goals include:

- Birth rate reduced by 0.25% per annum.
- Achieve replacement rate.
- Health and life expectancy increases.
- 95% of children under one year inoculated with six kinds of vaccine.
- Under-one infant mortality drops.
- Eight doctors with university degrees per 10,000 people.
- 80% of health stations served by doctors.

The indicators do not address issues such as whether healthcare facilities are family-friendly (including for women and children who are major users of healthcare) and ethnic minorities; whether high quality services are provided; or, whether resources are being used for the intended purposes (e.g. specific health issues, specific target groups or localities).

Social audit tools could bolster activities and monitoring in the health sector through a number of different techniques. These could include improving service quality, determining health issues, and barriers to accessing care. Citizen Report Cards and their community counterparts particularly could provide qualitative and quantitative information that captures major issues in health and identifies key issues for important target subgroups such as women, youth, and minorities. Also, in the case of the CSC, they could lead to local level strategies to improve implementation in the near term. CRCs, with their quantitative focus, a type of

'Health Audit,' may also shed light on M&E of the health sector and improve how progress is measured. A PETS could assess whether health care facilities receive their entitled funding, as well as equipment, medicine, etc.; review staff absenteeism, and determine if beneficiaries of free services are actually receiving those free of charge. A PETS could ascertain if budgets allocated for specific health services (e.g. maternal and reproductive health care) are being channelled to other healthcare activities.

A gender audit and a CRBSA could help assess whether health programs and services promote, respect and seek to realize all citizens' rights to health care. Gender responsive health care would include the provision of high quality maternal and reproductive health services, including maternal nutrition and ante-natal care; recognize the different risks and vulnerabilities of women and men to HIV/AIDS infection, including adolescent boys and girls; and provide a tailored HIV/AIDS prevention education approach to each social group, etc. CRCs could complement a gender audit by assessing the level of satisfaction with these services by different social groups, including ethnic minorities. A CSC could examine such issues at the local level and lead to an action plan.

As Section 1 highlighted, the CRC and CSC have been successfully conducted on the quality of health care services provided in health stations in several locations, comparing achievement of government standards at the health stations and the level of satisfaction with the health care facilities and services for children under six years of age. The CRC compared the level of satisfaction between migrant and non-migrant users, as well as poor and non-poor users. These could be easily replicated where there are known socio- economic disparities between social groups or by location to see if disparities are decreasing over time.

Possible additional Indicators for the health sector: "Improve health protection and health care"	Social Audit tool(s)
• Level of access to healthcare facilities by ethnic minorities and in remote areas	PETS (assess if budget allocations for minorities actually reach intended communities/beneficiaries).
• Level of improvement in the quality of maternal and reproductive health services	CRC, CSC, gender audit
• Level of improvement in quality of HIV/AIDS health education	CRC, CSC, gender and/or CRBA
• Level of user satisfaction with health care services and health care facilities (men, women, boys and girls)	CRC
• Adequacy of budgets to address gender/child/ethnic minorities health issues (e.g. health care affordability)	Gender Audit, CRBA
• Level of utilization of budgets to address gender/child/ethnic minorities health issues	PETS

Social Protection

Social protection issues in the 2006-2010 SEDP M&E Framework arise under *Promoting gender equality, improving the status of women and protecting the rights of children.*

Targets in the M&E framework include:

- Promote gender equality and improve the status of women
- Create safe, friendly environment for children to help build future human resources

Activities outlined to attain these goals include:

- Implement the National Strategy for Women
- Raise awareness of all levels on gender
- Improve policies relating to women

- Implement the National Action Plan for Children
- Provide incentives to prevent and counter social problems
- Investment for establishing centres for educating and curing drug addicts, prostitution

Indicators include:

(Output level)

Women:

- Proportion of women in the elected bodies at all levels by 2010: increase by 3-5%
- Proportion of women suffering from domestic violence
- Proportion of women trained in a vocation and lent credit

Children:

- Number of communes/wards are children-friendly by 2010: 70%;
- Number of schools with safe water and hygienic latrines by 2010: 85%;
- Number of especially disadvantaged children protected by 2010: 90%;
- Proportion of communes regularly organizing IEC against social problems;
- Number of drugs-addicts , prostitution recorded in rehabilitation and treatment files

(Outcome /Impact)

Women:

- GEM index
- GDI index
- Proportion of female workers getting the newly created jobs for 2006-2010: 50%

Children:

- Proportion of poor, minority children, children from disadvantaged areas and homeless children with access to education, health care and other social services: increases
- Proportion of children abused, violated, harassed or with a big workload : reductions
- Proportion of children working under 16 years of age : reductions
- Proportion of homeless and disabled children receiving social security support

Women and children:

- Number of women and child trafficking cases
- Number of drug trade and utilization cases addressed
- Reducing number of re-addicted

Notwithstanding the issues of social protection arising from “gender inequality”, such as violence against women, the proportion of women elected in the elected bodies at all levels is an issue of governance. It would be more useful from a gender equality perspective to put that issue under the objective “Strengthen state governance...”. Likewise, “proportion of women trained in a vocation and lent credit” and “proportion of female workers getting the newly created jobs...” belong under the objective “Improve the quality of

human resources so as to meet the needs of industrialization and modernization” or “Improve quality and productivity of labor”, or even “Poverty reduction”.

As an aside, there are many gender issues overlooked under the overall objective “Ensure high and sustained economic growth...”, which would benefit from a gender audit. This is crucial for women who tend to be in low skill, labor intensive jobs in the informal labor market and industries vulnerable to trade liberalization such as textile and garment production.

From a gender (and rights) perspective, questions to be asked on the issue of economic growth include:

- ⊕ What strategies are in place for women who account for a large proportion of those employed in the informal economic sector, small businesses, domestic labor, unpaid family labor, and migrant labor?
- ⊕ What will be particular challenges for women versus men with increased competition in the labor market, especially as Viet Nam implements WTO commitments to reduce import taxes and open markets in services and consumer goods manufacturing?
- ⊕ Are women-run businesses facing particular challenges (e.g. access to capital, credit, market information, legal information, etc.) and what strategies are in place to address these, particularly in rural areas?
- ⊕ Are there measures in place to enhance training and extension services in agriculture, livestock herding and fisheries to women (including those heading households) and young men and women seeking rural employment?
- ⊕ Do measures to restructure commercial banks and financial institutions include specific attention to the availability of micro-finance services for the poorest individuals and groups?²³

From a child rights perspective,²⁴ questions regarding economic growth (including some issues of child protection) that a CRBSA could examine include:

- ⊕ Do plans for industrial development include measures to safeguard against child labor while promoting appropriate vocational training for young people seeking employment?
- ⊕ Do plans and programs aimed at developing the service sectors include measures to safeguard against child labor and exploitation (for example in the tourist industry) while offering appropriate vocational training and skills development programs for young people seeking employment in these sectors?
- ⊕ Is information available, and monitored, on the role of children in existing agricultural production systems, livestock raising and fisheries?

Returning to social protection (for women) or gender equality, some of the targets, activities, outputs, outcomes and indicators are not congruent and others are ignored, such as the access to social security and government benefits, even if covered under the National Strategy for Women. A better approach would be to address each issue under the social or economic sector where it logically belongs, rather than just under the National Strategy for Women.

Drug addiction, prostitution and trafficking issues affect men, women, youth and children differently and with dissimilar economic and social implications for each, some with much stigma attached. These issues also have different implications in terms of health and education for each group. Such remedies as “Provide

²³ Source: Gender Audit Guide and Child Rights-Based Guide

²⁴ Source: Child Rights-Based Guide

incentives to prevent and fight against social evils” and “Investment for establishing centres for educating and curing drug addicts, prostitution” could benefit from a Gender Audit and Child Rights Based Audit to assess whether strategies put in place address multi faceted causes and effects of these issues for men, women, youth and children.

The same comments above regarding “Implementing the National Strategy for Women” apply to social protection issues for children being subsumed under the activity “Implement National Strategy for Children”. It would be more useful to outline the key protection issues contained in the National Strategy for Children and corresponding activities for social protection, while addressing other issues in the sector where they belong to avoid ignoring important issues. This is important because each sector should have strategies that take into account the rights and realities of children. Naturally, the same would apply for gender issues or ethnic minorities.

In addition to gender audits and child rights-based audits, other social audit tools and analysis tools, such as the toolkit on how to design and implement gender-sensitive social protection programs,²⁵ could help improve design, implementation and monitoring of social protection. CRC and CSC can be used to give a voice to citizens, including children, on what type of programming/activities/services are most needed, or most effective. While CRC and CSC can be used at the outcome level and at the end of programming cycles to make improvements for the next phase, they lend themselves to assessing issues during implementation and allowing for corrective action immediately, rather than waiting until the end.

Possible additional Indicators for the SEDP Social Protection Sector	Social Audit tool(s)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extent that social protection strategy is gender/ child responsive (and comprehensive) 	Gender Audit, Child Rights-Based Social Audit ²⁶
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extent that programs/services to address gender-based violence meet the needs of women/girls 	CRC, CSC (adapted for ethnic minorities, e.g. to assess how culturally appropriate they are)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Level of satisfaction with child-friendly communes/ wards²⁷ 	CRC, CSC (adapted also for ethnic minority children e.g. to assess how culturally appropriate they are)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extent programs and services to prevent drug-addiction, trafficking and prostitution meet needs of afflicted 	CRC, CSC (could be implemented on the basis of gender, age and ethnicity, e.g. groups of men, groups of women, adolescent girls and boys, children).
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proportion of resources for child friendly services that reach communes/beneficiaries 	PETS

Ethnic Minority Issues

Improving the “life of ethnic minority people, narrowing the gap in material and spiritual life among different ethnic groups,” is one of the key social development goals of the SEDP, with some of the broadest scope in terms of the other sectors included within this. These include education, cultural development, agriculture and environmental conservation, poverty reduction and hunger eradication, employment, health, gender, and youth. However, objectives related to minority issues are fairly limited (from the text and appendix):

- Complete most of the essential infrastructure in areas of ethnic minorities (continue implementation of program 135 to ensure that all communes have essential public works.)

²⁵ R. Holmes and N. Jones, How to design and implement gender-sensitive social protection programmes, ODI. See Annex A for full reference and web link.

²⁶ See the CRBSA Guide on how to assess social protection from a child rights perspective.

²⁷ The CRBSA Guide provides information on how to assess child-friendly environments.

- Enable ethnic minority people to access basic social services
- Enable ethnic minority people to access resources, assist them in production development and improve incomes
- Develop information and culture to improve spiritual life; preserve the culture of ethnic minorities

Policies and action aligned with these objectives are similarly minimal:

- Priority support given to remote and extremely difficult areas in terms of infrastructure, health care services, culture, education, etc.
- Effectively implement production stabilization; allocate land and forest for sedentation, develop farms with compatible size and management capacity
- Enhance support to agricultural, forestry, and fishery extension services, and vocational training
- Training and utilization of officials of ethnic minority groups
- Preservation and development of traditional cultures of ethnic minorities.

Improved “material and spiritual lives of ethnic minorities” are measured through only a few indicators:

- Reduced rate of poor households
- 100% of poor communes equipped with essential infrastructure
- Cultures of ethnic minorities preserved and developed
- Ethnic minority people functioning as leaders and officials at all levels increased

These indicators provide few concrete targets, and no real means of measuring success on the given goals. For instance, the objectives and activities that aim at cultural preservation have a highly qualitative dimension for which the M&E strategy is notably inadequate.

As the objectives of reducing poverty, increasing opportunities, and preserving culture crosses so many different sectors, a combination of several social audit techniques might contribute to improve monitoring of how these issues are initially incorporated into project planning, implementation and M&E. Audits, akin to a gender audit, but specifically targeted at policies and programs to improve living standards of ethnic minorities could facilitate tracing these priorities through some other program or office. Conducting an audit of an education program, for instance, that increased educational attainment by ethnic minorities would enable tracking how well this objective is incorporated into project design, implementation, and ultimately monitoring.

A Citizen Report Card could survey a small community to determine how well essential infrastructure and public services are delivered across a range of sectors. A Community Score Card in an ethnic minority community would allow the community to examine a particular service. These different tools facilitate exploring the issue of ethnic minorities as an issue often mainstreamed into other issues, or as a community framework for evaluating a sample of public services.

Gender and Youth

Gender and youth are both issues with discrete subsections in the social section of the SEDP, but also cross nearly every social dimension. Social audit techniques will allow them to be explored as their own topics, or as dimensions of other topics. For instance, youth and gender audits can be conducted of given programs or offices related to the SEDP to determine the extent that these themes appear from program objectives

down to implementation and M&E. Other tools, like CSC and CRC, can include questions and focus groups related entirely to youth and gender perspectives on issues to ensure their adequate measurement.

As noted earlier, gender issues would be best treated through the sector rather than as a separate category. As in education and training, and health and social protection, a gender audit conducted in any particular sector could examine whether gender has been mainstreamed in the overall approach, strategies, programming and M&E system, and whether adequate budgets were funded, and if there is capacity and etc. However, one fundamental element to conduct proper gender analysis, as part of a gender audit or not, is the availability of sex-disaggregated data.

Possible additional indicators indicator regarding gender	Social Audit tool(s)
• Extent that (SEDP) data is sex-disaggregated	All data collection tools including social audit tools should provide sex-disaggregated data
• Extent that gender has been mainstreamed	Gender Audit

Possible additional indicators indicator regarding youth	Social Audit tool(s)
• Extent that youth has been mainstreamed	Combination of Gender Audit and CRBSA

Section 3: Institutionalization of the Social Audit Approach for M&E in the Vietnamese Context

This section explores how the Social Audit Approach and the tools presented in this toolkit can be institutionalized in Viet Nam. It touches upon some of the key implications and issues linked with the integration of the Social Audit Approach into the SEDP M&E Framework, some of which are more immediate than others.

The institutionalization of the Social Audit Approach requires not only enhancing the SEDP framework but also supporting governmental M&E system and processes. Some principles apply, and there are numerous factors that influence how a particular practice will be adopted, or not. As the government of Viet Nam already has an M&E Framework and processes to monitor progress of the SEDP, the objective is not to replace what already exists. The objective is to complement this in order to strengthen the realization of rights of citizens, including vulnerable groups such as women, children, the elderly, ethnic minorities, the poor, people with disabilities, etc.

The process proposed to institutionalize the Social Audit Approach is based on a number of recognized success factors, or conditions, and best practices that the M&E literature has shown as important to ensure that M&E is institutionalized in government systems and accountable to citizens.²⁸ Using these intertwined and mutually reinforcing success factors, the current situation in Viet Nam is reviewed and several next steps are suggested as options to move towards the institutionalization of the Social Audit Approach into M&E of the SEDP.

‘Success’ is viewed here as having four dimensions:

1. Reliable results-based M&E data/information and evaluation findings;
2. High level of utilization of M&E findings, including internal mechanisms and demand from citizens;
3. Sustainability over time, including political will, political champions, expertise capacity, fiscal resources, leadership and enabling environment (e.g. legislation, decree, guidelines), that allow community participation; and
4. Stakeholder ownership: oversight (National Assembly and People’s Councils) and implementation and reporting (Ministry of Planning and Investment, line ministries down to service providers at the commune and ward level). Participation and interface between government and citizens and civil society organizations.

Success factor # 1: reliable results-based M&E

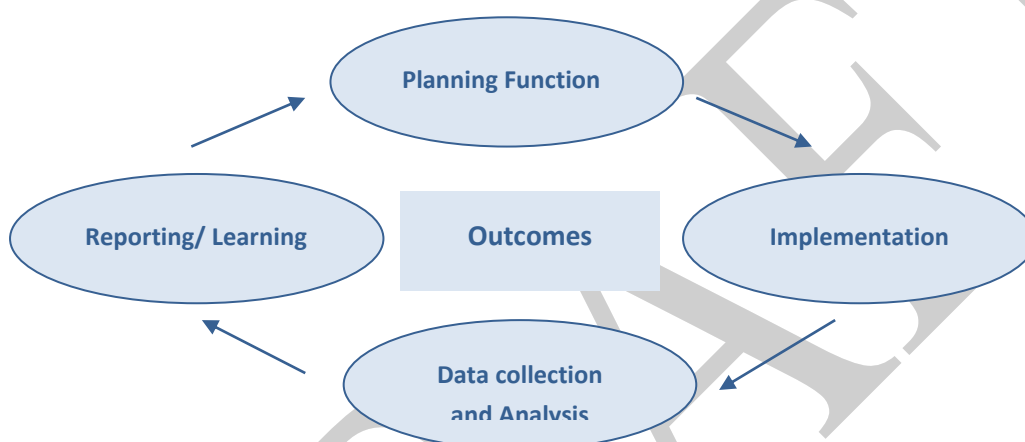
M&E frameworks and data collection methods must be collecting the right data in order to produce reliable evidence-based information that decision-makers can act upon to make changes where needed in programming and policies, or to change budget allocations as needed.

²⁸ Including: Jody Zall Kusek, Ray C. Rist, Ten Steps to a Results-Based Monitoring and Evaluation System, World Bank, 2006: <http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/23/27/35281194.pdf>; Mackay, Keith *Institutionalization of Monitoring and Evaluation Systems to Improve Public Sector Management*, World Bank, 2006; UNICEF, *Bridging the gap The role of monitoring and evaluation in evidence-based policy making*: http://www.unicef.org/ceecis/evidence_based_policy_making.pdf; MPI, Sri Lanka, Monitoring and Evaluation System in Sri Lanka: Experiences, Challenges and the Way Forward: http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTLACREGTOPPOVANA/Resources/Paper_Velayuthan_Sivagnanasothy.pdf.

Knowledge generation and its management are key components of using performance findings. Knowledge management entails capturing findings, institutionalizing learning, and organizing the wealth of information produced continually by the M&E system. New knowledge can be generated through the use of findings on a continuous basis. Results-based M&E systems and units have a special capacity to add to the learning and knowledge process. When used effectively, M&E systems can be an institutionalized form of learning and knowledge, if learning is incorporated into the overall programming cycle through an effective feedback system.

Figure 6 illustrates the different phases of the policy cycle. The M&E function is involved at all stages. It helps establish indicators, data collection and a reporting system right from the planning stage, monitors the gathering of data during implementation, may collect additional data during or at the end of the cycle (e.g. special studies, evaluations, etc.) , report on results and generate lessons learned.

Figure 6: M&E function in the decision-making cycle



Social audit tools can produce reliable information if facilitated by neutral, skilled and knowledgeable researchers. Part of the value-added is that M&E systems are strengthened by allowing for citizen inputs and participatory assessments.²⁹ A social audit lens can be taken to the existing SEDP M&E framework, as in the examples provided in this toolkit, to review and add outcomes and indicators that encourage the use of social audit tools.

As mentioned above, knowledge management is also a key element of performance management. This can be done through the SEDP cycle and at the end of each 5 year cycle, using information already generated through the existing system and through social audit tools. The social audit tools for instance would produce new knowledge on key issues that can be tested in different locations to provide ministries and departments managers with evidence on the effectiveness and efficiency of programs and services. This new evidence-based knowledge can act as leverage to make changes in the provision and administration of services, as well as implementation and management of programs at provincial or national level.

²⁹ Alatas, et al., 2003; Arroyo, 2004; Cabannes, 2004; Dedu and Kajubi, 2005; Woodhill and Robins, 1998; Shah et al., 1993.

Steps for institutionalization

A first step would be for MPI and key stakeholders to review the SEDP M&E framework and consider including additional outcomes and indicators that would allow collecting additional information through other means than those already in use. This would enrich the pool of data available to government to make appropriate decisions on programming approach and investments (or reallocation of budgets) to achieve the objectives and targets set out in the SEDP more effectively and efficiently. Allowing greater participation and feedback from citizens through the Social Audit Approach would not only help the government identify areas where it could achieve greater results or accelerate the pace of progress, it would also help the government fulfill its fiduciary obligations, based on human rights Conventions and national legislation.

Initially, a few key additional outcomes/and indicators could be identified, particularly in sectors where progress seems slower than expected. It would be advisable to focus initially on outcomes and social audit tools that can yield the greatest impact with a minimum of effort in the short term and with fewer resources to help increase interest for, confidence in and comfort with social audit tools/methods among government stakeholders at all levels. An analysis of the SEDP would be a logical way to choose additional outcomes and indicators to monitor through social audit tools, identifying areas of greatest need, as well as existing capacity in using the social audit tools piloted to date in Viet Nam.

In order to best collect consistent data at all levels, it would be desirable to harmonize the national and provincial level SEDP M&E frameworks. Priority outcomes and indicators to monitor through social audit tools could be identified by MPI in consultation with various stakeholders within government, including the Departments of Planning and Investment (DPI) and representatives from ministries and departments responsible for social aspects of the SEDP (e.g. Health, MOLISA/DOLISA, etc.).

The provincial-level SEDP M&E frameworks would be a logical starting point for the integration of the Social Audit Approach, in a decentralized setting. There are many options outlined in Section 2 of the toolkit as entry points. However, before scaling up any of the tools, it would be good to start with some of those that are easier to master and represent a modest initial financial and human resources investment, such as the Community Score Card and the Citizen Report Card, and ensure that the data collected is reliable.

Success factor # 2: clear mandate, roles and responsibilities

To ensure effectiveness, establishing clear mandates (through legislation, policy and administrative frameworks) is a good idea, as well as defining roles and responsibilities, formal organizational and political lines of authority, and communicating these to relevant stakeholders. It would be helpful to articulate the roles and responsibilities of all stakeholders, including research institutes, in decrees, regulations and guidelines, as the social audit involves third parties in the collection, analysis and reporting of M&E information.

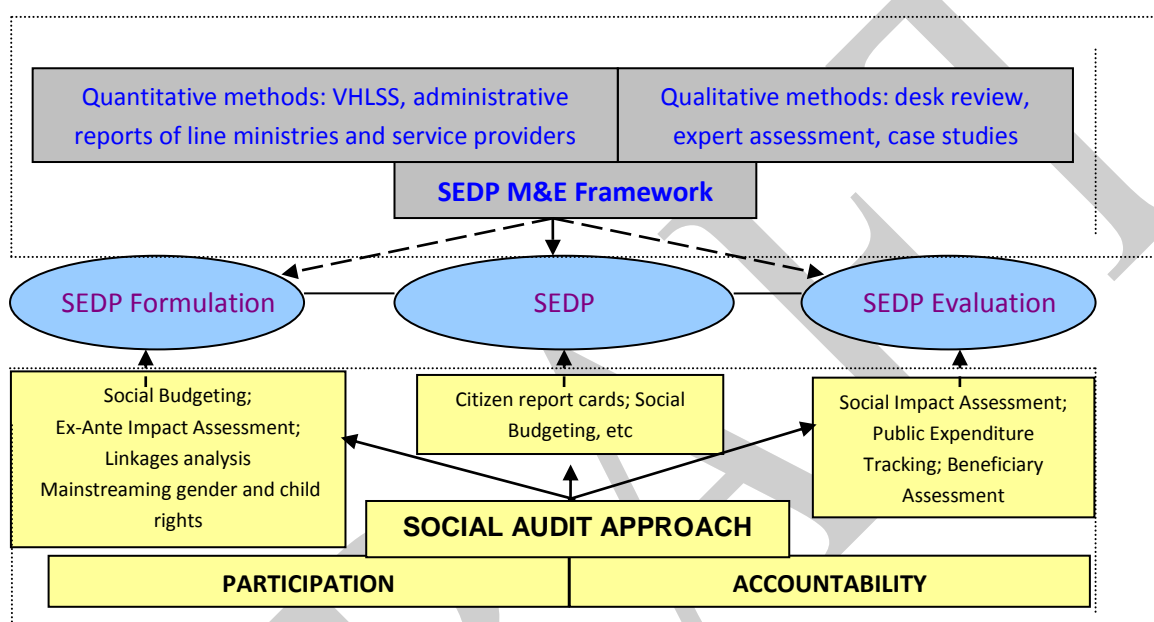
For example, in Nepal, the Primary Health Care Revitalisation Division of the Ministry of Health and Population produced a standard set of **Social Audit Operational Guidelines to ensure uniformity of practice for different programmes and in different districts**. The process is led by an impartial social auditor, who is appointed by the social audit organisation, a local non-government agency requested by the district to undertake the audit. To oversee the process, a Health Service Social Audit District Committee is formed under the leadership of the Local Development Officer. Each participating health facility forms a Social Audit Local Support Group, led by a member of the Health Facility Management Committee. The social auditor

works with these committees to ensure active participation of health workers, managers, service users and the general public, including media representatives. Activities include interviews with health staff and clients, focus group discussions and observation of services.³⁰

Steps for institutionalization

Figure 7 provides a representation of the interface between the Social Audit Approach and the SEDP and how it contributes to it.

Figure 7 – Interface between the Social Audit Approach and SEDP M&E Framework³¹



If the government chooses to commit to this approach, it would be important to legitimize the use of the Social Audit Approach, including the use of participatory methods, as a complementary approach to the existing M&E framework at national and provincial level. This can be done, for example, through legislation such as amending the Decree on M&E for the SEDP or by proclaiming a new Decree. The contribution of the Social Audit Approach to the SEDP and implementation mechanisms for the tools could be spelled out, as well as the role of the different stakeholders involved in the collection, analysis and reporting of data. It would be useful to clarify the role of research institutes (or possibly NGOs) and to formally legitimize the Social Audit Approach, through communication and awareness-raising of government officials and other stakeholders at all levels.

Success factor # 3: an effective M&E function

Best practices in M&E include having a functional M&E function separate from other functions in the policy or programming cycle so that internal accountability is built in the policy/programming cycle. This allows

³⁰ Nepal Health Sector Support Programme (2012).

<http://www.nhssp.org.np/pulse/Social%20Auditing%20Pulse%20Update%202.pdf>

³¹ MPI, UNICEF, Capacity Building for the Social Audit of the Socio-Economic Development Plan Project, Draft Concept Note for the Social Audit Project Inception Workshop, June 2009.

reporting more effectively on issues such as the continued relevance of programs (or activities within programs), results achieved and lessons learned.

While this is not only the prerogative of an M&E function (e.g. those implementing and managing programs and services should also monitor performance on a continuous basis and make appropriate changes where needed), the analysis of evidence-based results from the M&E system or other sources, such as special studies or social audit tools, and making the information available in a way that is useful to decision-makers requires specific expertise and skills. Therefore, results-based M&E units (function) have a special role to play in the generation of knowledge and learning processes if they are used effectively and have some degree of independence from other functions.

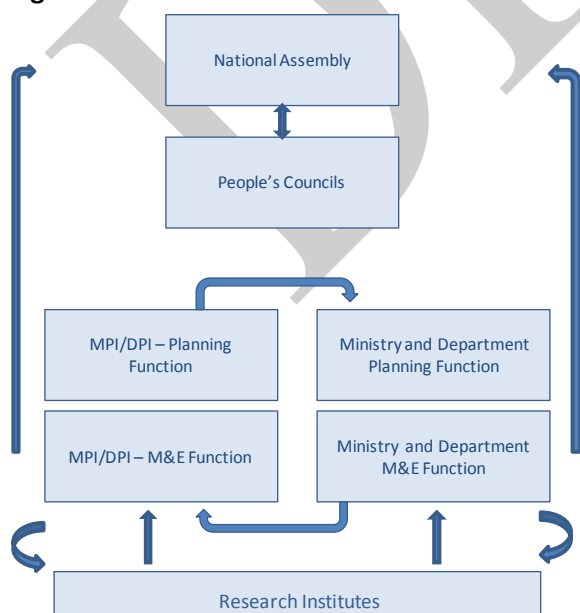
Currently, as there is no discrete M&E function within Ministries and Departments, this is done by planning officers in the MPI and DPIs, supported by the national and provincial statistical offices. The absence of a separate function for M&E, and the number of competing priorities planning officers face in their daily work, explains the over-emphasis on quantitative data in reporting on Viet Nam's performance in all sectors, as these can be produced with relative ease by a statistical office through household surveys and routine data management.

In addition, managing additional data collection tools, such as the social audit tools proposed for the SEDP also requires well-functioning and adequately resourced M&E function/unit with professional M&E officers, both at national and provincial level. However, the greatest need for this is likely at the provincial level, except for programs and services managed and monitored at the national level.

Steps for institutionalization

Figure 8 below illustrates the proposed reporting mechanisms/ information flow between the planning and M&E functions at the different levels of government based on their primary functional mandate. As the planning and M&E function are together in the same Ministry or Department, this already supports close collaboration in terms of setting objectives, activities and anticipated outcomes (the results-based logic model for the SEDP) through consultative processes with key stakeholders.

Figure 8: Information flow between functions



The M&E function would be in charge of developing the performance measurement strategy or M&E framework, setting indicators, data collection methods, identifying sources of information, setting timeframes and lines of responsibilities for data collection and reporting to high level ministerial and departmental managers. It would also be in charge of collating and analysing both the quantitative and qualitative data generated by government data collection systems, including the social audit tools. The information they generate will need to be integrated into the M&E system to feed into the reporting, learning and planning loop.

Data collection would not necessarily be done by the M&E Unit. For instance routine data is usually collected by service providers at the communal and district level. However, the M&E function/unit is responsible for ensuring that adequacy and consistency of data being collected by M&E systems across government agencies at all levels, and it is also responsible for analysis and reporting (although much of this can be done by programs as well), including generating lessons for managers. A detailed assessment or diagnostic of existing resources needed to make this happen would be needed in due course.

Reviewing the current effectiveness and efficiency mechanisms to collect, analyze, report on results and generate new knowledge and lessons for planners to make appropriate decisions may be part of the process as well.

Success factor # 5: sustained leadership

A successful results-based M&E system works best with sustained leadership from a powerful champion (able to lead the institutionalization of the Social Audit Approach, to persuade colleagues about the need to devote the resources needed to create a whole-of-government system). “While it is important to have dedicated program managers overseeing the implementation of government programs and projects, there must also be strong political support at the very highest levels of government who are committed to work with civil society.”³² The Social Audit Approach is most effective when government authorities are willing to collaborate and allow civil society to provide feedback and information about their activities. It enables public sector entities and civil servants to build a clearer picture of how their stakeholders view them and build more mutually beneficial relationships with them.³³

The experience of India’s National Rural Employment Guarantee Act is instructive with regard to the institutionalization of the Social Audit Approach, highlighting the importance of civil society. The first steps towards institutionalizing the Social Audit Approach in India is attributed, to a large extent, to the efforts of a local civil society organization based in Rajasthan, Mazdoor Kisan Shakti Sangathan (MKSS). MKSS held “public hearings” that encouraged ordinary citizens to speak out about abuses in public works and schemes from which they are supposed to benefit, under the slogan “Our Money-Our Accounts”. Initially, these were used to lobby local administrations and then the state government to obtain employment and payment records and other information. This was cross-checked at *jan sunwais* against actual worker testimonies, which thus drew attention to the ways officials had siphoned off large amounts of funds from public works budgets (Centre for Good Governance, 2005). Patient advocacy with the government achieved a government notification under the Panchayats Act stating that the people could inspect records of all Panchayat expenditure. Subsequently, the movement won the right to photocopy the records. In 2000, partly because of these efforts, Rajasthan passed the Right to Information Act (ibid).

³² Jody Zall Kusek, Ray C. Rist, Ten Steps to a Results-Based Monitoring and Evaluation System, World Bank, p. 53.

³³ Berthin, Gerardo (2011).

This case also highlights the importance of top-level government commitment to work in partnership with civil society. In August 2005, the government passed the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, which guaranteed 100 days of (unskilled manual) labour. Section 17 of the Act mandates that social audit tools be used at least once every six months. Crucially, in using these, the government solicited the expertise of MKSS during the planning phase. In particular, it sought their leadership in capacity building for the Social Audit Approach. Between March 2006 and July 2006, MKSS carried out a series of training sessions at multiple levels. The goal was to build a team of resource persons, and the training culminated in the setting up of a 25-member state resource team, with 260 (20 per district) district-level resource persons (Aiyar and Samji, 2009).

However, unlike in the case of Rajasthan, the first steps towards institutionalization of the Social Audit Approach took the form of a campaign in Nalgonda district related to the Food for Work Program and then Ananthapur district in a phased manner. Efforts were spearheaded by the Government of Andhra Pradesh through its Rural Development Department with the support of more than a hundred voluntary organizations. As Aiyar and Samji (2009) point out, demanding accountability is not exclusively a role of civil society. The case shows that the state can and does have a role in mobilizing citizens and fostering participation, and indeed can offer the most disadvantaged and disempowered the opportunity to exercise their rights in this (ibid).

The government set up a separate unit for the Social Audit Approach – the Andhra Pradesh Society for Social Accountability & Transparency (APSSAT). This includes experts and activists from civil society organizations chosen to spearhead the initiative across the state, offering technical support.

Social Audit Rules/Guidelines were passed by the Andhra Pradesh Cabinet. These rules draw on experience from the first two years of implementing audits in the state. Right to information requests pertaining to NREGS must be responded to within seven days of the receipt of the application.

Key to the institutionalization of the Social Audit Approach in the state was a fast phased process of scaling up. The political class was resistant to the approach, but the speed of scaling up meant it was not possible for a critical mass of opposition to build up. Tools were first piloted in three districts; within four months, this was scaled up to thirteen districts in the first phase; in 2009, in the second, to nineteen districts; and in the third, to all twenty-two. Training programmes were also extended to civil society organizations, citizens groups and political representatives. Social audit appraisals are undertaken each month.

The administrative machinery was originally resistant to the Social Audit Approach, but this was combated through executive instructions from the top and sensitization and training of more than 400 program officers. The issuing of Government Orders (GOs) and Memos which established social audit tools as a regular day-to-day activity of officers working on NREGS also went some way to normalizing the process.

Information pertaining to the works was not freely available, but this was overcome by information requests under Right to Information legislation. Indeed, institutionalization was achieved through the computerization of NREGS records. The creation of a website has brought greater transparency and accountability in implementation. It is argued that this has directly impacted in a reduction of corruption.

Equally, the introduction of a formal banking system (formal banks and post office accounts) has helped to contain corruption and move towards institutionalizing transparency. Moreover, considerable efforts have been made to bridge gaps between communities, the government and civil society.³⁴

Steps for institutionalization

Some key officials, former and current, from MPI have already played the crucial role of champion; they would benefit from support from the government and its allies (banks, UN, bilateral agencies) in their effort to modernize the M&E to more effectively measure the progress of the SEDP. In order to build a critical mass of leaders interested in using social audit tools, it would be important to identify champions in each of the key line ministries and department in charge of the social aspects of the SEDP, as well as among elected officials.

Success factor # 6: utilization of M&E data

Demand leads to utilization of M&E data, including data produced by social audit tools. The objective of government M&E systems is to achieve intensive utilization of existing M&E findings, to ensure that the M&E system is cost-effective and supports core government functions. Utilization is the yardstick of 'success' of an M&E system.³⁵

Assuming that the government at all levels is able to collect reliable M&E information and evaluation findings, substantive demand from decision-makers is an important factor to successful institutionalization, i.e. key stakeholders consider this information valuable, and M&E findings are used in the pursuit of good governance.³⁶ "Governments do not develop M&E systems because they have intrinsic merit, but because they directly support core government activities, such as the budget process, national planning, the management of ministries, agencies and programs, or to provide information in support of accountability relationships."³⁷

For example, the first PETS, undertaken in Uganda, focused on tracking leakage or diversion of funds intended for primary schools. Between 1991 and 1995, it was found that, on average, only 13% of the annual per student grant reached primary schools. That meant 87% of the funds were misappropriated or used by district officials for purposes not directly related to education. The PETS showed that, while larger schools and schools with pupils from wealthier families benefited disproportionately from the annual per student grants, smaller and poorer schools received no funds. Less than half of the schools received any funds at all. The findings prompted authorities to undertake several initiatives to enhance transparency and increase the proportion of funds received. **The government began publishing monthly intergovernmental transfers of public funds in the main newspapers, broadcasting information on them on radio; later, the government required primary schools to post information on inflows of funds for all to see.** A follow-up survey showed schools had received more than 90% of the capitation grant.³⁸

³⁴ Centre for Good Governance, 2009.

³⁵ Keith Mackay (2006), Institutionalization of Monitoring and Evaluation Systems to Improve Public Sector Management, ECD Working Paper Series # 15, Independent Evaluation Group & The Thematic Group for Poverty Analysis Monitoring And Impact Evaluation, The World Bank.

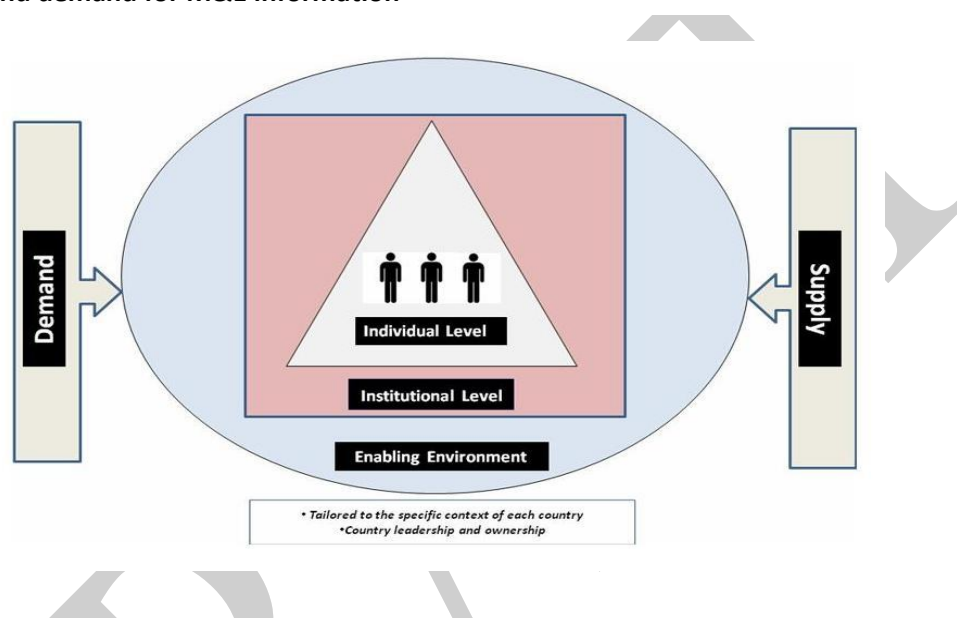
³⁶ IBID.

³⁷ IBID

³⁸ Kanungo, 2004.

Figure 9 illustrates the interplay between supply and demand for M&E information.³⁹ Government supplies M&E information, while demand originates from the institutional level (ministerial/departmental mandates to report to National Assembly and People's Councils), as well as from individuals at various level of decision-making within the government (functional roles and responsibilities for M&E) and from citizens. Demand from citizens/civil society often increases demand for performance information from decision-makers (e.g. elected officials at the national or provincial level, ministers, heads of departments, etc.). Other sources of demand include mass organizations such as Viet Nam Women's Union (VWU), bodies such the National Committee for the Advancement of Women (NCAFW), NGOs (e.g. Child Rights Working Group), development agencies and the media, etc.

Figure 9: Supply and demand for M&E information



An enabling environment includes a favorable legislative framework and policies to support M&E, a culture of accountability and space for citizen engagement and participation and citizen organizations in public policy debate. Delivering public services and monitoring and contributing to the management of public goods is a critical factor in making development policy and action responsive to the needs and aspirations of the people and potentially of the poor.⁴⁰

Steps for institutionalization

It would be worthwhile to build on the existing interest and capacity of government officials to institutionalize the use of social audit tools in various ministries, departments and targeted provinces. The Capacity Assessment undertaken as part of Phase 1 has shown a high level of commitment to and acceptance of qualitative data as an integral part of SEDP M&E by government officers and key informant interviews indicated a high level of willingness to use participatory approaches to M&E.

Similar conclusions emerged from a November 2011 MPI workshop on lessons learned from the CRC, CSC, gender audit and PETS pilots. As noted above, a key finding and lesson learned from Phase 1 was that all of

³⁹ MPI and UNICEF: Note on institutionalisation of SEDP PME support under PCFP's Capacity and M&E Project and PSP's Capacity Building for Social Audit project, [Draft – September 2010]

⁴⁰ Enabling Environment for Participation and Accountability and the Role of Information Social Development Department, World Bank.

the piloted tools showed substantial potential as an additional means of assessing the social performance of SEDP, based on the views of those to whom the programs are directed, and the government officials responsible for planning and assessing program effectiveness. The constructive nature of the experience was confirmed by participants, who concluded that social audit tools are a powerful tool to collect feedback from people and assess the performance of service providers. This information can provide an effective method for measuring the impacts of SEDPs in a participatory and comprehensive manner. Introducing the Social Audit Approach was seen as a key process to empower the poor and marginalized people in particular.⁴¹

Demand from citizens is potentially very high, but there has been very limited dissemination of the findings from the pilot social audit tools undertaken beyond government officials. Dissemination of information on the performance of government is integral to the Social Audit Approach: citizen participation and feedback (claiming their rights) will support the responsibility of the government to promote, protect and realize the rights of women, men, girls and boys.

A commitment to disseminate the findings of the next social audit tools piloted in Viet Nam to the host communities and mass organizations, as well as the general public, should help build demand. Ultimately, government officials (elected and managers) will be more interested in M&E results if citizens request changes in services and programs and hold them responsible for improvements. In upcoming social audit exercises, establishing a link with elected officials and with mass organizations should help start this process, particularly during the feedback stage.

For example, the government of Ethiopia has committed itself to improving transparency and accountability for its people, but Ethiopia has no precedent of engagement in a social accountability process such as the community scorecard, as there is limited understanding of entitlement to services and no culture of claiming rights. As such, community members were originally skeptical. There was also concern about the potential for government misunderstanding of the intent of the tool and potential damage to relationships with government. To combat this, efforts were made to ensure government partners were clear on the alignment of the community scorecard process with government accountability initiatives. **The NGO CARE highlighted the role of the scorecard in supporting capacity building of government service providers, and this sensitization resulted in an unanticipated high level of interest from local government and a request to expand the scorecard implementation to all project *kebeles* (the lowest administrative unit of government).**

In the first round, more than 85 *kebele* level officials and Micro and Small Enterprise Development (MSED) staff and more than 1,050 service users and community leaders were involved. The scorecard enabled the community to organize their thoughts and present and defend them. Similarly, service providers were receptive to criticisms of services they provided and recommendations for improvements, and were pleased to have the opportunity to share their constraints with the community.

As a result of increased confidence from the interface meetings, service users are increasingly going directly to service providers to raise issues. They argue that communication has been vastly improved, with service providers less defensive and more transparent about their activities, service users confident to raise issues or concerns and more frequent, structured and positive communication between both parties. And, as a

⁴¹ MPI/UNICEF (2011) "Summary of Workshop Proceedings: Reforming the Socio-Economic Development Plan's Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation – Opportunities and Challenges" 2-3 November 2011.

result of this success, the scorecard process has been replicated by a number of communities, service providers and local authorities, which shows the strength of the tool in generating a culture of participation and accountability.

Success factor # 6: adequacy of resources

Timely and adequate human, physical and financial resources are needed to conduct M&E, including using social audit tools, which is usually performed by a third party. As the M&E function is within government, it is unclear who is to work with research institutes or others implementing the social audit tools on behalf of government. All of these parties require the tools and capacity (human and financial resources) to analyze and process the data produced by audits, and to communicate the results to stakeholders within government and external stakeholders.

In Nepal, the Primary Health Care Revitalisation Division of the Ministry of Health and Population allocated a budget to pilot social audit tools in 20 districts, of which 6 have so far been completed and 14 are just beginning. For example, experience from the Equity and Access component of the Support to Safe Motherhood Programme (2005-10) showed how social audit tools can increase understanding between health service providers and clients, leading to direct improvements in services. Examples include longer and more regular service hours; more polite and caring treatment of clients, especially those from lower castes and economic groups; recruitment of additional staff by facility management committees; and improved cleanliness and infrastructure (such as water supply and waiting rooms). As the Social Audit Approach becomes the norm, communities will increasingly value and use their health facilities and health staff will feel a greater sense of pride in their work, making a positive feedback loop. **Already, facilities are incorporating actions recommended by the social audit into their annual plan and budget** – the draft Service Tracking Survey report found almost two-thirds of facilities had done so.

Steps for Institutionalisation

It would be advisable to review human, financial and physical resources available for M&E activities of the SEDP (e.g. working space, computer, internet, office facilities) from central and provincial level agencies, and consider increasing existing resources at the district and commune level, as needed.

It would be advisable to include a budget line item specifically for M&E, and to consider instituting M&E Units within the MPI/DPI and other planning units in key ministries and departments to handle regular M&E functions and to manage social audit tools as well as other M&E tasks.

Pilot efforts are useful to demonstrate the effectiveness of the social audit tools to produce results-based information, and can help support an enclave strategy (that is, islands of innovation in key provinces and districts) as opposed to a whole-of-government approach. These can be scaled up gradually as demand increases.

Success factor # 7: capacity and ownership

As repeated throughout the toolkit, it is vital to develop the capacity among government officers in participatory M&E and for them to have a good understanding of the social audit tools. Even though they may commission a third party to undertake the research, this process will be enormously helped by government officials and managers having a clear understanding of their focus, the methods they use and the information they generate, so as to make informed decisions on what tool to use, what information will

be provided and how it will be used to improve programming and services. Research institutes must have the necessary skills to implement social audit tools on behalf of government.

Ownership comes from the utility of the information generated and the ability to use it effectively to help organizations (e.g. governments) fulfill their mandate. In this sense, it is important that the primary users of the information (government officials) be in charge of deciding what information is necessary and how it will be used to improve programming or services. It is also important that citizens feel empowered to engage in constructive dialogue with government officials.

Key to the success of the Social Audit Approach in Andhra Pradesh in India was a robust capacity-building strategy, which included all levels, from the highest government management to the grassroots.⁴² At state level, the Rural Development Department established a Social Audit Unit. Around 25 state-level resource persons, with no less than 10 years of grassroots experience, were trained through a Training of Trainers (ToT) programme in social audit methodology. At district level, around 260 district resource persons were trained to coordinate trainings at *mandal* and village level. Village-level social auditors (literate youth from wage seeker families) were trained to use the actual social audit tools at village level and sensitize the community to the benefits. Trainings were also directed at officials and the political executive to encourage their cooperation and active participation in the use of social audit tools. For the purpose, three training manuals, guides and films, including a step-by-step procedure for undertaking a social audit of works under NREGS and a social audit questionnaire, were prepared. And, crucially, regular training programmes are still undertaken on a monthly basis for 20 to 40 people at community group level.

In Ethiopia in 2004, a citizen report card survey was carried out by the Poverty Action Network of Civil Society in Ethiopia (PANE), a local network of over 40 civil society organizations, as a pilot initiative for monitoring and evaluating Ethiopia's PRSP.⁴³ PANE received support from the Public Affairs Foundation (PAF) in India and UNDP. The analytical framework for the CRC focused on access to, use of and satisfaction with services. The survey was of 2,633 households from 3 rural and 1 urban region. Results were discussed with regional government representatives, presented to donors and civil society and submitted to the Plan for Accelerated and Sustained Development to End Poverty in Ethiopia (PASDEP) as part of the PRSP. The UNDP claims the survey was successful in providing additional qualitative indicators for monitoring implementation of the PRSP to supplement indicators used by the Government M&E system. This enabled service providers to receive feedback on service utilization and potential for improvement.

As the methodology was new to officials, it initially generated resistance in some areas, as people felt the findings would unveil weaknesses that might lead to their removal from office. **It was therefore necessary to invest time in helping officials understand the purpose of the study: not to accuse them but to help them make decisions that lead to improved efficiency for service delivery and become more effective.**

There are capacity requirements common to all the tools that are crucial to make them work:

- ✚ be committed to long-term change
- ✚ M&E systems need to be adapted to include qualitative and anecdotal information
- ✚ repeat the process at regular intervals (particularly for CSC and CRC) over the SEDP cycle

⁴² Centre for Good Governance 2009.

⁴³ Bekele Eschetu (2006)

- follow up on recommendations and take appropriate action (e.g. make changes in programming or budget allocations)

Steps for institutionalization

The following are key capacities to develop at the individual and organizational level for each of the social audit tools to be utilized as part of the M&E framework. This process has started through this initiative, as well as other institutional arrangements with different stakeholders, e.g. UNDP has supported training on CRC, and ILO has supported training on gender audits.

Citizen Report Cards

Individual capacity requirements:

- knowledge of local public service provision (or whatever the CRC is about)
- familiarity with key stakeholders
- experience in social science survey methodology and in planning and running focus group discussions (FGDs)

The team leader will also need to demonstrate quality management during survey-related work, particularly:

Data entry

- ✓ data cleaning
- ✓ data entry

Data use

- ✓ ability to disseminate and effectively communicate information in creative and user-friendly ways to a wide range of audiences, including the media, citizens, CSOs, public service providers and government at different levels
- ✓ facilitation and negotiation skills
- ✓ skilled in imagining, designing and implementing improvements in service delivery

Organizational capacity requirements:

- understand socio-political context
- neutrality
- skilled in the management of fieldwork
- understand survey techniques and qualitative and quantitative data analysis
- experienced in communicating research results in targeted and user friendly formats and conducting outreach
- experience of conducting advocacy and reform activities or supporting others to do so
- be experienced in working with multiple constituents, including communities, vulnerable and/or marginalised groups, civil society organizations, I/NGOs, government authorities at different levels, and the media
- build networks and create buy-in among CRC stakeholders – e.g. CSOs, government, service providers, and other organizations interested in public service provision
- negotiate change

- ⊕ facilitate communication to ensure that the necessary information is being received by relevant stakeholders (e.g. National level governments should receive information about provincial level government; CSOs should receive information about national government commitments, etc)

Community Score Cards

Individual capacity requirements:

Facilitators of CSCs should be experienced in focus group facilitation, with good numeracy and literacy skills, and thoroughly trained in CSC methodology. Experience in the sector being targeted is also helpful, particularly in terms of knowledge of government programs being run in the community in relation to the targeted service (i.e., in the health sector, where users discuss service prices, facilitators familiar with local health insurance schemes, for instance, can provide useful input).

Government Institutional/Organizational capacity requirements:

- ⊕ National to local accountability: Community Score Cards require buy-in at the national level to hold provincial departments and local service providers accountable for collecting this data. They require provincial authorities capable of holding service providers to account for collecting this data, as well as adequate information channels to pass information upwards.
- ⊕ Provincial level authorities need to be able to recruit and supervise research institutes or facilitators.
- ⊕ M&E systems need to be adapted to include qualitative and anecdotal information.

Institutionalizing the CSC process:

- ⊕ Repeat the CSC process at regular intervals.
- ⊕ Ensure quality control. This may involve having an agency, e.g. a research institute or someone within such an agency, to “audit” the process, and to reapply some of the tools in a small number of locations to verify results.
- ⊕ Link the CSC process to government systems, such as Sector Annual Plans, to:
 - ✓ create governance rating systems in a decentralized setting.
 - ✓ inform performance-based budgeting.
 - ✓ direct public input into budgeting.

Gender Audits and Child Rights-Based Social Audits

Individual capacity requirements:

Gender and Child Rights-Cased Audits require researchers with strong technical capacity. Depending on the scope of the audit, GAs/CRBA require a small team with skills in Gender or Child Rights analysis, and facilitation skills in interviewing and focus group discussions. Report writing is another essential skill for gender/Child Rights-Based Social Audits. As the gender audit pilots conducted in 2010 demonstrated, gender and child rights based analysis are areas which are particularly challenging and which may require further external support and mentoring in the short to the medium term. See Annex B for additional resources to assist in gender-based analysis for different sectors.

Institutional capacity requirements:

In terms of institutional capacity, GAs/CRBA function through focus groups and discussions – the greater the institutional and individual awareness regarding gender/child rights, the easier the audit is (and, predictably, the more favorable the results). Gender audits/child rights are also best implemented in contexts where there is a strong accountability framework – where the results of the audit can be transmitted to senior managers and effectively transmitted throughout an organization.

If a Ministry/Department (e.g. Health, Education) uses research institutes to conduct Gender or Child Rights Based audits, the Ministry/Department has to ensure that the research institutes have the necessary skills to conduct the audit.

Public Expenditure Tracking System

Individual capacity requirements:

The team of enumerators will vary in size according to the scope of the program. The team should have skilled technical expertise in budget execution, sector-specific knowledge (for example, on education or health), and a detailed knowledge of the relevant institutional context. The team should also have prior experience in surveys, with some members in particular with experience with qualitative interviews and micro survey work and statistical software to process the data. This does not always require sophisticated software, e.g. substantial analysis can be done using software such as Microsoft Excel. Microeconomics of provider behavior (incentives and organization theory) is a useful additional skill. Enumerators and supervisors will receive specific training on PETS data collection and analysis techniques.

Institutional capacity requirements:

- ⊕ National to local accountability: PETS require buy-in from the national level to the local level; as the information that might result from the analysis could uncover problems in the transfer and execution of budgetary resources at different levels, a common agreement to engage with findings and to open channels of information to communicate findings across the different levels is important.
- ⊕ Those coordinating data collection (e.g., provincial level authorities) need to be able to recruit enumerators and supervisors and provide for their transport and accommodation where necessary.
- ⊕ M&E systems need to be adapted to include qualitative information, as well as evidence in relation to management and use of resources.

Success factor # 8: a sound communication strategy

An effective communication strategy is essential for disseminating M&E information, including information generated by social audit tools, and sharing it with key stakeholders. **Information should be shared with all internal and external stakeholders and interested parties.** Active follow-up is necessary to implement recommendations and to incorporate lessons learned in future decision-making processes. Since the Social Audit Approach involves sharing with users, they have an inherent dissemination function that can encourage citizens, mass organizations or communities to demand action/improvements from service providers and government (See success factor # 2 – Demand).

Communication strategies need to be tailored to suit a particular target audience—National Assembly, People’s Council, ministers, the media, the private sector, NGOs and civil society organizations, and the general public. Disclosure of negative or controversial findings can obviously create challenges for government agencies in the near term, but the benefits of disclosure in the long run make it worthwhile. Greater disclosure can also increase the pressure for more systematic follow-up on recommendations, hence increasing accountability, while motivating those involved in M&E to produce a better outcome, since they know their report will be made public, rather than being buried on someone’s desk.

Steps for institutionalization

It may be useful for the government to consider how it would approach communicating results of social audit tools to the various audiences and stakeholders, from community, government, people’s councils and National Assembly, as well as the general population, depending on their different need for information. For instance, community level stakeholders would be interested in hearing about findings of the social audit tools in which they have participated, and hearing about improvements on issues that immediately affect them. Government officials (as well as the National Assembly and People Council) would be interested in hearing recommendations on how to improve services and programs. The general population would be interested in issues on a wider scale.

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Annex B: Additional Resources

Citizen Report Card

Citizen Report Cards – A Presentation on Methodology

http://info.worldbank.org/etools/docs/library/94360/Tanz_0603/CitizenReportCardPresentation.pdf

Improving Local Governance and Pro-Poor Service Delivery: Citizen Report Card Learning Toolkit

<http://www.citizenreportcard.com/crc/pdf/manual.pdf>

Citizen Report Card Surveys - A Note on the Concept and Methodology

<http://www.sasanet.org/documents/Tools/Citizen%20report%20card.pdf>

E-Learning Toolkit on the Citizen Report Card (CRC) methodology

<http://www.adb.org/Projects/e-toolkit/e-learning1.asp>

The Affiliated Network for Social Accountability (ANSA), funded by the World Bank Institute (WBI), is an initiative to promote, strengthen and sustain the concepts and practices of social accountability globally.

<http://ansa-sar.org/2012/?q=node/63>

An Assessment of the Impact of Bangalore, India, Citizen Report Cards on the Performance of Public Agencies

[http://lnweb90.worldbank.org/oed/oeddoclib.nsf/b57456d58aba40e585256ad400736404/d241684df81fce2785256ead0062de10/\\$FILE/ecd_wp_12.pdf](http://lnweb90.worldbank.org/oed/oeddoclib.nsf/b57456d58aba40e585256ad400736404/d241684df81fce2785256ead0062de10/$FILE/ecd_wp_12.pdf)

People's Voice Program in Ukraine: Citizen Report Cards

<http://www.undp.org/oslocentre/docs08/sofia/Case%20Study%201-%20Citizens%20Report%20Cards%20Ukraine%20FINAL.pdf>

The case of citizen report cards in Ethiopia

http://www.capabilityapproach.com/pubs/4_5_Bekele.pdf

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Akasoba, Clement A. and Lance W. Robinson (2007). Holding service providers to account: Community scorecards and district-level forums. Participatory Learning and Action Notes, no 56: 21-27.

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The World Bank. "Social Development Note: Community Score Card Process in the Gambia." <http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTPCENG/Resources/CSC+Gambia.pdf>

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<http://www.odi.org.uk/resources/details.asp?id=5093&title=design-implement-gender-sensitive-social-protection-programmes>

Sarojini Ganju Thakur (Commonwealth Secretariat), Catherine Arnold (DFID) and Tina Johnson (DFID), Gender and Social Protection, OECD, 2009.
<http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/26/34/43280899.pdf>

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<http://www.ilo.org/dyn/gender/docs/RES/536/F932374742/web%20gender%20manual.pdf>

ODI (2005) "An Introduction to Gender Audit Methodology, It's Design and Implementation in DFID Malawi"
<http://www.brookings.edu/views/Papers/200505moser.pdf>

CIDA, Gender equality and aid for trade - A primer and guide for practitioners
<http://www.acdi-cida.gc.ca/acdi-cida/ACDI-CIDA.nsf/eng/NAT-92774815-FUR>

The Urgent Action Fund and the Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children. "Gender Audit of Reconstruction Programmes in South Eastern Europe."
http://www.urgentactionfund.org/assets/files/uaf-pubs/BG_Audit_Final.pdf

GenderAction IFI Gender Audit and Advocacy: A Toolkit for Chinese Civil Society Organizations.
<http://www.genderaction.org/images/Gender%20Action-ChinaToolkitweb.pdf>

USAID Tanzania Gender Audit.
<http://www.devtechsys.com/publications/documents/FinalGenderAuditTanzania.pdf>

GTZ (1997) Gender Sensitive Vocational Education and Training.
<http://www.tzonline.org/pdf/gendersensitivevocational.pdf>

Child Rights-Based Social Audits

Castro Guevara, M.C., A.M. Felisa Galang Mayor, and M. Racelis (2009) “The Philippine Pilot Study of the Child Friendly Community Participatory Assessment Tools”

<http://www.childwatch.uio.no/publications/research-reports/philippines-pilotstudy.html>

UNICEF (2009) Manual: Child-friendly schools

[http://www.unicef.org/lac/Child_Friendly_Schools_Manual_EN_040809\(2\).pdf](http://www.unicef.org/lac/Child_Friendly_Schools_Manual_EN_040809(2).pdf)

UNICEF (2011) “Child Friendly Cities Final Toolkit 2011”. Web-based resource

<http://www.childfriendlycities.org/en/research/final-toolkit>

UNICEF 2010 “Child Protection System Mapping and Assessment Toolkit” (May 2010) Comprehensive toolkit; Core Toolkit; Users Guide http://www.unicef.org/protection/57929_58020.html

UNICEF and World Bank (2011) “Guidance Note on Integrating a Child Focus into Poverty and Social Impact Analysis(PSIA) “(September 2011) <http://www.childimpact.unicef-irc.org/documents/view/id/130/lang/en>

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<http://www.worldbank.org/research/projects/publicspending/tools/pswebsite.survey.toolkit.march3.2003.pdf>

Lindelöw, M., 2002, 'Health facility surveys : an introduction', Policy Research Working Paper No. 2953, World Bank, Washington D.C.

http://www-wds.worldbank.org/servlet/WDSContentServer/WDSP/IB/2003/02/07/000094946_03012511205070/Rend/red/PDF/multi0page.pdf

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Full document available online at: <http://www1.worldbank.org/prem/PREMNotes/premnote23.pdf>

Anti corruption resource centre, on PETS <http://www.u4.no/themes/pets/petstool.cfm>

Empowerment Case Studies: Public Expenditure Tracking Surveys public expenditure tracking surveys – application in Uganda, Tanzania, Ghana and Honduras

http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTEMPowerment/Resources/15109_PETS_Case_Study.pdf

Annex C: Glossary of Social Audit Tools and Participatory Methods for PM&E

In addition to the five tools outlined in this toolkit and included below, there are a number of participatory tools to engage citizens in the design, implementation and M&E of policies and programs. Some of the key ones are briefly described here.

Citizens' jury

Citizens' juries are a group of 12 to 50 selected members of a community that make recommendations or action proposals to decision-makers on complex issues after a period of investigation on the matter. The goal is to improve the quality of decision-making and increase the likelihood that policy formulation and implementation will be more legitimate, effective, efficient and sustainable. The process can be particularly helpful to address problems of democratic deficits in particular institutional settings, with a view to enable citizens' input in the decision-making processes of unelected government bodies. This helps to ensure that knowledge and policy processes respond more adequately to both local realities and local definitions of well-being and progress.

Links:

World Bank: http://www.worldbank.org/socialaccountability_sourcebook/Tools/Other/cj.html

Citizens Jury Handbook, The Jefferson Centre:

<http://www.jefferson-centre.org/vertical/Sites/%7BC73573A1-16DF-4030-99A5-8FCCA2F0BFED%7D/uploads/%7B7D486ED8-96D8-4AB1-92D8-BFA69AB937D2%7D.PDF>

Citizens Jury on Food and Farming Futures for Andhra Pradesh, India: <http://pubs.iied.org/pdfs/9135IIED.pdf>

Public hearing

Public hearings are formal meetings where local officials wish to solicit the views and opinions of citizens on a decision or action that they are set to make on behalf of the local government. These meetings are open to the general public and are therefore an important tool for citizens to raise their concerns in front of elected officials and bureaucrats on the one hand and an important feedback mechanism for the officials to gain a better understanding of the citizens' experiences and views on the other hand. A typical example would be public hearings of community budgets.

Links:

World Bank: http://www.worldbank.org/socialaccountability_sourcebook/Tools/Other/ph.html

Citizen Participation Handbook: <http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTBELARUS/Resources/eng.pdf>

Public Hearings on Public Expenditure, India:

<http://www.sasanet.org/documents/Case%20Studies/MKSS%20Case%20Study.pdf>

Community radio

Community radio is a radio station owned and managed by a particular community that deals with local issues in local languages and cultural context, relating to local problems and concerns. Its programs are based on audience access and participation and reflect the special interests and needs of the community. It is especially suited to help poor and illiterate populations be heard, be informed, learn and participate in a dialogue. Community radio by itself is not a social accountability tool. Its accessibility, flexibility and affordability, make it particularly useful for achieving social accountability outcomes.

Links:

World Bank: http://www.worldbank.org/socialaccountability_sourcebook/Tools/Other/cr.html

UNESCO: <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0013/001342/134208e.pdf>

Community Radio in Tambuli, Philippines:

http://www.unesco.org/webworld/publications/community_radio_handbook.pdf

Transparency portals

Transparency portals are websites that publish public financial information including budget law, budget manuals, and definitions of budget-related technical terms. The portals are directly linked to the financial management information system which means that users can track, with minimal lag time, how budgets are being executed and how tax revenues are evolving. If updated regularly, these portals can increase transparency by conveying a large amount of information to citizens that have internet access.

Links:

World Bank: http://www.worldbank.org/socialaccountability_sourcebook/Tools/Other/tp.html

Case Studies in Latin America: http://www-wds.worldbank.org/servlet/WDSCContentServer/WDSP/IB/2004/11/03/000160016_20041103103505/Rendered/PDF/303320ENGLISH0Thinking0out0loud0V.pdf

Citizen's charter

A citizen's charter is a document that informs citizens about the service entitlements they have as users of a public service, the standards they can expect for a service (time frame and quality), remedies available for non-adherence to standards, and the procedures, costs and charges of a service. The charters entitle users to an explanation (and in some cases compensation) if the standards are not met.

If citizens are well informed about their rights as clients of public services and about existing complaint mechanisms to voice grievances, they can exert considerable pressure on service providers to improve their performance. The charters also play an important role for other social accountability mechanisms. The standards which service providers commit themselves to are useful yardsticks for M&E of service delivery.

Links:

World Bank: http://www.worldbank.org/socialaccountability_sourcebook/Tools/Other/cc.html

South Asia Social Accountability Network:

<http://www.sasanet.org/documents/Tools/Citizen's%20Charters.pdf>

Centre for Good Governance: <http://www.cgg.gov.in/publicationdownloads/Citizens'%20Charter.pdf>

Client Citizen' Charter in Malaysia:

<http://unpan1.un.org/intradoc/groups/public/documents/un/unpan000762.pdf>

Ombudsman

The role of the ombudsman is to protect the citizens against violation of their rights, abuse of powers, error, negligence, unfair decisions and maladministration in order to improve public administration and make the government's actions more open and the government and its servants more accountable to members of the public. An Ombudsman is independent from the executive and the judiciary and is funded by the legislative body. The office of the ombudsman can take various forms. It can be a general purpose or specialized agency that receives and investigates citizen complaints against bureaucratic actions, an agency charged with protecting citizen's human rights, or an agency to protect other rights and interests (e.g. environmental protection).

Links:

World Bank: http://www.worldbank.org/socialaccountability_sourcebook/Tools/Other/om.html

International Ombudsman Institute: <http://www.law.ualberta.ca/centres/ioi/index.php>

Case Studies in Asia:

<http://asianombudsman.com/ORC/MemberResearchStudies/Research%20Study..Comparative%20Study%20of%20Ombudsman%20Systems%20in%20Asia,Future%20path%20for%20Macao%20Ombudsman%20Systems%20by%20CCAC,%20Macao,%20Nov,%202009.pdf>

Outcome mapping

Outcome mapping (OM) is an integrated participatory M&E system that looks at both development results and internal performance within a program or project. It aims to strike a balance between accountability and learning. OM focuses on changes in the behavior of direct partners (as outcomes); assesses contributions to the achievement of outcomes; and designs in relation to the broader development context. Focussing on changes in partners' behavior, relationships or actions allows a program to:

- measure results within its sphere of influence
- obtain feedback about its efforts to improve its performance
- take credit for its contributions to the achievement of outcomes
- show progress towards outcomes

Outcome Mapping can be used in the planning, monitoring, and/or evaluation of current or completed activities, including small projects, large-scale programs, even entire organizations.

Links:

IDRC: http://www.idrc.ca/en/ev-26586-201-1-DO_TOPIC.html

Outcome Mapping Learning Community:

http://www.outcomemapping.ca/download.php?file=/resource/files/OM_English_final.pdf

Outcome Mapping in Nagaland, India: http://www.idrc.ca/en/ev-41463-201-1-DO_TOPIC.html

Participatory budgeting

Participatory budgeting is a process in which a wide range of stakeholders debate, analyze, prioritize, and monitor decisions about public expenditures and investments. Stakeholders can include the general public, poor and vulnerable groups including women, organized civil society, the private sector, representative assemblies or parliaments, and donors.

Participatory budgeting can occur in three different stages of public expenditure management:

- *Budget formulation and analysis.* Citizens participate in allocating budgets according to priorities they have identified in participatory poverty diagnostics; formulate alternate budgets; or assess proposed allocations in relation to a government's policy commitments and stated concerns and objectives.
- *Expenditure monitoring and tracking.* Citizens track whether public spending is consistent with allocations made in the budget and track the flow of funds to the agencies responsible for the delivery of goods and services.
- *Monitoring of public service delivery.* Citizens monitor the quality of goods and services provided by government in relation to expenditures made for these goods and services, a process similar to citizen report cards or scorecards.

Links:

World Bank: <http://siteresources.worldbank.org/PSGLP/Resources/ParticipatoryBudgeting.pdf>

Participatory Budgeting in Asia:

<http://siteresources.worldbank.org/PSGLP/Resources/ParticipatoryBudgeting.pdf>

Participatory Budgeting in Porto Alegre, Brazil: <http://www.unesco.org/most/southa13.htm>

Appreciative inquiry

Appreciative Inquiry is a facilitated approach to organizational planning and change that asks, "what is working well around here and how do we build on it?" It's based on the assumption that in every group or organization, something works well. Practitioners of Appreciative Inquiry (AI) technique assert that the problem-led diagnostic approach in development planning tends to focus on negativity, which only emphasizes and amplifies negative traits, while, appreciative inquiry focuses on positive features and leverages them to correct or overcome the negative. The AI framework can be applied to a variety of interventions such as: strategic planning, instructional system design, diversity, organizational redesign, mergers and evaluations.

Links:

Thin Book Publishing (referred by the World Bank): <http://www.thinbook.com/docs/doc-whatissai.pdf>

Asian Development Bank: <http://www.adb.org/Documents/Information/Knowledge-Solutions/Appreciative-Inquiry.pdf>

Appreciative Inquiry in a Gender Evaluation of the Pan Asia Networking Program: <http://idl-bnc.idrc.ca/dspace/bitstream/10625/45401/1/131870.pdf>

Real-time monitoring

Traditional monitoring systems have been effective in tracking medium to longer-term development trends. Yet they were not designed to generate the type of real-time information decision makers need in developing timely actions to help vulnerable populations cope with fast-hitting, inter-connected crises. Taking advantage of innovative technologies, real-time monitoring initiatives aim at collecting high frequency data on livelihoods security and stability in access to services among vulnerable populations. The objective is to improve evidence-based decision-making and close the information gap between the onset of a global crisis and the availability of actionable information to protect the vulnerable. Existing real-time monitoring tools include customized SMS applications to speed up and enhance information needed during an intervention, community-based monitoring, multi-cluster rapid assessment surveys and sentinel sites.

Link:

UNICEF: <http://www.unglobalpulse.org/about>

Community-based monitoring system

The community-based monitoring system is an organized way of collecting information at the local level for use of local government units, national government agencies, non-government organizations, and civil society for planning, program implementation and monitoring. It is a tool intended for improved governance and greater transparency and accountability in resource allocation. The CBMS generally aims to provide the national and local governments with up-to-date information for policy-making and program implementation. In particular, CBMS intends to fill the information gaps in diagnosing the extent of poverty at the local level, determining the causes of poverty, formulating policies and programs, identifying eligible program beneficiaries, and assessing the impact of policies and programs.

Links:

Philippine Institute for Development Studies:

http://econdb.pids.gov.ph/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=25&Itemid=40

PEP Research Network: <http://www.pep-net.org/programs/cbms/country-project-profiles/cbms-philippines/cbms-philippines-handbook-for-practitioners-version-06-2009-01/>

Community-Based Monitoring System in the Philippines: http://www.pep-net.org/fileadmin/medias/pdf/CBMS_country_proj_profiles/Philippines/CBMS_forms/Technical_Paper.pdf

Participatory learning and action – appraisal, planning, follow-up and evaluation

PLA is an interdisciplinary approach (one which allows for different technical perspectives, bringing researchers, extension workers, planners, and members of the community together). They are designed for direct use in the field with communities and encourage learning with and from people, focusing on local

knowledge, practices, and experiences. They allow for and require “triangulation” of sources – that is, the use of several sources of information, several methods, and several participants to verify results. They also provide data that covers the full spectrum of conditions in the field, from a qualitative and/or quantitative perspective. The two main advantages of associated tools, from the perspective of communities and development agencies, are that they foster community participation and empowerment and help strengthen the service role of institutions.

Link:

Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture:

<http://www.iica.int/Esp/regiones/central/cr/Publicaciones%20Oficina%20Costa%20Rica/80tools.pdf>

Participatory mapping

Participatory mapping is a map-making process that attempts to make visible the association between land and local communities by using the commonly understood and recognized language of cartography. As with any type of map, participatory maps present spatial information at various scales. Participatory maps are not confined to simply presenting geographic feature information; they can also illustrate important social, cultural and historical knowledge including, for example, information related to land-use occupancy and mythology, demography, ethno-linguistic groups, health patterns and wealth distributions. The key aspect of participatory map production is that it is undertaken by communities to show information that is relevant and important to their needs and for their use.

Link:

International Fund for Agricultural Development: http://www.ifad.org/pub/map/PM_web.pdf

Participatory rural appraisal

Participatory rural appraisal refers to a growing family of participatory approaches and methods that emphasize local knowledge and enable local people to make their own appraisal, analysis, and plans. PRA uses group animation and exercises to facilitate information sharing, analysis, and action among stakeholders. Although originally developed for use in rural areas, PRA has been employed successfully in a variety of settings. The purpose of PRA is to enable development practitioners, government officials, and local people to work together to plan context appropriate programs. Tools common in PRA are semi-structured interviewing, focus group discussions, preference ranking, mapping and modeling, seasonal and historical diagramming.

Links:

World Bank: http://www-wds.worldbank.org/external/default/WDSP/IB/1996/02/01/000009265_3961214175537/Rendered/PDF/multi_page.pdf

World Bank:

http://www4.worldbank.org/afr/ssatp/Resources/HTML/rural_transport/knowledge_base/English/Module%205%5C5_6a%20Participatory%20Rural%20Appraisal.pdf

Participatory Rural Appraisal in the Philippines:

http://www.searca.org/brp/pdfs/monographs/PRA_Upland.pdf

Participatory rapid appraisal

Participatory Rapid Appraisal (PRA) is a specific form of Rapid Rural Appraisal (RRA), a research technique developed by researchers in international development as an alternative and complement to conventional sample surveys. PRA is a way of learning from, and with, community members to investigate, analyze, and evaluate constraints and opportunities, and make informed and timely decisions regarding development projects. It is a method by which a research team can quickly and systematically collect information for the general analysis of a specific topic, question or problem; needs assessments; feasibility studies; identifying and prioritizing projects; and project or program evaluations.

Links:

International Institute for Environment and Development: <http://pubs.iied.org/pdfs/8282IIED.pdf>

Participatory Rapid Appraisal in Thailand: http://www.crc.uri.edu/download/PRA_Report.pdf

Social Analysis System² (SAS²)

The central purpose of SAS² is to help people develop the skills they need to inquire into situations that do not lend themselves to easy solutions designed by experts alone. Creating and mobilizing knowledge for the common good does not depend simply on sharing the right information, having the right concepts, or using the right techniques. It hinges on the competency and wisdom that people bring to situations that are inescapably messy and unpredictable. SAS² shows how to design evidence-based and people-based inquiries that address the questions that people ask, at the right time and with the proper tools. The questions may be part of a problem or needs assessment, a strategic planning exercise, a risk assessment or a feasibility study. M&E questions can also be answered using SAS² concepts and tools.

SAS² Social Analysis tools include Social Analysis Techniques and All-Purpose Techniques. Social analysis techniques are organized into modules that reflect three basic questions applicable to any situation: what are the problems people face (e.g. Problem Tree, Forcefield), who are the actors or stakeholders affected by a situation or with the capacity to intervene (e.g. Stakeholder Identification, Role Dialogue), and what are the options for action (e.g. Results and Risks). All-purpose techniques (e.g. Tree Mapping, Forum Options) are generic in nature and can be applied to any topic to gather, organize, analyze and communicate information on peoples' knowledge and views of reality. They also help select the best forum and participation strategies to meet the needs of a situation.

Link:

Social Analysis Systems: <http://www.sas2.net/>

Social impact assessment

Social impact assessment (SIA) can be defined in terms of efforts to assess or estimate, in advance, the social consequences that are likely to follow specific policy actions (including programs and the adoption of new policies), and specific government actions. Such social impacts not only need to be identified and measured but also need to be managed in such a way that the positive externalities are magnified and the negative

ones minimized. SIA is a process that provides a framework for prioritizing, gathering, analyzing, and incorporating social information and participation into the design and delivery of developmental interventions. It ensures that development interventions: (i) are informed and take into account the key relevant social issues; and (ii) incorporate a participation strategy for involving a wide range of stakeholders.

Links:

SAS: <http://www.sasanet.org/documents/Tools/Social%20Impact%20Assessment%20Methodology.pdf>

CGG Guide including examples in Asia:

<http://unpan1.un.org/intradoc/groups/public/documents/cgg/unpan026197.pdf>