

Promoting ACCOUNTABILITY through PUBLIC AUDIT



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Current Context

- Prolongation of political transition - less effective governance and erosion of confidence in state institutions, increasing lawlessness and culture of impunity
- Local communities increasingly demanding more transparency and accountability of state institutions and development agencies
- Enactment of Right to Information Act (2009) to promote transparency and accountability of public organizations

Results achieved

- Public audit has become an obligatory practice in all infrastructure projects of Helvetas
- Responding to a fundamental right of communities
- Community articulate their concerns and grievances during the events
- Contribute to increased ownership of the community
- An efficient way of improving the project's performance through creating a two way communication between beneficiaries and Helvetas projects
- Means to control and combat corruption and manipulation
- Helvetas won the ALINE's Farmers Voice Innovation Award 2010

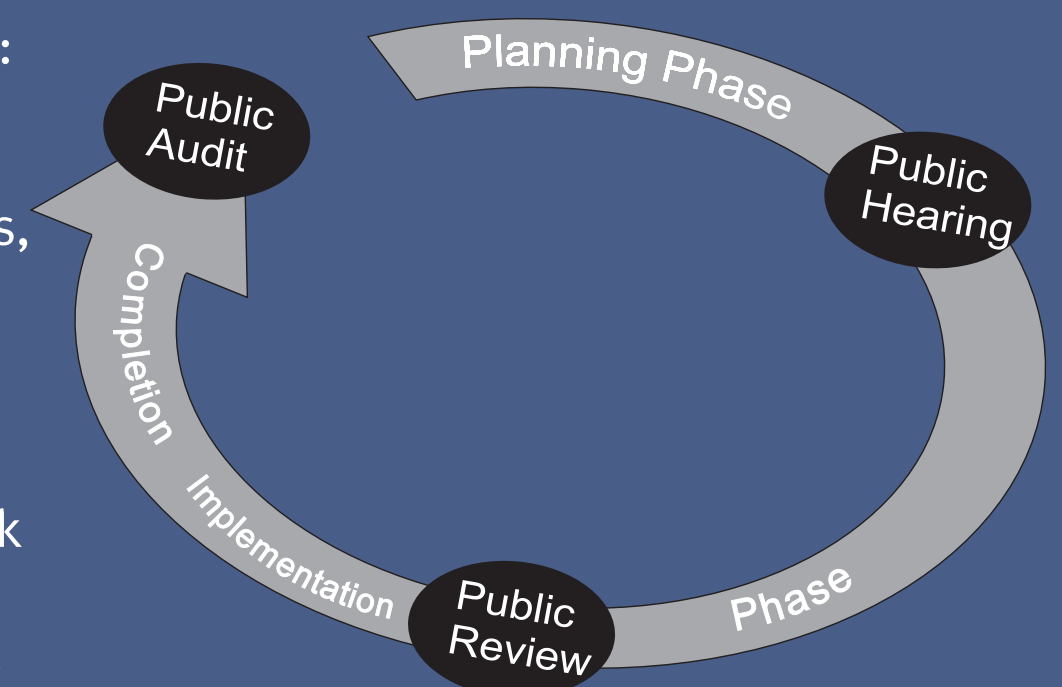
Objective

Communities are enabled to hold development organizations and local government bodies accountable for development work implemented, thereby increasing ownership and sustainability of development interventions.

Helvetas Approach to Public Audits

Three steps are taken to manage accountability of Helvetas projects towards the public:

- Pre-implementation stage: Public hearing to inform and obtain commitment and consent of all stakeholders towards the project (Presentation on the project purposes, roles/responsibilities of the stakeholders & budgetary contribution; clarification of issues raised, project endorsement and work plan preparation, signing of agreement and fixing of hoarding board)
- Implementation stage: Public review for monitoring the progress of the project (Presentation on the project progresses, clarification of issues raised, revision of work plan as per the decisions)
- Post-implementation stage: Public audit to furnish information on all cash, kinds and human labor incurred in the project (Formation of "Public Audit Committee", preparation/presentation of final audit report, clarification of issues raised, decisions in case of embezzlement/improprieties, final commissioning)



Expanding the practice of public audits

- Adoption of public audit as one of the policy level provision in infrastructure projects in Helvetas
- Government agencies as well as development agencies are interested to adopt public audit
- Issuance of "Public Audit Operational Guidelines (2006)" by MoLD encouraging all public agencies to undertake the practice
- Public hearing/audit as one of the performance measure indicator in Minimum Conditions & Performance Measures (MCPM) assessment of local bodies

Ownership

- Management and decision for the events are taken by the beneficiary community themselves
- Broader participation of the beneficiary communities in planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the projects
- Improved articulation of the beneficiary communities voice thereby fostering the community led development



WATER



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Use Master Plan

Current Context

- Less than one third of Nepal's rural households have access to safe water close to their house
- There is growing demand for water for households and agriculture
- Frequent conflicts occur in communities over access to water
- Changing climate will compound problems

Objective

Support VDCs to ensure optimal use of available water resources in equitable, effective and efficient ways within and amongst communities

Helvetas Approach to the development of Water Use Master Plans

Step-wise approach defined

- Inclusive water resources management committees are formed in VDC, members are trained and coached
- Local facilitators trained
- Socio-economic and demographic data collected, hardship ratings developed
- Technical assessment (inventory of all water sources)
- Outline all potential projects (drinking water, irrigation, source improvement and others) with tentative cost per project for implementation and setting priorities among the different projects
- WUMP Planning workshop
- WUMP endorsed by VDC council
- Support for the implementation of WUMP projects

Principles

- WUMP process is community managed
 - VDC administrations and Water resources management (WRM) committee take charge of the process
- WUMP process is bottom-up
 - WRM committees are formed, members trained and coached the task
- The WUMP process is inclusive
 - Managed by socially inclusive water resources management committee
- Awareness on key issues developed
 - Water is a finite and vulnerable resource
 - Women play a central part in the provision, management and safeguarding of water
 - Water has also an economic value

Results achieved

- 82 WUMPs have been developed
- Disadvantaged groups participate on equal terms in the management of Water resources of a community
- Equal access to water sources
- VDCs are able to acquire funds for water projects since they are outlined in detail in WUMPs
- The need for source protection is recognized
- Water losses are reduced; excess water is used productively
- Women taking the role of "water managers"
- A knowledge base is created



Learnings

- Ownership of WUMP by VDC and communities is crucial
- A WUMP should not just follow the logic of administrative boundaries but also the logic of watersheds
- Education and awareness efforts are crucial and need to focus on conserving water and reducing wastage of water
- Extreme weather conditions (drought, floods, etc) should be documented as part of the WUMP along with their timelines
- WUMP should include an outline of the requirement of trained people in areas for operation and maintenance

Replicability

- Other development projects have started to adopt WUMP e.g. RVWRM (Finnish Aid)
- MoLD has expressed interest in developing WUMPs for all VDCs
- Helvetas is reviewing the WUMP process to simplify it and reduce cost