



# The Dynamic Effects of Social Accountability Initiatives in Governance for the South African Public Service Sector

Andrew Enaifoghe<sup>1\*</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Department of Public Administration, University of Zululand, South Africa

<sup>3</sup>Third author affiliation, City, Country

\*Corresponding author email: [andyransey@gmail.com](mailto:andyransey@gmail.com) / [EnaifogheA@unizulu.ac.za](mailto:EnaifogheA@unizulu.ac.za)

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## Abstract

The objective of the study explore the idea of social accountability in governance, paying close attention to the interactions and synergies between information, citizen participation, and governmental responsiveness. In earlier research, scholars frequently made the implicit assumption that information paved the way for citizens' voices and, in turn, state responsiveness. Enhanced public action is a requisite, but not an adequate, precondition for social accountability in governance. Furthermore, a positive state response does not always follow the citizen's voices. Service providers and officials may choose to ignore the voice of the citizen, respond to it with retaliation, or, despite good intentions, be limited in their ability to respond due to a lack of capacity or resources. The study indicated that more effective than initiatives that only encourage localized change, strategic actions include a focus on creating an enabling environment and enhancing governmental responsiveness. Findings show that a positive governmental response may not always result from a citizen's voice, despite good intentions, service providers and officials may choose to ignore or respond to public complaints with harsh measures, or they may simply not have the means or capacity to do so. The study concluded that more effective than initiatives that solely support localized citizen voice, strategic actions involve a focus on creating an enabling environment and enhancing governmental responsiveness.

*Keywords:* Social accountability, governance, initiatives, responsiveness, citizens, interactions

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## 1. Introduction

Social responsibility is primarily a political process that is complex and non-linear; change occurs gradually and frequently in small increments that build on one another. It necessitates an iterative strategy with ongoing adaptive learning, particularly in situations with little capacity and unpredictable political systems. There are numerous examples of how social accountability efforts have improved service delivery and relationships between the state and its citizens, but not always or everywhere. The fact that diverse contexts offer various chances, entrance points, and potential paths for social accountability is a major factor in explaining why there are frequently more unsuccessful examples of the employment of a certain social accountability technology than successful ones (Friis-Hansen, 2014).

There are no specific methods or instruments that are always effective, and the pursuit of worldwide best practices seems futile (Taşan-Kok, Atkinson & Martins, 2021). Finding the "optimal fit" for a particular environment is likely to yield better results, and the first stage in intervention design is to understand the political and economic setting. However, the building of coalitions between the government and civil society, supported by positive public involvement, has frequently been shown to be crucial to the success of social accountability projects (Ferry & Sandford, 2022). This is not to imply, however, that more antagonistic forms of citizen action have no place because they may strengthen state-society alliances by giving them leverage. Social accountability initiatives have costs and dangers for citizens in addition to potential advantages, such as the opportunity costs of involvement; the danger of raising expectations that the state cannot or will not meet.

The consequences of elite capture - many social accountabilities and more expansive public participation initiatives have continued to struggle to benefit the poor, and, in particular, the poorest; the risk of replacing current, possibly more credible or productive mechanisms for legitimacy or accountability; and, most pertinently, the risk of retaliation against common people that worsen, rather than enhance, their set of circumstances (Danhoundo, Nasiri & Wiktorowicz, 2018). Other scholars' earlier research frequently made the implicit assumption that access to information led to citizen voice, which in turn led to state response. Increased citizen action is a necessary but

insufficient precondition, according to information. Additionally, a positive governmental response is not always the result of public voice. Despite good intentions, service providers and officials may choose to ignore or respond to public complaints with harsh measures, or they may simply not have the means or capacity to do so.

More effective than initiatives that solely support localized citizen voice, strategic actions involve a focus on creating an enabling environment and enhancing governmental responsiveness. The study's structure, which divides social accountability into five interconnected dimensions that are all crucial to its success—information, interface, civic mobilization, citizen action, and state action—is taken from the World Bank's flagship study on social accountability. The study's structure, which divides social accountability into five interconnected dimensions that are all crucial to its success—information, interface, civic mobilization, citizen action, and state action—is taken from the World Bank's flagship study on social accountability.

## **2. Materials and Methods**

### **2.1. Research Methodology**

This is a qualitative study that adopts a desktop research methodology. A thorough assessment of the literature was done to gather relevant data for the study. The body of existing literature deemed essential for the study is called the SLR (Rajasekar, Philominathan & Chinnathambi, 2006). SLR is defined as "the process of accessing published secondary data" by academics. Two distinct aspects of SLR—that it uses only secondary data that has been published—are explained by the definition (Stangor, 2011; Maxim, 1999). Publications include books, journals, articles, indexes in numerous databases, and reports from both organizations and non-organizations. The secondary sources for the literature search on the interplay of the role of entrepreneurship education in the South African Institute of Higher Learning for sustainable development were chosen.

The search engines Scopus and Google Scholar were used to find relevant literature related to the topic under study. These search engines were preferred over others because of the abundant information they provided. The authors utilized advanced keyword searches across several databases for the data collection process. Keywords that the author used to look for relevant materials to the study between 2014 and 2024 in the search engines. It is thought that it will take twelve (10) years to obtain the most recent data on the subject at hand.

### **2.2. The inclusions and exclusions criteria**

Regarding exclusions and inclusion criteria for selecting relevant information as data for the study, they were made following the study questions and the topic. Peer review journals that are pertinent to the research were chosen and moved, together with information from periodicals, newspapers, and the internet. After carefully reading articles that seemed relevant to the study, themes were developed to address the subject and the research questions. Data analysis was done using content analysis of the data collected. For the write-up, steps were made to create integrative review guidelines and systematic narrative reviews.

### **2.3. Government accountability civic engagement**

To improve government accountability, this study reviews a wide range of kinds of literature and practices and meticulously specifies numerous criteria that can be used to evaluate and characterize such social engagement. The dual crises of states and markets in the developing world can be resolved by civic involvement, according to an increasing number of writers and practitioners. According to this school of thought, the free-rider problem for public goods can be solved by benevolent social organizations and proactive consumers who look for alternate sources of private benefits. Furthermore, it supports the idea that a well-informed populace that demands that the government respect its rights can recreate a state that has failed.

The last twenty years have seen the acceptance of the market model, while the forty years after World War II were defined by a faith in state involvement, it seems that the next wave of development ideas will be firmly rooted in civic engagement (Enaifoghe, 2019). This paradigm change should be greeted with open arms as a chance to reconsider widely held beliefs and inject new vitality into development theory. However, like with all novel ideas and intellectual trends, we must closely examine and assess the various interpretations and applications that are incorporated into this novel school of thinking (Enaifoghe & Adetiba, 2019). This conceptual paper aims to elucidate a particular facet of the expanding body of research on civic engagement: The contribution of society to enhancing government accountability—A technique that's becoming more and more known as "social accountability."

"An approach towards building accountability that relies on civic engagement, i.e. in which ordinary citizens and/or civil society organizations participate directly or indirectly in exacting accountability," is how the World Bank defines social accountability (Maduku & Enaifoghe, 2018). Development experts contemplating harnessing societal energy to enhance government accountability has to take into account the diverse range of options available as well as the advantages and disadvantages of each. The sole goal of this article is to develop a conceptual framework for

policies aimed at enhancing government accountability. It stays away from the very crucial areas of responsibility in the commercial sector and for civil society organizations.

However, the expectation is that it will continue to offer a few suggestions to assist reformers consider how to handle accountability in these other two categories of institutions. In the first section, the idea of accountability is covered. It offers a fundamental definition of government accountability as a “proactive process by which public officials inform about and justify their plans of action, their behavior and results and are sanctioned accordingly” after discussing some of the classic literature in the area. It sets this definition apart from related ideas like transparency, oversight, and responsiveness.

### 3. Results and Discussion

#### 3.1. Accountability in the public service sector

In the developing world, corruption, clientelism, and capture pose the three main challenges to the establishment of good governance and the rule of law. The significance of all three of these phenomena—which go much beyond the mere diversion of funds—relates to the exploitation of public office for private gain (Maduku & Enaifoghe, 2018). Apart from providing immediate financial benefits to bureaucrats, corruption also causes market distortion and hinders the provision of services (Cinnamon, 2020). In addition to directing public resources unfairly toward particular client groups, clientelism distorts the nature of political rivalry and results in the inefficient delivery of public services (Fox, 2000). Not only does capture give rents to particular economic players, but it also significantly changes markets and makes customers, workers, and the environment less favorable to companies.

It is widely acknowledged that enhancing government “accountability” is the most effective strategy to take down this three-headed monster and ensure the state's public interest nature. However, what does this idea actually mean? When taken literally, accountability essentially refers to the “possibility” or “ability” of being “accounted for” or “counted up” for someone or something (Sutherland et al., 2022). According to this naive interpretation, government accountability would just mean the most basic bookkeeping (i.e., this year's highway miles built, this year's spending amount, this year's enrollment in public schools, and so forth). Additionally, it might need the presence of someone who could be able to access the accounts if they so wished for, if you will, a “minimum exposure” principle, but not much more.

This fundamental comprehension of the concept of accountability omits authority, principal-agent interactions, punishment, performance, corruption, external surveillance, and the public interest. It is obvious that such a definition is inadequate. Simple bookkeeping combined with little exposure is not a strong enough lever to accomplish the high standards of legality and good governance. It is evident that a more comprehensive definition of responsibility is necessary for this phrase to fulfill the expectations we have for it. Therefore, the conceptual challenge is to develop a practical definition of accountability that has enough power and precision to unquestionably advance the cause of good governance and the rule of law.

The argument is, however, where should our hypothetical building project start and end? This study noted that most authors start their works with a punishment or sanction. People who we wish to hold accountable understand exactly what it means to be held accountable—punishment, according to Robert Behn (Behn, 2001: 3). This component is also included by Andreas Schedler in his definition of accountability, along with answerability, or “the duty of public officials to enforcement, or “the ability of accounting agencies to impose sanctions on power holders who have violated their public duties,” and information, or “the capacity of accounting agencies to inform about and to explain what they are doing” (Schedler, 1999: 14). This second definition makes clear how difficult it is to resist the urge to push the concept further once we begin adding additional parts to it.

Schedler's definition, for example, includes the essential terms “information,” “explanation,” and “accounting agencies.” In this instance, the author pushes us to include a more aggressive opening up on the side of public officials, going beyond the comparatively passive condition of limited exposure. It is insufficient for bureaucrats to just leave their ledgers visible to the public on their desks. They have to actively communicate, clarify what they are doing, and maybe even provide a justification for it in understandable terms. Furthermore, Schedler's mention of accounting firms brings up the subject of an outside actor's involvement. According to the author, having complete communication amongst employees of a government agency is insufficient. In order for accountability to be present, an outside watchful eye must also be present.

This external aspect of the accountability relationship is highlighted in Richard Mulgan's definition of accountability. He contends that there are three essential components to accountability:

- (i) “It is external in that the information is provided to an entity other than the entity being held responsible;”
- (ii) “It entails social interaction and exchange,
- (iii) “It implies rights of authority, in that one side, that is calling for the account, seeks answers and rectification while the other side, that is being held accountable, responds and accepts sanctions” (Mulgan, 2000: 555).

A significant new component to our topic is introduced by this third part of Mulgan's definition: “superior authority.” Mulgan says that authority entails accountability. We can only discuss accountability when the observer is elevated above the observed. Other writers contend that accountability is limited to being a part of a “principal-agent

relationship" (Moreno, Crisp, and Shugart, 2003). Is it possible that we can only discuss responsibility since the actor being held responsible is working directly for the actor demanding an explanation? While externality and higher authority are frequently crucial components of accountability relationships, I contend that they are not required for accountability to exist.

There are many "internal" accountability connections, such as those that exist within a government organization, a sports team, or even a single person. What can public workers be held accountable for, regardless of the method of holding them accountable? There are two main schools of thinking here. Accountability is associated with integrity and adherence to rules. It is important to assess, commend, and penalize public employees according to how much they refrain from dishonest and unlawful actions. This approach to accountability is basically "negative" and process-based, requiring public employees to refrain from specific actions exclusively.

Another stream of thought supports the notion that accountability entails the positive duties of proactive decision-making and efficient performance (Paul, 1992). This viewpoint emphasizes that if a public servant's actions and choices do not result in successful policy outcomes, it is not very beneficial for her to follow the law and refuse bribes. Another crucial component of responsibility is the temporal dimension. More specifically, is all accountability always *ex post*, or are there instances of "ex ante" or "simultaneous" accountability? Accountability is strictly speaking only possible after the event.

It makes no sense to discuss evaluating something that does not currently exist because accountability entails assessing the conduct of public employees. However, this fact should not lead us to believe that the only things for which public employees can be held accountable are finished projects or "results." For example, an accountability agent does not have to wait for the highway to be completed before requesting information, providing justifications, and assessing the responses. How did the strategy plan come to be? At the construction site, how are the personnel arranged?

How do engineers react to unforeseen situations? To ensure conceptual clarity, we shall refer to the assessment of finished projects as "ex post" accountability; for example, "ex ante", the word "simultaneous" accountability refers to the assessment of ongoing government actions, whereas accountability refers to the appraisal of action plans. The Administrative Procedures Act (APA) and the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) in the US are great examples for anyone who might be unsure about the presence of *ex ante* accountability procedures. Prior to implementing new regulations, authorities must provide full details about their content, provide justification for them, and even provide a legal defense in the event that civil society organizations or other individuals with legal standing question them.

Although agencies must expend a great deal of time and money defending their plans and responding to criticism, these accountability mechanisms have been accused of needlessly slowing down government activity. However, this is a highly distinct idea from stating that these kinds of partnerships aren't accountable at all. Realizing that responsibility is a process rather than a state is another essential component of the equation. Being "accountable" means doing something, not just sitting in an office and being "open to criticism." Rather than trying to hide from examination, to "be" accountable means to collaborate with society and accounting agencies to promote government performance and honesty. The proactive conduct that accountability necessitates calls for discussion, justification, and explanation.

The literature also makes a significant contrast between "responsiveness" and accountability. Certain academics contend that there is a significant division between these two ideas, stating that meeting public requests differs greatly but have to answer to them. A government is "responsive" if it adopts policies that are signaled as preferred by citizens, according to Bernard Manin, Adam Przeworski, and Susan Stokes (Cinnamon, 2020). Governments are "accountable" if citizens are able to distinguish between representative and unrepresentative governments<sup>4</sup> and can appropriately sanction them, keeping in office those incumbents who perform well and removing those who do not (Manin, Przeworski, and Stokes, 1999: 10).

Such a drastic contrast has the drawback of conceptualizing government as something that people "alienate" or vomit into the air with every election, only to attempt to control or discipline it the next. According to this viewpoint, accountability can only be used *ex post* and externally. Voting in periodic elections gives citizens the authority to punish the government only when it has "performed." The opposing viewpoint regards the government as an integral element of the polity rather than an outside force that the people elevate above themselves and then attempt to exert control over thereafter.

An ongoing dialogue between the state and society is envisioned in this alternative conception of government, together with the practice of accountability both prior to and during the use of public authority. In this context, "accountability" and "responsiveness" still pertain to separate ideas; the former describes the reasoning behind a decision or action, while the latter describes the actual quality of the decision or action. However, they are closely related because a government that completely exposes itself to criticism and examination before to, during, and after acting will typically also take the needs and desires of its constituents very seriously.

After considering the aforementioned points, we have decided on a definition of accountability that encompasses proactive actions such as providing information and explanations, evaluating performance in addition to adhering to rules, holding people accountable before, during, and after decisions are made, and, of course, imposing sanctions (both positive and negative). Therefore, accountability can be defined as a proactive process by which public servants are held accountable for their actions, conduct, and outcomes and are informed about and given justification for them.

At the next election, representatives are meant to be held responsible for their actions by the people who elected them. In turn, the delegates name and oversee the actions of bureaucrats and members of the judicial branch. Since the positions of all public officials are ultimately determined by the results of the popular vote, such a "accountability chain" is meant to ensure good governance and the rule of law. Regrettably, empirical studies have demonstrated that the accountability that periodic elections subject public officials to is insufficient to ensure effective governance and the rule of law (Carroll & Simpson, 2012)). Elections as vehicles for accountability have four main issues.

First, there is a serious issue with information asymmetry between elected officials and the public as well as between elected officials and bureaucracy. It is just not possible for elected representatives to know everything that unelected public employees do, or for citizens to know everything that their elected representatives decide. Elections only function *ex post*, which is the second issue with them as accountability tools. We effectively "alienate" our voice by giving up all authority in the interim between elections if we just rely on *ex post* accountability. Third, voting only gives people the opportunity to hold government "outside," or "externally," accountable. Voting citizens send representatives to the capital, although they do not take part in the duty of government.

Citizens in formal representative democracies have little real power over the government. The fact that there aren't usually multiple worthy candidates vying for a given post is the last issue with elections. The degree to which elected officials are required to inform and answer to their voters is greatly diminished in such circumstances.

### 3.2. Social Accountability

Governments alone can significantly increase accountability by enacting measures like performance contracts, professionalizing employees through civil service reform, bolstering top-down oversight, empowering internal comptrollers, and establishing new, independent public oversight agencies. However, when society actors are also at the center of the accountability reform movement, the results are much more favorable. "An approach towards building accountability that relies on civic engagement, i.e. in which ordinary citizens and/or civil society organizations participate directly or indirectly in exacting accountability," is how the World Bank defines social accountability (Enaifoghe & Adetiba, 2018).

Initiatives that fit into this category are somewhat diverse. Citizens are involved in a variety of initiatives, such as administrative procedures acts, social audits, participatory budgeting, and citizen report cards (Enaifoghe, A. (2023)). Efforts aimed at social responsibility fall under the category of government oversight and control. Being able to "oversee" every aspect of government action is nearly impossible due to its vast scope. There is a cap on the amount of audits that comptrollers can complete. Ombudsmen for human rights are limited in the quantity of complaints they may handle. Legislators are limited in the number of government programs they can investigate. Although authorities and budgets can be increased, the overseer will never be able to monitor every little detail of government actions (Enaifoghe et al., 2023a).

There is no one all-knowing "god's eye" perspective that can be used to manage the state machinery. Therefore, bottom-up "fire alarm" systems must be used in addition to such top-down "police patrol" monitoring tactics (Crevani, 2018). According to McCubbins and Schwartz, "police patrol" oversight refers to the conventional approach used by supervisory agencies to make sure the people they are tasked with monitoring are always under observation. On the other hand, "fire alarm" supervision happens when an organization depends on outside parties to identify issues (i.e., "sound the alarm") and then concentrates extra effort on the areas that are given special attention.

Society is everywhere, even though a roving police cruiser could happen to come across a thief or a burning structure. Beer et al. (2019) asserts that this is an added benefit to society. Society doesn't even need to take action in every situation to be sensed because it is present everywhere. Public personnel are frequently kept under control by the simple prospect that society might raise an alarm or take other, more disruptive actions. Regrettably, despite society's ubiquitous presence, it frequently exhibits apathy and dormancy. It is a well-known fact that spectators are incapable of solving problems on their own, especially in highly developed urban environments. There are several instances of rings of interested onlookers that provide little to no assistance to accident, heart attack, or thievery victims. Furthermore, civil society is not always as "pure" as popular perception has it to be.

Any authority granted to society runs the risk of being appropriated by powerful interest groups and criminal organizations, who solely seek out advantages for themselves and their groups. The opportunity for society to improve governmental accountability is great. However, this force does not necessarily materialize in the most fruitful forms or come alive automatically. Pro-accountability business owners must create systems that support putting this potential into practice and give priority to social actors who serve the general welfare. Context is vitally important. There isn't a single "magic bullet" or unique formula for developing social responsibility programs that work. As we'll see in Section 5, the social and political backdrop will always determine the optimal course of action.

### 3.3. Accountability in Society

Section 2 defines civic engagement as "a proactive process by which public officials inform about and justify their plans of action, their behaviour and results and are sanctioned accordingly." This section looks at the various ways that civic engagement can improve government accountability. Additionally, it examines how social accountability interacts and enhances the other three pro-accountability reform tactics. Therefore, the conversation goes well beyond

merely reviewing the social accountability category to encompass a more comprehensive examination of how civic involvement can play a key role in a "accountability system" as a whole. Six key distinctions can be used to represent the range of behaviors that fall under the umbrella term "social accountability".

The relative importance of punishment versus reward-based systems, rule-following versus performance-based mechanisms, institutionalization level, degree of involvement, inclusivity of participation, and government branches. Any pro-accountability reform can be assessed using a number of these distinctions. For example, the distinction between reward-based and punishment-based systems in the first category would be relevant to both social accountability projects and Weberian reform assessments. However, the main goal of this section is to use these characteristics to comprehend the range of social accountability projects that practitioners might choose from. Incentive Structure: Reward-Based versus Punishment-Based Systems Most people most often link accountability with punishment.

According to this viewpoint, a government that is continuously subjected to the scrutiny of a government auditor, a public demonstration, or a reporter prepared for the next controversy involving corruption. One of the most important aspects of responsibility is punishment. In a perfect world where everyone is treated equally and bureaucrats are completely honest, the concept of accountability wouldn't need to have such "teeth." However, given the nature of humans and the vast social, political, and economic disparities that exist, punishment is in fact required to ensure morally upright and productive behavior. Naturally, the issue arises from the fact that severe penalties often cause public servants to become terrified and immobile.

From the standpoint of adhering to the law, this might be advantageous, but it frequently works against the goal of enhancing government performance. Rewards are not without challenges. They may encourage officials who are already quite honest and proactive to do even better, and they may even persuade subpar workers to change their ways, but they are not very effective at changing the actions of the "bad apples."

There are just too many opportunity costs involved for these officials to be persuaded by little incentives. Corrupt officials are likely already making a lot more money than they could through any award program. Despite the potential lost benefits, a great number of incompetent authorities have already decided to prioritize their leisure over their profession. Social accountability is frequently perceived as lying more on the reward side of the spectrum than the punishment side. This is because we frequently equate social mobilization with rage and protest, with social groups that oppose the government and aim to hold politicians accountable for wrongdoing or for adopting specific policy stances. These kinds of things do matter.

However, social accountability also works well when it is based on positive collaborations between the government and civil society. According to a recent World Bank report on the issue, "citizens are mobilizing globally, often locally, to demand better services." By counting instead of yelling. ensuring that their governments fulfil their commitments and use their money wisely (World Bank, 2004a: 2). Yelling is frequently successful. It's frequently the only option available to civil society. However, establishing "state-society synergy" agreements that benefit both parties can provide even greater benefits (Ackerman, 2004b). The Citizen Report Card is one instance of a social accountability system that is built on a positive-sum, rewards-based understanding of accountability.

Worldwide, the use of this device is increasing. The World Bank has recently provided funding for report cards in Peru, Uganda, Albania, and the Philippines. In addition to the World Bank, some Indian cities and the Ukrainian municipal presidents have adopted the methodology. The scorecard that Public Affairs Centre (PAC) in Bangalore, India organized in 1994 and subsequently repeated in 1999 and 2003 is the experience that sparked this wave of innovation. The report card approach has come under fire for being based on an inherently simplistic understanding of politics and ineffective bureaucracy. Certain accountability systems, for example, "can be considered 'weapons' only if the politicians and bureaucrats in question are ignorant of the service-delivery problems in the first place," according to Robert Jenkins and Anne Marie Goetz.

In actuality, the majority are already aware of how poor public facilities are in India's slums (Jenkins and Goetz, 1999: 619). Maybe this is going a little too far. Despite its flaws, the scorecard is unquestionably a "weapon." Still, Goetz and Jenkins make a valid argument when they say that merely giving public employees a performance grade is insufficient to encourage them to do better. Tougher measures that directly question and discipline public personnel and agencies who perform below expectations should be implemented in addition to such measures. Generally speaking, the ideal "accountability system" combines rewards and penalties, giving public servants significant incentives to do their best work while abiding by the law.

Government pro-accountability reformers should consider combining "tougher" tactics, such as the establishment of an independent anti-corruption ombudsman who has the authority to directly sanction or prosecute government officials, with "nice" tactics, such as scorecards and surveys, when designing their initiatives.

### **3.4. Responsibility for Performance-Based Mechanisms**

The responsibility mechanisms that is based on performance in a so-called "Old Public Management" and its emphasis on creating a Weberian bureaucracy based on logical action and a well-organized chain of command are related to a concentration on rule compliance. Governments typically oversee these tactics, but society can also be a significant player in pro-accountability campaigns of this nature. For example, Transparency International and its many national chapters work specifically to ensure that governments adhere to their own laws on contracting,

construction, procurement, and other areas. A singular focus on regulations has the drawback of rapidly escalating into excessive bureaucratization, so impeding service delivery and fostering inefficiency. Nevertheless, there are also systems that aim to promote successful performance.

This is the central claim of the so-called "New Public Management" (NPM), which holds that governments should switch from strictly process-based evaluation to results-based evaluation to speed up government action and foster creativity. Performance evaluation has been a key component of the standard auditing procedure in numerous northern and southern countries throughout the past 20 years (Cornwall, 2004). When assessing the effectiveness or "quality" of government services, society can have a significant impact. In this context, reforming the police, health care system, and education are crucial. There are numerous instances of prosperous school councils (World Bank, 2003a: 62; 5). It has also been demonstrated that community supervision of nearby health facilities is quite successful (World Bank, 2001: 14).

Additionally, there has been a significant reform wave in community policing in recent years (Vivier & Sanchez-Betancourt, 2020). Of course, focusing only on performance has its own set of issues. Technically speaking, there might be a trade-off between "accountability for performance" and "accountability for rule following," sometimes known as "legal accountability" (Ackerman, 2004a). This is in fact what is known as "the accountability dilemma," according to Robert Behn (Behn, 2001). The latitude that gives bureaucrats the ability to concentrate on output and come up with innovative solutions to issues could also create more opportunities for fraud. However, it seems that this danger is mitigated when civil society actors are watchful, as they typically keep a close eye on both procedural and performance indicators at the same time.

The most effective tactics for promoting accountability are those that concentrate public participation on both upholding the law and enhancing performance. For example, both of these features are present in the citizen engagement described in Goetz and Jenkins's research on India (Goetz and Jenkins, 2001). They describe how local rationing committees were established in Mumbai to ensure that local store owners complied with financial regulations and provided premium rations to their patrons. In this instance, citizens are acting as both watchful observers of the legitimacy of the mechanism used to supply the goods and ethical customers (Enaifoghe et al., 2023b). Institutionalization Level Ad hoc initiatives are typically the norm when it comes to involving society to increase government accountability (Enaifoghe, 2022).

The campaigns started by civil society activists and supported by well-intentioned public officials who respect and value democratic engagement. Such tactics almost seldom become permanently incorporated into state legislation or other institutional frameworks. According to Walter Eberlei, when the ideas of civic engagement and society participation are discussed, a particular "event culture" usually takes hold (Bentley, Pugalis & Shutt, 2017). Many public servants appear to think that these ideas just mean holding a number of workshops, consultations, and hearings—not starting a sustained, inclusive conversation with civil society. Participatory procedures can be institutionalized in the state at three different levels.

Firstly, government agencies can incorporate participatory mechanisms into their strategic plans and mandate rules and procedures requiring "street-level bureaucrats" to interact with society actors through consultation or other means. Secondly, specialized government organizations might be established with the aim of guaranteeing public involvement in government operations or serving as intermediaries responsible for establishing connections with members of the public. Third, laws requiring specific agencies or the government to include social actors at particular stages of the public policy process might incorporate participatory techniques. The third level of institutionalization is highly unusual, but the first and second levels are roughly equal in frequency.

#### 4. Conclusion

The main political process behind social responsibility is intricate and non-linear; change happens frequently and gradually in tiny steps that add up to one another. It requires an iterative approach with continuous adaptive learning, especially in circumstances when capacity is limited and political systems are uncertain. Though not always or everywhere, there are many instances of how social accountability initiatives have enhanced the quality of services provided and the bonds between the state and its people. One of the main reasons why there are often more failures than successful instances of the use of a particular social accountability technology is that different contexts offer different opportunities, entry points, and possible paths for social accountability.

There are no certain tools or techniques that work every time, therefore the quest of global best practices appears pointless. Understanding the political and economic context is the first step in designing an intervention since it is likely to produce better results when the "optimal fit" for a given environment is found. Nonetheless, it has often been demonstrated that the establishment of coalitions between the state and civil society, bolstered by constructive public engagement, is essential to the accomplishment of social accountability initiatives. Not that more adversarial types of citizen activity aren't appropriate; on the contrary, they might even deepen state-society partnerships by providing them with leverage.

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