

# HOW CAN CSOS AND GOVERNMENT COLLABORATE TO ENHANCE GOOD GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY?

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## Lay out

- ✓ Introduction
- ✓ Definitions of key terms
  - CSOs, Governance and Good Governance
- ✓ The need for Stakeholders engagement Strategy in promoting Good Governance
- ✓ 10 Tips on EFFECTIVE stakeholders engagement for CSOs-Government collaboration to enhance Good Governance
- ✓ Collaboration possible but inadequate; Field Experience and reflection: Examples from PF (at the National and YPC (at Local Level)
- ✓ Challenges: CSOs -Government collaboration in enhancing Good governance
- ✓ Recommendations
- ✓ Conclusion

## Introduction

Tanzania and many other African Countries are still confronted by serious governance challenges ranging from abuse of power and lack of accountability by public officials, prevalence of corruption, gender blindness, systemic impunity in favor of powerful individuals and institutions to inadequate peoples participation and questionable representative bodies, to mention a few!

All these detriments are greatly considered to be a reason for aggravated poverty and social injustice in these countries which are in contrast place in a continent endowed with numerous natural resources suitable for an exemplary economy.

This continent may not attain a broad –based growth and improved quality of life without making a step ahead in expansion, promotion and consolidation of all elements and necessary ingredients for Good Governance namely; Transparency, Accountability, participation, Rule of Law, efficient and responsive Government

Since the tap of Good Governance is TAP (transparency Accountability and Participation) ,it is important to underscore that at this era of expansion of democracies ,Good Governance will only exist in both theory and practice if citizens are empowered to participate in meaningful ways in decision-making processes. Citizen participation will hold leaders and executives accountable and force them to act transparently under the law and responding to the needs of the citizens where they derive their mandate. Active and Vibrant civil society will make government operations more transparent, to foster accountability among government officials, and to empower citizens so they might fully participate in governance

It should be remembered that while The World Leaders at the 2005 World Summit concluded that “good governance is integral to economic growth, the eradication of poverty and hunger, and sustainable development. The views of all oppressed groups, including women, youth and the poor, must be heard and considered by governing bodies because they will be the ones most negatively affected if good governance is not achieved”, the Tanzania’s third pillar of the National Strategy for Growth and Reduction of Poverty (NSGRP)-Governance and accountability provides a bedrock for fighting income poverty and improving quality of life and social wellbeing.

These statements on Governance brought and still are still bringing a lot of hope to citizens that there are a lot of public goods we should expect and hopefully which we have previously noted from improved Governance.

However we should not forget that, it is always risky to only rely on Governments to deliver this, it has to be demanded by citizens through organized groups, famously referred to as civil society Organizations (CSOs). On the other hand the Government should not work in isolation; it must relate, engage and work with other stakeholders particularly the CSOs to effectively enhance Good Governance. Most CSOs have made and are still making significant contribution to Democracy building in Tanzania.(Tarimo 2005). This however should not dismiss the fact that not all CSOs work for governance outputs as it is clear that even in the 21<sup>st</sup> century majority of the NGOs remain fixated on services and subcontracting roles; a tendency which defeats the purpose of a vibrant civil society. So a combination of services and advocacy work would quicken the results.

Appreciating the obvious fact that Tanzania has produced the PPP (Public Private Partnership) policy, this is a readily door that needs active and Vibrant Civil society organizations who definitely have a stake in Government policies and operations to open ,dialogue and influence.

This brief presentation stimulates a discussion about the need for a deliberate and sustained stakeholders engagement strategy by the State organs and from the side of the Civil Society organizations, the result of which elements of Good Governance will be reflected in all political and social –economic endeavours.

Before embarking on the central discussion, definitions of key terms is provided and the concluding remarks are done after a little field reflection by Policy Forum (PF) and the Youth Partnership Countrywide (YPC) in working at the national and Local/community level.

## Definitions

*‘We cannot be effective if we don’t know who we are as civil society. We cannot strengthen what we cannot see, cannot describe’* (David Bonbright (2011), Chairperson, Board of Directors, CIVICUS: World Alliance for Citizen Participation)

This statement by David Bonbright is an emphasis to make sure we describe who are we as CSOs and what Good Governance that we want to enhance is.

CSOs, are an acronym which stands for Civil Society Organizations. These are organizations founded by democratic free will of citizens which serves for community sake, do not seek profit and have no direct control over the country. According to concise English dictionary, CSOs are organizations which are not belonging to or associated with any government. Soanes and Stevenson (2003). These are groups or individual citizens who represent different sectors of society in exclusion of and independent from the government’s control.

In order to be more precise, the London School of Economics has added to say CSOs include Non Governmental organizations (NGOs), Faith based organizations (FBOs) and the Community

Based Organizations (CBOs). They also include Professional associations, Trade unions, Social movements, Business associations, coalitions and advocacy groups, and self help groups.(London School of Economics ,2006)

In a liberal democracy, Political Parties are also included.

## **Governance and Good Governance**

*Governance* is a value free term which simply means how the affairs of the state are managed. It is the style, approach and kind of public deliverables that qualifies a good or bad governance. Schortz and Hofmeister (1997) .Therefore *Good Governance* can simply be referred to as Management of public affairs and resources in a way that benefits the majority

## **10 Tips on EFFECTIVE stakeholders engagement for CSOs-Government collaboration to enhance Good Governance**

- ✓ Formulate a sound Stakeholders engagement strategy and reinforce it by institutionalizing consultative sessions such as Working groups and the like
- ✓ Maintain Open -two way communication with stakeholders
- ✓ Be sensitive to Stakeholders needs and concerns
- ✓ Seriously consider stakeholders views when making decisions
- ✓ Treat stakeholders equitably
- ✓ Facilitate training programs for capacity building CSOs/elected officials
- ✓ Recruit a permanent and readily accessible liaison officer responsible for stakeholders engagement

- ✓ Make Governance data accessible to CSOs
- ✓ Regularly organize information meetings to which stakeholders are invited
- ✓ CSOs Create or strengthen your own space with clear agendas in addition to honouring Government invitations so that your voices can be boldly heard

**Collaboration possible but inadequate;**

**Field Experience and reflection: Examples from PF (at the National and YPC (at Local Level)**

The African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) :Organization and process document outlines the importance of a fully inclusive consultative process and this has been reinforced in the APRM document titled *Objectives, Standards, Criteria, and indicators for the African peer Review Mechanism (OSCI)* which states

The Overarching goal of the APRM is for all participating countries to accelerate their progress....this can only be achieved through the sustained efforts of the country itself, involving all stakeholders. It requires that each country develops a program of action...to guide all stakeholders in the actions required by all –government, private sector, civil society -to achieve the country’s vision (OSCI, 2003)

Regular consultations with these stakeholders as it is done under Electoral Management Bodies in DRC, Ghana and South Africa will provide a room for the Government to directly be advised

The Government may work with CSOs as partners to implement various activities.

## I. At the National Level

- ✓ Produced together with Preventing and Combating Corruption Bureau (PCCB) a popular version of the Anti-Corruption legislation. 40,000 copies were printed in 2010/11
- ✓ YPC Participated making of Implementation Strategy for the National Youth Development Policy, which was organized by the ministry of youth development.
- ✓ Produced various analytical think-pieces and policy briefs e.g Citizens' Budget 2011/12
- ✓ Last year, we produced a TV spot sensitizing citizens to participate in the constitutional review processes. Tume ya Walioba were involved and they had invaluable inputs.
- ✓ Various invitations had been extended to PF e.g PER/GBS and other Gv/Donors/CSO's dialogues
- ✓ The Government Issued a Circular through the Prime Minister's Office Regional Administration and Local Governments (PMORALG) instructing all local authorities to provide CSOs with Governance information

## II. At the Local Government level

- ✓ YPC under the auspices of the Action Aid Tanzania trained Councilors on Good Governance and basics of PETs in 2011 and 20 12
- ✓ Various invitations had been extended to YPC to attend district and Regional consultative meetings
- ✓ YPC have extended several invitations to Local authorities both executives and elected officials
- ✓ YPC through the Kibaha Network of CSOs encouraged Kibaha Town Council officials and Councilors to appear at the feedback session when the SAM report was tabled
- ✓ YPC produced and distributed Governance infrastructures such as Notice boards and Filing cabinets to 24 villages across the entire Kibaha in Coast Region in 2012.



## Challenges: CSOs –Government collaboration in enhancing Good governance

- ✓ Some CSOs may be ‘difficult’ for reasons that are legitimate, such as the Government’s failure to treat them with fairness, respect and impartiality.
- ✓ Others may simply be difficult for reasons such as personality clashes and past misunderstandings.
- ✓ Some stakeholders could be afraid of making mistakes during the interaction process
  
- ✓ Bureaucracy in accessing public information
- ✓ Little knowledge on some processes within Government structures such as the budget processes
- ✓ Little knowledge on who does what in which section of the Government and so one issue may take you to several without a tangible response
- ✓ Sometimes elected representatives at District level decide to side with the executives when serious questions are asked
- ✓ Many Citizens including CSOs officials don’t adequately turn up public meetings convened by Local authorities at Village and Mtaa level hence missing the chance to influence.
- ✓ Not all CSOs are focused in Good Governance outputs but the Government want to speak to a network and not every individual NGO, the case of Kibaha Town Council and Coast Region.

## Recommendations

- ✓ Governments should foster close cooperation with CSOs to ensure their support for its policies and programmes and to strengthen CSOs confidence in what the Government is doing;

- ✓ Governments and CSOs need to undertake consultative activities that will help understand the expectations of each other and other stakeholders
- ✓ A Government strategy for dealing with each individual stakeholder should be guided by the attitude of each stakeholder towards the Government
- ✓ A relatively low-cost way in which Government/CSO can foster its stakeholders' awareness of its activities and build their loyalty is through a sustained effort of promoting open communication and dialogue; This could be by sharing its publications such as annual reports, financial reports and newsletters with all stakeholders,

## Conclusion

Since the tape of Good Governance is TAP (Transparency Accountability and Participation). Good Governance cannot be exercised where CSOs are politically passive concentrating only on service delivery, Not turning up in invited spaces -public meetings, village assemblies and other public forums. CSOs are better placed to make sure they meaningfully participate in organized national consultative sessions and local public meetings organized by their local leaders so as to be informed and take a step ahead by contributing ideas and asking accountability questions. Through this active engagement CSOs can collect evidence and build up advocacy cases to hold their government accountable for their daily responsibilities

Necessary social skills such as lobbying, advocacy, negotiation and policy and budget analysis skills must be developed so as to

have meaningful and informed participation when engaging local and central government policy makers and bureaucrats..

However CSOs should be aware that while planning to promote Good Governance in public offices, a deliberate effort must be done to first of all make their organizations transparent, accountable and participatory.

And on the question of mistakes, a mistake is an opportunity to be better, and to show remorse and a lesson learned. This is how civilization progresses.

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