Role of social accountability in promoting women's leadership and gender transformative change

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Leadership for Inclusive Development

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Overview of presentation

1 Women's exclusion in service delivery and leadership

2 Our research project

3 What is 'social accountability' and 'gender transformative change'?

4 What could 'gender transformative social accountability' be?

5 Enablers and barriers to women's leadership

6 What is leadership in 'gender transformative social accountability'?

Women's exclusion in service delivery and leadership

- Poor access to basic WASH services

- Women often excluded from basic WASH services and decision-making on management of water resources

- Social accountability strengthens governance and improved levels of service

- Gendered perspective often absent in social accountability

- Gap in understanding whether social accountability leads to recognition of women's knowledge and value of women's leadership

Photo Credit: World Vision Bangladesh, Annual Report 2017

Our research project

- Three year research partnership ISF-UTS, World Vision Bangladesh and University of Rajshahi

- DFAT Water for Women Fund Research Award

- Linked to World Vision Bangladesh's SHOMOTA Project: strengthening gender equality and social inclusion in WASH

- Co-creating model of 'gender transformative social accountability' (GTSA)

- Iterative and adaptive learning practice of GTSA by World Vision Bangladesh

- Evaluating change outcomes

Bangladesh

Regions of operation:
- District of Gaibandha
- District of Jamalpur
- District of Satkhira

Water For Women   World Vision

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Social accountability

- Strengthened citizen voice will lead to increased state accountability

- Focus on citizen empowerment and participation

- *Citizen Voice and Action* is World Visions' social accountability approach which aims to mobilise and equip citizens to monitor and advocate for the improvement of government services

Photo Credit: World Vision Bangladesh, "Citizen Voice and Action Interface Meeting"

Gender transformative change

| GSI blind/ harmful | → | GSI aware | → | GSI Responsive/ accommodating | → | Transformative |
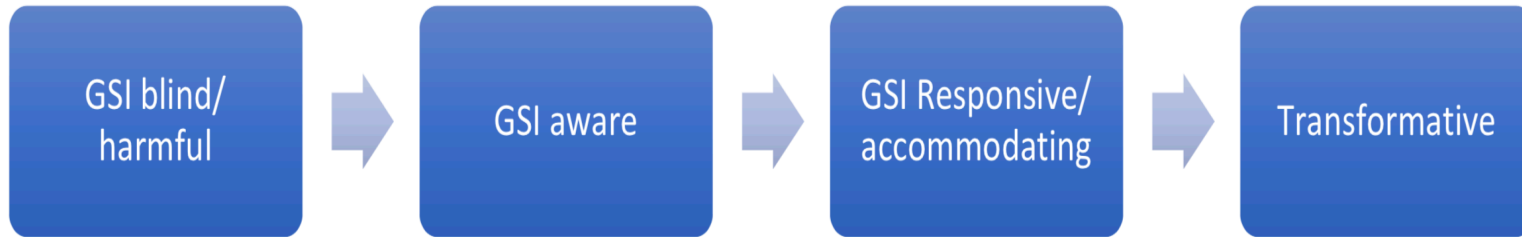
- Targets the structural causes as well as symptoms of inequality

- Works in multiple spheres

- Long-term and non linear

- Change influenced by diverse set of actors and events/ interventions
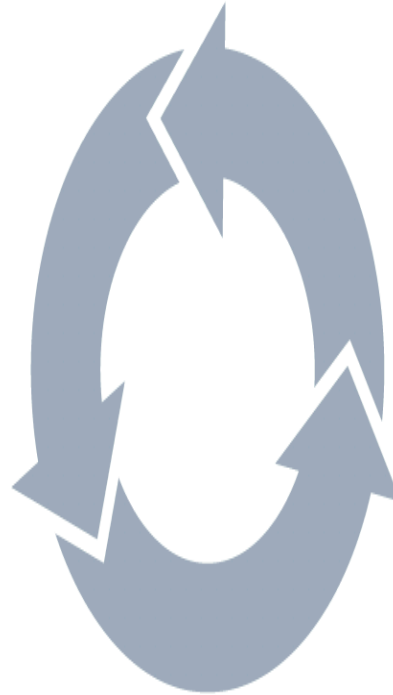

Photo Credit: World Vision Bangladesh

Gender transformative change

Household

Local public arena

Broader public arena

BUILD AGENCY

Building consciousness, confidence, self-esteem and aspirations (non-formal sphere) and knowledge, skills and capabilities (formal sphere).

CHANGE RELATIONS

The power relations through which people live their lives through intimate relations and social networks (non-formal sphere) and group membership and activism, and citizen and market negotiations (formal sphere).
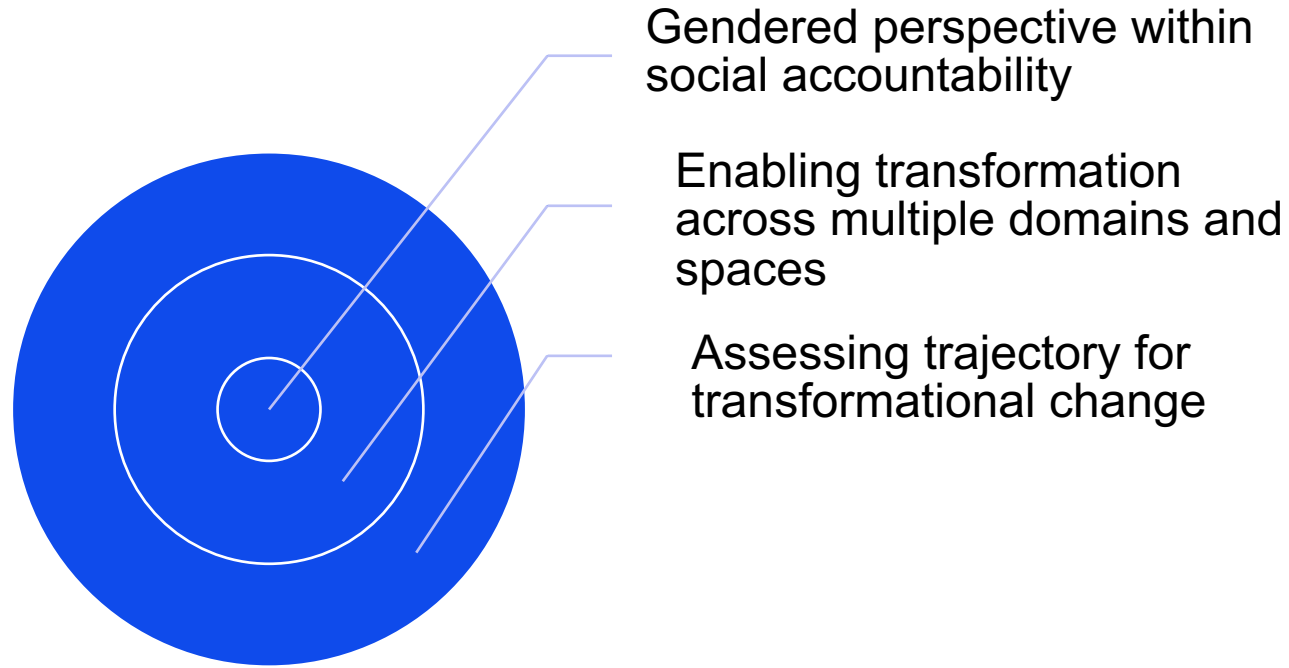
TRANSFORM STRUCTURES

Discriminatory social norms, customs, values and exclusionary practices (non-formal sphere) and laws, policies, procedures and services (formal sphere).

CARE's Gender Equality Framework, (CARE, 2018, p.6)

What could 'gender transformative social accountability' be?

Gendered perspective within social accountability

Enabling transformation across multiple domains and spaces

Assessing trajectory for transformational change

Agency. Voice. Responsiveness. Accountability. Answerability. Shared responsibility. Relationships of solidarity. Gender Justice.

Photo Credit: World Vision Bangladesh, "Citizen Voice and Action Community Scorecard"

What are the potential enablers of women's leadership and inclusion?

- Willingness to work in development

- Increase literacy rates

- Examples for encouraging women's participation

- Changing social attitude towards participation

- Modern perceptions towards role of women

- Information communication technology (ICT)

- Creative thinking & potentiality

What are the potential barriers to women's leadership and inclusion?

- Movement is restricted

- No involvement in decision making process at household level

- Not able to raise voice and claim rights

- Always busy with domestic works

- Act as a care giver of children as well aged people

- Religious superstitions

- Facing health hazards

- Family pressure and overburden

- Prohibited to touch utensils during MHM

- Violence against women

Leadership in gender transformative social accountability

- Premise women's voice and decision-making role recognising existing in inequalities

- Leadership in both private and public spheres / informal and formal leadership

- *Inter-est'* which provides the means to consider what lies between different groups and what could bind them together

- Combing leadership through dialogue and transformed relations

Photo Credit: World Vision Bangladesh

Key messages:

- Social accountability is an effective approach that strengthens governance and improved levels of service

- There is a gap in understanding whether social accountability leads to recognition of women's knowledge and value of women's leadership

- Gender transformative social accountability offers a means to consider direct contribution and longer-term impact to changes in gendered relations

- Women's leadership in social accountability is informed by changes for women and also men in both public and private spheres

- Women's leadership offers opportunity for dialogue, transformed relations and shared interest

Further resources

- Hillenbrand E, Karim N, Mohanraj P, et al. (2015) Measuring gender-transformative change: A review of literature and promising practices.

- DFID PPA Gender Learning Partnership, (2015) 'What works to achieve gender equality and women's and girls' empowerment?'

- Cornwall, A., Rivas, A. (2015) From 'gender equality and women's empowerment' to global justice: reclaiming a transformative agenda for gender and development Third World Quarterly Vol. 36, Iss. 2, 2015

Thank you

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