

Social Accountability: Governance Scenario in the Health and Education Sector

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ABSTRACT Over the past few years there has been a growing concern in the development sector about the efficiency and effectiveness of resource-use by governments. This has led to the growing recognition that accountability can effectively contribute to improved governance, increased development effectiveness through better service delivery, and more importantly, citizen empowerment. However, despite large social sector expenditures, accountability of the system towards the citizens remains a dream yet to be fulfilled. The present paper attempts to analyze factors that may contribute to good governance and effective implementation of government programmes drawing inferences from field study undertaken in three states of the country namely Kerala, Bihar and Uttarakhand. Vital key factors were identified, which are necessary for successful implementation of a programme and strengthening of social accountability mechanisms, primarily - development of a mechanism on information exchange and continuous dialogue between community and programme functionaries; secondly, ability of stakeholders to actively look for accountability of the programme functionaries and policy makers; thirdly, ability and the willingness of functionaries be accountable to public. In addition to these, an enabling environment for promotion of social accountability, political freedom to promote accountability and lastly, open debates on issues of concern, economic basis and financial viability of civic engagements, and values, norms, and social institutions for constructive engagement are required, thus leading to building an environment where government is accountable to its citizenry and citizen's have the will and the capacity to demand it.