END OF STRENGTHENING **PUBLIC ACCOUNTABILITY AND INTEGRITY SYSTEMS (**SPAIS) FINAL PROJECT REPORT

SUBMITTED TO:

UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM (UNDP)

BY

HEALTH NGOS NETWORK (HENNET)

Contents

Acronyms

HENNET	Health NGOs Network
BAPA	Buenos Aires Plan of Action
CSOs	Civil Society Organizations
CVA	Citizen Voice and Action
FBOs	Faith Based Organizations
M&E	Monitoring and evaluation
NGOs	Nom-Governmental Organizations
SA	Social Accountability
SMS	Short Message Service
SSC	South-South Cooperation
SSTC	South-South and Triangular Cooperation
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme

1. Executive Summary

Strengthening Public Accountability and Integrity Systems (SPAIS) was a six (6) months pilot project implemented by HENNET with funding from UNDP. The project targeted Mombasa and Nairobi Counties.

The project aimed at enhancing citizen engagement and participation of civil society organizations to inform the public, monitor service delivery and promote public accountability (targeting the health sector).

This was to be achieved through Strengthened citizen participation and engagement of citizens in Government processes, well-coordinated health sector players and improved knowledge on Social Accountability by citizens, CSOs and governments**.**

The projects realized several achievements that included enhanced capacities of the beneficiaries, coordinated forums, engagement of the selected health stakeholders, and development of tools for social accountability, media strategy and overall pushing for accountability in the health sector both in Mombasa and Nairobi counties. Through the projects initiatives, the project has been able replicate accountability initiatives at the national level also. This was made possible as the organization utilized media in dissemination of its findings and as we utilized the findings to advocate and call upon the policy marker to ensure that they are accountable.

There was improved coordination amongst the health players in the two counties, who are able to engage with the policy makers and advocate for improved Service delivery. The media team were also embedded in the whole arrangement and continued increasing visibility on Social accountability and Public Participation in the health sector,

Additionally HENNET developed Media strategy which is being applied in all other Projects within the tenents of HENNET programming.

Apart from the achievements COVID-19 pandemic containment measures disrupted the harmonious implementation of project activities compelling HENNET to use virtual platform throughout the lifespan of the Project.

Good work has started and it would be critical for SPAIS to be continued to protect the gains that have been realized in this 6(six) months pilot period.

Our final report will focus on a situational background, progress towards development results , contribution to longer term results, progress towards project outputs, a human Interest story, cross cutting issues, gender results, partnerships, environmental considerations, sustainability, South to South and Triangular co-operation, strengthening national capacity ,monitoring and evaluation, risk management ,challenges, lessons learned, conclusion and way forward and finally present a financial summary .

2. Situational Background

 The SPAIS project was founded on citizen engagement and social accountability which is aligned to the 2010 Constitution's provisions on "public participation".

The Constitution of Kenya 2010 in promoting social accountability, Article 174 advocates for active engagement of the citizens, communities and other non-state actors in governance processes. Further, Article 10 identifies public participation as one of the national values and principles of governance. The legislature and executive at both national and county governments are required to engage individuals, governmental and non-governmental groups in policy making, monitoring and implementation. These requirements serve to strengthen the voice and capacity of the general public in demanding greater accountability from public service providers and decision makers. Additionally, Article 43 (1) states that Kenyan have the right to the highest attainable standard of health, therefore requiring the state to strive towards ensuring its citizens access quality health services.

In conformity with the Constitution, the Kenya Health Policy 2014 – 2030 indicates social accountability as one of the principles of health service delivery. The government has adopted Universal Health Coverage (UHC) as one of the big four priority agenda by His Excellency the President, with an aspiration that by 2022, all persons in Kenya will be able to use the essential services they need for their health and wellbeing through a single unified benefit package, without the risk of financial catastrophe. – PHC is a driver. These policies clearly demonstrate the commitments that the government has made to improving health. The issue therefore is, what is the extent to which the policies are implemented to improve the health of the citizens.

Over and above, the government has continued to increase budget for the health sector both at the national and county level. But all said and done, we have had serious challenges in the health sector among them being: massive corruption inadequate health worker, strikes by health workers strikes, stock out of health commodities, poor quality health services, delay in release of funds mostly by the national government to the counties, insufficient and poorly distributed health facilities in the country and emerging vulnerabilities such as new infectious disease outbreaks (COVID19 Pandemic) climate change-related disasters (floods, drought) among others. A number of state agencies and commissions have been established to monitor use of public funds and more so monitor malpractices and   further have the culprits dealt with. Though corruption allegations are too high these bodies have done very little as per the evidence and actions demonstrated.

The CSOs and the citizens are very keen and desire to see accountability in action for this is only way citizens can enjoy quality health services in Kenya. However both the citizens and the Health CSOs are faced various challenges too. Internally, HCSOs face unhealthy competitions, lack of co-ordination, ,insufficient knowledge on accountability, to both citizens and CSOs. The civil society in most cases are reactionary to government issues as opposed to being proactive towards the national agenda due to lack of capacity, evidence generation to guide them in their roles. There is also poor structures that can enable them to participate in public initiatives. On the other hand, funding for social accountability it is still hopeful, with many donors still seeking to understand how and where they can support its efforts most effectively.

HENNET has committed to elevating and achieving UHC in our 2020-2025 Institutional Strategy, with advocacy and accountability as major mechanisms to achieve these goals.

1.0   Progress towards development results

The SPAIS project aimed at enhancing citizen engagement and participation of civil society organizations to inform the public, monitor service delivery and promote public accountability in Mombasa and Nairobi Counties in Kenya
The importance of citizen engagement was a useful strategy that sought to strengthen accountability in service delivery, mitigate risks, and anticipate problems at the health services of the County Government and National Government levels. There has been increased involvement of the CSOs in the operations and decision making of the Nairobi and Mombasa County Government and demand for more openness. The open and public nature of the two County Government procedures including in project identification and implementation has opened up the government to greater scrutiny and hence accountability. The public can now question procedures and circumstances surrounding County government action and make concrete suggestions on the issues of governance. This is hoped to reduce the chances of corruption, embezzlement of public funds and other unethical activities.

 In Mombasa County, CSOs have been very vocal on public participation and even sued the County Government for passing the County Public Participation Policy without their inputs. The Court directed that the policy be subjected afresh to public participation. Following this development, Health CSOs wrote a memoranda on issues they wanted covered in the policy. The County Government obeyed the court order and returned the policy for more public scrutiny. With this development the county government of Mombasa embarked on meeting the constitutional and legal requirements of citizen participation in governance as per the County Government Act 2012 [10] section 87. This development has brought about a notable improvement in development levels at the health sector in the county. It is now appreciated that there is some level of positive change in health facilities projects initiated through consultation and successfully implemented under their watch as tangible evidences of improved living standards.

CSOs have also indicated that public participation has indeed become a critical window for the public to engage with the county government. The formerly 'unfriendly' and 'inaccessible' government is now available and approachable. This has enhanced the citizens' sense of self-worth and bolstered their patriotic feelings. The constant awareness and exposure of the public to government procedures and activities has created an enlightened CSOs that can critically follow up on government initiatives. Although this is still limited in scope, its growing gradually as citizen participation is sustained. Improved Awareness of Government Programs and the involvement of the citizens in governance has increased their levels of knowledge and awareness of government programs and procedures. This in turn has produced CSOs who are able to offer positive and informed suggestions on government projects and thus improved service delivery

NMS requested to have a physical meeting with the Nairobi CSOs to plan for effective public participation through civic education on the citizens. This collaboration with the NMS and County Government is set to step up civic education as a crucial ingredient of good governance and is hoped to enhance public service delivery in the health sector. Generally the project has enhanced partnership between the CSOs, FBOs, private sector and MoH at both county and national level as they promote accountability in the health sector.

2.0   Contribution to longer term results

2.1   Progress towards project outputs

After implementation of the planned activities there was observed Strengthened citizen participation and engagement of citizens in Government processes, a Well-coordinated health sector that is able to undertake their roles effectively with enhanced knowledge on Social Accountability

The project resulted in strengthening the voice of civil society in Nairobi and Mombasa Counties in anti-corruption activities. Health Civil Societies involved in the project are able to effectively engage with the Policy Makers and demand for dialogue aimed at increasing health services. During the review of the SPAIS project, many of the CSOs indicated that the skills and substantive knowledge they acquired through the training have elevated them to a different level in their interaction with governments as well as other stakeholders., The beneficiaries considered gained considerable knowledge/ expertise and are invited by governments to meaningfully engage in the public participation process like in a case of Nairobi County where Nairobi Metropolitan services invited Nairobi Accountability Champions to discuss public participation program for the city. Moreover, this impacts CSOs' convening power with other stakeholders who consider the government's invitation as a sign of trust and credibility.

The Communities were involved in the project and shared their views using bulk SMS that were analyzed and results shared –one such results was ineffective public participation processes at the County level where Top-bottom approach is used as oppose to bottom up.

The Mombasa and Nairobi Health CSOs and champions involved in the SPAIS project are now well coordinated and this should be continued. They are jointly advocating for improved health service delivery as oppose to silo efforts that were not yielding good results. A joint work plans was participatorily developed and is guiding their engagement beyond the end of the pilot phase.

The project helped in creating a platform for a dialogue between civil society and governments. The substantive knowledge acquired through the trainings has contributed to the creation of an entry point for CSOs to interact with governments in order to establish a relationship of trust such. Although limited in scope, these first initiatives have succeeded in strategy development for tackling corruption in the health sector. Nonetheless, CSOs referred to the difficulty in tackling such a complex sector and have called for further support and capacity development. Overall, the programme has resulted in knowledge transfer at the micro level (CSOs) and macro level with a sharing of that knowledge with other stakeholders. Subsequently, CSOs' increased convening power is translated in the net result of a wider stakeholder engagement in anti-corruption activities and impacting on human rights and good governance.

The current concern with accountability and health systems reflects several factors. First is dissatisfaction with health system performance. This has centered on cost issues, quality assurance, and access availability and equitable distribution of basic services, abuses of power, financial mismanagement and corruption, and lack of responsiveness. CSOs and citizens want health care providers to exercise their responsibilities professionally and correctly according to regulations and norms, and with respect for patients. Second, accountability has taken on a high degree of importance because the specialized knowledge requirements, along with the size and scope of health care bureaucracies in both the public and private sectors, accord health system actors significant power to affect people's lives and well-being. Further, health care

constitutes a major budgetary expenditure, and proper accounting for the use of these funds is a high priority. The role of social accountability in good governance through both horizontal accountability and vertical accountability has been identified as being critical. Horizontal accountability involves setting up government procedures and public policies, though vertical responsibility includes public systems for authorizing responsibility, both previously and amid the activity of public authority, and incorporates subject groups and an energetic autonomous media. This vertical accountability prompts a more extensive comprehension of good administration, requiring consistent give and take between the state and society.

Hybrid of Social Accountability tools have been designed by the Project to help integrate a series of health indicators. The tools integrates aspects of Community Score card, Social Audit, budget Tracking and Public Expenditure which we believe will give us better results in the next phase of the Project

Media training was important. A well informed media has a powerful role to play in promoting social accountability, amplifying the voice of the citizens, facilitating the dialogue between the citizens and the state, acting as a sounding board for government policies, and fulfilling the watch dog function to protect against abuse of power. What need to be done better for the media to play a prominent role in holding the government accountable, it needs to have a functioning infrastructure, professional skills and editorial independence.

Media Engagement Policy was developed during this pilot period to guide engagement with the media teams. This is now become a key HENNET document that is being used in other advocacy projects being implemented.

Social Media using tweets became a major tool for raising important Social accountability issues to a wider audience targeting youths.

Evidence Based advocacy also formed part of the Project where fact sheets developed on Facts on Utilization of COVID-19 funds that was shared in the National Print and Social Media and demand for action on the related corruption cases demanded by HENNET. Follow ups are being made on what kind of action the Government is taking on those who are adversely mentioned and are culpable.

2.2   Human Interest Story

AUTHOR: BEATRICE KWAMBOKA: MY STORY ON: THE POWER OF EFFECTIVE CO-ORDINATION OF THE HEALTH CSOs; DEMONSTRATION OF MOMBASA & NAIROBI COUNTIES UNDER THE SPAIS PROJECT IN KENYA.

This is a human interest story from Beatrice Kwamboka a 35 year old lady from Kariobangi South Community in Nairobi who was involved in the SPAIS project and shared her one of the issue that she found very pertinent during the life span of this project.

She had the following to say "I participated in all the SPAIS virtual meetings and I enjoyed the work we did together as Health sector stakeholders as we sought on how to promote accountability in the sector. I want to first and foremost to thank HENNET for co-ordinating us through this process. We were able to all meet and we started it all by getting to understand the purpose of the project, we developed a joint work plan and we used it to guide us throughout the period. One issue that really made me to appreciate and note the power of co-ordination was when we had planned to engage with Nairobi Metropolitan Service (NMS) which was a new structure in Nairobi, it was not easy to know how we could engage with NMS but when we approached them under the umbrella of HENNET NMS gave us an opportunity to have a meeting. We held a meeting and through this NMS it was agreed that we should :

1. Enter into a Memorandum (MoU)   to assist us engage in a more organized way.
   2.   It was stated that as we serve with NMS we will set up a health forum which will be shared by NMS and co-chaired by HENNET
   3.   As I represented HENNET I sought to know from NMS whether they have a Public Participation Strategy and NMS promised to check whether this strategy exist and then get back for us to know the next steps .

 Generally, through co-ordination as CSOs we were able to engage with the County Health Leadership and under these well-coordinated meetings we all participated and gave our view on how well we thought we could improve services in the sector. I found this very helpful because unlike before we would find individual organizations seeking for a meeting separately and one organization would secure the appointment and one would miss or would get the opportunity later and having nothing new to share with the government officer but repeating what the earlier CSO had shared. This in it would make the officers feel that we were "wasting their time" Due to this co-ordination, many CSOs supporting the Health agenda have requested that we have HENNET chapters operationalize the accountability operations in all the 47 counties of Kenya.

Photo during a meeting organized Ms. Kwamboka during the NMS meeting representing HENNET during a discussion on Health agenda in Nairobi County.

3.   Cross Cutting Issues

3.1   Gender results

The Project was gender sensitive and undertook affirmative action to ensure that there was balanced representation of both women and men in the Project Implementation activities. For example among the 20 Champions 12 were men and 8 women

Social accountability is concerned with increasing citizen engagement, especially for marginalized or vulnerable groups. In the pilot phase there was balanced gender representation in project interventions. However, there is little consideration of the gendered nature of voice, accountability and empowerment in current. social accountability programme in the targeted Counties of Nairobi and Mombasa Women, children and adolescents continue to face poor health outcomes, despite the wealth of commitments and frameworks that are in place to foster the respect, protection and fulfilment of women's, children's and adolescents' right to health. Ensuring the wellbeing of women, children and adolescents is at the center of the Sustainable Development Goals, universal health coverage, and a range of United Nations strategies, initiatives, declarations, commitments and guidelines. Yet progress at the national level has been uneven, and inequalities in reproductive, maternal, newborn child and adolescent health.

SPAIS project purposely coined tweets messages to discuss gender related issues for instance asking questions whether the health facilities constructed are gender sensitive and women/girls friendly.

The Project provide equal opportunities for both women and men to voice their issues during meetings and that's why Kwamboka became an icon in the project and honored by the County Government of Nairobi.

3.2   Partnerships

The Project built partnership with   partners drawn from Ministry of Health both at the National and the two selected counties, Health CSOs and FBOs, consultancy firm, private sector and media and the general population in Mombasa and Nairobi in as much the project only targeted 20 HCSOs.

Building trust between stakeholders is central to the success of social accountability. Often, informal processes are key to creating vitality in the formal processes. The involvement of coalitions of NGOs through HENNET and other key stakeholders brought about many benefits, including: breadth of skills and experience, the pooling of risk, and facilitating the communicating of key messages from local to national level.

3.3   Environmental Considerations

The role of civil society actors in promoting social accountability is particularly relevant to the Kenyan context because of the emphasis on the need for good governance to enhance social and economic development. Social accountability mechanisms that strengthen links between the state and citizens form a critical foundation for on-going effort to develop democratic institutions that enable economic growth and human development. These mechanisms are important for limiting corruption, a problem all stakeholders acknowledge as a mounting challenge in the Country. Environmental consideration for social accountability seeks:-

- Analyze conditions that influence the ability of citizens and their organizations to promote accountability of public institutions; In this regard the project sharpened the stakeholders knowledge on Social accountability and Public Participation and the teams are able to analyses the prevailing Context using evidence based approach
- Identify priority areas for policy, legal, regulatory, and institutional reforms to improve these conditions; *Mombasa County Public Participation Policy was reviewed by the Champions and views Considered. Once accented by the Governor, the Framework will improve public participation processes*

The issues above applies a civic engagement program to assess the enabling environment: the factors and conditions that would allow Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) to promote public accountability. This program recognizes five enabling elements of civic engagement, namely, the ability of citizens to: Associate to further their purposes; mobilize appropriate Resources; exercise their Voice; gain access to Information that is relevant, timely, and accessible; and Negotiate with government through established mechanisms and rules of engagement.

3.4   Sustainability

SPAIS projected engaged with the local Health Civil Societies that are already working their respective Counties and having running Programs. The implication here is that the HCSOs are able to continue with project activities beyond the life time of the project.

Additionally the HCSOs developed a joint plan that extends beyond the lifespan of the project and this will definitely guide the implementation of the Project as SPAIS pilot phase ends.

Involvement of the County Government Health Department and the buy in of the project will make the Social accountability engagements easier and sustainable. In the Program with more permanent structure i.e. County Health Management Committee will ensure continued.

HENNET developed instruments such as Media engagement Strategy that will still be used by the organization and players to guide on how to engage with the media teams

3.5   South to South and Triangular Cooperation

During SPAIS project implementation, HENNET invited a Panelist from America Professor David Monda who teaches Political Science, American Government and International Affairs at City University of New York - York College. His doctoral training is situated at the intersection of Comparative Politics and International Relations with an emphasis on migration policy. His research interests center on transnational migrant communities, civil society/social movements, securitization of narratives around terrorism and comparative electoral politics. This research has included field work and research in Belize, South Africa, Brazil, Kenya and Argentina. Outside academia he enjoys scuba diving, playing soccer, chess and travel to exotic corners of the earth." Supported by local experts they facilitated on "How can the health CSOs promote anti-corruption and social accountability in the health sector in Kenya?" The webinar was conducted through digital means and attended by over 200 CSOs drawn from all parts of Kenya.

 The experts shared their different perspectives about corruption in Kenya, the roles of CSOs in preventing Corruption and provided possible solutions amongst the solutions were to have the CSOs:

1. Develop coalitions with partners regionally, continentally and globally to fight corruption in the health sector.
2. Deepen collaboration between tertiary institutions and CSO industry players. Making networks between academics in the classroom and practitioners in the field.
3. Establishing think tanks at universities as centers for training, research, networking and problem solving for a range of stakeholders.
4. Develop networks with Kenyan diaspora communities in North America, Asia, the Gulf and Europe to provide material, networking, technological and lobbying support to the Kenyan CSO community fighting corruption in Kenya.

3.6   Strengthening national capacity

SPAIS project was County based, however HENNET due to the fact that we work very closely with the Ministry of Health at both the national and county levels and that we are a recognized partner in the health sector we were able to advocate for the need of enhancing accountability, public participation, and other principles of good governance during   National forums, Social medium which has no boundary was extensively used to address corruption. Need for accountability in Kenya were shared through print media and a position paper shared with the National Ethics –Anti- Corruption Committee. HENNET developed a fact sheet COVID 19 funds and disseminated the findings at all levels.

4.   Monitoring and Evaluation

HENNET ensured that there were monthly plans and reports that formed part of monitoring project performance on a monthly basis. UNDP staff in charge of SPAIS project continued to have weekly Check in meetings to establish the progress and challenges and provide recommendations for the next steps.

HENNET organized monthly planning and reporting meetings with all the staffs to receive progress, challenges and recommendations shared under the leadership of the Chief Executive Officer(C.E.O)

At the end of the pilot phase HENNET organized review meeting with the participants to review achievements, challenges using a structured evaluation tool. The responses are analyzed and Review report produced. One major recommendation is that the participants found the project sustainable, relevant and based on felt needs. Due to this the beneficiaries recommend that this pilot project should continue and further be up-scaled in all the other counties and at the national level too.

5.   Risk management

Some of the risks encountered during the Project implementation and Mitigation are tabulated below:

	RISK TYPE	MITIGATION
1	COVID-19 Pandemic Containment measures	Use of Virtual Platform
2	The stakeholders who are supposed to drive SAc lack capacity while others lack goodwill in promoting this practice for the SA	Advocacy on the importance of advocacy and building capacity on SA
3.	Government resistance due to fear on accountability topic and results	Engagement of Government officials in the Project proactively
4.	SA for health work in Kenya is not well coordinated leading to loss of opportunities	Established platforms and documents to ensure co-ordination
5.	There is no mapping or network of those who are engaged in social accountability at the national and in all the 47 counties which can lead to duplication of efforts and lost opportunities to find synergies in learning and practice.	HENNET has established county chapters as platforms out to promote SA.

6.   Challenges

There are a number of challenges in the social accountability program and include:-

- Though public participation is a mandatory and continuous process for the county governments, it has faced some challenges in that most citizens and even stakeholder in the health sectors do not participate well due to lack of capacity and lack of an enabling capacity for effective public participation. Funding for social accountability programs is often inadequate, and some counties have not given such programs adequate consideration especially when preparing county integrated development plans. In addition, although the structures of social accountability exist, in some cases there is little commitment to making them work, and citizens feel locked out especially when meetings are postponed and there is no timely communication.
- Public participation is not an ingrained culture among the public officials, and this has seen delays in release of adequate and timely information to citizens. Moreover, awareness on social accountability among the citizens is low, and this has made it difficult to hold public officers accountable even in misuse of funds;
- Many of the accountability mechanisms continue to focus on 'vertical accountability' where citizens hold government to account through direct channels, which has created a dynamic of 'us' (civil society) against 'them' (government). In response, decision-makers have often taken steps to reduce transparency by limiting information-sharing and raising walls of suspicion rather than bridges of trust;
- Effectiveness of social accountability in Kenya is dependent on the extensiveness and character of the civil society organizations. Though there are efforts within the civil society organizations to mitigate these limitations by collaboration and building alliances and constructive networks, the civil society's authority, legitimacy, credibility and effectiveness are challenged as a result of poor approaches, poor accountability approaches and assertions of manipulation by some donors.
- Efficiency of social accountability mechanisms employed by CSOs in Kenya are affected by their scale, short-term nature, use of differing methodologies and platforms as well as over-reliance on external donor support.
- Though civil society organizations strive to seek an active voice in the planning of the local development, formulating of budgets, demanding government accountability in local resources allocation, enhancement of revenue and tracking its use, there is limited evidence on how these social accountability mechanisms actually have a demonstrable impact on improving governance
- COVID-19 pandemic was a real challenge throughout the project lifecycle and this made the SPAIS to undertake virtual approach for implementation of Project activities.

7.   Lessons Learned

Some of lessons learnt include:

- Bringing various stakeholders together for open and candid discussions on accountability for health issues, as they articulate most practical strategies to address the challenges.
- Corruption is the greatest enemy in the health sector both at National and county levels and it is caused by lack of accountability and in ability of the citizens and CSOs to efficiently hold the leadership to account
- Citizens, CSOs , Government and all stakeholders in the health sector must pursue accountability if the health sector will become profitable as it ought to be the health right in Kenya
- Media is an important stakeholder who is able to disseminate and escalate the issues to all levels; making community and leaders aware of the situation
- Co-ordination through well-structured platforms enables the stakeholders to engage well and to speak in a united voice. Co-ordination also makes it easy for the different players to have common issues discussed, for the CSOs they are able to identify advocacy issues and address them together. They also share the issues in one documents and they also do not bombard the government offices with appointments and duplicated messages/issues. HENNET for this project was the platform through which the CSOs submitted their documents through. Proper co-ordination also gives the CSOs an opportunity to review, propose or in unity track issues, track policy implementation, budgets in terms of allocation release and utilization. With this kind of co-ordination, all the CSOs are able to receive information on an equal basis with each other hence reduction of un health competition.
- Engaging community members together with duty bearer, health champions and citizens to share responsibility for monitoring service usage and outcomes may produce greater transparency and active dissemination of information, but can also increase follow-up action.
- Social Accountability initiatives that incorporate multiple program components often prepare an enabling environment for program activities. For example, conducting discussion activities, like forums – where citizens, duty bearer, and health committees collaborate to design standards and monitoring instruments prior to implementation – has been effective for creating a collaborative environment and removing barriers to participation;
- Strengthening voice and accountability require longer-term commitments than those usually made in project planning.
- Building relationships with key strategic actors (both state and non-state actors) over the long term seems essential to ensure positive outcomes, as is helping to build strategic alliances between key actors and within civil society, whose voices are heard and levels of inclusion in participatory processes are fundamentally shaped by power as well as cultural norms and discrimination.

8. Conclusions and Ways Forward

To enhance social accountability, those in leadership positions need to actively engage the public by providing adequate time and resources for public to participate in the governance processes. It is also important to build capacity of the citizens and other non-state actors to understand their role in devolved governance. There is also need to train state actors to appreciate the essence of meaningful engagement in social accountability processes.

Easy and timely access to verified and authentic information is critical in ensuring that all stakeholders are adequately informed for productive engagement. Moreover, a clear mechanism for public participation and communication channels between the citizens and county officers will enhance knowledge and understanding of the development issues and public processes. While public institutions and County Governments require enabling systems, mechanisms and frameworks to be in place, the extent to which social accountability achieves the intended objectives largely depends on how the public is organized and informed on the issues they seek to influence.

Way forward

- Stakeholders should collaborate to develop civic education programs to inform citizens of their rights to civic engagement and the key role of CSOs in social accountability initiatives.
- Social Accountability strategies should be complemented and implemented.
- Citizen Voice and Action(CVA) for Government Accountability and Improved Services CVA would be important to strengthen SA program in Kenya. The program would be aimed at improving health services among target beneficiaries.
- This would operate at multiple levels, enhancing information exchange, coordination, and cooperation among citizens and County Government, County Health Committees, and County Assemblies. At the beginning of program implementation, a civic education component will be conducted aimed to improve community knowledge of the services that the government is responsible for providing to citizens.
- This includes information about service standards, health indicators, and facility details to prepare citizens to engage in evidence-based discussions. CVA will also promote the use of community scorecards, which are filled out by both service providers and community members; the collected information offers a constructive opportunity to learn from different perspectives and address areas for improvement.
- Given the importance of CSO-media relations, CSOs should redouble their efforts to develop strong relations with various media outlets and individual journalists. Sound media relations would ensure publicity of civic engagement/social accountability activities
- CSOs should also enhance both outreach and accountability to instruct their constituents about their important roles and activities in social accountability;
- The next level of social accountability should involve CSOs applying practical tools to analyses the accountability in the health sector and use the information for advocacy.
- Co-ordination of the stakeholders promoting Social Accountability should be enhanced.
- The SPAIS project should be up-scaled for it will highly assist the citizens of Kenya to acquire knowledge, skills in the area dealing with accountability. There is also room to generate evidence and to track and generate reports on SA in the health sector.

As champions of social accountability, it is important that we work towards the graduation from the vertical 'us versus them' approach which reinforces otherness. Instead we move to a collective 'us', which emphasizes the partnership between civil society and government in working to achieve shared objectives. This process of building trust and relationships opens a pathway towards more transparency and therefore accountability.

If the role of civil society groups moves beyond the lodging of grievances to collaborating with government and service providers to find solutions, it will likely change power dynamics as they become part of the decision-making process and are no longer only 'right holders' but also duty bearers. In this, it is important that they continue to answerable to the communities that they represent so that these know and understand their rights, and are able to monitor those who represent them to identify gaps before they turn into chasms.

9.   Financial Summary

Without the financial resources granted by UNDP the SPAIS project would not have been successfully implemented..

HENNET was granted Kes. 3, 19,500 to support this work and that far cash at bank is Kes. 3,545.55.