Rights in Principle and Accountable in Practice: Child Rights and Social Accountability in the Post-2015 World
Accountability in the Post-2015 Agenda – Objectives:

A requirement to achieve equity through greater accountability of:

- States to Citizens
- Global Institutions to States
- Industrialized States to Developing States

State, community and the family share the obligation for realising children’s rights
Foundations:

What is accountability?
- The guarantee that duty-bearers perform their duty

Key requirements for the implementation of accountability:
- Setting performance standards
- Obtaining information on performance
- Judgments on performance vs standards
- Sanctions as a remedy for violation of children’s rights
Parties to Social Accountability:

• **State/Duty-bearer** responsible for:
  – Facilitation of an enabling environment
  – Supply of rights-fulfilling services

• **Citizen/Children/Rights-holders** responsible for:
  – Demand for adequate, available, accessible, acceptable and quality services
Types of Accountability:

Formal/Official

- Judicial (Courts)
- Quasi-judicial (Ombudsman, UN, HRC)
- Political (Parliamentary Committees)
- Administrative (Monitoring groups)

Informal/Unofficial

- Social (relies on civic engagement)
  - Obstacles for children’s participation are political, cultural and social status, and a dependence on adult intermediaries.
How accountability achieves results and narrows the equity gap – Remedies:

- Redress (rectifying service failures, providing alternatives, new social services)
- Sanctions or punishment (for responsible duty-bearer)
- Compensation (monetary damages)
- Guarantee of non-repetition (legislation reform, shift in public planning)
Social accountability in practice:

- **Mechanisms** (community committees, school committees, citizen observatories, child protection committees, watchdog groups)
- **Instruments** (data collection, Public Expenditure Tracking Surveys, inclusive budget planning, accessible complaints mechanism, civic reporting mechanism, local government monitoring mechanism, public hearings)
- **Capacity development** (for citizens to engage and service providers to respond)
- **Remedies** or outcomes of accountability demands
Key questions concerning social accountability:

- Essential preconditions?
- Impact on children’s rights: process or outcome?
- Scalability: from community to national?
- Extent of reliance on formal accountability to achieve results?
- Sustainability in absence of external support?
- Theory of change articulated?
Mind the gap – how to close in on equity:

• Approach accountability as a supply and demand dynamic
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