

**DFID Management Response to the Independent Commission for Aid Impact recommendations on:**

**DFID's Empowerment and Accountability Programming in Ghana and Malawi, October 2013**

ICAI Recommendation	Accept/Partially Accept/Reject	Action already taken	Action to be taken	Target date
<p><b>Recommendation 1:</b></p> <p>Promoting constructive community engagement with government around the delivery of public services and development programmes should be the principal focus of DFID's social accountability programmes and a shared goal with its sector programmes.</p> <p>When scaling up successful social accountability initiatives direct grants to national CSOs to work with local communities are likely to be more effective than competitive grant making.</p>	<p><b>Partially accept</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>We agree</b> that community engagement and social accountability objectives should be more consistently integrated in sector programmes. DFID has provided guidance to support country offices to identify potential links between social accountability initiatives and DFID's sector programmes.</li> <li>• <b>We disagree</b> that public services should be the principal focus of all our social accountability programmes. DFID has developed successful initiatives that have broader social and political goals, or focus on areas beyond public services and development programmes (e.g., India's National Campaign on People's Right to Information; International Budget Partnership; establishment of Brazil local councils).</li> </ul>	<p>DFID will review evidence of the effectiveness and impact of social accountability initiatives, update the empowerment and accountability Theory of Change and communicate across DFID business units an updated version and revised summary of current evidence.</p>	<p>July 2014</p>

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>We disagree</b> that direct grants to national CSOs will always be more effective than competitive grant making. We prefer to fund CSOs using mechanisms adapted to each country context.</li> </ul>		
<p><b>Recommendation 2:</b> DFID support for CSO advocacy and influencing at the national level should be more targeted, with smaller portfolios, longer partnerships and more tailored capacity-building support.</p>	<p><b>Partially accept</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>We agree</b> that in some countries this could be helpful. But <b>we disagree</b> that our support for CSO influencing at the national level should always consist of smaller focused portfolios over longer periods of time. DFID will continue to experiment in this field and evaluate our experience to find the most suitable strategy.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• See actions in Section 1 and 3 (updated evidence summary and new 5 year research programme).</li> </ul>	<p>See dates in Section 1 and 3.</p>
<p><b>Recommendation 3:</b> Future social accountability programmes should be designed with the flexibility to test different approaches and scale up successful initiatives. DFID's central policy team should guide this process of structured learning and ensure the continuous</p>	<p><b>Accept</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>We agree</b> that we should continue to test different approaches in order to scale up successful initiatives. Our current work includes a large-scale evaluation of our empowerment and accountability programmes. It will test our theory of change and examine our programming</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In addition to the evaluation, DFID will develop a multi-year, multi-country research programme. This will consider how to promote constructive community engagement in service delivery, and what social</li> </ul>	<p>Programme to be approved by December 2014</p>

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<p>sharing of lessons among country offices and managing contractors and with relevant sector programmes.</p>		<p>approaches on empowerment and accountability. It will incorporate a communications and uptake plan to support scaling up of successful initiatives.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The empowerment and accountability online resource is updated regularly to support cross-office learning.</li> </ul>	<p>accountability initiatives work in different contexts. Evidence will enable scaling up of successful initiatives.</p>	