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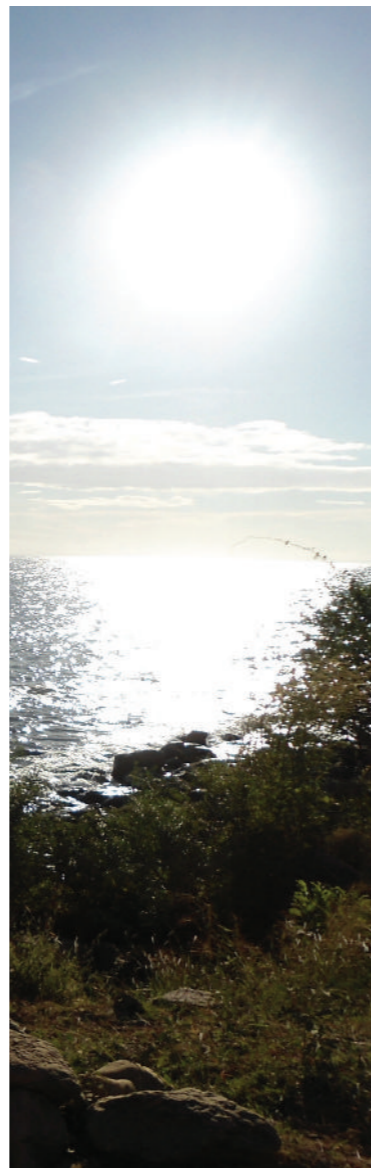
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Municipal Social Accountability Monitoring Program – MuniSAM
Newsletter, July 2013

Municipal Social Accountability Monitoring Program- MuniSAM

Dear Reader,

Welcome to the third Edition of our Newsletter of Municipal Social Accountability Monitoring Program (MuniSAM) implemented by Concern Universal Mozambique in partnership with National Civil Society Organizations and funded by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation - SDC.

In this edition, we include the 8th National Meeting of Municipalities held in Maputo City in March of 2013 and the Public Hearing conducted in April 2013 in the Municipality of Cuamba. You can also read about the use of digital stories in Monitoring and Evaluation and Learning of our Program. Technical support from personnel at the Institute of Development Studies (IDS), of the University of Sussex has allowed implementation of this methodology.

We also have Journalists Fernando Gonçalves of Savana and Suziane Rafael of Faisca to speak about the Public Hearing conducted in Cuamba last April. This was done in order to have external "eyes" assessing our job.

There are findings and a brief analysis of the impact of the Program at the level of Municipalities of Metangula and Cuamba - an update of the status in relation to the findings of the baseline survey. This material as well as further information about other Programs of Concern Universal Mozambique is available on our website: www.concern-universal.org.mz

Lastly, we have the first part of a reflection on the Right to Social Accountability in Mozambique in a words of Aly E. Lala, MuniSAM's Program Researcher.

Enjoy your reading!



**Paulo Gentil –Director of MuniSAM Program,
Concern Universal Mozambique**

In Cuamba - Municipality accountable to electors

By Fernando Gonçalves - An extract from his article in the Savana Newspaper, May 3, 2013.

Along these shores of the Indian Ocean where the paradigm of power reaches totalitarian proportions that blinds political leaders, sometimes the impossible, though rarely, becomes possible.

On one Friday in April, around a hundred and fifty residents of the city of Cuamba in the southern part of Niassa Province, northern Mozambique, challenged the dust from the red clay soil of the streets of their hometown and got together in a large room that once was a military maintenance workshop hole. The room nowadays serves as the main auditorium of the local branch of the Faculty of Agriculture of the Catholic University of Mozambique (UCM), and this room is often used for important events, such as the one that took place during the above mentioned Friday.

The Mayor, Vicente da Costa Lourenço is seated at the top of table, and the Chairman of the Social Accountability Monitoring Committee (SAMcom), Romão Victor Braga is on his left hand side. The Administrator of the Cuamba District, Manuel Cabral, local State officials, representatives of political parties and religious leaders are among those present. The occasion was the first session of the public hearing, where the Mayor and its councilors would undergo the scrutiny of citizens, through which they would have to account for their performance in the year 2012.



Participants in Public Hearing in Cuamba, April 2013

This is an innovative model of participatory governance. If successful, it has the potential to break the current leadership style, whereby once elected, most municipal leaders completely abandon their own electors and will return to meet them only to ask for renewal of their votes for the next five years.

IMPACT in Metangula

This subsection is the update on the status of the findings of the baseline survey conducted in May 2012 in the Municipality of Metangula.

| No. | Baseline Finding | Current Status |
|-----|---|---|
| 01 | Fear of interacting in a participative manner in the management of municipal affairs, mainly due to fear of consequent political connotations and possible social, political and economic exclusion. | Members of civil society through SAMcom (social accountability monitoring committee) have been interacting in the management of municipal affairs. However, as a result of this engagement some SAMcom's members have suffered accusations that they belong to the opposition parties. In May 2013 The Chairman of SAMcom of Metangula was selected to be part of the Electoral Observatory of Niassa Province. |
| 02 | Civil society has the perception that municipal authorities are unaware and/or do not acknowledge the role that civil society plays in the development of the Municipality. | Members of civil society have the perception that municipal authorities know but do not recognize in full its role in the development of the Municipality. |
| 03 | Ignorance about the juridical and legal instruments in force, the principles laid down in the Constitution of the Republic and other instruments related to social participation in the processes of public resources management and municipal management, more specifically. | On the part of civil society (SAMcom) this weakness started to be addressed through training provided under MuniSAM. Deficiency still exists on the part of the Municipal Council. |
| 04 | Ignorance about public resources management processes at the Municipal level, namely the strategic planning and resource allocation, budget execution, accounting, internal reporting and control, external audit, and policy and strategy review. | On the part of civil society (SAMcom) this weakness started to be dealt with through training provided under MuniSAM. Deficiency still exists on the part of the Municipal Council in relation to some processes. |

| No. | Baseline Finding | Current Status |
|-----|---|--|
| 05 | There is a lack of tools that make it possible to monitor each public resources management process. | Members of SAMcom equipped with social accountability tools. It is necessary to continue with monitoring to consolidate this knowledge. |
| 06 | On the other hand, members of civil society have the perception that their involvement in the planning processes do not produce any results. Civil society feels that their contributions are regularly and systematically neglected, thus creating feelings of frustration in relation to the process thus discouraging their participation. | SAMcom is certain that their involvement brings concrete results. Indeed, the pressure exerted by SAMcom has led the Municipal Council to implement (planned) activities that were not previously taken into account. Strong partnership with the Municipal Assembly making it possible to contribute to the planning process. |
| 07 | Civil society groups acting alone and not in an organized manner, especially the most vulnerable groups, such as women's groups, people with disabilities (in spite of potential contributions they can make and support they can receive at the country level). | SAMcom, established under MuniSAM, brings a new dynamics in the work of civil society groups in the Municipality. |
| 08 | Civic groups/groups of interest lack organizational skills to operate accordingly and to better represent their communities or constituents. | SAMcom, established under MuniSAM, brings a new dynamics in the work of civil society groups in the Municipality. It is necessary to continue monitoring in order to consolidate this process. |
| 09 | Lack of opportunities to interact and exchange experiences with other groups of Municipalities where civil society operates in a more organized fashion. | MuniSAM organized an exchange visit and interaction between SAMcoms of Metangula and other CSOs (including other SAMcoms). |

Some Results Achieved from the Implementation of the MuniSAM Program in Metangula

Discussions with the Municipality showed that there have been changes. Currently, the Municipal Council puts more emphasis on listening to difficulties faced by citizens at the level of neighborhoods. In the current planning process (for the year 2014) representatives (leaders) of neighborhoods were invited by the Mayor - ahead of the open presidency - to give them the opportunity to report the needs of the residents of the neighborhoods they represent. This will allow the Municipal Council to have an initial and more concrete idea about the existing needs and concerns, during the open presidency.

Technical staff of the Municipal Council started to be more cautious about inclusion of activities in the Economic and Social Plan of the Municipality and in the respective record of achievements (reporting). Moreover, some relevant information, such as the daily revenues and other revenues are now posted more regularly in all relevant buildings of the Municipality.

SAMcom has been structured in sectors corresponding to each branch of the Municipality in order that issues could be addressed in a more organized way. In relation to Year 2011 SAMcom work made it possible to identify (a) activities that were pursued and that were not included in the plans, (b) planned activities that were not undertaken, and (c) areas which caused concern to citizens and which were not taken into account in the Plans. Furthermore, SAMcom conducted a social audit of the 2011 plan; for this purpose, it shared its respective report with the AM and CM, but it had no opportunity to present the results at a public hearing.

Successes through SAMcom (social accountability monitoring committee) auditing in Metangula

- ✓ New access roads have been opened in the Municipality. Some roads had been declared as opened / rehabilitated but the work of SAMcom made it possible to identify those that had not been yet completed as well as to indentify new priority roads;
- ✓ The 2011 Plan included the construction of a porch for fish sellers at the central market. This work had not been carried out and the work of SAMcom made it possible to carry it out in 2012, and it is now completed;
- ✓ Work of construction of a wall at the residence of the Mayor was delayed and the same is now completed;
- ✓ Previously, garbage was put underneath electricity/lighting poles posing risks to infrastructures and human lives. Today, garbage is not put nor burned underneath electricity poles. A new area was identified to function as the Municipality landfill, where garbage is now disposed of;
- ✓ A significant part of the municipality is using electricity now (although there are still four neighborhoods that have no electrification);
- ✓ The waiting room for patients at the Hospital has been expanded for better comfort of patients;
- ✓ Acquiring a funeral car for Municipality was part of the Plan of the Municipality since 2011, but it had not been acquired. The said funeral car was recently acquired (2013);
- ✓ SAMcom put pressure to get the cooling system for the Morgue (hospital). Now, it has already been installed and is awaiting an inauguration ceremony - which took place during the visit of the Head of State in June 2013.

Some Results Achieved from the Implementation of the MuniSAM Program in Metangula (cont'd)

The level of involvement of civil society has changed. Civic groups/groups of interest were not playing their role as a channel of expression for citizens. SAMcoms are operating as spokespersons of citizens to municipal bodies. Participation at sessions of the Municipal Assembly has become more significant. According to the Chairman of the Municipal Assembly, Mr. Armando Miqueias, they (the members of SAMcom) "entered the process as advocates of those who have no way to get there and give their voice, so they entered as interlocutors between the rulers and the recipients of public services. Many things have changed, so has our relationship positively. We have learned many things, we have gained a lot of working experience; so many things have improved in our Municipality thanks to this Program".

Municipal Assembly has a strong connection with SAMcom. Members of SAMcom use evidences (including photos) brought from the field so that members of the Municipal Assembly start taking them into account during supervision of activities of the Municipal Assembly. Moreover, there is a relationship between these two players whereby SAMcom suggests concrete activities that should be included in the Plans of the Municipality. SAMcom is seen, therefore, as an important partner of the Municipal Assembly.

SAMcom has been able to influence the approval of plans of the Municipality regarding the most relevant activities and priority activities to be executed. Among the activities incorporated into the Plan of 2013 as result of the work of SAMcom, we would like to mention the following: identifying a space for construction of a kindergarten, and construction of two classrooms and an administration block (primary education) in the community of Capueleza.

SAMcom conducted awareness raising activities on the payment of taxes including municipal taxes. References - including the Municipal Council itself – show that the level of State revenues has been increasing as a result of these awareness raising activities (which are based on the principle that the Citizen should not only demand accountability, but also they must fulfill their obligations).

SAMcom brought a new approach in collaboration between civil society and the municipal authorities. It has also brought a new vision about which action civil society should undertake, and about the obligation of all citizens, from all neighborhoods, to participate in the monitoring of municipal management, despite existing challenges related to political connotation and persecution.

National Meeting of Municipalities

The 8th National Meeting of Municipalities was held from 25- 28 March 2013, where the implementation of the five-year plan was analyzed and participants discussed key opportunities of the process of establishing municipalities. Municipal Leaders from across the country (Mayors, Chairmen of Municipal Assemblies and representatives of the State in the Municipalities, among others) attended the Meeting.



Speaking at the Opening Ceremony, the President of the Republic, Armando Emilio Guebuza, named some of the challenges that the Municipal Administration have to cope with to have a better and more effective responsiveness to the concerns of local communities. And he added: "Indeed, the development and qualification of our cities require constant reinforcement of the ability to meet the challenges of modernizing them. Necessarily, it involves paying attention to the fundamental human rights ..."

It is recognized that in the course of the 3rd term of office of the local municipalities which is about to end, significant results have been achieved. These results contributed to improving living conditions of communities and widening the ongoing democratic process in the country. Nevertheless, many challenges still prevail for the next term of office, among which we would like to highlight some due to their importance in the context of our MuniSAM Program:

- **Establishment of greater coordination between the State and the Municipalities as regards the strategic planning;**
- **Monitoring the process of transfer of functions and powers from the State to the municipalities;**
- **Harmonizing strategic plans and other urban planning instruments;**
- **Promotion of the welfare of the citizens;**
- **Giving support in technical assistance and providing capacity building to technicians and to municipal officers;**
- **Preparing and submitting ratified legal instruments endorsed by local assemblies;**
- **Sanitation and supply of drinking water including rehabilitation of waste water and storm water sanitation systems in the Municipalities.**

IMPACT in CUAMBA

This subsection is the update on the status of the findings of the baseline survey carried out in November 2012 regarding the Municipality of Cuamba.

| No. | Baseline Finding | Status |
|-----|---|---|
| 01 | Fear (on the part of members of the Municipal Assembly and civic players) to interact in a more participative fashion and fear to question about how the management of municipal resources is carried out. Such fear is felt mainly due to possible political connotations as a result of such engagement and the possible stigma that may arise from this. | This fear no longer exists. Indeed, a strong partnership between SAMcom – Municipal Council – Municipal Assembly towards municipal public resources management has been established. This partnership also encourages participation of other civil society organizations towards interaction with municipal authorities. In May 2013, the Chairman of SAMcom of Cuamba was selected to be part of the Electoral Observatory of Niassa Province. |
| 02 | Perception that the Municipal Council of Cuamba does not fully recognize the legitimacy of the role played by the Municipal Assembly or civic groups under the five processes of social accountability and public resources management. | This perception no longer exists. |
| 03 | Widespread lack of knowledge about legal provisions in force, in particular, the Constitution, other legal instruments and opportunities related to civic participation in the public resources management. | This deficiency no longer exists. Knowledge was made available during training sessions of MuniSAM. The same needs to be consolidated. |
| 04 | Lack of knowledge about public resources management at the municipal level - for example lack of knowledge about needs assessment processes, strategic planning and budgeting, budget execution, accounting, internal reporting and control, external audit, supervision, and policy and strategy review. | On the part of civil society (SAMcom) this weakness started to be addressed through training sessions under MuniSAM. However, it needs monitoring. Deficiency still exists on the part of the Municipal Council in relation to some processes. |

| No. | Baseline Finding | Current Status |
|-----|---|---|
| 05 | Lack of tools and instruments for monitoring and engagement in each of the public resources management processes. | Members of SAMcom provided with tools for social accountability monitoring. It is necessary to consolidate this knowledge. |
| 06 | Members of civil society have the perception that their involvement in the planning processes to date does not produce tangible results or changes. Civil society members expressed the opinion that their contributions over the years have been systematically neglected, thus resulting in a feeling of frustration about the processes and discouraging their participation. | Currently, SAMcom believes otherwise. Indeed, the outcomes of MuniSAM so far have been satisfactory and beyond expectations. |
| 07 | Lack of organizational skills of civic groups to adequately represent their communities and to coordinate and make progresses in relation to their needs. | This deficiency started to be overcome, and SAMcom has been able to listen to communities at the grass root level and then channel their concerns to the Municipal Council/ Municipal Assembly. |
| 08 | In institutional terms, there are still challenges, including, among others, (i) effective communication within the Municipal Council, and between The Municipal Council, the Municipal Assembly and the citizens, (ii) technical and qualified personnel for the various municipal management functions, (iii) an official responsible for implementing the internal control function, and (iv) there is a small size budget which is not enough to provide municipal services more efficiently. | Measures have been taken to overcome this situation: (i) There has been better communication between the Municipal Council/Municipal Assembly and the citizens with SAMcom serving as a bridge; (ii) Several technicians holding specialized training have been hired by the Municipal Council, especially in the context of Administration and Finance; (iii) There is still no official responsible for the internal control function; (iv) The budgetary resources available are not yet sufficient. |

Some Results Achieved from the Implementation of MuniSAM Program of Cuamba

- SAMcom has been serving as a mechanism to make the voice of the citizens heard, especially those who, under normal circumstances, would not be able to communicate their concerns to the Municipal Council.
- SAMcom was structured in areas corresponding to each of the branches of the Municipal Council in order to deal with affairs in a more organized way. As far as the period 2011/2012 is concerned, the work made it possible to identify (a) activities pursued that were not included in the plans, (b) planned activities that were not performed, and (c) areas which were concerns of the citizens and which were not taken into account in the Plans.
- SAMcom conducted awareness-raising activities on the importance of paying taxes including municipal taxes. Mayor of Cuamba, Mr. Vicente da Costa Lourenço, said – “SAMcom helped us a lot in collecting revenue in ways that initially our ability was maximum 400.000,00 Meticais, but within the period in which we are working in coordination with SAMcom our revenue rose to 700.000,00 Meticais”.
- Municipal Council recognizes SAMcom as its partner in the municipal management process, not only in the analysis of activities already pursued, but also in the process of planning and monitoring of their activities.
- Following community hearings conducted by SAMcom, and at the request of the communities the Municipal Council is building classrooms in some neighborhoods where these classrooms are lacking and where the existing classrooms do not meet the appropriate standards for teaching children.
- In the initial phase of its activities, SAMcom managed to carry out an activity to raise awareness and ensure that public and private institutions offer accessibility to public buildings for people with disabilities (ramps).



Extract of MuniSAM Baseline Survey in Quelimane

Challenges that the Municipality of Quelimane has to overcome in relation to engagement in the municipal governance processes are:

- Fear exists (on the part of members of the Municipal Assembly and civic players) to interact in a more participative manner and to question how municipal resources are being managed.
- Widespread lack of knowledge about the juridical provisions in force, in particular, the Constitution, other legal instruments and opportunities related to civic participation in the public resources management.
- Lack of knowledge about public resources management – without any limitation – at the municipal level, particularly about needs assessment processes, strategic planning and budgeting, budget execution, accounting, internal reporting and control, external audit, supervision, and policy and strategy review (including the central, provincial and district levels).
- Lack of tools and instruments for effective monitoring and engagement in each of the public resources management processes.
- Civil society in Quelimane is mainly focused on interventions and initiatives outside the municipal territory exerting greater focus on districts outside the Municipality.
- A lack of organizational skills of civic groups to adequately represent their communities and to coordinate and make progresses in relation to their needs.
- In institutional terms, there are still some challenges to be overcome including (i) effective communication within the Municipal Council, and between the Municipal Council, the Municipal Assembly and the citizens, (ii) technical and qualified personnel for the various municipal management functions (iii) an official responsible for implementing the internal control function, and (iv) there is a small size budget which is not enough to provide municipal services more efficiently.



Chairman of the Municipal Assembly of the City of Quelimane, Afonso João:

“We are pleased to acknowledge that we will work in collaboration with civil society. From the outset, Concern Universal contacted us and advised on the objectives of this Program. SAMcom did not come to replace the Municipal Assembly. Participatory governance requires citizens to participate and express their opinions on the municipal governance. We are ready to cooperate. As a matter of fact, if it were not so, we would not be here.”

Reflecting on the Right to Social Accountability in Mozambique



Social accountability is the right that citizens have to get explanations and justifications on how public resources are managed by public authorities

The Mozambican juridical-legal framework is not oblivious to this dynamics and sets the right of citizens to participation. Such participation is provided for both in the Constitution of the Republic and in legislations (including, among others, municipal legislation, legislation on local bodies of the State). More importantly, when the

Constitution establishes as fundamental rights the right to information, education, health, housing and quality services, among others, it is stating that citizens should not, under any circumstances, be deprived of the same. It is at the same defined as a right to request information on how public resources are used to fulfill those rights constitutionally enshrined. It is recognizing the right to social accountability as an inherent right of the citizen provided for in the Constitution as a human right.

One of the major challenges that arises when we talk about social accountability and processes for achieving it is the fact that even though legislation refers to the right to the access to information, transparency and participation, this is not very

clear and detailed. However, how could this be done? We feel, somehow, that national legislation and policies still have to take a step further to determine, in a practical and clear way, how the right to social accountability can be exercised - and forgive our repetition – how can citizens effectively engage in defining their priorities, how can citizens monitor budget execution, how can citizens follow up on and monitor mechanisms that make it possible to prevent and correct situations of mismanagement and misuse of public funds and corruption, how can citizens monitor the performance of public authorities, and how can citizens have access to adequate information about all of these moments.

Despite progress made at various levels and dimensions, there is still a long way to go. During the launch of the Annual Program Report of MuniSAM in May this year, I remember hearing one of the distinguished participants saying that this type of interventions for better governance in Mozambique is not new. It is rather the result of a number of past efforts by self-sacrificing and dedicated people. And only now we are harvesting the benefits and results of this work. I would go further and would like to quote Sir Winston Churchill, saying that this is still the end of the beginning and that there is still a long way to go. I would also like to remind the reader that Social Accountability per se is not an end. It is, likewise only a means to an end: the full respect for human rights in favor of citizens under the Constitution of the Republic.

**By Aly E. Lala,
MuniSAM's Researcher, Concern Universal Mozambique**

Digital stories



In the context of implementing the MuniSAM Program, 6 staff of Concern Universal Mozambique have undertaken training in digital storytelling, training that was provided by IDS (Institute of Development Studies, University of Sussex). This methodology has been put into use with the purpose of strengthening the Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning system (MEL) of Concern Universal Mozambique. Digital story is a learning experience/invention aided by technology. They allow participants to create their own short film with voice, images and music.

Esvénia Viola is one of the trainers in digital storytelling within Concern Universal Mozambique. "Digital stories, unlike a documentary, human interest stories or other narrative method, bring an extra dimension because they are exclusively produced by the author. We, as trainers, do support the beneficiary-protagonist of the story in this process that requires veracity and authenticity of the experience on moments, actions and emotions that should be told in the first person. After watching digital stories produced by some members of the social accountability monitoring committees (SAMcoms) of Metangula and Cuamba, that I would like to provide you with the links:

www.concern-universal.org/neighborhood_of_hope
www.concern-universal.org/being_a_citizen_in_mozambique
www.concern-universal.org/fiscal_citizenship_in_mozambique
www.concern-universal.org/changing_times_in_mozambique
www.concern-universal.org/the_rubbish

I realized that this tool can be a gigantic stimulus to any monitoring, evaluation and learning system because this tool takes a person to places, moments and emotions never before experienced. On watching these stories around 3-4 minutes long we experience a whirlwind of feelings, questions, reflections and acquisition of valuable information and knowledge for any development process. Digital stories become the living part of the archive of an individual, a group of people or a community, as they can portray/tell us how a person, a group or a community walked along the road of life, adapted to the different challenges of life and changed over time. They can bring hope, reconciliation, they can connect us to moments and emotions experienced by other people, other nations, they can stimulate dialogue, and give us new perspectives and lead us to different phases of reflection over actions, attitudes, changes...

By: Esvénia Viola, Project Officer and Trainer of digital storytelling methodology, Concern Universal Mozambique