



Enabling Environment for Accountability Mechanism Through *Citizen Scoring* 2020

Introduction

The Citizen Scoring is now in 4th year consecutively in 2020. It has been introduced at Bhola in 2017 and practiced yearly since then. The Water Management Citizen Committee-WMCC at Bhola uses the Citizen Scoring to give feedback on the quality of services on WASH and IWRM by the duty bearers' thus enabling environment of accountability mechanism. Scoring by using Citizen Scorecard in Bhola is a civil society initiative targeting improvement of WASH and IWRM services.

The Community Score Card (CSC) is a two-way and on-going participatory tool for assessment, planning, monitoring and evaluation of services. The Citizen Scoring gathered citizen feedback on services of public agencies at Bhola same as before and shared with Bangladesh Water Development Board-BWDB, Local Government Engineering Department-LGED and Department of Public Health Engineering-DPHE. It has been an exciting way to increase participation, accountability and transparency between service users, providers and decision makers.

Objective of Citizen Scoring

The key objective of the citizen scoring is to engage the service providers of WASH & IWRM and the service recipients in a dialogue so that the quality of service can be improved by using the collected data and information. Making the government accountable and take steps for improving the quality of services considering SDG-6 is the strategic objective of Citizen Scoring.

Citizen Scoring Methodology:

A matrix tool has been developed to use the data for giving feedback and recommendations to service providers. This year the citizen scoring tool was ready to use for Water Management Citizen Committee at Bhola as this is fourth year of the approach. The CSO members were again given brief by DORP this year for refreshments about the roles and responsibilities of the service providers and citizen in a meeting. The performance of the service providers is observed or evaluate through the participation of maximum CSO members. For each topic the CSO gives a score of satisfaction along with explanations of such scores.

A ten-point (1-10) rating scale facilitated quantification of citizen satisfaction levels with regard to Citizen Charters of respective departments i.e. BWDB, LGED and DPHE. In this technique, the lower the score (1–5), the worst the service or project is; the higher the score (6–10), the better the service or project is. This year also the CS has been shared and filled up by the respective departments for scoring and analyse with the scoring of citizens. Later the Citizen Scoring has been shared with BWDB, LGED and DPHE along with citizen committee for support to improve the quality of services according to peoples need.

The CSOs namely Water Management Citizen Committee-WMCC and NGO Network (locally registered non-government organizations) have formed with socially-excluded and less-welcome citizens (Bede, coolie, disable, yogurt maker, water user group member, midwife, village doctor, etc.) as well as teacher, journalist, ex-government officials, ex-public representative, and social worker. Total 36 members of CSOs have consulted in a group discussion and voted on the mini-scenarios of respective departments.

Discussion on Findings

The main goal of the Community Scoring is to positively influence the quality, efficiency and accountability with which services are provided. And this scoring found out the sharp changes in services of respective departments on WASH and IWRM at present that meets its goal. Services to the people have been improved in all criterion of the

citizen scoring with few lacking which could be reduced through joint effort of citizen and service providers. Government's willingness and interest also reflected in the budget and if it approves then the lacking also can be addressed easily like the sanitation service. Now there are no allocations in any of the department for sanitation services. Although respondents seemed satisfied with services for providing support to community on Tube well installation and repairing, drainage, re-excavation of pond and canals need to be more focused in order to ensure usage of surface water more.

One must remember that Citizen Scoring is not about finger-pointing or blaming or even supposed to create conflict rather it provides immediate feedback to service providers and emphasizes immediate response and joint decision making thus solving the problems of community people. This is happening at Bhola now a day. The service providers are improving their services and it reflected in the scoring that if we see the changes over the years in the table it marked most of the criterion are in good situation and remaining's are in moderate. The improvement part is now very small that's why it does show in the graph without existence in the table actually indeed.



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It becomes a part of a government institution's monitoring and evaluation system, the departments check the feedbacks carefully and responding the concerns of citizens.

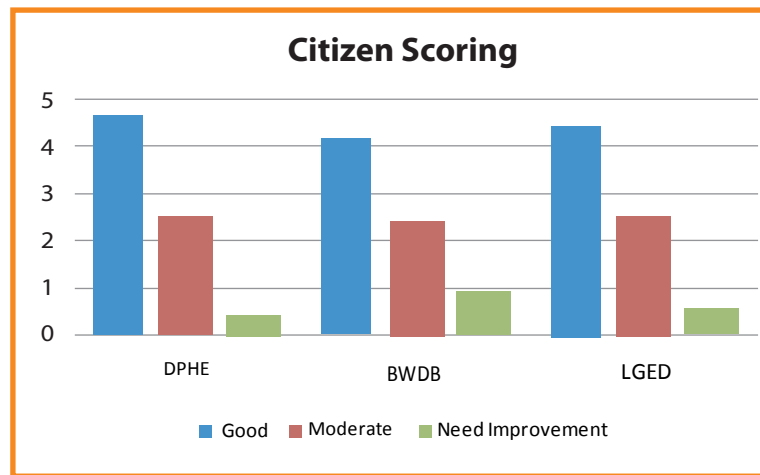
The citizen scoring has already promotes dialogue and improves relationship with the service provider as well as facilitates accountability, transparency and responsibility from service providers. It is also facilitating a common understanding of issues and solutions to problems so immediate responses are being made by the service providers. The most important thing is that this is helping to empower service users leading to community monitoring of services and increased community ownership of services and projects. The citizen scoring proves at Bhola that it is a stepping stone to improve service delivery and communication between service users and service providers.

Achievement

1. Reforms and changes take times but with active participation of citizens and influencing advocacy can bring forward the best services from the departments which have happened here at Bhola.
2. The Citizen Scoring has emphasis on accountability mechanism and community empowerment where in both cases the CSO has succeeded that reflected in the scoring by seeing changes in satisfaction.

Challenges

1. Due to different background of the CSO members it was not checked whether the understanding of every members were the



same and time was also a significant issue for participants.

2. Sometimes it becomes confronting for the citizen and service providers while sitting together to discuss these issues but better facilitation skill can overcome this challenges.

Lesson Learned:

The Citizen Scoring approach can be used to facilitate good governance through promotion of participation, transparency, accountability and informed decision-making which has reflected in the scoring. Service providers, especially government, have a constitutional responsibility to provide services in a manner that is respectful of the service users and will facilitate equal access for all. Similarly, communities have responsibilities in addition to their rights and should take responsibility and be accountable as well.

