

Understanding Social Accountability

What is Accountability?

- Answerability
- Enforcement
- Responsibility
- Accountability involves both an **obligation** of public officials and **rights** of citizens
- Public officials could be held accountable for their:
 - **Conduct**
 - **Performance**

Traditional “Supply Side” Accountability Mechanisms

- Political checks & balances
- Administrative rules & procedures
- Auditing systems
- Formal law enforcement agencies like courts and police
- **Vigilance Commissions**
- **Ombudsmen**
- **Privatization**

What is Social Accountability?

- An approach towards building accountability
- Driven by participation & civic engagement
- Citizens and their organizations participate directly or indirectly in exacting accountability
- Practice of citizenship – Active citizenship
- Complements 'supply side' accountability systems

Six Dimensions of Social Accountability

Incentive structure	Punishment	↔	Reward
Accountability for what?	Rule following	↔	Performance
Institutionalization	Low	↔	High
Involvement	External	↔	Internal
Inclusiveness	Elitist	↔	Inclusive
Branches of government	Executive	Judicial	Legislative

Approaches to Participation

- Historical approach
 - Traditional forms & mechanisms – castes, villages, tribal/indigenous
 - Voluntary, self help
 - Independent of external inducement
 - Modern forms and mechanisms – VEC, WSC, Village Council
 - Sectoral and projectized
 - Grassroots governance (through local governance)
 - Externally induced

Approaches to Participation

- Bottom-up approach
 - Stratification at the bottom
 - Focus on poorest of the poor and most marginalized
- Political & cultural meanings of participation
 - Beyond voters and consumers
 - Cultural meanings – sense of belonging & responsibilities – community, fraternity & kinship

Approaches to Citizenship

- Polarity 1: Individual & Collective
- Polarity 2: Rights & Obligations
- Polarity 3: Constitutional & Humanistic
- Polarity 4: Nation-State & Citizenship

Good Governance : Three Pegs



Why is Social Accountability Important?

**Improved
Governance**

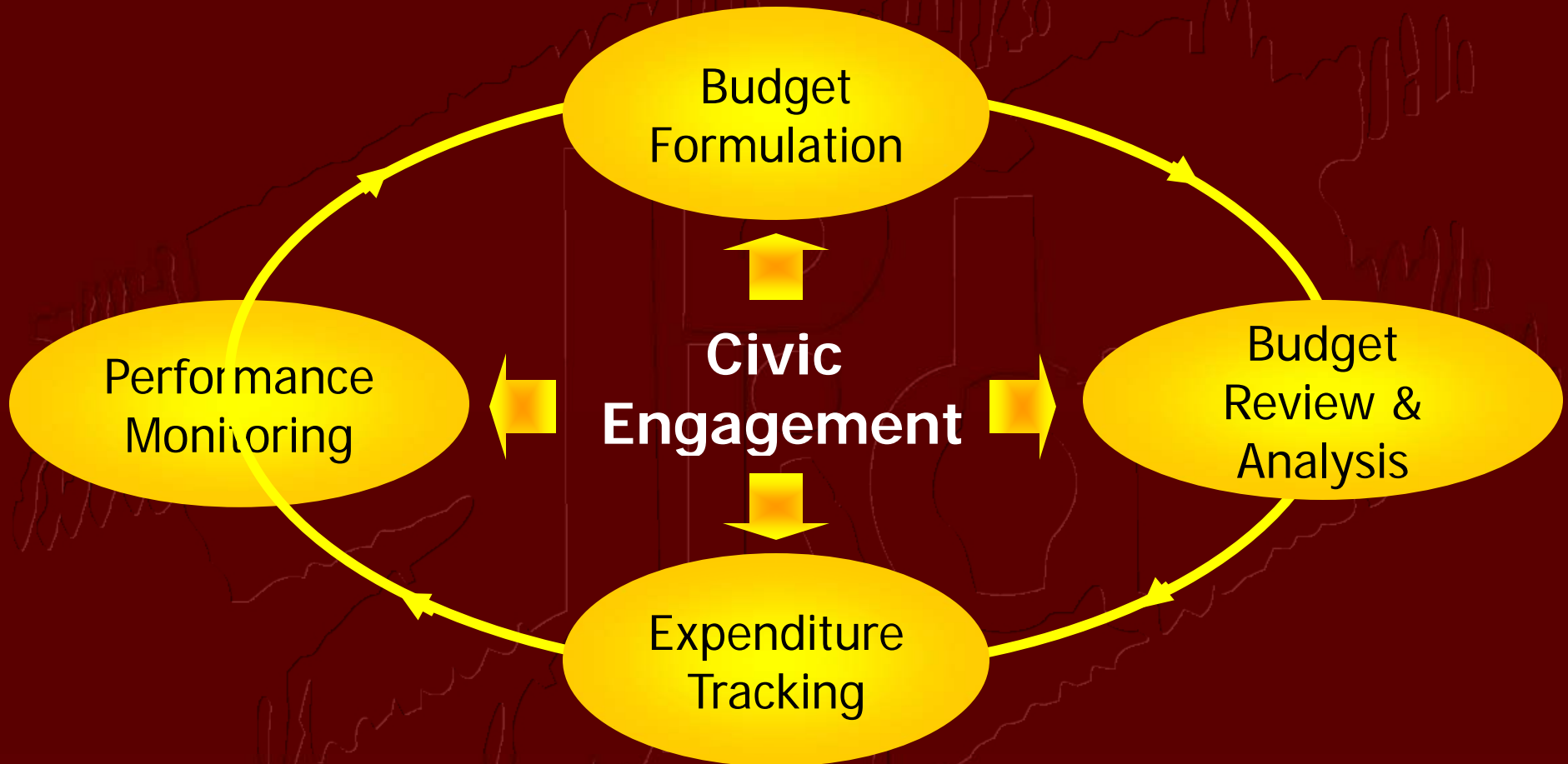


Social Accountability

Empowerment

**Improved Public
Policies & Services**

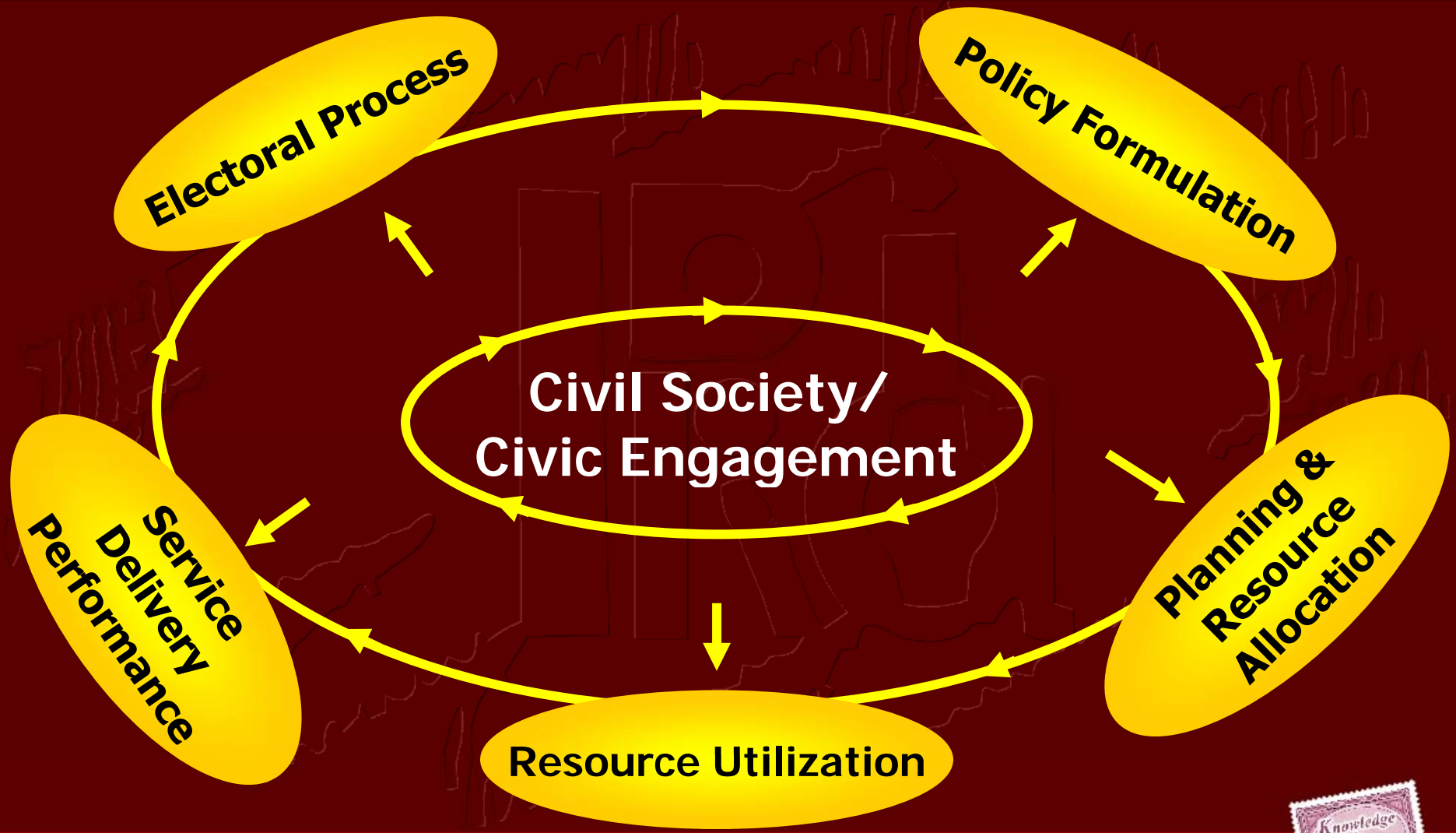
Social Accountability: PPEM Model



Key Triggers...

- Governments spend on the wrong goods and people – Budget Allocation Problem
- Resources fail to reach service providers or users – Expenditure Tracking Problem
- Weak incentives for effective service delivery – Problem of Monitoring/ Accountability
- Demand-side constraints – Problem of Participation/ Awareness – VOICE

Social Accountability: Revisited



Social Accountability Tools (1)

Electoral Processes

- Pre-Election Voters' Awareness Campaigns in Local Governance Elections (PEVAC)
- Election watch/ monitoring

Policy Formulation

- Participatory Policy Research
- Convening Multi-Stakeholder Policy Dialogues

Social Accountability Tools (2)

Planning and Resource Allocation

- Micro Planning at Village/Ward Level
- Participatory Urban Planning (including sectoral planning, e.g. SWM)
- Participatory District Planning
- Participatory Budgeting

Social Accountability Tools (3)

Resource Utilization

- Independent Budget Analysis
- Expenditure Tracking

Service Delivery Performance

- Participatory Surveys
- Social Audit
- Citizen Report Card
- Community Score Cards
- Development Campaigns
- Right to Information
- Local Grievance Mechanism
- Performance Award

Pre-Election Voters' Awareness Campaign (PEVAC)

- Major Stages of Local Governance Election
 - Delimitation of constituencies including reservation of seats
 - Preparation/updation of electoral list
 - Filing of nominations by the contestants
 - Election campaign by contestants
 - Carrying out actual election, counting & declaring results

PEVAC : Objectives

- Ensuring maximum participation of marginalized citizens in the election process
- Providing proactive support to marginalized citizens to contest election
- Influencing the policies, procedures & institutions related to local governance election through empirical evidence

PEVAC : Major Steps/Processes

- Creating an advisory committee including prominent civil society leaders
- Creating a civil society platform including media, academia
- Partnership with State Election Commissions
- Carrying out the campaign activity and monitoring
- Impact assessment
- Sharing of findings with all the stakeholders

PEVAC : Methods

- Distributing IEC materials
– handbills, election manuals, booklets, stickers etc.
- Displaying posters, hoardings, banners etc.
- Tabloid
- Focus group meetings
- March on foot
- Cycle rally
- Announcement in public places
- Street plays
- Folk music and dance
- Information booth
- Open forum with candidates
- Oath paper
- Advertisement in news paper, radio and TV

PEVAC : Outcomes

- Increase in the percentage of voters turn out and number of contestants specially from marginalized sections
- Decrease in rejection of nomination and ballot papers (invalid votes)
- Decrease in uncontested seats
- Deepening positive government-CSO relationship at all levels – local to state
- Sensitization of media
- Good beginning for a large number of CSOs to engage in governance issues

Citizen Monitoring : Meaning

- A system of measuring, recording, collecting, aggregating, analyzing, communicating and acting with the explicit purpose of improving performance
- Focused on citizenship encompassing rights/entitlements and responsibilities/ practice dimensions
- Involving apathetic personnel and institutions to be responsive
- Citizen Monitoring devoid of action is merely reporting

Citizen Monitoring : Steps

1. Planning the Process: Identification of Objectives and Issues
2. Identification of Indicators
3. Identifying Actors and Their Roles in Collecting the Information
4. Data Collection
5. Data Analysis
6. Data Presentation, Documentation and Sharing
7. Taking Appropriate Actions

Cornerstone of A “Good” Citizen Monitoring

- Shared understanding on the purpose and intended outcome
- Relevance of issues to people: those that concern the most would find favour
- Informed reflection within and outside the community can enhance citizen empowerment
- Oft-repeated: ongoing capacity building holds the key

Key Lessons on Social Accountability

- Right/access to information
- Critical balance between demand and supply side interventions
- Enabling environment supported by the policies, programmes, institutions and champions
- Mobilization and organization building hold the key
- Ongoing capacity building and hand holding to break the culture of silence
- Cross-sectoral partnership and multi-stakeholder engagement