

Call for Consultancy Proposals

Understanding and enhancing access to public information and citizen participation in local development processes.

Deadline: 1600 Hours, May 31, 2019

Background

Following enactment of the Tanzanian Access to Information Act in September 2016, in early 2017, Twaweza and MIT GOV/LAB conducted a mystery shopper's exercise on citizen's access to public information in Tanzania. The exercise revealed that two out of three citizens' requests for public information are usually not granted. The previous study enabled us establish the extent to which public information is accessible (or not) but did not provide a deeper understanding on the factors enabling or constraining access to public information. We focused on access to information alone contending that access to timely information would encourage more meaningful citizen participation in local development decision. However, evidence from existing literature including Twaweza's experience reveal that information provision is necessary but not sufficient to trigger participation (behavioral changes) among targeted audiences. Moreover, the previous study focused on the demand side only (citizens' access to public information).

The proposed revised study will focus on the supply side, with the aim of improving understanding on whether, how and why do civil servants provide (or not) public information to citizens and whether, how and why civil servants facilitate (or not) meaningful citizen participation in local development decision?

Objectives:

- i. Perspectives on ATI: Assess civil servants' perspectives on citizens' access to public information*
- ii. Actual practice on ATI: Assess civil servants' experiences on citizens' participation in local development decision processes*
- iii. Perspectives on citizen participation: Assess civil servants' perspectives on citizens' participation in local development processes.*
- iv. Actual practice on citizen participation: Assess civil servants' experiences on citizens' participation in local development decision processes*

By perspectives we refer to the views held by civil servants towards citizens' access to information and participation.

- Do civil servants have positive or negative attitudes towards providing public information to citizens and facilitating citizens' participation in local development decisions?
- What caused these positive and negative views/attitudes? (Govt related reasons; Citizen related reasons; Personal reasons; other reasons?)
- Do they realize that their views are important in enabling/constraining execution of their duties in providing information to citizens and encouraging citizen participation? How?
- How can the enabling views (positive attitudes) be promoted and constraining views (negative attitudes) be changed/transformed?

By experience we refer to the practices/actions by civil servants towards citizens' access to information and participation. Broadly, there are various laws, regulations and guidelines on how civil servants at both the central and local government levels can and should provide public information to citizens and facilitate citizens' participation in various development processes at the local level. We want to assess

any discrepancies between what is prescribed on paper regarding ATI and participation and actual practice.

- What are the different participation processes, spaces and mechanisms as prescribed in policies, regulations and guidelines?
- What role do civil servants play in providing public information and promoting citizen participation?
- To what extent are civil servants providing public information to citizens? To what extent are civil servants promoting citizen participation in local development decisions?
- What are the reasons for low/poor information provision? What are the reasons for low/poor citizen participation?
- What challenges do civil servants face in executing their duties related to providing public information and promoting citizen participation?
- What recommendations do they have for improving the situation?

Approach

Semi-structured interviews with relevant civil servants at the central and local government authorities will be the main data collection approach. The consultants will review and improve on the interview guide drafted by the client. The consultants will interview at least 40 senior and mid-level civil servants, being at least 10 from the central government and 5 per LGA from 6 purposively selected LGAs. LGA sampling will consider districts that Twaweza has conducted some work previously and has plans to continue implementing some initiatives in those districts so that we build on knowledge and networks already created.

The objectives and questions listed above will guide data collection and analysis. Findings will be disaggregated variously to test whether respondents' personal attributes (e.g. gender, longevity in service, frequency of on-job training) correlate with reported perspectives and practice/actions.

Key competencies needed

We will engage the services of experienced social science researchers in undertaking this assignment. We will select consultants with experience in interviewing and accessing senior and mid-level civil servants. Preference will be given to consultants with grounded experience on citizens access to public information and citizen participation formal and alternative spaces and processes for participation in local development decisions.

Requirements

Interested individuals, firms and teams of consultants are requested to submit the following documents:

1. A cover letter expressing interest and availability to undertake this assignment and summarizing key competencies of the principal applicants.
2. Technical proposal demonstrating consultants' understanding and response to the call for proposals
3. Proposed timeline
4. Financial proposals including consultancy fees and direct costs
5. CV's of key team members including references and examples of similar past assignments

Assignment duration: June 17 to August 31, 2019

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