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Civil Society and Accountability in Rwanda

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Question

How effective is civil society in promoting accountability in Rwanda, and what is the impact of donor support on civil society in Rwanda?

Contents

1. Summary

Donors became interested in government accountability after the release of the World Development Report in 2004. Subsequently, the World Bank and international donors supported interventions that were designed to increase transparency which in turn was expected to promote accountability in developing countries. The limited evidence from impact assessments of such interventions steered by Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) indicates that there is more impact in Rwanda than other African states. This trend occurs because of the stronger government institutions and commitment to development in Rwanda (Wild et al., 2015; Honeyman, 2017). However, Rwandan CSOs operate with constraints on their freedom of expression, therefore criticism of the government is muted (Francois, 2017).

This rapid literature review is based on sources from academic and grey literature. It comprises of audits of civil society in Rwanda undertaken by international CSOs such as Civicus and Transparency International and assessments of accountability programmes using randomised control designs or case studies. The audits are based on surveys, in-depth interviews or focus groups with members of the public who are asked to rate the effectiveness of CSOs in providing information or advocating on behalf of citizens. The literature on impact assessments of social accountability programmes is sparse (Joshi, 2013; Fox, 2015) and there are very few studies on Rwanda. This review was able to find two assessments of civil society and three case study assessments of social accountability programmes in Rwanda. The literature on social accountability or transparency and accountability initiatives does not highlight issues pertaining to the role of donors in accountability programmes.

Recent scholarship on social accountability notes that the theory of change which assumes that transparency leads to accountability relies on the premise that citizens, including marginalised groups, have agency to effect change. However, this premise is overly optimistic in most developing countries (Fox, 2015). Consequently, there is a push for adapting programmes to suit local conditions (Wild et al., 2015), and for the 'sandwich strategy' which requires that multiple coalitions advocate for accountability (Fox, 2015). Furthermore, CSOs play a useful role as intermediaries which purvey information in user-friendly formats and advocate for accountability on behalf of the community (van Zyl, 2014).

The main findings on the impact of social accountability programmes in several developing countries are as follows (Joshi, 2013; Fox, 2015):

- The evidence on the impact of social accountability interventions is mixed;
- Public expenditure tracking surveys, citizen report cards and community score cards have resulted in improved performance outcomes in some cases;
- Interventions have been more successful in reducing corruption than enhancing service delivery; and
- Voice and accountability interventions which are targeted directly at women and other marginalised groups have yielded some impact on empowerment (Joshi, 2013). For example, in Bangladesh the parents of girls in schools mobilised to monitor teacher attendance and discourage absenteeism.

In Rwanda, the key findings from impact assessments of accountability programmes are as follows:

- The impact of civil society on accountability is perceived as moderate by citizens (Civicus, 2011);

- Over 70% of citizens state that CSOs influence public policy and 66% assert that CSOs engage with the state (Transparency International Rwanda, 2015);

- An evaluation of the CARE Community Score Card (CSC) found that it had a positive impact on service delivery. Feedback from the CSC was communicated to local government by service providers, leading to tangible improvements in service delivery such as mobile clinics and more health workers (Wild et al., 2015);

- The Rwanda Threshold Programme which aimed to promote civic participation did not have a positive impact on accountability;

- The Rwandan government has utilised performance contracts, referred to as *imihigo*, to raise service standards in the public sector. In the education sector *imihigo* has limited impact on the quality of education although there is a positive impact on school infrastructure. Bottom-up initiatives are less effective (Honeyman, 2015); and

- CSOs are aid dependent and 75% rely on international aid (Transparency International Rwanda, 2015).

2. Background

Donor interest in strengthening accountability was stimulated after the publication of the World Development Report (WDR) of 2004 (Wild, Wales, & Chambers, 2015). The WDR was built on the principal-agent approach in which citizens are the principles and elected officials are the agents. It assumes that principles are able to hold agents accountable (Fox, 2015). Accountability is defined as the obligation of those who hold power to take responsibility for their actions through explanation or justification (McNeil & Male, 2010). The accountability of state actors is derived from the social compact between citizens and their elected representatives in a democratic setting (McNeil & Male, 2010). The WDR contends that the 'long route' of accountability through elected representatives failed the poor and argues instead for strengthening the 'short route' of direct accountability between users and service providers (Joshi, 2013, p. 530). Subsequently, policymakers have devoted much attention to examining alternatives for strengthening the 'short route'.

According to Joshi (2013) the interest in transparency and accountability comes from two distinct ideological streams. **New Public Management** (NPM), which emerged in the 1990s, encourages the adoption of market mechanisms in the public sector in order to make providers more responsive and accountable. NPM reforms for accountability concentrate on vertical accountability within organisations through mechanisms such as performance-based pay, citizen charters, and complaint hotlines. Furthermore, NPM approaches regard citizens as individual consumers who should have a choice of providers in order for markets to deliver accountability. At the same time proponents of **rights-based approaches** argued that governments have an obligation to provide basic services which were 'rights' that should be protected by the constitution or legislation (Joshi, 2013, p. 531). For example, McNeil & Male (2010) declare that citizens have both the right and the responsibility to demand accountability from the government. Consequently they state: "citizens have the right to ensure that public actors (a) obey the law and not abuse their powers, and (b) serve the public interest in an efficient, effective, and fair manner" (McNeil & Male, 2010, p. 5). The literature on transparency accountability initiatives,

feedback mechanisms and social accountability relates to interventions which are designed to promote the 'short route' (Jump, 2013; Wild et al., 2015).

In sub-Saharan Africa, transparency regarding public revenue is extremely weak due to corruption. Moreover, a large portion of government revenue comes from international aid and the export of primary resources rather than tax revenue, which further diminishes the sense of accountability among citizens with regard to public revenue (McNeil & Male, 2010). Governments, civil society, and donors have become increasingly interested in the idea that citizens can contribute to improved quality of service delivery by holding policy makers and providers of services accountable (Ringold, Holla, Koziol, & Srinivasan, 2011). Civil society organisations (CSOs) can play an important role in bridging the gap between transparency and accountability by functioning as information intermediaries, as well as by putting pressure on oversight institutions (van Zyl, 2014).

After the 1994 genocide there was an influx of CSOs in Rwanda, including international non-governmental organisations (NGOs) (Civicus, 2011). Transparency International Rwanda (2015, p. 2) states that "CSOs can be described as all organised activity not associated with major institutional systems: government and administration, education and health delivery, business and industry, security and organised religion." CSOs have been instrumental in the peacebuilding and post-conflict transformation processes (Francois, 2017). Moreover, CSOs are a third sector, which is mainly involved in service delivery and religious activity. Very few CSOs engage in policy advocacy or oversight of the government, thus voice and accountability are lagging behind compared to other areas in Rwandan social and economic life (Transparency International Rwanda, 2015, p. 4). Although the government of Rwanda regards CSOs as a pillar of good governance, there are restrictions on political activities and advocacy. In addition, the government has been accused of hindering human rights groups and limiting dissent (Nichols-Barrer, Protik, Berman, & Sloan, 2015). This report reviews the literature on social accountability and examines the impact of CSOs and community participation in Rwanda in terms of promoting transparency and accountability. Donor support for the Rwandan government and CSOs is briefly reviewed.

3. Social accountability

The literature on social accountability is parsimonious and thus far has not considered any in-depth case studies in Rwanda. However, this literature is briefly reviewed as it offers insights regarding the design of interventions to improve accountability used in other developing countries. **Social accountability** is a process whereby citizens hold the state accountable (McNeil & Male, 2010). Citizen- or civil society-led initiatives to hold the government accountable include public demonstrations, protests, advocacy and lobbying. However, accountability can also be achieved using participatory data collection and analytical tools. This emphasis on data has led to a growth of social accountability practices which utilise a solid evidence base as well as dialogue and negotiation with the government, such as participatory public policy-making, participatory budgeting, public expenditure tracking, as well as citizen monitoring and evaluation of public services. McNeil & Male (2010) identify the following spheres for social accountability:

- Public budgets – this includes budget literacy, analysis of the implications of budget allocations, and advocacy for greater public influence on national budget decisions;

- Public expenditure – this includes public expenditure tracking exercises, for example the education expenditure tracking surveys in Malawi; and

- Public service delivery – citizen participation in monitoring and evaluating service delivery to assess the accessibility and quality of public goods and services. For example, in Malawi there are service delivery satisfaction surveys and community score cards which allow users and service providers to evaluate the quality of public services. In Kenya, citizen report cards and roadshows are used to strengthen community participation in the provision of water and sanitation.[1]

In the **transparency-accountability** framework, providing information about public services (including the services which citizens are entitled to, how to access them and the quality of services) encourages citizens to demand accountability leading to improved service delivery (Ringold et al., 2011). The **theory of change** is built on the premise that providing information improves accountability by motivating localised collective action (Fox, 2015). However, this theory of change makes several assumptions which are listed below (Ringold et al., 2011; Joshi, 2013; Fox, 2015):

- Citizens have the ability and incentive to access and process information about service delivery;

- Citizens are principles regardless of whether or not they live under electorally competitive regimes;

- Citizens have homogenous interests and goals;

- Service users are willing and able to use information to put pressure on service providers;

- Policy makers and service providers are responsive;

- Failures in service delivery are due to poor motivation among public officials rather than the lack of resources or capacity;

- There is a credible threat of sanctions for poor service; and

- The demand for accountability will trigger the supply of accountability through market mechanisms.

Recent literature on social accountability is sceptical of the aforementioned assumptions, which are regarded as unrealistic given the conditions in many developing countries (Fox, 2015; Joshi, 2013). There is a lack of clarity with regard to the expected impacts: "This confusion arises partly because studies of impact rarely examine the impact of accountability and transparency alone, looking instead at the impact of a range of governance interventions, such as changing incentives for public officials or improved management processes." (Joshi, 2013, p. 540). Fox (2015, p. 349) suggests that a more nuanced approach to social accountability, which addresses the following issues, is required:

- The kind of information that can empower the poor;

- Information needs to be perceived as actionable, this means that citizens must be able to act on the information,

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[1] These initiatives were undertaken by CSOs or service providers.

- An enabling environment which reduces the fear of reprisal is necessary to encourage citizen led action;
- Decentralisation which brings government closer to the people;
- Community participation, which is likely to represent socially excluded groups; and
- Community oversight mechanisms which can address state failure.

The evidence on the impact of accountability and transparency initiatives comes from case studies, randomised controlled trials, quantitative/qualitative evaluations, and participatory evaluations (Joshi, 2013). Fox (2015) and Joshi (2013) reviewed several impact assessments conducted in Africa and Asia and found that the impact of social accountability initiatives is varied.[2] Since the evidence from Rwanda is limited, evidence of impact from other African and Asian countries is summarised as follows:

- There is no clear indication as to whether 'top-down' initiatives are better than 'bottom-up' initiatives;
- The performance of information dissemination accountability initiatives is varied. For example, studies in Bangladesh and Uganda found that information dissemination led to reduced absenteeism among teachers or health workers in schools and health clinics, respectively. In contrast, similar initiatives had little impact on education outcomes in India;
- Public Expenditure Tracking Surveys (PETS) used by CSOs in Uganda, Malawi and Tanzania resulted in positive impact, such as reduced corruption or improved remuneration in the health and education sectors;
- Complaint mechanisms and charters work better in urban than rural areas;
- Citizen report cards were pioneered by a CSO in Bangalore, India where they had considerable impact on improving public services. However, in Bangalore there was assistance from an active, independent media and CSOs that were willing to advocate for accountability and reforms;
- Community monitoring had a positive impact on health and education services in Uganda and Kenya, however the impact was modest in Indonesia;
- Social audits and public hearings initiated by grassroots CSOs were effective in terms of reducing corruption in India; and
- Community score cards (CSCs) were associated with improved user satisfaction levels in India and Madagascar.

Joshi (2013) finds that transparency accountability initiatives are effective in terms of exposing corruption, but the results are more mixed with regard to the impact on the accessibility and quality of public services. Moreover, social accountability mechanisms are more likely to have traction if they are supported by **formal sanctions** or willingness from the public sector to support attempts that improve accountability. In addition, collective accountability mechanisms may be better suited for increasing voices of poor and vulnerable citizens, since they may have greater impact than individual action (Joshi, 2013). Context is very important, as accountability strategies may require adaptation to local conditions (Fox, 2015). For example, an evaluation of

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[2] There were no case studies on Rwanda in the literature reviewed by Fox (2015) or Joshi (2013).

the CARE CSC across four African countries revealed that stronger institutions and the developmental state model in Rwanda fostered a stronger commitment to improve local service delivery (Wild et al., 2015, p. 33).

Fox (2015, p. 352) discusses a strategic approach to accountability, with a theory of change which specifies multiple links in a causal chain. This strategic approach encompasses the following elements:

- An emphasis on user centred and actionable information. This requires the identification of information which, if disclosed, will change the perceptions of citizens and encourage them to engage in collective action;
- The scaling up of a voice which can be achieved with information and communication technology or through the use of interlocutors which act as facilitators of two-way communication;
- An enabling environment which reduces the risk of challenging the state. This may be achieved through the use of external allies;
- Improvements in state capacity which encourages responsiveness; and
- Strengthening vertical accountability so that politicians and bureaucrats are more accountable to citizens.

Fox (2015) recommends a '**sandwich strategy'** which involves coalitions of pro-accountability forces that bridge the state-society divide and break the 'low accountability' traps. A four-country evaluation of the CARE CSCs provided empirical support for the accountability sandwich strategy (Wild et al., 2015). The findings emphasise the importance of framing a score card in terms of building collaboration and collective interests. Moreover, CSCs can help to change working practices if the information they gather is channelled to higher levels of local government, although this requires that states have the political will to support reforms (Wild et al., 2015). In such states, the feedback from CSCs can improve access to services.

# 4. CSOs and accountability in Rwanda

Although governments have a duty to be transparent even countries with high levels of transparency produce public information in formats which are not user-friendly or accessible (van Zyk, 2014). CSOs play an important role by interpreting and disseminating such information in formats which are easy to understand. Van Zyl (2014, p. 248) mentions four ways in which CSOs can facilitate the transition from transparency to accountability:

- Accessing, interpreting and distributing information to multiple stakeholders in a usable format;
- Demanding accountability from government directly;
- Supporting and encouraging formal oversight actors (such as legislators, auditors and judges) to demand accountability; and
- Supporting other stakeholders (such as political parties, activists and donors) to demand accountability.

Effectiveness of CSOs

The effectiveness of civil society or citizens in promoting accountability is assessed using score cards, report cards and audits (Ringold et al., 2011). Surveys and focus groups with members of CSOs, the public or stakeholders are conducted to generate data which is one of the sources of information used in score cards or audits. Civicus conducted an evaluation of CSOs in Rwanda which combined in-depth interviews and a survey among key stakeholders. The study found that CSOs in Rwanda attained an overall impact rating of 1.9 on a scale from zero to three, which was moderate (Civicus, 2011, p. 37). Figure 1 depicts the ratings for the sub-categories of the overall rating.

Figure 1: Impact Scores for CSOs
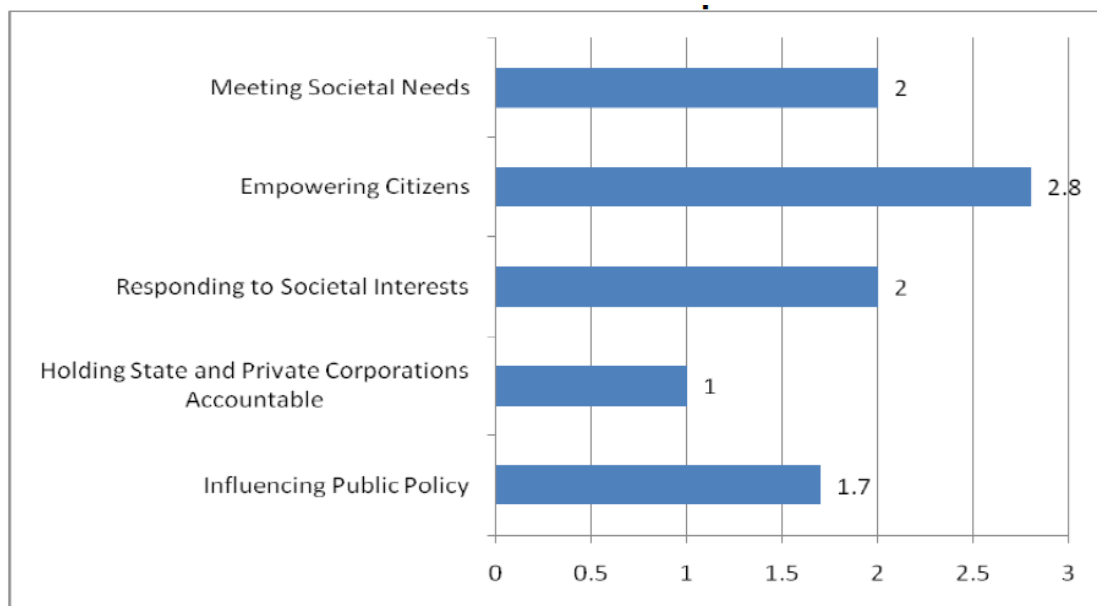
Source: Civicus, 2011, p. 38

Interviews with the leaders of local CSOs found that only 50% believed that they are able to influence the decisions of local authorities (Civicus, 2011). In addition, 57% of respondents from regional stakeholder consultations believed that CSOs were very or quite active in holding the state accountable and 16% stated that CSOs were very or quite effective in terms of holding private corporations accountable. The state was not challenged by civil society and the majority of the stakeholders believed that political will rather than advocacy is responsible for accountability (Civicus, 2011). The report also found that overall there were higher levels of trust in the president and the armed forces than in CSOs. Similarly, Francois (2017, p. 17) states that the level of trust in CSOs involved in national reconciliation is 51% and it was perceived that 36% of CSOs were corrupt.

Table 1: Effectiveness of Civil Society -1

Dimension 4: Impact and effectiveness	2015 edition		2012 edition		Change (% 2012/2015)	
	CSOs	Citizens	CSOs	Citizens	CSOs	Citizens
Influencing public policy (72.3%)						
Civil society's impact on Social policy issues		71.9		67.00		4.90
Civil Society's impact on Justice and Human Rights policy issues		73.6		64.40		9.20
Civil Society's Impact on governance policy issues		72		NA		
Civil Society's Impact on economic development policy issues		71.7		NA		
Engage state and private sector (54.2%)						
Extent to which CSOs engage State		66.3		49.00		17.30
Extent to which CSOs engage private sector		62.1		46.90		15.20
Empowering citizens (70.6%)						
Informing/ educating citizens		67.2		58.00		9.20
Building capacity for collective action		70.7		62.70		8.00

Source: Transparency International Rwanda, 2015, p. 64

Transparency International Rwanda undertook a survey of citizens' perceptions of CSOs in 2015. A comparison of the 2015 results with the findings of an earlier 2012 survey is provided in Table 1. Overall, over 70% of the respondents believe that civil society is able to influence public policy (Transparency International Rwanda, 2015, p. 62).   Two thirds (66%) stated that civil society was able to engage with the state and 62% stated that they engaged with the private sector. However, this was a vast improvement on 2012 figures.

Table 2: Effectiveness of Civil Society -2

Dimension 4: Impact and effectiveness	2015 edition		2012 edition		Change (% 2012/2015)	
	CSOs	Citizens	CSOs	Citizens	CSOs	Citizens
Empowering vulnerable people		73.8		66.70		7.10
Empowering women		73		70.70		2.30
Empowering youth		68.1		NA		
Responding to membership needs (75%)						
Extent to which CSO are responsive to membership needs		75		NA		
Meeting societal needs (58%)						
Lobbying for state service provision		68.2		59.90		8.30
Meeting needs of vulnerable groups		25		34.10		-9.10
Lobbying for poverty eradication		69.6		NA		
Lobbying for environmental sustainability		69.7		NA		
Level of CSOs' responsiveness to social interests		64.3		NA		

Source: Transparency International Rwanda, 2015, p. 65

Table 2 indicates that CSOs are more effective in terms of building capacity for collective action, empowering vulnerable people (74%) and empowering women (73%). CSOs are also very effective in terms of lobbying for state services, poverty eradication and environmental sustainability. Less than two in three CSOs (66%) are responsive to social interests. However, only one in four and meet the needs of vulnerable people (Transparency International Rwanda, 2015, p. 65).

Case studies

CARE Community Score Card

CARE International implemented a CSC programme in Rwanda and three other African countries. In Rwanda the CSC was implemented in partnership with a well-established service delivery programme, the **Public Policy Information, Monitoring and Advocacy Project** (PPIMA). Several mechanisms were introduced by the government to enable citizens to participate in local development planning processes which include *imihigo*, *ubundehe, umuganda* and district open days (Wild et al., 2015).[3] However, these approaches reflect a 'top-down' centrally driven policy which is driven by the state. CSO's including CARE International provide 'bottom-up' accountability mechanisms to complement the government initiatives. The 'bottom-up' initiatives provide a forum for Rwandan citizens to openly challenge the effectiveness of district authorities. CARE's CSC was adapted across local contexts and communities were able to decide which sectors the CSC would focus on. The CSC programme provided a forum for service providers to explain the challenges they face to citizens, as well as their superiors (Wild et al., 2015).

In Rwanda, there were many examples where service providers reported concerns raised by service users to the district authorities and this led to a redistribution of resources in some cases (Wild et al., 2015). There was improvement in the relationship between service users, service providers and the local authorities. As such, the 'culture of silence' was challenged. The feedback led to alterations in staff schedules and the creation of mobile HIV and reproductive health services. More nurses were hired and there were improvements to infrastructure such as water pipelines, health centres, roads and nurseries (Wild et al., 2015). Data from focus groups revealed that before the programme local authorities perceive the citizens to be ignorant but that as a result of the CSC the credibility of the community was enhanced. In addition, service providers claimed that citizens were more understanding of the difficulties which the providers faced and less inclined to blame the providers for problems (Wild et al., 2015).

Wild et al. (2015) notes that Rwanda is the only country where there is a clear example that information generated by the CSC was channelled to the national government and contributed policy dialogue. Findings from the CSC provided an input into the district dialogue processes which aided the wider CSO accountability processes. Consequently, the information was then passed on to several ministries and contributed to a government decision to review health

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[3] Rwanda has developed home grown initiatives which build on traditional concepts of participation so that the developmental state is inclusive and 'home grown' (Hasselskog, 2018). In Kinyarwanda *imihigo means taking a vow to deliver something or a pledge*, u*bundehe refers to pre-colonial practices of mutual support and collective action to solve problems and umuganda refers to voluntary work* (Hasselskog, 2018).

insurance targets. Wild et al. (2015) attribute this feedback loop to the strength of public sector institutions in Rwanda.

Rwanda Threshold Programme

The Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) sponsored the Rwanda Threshold Programme (RTP), a programme designed to enhance the contribution of local and national CSOs in government policymaking (Nichols-Barrer et al., 2015). The strengthening civic participation component of the programme occurred from June 2009 to December 2011 and was implemented in conjunction with USAID and government stakeholders. The programme entailed: training local government officials with regard to mechanisms to increase civic participation; technical assistance to build the management and advocacy components of local CSOs, grants to local government and CSOs and training for government departments so that they could develop and distribute a citizens' guide to the national budget (Nichols-Barrer et al., 2015).

The rollout of the programme was conducted in two phases so that the 30 districts in Rwanda could be randomly allocated to either phase I or phase II. A baseline survey (9,619 respondents) was administered in both treatment and control districts before the start of the programme and a follow-up survey (10,032 respondents) was conducted in 2012 after the programme activities ended (Nichols-Barrer et al., 2015). In addition, in-depth interviews were conducted with government officials and CSOs. Regression analysis was used to examine the impact of the programme. Several of the RTP's expected outcomes were not achieved especially in terms citizens' perceptions of communication between CSOs and the government. One explanation for this failure may be that the programme was designed to build the capacity of CSO's and local government officials, therefore even if the amount of communication between CSOs and government officials increased this would not be reflected in the perceptions of the citizens. It is also possible that in the longer term there may be a detectable positive impact. The qualitative research revealed that CSOs reported that citizens were encouraged to voice dissatisfaction more openly as a result of the RTP (Nichols-Barrer et al., 2015).

***Imihigo* in the education sector**

The understanding of accountability in Rwanda is influenced by English, French and most importantly the official language Kinyarwanda. In Rwanda, accountability is synonymous with the act of making pledges and fulfilling them, known as *guhiga no guhigura* in Kinyarwanda (Honeyman, 2017). The terms *guhiga* or *imihigo* were historically used in Rwanda to refer to public pledges or acts of bravery (Honeyman, 2017). The contemporary **imihigo system of performance management contracts** originated as a public pledge in the form of a written contract which specifies development targets and performance indicators. *Imihigo* has become a crucial tool of governance at national, provincial, district, sector, sell and village levels (Honeyman, 2017). Moreover, *imihigo* plays an important role in decentralisation. From 2006 to 2009, district *imihigo* were used to compare performance and achievements and district mayors were either praised or censured according to their performance. For example, in 2015 mayors in four districts resigned because of unsatisfactory performance evaluations (Honeyman, 2017). However, the education component of the district *imihigo* reveals that objectives are often set with little knowledge of the national education sector strategy. In addition, the system places priority on objectives which are easily quantified and measured even though some of the most important goals for education quality are not easily quantifiable (Honeyman, 2017, p. 8).

Honeyman (2017) identifies the following problems with the *imihigo* system for the education sector:

- The greatest focus was on the construction of physical infrastructure because this is visible and attracts public attention. As Honeyman (2017, p. 9) states: "If a district action plan objective such as increasing parents' participation in school meetings is not attained, it is unlikely that many people will know; however, if a district *imihigo* objective such as building a certain number of primary classrooms is not attained, it is likely that the district mayor may be publicly shamed and called to account for the failure";
- The *imihigo* system creates negative incentives. For example, there are many instances where students who could not pay school lunch fees were dismissed from school so that officials could achieve the *imihigo* target of 100% contribution to the school feeding programme;
- The Rwandan constitution of 2003 guarantees the right to education while several pieces of legislation and ministerial orders facilitate a system of top-down accountability within the education system. However, there is no available evidence for assessing the extent to which the objective of universal access to education has been achieved;
- There is a hierarchical system of supervision which ends with the Ministry of Local Government which has no education specialists and no direct reporting line to the Ministry of Education. Furthermore, education is not a priority for local governments therefore this reporting structure creates fewer incentives for boosting education quality.

'**Bottom-up' accountability** in the education system appears to lag behind the 'top-down' accountability provided by the *imihigo* system. The General Assembly Committee which comprises the headmaster, two parent representatives, two teacher representatives and two student representatives is the mechanism for 'bottom-up' accountability (Honeyman, 2017). The General Assembly Committee is intended to ensure public oversight of school management and education quality at the local level. However, Honeyman (2017) notes that parental engagement is low, and elected representatives are not very informed about management and performance issues and tend to avoid conflict with the headmaster. Another 'bottom-up' mechanism, national examination results, are published at the aggregate level by the media and there is little assessment or comparison of these results at local level or across time. Therefore, public information about education quality in Rwanda is limited (Honeyman, 2017, p. 15).

There are a number of formal and informal structures at the village or *umudugudu* level to discuss local issues or complaints and while education issues are often raised they are generally not a high priority concern. From 2012 onwards, the Rwanda Governance Board conducted an annual citizen report card study using questionnaires, interviews and focus group discussions to assess public opinion with regard to government service provision, including education. This initiative provides public opinion data with regard to the quality of education, provision of school lunches, physical infrastructure and accessibility of schools in terms of distance. However, the data is underutilised as an information resource for accountability (Honeyman, 2017). In addition, several CSOs collaborate in the PPIMA which implements a CSC. Education has been identified as an area of public concern through the community score card (Honeyman, 2017). Transparency International Rwanda also conducted a CSC in conjunction with the public expenditure tracking surveys which encompasses education. Although there are multiple

mechanisms for the public to hold the government to account, there are few opportunities to criticise the leadership (Honeyman, 2017).

5. Donor support in Rwanda

The Rwandan government's reputation for being largely corruption free has resulted in the receipt of a large amount of foreign aid disbursed in the form of budget support (Swedlund, 2013). The government of Rwanda has a clear preference for budget support compared with other aid modalities. Rwanda is a highly aid dependent country and in 2015 30-40% of its national budget was derived from aid (Hasselskog et al., 2017, p. 1819). Most budget support has been provided by the UK, the European Commission, the World Bank and the African Development Bank. There are also bilateral relationships with Germany, Belgium and the Netherlands (Swedlund, 2013). Despite high levels of aid, the RPF government has been able to exercise much agency in its relationship with donors (Curtis, 2015).

The Rwandan government and donors established a mutual accountability framework (Versailles, 2012). The Common Performance Assessment Framework (CPAF) is a matrix of 45 indicators based on Rwanda's poverty reduction strategy. The CPAF permits development partners to hold the government accountable for delivering economic development and poverty reduction (Versailles, 2012). The CPAF arose in response to the needs of budget support donors for a monitoring and accountability framework. The Donor Performance Assessment Framework (DPAF) was developed to align indicators with the Vision 2020 strategy of the government. The development partners have committed to helping the government achieve the DPAF targets, thus creating a framework for mutual accountability (Versailles, 2012).

Donors such as UNICEF, UNESCO, DFID and USAID are involved in horizontal accountability as they are co-chairs in the Technical Working Groups (TWGs) (Honeyman, 2017). In the education sector the TWGs influence policy and strategy in relation to planning and management, curriculum and assessment, teacher professional development and early childhood development (Honeyman, 2017).

There is very little literature on the donor support for civil society in Rwanda. CSOs in Rwanda are dependent on financial and technical support from international stakeholders and 74% of CSOs have international partners (Transparency International Rwanda, 2015, p. 72). Three quarters (75%) of CSOs are dependent on donors for funding. however only 36% state that financial resources are sufficient for accomplishing their goals (Transparency International Rwanda, 2015, p. 73). The Civicus evaluation of CSOs highlighted the need for Rwandan CSOs to become less dependent on donor funding so that they can exercise more independence in carrying out their missions (Civicus, 2011, p. 44).

A mapping study conducted for the European Union found that a relatively small group of donors support CSOs in Rwanda: USAID, DFID, SIDA, German Co-operation, Swiss Co-operation, Belgian Technical Co-operation, the World Bank and UNDP (Constantini, Verdecchia, & Rutayisire, 2013, p. 48). Other key findings from Constantini et al. (2013, p. 49) are listed below:

- USAID funds Rwandan CSOs only,
- Belgian Technical Co-operation funds international NGOs in partnership with local CSOs;

- The World Bank funds local CSOs in partnership with public authorities;
- Rwanda is the beneficiary of the World Bank's Global Partnership for Social Accountability;
- DFID and SIDA work together to support capacity building for local CSOs;
- USAID funds public participation in the decentralisation process and to improve service delivery; and
- DFID funds the PPIMA.

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