



Ethiopian Social Accountability Program (ESAP)

Social accountability is an ***approach towards building accountability that relies on civic engagement***. It consists of a broad range of actions and mechanisms that citizens can engage in to hold the state to account, as well as actions on the part of government, civil society, media, and other societal actors that promote or facilitate these efforts.

The Ethiopian Social Accountability Program was introduced by the Ethiopian government in collaboration with its development partners in 2006 as a pilot during the first phase of the Protection of Basic Services Program (PBS) to test a small range of Social Accountability (SA) tools, approaches, and mechanisms to make basic service delivery more effective, efficient, responsive, and accountable in 80 Woredas.

Between 2011 and 2018, the second phase of the program ESAP 2 scaled up SA into 240 Woredas with the aim to strengthen the capacities of citizen groups and government to work together in order to enhance the quality of basic public services delivered to citizens and with a focus on the core basic social services sectors of health, education, water, agriculture (including the Productive Safety Net Program=PSNP) and rural roads throughout the country using a range of SA tools and mobilizing more than 100 local Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) as facilitators of SA.

Building on the lessons from the first two phases of the program, the third phase (2019 – 2024) aims to scale up, sustain, and institutionalize Social Accountability in 417 Woredas representing all regions and city administration of the country. It is part of the on-going Enhancing Shared Prosperity through Equitable Services Program (ESPES) that aims to improve equitable access to basic services and strengthen accountability systems at the decentralized level.

ESAP3 operates with resources from two funding streams: financing from the Multi-Donor Trust Fund (MDTF) and allocations from World Bank/International Development Association (IDA).

The Multi Donor Trust Fund (MDTF) part of ESAP3 was launched in 2019 with approximately \$27million commitment by five Development Partners¹ (DPs) and is being implemented by VNG International as the Management Agency (MA) in partnership with CSOs. The World Bank is responsible for administering MDTF funds and ensuring compliance of the MA and its project Implementation partners (IPs) with set fiduciary standards and requirements. The overall oversight and guidance role rely on the Federal level Steering Committee chaired by the State Minister of MoF. Members of the Steering Committee are drawn from the relevant government institutions, CSO umbrella organizations and Development Partners. In addition, there is also a technical committee that serves as technical arm to the steering committee.

The IDA financed (\$20 Million) component is fully executed by the Ministry of Finance (MoF) and Regional Bureaus of Finance and Economic Development (BoFEDs) in all the Regions of the country and the two City administrations--Addis Ababa and Dire Dawa.

The IDA financing to ESAP3 will primarily be used to:

- a) Takeover, institutionalize and sustain SA practices in the MDTF program Woredas based on a gradual handover time frame to be worked out with the MA and,*

- b) Build supply side capacities to open for and embed SA mechanisms and processes in their mandated service delivery and oversight roles and functions.*

¹ Austria, the European Commission, Ireland, Sweden, and the United Kingdom

IDA financed part of ESAP was officially launched in October 2021 with an opening statement of HE the State Minister of MoF representing the Ethiopian government in the presence of Federal and Regional government officials and the World Bank.

Since its start up, IDA support project has conducted the following main activities.

- *Set up a Social Accountability structure at MoF-Channel One Programs Coordination Directorate (COPCD) and deployed a full time Team Leader and two additional SA senior experts.*
- *Prepared and secured no-objection from the World Bank on its multi-year action plan and budget which was further elaborated into annual action plan and budget for EFY 2014 and operationalized.*
- *Completed the recruitment of 11 SA focal persons i.e., one in 9 Regional state and two City administration BoFEDs.*
- *Prepared and operationalized **Job Descriptions** for its newly assigned regional SA experts and Senior SA experts at MoF-COPCD.*
- *Designed and operationalized a **Social Accountability guide** for use by MoF and BoFED SA experts as well as woreda Finance office and basic sectors service provider offices.*
- *Organized and conducted **Capacity development training** for Federal and Regional SA experts and key stakeholders on SA approaches, mechanisms, and emerging global trends in embedding SA in government systems for improved and accountable public service delivery and;*
- *Organized and conducted 7 regional IDA- ESAP launching workshops in **Benshangul-Gumuz, Dire Dawa, Gambela, Harari, Oromia, Sidama and Somali** regions that involved key public service delivery sector stakeholders and government official. Similarly, the remaining Regions and Addis Ababa will hold their respective launch workshops shortly.*

All these start-up activities indicate that the government has given due attention to the social accountability program and committed towards the successful implementation of all activities and thereby achieve its objectives.