

# Formative evaluation of the '*I Am Aware*' social accountability project in Ghana

April 2019

 i am aware

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- **At district level** – citizens, civic groups, civil society organisations (CSOs), local radio stations, service providers and duty bearers in the four districts selected for the evaluation (Garu, Central Tongu, Ekumfi and Kwaebibirem).
- **At national level** – CSOs, journalists, academics, development partners; ministry officials and parliamentarians.

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# Executive Summary

'*I Am Aware*' is a social accountability project implemented by the Ghana Centre for Democratic Development (CDD-Ghana) and funded by the Hewlett Foundation. The objective is to 'empower citizens and duty bearers by providing free, up-to date, user-friendly and accessible information on the state of public goods and services, to strengthen the demand and supply side of accountability.'

## *I Am Aware* project

CDD-Ghana collects and archives government data on service delivery at district level. The detailed sector data is provided on the *I Am Aware* website ([iamawareghana.com](http://iamawareghana.com)). Information products are also created to make the data more accessible and useful. For example, the District League Table (a collaboration with UNICEF) ranks all districts in Ghana on the quality of key services, using a composite index. The website has apps that enable users to compare service quality in selected districts, which are presented as graphs. 'Bulletins' provide infographics that compare the quality of services in particular districts to national averages. A Free SMS platform has also been set up, for citizens to text requests for data which is sent to their phone.

*I Am Aware* is implemented in collaboration with selected civil society organisations (CSOs), media and technical partners, to strengthen its reach and influence. The information is shared through open access sources (e.g. the website, mass media and SMS) and in forums for dialogue with target stakeholders. The dissemination and engagement are done at national and regional levels, and in twenty project districts.

**The evaluation** is based on research with civil society and duty bearers at national level and in four sampled project districts. It explores the project assumptions, and key intermediate outcomes such as the relevance and accessibility of the information, how it has been used, and whether and how this influenced government responsiveness.

## Summary of the evaluation findings

CDD-Ghana encountered various challenges with collecting government data. It required building trust and understanding among the key central ministries. Yet **some of the required data was not available and there have been challenges with its timeliness and accuracy**. These problems are underpinned by the weak government data ecosystem. In response, CDD-Ghana has started to raise awareness about the importance of quality data on public services, and more adequate government resourcing for data collection and management.

### National level

The District League Table has been widely disseminated at national level. **Most sampled national CSOs and policy advocacy organisations had used the District League Table, which is a strong indication of its relevance**. They used it to plan their geographical focus, for advocacy in the districts, or for policy analysis. The District League Table has also gained wide media coverage. Yet the media stories often sensationalised the rankings (to shame districts with low performance) rather than analysing the deeper policy and budget issues.

Few non-partner civil society organisations were aware of the detailed sector data (available on the website and SMS platform). This highlights the need for stronger marketing.

We facilitated a review of the data available on the website within the evaluation interviews. **The sampled CSOs thought that the sector data would be useful for advocacy, but felt that the website graphs could be clearer, and they suggested the creation of more compelling sectoral information** (e.g. sectoral league tables). They also called for more gender disaggregation and data on disability access. The sector data is less relevant to national journalists, who prefer ready-made news (like the District League Table) and more current information.

**CDD-Ghana's engagement with ministries and parliamentarians has promoted integration of the District League Table into national and regional oversight mechanisms.** Some regional governments have also imposed targets on the districts (e.g. becoming 'open defecation free' by a certain date) to improve their District League Table rankings. **Yet the data has not yet influenced national policy or budget**, which would evidence greater central government accountability. This is critical since the district budgets are small and the central government directly manages some services. CDD-Ghana has influenced government debate on use of the League Table to determine district budgets; yet there is disagreement on whether to give more funds to districts with poorer services; or alternatively, to reward those with good performance.

## District level

**There has been greatest responsiveness to the data at district level.** All four sampled district assemblies have integrated some citizen priorities into their medium-term development plans, and three have commenced service delivery improvements (Garu, Kwaebibirem and Ekumfi). The publicity and pressure around the District League Table has been a key driver for this responsiveness because it created competition and embarrassment, and this opened space for citizen dialogue on the sector data.

**The sector data is largely relevant to citizen concerns, but with variation.** For example, the data speaks to concerns about examination pass rates, open defecation, and the availability of boreholes (and for disabled people, borehole mechanisation). Yet citizens found the indicators on disease prevalence less relevant and more difficult to use. Some priority concerns are not captured by the data, such as service provider behaviour, drug availability, health insurance, and road potholes. CDD-Ghana has tried to address some of these gaps, but this is constrained by what data is available.

The project has worked with local radio partners (one per region) to share the information with citizens, including on-air dialogue with duty bearers and citizen call-in. **Local radio is**

**an appropriate channel for information sharing and dialogue.**

Most citizens listen to radio, and it is used by district authorities to communicate with citizens. Citizens also felt that calling-in to a radio programme is a less onerous way of raising issues than meeting duty bearers in person. Yet **the proliferation of radio stations limited the effectiveness of working with just one per region.** In response, the project has started to expand the strategy to include additional radio stations and journalists.

**Many citizens lacked the confidence to make demands, and there were few active civic groups in some districts. Due to this, the project has created 'social action groups'** to lead advocacy based on the data. These are comprised of some civic group leaders, opinion leaders (e.g. retired professionals) and community leaders; and include women and people with disabilities. Verbal explanation of the data and local governance systems has enabled these influential citizens to use the information for advocacy. We found strong alignment between social action group advocacy and the service delivery problems that concern wider citizens. Yet few of the social action group members had discussed the data or advocacy priorities with wider citizens. This was affected by the decline of forums for community dialogue, as well as the difficulties of explaining the data. This presents a risk of elite capture.

**CDD-Ghana and its CSO partners have facilitated meetings between the social action groups and district duty bearers, in which the data was used to highlight sector challenges and to evidence citizen concerns.** This included consultative meetings on the district medium term development plans, the timing of which was an opportunity for influence. Social action group members have also pursued independent advocacy at facility level and for specific local needs. Some of this advocacy focused on issues beyond the data, such as service provider behaviour. They also used the data in written petitions, and in one-to-one meetings with duty bearers.

**The social action groups found the data useful because it evidences the extent of the problems and inadequacies.** The district comparisons and provision of national standards (e.g. '1 policeman per 500 citizens') were especially useful for advocacy and made the data more tangible. The provision of both outcome and input data in some sectors also strengthened understanding of the underlying challenges. Across the districts, duty bearers reported that the data and dialogue has strengthened their understanding of sector problems; and helped them to identify priorities. Framed by the pressure to improve District League Table rankings, the dialogue and evidence led to commitments to improve services and some implementation has commenced.

## Project implementation through partnerships

Building partnerships with other organisations helped to extend the project’s reach and influence. Such ‘infomediaries’ are often seen as key to open data initiatives because they can help to translate data into accessible information, and support data use. CDD-Ghana built the partner’s capacity to use the *I Am Aware* data. The partners especially appreciated CDD-Ghana’s ongoing technical support and the peer learning in bi-annual partner meetings.

- **Partnerships with other CSOs** expanded the project’s reach and influence at district level. This required quite intensive CSO engagement and was enabled by existing social capital in the districts. Yet low financial support for partner activities reduced the scope of CSO work.
- The **technical partners** (Wigal, and the Centre for Geographical Information Systems) developed the SMS platform and a website application, which CDD-Ghana could not have achieved alone.
- The **national media partners** did not use the *I Am Aware* information as extensively as CDD-Ghana had anticipated. Most of them covered the District League Table, as did wider media, but they did not use the more detailed sector data. This was affected by a lack of time to seek data and a preference for ‘ready-made news’.
- The **local radio partnerships** promoted on-air dialogue about the district level data, which made it accessible to citizens. Yet, the strategy of partnering with one radio station per region limited the reach of the programs.

## The evaluation assessed the following theory of change assumptions:

ASSUMPTION	ASSESSMENT
<b>Comparisons of districts</b> would make the data more accessible and powerful	<b>True</b>
<b>National civil society partners</b> would use the <i>I Am Aware</i> information to strengthen their existing work.	<b>Partially true:</b> The national CSO partners had relevant projects but few used the data until additional financial support was provided for activities. National media partners used the District League Table, yet few used the sector data (partly because they need more up-to-date information and prefer ‘ready-made’ news).
<b>Partnerships with citizen groups</b> would build their capacity and motivation to use the data for advocacy, and they would know and represent wider citizen concerns.	<b>True</b> , although their direct representation and engagement with citizens could be strengthened.
<b>District duty bearers</b> would be more responsive when citizens make demands.	<b>Partially true:</b> intensive and strategic advocacy is required and limited resources constrain their ability to respond.
<b>Parallel engagement at district and national levels</b> would strengthen responsiveness	<b>Partially true:</b> Engagement at both levels is certainly critical, and national government use of the data for oversight strengthened district assembly responsiveness. Yet more concrete outcomes at national level, in terms of policy and budget, have been more difficult to achieve.

## Summary of key insights and lessons learnt

The *I Am Aware* initiative has generated various lessons and insights that may be useful for wider transparency and accountability projects.

- **The weak government data ecosystem was a challenge** for the timeliness, completeness and accuracy of the data, which also affected its relevance. Yet, the publication of the data has encouraged greater attention to data quality in some districts; and it opened space for civil society dialogue with government on the need to improve the data ecosystem.
- **The design and dissemination of information products require an audience-focus**, to ensure that they are relevant, accessible and compelling to that audience. There were challenges with the accessibility of technology-based information platforms (especially in rural areas) and they require expansive marketing.
- **Citizens found comparative information more accessible and useful** for advocacy, than empirical data. The provision of both service input and outcomes data enabled understanding of the linkages and informed specific interventions.
- **National civil society did not demand data in the way that CDD-Ghana assumed.** So, the project moved toward a more active approach to encourage data use such as creating more compelling information and engaging civil society in dialogue.
- **At district level, verbal explanation of the information supported civil society uptake**, as did citizen education on local governance systems. Partnerships with citizen groups also strengthened their capacity to use the evidence in engagements with their district assembly.
- ***I Am Aware* found that it is important to foster citizen champions** to advocate on behalf of others, since many citizens didn't have the courage to make demands. Yet, while there was alignment between advocacy and wider citizen priorities; partnering with small groups of citizens bears the risks of elite capture, particularly given the decline of community forums.
- **District assembly responsiveness to the League Table was partly influenced by regional government pressure, and its integration into national monitoring frameworks.** This resonates with recent social accountability analysis (e.g. Fox 2016), which finds that citizen 'voice' is most effective when it triggers such horizontal government accountability ('teeth').
- Yet, **the way that the League table has been used has placed pressure on the district assemblies to respond, while their capacity for responsiveness is constrained.** Through dialogue on these challenges, *I Am Aware* encouraged the district assemblies to press central government for more support - which achieved some (albeit piecemeal) responsiveness.
- As such, ***I Am Aware* has taken a strategic approach, by working at all levels of government to promote collective responsibility for the delivery of quality services.** This has started to influence central government dialogue on policies and resource allocation that would improve service provision, although as yet there have been no outcomes in this regard. A key challenge is the way that national policy and decisions are made: they are based more on party manifestos and politics than evidence. This highlights the need for more intensive national level engagement, including building political support. Working towards this, CDD-Ghana has tested some approaches which hold potential, such as fostering government champions in key ministries, and engaging national CSO coalitions in dialogue on the data.

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# List of abbreviations

<b>CDD-Ghana</b>	Ghana Centre for Democracy and Development
<b>CGIS</b>	Centre for Geospatial Intelligence Services (I Am Aware technical partner)
<b>CSO</b>	Civil society organisation
<b>FGD</b>	Focus group discussion
<b>GACC</b>	Ghana Anti-corruption coalition (I Am Aware CSO partner)
<b>GII</b>	Ghana Integrity Initiative (I Am Aware CSO partner)
<b>LRC</b>	Legal Resources Centre (I Am Aware CSO partner)
<b>OPM</b>	Oxford Policy Management
<b>OPMF</b>	Omega Project Management Foundation (I Am Aware CSO partner)
<b>PDA</b>	Participatory Development Associates
<b>SDGs</b>	Sustainable Development Goals
<b>SMS</b>	Short message service (i.e. mobile phone text)
<b>UNICEF</b>	United Nations Children's Fund
<b>WASH</b>	Water, sanitation and hygiene
<b>WILDAF</b>	Women in Law and Development in Africa (I Am Aware CSO partner)

# 1 Introduction

*I Am Aware* is a social accountability project implemented by the Ghana Centre for Democratic Development (CDD-Ghana) and funded by the Hewlett Foundation. The project objective is to 'empower citizens and to improve their awareness and engagement with duty bearers by providing free, user-friendly, accessible information on the state of public goods and services, in order to strengthen the demand and supply side of accountability'.

The *I Am Aware* concept grew out of CDD-Ghana's wider work, such as the Afrobarometer surveys. This indicated that a key constraint for social accountability is citizens' weak access to information, alongside a limited sense of citizen efficacy. The project was also informed by literature on transparency and accountability.

## Insights from transparency and accountability literature

Social accountability is the process of citizens calling duty bearers to account for good governance, including the delivery of quality services. Access to information is seen as an important enabler for social accountability. For example, the disclosure of information about service quality may help citizens to identify problems, increase their expectations and enable evidence-based demands, which may incentivise duty bearers to respond<sup>1</sup>. Yet experience has shown that providing information alone is rarely enough to achieve this pathway of change, and the outcomes of transparency initiatives are highly context dependent. While there is much still to learn about the relationship between transparency, participation and accountability, some key insights are starting to emerge.

Firstly, the information provided needs to be accessible, usable and relevant to citizens<sup>2</sup>. Some research on open data finds that ordinary citizens have limited capacity to access and use much of the information provided, or it is not the kind of information that they would find useful<sup>3</sup>. Gurstein (2003) provides a useful framework for thinking about information

accessibility. He argues that the following conditions need to be met for citizens to make 'effective use' of information:

- *Awareness* of the information;
- *Access to the infrastructure* used for dissemination (internet, radio, phones, community meetings)
- *Skills* to access and use the information (literacy, numeracy, information technology skills, etc.);
- *Appropriate communication of the information* (formats, language used, etc);
- *Relevant content* - it addresses citizen concerns and is salient;
- *Sense-making* - citizens are able to interpret and make sense of the information.

Citizen capacities to access and use data are clearly varied, with the most marginalised (including rural populations and women) often being least able to do so. This can reinforce existing inequalities<sup>4</sup>.

Secondly, intermediaries (such as CSOs and media) often play an important role. For example, by translating data into accessible information; and supporting citizens to relate the information to their everyday concerns and to work collectively to make demands<sup>5</sup>. Various factors shape the effectiveness of the intermediary process, such as skills, existing relationships, trust and credibility<sup>6</sup>. Some studies highlight challenges with bringing on board desired intermediaries. For example, research in Nepal found low use of open data among journalists due to their preference for existing working practices, such as using personal contacts to access information<sup>7</sup>.

Thirdly, citizen use of evidence for social accountability requires effective channels to engage with duty bearers and the belief that such engagement will make a difference.

<sup>1</sup> See: Reinikka & Svensson (2010); Bjorkman & Svensson (2009), and Olken (2007).

<sup>2</sup> Africa Data Consensus 2015; Davies (2014); Gurstein (2010)

<sup>3</sup> Davis (2014), Matuku & Mahihu (2017), Gaventa & McGee (2013).

<sup>4</sup> Acevedo-Ruiz et al (2017), McGee et al (2018).

<sup>5</sup> Zuiderwijk et al (2012), Peixoto, (2013), Carolan (2016).

<sup>6</sup> Matuku & Mahihu (2017)

<sup>7</sup> Davies (2014).

The risks of social accountability action and fears of reprisal can also be significant barriers<sup>8</sup>.

Fourthly, governance contexts shape whether and how social accountability might lead to responsiveness and improved service outcomes<sup>9</sup>. Responsiveness is deeply affected by factors such as incentives, capacities, financial resources, institutional relationships, vested interests and political will, as well as perceptions of citizen rights and engagement.

Finally, social accountability initiatives vary greatly in their approach and take place at different levels. Some focus on citizen engagement with service providers (short route accountability), while others aim to influence decision makers (long route). Fox (2016) highlights that social accountability initiatives focused at service delivery level can often become 'trapped' in the local<sup>10</sup>. They fail to address the underlying causes of service delivery problems managed at other levels of government, such as policy, budgets and incentives. Fox finds that successful initiatives have often taken a more strategic approach, involving civil society engagement at multiple levels to understand and address systemic issues. Fox, among others, also finds that social accountability is most effective when it triggers higher-level government oversight.<sup>11</sup>



<sup>8</sup> Senderowitsch (2015), Gaventa and Barret (2010)

<sup>9</sup> Kosak and Fung (2014), Gaventa & McGee (2013).

<sup>10</sup> This localised approach is seen, for example, in the Ugandan health sector project analysed by Raffler et al (2018).

<sup>11</sup> Fox (2016), Raffler et al (2018), Senderowitsch (2015)

## 2 The ‘I Am Aware’ project

**Theory of change:** *I Am Aware* collects government data on the quality of public goods and services, which is disaggregated at district level. Information products are created from the data to make it more accessible and useful. This includes comparisons of service performance between districts, and to national averages. The information is shared through open access sources (such as the *I Am Aware* website and mass media) and in forums for dialogue with civil society and government stakeholders. This is intended to build citizen awareness and demand for quality services; and to strengthen government accountability. To expand the project’s reach and influence, selected media and civil society organisations (CSOs) were brought on board as partners. Partnerships were also forged with key government stakeholders, to promote ongoing data provision and improved responsiveness.

**Phase 1** (2011-13) of the project focused on three sectors and developed the approach to data collection, analysis and archiving. Harvard University helped to build CDD-Ghana’s capacity for statistical analysis, data management and visualisation. CDD-Ghana built relationships with key ministries to foster their support for data provision, which was particularly important as Ghana had not (at that time) passed the *Rights to Information Law*. The website was launched in 2012 and the highlights on service quality were shared in mass media and public disseminations. This coincided with the 2012 election, and the information on service quality was used in pre-election debates on local radio. Yet one of the key lessons from phase 1 was that providing information is not enough: citizens required support to use it, including an understanding of local governance systems.

### 2.1 Project strategy and adaptations during phase 2

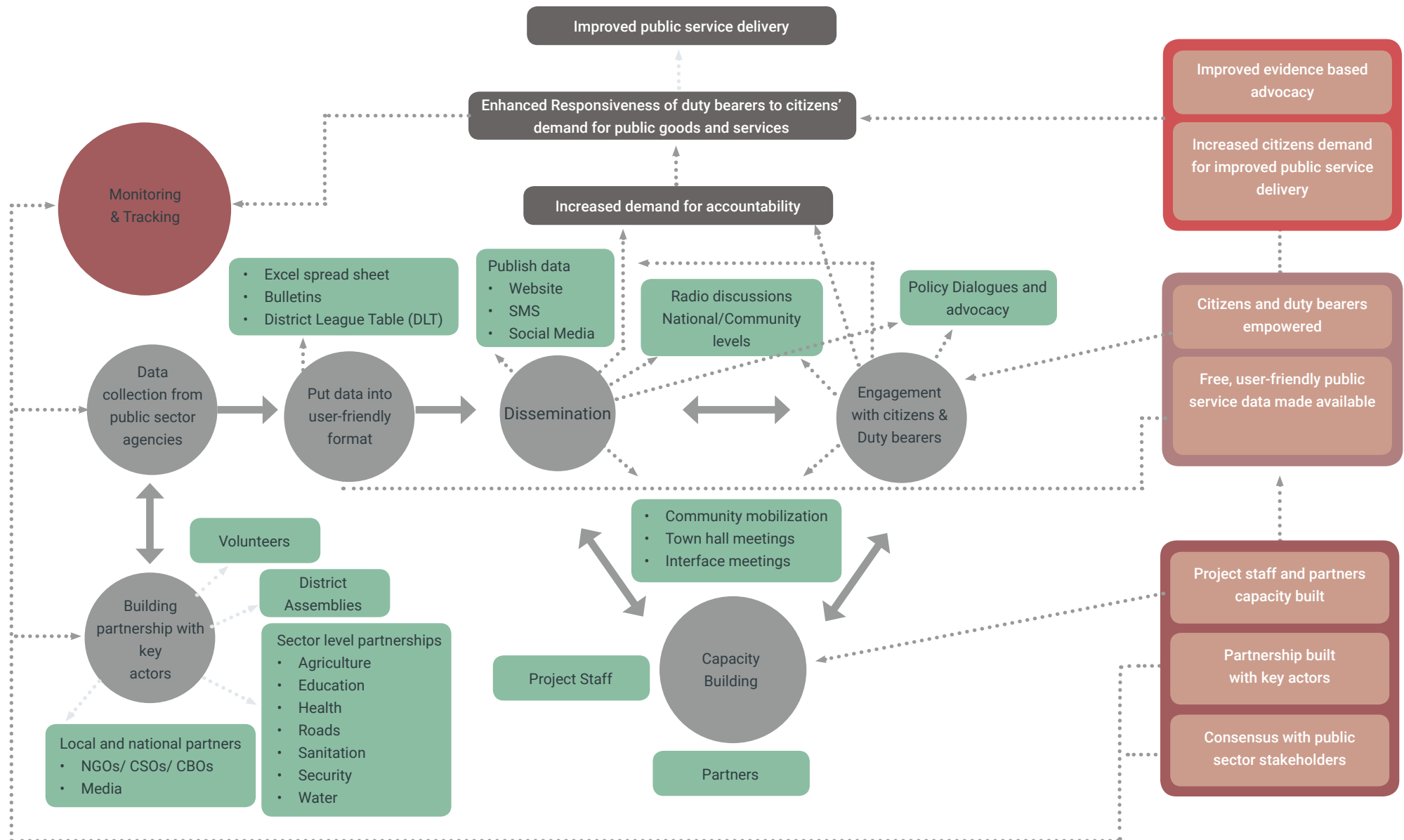
In phase 1, CDD-Ghana assumed that disseminating information to civil society would entice them to seek more detailed data from the website. CDD-Ghana described this as a ‘demand driven strategy’. As phase 2 progressed, CDD-Ghana realised that a more ‘supply driven approach’ was required to encourage civil society to use the data. This has entailed the creation of more compelling information and engaging key stakeholders in dialogue.

Several of the **information products** use comparisons, on the assumption that this would make the data more accessible and create constructive competition. For example, CDD-Ghana collaborated with UNICEF and the Local Government Service to create the District League Table, using the *I Am Aware* data. Produced annually, this ranks all 216 districts on their overall service delivery outcomes, based on selected indicators. UNICEF funds the League Table report and much of the dissemination. During phase 2, CDD-Ghana has made the *I Am Aware* website more interactive by creating apps to compare the districts. A set of Bulletins were also developed for best and worst performing districts. Using infographics, these compare district performance with national averages for selected indicators.

**Channels:** Alongside the use of mass media, *I Am Aware* has used information technologies to share the information and to create channels for debate: for example the website, social media and WhatsApp. Large dissemination meetings were facilitated, alongside dialogues such as roundtable discussions, meetings with issue-focused CSO platforms, and ongoing engagement with key government actors. A SMS platform was created in 2017. Using this, citizens can text (at no cost) to request for data, that is sent to their phone.

**Partnerships** are key to the *I Am Aware* strategy. The SMS and website apps were created by technical partners; while selected national media and CSOs were brought on board to strengthen the project’s reach. CDD-Ghana has built partner capacity and facilitates bi-annual partner meetings for peer learning. However, until late 2016, the national CSO and media partners were largely inactive. In response, CDD-Ghana increased the financial support available for partner activities. CDD-Ghana further adapted the strategy (in 2016) by fostering partnerships with regional CSOs and local radio stations (six of each) to lead the engagement at district level. It was assumed that regional CSOs would have social capital in the districts, which would strengthen project outcomes.

Figure 1 | I Am Aware theory of change diagram (developed in April 2018)



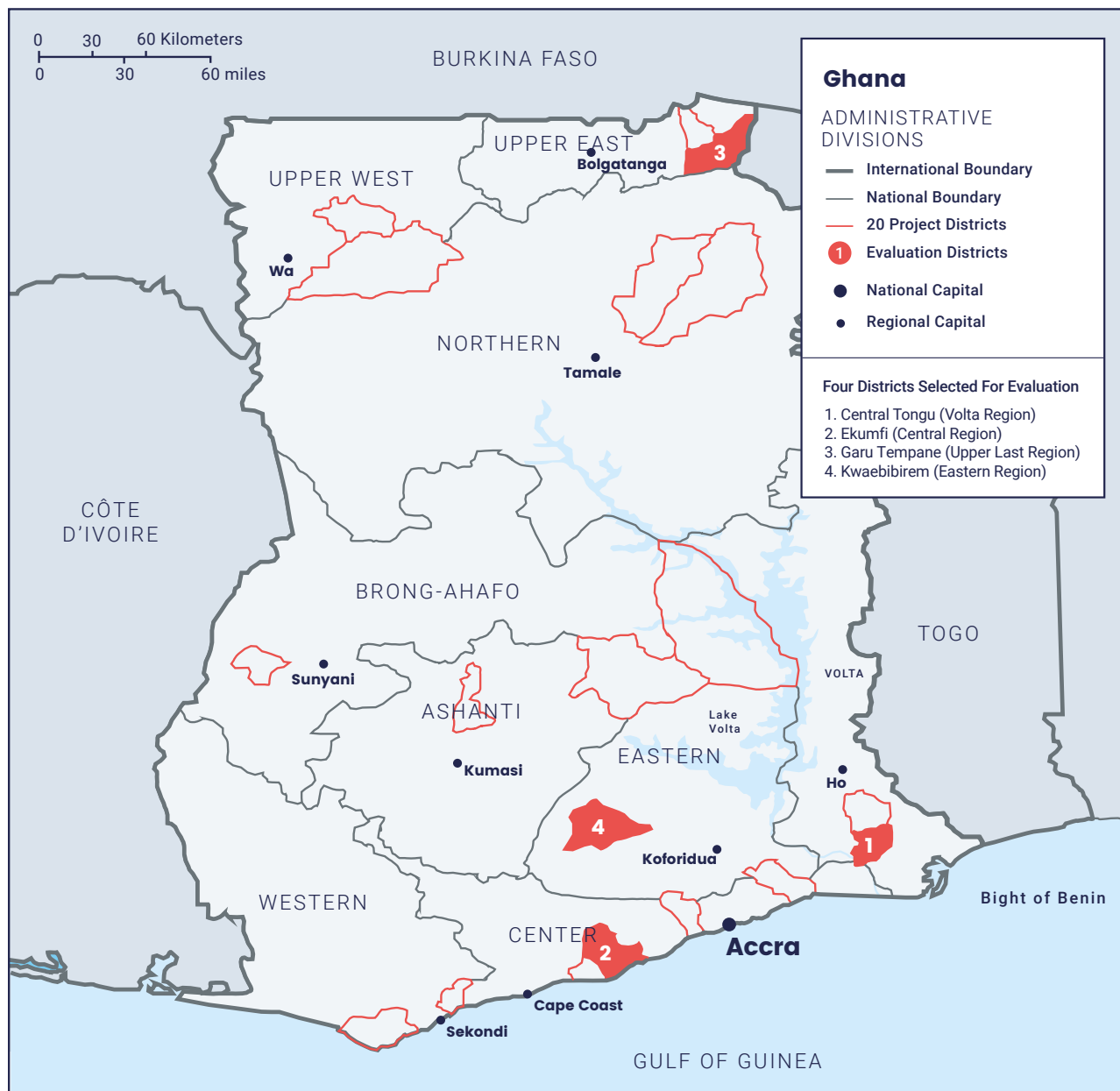
Local radio partnerships were expected to promote on-air dialogue about district-specific data, supported by the CSOs.

***I Am Aware undertakes intensive engagement in 20 districts*** (see Figure 2) of the 260 districts in Ghana. Responding to the lesson that citizens require support to use the data, the phase 2 design centred on fostering alliances with civic groups. This engagement started with town hall meetings to explain the data and build capacity to use it. Yet in several of the districts, there were few active civic groups and many citizens lacked the confidence to act. The CSO partners also needed a practical entry point. So, in most districts, the strategy shifted away from engaging multiple civic groups, to alternatively creating social action groups. Most

of these have around 30 members. This includes opinion leaders (educated citizens), interest-based groups (parent-teacher associations, transport unions, water associations etc), and community governance actors (e.g. chiefs). Such representatives were assumed to know citizen priorities and to have the confidence and influence for effective advocacy. Since 2017, *I Am Aware* has also started to recruit volunteers (via the SMS, website and Facebook), whom CDD-Ghana has trained to support the dissemination to wider citizens. Another adaption has been fostering alliances with district assemblies and facilitating interface meetings between them and the social action groups, including citizen engagement in local planning processes.

**Figure 2 Map of I Am Aware project districts**

This map shows the 20 project districts (red outline), and the four evaluation districts (red block colour).





## 2.2 Evaluation questions and approach

The evaluation focused on phase 2 of the project (2013-18). The main aim was to support CDD-Ghana learning, to help inform the design of phase 3. CDD-Ghana supported the evaluation design.

### Evaluation questions

- What assumptions were made at the start of phase 2; and which were validated or modified?
- What lessons were learnt; how was the strategy adapted; and how well was it implemented?
- What external factors affected implementation?
- What challenges did CDD-Ghana confront in collecting the data and creating information?
- How well was the information made available, accessible and relevant to citizens and civil society?
- What channels and methods of distributing the information were most or least effective?
- Has the project informed citizens about the quality of public services in their locality?

- How effectively has the project built consensus on the need to make information publicly available?
- How was the information used for advocacy and did this influence government responsiveness?
- What was the relative importance of different partnerships for achieving the outcomes?

### Evaluation approach

The evaluation takes a theory-based approach. It explores: (a) how existing change pathways are working in practice and for whom; and (b) the assumptions and intended change pathways. We also drew on the ‘outcome mapping’ approach and worked with CDD-Ghana to identify the behavioural changes that they *expect*, would *like* and *love to see*, for each type of ‘boundary partner’ (see Section 6).

The evaluation focused at both national level and in four sampled project districts. The districts were randomly selected based on two criteria: (a) different regional contexts; and (b) different CSO implementing partners. We included one district where the engagement is led by CDD-Ghana itself.

**Table 1 Project districts selected for the evaluation**

District	Region	Regional context	Implementer
Garu	Upper East (north)	Poor relative to coastal area and middle belt	RISE-Ghana
Ekumfi	Central (coastal)	Stronger economy, more educated population	Keba Africa
Central Tongu	Volta (middle belt)	Poor, remote area	Omega Project Management Foundation
Kwaebibirem	Eastern (middle belt)	More urban, educated	CDD-Ghana





### Interviewee sampling:

- **We interviewed stakeholders whom *I Am Aware* has directly engaged:** 15 project partners; 46 government stakeholders; 9 CSOs; and 16 focus group discussions (FGDs) with citizen groups.
- **We took a random sample of potential beneficiaries** to explore the accessibility and relevance of the information. In the districts: 12 civic groups, 6 CSOs and 48 citizens (male and female). At national level: 12 CSOs, 5 journalists and 6 academics who work on accountability or the focal sectors.
- **We facilitated practical tests** of the project website, SMS platform, District League Table poster and radio program clips - to explore their accessibility and relevance to intended beneficiaries.

- **We also assessed the relevance of the *I Am Aware* information to citizens**, using a participatory tool. This was done in FGDs with civic groups. It explored the service delivery problems that concern them most, and the relevance of the *I Am Aware* information to these concerns.

### Main limitations of the evaluation design:

- The sampled districts may not be representative, and the selection of three districts with 'high intensity work' may result in a positive slant. To mitigate this challenge, we also drew on the reports of other CSO partners which describe the activities and outcomes in other districts.
- The sample of citizens and civil society is small and not representative. However, we used these interviews to understand some of the benefits and challenges of the *I Am Aware* design.

# Evaluation Findings





### 3 Challenges of collecting the data and creating information

CDD-Ghana confronted many challenges in the task of collecting data for *I Am Aware*. The Ghana Statistical Service (national bureau of statistics) does not hold the required data as a 'one-stop-shop', so CDD-Ghana collects it from each ministry, department and agency. This makes the annual task very time intensive. Some of the sectors were collecting the data for their own use, while others were not:

- *I Am Aware* has sanitation data only for 2016. The required data is not collected by the ministry. In 2016, the ministry made a special request (to the regions) to collect the required data. Yet in 2017 the districts did not provide it. A ministry official explained: 'to get data, we dwell on relationships'.
- CDD-Ghana wanted to collect data on agriculture extension and food security. This data has not been collected at national level for many years. CDD-Ghana continues to promote this.
- In the security sector: *I Am Aware* only has data on police numbers. CDD-Ghana had intended to collect crime data (as an outcome indicator) but this is not disaggregated to district level.
- CDD-Ghana has also been unable to access data on roads. This is due to the creation of new districts in Ghana<sup>12</sup> and ongoing politics over boundaries, and thus which roads sit in which district.

12 As of April 2019, Ghana has 260 districts. The government created 38 new districts in March 2018 and 6 in February 2019

Due to government protocols, the data is largely provided to CDD-Ghana in PDF format. This makes the process of data archiving very time intensive. CDD-Ghana provided the ministries with excel templates and trained staff on how to use them. Yet most ministries continue to submit hard copies. There have also been **challenges with the timeliness of the data**: In late 2018, CDD-Ghana was still awaiting the 2017 data. This is because it takes time for government to collect and validate data and **the entire data ecosystem is under-resourced**. This includes inadequate funds to print data forms, inadequate staffing, a lack of computers and weak internet connection. Ministry officials also complained about the district assemblies' **low appreciation of the importance of data**. CDD-Ghana added that there are also low incentives, since it is not clear what the data is used for. *I Am Aware* has had a positive influence in this regard. The District League Table publication has compelled some districts to pay greater attention to data completeness and accuracy, since gaps and errors affect their rankings. Ministry officials reported a similar influence from other projects that work with government data. Across the sectors, officials suggested that *'CDD-Ghana should not just ask for data, but also strengthen our capacity to collect it'*.

As phase 2 progressed, CDD-Ghana started to respond to this challenge strategically. Working with the CSO platform on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and the Ghana Statistical Service, CDD has started to promote the strengthening of the government data ecosystem. This strategic engagement raises attention to the importance of quality data for planning, monitoring and resource allocation, and promotes more adequate government funding for the collection of service delivery administrative data.

### 3.1 Challenges with creating information products

The main challenges of developing the **District League Table** were selecting indicators that would show overall service quality, and the lack of outcomes data in some sectors. For example, it uses police numbers as the indicator for security since crime prevalence data is not disaggregated to district level. Many district duty bearers critiqued this since *'more police are required in high crime areas'*.

Development of an **SMS platform** was costlier and more complex than anticipated. The engagement of Wigal as an *I Am Aware* partner enabled development of the platform at a discounted rate. Volunteers were also brought on board to support the huge task of syncing the *I Am Aware* database with the SMS system. To increase accessibility, the system does not require a smart phone. Yet the USSD system carries a limited number of characters, so not all indicators are included and the process of accessing the data involves a long journey through multiple menus (see Section 4.2.3).

The creation of an **online heat map** has suffered delays. This will be an interactive system that enables users to compare districts on each sector indicator. Due to the creation of new districts, the official Ghana 'shape-map' is not yet updated, so partner the Centre for Geospatial Intelligence Services (project partner) is using an unofficial map at present. Filtering and syncing the data has also been a huge challenge, partly due to errors such as misspelt districts.

# 4 How well was the information made available, relevant and accessible to civil society and citizens?

## 4.1 National civil society

**Summary:** *I Am Aware* has made the District League Table widely available, accessible and relevant to national civil society. Yet there was limited awareness of the sector data which is available on the website. The sector data is relevant to most national CSOs, but it is less relevant and accessible for journalists.

We found **very wide awareness of the District League Table** among the sampled national CSOs, advocacy organisations and journalists. Most knew of it from multiple sources. *I Am Aware* has mobilised wide media coverage of the District League Table, which is enabled by the 'newsworthy' nature of the report. The annual launch events have each attracted over 200 civil society participants, many of whom were senior staff. Several respondents also received the District League Table by email or whatsapp, or they attended roundtable discussions.

**National civil society see the District League Table as an accessible and powerful tool. Most of those sampled had used it**, which provides strong evidence of its relevance. Some CSOs found it useful for planning their geographical focus; and many had used it for advocacy at district level (with some positive outcomes). It has also provided useful insights for policy analyses and compelling information and entry-points for media. Yet several CSOs (and CDD-Ghana) noted that the media stories have often sensationalised the District League Table: They report only on the rankings (in some cases to shame low ranking districts) rather than analysing the deeper issues and problems such as low central government resourcing. This highlights that **the District League Table is relevant to the media in particular ways**. While such media publicity has been a driver for district responsiveness to the District League Table (see Section 5.2), it has not supported the objective of promoting dialogue on sector policy and resourcing. This media framing of the District League Table also affects the depth of information received by citizens.

**CSOs and policy analysts also made suggestions on how to improve the District League Table's relevance.** Some felt that its power is lessened by not differentiating district contexts, which distorts the analysis, noting that urban districts receive more funds than rural and so should have different weightings. Some also questioned whether responsiveness would actually improve the rankings, particularly in the short term: '*if a district builds a hospital, would their health score improve?*' One CSO, and also a ministry official, felt that the District League Table is compelling some districts to falsify data. Several CSOs also felt that district league tables focused on specific sectors would be very useful (and one CSO had used the *I Am Aware* data to create an 'open defecation league table').

**Few of the sampled national civil society knew about the *I Am Aware* sector data or website.** This is explained by CDD Ghana's main focus on the District League Table in the national disseminations. An exception was the organisations which attended a CDD-Ghana dialogue on the sector data, at a forum for water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) CSOs. This led to strong use of the open defecation data by these CSOs, for advocacy at both district and national levels (see Section 5.1). While the *I Am Aware* website has attracted a fair number of users; the findings suggest a need for stronger marketing of the sector data and website at the national level. Some respondents suggested that the website could be publicised at CSO forums, with WhatsApp alerts when new data and information is uploaded.

When reviewing the website as part of the evaluation research, **most sampled CSOs, policy analysts and**

### ***I Am Aware* website analytics**

In the first 8-months of 2018, there were 10,677 visitors to the website, of which 6,500 were new. There were 49,187 page views. Yet there were fewer downloads of materials (144) such as the District League Table and Bulletins.

**academics showed strong interest in the sector data and thought it was relevant** to their work. Many CSOs made comments like: *'this detailed sector data is what we need for analysis and advocacy'*. However, there was variation among interest groups. **The data is not very relevant to disability CSOs** because there is no focus on disability access, and numerous CSOs would **like to see more gender disaggregation**. Many CSOs also suggested that *I Am Aware* should facilitate the collection of citizen-generated data, and couple it with their existing data. They felt that this would both help to validate the government data and enable citizens to voice other issues.

**The *I Am Aware* sector data is less relevant and accessible to journalists**. While some journalists showed interest in the website; many explained that they have little time to analyse data and prefer ready-made news. The lag-time in publication of the *I Am Aware* data also reduces its relevance for media. Journalists generally felt that much of the sector data is less newsworthy than the District League Table and that their audiences have little appetite for numerical data. One thought that the data is 'static' and that trend analysis would provide a media entry point.



## 4.1.1 Accessibility of the *I Am Aware* website

**Summary:** The website is targeted at CSOs, journalists and academics. It is generally accessible to these groups in Accra, but less so in the districts due to challenges with internet connection. The website structure and presentation of data could be improved, to increase its accessibility and usability.

The general accessibility of a website is affected by internet connection, speed and costs. Such challenges were noted particularly in the districts, but also by some national CSOs and journalists.

All CSO partners could navigate the website with ease and had good understanding of the data. This highlights the quality of the CDD-Ghana training. However, some local media partners said they *'get lost in the website'*, *'the set-up is not logical, so I forget how to find the data'*. First time users (national and district CSOs sampled for the evaluation) found the website relatively easy to use, but several needed help to find the data pages and to compare the districts. On the latter, common challenges were clicking on sectors or years for which data is not available (which reduced confidence in the website) and confusion over the sequence of clicks required to select the indicators. **Suggestions on how to improve the website focused on making it more user-friendly.** This included: putting the data links at the top of the front page; providing dropdown menus in the app to compare districts; disabling tabs if the data is not available; and identifying the district in the file names of the Bulletins.

The apps to create comparative graphs were widely seen as useful, but many respondents felt that the graphs don't provide a crystal-clear picture. Indicators with small frequencies cannot be seen because the population data

distorts the scale. The graphs also require some analysis to understand because they often provide frequencies and population data (rather than per capita statistics). Some thought that **the readability and power of the online graphs could be improved** by provision of: separate graphs for each sector indicator; per capita statistics; and comparisons to national averages and standards. The Bulletins (which are only available on the website) meet each of these ideals and were seen to provide the clearest and most powerful picture (see Section 5.3)

### Website : Key Lessons



#### Advantages

- Accessible to key national target groups (e.g. CSOs, academics).
- Users found the apps to compare districts useful



#### Disadvantages

- Less accessible at district level: lack of computers, IT skills and weak internet connection
- Some target groups (e.g. journalists) lack time to seek data on a website



#### Lessons Learnt

- Requires a more user-oriented design, e.g.: simple steps to access data; user-oriented filing; clearer graphs
- More expansive marketing of the website is required

## 4.2 District level: civic groups and wider citizens

**Summary:** The *I Am Aware* information has been made available, relevant and accessible to groups of elite citizens, which has enabled advocacy and influence. The use of local radio for wider dissemination has enabled on-air citizen dialogue about local services, yet contextual challenges affect the strategy's reach. The SMS platform has some potential to reach numerate and literate citizens, but the SMS has not been widely advertised and as fairly 'raw data' it is less usable for ordinary citizens.

*I Am Aware's* main strategies for information sharing at district level are: to engage key opinion leaders and civic groups in citizen town hall meetings; and to reach wider

citizens via local radio and the SMS platform. The strategy has been implemented slightly differently in each of the sampled districts.

### Box 1 Project districts: different contexts and approaches to *I Am Aware* engagement

In Ekumfi, Central Tongu and Kwaebibirem districts, there are few active civic groups or CSOs. In each district, the initial town hall meeting engaged some opinion leaders (educated citizens), civic group leaders, chiefs, queen mothers, and local governance actors (assembly wo/ men and unit committees<sup>13</sup>). In each district, an 'I Am Aware social action group' was formed at the meeting, to lead evidence-based advocacy. These include women and some people with disabilities

**Kwaebibirem:** CDD-Ghana had not previously worked in the district. Their engagement commenced when a group of district assembly members visited CDD-Ghana's office to discuss the district's low League Table ranking. CDD-Ghana asked the assembly members to invite opinion leaders and community leaders to the town hall meeting. The assembly members continue to work in partnership with the social action group. CDD-Ghana engaged a radio partner which is based in the district.

**Ekumfi:** Keba Africa is based in Accra but has a focal person in Central region and existing projects in Ekumfi. Their approach was shaped by the *'common belief in Ekumfi that only citizens affiliated to the incumbent party can tell the assembly their concerns. So, we ensured that the social action group includes citizens linked to each political party'*. Keba Africa held some community meetings to validate the advocacy priorities. There is no radio station in Ekumfi, so they engaged a regional radio which reaches both project districts in Central region (although the signal is weak in Ekumfi).

**Central Tongu:** Omega Project Management Foundation (OPFM) is based in Accra, with a focal person in Volta. They had not previously worked in Central Tongu. Since their initial scoping found few active civic groups, OPFM asked the district assembly to invite opinion leaders to the town hall meeting. Some of the educated citizens in the social action group are non-indigenes, which affects their interest and commitment. OPFM has not undertaken wider community sensitisation. The local radio partner was selected for its regional coverage, but it does not reach Central Tongu.

**Garu:** RISE-Ghana is based in the regional capital and has previously worked in Garu. Unlike the other three districts, Garu has many active civic groups, due to development partner support to civil society. This enabled a different approach. RISE-Ghana convened numerous *I Am Aware* meetings across the district, with different kinds of civic group. Citizen 'action groups' were created in each locality. Representatives from each group have formed a core 'social action group', to lead engagement with the district assembly. The radio partner is based in the district.

13 Assembly Members and Unit Committees are the most local level of governance. A key role of Assembly Members is to represent citizen concerns in district assembly decision making. Unit Committees represent clusters of communities. Their role includes communication of community concerns to the assembly, coordinating community work, tax collection, and monitoring local projects.



## 4.2.1 Citizen town hall meetings

**Interviews with town hall meeting participants highlighted that these were an effective method to make the *I Am Aware* information accessible and relevant to civic and community leaders.** Importantly, they also provided a space to sensitise these elite citizens on local governance systems. A fair number of the participants had secondary education, yet some were not literate (particularly the chiefs and queen mothers<sup>14</sup>) and few were familiar with statistics and graphs. The project made the data and graphs more accessible by explaining them verbally in local languages; and facilitating discussion on the data as it relates to local concerns. Most sampled participants reported that while they were initially confused by the statistics and graphs, the in-depth discussion enabled their understanding. Only one sampled group (a disability group in Garu) reported that they did not understand the data. They attributed this to being too far from the screen and felt that the explanation was too brief.

**We found strong alignment between the social action groups' advocacy and the service delivery problems that concern wider citizens.** This suggests that the project correctly assumed that these opinion leaders would know and represent community concerns. Most sampled citizens said that if they were to raise concerns formally, they would approach opinion leaders, chiefs or assemblymen (i.e. social

action group members). Yet many had only complained within their social networks. This was often because they lack belief in the governance system and community durbars<sup>15</sup> are seldom held. **A few social action group members said that *I Am Aware* has strengthened their link to communities,** because it has highlighted the importance of voice and strengthened channels for influence. For example, some chiefs and assembly members have revitalised regular community durbars and some have shared *I Am Aware* information in these. In Kwaebibirem, an outcome of *I Am Aware* engagement has been the inclusion of community chiefs in assembly meetings, who had not been invited to these for some years.

**Yet some social action group members voiced challenges with sharing the *I Am Aware* information with wider citizens** because: *'it is complex to explain'* and *'it would be easier if we had visual aids like the District League Table poster'* (see Section 4.2.4). The launch of the SMS platform has been useful in this regard. In Ekumfi, some assemblymen had complained and felt undermined when civic groups tried to share the information with wider citizens. Here, social action group members said: *'we wish that Keba Africa would help us to share the I Am Aware data, the communities won't accept new ideas from us.'* Keba Africa reported that such activity

### Town Hall Meetings in Districts: Key Lessons



#### Advantages

- Face-to-face meetings aided citizen comprehension of the data and its relevance
- Provided space for citizen education on rights and governance systems
- Encouraged dialogue on service quality, and promoted collective action
- The project gained feedback about data relevance and citizen concerns



#### Disadvantages

- Meetings reach just a few citizens – the project focused on civic leaders
- The decline of community forums in some areas - reduced opportunities for direct representation of wider citizens



#### Lessons Learnt

- Need to strengthen representation of wider citizens in the process that follows the meetings
- Civic leaders need support and visual aids share the information with wider citizens

14 In Ghana, each community has a chief (a male, and often hereditary) who presides over community affairs. This includes dispute resolution, convening meetings about key issues, and representing the community in wider forums and decisions. Queen mothers are female leaders (often from the lineage of the chief) who preside over women in communities and markets. This includes dispute resolution and convening meetings about key issues.

15 A community durbar is a formal meeting of community members, convened by chiefs or assembly wo/men to share information, or to discuss key issues and gather opinions.

was limited by the *project's* financial support for activities. **This weakness in social action group representation of wider citizens is a concern and risks elite capture.** RISE-Ghana has taken a more community-based approach to sharing *I Am Aware* information in Garu (see Box 1). Their tiered structure of citizen groups is a useful model that could be replicated. In Kwaebibirem, CDD-Ghana has started to support the assembly to reactivate parent-teacher associations, which is also an avenue to explore in other districts.

The evaluation was not designed to measure *I Am Aware's* reach. However, the findings indicate a potential challenge. None of the randomly sampled citizens, civic groups or CSOs in the districts had heard about the District League Table or the *I Am Aware* data. In the following sections, we review the accessibility of the information channels used by the project.



## 4.2.2 Local radio

***I Am Aware's* strategy to share information via local radio makes sense.** Alongside social networks, citizens explained that radio is their main source of information. Many citizens also spoke of local radio as a channel for citizens to raise concerns about public goods and services (via citizen call-in shows), which is less onerous than visiting the assembly or raising issues in community durbars. In all four districts, there were some examples of duty bearers responding to problems raised on the radio (such as action to repair bridges, switch on water taps or clear refuse). Some district assemblies also use local radio to communicate with citizens, such as to

explain their policy priorities and projects.

***I Am Aware* has made good use of local radio to share the information and promote dialogue.** Each of the regional CSO partners has built a partnership with one local radio station per region. Since radio stations generally require payment for dedicated airtime, *I Am Aware* funded a series of (ten to fifteen) thirty-minute programs on each partner station. These focused on the quality of local services and citizen rights to raise concerns. In some of these, the CSO partner presented the information guided by a well-thought-out script. Other programs were led by social action group members

or duty bearers, or a panel of both. Many of the programs included a citizen call-in segment, which enabled on-air dialogue about service quality. Each of the sampled local radio partners had also used the data in other (unfunded) programs. They explained that this was promoted by the relevance of the data to their audiences, and the capacity building provided by the *I Am Aware* CSOs. Some of the radio staff had used the website or SMS to gather information for these programs. One radio host explained: *'the data empowered me to ask bold questions to duty bearers on air, because it gave me clear evidence of the problems.'*

**However, some contextual challenges may mediate the effectiveness of the local radio strategy.** The interviews with citizens highlighted that numerous radio stations reach the districts; and many citizens only tune in for particular shows (often news or music). Additionally, due to radio syndication, peak time on local radio (7-10am and 4-7pm) is dominated by national news and programs. Several of the sampled citizens suggested that if *I Am Aware* advertised its programs (e.g. through jingles at other times and on other stations) they would tune in to listen to them.

**There were also challenges with selecting one radio partner per region.** In Volta, the selected station has a large audience across the region, but it does not reach the sampled project district (Central Tongu). Similarly, the selected station in Central region has a weak signal in Ekumfi district (so few citizens listen to it). In Upper East, an English language station was selected both for its reach and to enable dialogue with district bureaucrats (few of whom speak the local language - Kusaal). Here, the *I Am Aware* programs were simultaneously translated into Kusaal, and (encouraged by RISE-Ghana) some community radio stations have presented

the highlights. **Recognising the limitations of partnering with one station per region, some of the CSO partners have spoken about *I Am Aware* on other local radio stations. CDD-Ghana has also started to provide trainings to wider journalists in the regions.** The example in Box 2 indicates that these trainings have helped to extend *I Am Aware's* reach, albeit it also shows a preference for stories from communities

### Box 2: Non-partner radio using the data

In Central Tongu, all sampled citizens and duty bearers listen to Dela community radio. Dela radio staff visit communities to gather citizen concerns about service delivery. These concerns are aired on a weekly program called 'Volta Must Know', which has catalysed some responsiveness from the district assembly.

Dela journalists attended an *I Am Aware* workshop for media in Volta region. Arising from this, Dela staff reported on the District League Table in 2017. At this time, they also used data from the *I Am Aware* website to compare service quality in the three Tongu districts. This catalysed many calls from citizens and duty bearers. But Dela radio has not used the *I Am Aware* website since. Staff of Dela radio stated: *'We should use the I Am Aware data more, it is useful; but we mainly use stories from communities about specific local problems.'*

## Local Radio : Key Lessons



### Advantages

- **Appropriate channel:** Common use for district communications, and most citizens listen to radio. For citizens, calling a radio show to raise a problem is less onerous than meeting duty bearers.
- **Platform for district assemblies** to explain the data to citizens (reduced tension about publication of the data)
- **Enabled public dialogue** about local service quality (citizen call in shows)



### Disadvantages

- **The reach of the local radio programmes was reduced by:**
  - Partnering with one radio station per region, while many stations reach the districts
  - Radio syndication: Peak time on local radio is dominated by national programmes
- **Radio stations are for-profit:** Most required payment for dedicated airtime



### Lessons Learnt

- **Need to expand reach to more local radio stations.** Approaches that worked:
  - trainings for wider journalists;
  - encouraging regional stations to share the information with community radios.

## 4.2.3 SMS platform

The SMS platform<sup>16</sup> is generally targeted at citizens with secondary education, since the system uses English and presents numerical data. Yet *I Am Aware* has also trained the social action groups to use the SMS. We found that **social action group members with a low level of education could not use the system because it requires English; but most randomly sampled citizens with secondary education found it intuitive and easy to use** (with no difference by gender or disability). For those who needed support, the main hitch was the lengthy process to find their district, and particularly the need to press 'm' for 'more' districts.

**Weak phone networks were a challenge for using the SMS platform.** In the practical tests with citizens, 30% (7/24) did not receive the data due to network failure, which depleted their confidence in the system. This challenge was most notable in Garu (the most remote district). **Another challenge was weak comprehension of data that is texted.** 50% (6/12) of women did not fully understand the data, and 33% of men. This was mainly due to the data that was requested. Some of the data is self-explanatory (e.g. number of schools), while **some data is less easy to understand without clarifiers.** For example, infant mortality rates were not understood as 'per 1000 live births'. Due to this, one woman had a look of mockery as she said '*what, only 2 infants died in 2016!*' One man misunderstood the indicator on 'writing places' as the number of exam halls; while it actually refers to the number of tables in schools. Several citizens also suggested that the **per capita statistics would be more useful and powerful than absolute numbers:** '*Percentages would make the data more*

*understandable. This gives me the number of schools with toilets, but I have to text again to know the total number of schools. It would be better to give the percentage of schools with a toilet'* (civil group member, retired professional).

Despite these challenges, most sampled citizens were **excited that they could receive such data so easily on their phone.** In most cases, they referred to the importance of '*knowing the situation in the district*'. A small number of citizens related this to the potential for social accountability action. For example, a male farmer in Volta said: '*Nobody will be able to take advantage of you if you have this information. If there is a forum and the district director comes to talk to us, we can ask the right questions. If he tries to deny the facts, we can easily check what is on the ground to see if he is hiding something.*'

### Free SMS: Key Lessons



#### Advantages

- Citizens have greater access to mobile phones than computers
- System does not require a smart-phone
- Primary target group (citizens with secondary education) found the system intuitive to use



#### Disadvantages

- Weak mobile phone network in some areas: error messages lowered confidence in SMS
- SMS platform not accessible to all civic leaders (requires literacy/numeracy)



#### Lessons Learnt

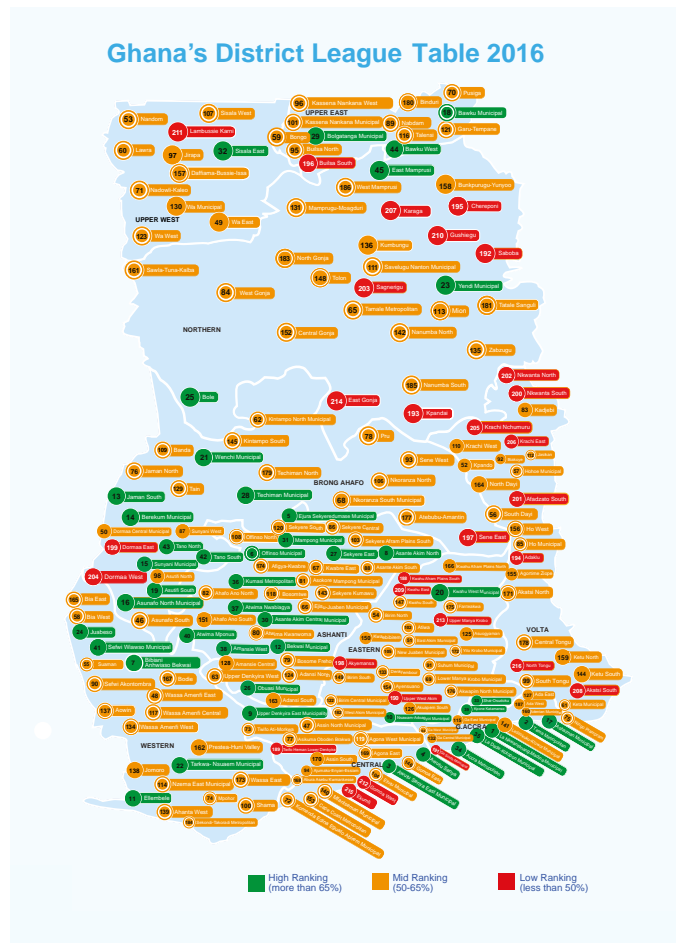
- Requires a more user-friendly design: e.g. fewer steps to access data; user-oriented indicator descriptions
- Sharing analysed data by SMS is more useful to citizens, than empirical data
- More expansive marketing of the Free SMS is required

<sup>16</sup> Users send an SMS to a free-text number. In response, they are texted a series of questions which ask for the district, sector and indicator on which they would like data. For example: *Garu district > education > number of primary schools*. They then receive a text which provides the data (e.g. the number of primary schools in Garu district).

## 4.2.4 District League Table poster

The Local Government Service requested that a poster of the District League Table be developed, for district assemblies to display in their offices. It therefore had limited distribution and very few respondents had seen it. However, we tested citizen comprehension of the poster. **Citizens with secondary school education understood the information on the poster. Yet those with a lower level of education could not.** While the map presents a simple visualisation of the League Table, citizens with low literacy could not read the key or explanatory text provided on the poster. Their interpretations of the map included: 'I see rivers', 'I see roads', 'red means unfinished projects'.

However, **when the poster was explained to citizen respondents, it catalysed vibrant debate about the quality of local services.** Most thought that the poster was a good way of communicating the information, since it is colourful and visual, but that it should be made more accessible to those who cannot read. Some felt that if the poster were displayed in public places, educated citizens would explain it to others. Some citizens and service providers also suggested that the poster could be used for education in schools and churches or displayed in health facilities.



### District League Table Poster : Key Lessons

#### ✔ Advantages

- **Colourful visual** - attracted attention
- **Hard-copy product:** preferred by CSOs; potential to reach citizens without access to technology

#### ✖ Disadvantages

- **Not intuitively understood by all:** literacy required to read the information key

#### ➔ Lessons Learnt

- **There is demand for wider distribution**  
Some citizens and service providers wanted to display/explain the poster at schools, health facilities and church or mosque

## 4.2.5 Is the I Am Aware data relevant to citizens?

To understand the relevance of the data, we asked the sampled citizens and civic groups to explain their main concerns with the quality of public services. We then facilitated discussion on the relevance of the *I Am Aware* indicators they had not mentioned. This highlighted that the indicators are generally relevant to citizen concerns, but with some sectoral variation. This variation has been partly affected by the government data that is available in different sectors (see Section 3).

- **The education indicators capture most of the sampled citizen's priorities** and the social action groups appreciate how these indicators enable them to make links between service inputs and outcomes. Citizens also mentioned concerns that are not included in the data, such as: disability access to schools; teacher behaviour and absenteeism, and weak parental supervision of students.
- **The sanitation indicators also capture key citizen priorities**, particularly open defecation and refuse dumps /collection. However, many citizens were also concerned about a lack of public toilets, and they linked open defecation to cholera (neither of which are *I Am Aware* indicators).
- **The water indicator on boreholes was most relevant to citizens** and their mechanisation is important for people with disabilities. Common concerns beyond the indicators included: the water tap being turned off; and water contamination from mining or open defecation.
- **Security was mostly mentioned by men and it was a larger concern in some districts** (Garu and Central Tongu). In addition to police numbers (the only *I Am Aware* security indicator) men were concerned about police behaviour (e.g. bribes). Some women were also concerned about a lack of street lighting. District assemblies questioned the relevance of the indicator on police numbers, since this is not within their control, and several called for an outcome indicator on crime prevalence. CDD-Ghana has tried to collect crime data, but it is not disaggregated to district level.
- **The *I Am Aware* health data were less directly relevant to citizen concerns and the indicators are more difficult to use.** The data focuses mainly on disease prevalence and infant mortality, with one input indicator (number of hospital beds). *I Am Aware* does have data on the number of health facilities, but this is not included in the


graphs on the website. Many citizens believed that the focal diseases and infant deaths are caused by poor citizen attitudes and practices, and that public education has already been expansive. Citizens were alternatively concerned about: health insurance; drug availability; a lack of local health facility/staff; the poor state of facility buildings, and health worker behaviour. The district assemblies critiqued the indicator on hospital beds, as data is only provided for regional hospitals (due to a lack of data for district hospitals).

- **Rather than the road network, most citizens were concerned about the poor state of roads** (potholes, dangerous bridges etc). This was a major concern in Kwaebibirem. Citizens (particularly women) linked the poor state of roads to maternal and child deaths; as well as poor market access and a subsequent high cost of farm produce. Poor roads also exacerbate access and mobility challenges for people with disabilities.
- **Other common concerns beyond the *I Am Aware* data** included: agricultural extension (on which *I Am Aware* intends to collect data), electrification, unemployment, and teenage pregnancy.

### There were some suggestions on how to further strengthen the relevance of the data:

- Couple the information on service quality with data on district assembly resources and expenditure.
- Share more 'standards' for comparison (like that shared for security: '1 policeman per 500 citizens').
- Disaggregate more data by gender; and include data on disability access (for example to schools)
- Many national CSOs also proposed the need for citizen-generated data, to help validate the government data and to enable citizens to raise other localised issues.

# What sector data was most relevant to citizens?

	 <b>Education</b>	 <b>Sanitation</b>	 <b>Water</b>
I Am Aware indicators (data provided for each district)	<p><b>Primary and Junior High:</b> # of schools, # students (male/ female), # teachers; # trained teachers; # textbooks available (science, maths, English), # chairs, # tables, # students repeating the year</p> <p><b>Outcomes:</b> # students repeating the year, Junior high completion rate (male/ female); Basic Secondary Examination Certificate (BECE) pass rates per subject (male/female)</p>	<p># sanitation officers, kg waste produced; # waste collecting trucks; # waste skips and dump sites</p> <p><b>Outcomes:</b> # communities with open defecation free (ODF) certification</p>	<p># sanitation officers, kg waste produced; # waste collecting trucks; # waste skips and dump sites</p> <p><b>Outcomes:</b> # communities with open defecation free (ODF) certification</p>
Do the indicators cover priority citizen concerns?	<b>Yes.</b> Combination of input and outcome indicators is useful for advocacy. Useful gender disaggregation.	<b>Yes.</b> Particularly open defecation, and refuse dumps/collection.	<b>Yes.</b> Particularly boreholes, and their mechanisation (for people with disabilities)
Citizen concerns not covered by the indicators	Disability access to schools, teacher behaviours and absenteeism, weak parental supervision of students.	Lack of public toilets; cholera caused by open defecation.	Water tap being turned off; water contamination caused by mining or open defecation.
	 <b>Security</b>	 <b>Health</b>	 <b>Roads</b>
I Am Aware indicators (data provided for each district)	# of police in district	<p>Total hospital admissions; # beds per patient; # health facilities; # health workers.</p> <p><b>Outcomes:</b> # communities with open defecation free (ODF) status; Rates of infant and maternal mortality; HIV/AIDS, diarrhoea, pneumonia, anaemia, typhoid</p>	Data not yet provided. I Am Aware intended to collect data on the road network.
Do the indicators cover priority citizen concerns?	<b>Yes.</b> Security was mainly mentioned by men, and it was a larger concern in some districts than others.	<b>Data is less directly relevant</b> to citizen concerns, and the indicators are more difficult to use.	<b>Data is less directly relevant</b> to citizen concerns.
Citizen concerns not covered by the indicators	Police quality and behaviour/bribes; lack of street lighting (mentioned by women); crime prevalence.	Health insurance, drug availability, a lack of local health facility/staff, the poor state of facility buildings, and health worker behaviour.	<b>Poor state of roads</b> (potholes, dangerous bridges, etc).



### 4.3 Has I Am Aware data informed citizens about the quality of services?

Much of *I Am Aware* data speaks to citizen concerns, so some of the issues it raises are not 'new'. But many social action group members said it has **highlighted and evidenced the extent of the problems and inadequacies**. In this regard, the district comparisons and provision of national standards have been especially useful. For example, they make clear the inadequacies of police numbers, school toilets and furniture; the relative strength of BECE pass rates; and relatively high open defecation rates.

Some social action group members were shocked by the data, as one exclaimed: *'I was shocked that so few children have chairs at schools, and how high the open defecation rate is in my district. It moved me to take action'* (social action

group, Garu). We heard similar comments from wider citizens when we played them a clip of an *I Am Aware* radio program. The *I Am Aware* data and capacity building has also enabled the social action groups to **understand and evidence the links between service inputs and outputs**, especially in education. A social action group member in Kwaebibirem explained: *'I Am Aware helped us to see that the exam passes are affected by many things, including whether teachers are trained, and if the children have tables and textbooks. So now we go beyond complaining, to dialogue with the district assembly about these issues and how the services can be improved'*



# 5 Use of the data for advocacy and impact on responsiveness

## 5.1 National and regional level

**Summary:** Dialogue on the District League Table has influenced various national and regional oversight mechanisms, which push down on the districts and promote their accountability. In this regard, the District League Table is becoming institutionalized as a service delivery monitoring tool. Yet there has been no influence yet on national policy or budget, which would support the districts and evidence greater central government accountability.

CDD-Ghana and UNICEF have used the District League Table and *I Am Aware* data to engage various national government stakeholders in dialogue about the quality of public services. CDD-Ghana has facilitated round table discussions, bi-annual meetings for key parliamentary committees, and ongoing engagement with the ministries/agencies that oversee local governance. Meanwhile UNICEF has led advocacy toward sectoral ministries and one of the national media partners supported this by facilitating on-air roundtable discussions. Alongside promoting debate on sector challenges and their underlying causes, the District League Table has been used to highlight district variations and the need to respond to these through the district budgets (Common Fund Allocations). This has been framed by another *I Am Aware* advocacy message: ‘all levels of government are collectively responsible for the provision of quality goods and services’.

CDD-Ghana’s strategy at the parliament has been to foster champions in key committees. Their engagement with members of parliament (MPs) led to a **series of parliamentary debates about the quality of services**. Some MPs have also used the data to evidence burning issues in their districts (particularly open defecation). One MP said that ‘*the data has enriched our debates with facts to replace conjectures*’; while another felt that the District League Table has increased transparency: ‘*In the past, such evidence was only known to the agencies that collect it.*’ **Some MPs have used the District League Table indicators to prepare verification plans for oversight visits**. One reported: ‘*it helped us to understand what questions to ask and what measures to propose; so it has strengthened parliamentary functions.*’

***I Am Aware* has also started to influence government debate on district variations in service outcomes, and the potential use of the District League Table to guide common fund allocations**, although commitments have been weak so far. At an *I Am Aware* roundtable discussion, the Deputy Minister for Local Government stated:

*“ We will consider the District League Table results in disbursement of the district common fund... Greater weight should be given to deprived districts with lower rankings. The District League Table could be used to empower local authorities to effectively and efficiently utilise their common funds ”*

[\(Finder newspaper 12/9/2017\)](#)

However, parliamentarians indicated that there are divergent opinions on how the District League Table rankings should inform budget allocations, which has been a bottleneck for the decision:

*“ During budget deliberations there was a suggestion to use the District League Table as a guideline for the district common fund allocations. There is an intense argument on who should get more funds: districts doing well or those at the bottom of the league table. This has caused the delay in use of the District League Table to guide the allocation ”*

[\(Parliamentarian\)](#)

A Ministry of Local Government staff member has used the website extensively, to run year-on-year comparisons of specific sectors. To increase the relevance and power of the *I Am Aware* data, he **suggested 'closer alignment with the SDG targets and Agenda 2030.** *This will be a big step towards government owning the process, as the District League Table will align with government priorities.'*

**CDD-Ghana's ongoing engagement with the Local Government Service has influenced its use of the District League Table to strengthen its oversight and planning.** The existing district performance contracts monitor activities and relationships between key stakeholders. The Local Government Service is now working with CDD-Ghana to *'synchronise this tool with the District League Table, to get a more holistic picture that includes service outcomes.* The Local Government Service also using the District League Table to facilitate *'peer support and learning among district assemblies; with well-performing districts paired with those facing challenges in particular sectors'*. Strong influence at the Local Government Service has been enabled by CDD-Ghana's engagement with not only senior staff but also the leadership.

A Ministry of Local Government official suggested that *'CDD-Ghana could more proactively leverage on existing high-level platforms, such as the Office of the Vice President - which leads on government reforms'*. However, **for *I Am Aware*, political engagement is constrained by the U.S. law which prevents the use of grant funds for lobbying.** Due to this, UNICEF has led such political engagement. Yet, UNICEF reported ongoing challenges with engaging political leaders: *'Ministers agree to meetings but don't turn up. This has been the main reason for no influence on national policy and budget: You need to get the politicians on board'*.

The District League Table disseminations have also influenced some donors. The Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) has used it to select focal districts, while the Head of Local Government Service has asked the European Union (EU) to do the same. **Some non-partner CSOs have also used the data for national level advocacy.** One CSO reported: *'the District League Table has been a good resource to start discussion on improving service delivery.'* Another non-partner CSO used the *I Am Aware* data to create an 'open defecation league table'. They used this as a basis for performance contracts signed with the districts, to achieve 'open defecation free' status by a certain date. They also presented it to parliament to highlight the need for more government resources. As yet, there has been no national policy or budget response. Yet this use of the data may have contributed to the perception that the District League Table has had greatest impact on action against open defecation.

Sanitation ministry staff felt that this is affected by the low baseline (inadequate prior attention to open defecation), coupled with the effective use of *I Am Aware* data to evidence and publicise the extent of the problem.

Regional disseminations of the District League Table also contributed to this achievement. At these events, CDD-Ghana and UNICEF used the regional rankings to highlight variations in the quality of services, alongside sector challenges and systemic problems. **Regional governments across Ghana have started to drive responsiveness to the District League Table.** In each of the sampled districts, duty bearers spoke of being called to numerous regional government meetings about the League Table, at which districts were urged to take measures to improve their scores. A district official explained *'no regional government wants their districts to have low League Table scores; it reflects badly on the region'*. Several regional governments have **integrated the District League Table into monitoring systems**, which has further institutionalised it and put pressure on the districts to respond. Some regional governments have also **imposed 'open defecation free' targets on the districts** (e.g. Central region).



## 5.2 District level

**Summary:** *There has been greatest responsiveness to the I Am Aware data at district level. The District League Table has been a key driver for this, and it has opened space for citizen voice and influence. The social action groups have used the I Am Aware sector data in engagements with their district assemblies, which (coupled with the League Table) has contributed to some notable responsiveness outcomes.*

**I Am Aware has influenced responsiveness in all four sampled project districts** (see Annex A), **and notably so in three** (Ekumfi, Garu and Kwaebibirem). This includes the incorporation of some citizen priorities in the District Medium Term Development Plans (2018-2021), but moreover the implementation of various initiatives, such as:

- **Education:** purchase of chairs and tables for schools; intensified school monitoring; creation of an award scheme to motivate teachers; new initiatives for in-service teacher training and mock exams.
- **Health:** new public education initiatives on infant mortality and citizen rights to report poor health worker behaviour; and completing the construction of various health facility infrastructure.
- **Sanitation:** new public education initiatives on open defecation and hand washing; the construction of public toilets for women; and refuse disposal areas.
- **Security:** the construction or renovation of local police posts to help retain security personnel; and successfully calling on the national government to post more police to the district.

**The District League Table has been a key driver for this responsiveness.** Across the sampled districts, duty bearers referred to the League Table as a 'wake-up call'. The media publicity, pressure from regional governments, and integration of the League Table into monitoring systems, has put pressure on the assemblies to improve their rankings. They also feel pressure from citizens, some of whom have visited the assembly to complain about low League Table rankings and the poor service quality this shows.

*“ The District League Table puts us on our toes to work harder to improve services, so we don't suffer disgrace like those at the bottom. Citizens are not happy about our ranking”*  
**(Duty bearer, Central Tongu)**

*“ When the District League Table is released, the district assembly leaders get diarrhoea. They put pressure on us to rise from our slumber. It has triggered much discussion about how governance is run. To improve the League Table rank next year, we have set in motion so many things.”*  
**(Duty bearer, Central Tongu)**

*“ The District League Table rouses citizens against the assembly for poor performance. We want to improve our ranking because it has given a poor public perception about the district assembly. We have started measures on education and security... The regional minister engaged us on our low District League Table score, and gave us to May next year to stop open defecation... ”*  
**(Duty bearer, Ekumfi)**

As these quotes suggest, **the District League Table has created a demand and supply-side push on the assemblies to improve service outcomes. This opened space for citizen engagement on the *I Am Aware* sector data**, which highlights the sectoral drivers of low rankings. In each project district, CDD-Ghana or the CSO partners convened initial meetings with the district planning coordinating units, comprised of the district political leader and all sectoral directors. Presentation of the *I Am Aware* data promoted in-depth dialogue on each sector (as explained below) and also vibrant debate on the District League Table method. There was, and remains, **strong contestation about the inclusion of indicators over which the assemblies have little control** - such as police personnel postings. Moreover, district responsiveness is constrained by the relatively small district budgets (the 'Common Funds'), which are further depleted by large deductions at source (of up to 80%) by central government.<sup>17</sup>

In response to these challenges, *I Am Aware* emphasized that the District League Table is an assessment of the district as a whole, including central government accountability. This point resonated with district assemblies, but they remain concerned that citizens '*just point the finger at the assembly*'. **CDD-Ghana and its partners have encouraged the assemblies to push for more support from central government and NGOs.** In response, some assemblies have used the *I Am Aware* data to gain NGO support for school furniture (Garu) or maternal health programs (Ekumfi); and to influence central government to post more police to the district (Ekumfi, Kwaebibirem). Advocacy on the latter was strengthened by the use of national standard for police-citizen ratios. An official in Ekumfi recalled: '*we didn't know we could request for more police; this project has really opened our eyes to what we can do*'.

### **Box 3: Responsiveness was partly affected by the context and character of key duty bearers**

Ekumfi District Assembly showed strong responsiveness to the data and citizen engagement. This was widely attributed to the recent creation of the district, and a desire to prove its legitimacy as a separate entity. This shaped a particularly strong drive to improve its District League Table score, since district leaders felt that its low ranking had affected public perceptions.

In another district, good responsiveness was attributed to the character of the District Coordinating Executive (DCE). He is widely seen as '*driven and development-minded*', and he sees citizen engagement as supporting his plan to improve service delivery alongside his political ambitions. Yet there has been high turnover of duty bearers in the district, with 3 DCEs in the past 2 years, and many transfers of key directors who are responsible for service delivery. This turnover has been an overarching challenge for the project, since it has intervened in the process of building relationships and trust, and fostering dialogue and responsiveness.

17 Such deductions at source have been reported in various national media (see for example: <http://www.ghanamp.com/news-events/details.php?id=1481>). Moreover, in mid-2018, the parliament approved a routine deduction at source of 80%, although this was being staunchly contested at the time of the research (Source: <https://starrfmonline.com/2018/05/29/withdraw-notorious-dacf-directive-minority-to-govt/>)



**Building on the initial separate engagements with duty bearers and social action groups, the CSOs facilitated interface meetings which brought them together.** The social action groups used the *I Am Aware* data to highlight sector challenges, the links between inputs and outcomes, and to evidence citizen concerns. Framed by pressure to improve District League Table rankings, this led to commitments for new and improved interventions, and implementation has commenced in some districts. Across the districts, duty bearers said that the *I Am Aware* data has strengthened their understanding of sector problems and helped to identify priorities. However, a few raised concern that the District League Table has urged action in some sectors to the detriment of other priorities.

*“ I didn’t know that my district has been last in the region for basic education examination results for six consecutive years. The I Am Aware data was alarming. We realised we had to do something urgently. It showed our gaps and that some of our priorities are not right. ”*  
**(Duty bearer – political, Garu)**

*“ Omega [OPMF] streamlined the issues using the data, which put a spotlight on what we needed to do. Compare this to the 2014–17 Medium Term Development Plan process, when nearly every community made big demands – classroom blocks, health centres. You may overlook the strategic priorities with that approach ”*  
**(Duty bearer, Central Tongu)**

#### **Box 4: Partnerships with citizen groups motivated and enabled their advocacy**

CDD-Ghana assumed that partnerships with citizen groups would motivate and enable their use of the data. We found this to be largely true. This is illustrated by the following case study: RISE-Ghana’s work in Garu district.

The Garu population is largely agrarian, with low levels of formal education. The initial meetings with citizen groups promoted dialogue about service quality problems. Some came forward as ‘natural leaders’, who were prepared to engage with the district assembly. RISE-Ghana met this core social action group four times in twelve months. The citizens explained that the ongoing meetings with RISE-Ghana enabled their advocacy: *‘When they explained the data, it helped us to see the problems. But we didn’t know we could make a case for our needs to the assembly. We had fear. RISE-Ghana made us see that we can and also how to do it, like petitions or who to meet.’* RISE-Ghana helped them to identify evidence that would strengthen their demands. The meetings also provided a space for the social action group to discuss their advocacy successes and challenges, and RISE-Ghana has supported them to adjust their strategies.

The partnership involved RISE-Ghana taking on particular roles to open space for citizen voice. They drew on their existing relationships with the district assembly to build support for citizen engagement, and to convene interface meetings. This included an initial meeting at which duty bearers ‘beat out their concerns with the data’ in a space separate to citizens. This enabled more constructive dialogue in the later meetings with citizens. RISE-Ghana also supported the citizen group to lead radio dialogues on service quality, some of which have involved duty bearers.



**The timing of the 'District Medium Term Development Plans' provided an opportunity for more strategic citizen engagement in budget and planning processes.** All four district assemblies claimed to have formerly enabled some citizen inputs into the Development Plans (via community durbars, or assemblymen). Yet many citizens reported that, in reality, these channels are rarely convened, or they are ineffective. The *I Am Aware* interface meetings created a new channel, in which civic leaders sat with senior duty bearers, reviewed the draft plans, and used data to evidence sector problems and priorities. In all four districts, duty bearers committed to include several interventions in the planning documents which responded to citizen concerns (see Annex A). None of the Plans are yet finalised, however. *I Am Aware* CSOs remain concerned that district resource constraints will push the citizen priorities out of the final plans, or they won't be implemented. In response, they have **started to promote transparency and citizen oversight**. For example, in Central Tongu, a citizen committee was formed to continue the engagement as the Development Plan is finalised, and to monitor implementation.

Alongside open defecation (explained in Section 5.1), **there has been particularly strong and strategic response to the *I Am Aware* education data in Ekumfi and Garu** (see Box 5). In both districts, the CSO partner had existing relationships with the education departments, fostered through earlier projects. The relevance of the *I Am Aware* education data to local concerns has also strengthened use of the data. Meanwhile, the relatively large number of *I Am Aware* education input indicators has supported understanding of their links to outcomes; and helped to inform interventions. There is some indication that such '*targeted sector advocacy enables stronger outcomes than a scatter gun approach*' (national CSO partner).

### Box 5: Use of the education data in Ekumfi and Garu

**Ekumfi:** Keba Africa supported the social action group to attend School Performance Appraisal Meetings (SPAM) at various schools. They also successfully promoted a district level SPAM meeting, for worst and best performing schools, to enable peer learning. At the meetings, the social action groups used the *I Am Aware* data to promote dialogue on education inputs (e.g. number of trained teachers) as they relate to outcomes (exam results). They also raised concerns beyond the data, such as teacher absenteeism. The meetings resulted in each school (and the district overall) committing to improve their exam pass rates to outcomes (exam results). They also raised concerns beyond the data, such as teacher absenteeism. The meetings resulted in each school (and the district overall) committing to improve their exam pass rates to a specified percentage. To achieve this, the assembly has intensified school monitoring, commenced in-service trainings for teachers, and introduced mock exams. Some school management committees committed to provide accommodation for teachers. And in one community, the chief has set up a task force to ensure that students do homework before recreation.

**Garu:** RISE-Ghana also used the education data to evidence the links between outcomes and inputs. Duty bearers explained that their low League Table education score was a key motivator for action. A district leader recalled that he was '*shocked to find out that 30% of school children sit on the floor, I knew we had to do something!*' At the *I Am Aware* meeting, the assembly pledged to focus on furnishing existing schools before building new ones, and that new schools must have a budget for furniture. The assembly has purchased some school furniture, and included more in in the Medium Term Development Plan. They also used the *I Am Aware* data to gain NGO (World Vision) funding for 2000 tables and chairs.

**Beyond the formal interface meetings, numerous social action group members have pursued independent advocacy at facility level and for specific local needs (see Box 6).**

This was widely attributed to a sense of empowerment arising from the *I Am Aware* information and engagement. Such advocacy has in some cases used the *I Am Aware* information; but in others it has focused on local concerns beyond the data, such as service provider behaviour and poor-quality roads. Social action group members reported generally good responsiveness from duty bearers and service providers, including cases of changed behaviour and some public financing of new interventions. Yet other social action group members were snubbed by service providers; or found that district authorities failed to take action. For example, road transport union members in Garu were frustrated that the authority has not responded to a call to fill road pot-holes. *I Am Aware* CSOs have used these experiences to discuss the challenges and how to strengthen advocacy strategies.

**Box 6: Independent citizen advocacy enabled by *I Am Aware* engagement**

In **Kwaebibirem**, a disabled social action group member saw children self-learning under trees. Empowered by *I Am Aware*, he felt compelled to take action. His inquiries in the community identified that the assembly had agreed to build a new school, but to locate it in a faraway location. The parents had not allowed the children to go. He called for a meeting of the parent-teacher association (PTA) and supported them to visit the district authority to discuss their needs and concerns. He reported that *'after much discussion, the district authority listened and a school is now being built in the community itself'*.

In **Garu**, a female social action group member, who leads a water user's group, led advocacy for the construction of a public toilet for women in the market. She presented a petition to the assembly. This petition presented the *I Am Aware* open defecation data, alongside a clause in the Local Governance Act about the district authority's responsibility to provide adequate toilet facilities in public places. This policy information was provided by *I Am Aware*. The petition also asserted that *'improvement in the District League Table sanitation score should start from the market, where there are no toilets'*. The petition was lodged shortly before the District Medium Term Development Plan was developed; which enabled the toilet to be included in the district budget. The toilet has now been constructed.



## 5.3 What methods & channels were most/least effective for data uptake?

**National and regional comparisons, and the use of comparators (national standards), have been a particularly effective method.** These have been a powerful way of evidencing the extent of service quality inadequacies, which made the data more accessible and tangible. Such comparisons have created embarrassment and competition; and strengthened the effectiveness of advocacy.

- The **District League Table** has been an effective method for calling attention to geographical disparities in the quality of services, as well as low service quality overall. Its impact has been underpinned by wide dissemination and media coverage, as well as its use in national and regional government oversight.
- *I Am Aware* **Bulletins** similarly provide comparisons in a compelling way. These focus on specific indicators in particular districts, and use infographics to compare district performance to national averages. Yet so far, these analyses have only been developed for a small number of districts. Local CSOs would like a set of Bulletins covering all key indicators for their district. National CSOs also suggested that Bulletins could also be developed for use in national level advocacy. This highlights a desire for such analysed information, in simple formats that depict a clear picture. The Bulletins were explained verbally in the district town hall meetings. This stimulated dialogue, made service quality gaps clearer, and prompted some assembly responsiveness. Regional comparisons were particularly powerful. As one social action group member explained: *'We knew we fair badly in Ghana as a whole, but to know that our district has the highest open defecation rate in the region was a real push for the district assembly'*.
- *I Am Aware* provided the **national standards** for police: citizen ratios. In several districts, this evidenced a clear gap in service quality and underpinned successful advocacy. Across the sampled districts, the social action groups requested for provision of national standards relating to other indicators.
- **Empirical data was generally less tangible and useful for citizens**, particularly since it requires time and skills to analyse. However, it has been useful for those who wish to analyse the data in different ways, and some national civil society stakeholders have done so.

**The facilitation of interface meetings and use of the data in district planning processes has been key to outcomes in the sampled districts. In-depth sectoral engagement has also been effective.**

- The timing of the **Medium-Term Development Plans** was an opportunity for *I Am Aware*. The CSO partners promoted citizen-assembly interface meetings on the Development Plans, which provided a formal space for the social action groups to make inputs, using the *I Am Aware* data. The District League Table also opened space for this engagement and influence.
- **In-depth sectoral engagement:** Use of the data in school performance appraisal meetings enriched dialogue on how to improve results in poor performing schools, which led to commitments and action. CDD-Ghana's presentations to national WASH CSOs also led to strong use of the data for advocacy at multiple levels. This contributed to the setting of 'open defecation free' targets, supported by a strong push from regional governments.



# What kind of data was useful and for whom?

## Analysed comparative data



### **Comparison of district service performance to regional/national averages and standards**

were especially useful for citizens. They made inadequacies clear and strengthened advocacy

### **Comparisons to nearby districts**

were meaningful and tangible for citizens and useful for advocacy. Also a focus of local radio debate

### **District League Table:**

#### **Newsorthy information for media.**

Yet most media stories sensationalised the rankings, without drawing attention to systemic issues.

#### **Useful for national and regional government:**

It was integrated into monitoring frameworks and used to impose targets on districts.

#### **Drove district authority responsiveness:**

It created competition and embarrassment. Yet District Assemblies contested its validity as it is based on data that has gaps and errors.

## Detailed empirical data



**Enabled broader analyses** by some CSOs and academics, that was used for policy papers and advocacy

**Less useful and accessible for citizens and journalists** who lack the capacity or time to analyse the data

## Providing data on both service inputs and outcomes



**Enabled understanding of the linkages between inputs and outcomes** - for both citizen groups and district duty bearers.

**Service input data** was more tangible for citizens than outcomes data. It highlighted specific intervention needs to district authorities.

## 5.4 Has *I Am Aware* strengthened consensus on the need for open data for the purpose of government answerability and responsiveness?

At the time of the research, the rights to information bill was still pending in Ghana.<sup>18</sup> Yet dialogue around this, and the work of some development partners to make information available, had started to shift opinions. All sampled government stakeholders believed that data should be made public and many asserted that this has long been their view. A fair number explained this with statements like, *'government is of and for the people; it is their data'*. But in practice, many institutions were not providing data to the public, or the process for accessing data is very bureaucratic.

At the ministries from which CDD-Ghana collects data, officials spoke of initial concern that the data would be misrepresented. Across these ministries, officials referred to the positive influence of roundtable discussions and data validation sessions with CDD-Ghana, which built understanding and trust. An influential message was that *I Am Aware* aims to increase the district assemblies' sense of responsibility for service quality, which dovetailed with ministry objectives. This logic - that **making data public can prompt accountability at other levels** - was strong among all stakeholders and is framed by weaknesses in horizontal accountability mechanisms in Ghana. CDD-Ghana has used the District League Table to emphasize this message, by asserting that 'all levels of government are accountable for the quality of services in the districts'. This message gained strength to counter media sensationalism of the rankings, and a sense of unfair pressure on the district assemblies. It has also been reiterated by the Local Government Service in public statements made at *I Am Aware* roundtable events.<sup>19</sup> Yet there is limited evidence that making the data public has yet affected national ministry perceptions of their own responsibilities for service quality (see Section 5.1).

In the project districts, many duty bearers said that making the data public has been a useful awakening which urged them to improve service quality (see section 5.2). *I Am Aware* dialogue supported this perception, by helping the district authorities to plan for service improvement and to call on others for support (central government, NGOs, assemblymen, chiefs). This has helped them to 'own the process' and to appreciate that **making data public can facilitate useful dialogue and collective action**.

**The importance of the *I Am Aware* dialogue is highlighted by comparison to some non-project districts.** One national CSO spoke of a district where the assembly contested the District

League Table and its response has been a refusal to provide further data to CSOs. Another CSO felt that many assemblies *'do not own the District League Table process, they just see the competitive side, so they sometimes falsify the data.'* There has also been **concern about the quality and timeliness of the data being publicly shared**. In the project districts, CDD-Ghana explained, some duty bearers were *'worried that historical data is being shared with citizens; they say they have improved services since last year'*. This again highlights the challenges arising from the weak data ecosystem.

***I Am Aware* has promoted some dialogue on transparency at the district level.** This was particularly notable in Kwaebibirem (CDD-Ghana district). Here, the *I Am Aware* meetings led citizens to raise questions about the lack of detail in the district budget (e.g. the location of projects) which prevents citizen monitoring. Duty bearers responded to this with their own challenge: *'The common funds are rarely provided in full, so if the budget shows where projects will be, the communities will complain if we can't do it'*. In Kwaebibirem, such dialogues have started to influence an **emerging change in accountability relationships**:

*" You see the impact of I Am Aware. Now when we meet citizens, the level of questions they ask shows they are enlightened, and you can't take them for granted. If you don't take care they will disgrace you. Before now, we could put together a budget or a plan and not implement it. But now we know they will refer us to those documents and demand explanation. "*

**(Duty bearer, Kwaebibirem district)**

This emergent change was also apparent in Garu. Here, *I Am Aware* dialogue on education services led the assembly to recognise their weak capacity to monitor programs and contracts in communities. They verbally agreed to *'share copies of contracts with affected communities, so they can use it to monitor progress and alert the assembly to challenges'*. **Many district officials also reported that *I Am Aware* has increased their appreciation of the need for community engagement**, since this can both strengthen the relevance (and thus use) of services, and the quality of implementation.

<sup>18</sup> The Rights to Information law was finally passed by parliament on March 26, 2019.

<sup>19</sup> See for example: <http://peacefmonline.com/pages/politics/politics/201710/332601.php>

# How the Process of Influence Played out In Practice

■ government responsiveness outcomes

■ civil society action outcomes

■ project activities



## National government

Why they responded

*Project dovetailed with ambition to improve District responsibility for service quality*

How they responded

- Integrated District League Table into monitoring frameworks
- Some dialogue on using League Table to inform budget allocations
- Yet no responsiveness yet in regard to national policy or budgets

**Advocacy** to access government data, and to promote responsiveness at national level



## Regional governments

Why they responded

*League Table created competition and drive to improve regional rankings*

How they responded

- Integrated District League Table into monitoring frameworks
- Called meetings with district assemblies to discuss League Table
- Some imposed targets on districts to improve League Table scores

Bureaucratic accountability - downward push on districts

District assemblies used data to call for more support from National Government and NGOs

**Disseminations and dialogue** on District League Table



## District Assemblies

Why they responded

*Publicity & pressure around League Table created incentive to improve scores and engage citizens. Citizen use of evidence made problems clear and demands credible*

How they responded

- Integrated some citizen concerns into district plans
- Implemented various initiatives in response to citizen demands
- Emerging change in perceptions of accountability relationships in some districts

**Engaged district assemblies:** dialogue on the sector data, and promoted citizen engagement

## Vertical accountability - civil society demands for District Assembly responsiveness



### Engaged citizen groups

*Feel empowered by the project engagement, data and new knowledge of government systems*

Why they engaged

Met District Assemblies to discuss service concerns and citizen priorities

How they engaged

Used existing engagement channels to advocate for specific initiatives  
Met service providers to discuss concerns



### Wider civil society

*Data dialogues motivated advocacy*

• Media used League Table to name and shame districts

• Local radio programs on service quality

• Some CSOs used data for advocacy, mainly in districts



### Wider citizens

*For those reached, district comparisons raised awareness and concern about poor local services*

Some citizens met District Authorities to complain about League Table scores

Some citizens called into radio dialogues, to raise service quality concerns

**Engaged civic leaders:** dialogue on the data and supported advocacy

• **SMS and local radio** to reach wider citizens.  
• **Data dialogues** with some wider civil society



## 6 Project implementation through partnerships

CDD-Ghana implemented *I Am Aware* in partnership with other organisations to extend the project's reach and influence. As explained in section 1, such 'infomediaries' are often seen as key to open data initiatives, as they can help to translate data into accessible information and support data use. The *I Am Aware* partnerships are not grant-funded, but financial support for activities is available. CDD-Ghana has built the capacity of the partners to use the information; and provides ongoing technical support. CDD-Ghana also convenes bi-annual partner meetings, which have provided a useful space for peer learning. Various lessons were learnt about fostering partnerships and their outcomes.

**Partnerships with national and regional CSOs strengthened the project's reach and influence at district level.** The national CSOs have together implemented in 43 districts (beyond the 20 focal districts). Their approaches are similar

to the regional CSOs, but their engagement has been less intensive due to the larger number of districts covered (see Box 7). The regional CSOs were able to undertake more in-depth district-level engagement, which has contributed to stronger outcomes. This was enabled by their focus on a small number of districts and their closer proximity. Most of the national and regional **CSO partners drew on their existing social capital in the districts to engage citizens and open space for their engagement with district assemblies.** Where CSOs focused on districts in which they had no prior experience, the process of engaging citizens was more challenging.

### Box 7: National CSO partners used the information in their existing projects

The Ghana Anti-Corruption Commission (GACC) fosters *local accountability networks* (LANET) in districts across Ghana. Each LANET has 20 members, including chiefs and civic group leaders. Prior to *I Am Aware*, the LANETs used education and health data for advocacy. GACC explained that *I Am Aware* has expanded their sector focus and provided useful information products.

GACC has shared the *I Am Aware* information with the LANETs in 29 districts; and facilitated 'interface meetings' between LANETs and duty bearers. However, unlike the regional CSOs, GACC did not facilitate citizen inputs into the medium-term development plans. Due to the number of districts covered, they have spent just 2-days in each. GACC found that the LANETs need ongoing prompting to encourage them to take action.

## 6.1 Promoting behavioural changes

CDD-Ghana hoped to promote various behavioural changes among the *I Am Aware* 'boundary partners'. This includes both the project partners (CSOs, media) and also wider civil society and government stakeholders. Using the 'outcome mapping' framework, Table 2 summarises the behavioural changes that CDD-Ghana would '**expect to see**' (at this stage); '**like to see**' (strong outcome); and '**love to see**' (idealistic and longer term). It also provides an assessment of progress.

**The national media partnerships did not lead to substantial use of the information in the way that CDD-Ghana anticipated.** Most have only covered the District League Table, as have other media. Many journalists prefer 'ready-made news', and (as for-profit organisations) they seek payment for coverage of less newsy information that an organisation wishes to share. Rather than creating formal partnerships with a few media outfits, an alternative approach is to create targeted information products that are relevant and compelling to all media.

**The partnerships with local radio stations were more successful.** While they have been paid for airtime, they have also used the *I Am Aware* information in unfunded broadcasts. This was motivated by ongoing engagement with the CSO partners, and the relevance of the district-specific data to their audiences. Yet as explained in Section 4.2.2, there are limitations to the reach of each radio station. *I Am Aware* has responded to this by engaging with a wider set of local media.

**The collaboration with UNICEF enabled development of the District League Table** at a time when CDD-Ghana felt that this may be interpreted as too political (under the USA law which governs Hewlett funding). For some duty bearers, UNICEF's name enhanced the credibility of the League Table. UNICEF networks and status also strengthened the disseminations and enabled political engagement.

Table 2 / Am Aware progress markers: boundary partner behavioural changes

**Key:** The green highlights show the current progress towards desired behavioural changes

	ULTIMATE DESIRED OUTCOMES	PROGRESS MARKERS		
		EXPECT TO SEE	LIKE TO SEE	LOVE TO SEE
<b>DIRECT BOUNDARY PARTNERS</b>				
<b>National government partners</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· <b>Appreciate need for open data</b></li> <li>· Willing to produce and share data</li> <li>· Evidence used to design policy</li> <li>· Responsive to assemblies and citizens</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· <b>Make data available</b></li> <li>· Appreciate need for open data</li> <li>· Receptive to citizen demands</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Proactively engage with citizens</li> <li>· Use data for decision making</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Investment in data collection and quality</li> <li>· Evidence-based planning &amp; expenditure</li> <li>· Mobilising citizens to support solutions</li> <li>· Consensus around data validity</li> </ul>
<b>Partner CSOs (national &amp; districts)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Conceptual change toward appreciating importance of evidence</li> <li>· Systematically integrating data into their interventions</li> <li>· Create platforms for citizen-gov't dialogue and co-creation of solutions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Broad advocacy on access to information</li> <li>· Use / Am Aware data to add value to existing interventions</li> <li>· <b>Evidence-based advocacy using the / Am Aware data</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Advocacy to improve service quality</li> <li>· Empower and mobilise wider civil society and citizens for advocacy on improved service delivery</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Sustained interest in evidence-based advocacy</li> <li>· Informed civil society that appreciates quality data</li> <li>· Create platforms for citizen-gov't dialogue and co-creation of solutions</li> </ul>
<b>Partner national media</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Routinely seek and publicly share evidence on service quality data</li> <li>· Create platforms for citizen-gov't dialogue</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Use of / Am Aware evidence in reports <b>(partial)</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Greater use of evidence on service quality in media reports</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Proactively seeking and using evidence on the quality of public goods and services.</li> </ul>
<b>INDIRECT BOUNDARY PARTNERS (1<sup>ST</sup> TIER) – ENGAGED LARGELY BY CSO PARTNERS</b>				
<b>Local media</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Seek and publicly share evidence on service quality data</li> <li>· Platforms for citizen-gov't dialogue</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· <b>Use of / Am Aware data in reports</b></li> <li>· <b>Platforms for citizen-government dialogue</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Greater use of evidence on service quality in media reports</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Proactively seeking and using evidence on the quality of public goods and services.</li> </ul>
<b>Civic / Social action groups</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Feel empowered, demand information</li> <li>· Proactively engage in evidence-based advocacy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· <b>Appreciate need for evidence</b></li> <li>· <b>Aware of service quality issues</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· <b>Confident that they can inform decisions</b></li> <li>· <b>Use evidence for advocacy</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Have influence to affect accountability</li> <li>· Capacity to advocate &amp; exercise voice</li> <li>· Provide feedback to and sensitise wider citizens (incl. poor &amp; vulnerable)</li> </ul>
<b>Local authorities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Appreciate need for open data</li> <li>· Willing to engage with citizens</li> <li>· Responsive to evidence and citizen needs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· <b>Appreciate need for open data</b></li> <li>· <b>Engage with citizens on data</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Proactively engage with citizens</li> <li>· <b>Receptive to citizen demands</b></li> <li>· Use data for decision making</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Invest in data collection and quality</li> <li>· Evidence based planning &amp; expenditure</li> <li>· Mobilise citizens to support solutions</li> <li>· Consensus on data validity</li> </ul>
<b>INDIRECT BOUNDARY PARTNERS (2<sup>ND</sup> TIER)</b>				
<b>Wider citizens (incl. poor, vulnerable)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Interested in the use of information to demand accountability</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· <b>Concern about quality of service in local area</b></li> <li>· <b>Talking about the quality of public services</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Gaining confidence (empowered) to call for accountability</li> <li>· Evidence of interest in collective action for improved services</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Making demands about quality of service via representatives/ social action groups</li> </ul>
<b>Wider civil society</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Appreciate importance of evidence</li> <li>· Systematically integrate data into work</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· <b>Aware of / Am Aware data and some use for advocacy &amp; analysis (national civil society)</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· <b>Use of service quality evidence in advocacy and policy analysis (national civil society)</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Informed civil society that appreciates quality data, and its use for advocacy</li> </ul>

# 7 Conclusions

*I Am Aware* is an ongoing project, which is learning and adapting as it moves forward. Various adaptations were made during phase 2 and further revisions to the strategy are planned for phase 3.

CDD-Ghana partnerships with key national ministries enabled data provision, albeit within the constraints of the system. CDD-Ghana tried to respond to citizen calls for additional indicators that relate to their priorities (such as health insurance) but this was constrained by what data is available. In response, CDD-Ghana has started to promote the strengthening of the data ecosystem. Many CSOs also called for official data to be coupled with that generated by citizens. This has been integrated into the design for phase 3.

In line with the strategy, CDD-Ghana has made the website more interactive and developed the SMS platform, although their usability could still be improved. Various information products have also been developed using the data, some of which have been instrumental to *I Am Aware* influence.

The dissemination strategy at national level focused on the District League Table. The disseminations were expansive and influenced both CSO use of the data and responsiveness

at district level. The targeted engagement of WASH CSOs was particularly effective for promoting use of the sector data. This was in line with CDD-Ghana's adapted strategy to more actively drive CSO data use, and this could be further increased in phase 3. Yet limited district budgets, and the lack of influence on national policy and resource allocations, highlights the need for more intensive national engagement. Responding to this, CDD-Ghana intends to foster champions in sectoral ministries in phase 3.

The district level strategy influenced some strong outcomes. CDD-Ghana has built the capacity of CSO partners, most of whom have fostered strong alliances with citizen groups. CDD-Ghana and the partners have adapted to the limitations of working with one media partner, by expanding the local media engagement. *I Am Aware* also responded to weak civil society structures at district level by focusing on a core group of civic and community leaders. These are people whom citizens visit to discuss issues, and their advocacy aligns with citizen concerns. Yet *I Am Aware* could do more to strengthen their direct representation of wider citizens where such structures are weak.

## 7.1 External factors which affected *I Am Aware* implementation

- **Local government laws now require citizen engagement.** District assemblies indicated some effort to implement this and it has been supported by various projects.
- **Dialogue around the rights to information bill** and the work of some influential donors has started to increase government willingness to make data publically available.
- **Some districts have few active civic groups.** Many citizens have weak understanding of channels for making demands, and advocacy is constrained by low confidence and capacity.
- **Broadcast syndication** (national radio programs aired at peak times on local radio) may have reduced the reach of *I Am Aware* radio programs. Media are also for-profit organisations and expect payment if they are approached to share information.
- **The ongoing creation of new districts** has been a challenge for the collection of district level data. It has also increased the transfer of duty bearers, which impacted on *I Am Aware* relationship building.
- **Policy making is not currently evidence based:** it is often based on party manifestos and politics.
- The **USA law** governing the use of grant funds prevents *I Am Aware* engagement in political processes. It also constrained CDD-Ghana's ability to develop more powerful information products.
- **There is a gradual move toward fiscal recentralisation.** The funds received by district assemblies are often just enough to cover recurrent costs. This situation is worsened by the economic crisis in Ghana, such that the districts currently receive only a portion of common funds, and irregularly.



## 7.2 Which I Am Aware assumptions were validated?

The *I Am Aware* design was based on various assumptions about the relationships between information, citizen engagement and responsiveness, and how to strengthen these. The evaluation tested several of these assumptions.

ASSUMPTION	ASSESSMENT
<b>Comparisons of districts</b> would make the data more accessible and powerful	<b>True</b>
<b>National civil society partners</b> would use the <i>I Am Aware</i> information to strengthen their existing work.	<b>Partially true:</b> The national CSO partners had relevant projects but few used the data until additional financial support was provided for activities. National media partners used the District League Table, yet few used the sector data (partly because they need more up-to-date information and prefer 'ready-made' news).
<b>Partnerships with citizen groups</b> would build their capacity and motivation to use the data for advocacy, and they would know and represent wider citizen concerns.	<b>True</b> , although their direct representation and engagement with citizens could be strengthened.
<b>District duty bearers</b> would be more responsive when citizens make demands.	<b>Partially true:</b> intensive and strategic advocacy is required and limited resources constrain their ability to respond.
<b>Parallel engagement at district and national levels</b> would strengthen responsiveness	<b>Partially true:</b> Engagement at both levels is certainly critical, and national government use of the data for oversight strengthened district assembly responsiveness. Yet more concrete outcomes at national level, in terms of policy and budget, have been more difficult to achieve.



## 7.3 Key insights and lessons learnt

The *I Am Aware* initiative has generated various lessons and insights that may be useful for wider transparency and accountability projects.

- **The weak and under-resourced data ecosystem was an overarching challenge** for the timeliness, completeness and accuracy of the data, which also affected its relevance. Yet the publication of the data has encouraged greater attention to data quality in some districts, and it opened space for civil society dialogue with government on the need to improve the data ecosystem.
- The evaluation highlights the need for expansive marketing of technology-based information platforms, and also challenges with their accessibility especially in rural areas. More broadly, there is a **need for an audience-focus in the design and dissemination of information products**, to ensure that they are relevant, accessible and compelling to that audience, and oriented toward information use.
- National civil society did not demand for data in the way CDD-Ghana assumed. So, **the project moved toward a more active approach to encourage data use, such as creating more compelling information and engaging civil society in dialogue**. At district level too, verbal explanation and dialogue on the information supported civil society uptake, as did citizen education on local governance systems and rights. CSO partnerships with citizen groups also strengthened their capacity and confidence to use the evidence in engagements with their district assembly.
- ***I Am Aware* found that it is important to foster citizen champions** to advocate on behalf of others, since many citizens didn't have the courage to make demands. Yet while there was alignment between their advocacy and wider citizen priorities; **partnerships with small groups of citizens bear the risks of exclusion and elite capture**. This was exacerbated by the decline of forums for community dialogue, which lessened opportunities for wider citizen engagement.
- **The citizen groups found comparative information on service performance more accessible and useful for advocacy, than empirical data**. The provision of both service input and outcomes data was also useful, since it enabled understanding of the linkages and informed specific interventions. Some citizen groups highlighted that data on public financing would further strengthen their ability to make effective use of the information on service quality.
- **District assembly responsiveness to the League Table was partly influenced by pressure from regional governments, and its integration into national monitoring frameworks**. This resonates with recent social accountability writing, which argues that citizen 'voice' is most effective when it triggers such horizontal government accountability ('teeth').
- Yet **the way that the League table has been used has placed pressure on the district assemblies to respond, while their capacity for responsiveness is constrained** by various systemic issues, including their limited resources and irregular receipt of funds. Through dialogue on these challenges, *I Am Aware* encouraged the district assemblies to press central government for more support, which achieved some (albeit piecemeal) responsiveness.
- In this regard, *I Am Aware* has taken a different approach to many sub-national social accountability projects that suffer from what Fox (2016) calls a 'local accountability trap'. Alternatively, **the project takes a more strategic approach, by working at all levels of government to promote collective responsibility for the delivery of quality services**. This has started to influence central government dialogue on policies and resource allocation that would improve service provision, although as yet there have been no outcomes in this regard. A key challenge is the way that national policy and decisions are made: they are based more on party manifestos and politics than evidence. This highlights the need for more intensive national level engagement, including building political support. Working towards this, CDD-Ghana has tested some approaches which hold potential, such as fostering government champions in key ministries, and engaging national CSO coalitions in dialogue on the data.

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## Annex A: District assembly responsiveness to the information and engagement

Garu – Upper East	What influenced the responsiveness?						
District Assembly responsiveness to <i>I Am Aware</i> data and engagement	Information		Channel				
	District League Table	Sector data	Regional gov't pressure	Interface meeting (citizens & assembly)	Citizens engaged in school appraisal meetings	Petition written by citizens	Citizen meetings at facility, or with officials
<p><b>Citizen issues included in draft Medium-Term Development Plan:</b> School furniture; best teacher and worker award; toilet for women in the market; public education on open defecation and sanitation; construction of additional community health facilities</p>	✓	✓		✓			
<p><b>Education:</b></p> <p>Interventions commenced: (a) Assembly purchased some school furniture and (b) used <i>I Am Aware</i> data to elicit the support of World Vision - which will provide an additional two thousand tables and chairs. (c) intensified school monitoring; (d) Created a best teacher and worker award to motivate good performance (GH¢ 60,000 package; 29 awards made in 2018). (e) Stronger drive to encourage students to concentrate on their studies.</p> <p>Strategy changes: (a) Pledged to focus on furnishing existing schools before building new schools; and that new schools will not be built unless there is a budget for furniture. (b) New policy that children who do not reach the required standard will repeat the year</p>	✓	✓	✓	✓			
<p><b>Sanitation:</b> Construction of a toilet for women in the market.</p>	✓					✓	✓
<p><b>Sanitation:</b></p> <p>The District Assembly has set an Open Defecation Free target and commenced advocacy to encourage every household to build a toilet.</p> <p>New strategy: when a community asks for a borehole, the assembly will ask them to first be open defecation free, so the water does not get polluted.</p>	✓	✓	✓	✓			
<p><b>Health:</b></p> <p>Interventions commenced: (a) Public education on health and personal hygiene and measures to reduce infant mortality; (b) Public education on citizen rights and responsibilities to report the poor attitude of nurses. (c) Introduced 'tippy tap' campaign in schools to encourage hand washing.</p> <p>Commitment: Construction of community health facilities included in Medium Term Development Plan.</p>	✓	✓		✓			

Ekumfi – Central Region	What influenced the responsiveness?						
District assembly / service provider responsiveness to I Am Aware data and engagement	Information		Channel				
	District League Table	Sector data	Regional gov't pressure	Interface meeting (citizens & assembly)	Citizens engaged in school appraisal meetings	Petition written by citizens	Citizen meetings at facility, or with officials
<p><b>Citizen issues included in Medium Term Development Plan:</b> In-service training for teachers; rehabilitation of a school; construction of police post; public education on open defecation; financing for school performance appraisal meetings.</p> <p>The district assembly reported: 'Due to the District League Table, assembly attention has shifted to education and sanitation in 2018, as priority sectors for district'</p>	✓	✓		✓			
<p><b>Education:</b> Implementation commenced:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Introduction of school performance appraisal and strengthened school monitoring</li> <li>- In-service trainings for teachers; and training untrained head teachers.</li> <li>- Introduction of mock exams for students</li> <li>- One community created a task force to improve community attitudes to education.</li> </ul> <p>Commitments: (a) to increase the basic education exam pass rate (to a specified % in each school, and to rank 82 for the district overall). (b) to rehabilitate a school affected by a fire. (c) Some school management committees committed to provide teacher accommodation.</p>	✓	✓				✓	✓
<p><b>Sanitation:</b> Implementation: (a) Created a central point for refuse disposal. (b) Sanitation officers facilitated 'clean up days' in communities. (c) Community education (by assembly men) to stop indiscriminate refuse dumping</p> <p>Commitments: (a) The assembly committed to end open defecation by May 2019 (target imposed by regional minister).</p>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
<p><b>Security:</b> Police post constructed to attract more police personnel.</p>	✓	✓		✓		✓	
<p><b>Security:</b> National government has posted more police to the district</p>	✓	✓	The Assembly petitioned national government; and the social action group petitioned the police commander				
<p><b>Health</b> - Implementation (a) renovation of a clinic maternity ward. (b) Intensified public education on giving birth at health facilities. (c) Assembly used data to gain support from PLAN-Ghana for maternal health programs. (d) Assembly engaged Queen Mothers to reduce teenage pregnancy.</p>	✓	✓		✓			
<p>Lights installed at health facility</p>						✓	✓

Kwaebibirem – Eastern region	What influenced the responsiveness						
District assembly / service provider responsiveness to I Am Aware data and engagement	Information		Channel				
	District League Table	Sector data	Regional gov't pressure	Interface meeting (citizens & assembly)	Citizens engaged in school appraisal meetings	Petition written by citizens	Citizen meetings at facility, or with officials
<b>Citizen issues included in Medium Term Development Plan:</b> foot bridges and drains in some communities; 3 public toilets; renovating Kade police station; completing an 18-bed maternity block; constructing rural feeder roads and renovating some roads.	✓	✓		✓		✓	
<b>Health:</b> implementation: (a) community health facility built (after building work had ceased for many years). (b) Assembly is now building a maternity ward in the municipal hospital		✓		✓		✓	
<b>Roads:</b> implementation: a) District authority has upgraded some sections of road; b) 10 km of road built by central government (responding to a petition from the assembly).			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assembly petition to national gov't (supported by regional gov't);</li> <li>Citizen call-in to radio program;</li> <li>Civic group demonstration</li> </ul>				
<b>Security:</b> implementation: (a) built washroom in municipal police cells, (b) building a police post; (c) rented an apartment for the district police commander for three years, to promote improved management of the police service.	✓	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assemblymen (affiliated to the social action group) lead dialogue at assembly sitting.</li> <li>Assembly petition to central gov't for more police</li> <li>Interface meeting with citizens</li> </ul>				
<b>Sanitation:</b> Implementation: Assembly commenced public education on open defecation and encouraging household latrines.  Strategy: Review of district water and sanitation plan	✓						
<b>Other sectors:</b> Implementation: a) electrification of a community; b) District Assembly intervention in incessant noise at an information centre at night.	✓					✓	✓
Facility level citizen influence							
<b>Education:</b> Community influenced the location of a planned school in a different location							✓
<b>Education:</b> A teacher who often absent from school was reprimanded by social action group member, who reported that his attendance has now improved.							✓
<b>Education:</b> Teachers ceased taking money from children at a particular school.							✓
<b>Sanitation:</b> District authority collected refuse in response to community concern. A social action group member also successfully encouraged his community to clean their environment							✓
<b>Health:</b> A nurse who had a bad attitude towards patients was reprimanded by superior, after a social action group member raised the problem. It was reported that the nurse apologised and promised to change her behaviour.							✓

Central Tongu – Volta region	What influenced the responsiveness						
District assembly / service provider responsiveness to <i>I Am Aware</i> data	Information		Channel				
	District League Table	Sector data	Regional gov't pressure	Interface meeting (citizens & assembly)	Citizens engaged in school appraisal meetings	Petition written by citizens	Citizen meetings at facility, or with officials
<p><b>Citizen issues included in Medium Term Development Plan:</b></p> <p><b>Security:</b> commitment to build a police post; and to encourage formation of watch dog committees.</p> <p><b>Health:</b> commitments to strengthen public education on health and to provide some medical equipment.</p> <p><b>Sanitation:</b> commitments to provide public education on sanitation; implement community-led total sanitation (CLTS) in communities with a population of under 1000 people; and to facilitate provision of institutional water and sanitation facilities,</p> <p><b>Education:</b> commitments to provide in-service capacity building for teachers; and to improve disability access in various classrooms</p> <p><b>Water:</b> commitments to provide a standpipe in communities with a population of over 229 people; and to provide public safety education for boat operators</p> <p><b>Citizen engagement:</b> commitments to hold regular town hall meetings; maintain engagement with citizen assurances committee, enable citizen engagement in monitoring; and to increase women's participation in decision making</p>	✓	✓		✓			