



## A REVIEW OF KIRINYAGA COUNTY COMMUNITY SCORE CARD

### Introduction

---

Accountability is increasingly called for to improve county programs and projects and general performance and accelerate progress of programs and projects within the County.

Accountability encompasses both answerability – the obligation of public officials to provide information about, and explanation for, their actions – and enforcement – the imposition of sanctions in response to the failure of power-holders to uphold their duties

While reviewing the Kirinyaga Score Card, we are looking at projects including: Infrastructure, Sports, Gender, Agriculture, environment, Youth and Sports, We note that accountability mechanisms aim to ensure both answerability and enforcement, and these mechanisms ideally support collaborative solutions. To support collaborative solutions, accountability mechanisms typically must ‘mediate relationships between unequal partners’, addressing issues related to power and representation, and transforming participants’ there is need to fully involve the county citizens 100 percent in all these programs and projects

The Kirinyaga County community Score Card has outlined two categories of accountability mechanisms, looking at the various sectors and projects in the county, in the health ‘external’ mechanisms aim to regulate answerability between the community and the programs and the projects. We also see that ‘internal’ or bureaucratic mechanisms seek to regulate answerability between and among different levels of while implementing these programs or projects.

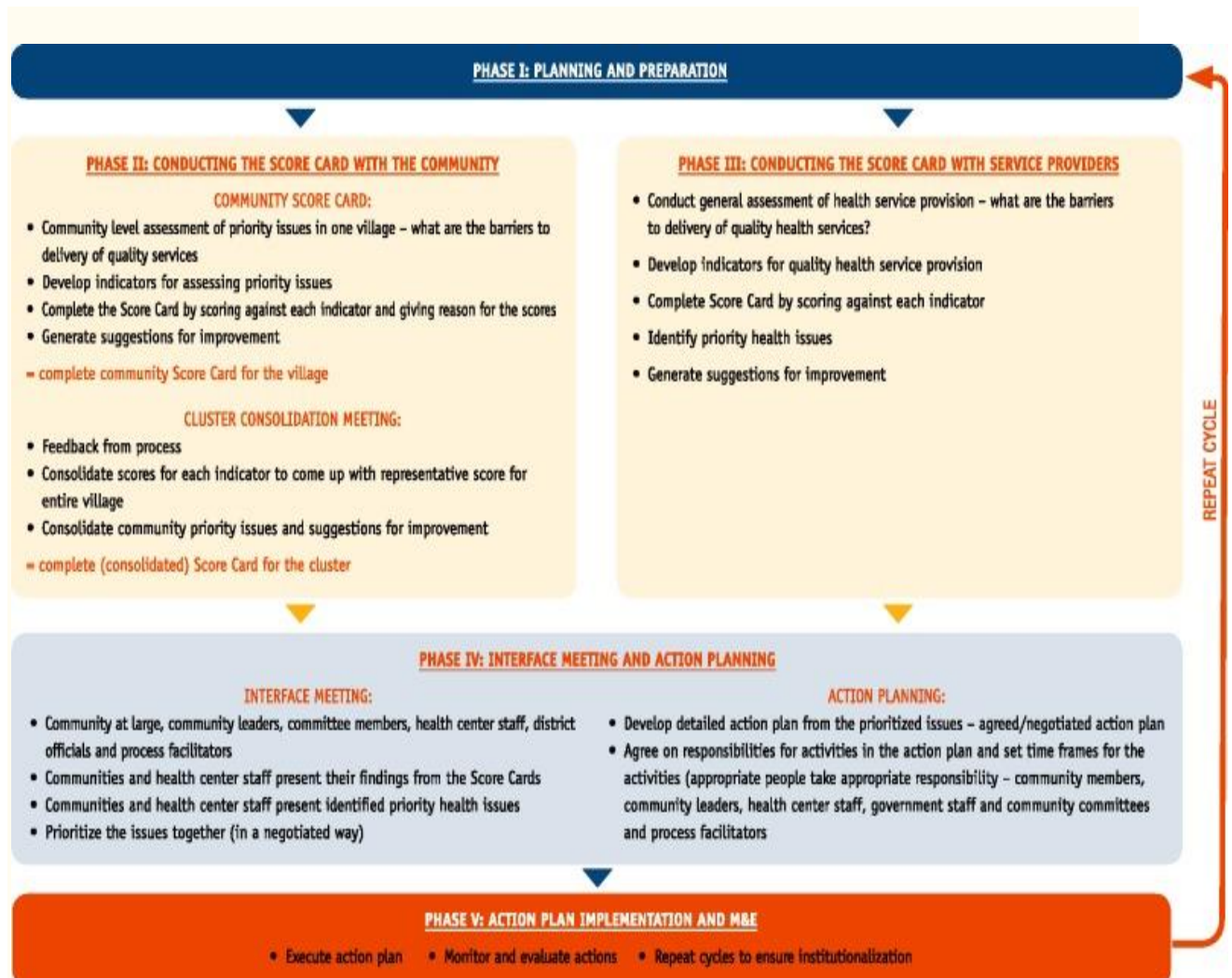
**External accountability refers to** -community accountability’ or ‘social accountability they all centre on the idea of citizen engagement in processes to improve public sector performance and hold service providers and other actors accountable.

Social accountability while reviewing these programs and projects is necessary as a way to achieve good governance and address service delivery failures that Kirinyaga County could be facing.

For there to be effective accountability and have a good model in place that will keep the county in check, the following has to be in place:

- 1) *empowering individuals and the institutions that support them in their communities to analyse their situation and take decisions about their lives, rather than being passive objects of choices made on their behalf; and*

- II) Working with different levels of the government to see how best they can meet the needs of communities with respect to the provision of various services that are missing or are very low on the map.
- III) The below mentioned are the different phases that are very instrumental when reviewing Kirinyaga County Community Score Card.



Kirinyaga County Community Score Card methodology going forward.

- Phase I: Planning and preparation.** This involves identifying the sectoral and geographic scope of the initiative, assessing entitlement gaps, training CSC (County Community Score Card) facilitators and securing cooperation of all participating parties.
- Phase II: Conducting the Score Card with the community.** This involves focus group discussions (FGDs) with community members (separated into groups such as men, women, youth and others depending on the CSC's sectoral scope) to identify and prioritize issues (e.g. service access, utilization and quality provision), CSC facilitators and stakeholders clustering similar issues to create the Score Card indicators, communities scoring each indicator and listing

reasons for the score and consolidation of Score Cards across communities if needed.

- **Phase III: Conducting the Score Card with service providers.** The service providers essentially go through the same process as the community, outlined under Phase II. Phase III can occur after or concurrently with Phase II. As with the community FGDs, CSC facilitators can group similar types of providers so that those at different levels in the health system feel more comfortable speaking candidly about the issues and barriers they face.
- **Phase IV: Interface meeting and action planning.** This involves community members (i.e. service users), service providers, government staff and additional power-holders coming together to share and discuss the Score Cards and to develop a joint action plan.
- **Phase V: Action plan implementation and follow-up.** This involves action plan implementation, monitoring and evaluation. The community members, service providers, government staff within Kirinyaga County and additional power-holders all have a role to play in this phase. **The process is repeated every six months** to institutionalize the practice and assess if there has been improvement resulting from action plan implementation.

It is important to bear in mind that this Kirinyaga County Community Score Card (CSC) is not about finger-pointing or blaming, and it is not designed to settle personal scores or create conflict within communities and within the County Government. Rather, the CSC helps service users give **systematic and constructive feedback to service providers about their performance, while also helping governments and service providers learn directly from communities about which aspects of their services and programmes are working well and which are not.**

**Reviewing the Kirinyaga County allows the county to** process the information received and generates and enables decision-makers to make informed decisions and policy choices and to implement service improvements that respond to citizens' rights, needs and preferences. This activity will allow the citizens also feel appreciated in the building of their county.

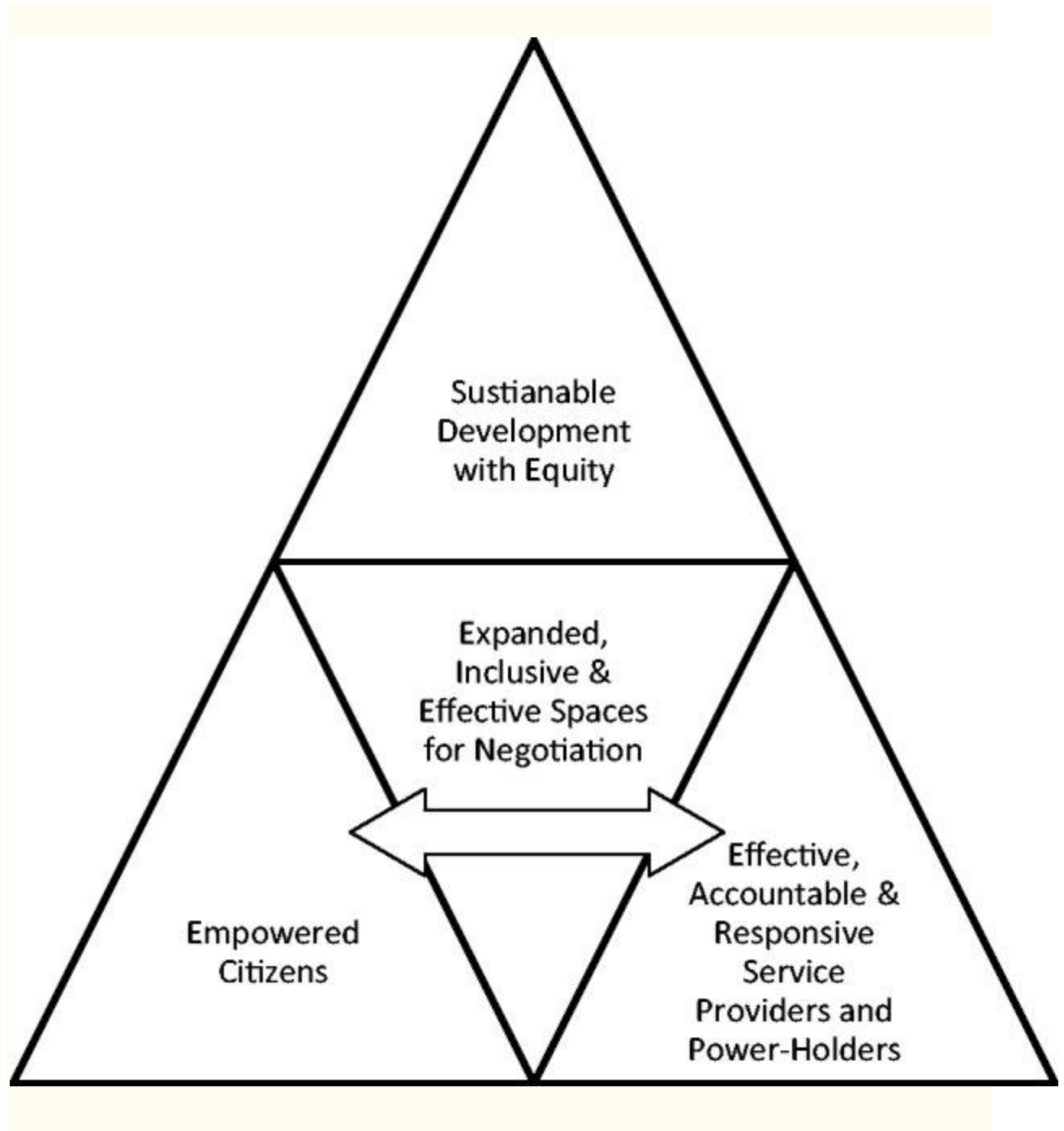
This report outlines three domains necessary to achieve good governance and sustainable and equitable development:

- (1) **Empowered citizens;**
- (2) **Effective, accountable and responsive providers and power-holders; and**
- (3) **Expanded, inclusive and effective spaces for dialogue and negotiation between the groups.**

Change needs to take place and be sustained in all three domains to achieve this impact. To cultivate changes in the three domains, Kirinyaga County should employ social accountability approaches. This also emphasizes on the importance of the interaction between these parties, and the reports' role is often to help build and strengthen the systems and spaces where citizens, especially the most vulnerable and

marginalized, service providers and power-holders can come together to discuss and resolve issues.

The diagram below shows how the information within Kirinyaga County will greatly improve if the Score card is participatory.



## Methods

For this review, we identified all the programmes that were implemented in the County and we located programme materials and evaluation reports.

We classified the CSC-related outcomes extracted from the programme evaluation documents into four categories:

- **Governance;**
- **Service;**
- **Human development;**

### **Governance:**

If reported outcomes fell within one of the three domains underpinning, we categorized them as **governance** outcomes. This included outcomes that indicated 'empowered citizens' (i.e. citizens that demonstrate awareness of their rights, exercise agency, organize or take collective action and hold power-holders to account); 'effective, accountable and responsive service providers and power-holders' (i.e. those who have the capacity to uphold rights, are responsive to service users and are transparent and accountable); and 'expanded, effective and inclusive spaces for negotiation' (i.e. the existence of mechanisms and spaces for sharing and responding to information and feedback)

**Service** outcomes included changes in service availability, access, utilization and quality, including the following dimensions of quality: safe, effective, user-centred, timely and equitable.

### **Human Development:**

We categorized impact-level outcomes such as health impacts and academic achievement as **human-development** outcomes. Finally, changes that did not fit into the three categories outlined above, we grouped under **other** outcomes. After assigning the outcomes to their categories, we identified and synthesized key themes. We also identified challenges reported in project documents and identified and synthesized key themes among those challenges.

### **Limitations**

The fact that this review was done and was based on the report and projects evaluation reports for Kirinyaga County, is a limitation of our methodology. While every effort was made to conduct a fair and balanced review of the programme results, we cannot be certain all potential bias was eliminated.

### **Benefits and Successes**

Evaluations of all the projects within the County reported CSC-related **governance outcomes** across all three domains of the GPF:

#### **Empowered citizens;**

---

- effective, accountable and responsive service providers and power-holders;
- expanded, effective and inclusive spaces for negotiation
- A majority of the projects report the CSC led to increases in community voice, including voicing of needs, concerns, feedback and demands,
- As well as increased confidence to do so.

1. Projects reported CSC-related increases in community members holding providers accountable.
2. The Project shows that most projects and programs in the County were attended and given attention, a good example is for women, Youth and People with disabilities.
3. The Kirinyaga County Score Card, clearly indicates an improved in county projects and an emergence of new projects like new roads for the counties in various wards, New Markets in various wards, refurbishing of social amenities within the County which is beneficial to the County Citizens.
4. A majority of projects reported CSC-related increases in community members' knowledge,
5. Ranging from knowledge of their rights to knowledge of constraints faced by service providers.
6. The CSC evaluations noted that the increased understanding of providers' constraints led to more realistic expectations among service users and a more sympathetic dialogue with providers.
7. Projects also reported community members exercising their rights and responsibilities and activation of effective community structures to promote community involvement in service delivery governance.
8. In addition, the CSC reported that the process helped community members feel more comfortable approaching service providers and power-holders.
9. Community members no longer feared service providers and power-holders, but instead viewed them as partners.
10. All of the evaluations for all of the projects reported CSC-related improvements in service provider and power-holder effectiveness, accountability and responsiveness.
11. Several projects reported CSC-related increases in provider openness and transparency.
12. For example, providers disclosed budget and financial information to the community (GAP and Getting Ahead).
13. Projects also reported CSC-related increases in service provider accountability, responsiveness and answerability to communities. For example, county officials in the projects within the Wards increased investments in Health, roads and agriculture at the request of communities.
14. Projects also reported increases in service provider commitment to their work and capacity owing to the CSC process.
15. For example, the CSC process helped with empowering service providers by arming them with improved understanding of users' needs and priorities, which, in turn, gave them increased confidence and credibility to push for improvements within their own organizations and centres and bringing attention to gaps.
16. All projects reported CSC-related improvements in expanded, effective and inclusive spaces for negotiation between service providers and the community, including changes in direction, channels, frequency, systems, avenues, spaces and levels of communication.

17. In addition, some projects reported changes in the nature of communication, describing it as more transparent, accountable, inclusive and positive.
18. All the projects reported CSC-related improvements in community participation in services, including increases in monitoring, assessment, planning, decision-making, budgeting, influencing and engagement in policy processes.
19. Several projects reported increased and inclusive meetings between service providers and community members resulting from the CSC process.
20. Four projects reported CSC-related infrastructure improvements – for example, the construction and refurbishment of health facilities and improvements to communication facilities and infrastructure.
21. The CSC process resulted in increased utilization of health services, including increases in pregnant women delivering at health facilities and community members seeking treatment for illnesses at health centres.
22. A majority of the projects reported CSC-related changes in service quality, four projects reported services to be more user-centred, respectful and responsive to users' needs. In addition, evaluations reported improvements in service timeliness, cleanliness and effectiveness.
23. This report also reveals a majority of evaluations also reported, CSC-related improvements in community member and service provider negotiated spaces, communication, collaboration and relationships. This is important because social accountability initiatives are more likely to be effective if they avoid oppositional tactics and focus on improving communication, shared expectations and collaboration.
24. Several projects also reported CSC-related improvements in service availability, access and utilization. These improvements ranged from changes in provider behaviour (showing up to work on time, observing official working hours and visiting the community on a regular schedule)
25. To increases in staff, supplies, equipment and infrastructure. These findings suggest that the CSC was not only able to initiate improvements requiring provider responsiveness, but also improvements requiring responsiveness and resources from local-level authorities (i.e. increases in staff, etc.).
26. Similarly, just over half the projects reported CSC-related service accessibility improvements that required responsiveness and resources from higher-level officials. In addition, three projects reported increases in utilization of health services, which is an encouraging finding, as it suggests the CSC may be able to change community members' health-seeking and utilization behaviour.

## Challenges

Report shows the Projects faced challenges in the following areas:

---

1. Securing and maintaining CSC stakeholder commitment, quality of CSC facilitation
2. Addressing equity issues,

3. Implementing under short project timeframes,
4. Igniting County government responsiveness
5. Monitoring and evaluation.
6. In some wards there was lack of citizen involvement.

Challenges securing and maintaining:

1. We note that community members, and even some staff KIRINYAGA COUNTY staff were reluctant to evaluate government services at first, fearing retribution from authorities.
2. The project overcame this challenge by ensuring government partners and community members were clear on the alignment of the CSC with government accountability initiatives.
3. The success of the CSC process is highly dependent on the quality of the facilitator and his or her ability to draw out the community's views, manage power relations, manage time, keep the process focused on consensus building and steer the process away from fault-finding.
4. Some of the CSC facilitators faced challenges keeping the dialogues focused on building relationships and trust between stakeholders.
5. Community members' inclusion in the CSC process and in determining whether the Score Card is representative of everyone's views.
6. CSC monitoring and evaluation challenges, which made advocacy efforts more challenging.
7. All projects reported CSC-related improvements in citizen empowerment, service provider and power-holder effectiveness, accountability and responsiveness, and expanded, effective and inclusive spaces for negotiation between the two.
8. CSC may be able to address challenges that accountability mechanisms face in the health sector and also education, some of the challenges to achieving accountability in the health sector are the asymmetries in information, access to services and expertise among service users, health providers and oversight
9. The CSC may hold potential to overcome these challenges as several projects included in the review reported CSC-related increases in citizens' knowledge and service provider and power-holder openness, transparency and communication with citizens.
10. Another challenge threatening the health, Education and Gender system's accountability to citizens is the potential for internal accountability mechanisms to overshadow community mechanisms
11. This review reveals that the CSC may be able to guard against this overshadowing, ensuring service provider and power-holder accountability and responsiveness to citizens.
12. All of the projects included in the review reported challenges that, if not proactively and properly addressed, could limit the effectiveness of the CSC process.
13. While projects reported overcoming a majority of these challenges, addressing equity issues and igniting Kirinyaga County government responsiveness proved particularly challenging to overcome.



14. Research suggests that accountability initiatives need to question 'who is represented and who may have been left out in order to ensure that policy and program structures do serve the cause of equity'
15. Several projects also reported that the CSC process failed to ignite Kirinyaga County government responsiveness, which was attributed to the CSC process not placing enough emphasis on Kirinyaga County-level advocacy and engagement.
16. This is problematic, as some service delivery issues raised through the CSC process require a higher-level response.
17. In addition, projects highlighted CSC monitoring and evaluation as a challenge. Despite more than a decade of experience implementing the CSC.

### **Way Forward:**

---

1. Some ideas on how to overcome this challenge include using common Score Card indicators across sites so information can be aggregated and shared at the County level and plugging into existing government accountability mechanisms; however, a robust CSC strategy to ensure Kirinyaga County government engagement has not yet been developed.
2. Constant running of the Score Card within the counties to review the projects.
3. Women, Youth and People with disabilities programs and projects are being well implemented.