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# Non-lending Technical Assistance to Assam: Improving Nutrition and Development Outcomes in Early Years (P168656)

## Report on Social Audits conducted in Goalpara and Udalguri Districts of Assam

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Output submitted to the World Bank  
by The Coalition for Food and Nutrition Security

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As a part of World Bank Non lending technical assistance, a 2-day workshop on Social Audit to build the capacity of government officials was organized by Centre for SDG in collaboration with Coalition for Food and Nutrition Security and Voluntary Health Association of Assam on 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> August 2019 at Bosco Reach out Guwahati. The workshop was organised to strengthen program monitoring and improving transparency and accountability at all level. The training was attended by 30 officials from Social Welfare, ICDS, Health and Family Welfare, Agriculture, Education, ASRLM, Public Health Engineering Departments, CSDGs, CFNS and VHAA from both state and districts level.

### **Objective of Capacity Building Training on Social Audit**

- To build the capacity of Government officials on Social Audit and its tools
- Sharing and finalization of tools for conducting Social Audit at two districts

### **Purpose and activities**

Social Audit is one of the key activities of the project to build the *capacity* of CSDGs at state as well as district. Based on this strength, CSDGs will lead this process with other projects, aiming to accelerate SDGs indicators in the state. The CSDGs will lead to assist various departments in measuring and assessing the outcomes & impact at ground level and hold the system accountable. The Social Audit process will make the projects / schemes more effective and efficient to accelerate the SDGs.

- Build capacity of CSDGs Team at state and district level
- Develop Communication materials on social audits for CSDGs
- Conduct two social audits preferably in Udalguri and Barpeta

### **Social Audit Process aimed to**

- Identify systematic gaps in the implementation of ongoing projects / schemes related to nutrition
- Findings would be used while developing the results based multi sectoral plan, influence policies based on grass root level findings and evidences
- Community awareness on their health and nutrition entitlements and services

### **Key Activities Undertaken under Social Audit**

- Capacity building workshop on Social Audit (Community Based Assessment) of Center SDGs Team and Concerned department, Government of Assam
- Training of Field Team on Nutrition Empowerment Tool  
Development of tools and communication material to conduct Social Audit
- Two social audits, one each in the gram panchayat of Udalguri and Goalpara on Supplementary Nutrition service delivery under ICDS and Water and Sanitation facilities

## Implementation Plan

The implementation plan can be broadly divided into two phases – preparatory and actual implementation.

As part of preparatory - a 2-day Capacity building workshop on Social Audit for the officials of concerned departments of Government of Assam was organized by Coalition for Food and Nutrition Security in collaboration with Center for SDGs and Voluntary Health Association of Assam on 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> August 2019 at Bosco Reach out Guwahati under the World Bank's supported TA. The training was attended by 30 officials from Social Welfare, ICDS, Health and Family Welfare, Agriculture, Education, ASRLM, Public Health Engineering Departments, CSDGs, CFNS and VHAA from both state and districts.

At field level in both the Blocks of Udalguri and Barpeta district, ICDS and Panchayat members were appraised of the Social Audit to be executed by field team of VHAA. All functionaries welcomed the initiatives and expressed their expectation that it will generate valuable input. In order to make this as a unique opportunity for members of Mother Support Groups by getting involved with the field team, we requested concerned supervisors to inform them.

Some initial sensitisation activities through communication materials and small group discussions at community level were carried out as stepping stones for the process. Social Audit process started simultaneously in both the ICDS Blocks. Infrastructure assessment of 6 AWCs were done by using the Format: 1 .AWWs and AWHs were interviewed at their respective Centers .At the beginning, they were a little scared and guarded, but when they were appraised how Social Audit helps both the recipient and service provider, almost all AWWs extended support. In both the district members of Mothers support group, women accompanied community volunteers during home visits. It indicates communities are willing to learn and support the process.

In both the District 12 AWWs along with AWHs were interviewed to collect information in regard to AWC infrastructures in both the districts. In Bodohapur Block, Goalpara, total no of beneficiary respondents were 142 comprising of 41 Pregnant women, 20 Lactating Mother and 81 mothers of children in the age group of 6months -2 years ( first 1000 days)

In Khairabari Block, Udalguri District, 99 respondents were reached in the CBA process. Out of it 23 were pregnant women, 21 were Lactating Mother and 55 were 81 mothers of children in the age group of 6months -2 years (first 1000 days). As per AWC register, there are all total 26 pregnant women but three were not available for response. FGDs were held to draw inference to the quantitative data collected through structured interviews of beneficiaries and service providers.

In Khairabari Block, only one AWC has own infrastructure, rest are operating from temporary place. So they cannot keep any utensil or materials at the center. This situation has forced them to provide uncooked ration to children in 3-6 age group who are entitled to receive hot cook meal and Morning snacks. None of the center has own water and Toilet facilities nor displayed Board about beneficiary or menu charts.

Only 1 AWC has usable Baby Weighing Scale and 3 AWC have Adult Weighing Scale .weight is found to be measured and plotted in three centers. So gaps in the component of growth monitoring has been observed in three AWCs. None of the AWCs measure heights of children as they are not provided with height measuring tape. Hence they are not aware whether enrolled children has age appropriate height or not. During FGDs it emerged that they are not aware of the relationship between stunting and mal Nutrition.

In Bodohapur Block, Goalpara all 6 AWCs are operating from own building out of which two AWCs are in need of immediate repairing. Only 4 AWC has own water source and two share it with others. Having separate cooking area and utensil, all centers provide hot cook meal.

Feedback on THR and AWC, VHSND based services entitled to pregnant women, Lactating Mothers and Mothers of children in the age group of 6months -2years indicates a range of gaps requiring attention at different level.

It is believed that the findings of this demonstrative CBA (Social Audit) though small in scale shall be able to deliver the objectives of equipping the CSDGs team to mainstream social audit process in all concerned departments.



*Community Assessment about the quality, efficiency and accountability of the nutrition related services, provided at different levels. The objective was to open a dialogue in a participatory forum that engages both service users and service providers.*



*Social Audit is no longer a choice for better nutrition outcomes. World Bank in collaboration with CFNS, Centre for SDGs and VHAA organised a workshop on Social Audit with the representatives of Department of Health, ICDS, PHED, HRD and Agriculture in Guwahati.*