Beyond Fundamentals:
Learning About Social Accountability Monitoring Capacities and Action in Southern Africa

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Acknowledgements

ACRONYMS

ANSAF	**Agricultural Non State Actors Forum**
CU	Concern Universal
COPSAM	Community of Practice for Social Accountability Monitoring
CFHD	Civic Forum on Human Development
CBO	Community Based Organization
FoN	Friends of Needy
GPSA	Global Partners for Social Accountability
HBC	Home Based Care
HRBA	Human Rights Based Approach
M & E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MEL	Monitoring Evaluation and Learning
MIICO	Mbozi Ileje & Isangati Consortium
MuniSAM	Municipal Social Accountability Monitoring
NANA	Mocuba's Organização de Apoio ao Desenvolvimento or Association of Machuabos Residents and Friends of Mocuba
NAFEZA	Núcleo das Associações Femininas da Zambézia or Center of Women's Associations of Zambezia
NZP+	Network of Zambian People Living with AIDS
PSAM	Public Service Accountability Monitor
PRM	Public Resource Management
PF	Policy Forum
RLP	Regional Learning Programme
SAMComm	Social Accountability Monitoring Committee
SAM	Social Accountability Monitoring
SAPST	Southern African Parliamentary Support Trust
Tz	Tanzania
ZGF	Zambia Governance Foundation

Executive Summary

- **The Public Service Accountability Monitors' Regional Learning Program (PSAM/RLP) supports social accountability monitoring (SAM) in Southern Africa**. Its 3-tier strategy includes: a) training about a systemic approach to Public Resource Management systems and social accountability monitoring (Fundamentals of SAM); b) progressive and continuous enquiry into the context for public resource management and opportunities for demand side actors to engage, c) Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning. A PSAM/RLP assumption has been that the process of continued application of the approach is, in essence a process of learning over time about the factors that make the approach applicable or not, including learning more about the factors that affect applicability. PSAM/RLP has made efforts to broker a regional learning conversation about the applicability of SAM.

- **In 2016, a group of SAM practitioners diagnosed that there is a gap between practices in organizations and the learning conversation.** Largely, the knowledge about practice and results is tacit and held by a number of colleagues and partners on the ground. Since August 2016 with the assistance of a team of technical consultants, PSAM/RLP and four partners engaged in a learning exercise to develop practitioners' capacities to learn more consciously and proactively through and from practice for improved outcomes and impacts (fulfillment of the right of social accountability and service delivery results). The learning exercise was also aimed at and improving their monitoring, evaluation, and learning (MEL) functions and approaches with their overall strategies and social accountability practices.

- **This paper identifies and analyzes the practice/learning gap using a tailored analytical framework. This framework focused on understanding why and how different organizations have experimented and adapted PSAM's approach to their contextual and organizational characteristics over time.** An inductive-deductive approach was used to trace and analyze the SAM journeys of organizations in four countries. These are: Tanzania (Policy Forum, Agricultural Non-State Actors Forum, Mbozi Ileje &Isangati Consortium and SIKIKA), Zimbabwe (Southern African Parliamentary Support Trust), Zambia (Zambia Governance Foundation, Friends of the Needy, God Visits Orphans, St John's Home Based Care, Maluba Home Based Care, NZP+ Mpika) and Mozambique (Concern Universal, Mocuba SAMCom and Quelimane SAMCom). The process – beginning from the selection of the partners to the write up of this document – has been an effort to maximize resources, time and information available, while striking a balance for the different parties and audiences.

- The quick analytic narratives of these partners' SAM journeys were developed and compared using a combination of tools, including, but not limited to stakeholder analysis, chronological analysis of organizational/countries histories and monitoring and evaluation documentation and data, political economy, in-depth interviews, in-

country reflection meetings and counterfactual analysis. The bulk of the 4 weeks spent in the field was used to capture tacit knowledge from practitioners and their environments. Theory helped focus the analysis of individual trajectories to strive for meaningful, yet bounded insights about individual partners that make sense for the collective. Theory also contributed to the methodical collection and analysis of data.

- The hope was to move beyond a macro, overly general statement about SAM, context, organizations and learning towards a better understanding of how the range of practical capacity development and learning tools used by PSAM/RL and partners in practice contributed to improving understandings, developing capacities and influencing behaviours of SAM practitioners and other PRM stakeholders. Have they done so in in concrete contexts or across contexts?

- **What do SAM journeys look like? SAM journeys start with a common technical understanding of systemic public resource management systems (Fundamentals).** SAM practices and strategies are based on awareness and understanding of the public resource management system.

- **They unfold in gradual, uneven manner.** SAM practitioners, contribute, to milestones through contextually relevant multi-pronged social accountability strategies over time rather than one-off engagements with SAM documents, processes, actors and tools. The pathways show forward movement and, sometimes, regression. The road includes allies and obstacles.

- **The SAM practice that shapes these gradual pathways is an "advanced" version of Fundamentals (Fundamentals Plus).** SAM practices & strategies seem to become actionable when interacting with a range of contextual factors, capacities, and capacity development processes that go beyond the common technical core of SAM. These are the four key elements that make up 'Fundamentals Plus' practice.

  i. *Identifying the problems motivating the use of SAM*. In SAM and development it is common to aim for the achievement of broadly stated, aspirational goals. The centre of the SAM cycle as it states its goal is the realization of human rights and capabilities. However, focusing on a concrete problem helps learning and advancing reform efforts. What are the specific problems SAM practitioners are trying to address? Attention to specific problems greases the wheels of most, if not all, SAM journeys traced in this paper. SAM partners rely on people who care about access to water and medications in their communities. These service delivery issues point to the direction of the journey, those who will come along in the journey, and the way in which SAM practitioners learn and problem-solve. A learning conversation about SAM among partners who are focused on different problems risks being unproductive unless there is a collective understanding on what problems are being prioritized in that conversation at a point in time.

ii. *Navigating Salient Systemic Interactions.* The PSAM is a pioneer on systemic thinking in the social accountability field. Partners who have been trained in the SAM approach think about the public resource management processes as part of an interconnected system. They map the legislative, regulatory and normative aspects of the public resource management in law and practice. Partners apply this knowledge to their work. This does not mean that they tackle all the public resource management components, all the time. Part of their savvy, is to know when and what to prioritize given contextual factors. These like many other decisions that shape what SAM journeys look in practice stem from the interaction of the PRM system with concrete aspects of their context. Two systemic interactions with the PRM system are salient in all journeys – the systems that shape how power is exercised and how civil society operates. While these factors are critical to set expectations and learn about SAM practice, they have not been systematically present in the regional learning conversation.

iii. *Applying concrete capacities.* The paper identifies four types of skills and abilities that SAM practitioners need in order to make and execute decisions and achieve results, as they go about their Fundamentals Plus journeys. These are: analytical, organizational and operational, civic, and adaptation capacities. This finding is consistent with insights from the broader social accountability field (Guerzovich and Poli 2016). The capacities are considered to some extent in the PSAM/RLP documentation and work, but this focus is new and has not been as explicit in the regional learning conversation.

iv. *Nurturing capacity enhancing processes.* The paper also identifies three types of mechanisms through which organizational, contextual and strategic resources are linked to the development of SAM practitioners' understandings, capacities and behaviours. These three sets of capacity-development/learning tools have different starting points and vehicles. The first one draws on experts' ability to inform behavior by imparting their technical knowledge/expertise about appropriate or desirable actions. The second one expects action in accordance with lessons drawn from relevant experiences of one's own or from peers. The third one seeks to strengthen and leverage the PRM ecosystem whilst strengthening the capacities of multiple types of stakeholders all at once. The three mechanisms are present and interact in SAM journeys, though it has been challenging for the PSAM/RLP community to support reflective practice through communal learning.

- **SAM's monitoring and evaluation (M&E) mechanisms have not contributed to supporting the development of Fundamentals Plus capacities.** M&E systems at the organizational and regional level have been deficient for many reasons. The paper argues that an important reason for this failure is the failure to put the users and uses of M&E front and center in the definition of strategies, mechanisms, processes, and tool. In a complex environment such as SAM practice this is first and foremost a political decision that requires organizational

compromises, as well as a keen awareness of the operational conditions and feasibility of those agreements. Technical decisions should follow those bargains.

- **One of the critical decisions ahead for the regional SAM community may be the need to rethink the assumptions that shape their joint learning questions and agendas.** The four elements of Fundamentals Plus are not clearly embedded in the current ones. The paper concludes presenting a "menu" of options from which PSAM/RLP and partners can select as they ponder the way forward, preferably with a learning agenda that is better able to link learning with actual practice at the local, regional, and global level.

- **The paper seeks to support thinking about ways to close the practice/learning gap by pointing to challenges and opportunities available to SAM practitioners and PSAM/RLP, rather than making decisions for them.** Ultimately, the paper is intended as a critical conversation in an ongoing dialogue for the PSAM RLP community of practice that will help inform its choices- not only at the PSAM Regional Learning Conference scheduled for August 2017, but as part of going forward as a regional learning community. The paper concludes with a tentative menu of forward-looking options to help kickstart these conversations.

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1.Introduction

In August 2016, the Public Service Accountability Monitor's (PSAM)'s Regional Learning Programme (RLP), along with partners implementing Social Accountability Monitoring (SAM) in 4 countries, met in Bulawayo, Zimbabwe. During the meeting, the RLP created a safe-space for a needs-based diagnostic of the link between SAM practice and monitoring, evaluation, and learning (MEL) at the individual and community levels. The Community of Practice for Social Accountability Monitoring (COPSAM) shared insights about difficulties and opportunities to use MEL to improve social accountability practice.

The group identified three related challenges and opportunities for learning[1] for their practices in the region (See summary of challenges in the left side of Figure 1):

a. There seems to be a gap between practices in organizations and the learning conversation. It is difficult to demonstrate the value of learning activities within the organization itself. It is also difficult to show value from learning activities to different organizations and colleagues. How do we develop a learning journey that bridges these gaps between those implementing the SAM? Would it help if we make the conversation about mapping how learning is already happening at the local level in the implementation of SAM as opposed to concepts or tools? Partner organizations have been acquiring insights from RLP and trying to apply it at home. Their practice entails adaptations because their context diverges from the conditions assumed by the approach. Organizational opportunities and constraints as well as learning by doing may also have created a gap between the SAM taught through the Fundamental's course[2] and practice. What is common across SAM practices? What are the divergences and why have they emerged? Are they strategic and purposive? Why and how are they helping organizations achieve desired outcomes and impacts?

b. Largely, the knowledge about practice and results is tacit and held by a number of colleagues and partners on the ground. Previous efforts to systematically collect these insights at the organizational level and learn across organizations have faced many obstacles. For example, PSAM has an elaborate intentional design modeled on the outcome mapping methodology[3] but monitoring the numerous indicators and journaling consistently has been a challenge. RLP partners have indicated that they are struggling with documenting their learning and impact consistently and in a way that contributes to organisational learning and decision-making in a meaningful and systematic way. This, in turn, could be creating challenges for developing organizational capacities for MEL as well as using those capacities to support practice. It is also challenging to answer PSAM

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[1] Learning here is, unless specified otherwise, as the extent to which a program, project, organization "gains and uses knowledge, from both its own work and that of others, to influence its policy, strategy, plans and actions." It presupposes development of capacities, changes in behavior, and new forms of reasoning to justify those changes. The definition is from ICAI Evaluation of DFID's learning and used by the Global Partnership for Social Accountability (Guerzovich and Poli 2014; 2017).
[2] The fundamentals course, as detailed later on, is a training mechanism to convey PSAM's approach to Social Accountability Monitoring.
[3] PSAM Intentional design

RLP's learning questions. How can we pilot a different MEL effort to overcome these challenges with fit for purpose tools? Are there new opportunities and constraints we should consider as we move forward?

Figure 1: Learning for and with COPSAM
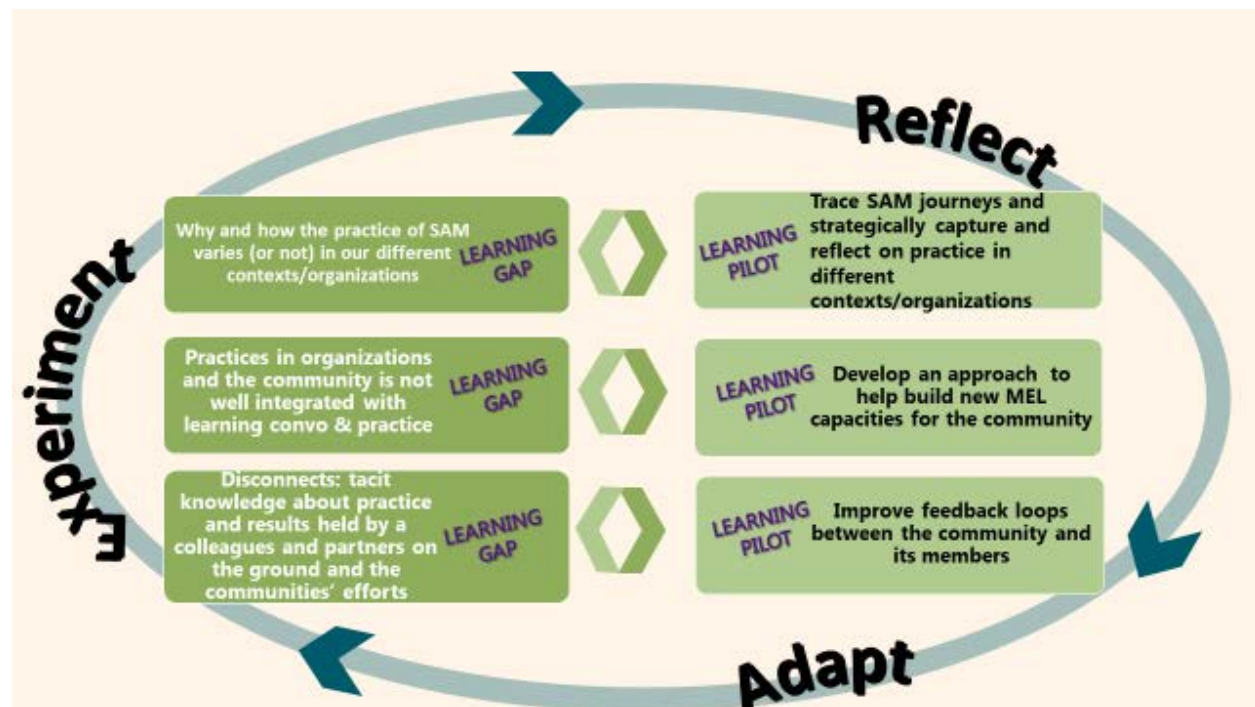
The community also discussed ways to support the development, implementation, and documentation of learning and ways forward. COPSAM agreed a mandate for RLP, technical advisors and a sub-set of members to experiment with an approach to address these challenges (See the right side of Figure 1):

i. Piloting a process by which two "critical friends" (technical advisors) and PSAM RLP's MEL Officer will work with a select group of organizations, ideally in 4 countries, to trace their journeys and strategically capture tacit knowledge, reflect on these insights, and build quick analytic narratives. The focus is to understand why and how different organizations have experimented and adapted SAM to their contextual and organizational characteristics over time.

ii. Using the process as a tool to help build new MEL capacities for these organizations and PSAM's RLP, so all can continue to refine their MEL approaches with a view to enabling learning that can inform future social accountability practice beyond this year.

iii. Using these insights to feedback to the community of practice in the hope that this process will provide useful information about their work in and across

contexts. In turn, these insights could help improve support to apply PSAM's approach in practice.

iv. This pilot is not an evaluation of PSAM's RLP or individual RLP partners nor an academic exercise.

This document reflects on and summarizes the process and findings from this exercise at the portfolio-level, learning for and with COPSAM. It proceeds as follows. Section III briefly introduces the theoretical and methodological approach of the exercise. The starting point of the paper is the gap between practices in organizations and the learning conversation and practice. The goal is to better understand the causes of the gap and supporting thinking about ways to close it. Section IV focuses on the substance of SAM practices and trajectories. Section V focuses on M&E from the perspective of individual organizations practicing SAM.

This paper argues that in order to support MEL for SAM practices and strategies, it is timely to rethink the set of hypotheses that guide the effort. SAM practices and strategies are based on awareness and understanding of the public resource management system. These practices & strategies seem to become actionable when interacting with a range of contextual factors, capacities, and capacity development processes that go beyond the common technical core.

While PSAM/RLP's 3-tier strategy has made some steps to address these issues, more could be done to ensure that the changes feedback into the regional learning agenda. The last section presents a menu of options from which PSAM/RLP and partners can select as they ponder the way forward, preferably with a learning agenda that is better able to link learning with actual practice at the local, regional, and global level.

Annexes to the document include the initial proposal presented by the technical team's lead to PSAM, the Roadmap for the exercise, and 4 organization-specific brief roadmaps agreed post-Bulawayo, a learning pilot blog on the process, and 4 organization specific reports. Content from these documents is partly reproduced in the main report.

2. Analytical Framework

This section briefly outlines the analytical framework used in this exercise. A theoretical framework was customized for the exercise, using an inductive-deductive approach (See Annex for more details). The process was informed by a combination of the interests of PSAM/RLP at the start of the exercise (see Sections I and II) and the learning needs of 4 partners in Tanzania, Zimbabwe, Zambia and Mozambique that participated in the exercise (see Table 1 below).

Table 1: Four partners and learning questions per country

Country	Tanzania	Zimbabwe	Mozambique	Zambia
Lead Partner	Policy Forum (PF)	Southern African Parliamentary Support Trust (SAPST)	Concern Universal (CU)	Zambia Governance Foundation (ZGF)
Local Partners (who participated in learning exercise)	Agricultural Non-State Actors Forum (ANSAF); Mbozi Ileje &Isangati Consortium (MIICO); Sikika		Mocuba SAMCom and Quelimane SAMCom	Friends of the Needy (FoN) God Visits Orphans (GVO) St John's Home Based Care Maluba Home Based Care NZP+ Mpika
Focus question / learning needs	To build its MEL capacities to improve the way PF collects evidence of impact in manner that clearly and indisputably describes its key contributions (i.e. draw causal links between activities and impact at the policy and local levels).	Why and how SAPST took on the PSAM approach and what it has accomplished.	Tto capture, analyze and reflect on the trajectory and application of social accountability processes in the MuniSAM (Municipal Social Accountability Monitoring) Program., including why & how local partners adapted PSAM approach to context	Why and how ZGF took on the PSAM approach in supporting community-based organisations in Muchinga Province and what ZGF and selected members of those organisations learnt by implementing this approach.

The process – from the selection of the partners to the write up of this document – has been an effort to maximize resources, time and information available, while striking balances for the different parties and audiences (Figure 2). At different junctures in the process, the team had to prioritize the particular needs of the 4 learning partners and

their stakeholders to ensure buy-in and timely support as well as feedback not just from PSAM-RLP but also from community members.

Another challenge has been to support learning for partners that are working in different contexts, issues and organizations and to help PSAM/RLP answer their own learning questions about the broader SAM community. The 4 partners are not representative of the community, but they were willing and fit the criteria to participate in the learning pilot.[4]

Figure 2: The process at a glance
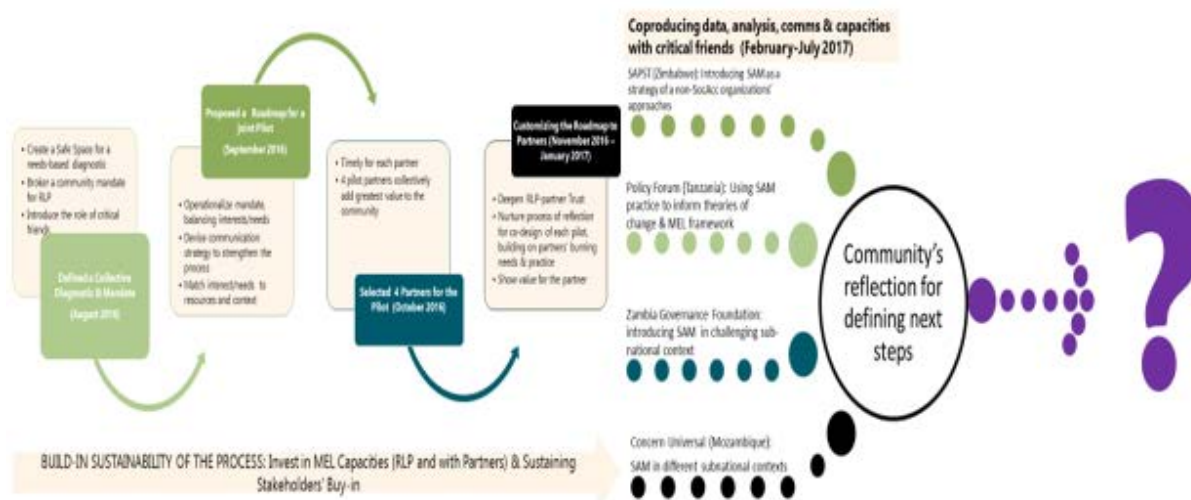
Consequently, the process entailed trade-offs in terms of theoretical and methodological focus and precision. Compromises were critical to enable work forward.[5] Box 1 provides additional details about the process and timeline.

Box 1: The Timeline in detail

> The approach used during the exercise put emphasis in iterative decision-making and action. The main steps of the process were as follows:
> - May 2016: PSAM-RLP initiate conversations with the technical team August 2016: Emerging mandate from Regional Learning Meeting
> - August – September 2016: Development of a proposal building on insights from the meeting. Solicitation of expressions of interest.
> - September – October 2016: Selection of 4 sets of partners for the learning exercise according to pre-specified criteria. PSAM officially received four applications from Concern Universal (CU)

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4 See Roadmap of Learning Pilot in Annex for details regarding selection criteria
5 For more detailed accounts of the tensions throughout the process, see e.g. blog posts (it may be useful to insert actual link here)

based in Mozambique, Zambia Governance Foundation (ZGF), Policy Forum based in Tanzania as well as Civic Forum on Human Development (CFHD) based in Zimbabwe. The technical team reviewed the applications and all were found to meet the criteria with the exception of CFHD. Another option was explored with the Southern African Parliamentary Support Trust (SAPST) based in Zimbabwe. Following the technical team's conversations with PSAM's RLP programme and SAPST, it was decided that SAPST presented as a viable second option.

- October – December 2016: Develop conceptual framework & methodological approach for the learning pilot with selected partners, identifying each partners' needs and customizing
- January 2017 – Develop site visit plans with partners. Launch Learning Pilot Blog on CoPSAM & Blogger
- February 2017 - Site visit in Zimbabwe
- April 2017: Site visits in Tanzania, Mozambique and Zambia
- June – July 2017:Analysis, packaging and review of learning pilot case study documents capturing key narratives & lessons from adapting PSAM approach
- August 2017: Presentation of learning pilot outputs and findings at RLP annual learning meeting

The first building block of the resulting theoretical framework are the three tiers of PSAM/RLP's strategy which refers to the following broad plan of action linking inputs to desired outcomes and impacts:

a. Training about a systemic approach to Public Resource Management systems and social accountability monitoring for the realization of human rights and capabilities. According to SAM, in order for government to convert public resources into services that meet people's most pressing needs, the state needs to implement five processes which forms the basis of a system managing public resources (PRM system, see Figure 3): *Process 1: Resource Allocation and Strategic Planning; Process 2: Expenditure Management; Process 3: Performance Management; Process 4: Public Integrity; Process 5: Oversight.*
The approach assumes that by applying SAM to the PRM system, demand side actors (civic actors & oversight members) will be able to hold the executive to account for the use of public funds for service delivery and human rights outcomes (see below diagram depicting PSAM tools for monitoring the social accountability system which is the starting point);

b. Progressive and continuous enquiry into the context for public resource management and opportunities for demand side actors to engage,

c. Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning.

In all cases analyzed, partners have been trained by PSAM/RLP in at least some aspects of the approach,[6] localization and contextual analysis has occurred to some extent, partners have engaged in practice which adds their own strategies to the mix, and some collective monitoring, evaluation and/or learning actions have previously been conducted.[7]

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6 Zambian partners in Muchinga have received partial training about the system (see next section). The other partners have received comprehensive training.
7 PSAM has over time introduced learning opportunities for their partners in country and at the regional level through Annual In Country Learning & Reflection Meetings since 2012 as well as Annual Regional Learning Meetings since 2015

Figure 3: The PSAM approach for Social Accountability Monitoring in the Public Resource Management System
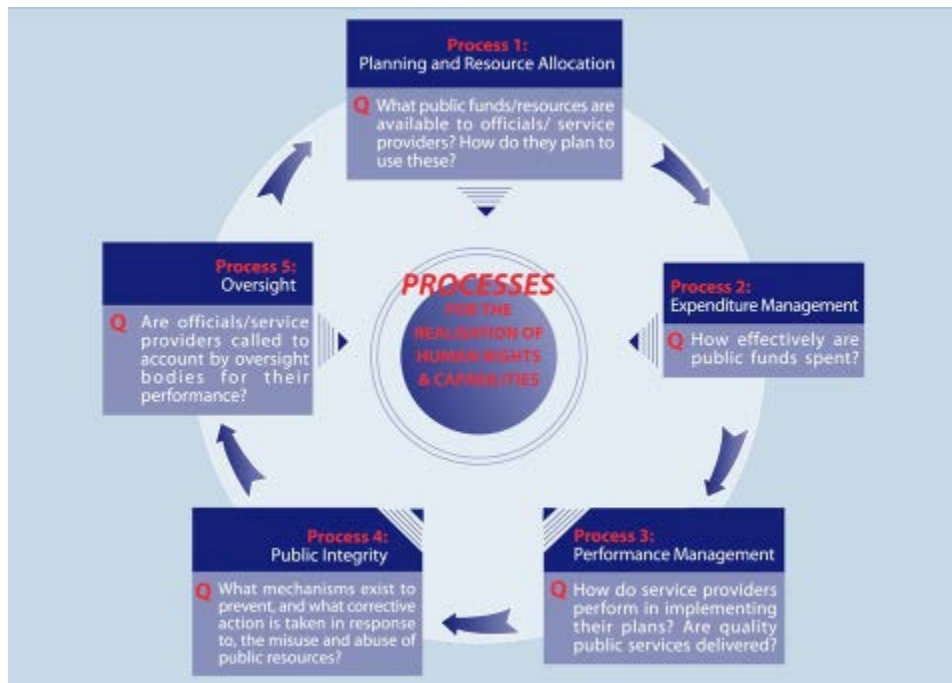
Figure 3 maps a simplified version of the dynamics through which these RLP and partners' inputs (1), are expected to contribute to specific sets of capacities (2), which in turn may contribute to improved service delivery (3).

What do these links, interactions and dynamics look like? Analytically, identifying systematic causal mechanisms is important to increase confidence in the findings.[8] This is also important for practical purposes: SAM practitioners want to learn about the how of things when they work. PSAM/RLP's learning questions provide a set of underspecified hypotheses about these links (Figure 5). The hypotheses are more explicit about the links between (1) and (2) than they are about the links between (2) and (3). As discussed before, the agreement among parties that the exercise would focus on exploring the latter set of links is logical prior to embarking on an effort to evaluate/research impact with sufficient organizational knowledge about what is the best approach for PSAM/RLP.

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[8] These are the hypothesized causal mechanisms. For an overview of the role and use causal mechanisms in the social sciences see, e.g. Hedstrom, Peter. 2008. "Studying Mechanisms to Strengthen Causal Inferences in Quantitative Research." In The Oxford handbook of political methodology, ed. J. M. Box-Steffensmeier, H. E. Brady and D. Collier. Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press. For a deeper discussion of the ways in which researchers can advance the understanding of the interaction of context and causal mechanisms in political analysis, see T. Falletti and J. Lynch. Comparative Political Studies Volume 42 Number 9 https://www.sas.upenn.edu/polisci/sites/www.sas.upenn.edu.polisci/files/Falleti&Lynch(2009)CPS_Context&CausalMechanismsInPoliticalAnalysis.pdf.

Figure 4: Thinking about PSAM/RLP's assumption about how they may contribute to change [9]
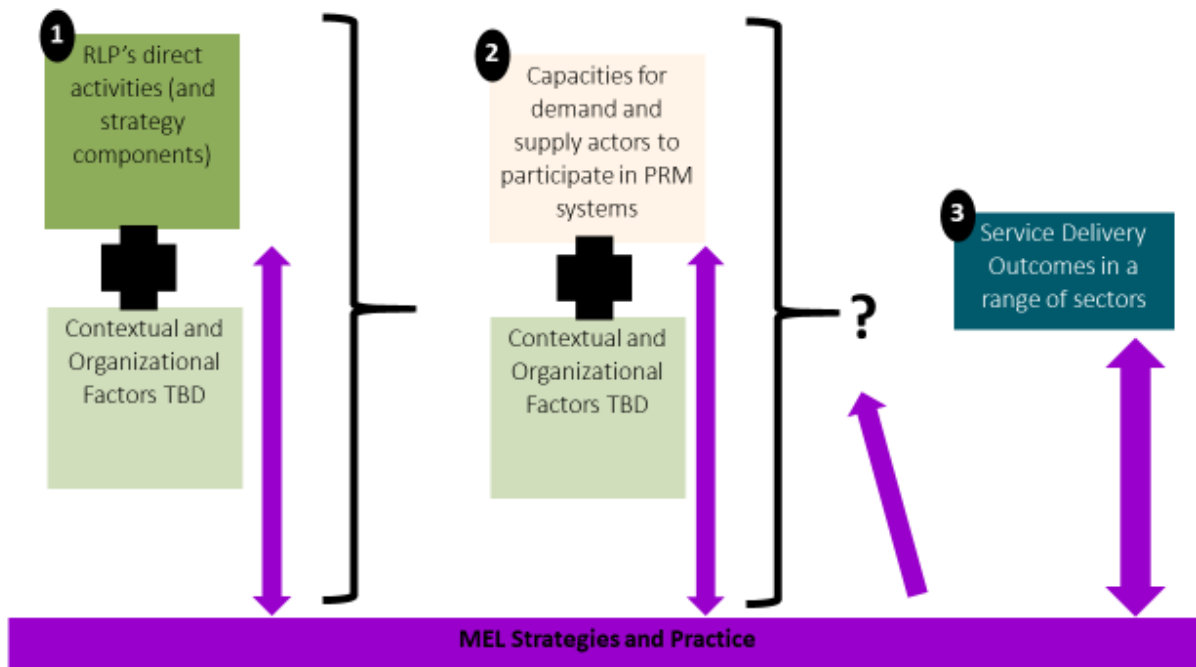
The hypotheses in Figure 5 below are largely silent about the plus signs in Figure 4- i.e. the way concrete contextual and organizational factors affect each step in the chain, as well as the overall dynamic.[10] The learning exercise prioritized key dimensions of context and organization deductively because PSAM does not have the resources to do an analysis of all the possible dimensions of context, strategy, and organization, nor all the questions, interactions, and variables that may arise and be of interest to the community.

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[9] Contexual factors: - Operating environment; Important Contextual factors that can affect the ability to accomplish goals such as not limited to political actors, diversity & independence of demand actors such as CSOs, academia, media; capacity of state bureaucracies; availability and quality of accountability agencies, legal and institutional frameworks.
 Organizational factors: Human & financial resources/funding; decision making processes; learning & capacity building processes; skills (technical know how) & leadership characteristics
10 Guerzovich, Florencia and Chies Schommer, Paula, Four Ways in Which Social Accountability and Open Government Interventions Bridge the State and Society (August 31, 2015). Available at SSRN: https://ssrn.com/abstract=2653868

Figure 5: Hypotheses about the contribution of SAM training, contextual inquiry and MEL [11]

U UNDERSTANDING

Understanding of public resource management (PRM) as an integrated 5-process system from a rights-based perspective

E ENGAGEMENT

Demand side actors engage more confidently, proactively and strategically with PRM processes

M MUTUAL UNDERSTANDING

A better mutual understanding of the relationship between public resource management practice and the systemic determinants of service delivery problems

R REASONING, CAPACITY, BEHAVIOUR

Changes in the reasoning, capacity and behaviour of demand and supply side actors as they participate in the public resource management system

I IMPACT

Improved service delivery

The focus on specific factors was also used to increase analytical leverage in a context of imperfect data to guide this pilot in ways that helped it accomplish its goals. At the beginning of the process, these factors were: the relative level of political pre-conditions, including civic space and civil society capacities, present in the country at a point in time as well as the social accountability capacity building needs in a given organization – defined by the extent to which they are centralized or not. The specifications of these variables evolved over time.

The key hypotheses in Figure 5 are also silent about what the interaction between practice and monitoring, evaluation and learning. To be sure, other PSAM/RLP documents can partly contribute to addressing this silence. For instance, the figure should have additional loops to reflect an assumption embedded in more recent PSAM/RLP documents to include: context, strategy and organizational after cycles of experimentation, learning and capacity development, and adaptation rather than once-off application of the SAM approach.[12] The point is that the links and arrows are still underspecified in the questions,[13] as is much knowledge from practice, and this exercise sought to surface them to inform future action.

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11 Regional Learning Programme Training and Mentoring: Theory of Change with Assumptions

12 Guerzovich, F., & Schommer, P. C. (2016 - to be published). The politics of open contracting for urban service delivery: Brazilian contexts, strategies, and learning. U4 - Anti-Corruption Resource Centre. Guerzovich, F., & Schommer, P. C. (2015). "Four Ways in Which Social Accountability and Open Government Interventions Bridge the State and Society". Link.

13 PSAM/RLP's intentional design goes some way towards signaling how the hypotheses could be further specified. Although, as discussed below, the specification is not necessarily consistent with insights from practice – precisely the goal of the exercise.

The paper focuses on causal mechanisms associated with learning. Although multiple mechanisms may be interacting, assumptions could not be determined ex-ante and/or sufficient overlap in interest among parties identified. The hope was to move beyond a macro, overly general statement towards a better understanding of how the range of practical capacity development and learning tools, from training to research and MEL of partners' outcomes in practice contributed to improving understandings, developing capacities and influencing behaviours. Furthermore, have they done so in in concrete contexts or across contexts?

The methodological approach used to explore these questions combined several tools.[14] Analytic narratives of SAM journeys, stakeholder analysis, chronological analysis of organizational/countries histories, such as informed background analysis. The learning pilot team quickly but strategically conducted political economy-informed analysis for social accountability (see Box 2). When possible and relevant, the team developed simplified systems maps[15] and strategic and tactical maps.[16] All these tools contributed to controlled within and across country comparisons, and counterfactual analysis of partners' SAM trajectories. To support comparability efforts were made to use feasible functional equivalences in each country/partners' circumstances – from specific indicators to the broad selection of data collection tools to analysis. [17]

These tools are considered adequate in the social sciences and have been implemented in other projects in the social accountability field. Naturally, these tools have limits that should be considered. For example, the analysis of the usefulness of PSAM's approach in these four countries by no means will provide a comprehensive account of social accountability in all countries/sectors/partners' practices. Still, systematic comparisons can help us get answers that many observers would attribute to ad hoc occurrences. It can also help further specify causal chains that up to now remain underspecified, building on tacit knowledge. Conversely, extrapolating results outside these boundaries without appropriate empirical research is likely to render problematic inferences and prescriptions.

The approach also uses what scholars often refer to as "triangulation of sources". The idea is that research, evaluation and reflection should not rely on a single piece of

14 The methodology builds on insights from other exercises to research adaptations of a common social accountability methodologies to different contexts with limited time/resources. Guerzovich, Florencia and Chies Schommer, Paula, Methodological Note: How to Learn about How We Do Social Accountability in Context? (December 31, 2016). Working Paper - Grupo de Pesquisa Politeia - Coprodução do Bem Público: Accountability e Gestão. Available at SSRN: https://ssrn.com/abstract=2653855
15 https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=1780935
16 Guerzovich, Florencia and Chies Schommer, Paula, Methodological Note: How to Learn about How We Do Social Accountability in Context? (December 31, 2016). Working Paper - Grupo de Pesquisa Politeia - Coprodução do Bem Público: Accountability e Gestão. Available at SSRN: https://ssrn.com/abstract=2653855
17 The idea is that meaningful comparisons between two SAM trajectories need to consider functions, not just the form. Components that have the same name can have a different role in their respective context, aiding or obstructing the achievement of results. Rather than assume that the same data collection tools or indicators will be a valid measure of a concept across cases, the team used interviews and content analysis which are especially well suited to provide familiarity with the cases and additional depth to assess trajectories and their results. More generally, on this methodological issue see Przeworski and Teune (1970); Locke and Thelen (1995). This approach is also consistent with the directions of the debate about strengthening governance referenced later in this study.

evidence, method, or source of evidence, but on multiple pieces, methods, and sources. This approach was used because data, sources, methods, and researchers have different biases. Also, in self-reporting mechanisms inaccuracies that are memory-related are likely. Through the multiplication of these tools and information the team tried to qualitatively complement biases (including its own) – not ignore them. This reference does not seek to provide a false sense of certainty, but help strengthen confidence in our findings and claims about causal processes.

Box 2: Political Economy for Strategic Social Accountability

Political economy analysis is concerned with the interaction of political and economic processes in a society. It focuses on power and resources, how they are distributed and contested in different country and sector contexts between different groups and individuals, and the processes that create, sustain, and transform these relationships over time (see here, also see here, here, here, here).

But applying political economy savviness to social accountability approaches means a lot more than writing up a map of stakeholders and institutional and governance arrangements. For the GPSA (see application template here), strategic social accountability is a process encompassing:

(a) the use of a combined set of linked, fit for purpose tactics, mechanisms and "tools" including formal (i.e., mandated by laws and regulations) and informal (set up or organized by CSOs and citizen groups themselves),

(b) whereby the choice of mechanisms and tools is grounded on several considerations, such as a cost-benefit analysis of alternatives, an analysis of the political-institutional context, an assessment of needs and problems regarding the service delivery chain or the management process, among others, as well as of "entry points" for introducing the process, and of existing capacities and incentives of the actors to be engaged, including service users, CSOs, service providers and public sector institutions. 'Ideally, all these stakeholders learn from each other (and even team up) to figure out options in terms of strategies and solutions and put them to work. CSOs drive strategic social accountability interventions, but by no means, go it alone.

Poli, M. y Guerzovich, F. (2014). "Introduction to GPSA Dissemination Notes series", Series: Are We Ready for Social Accountability? GPSA. See Article.

The exercise relies on both qualitative and quantitative data available through PSAM/RLP and partners, though the latter type of data was not always available at PSAM and the organizations.

Three team members spent 1 week in the field per country/set of partners to collect additional qualitative data. The bulk of the time in the field was used to capture tacit knowledge from practitioners and their environments. The goal was to trace and document how and under what conditions PSAM in-country partners had applied, iterated and adapted the SAM model, highlighting the interactions and effects of key variables in the conceptual framework. In all the cases, the focus was adjusted by partners' own learning questions. Data collection included a range of primary and secondary sources, including, but not limited to desk reviews, 50 in-depth interviews and 1 Learning Pilot Workshop with 15 participants and 6 collective meetings on site (see Annex).[18] The team consulted a broad range of stakeholders in SAM processes, including but not limited to SAM practitioners (staff members of PSAM/RLP partner

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18 18 in-depth interviews were conducted in Zimbabwe; 19 interviews in Zambia plus 3 collective/ group meetings; 9 interviews in Mozambique plus 3 collective/ group meetings and 7 interviews plus workshop discussion & activities in Tanzania (See Annex for specific details).

organisations doing SAM; Local, Provincial and National Authorities; Ministry of Finance officials; Members of National and Local Assemblies; Media Practitioners; Staff from Auditor General Office; Chiefs & Traditional Leaders and Donor Representatives..

During the data collection process, theory was used to focus the analysis of individual trajectories to strive for meaningful, yet bounded recommendations for individual partners that make sense for the portfolio's big picture realities, too.[19] Theory also contributed to the teams' methodical collection and analysis of data. As research and analysis of individual trajectories occurred sequentially between February and April, each country visit was an opportunity for collecting information, check against abstract theoretical expectations, reflect and then refine the theory.[20]

The team also thought to build into the process collective reflection meetings. These meetings, which took place in two out of the four countries during the site visits, contributed to giving meaning to the findings, furthermore, collective reflection meetings captured insights about the feasibility of recommendations and support the uptake of the lessons that stem from the evaluation portion of the exercise. Other forms of feedback were used when reflection meetings where not possible. This methodological approach will be complemented with other collective processes engaging project partners at the next regional learning meeting to inform a comparative portfolio level review that, in turn, informs the assessment and recommendations for the MEL strategy.

Divergent partners' needs and interests were important across the exercise. Specially, they mattered for the communication of the analysis to different audiences – an issue the paper makes reference to later. This paper synthesizes insights across the 4 sets of partners. The Annexes include tailored answers for each partner. In these documents, the decision was not to use a standard template or to provide answers to all questions for which the team collected data. The objective was to communicate insights aiming to answer the needs and audiences expressed by each one of the partners.

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19 Reflections on the role of comparisons in the field, F. Guerzovich and S. Rosenzweig. 2014. Bridging the context gap through comparative research. London: Transparency and Accountability Initiative, Think Piece. https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=2992062
20 See blog post

3. The Learning gap: Insights into SAM practice and the regional learning agenda.

A. Fundamentals of SAM

The starting point to reflect about PSAM/RLP's assumptions about how SAM contributes to change is PSAM/RLP's Fundamentals of Social Accountability Monitoring. The Fundamentals of Social Accountability Monitoring (which will henceforth be referred to as "Fundamentals") is the framework through which PSAM/RLP and its partners introduce five key public resource management (PRM) processes necessary for the realization of rights and capabilities from a rights based perspective. Fundamentals includes an introduction to the tools to evaluate the five PRM processes produced routinely by these same processes (see Figure 3 and discussion above). Mainly 'Fundamentals' seeks to convey that SAM is about understanding and engaging the entire system as a whole for the progressive realization of rights. SAM is not about engaging a single social accountability tool nor a single PRM process. The cornerstone of capacity building for SAM occurs through the Fundamentals of Social Accountability Monitoring course and its local adaptations (see more below).

B. Understanding the learning gap between Fundamentals and SAM practice

This learning exercise went beyond looking at Fundamentals. The assumptions about how Fundamentals contributes to change are embedded within the PSAM/RLP four main questions which set the parameters for the collective regional learning agenda (See figure 5). The question however is - how well do these assumption serve practitioners?

The paper juxtaposed the PSAM/RLP hypotheses with the way practices of SAM look like across organizations with different goals, levels of resources and country contexts. In doing so, as a PSAM/RLP publication argues, it is critical to understand that it may not be realistic to expect practitioners to apply Fundamentals "dogmatically."[21] Practitioners are more likely to choose the methodology or tool that will help them achieve service delivery outcomes, regardless of what the original methodology dictates. The team focused on generating systematic knowledge about this characteristic of practice rather than focusing on generating indisputable evidence about the value of the abstracted Fundamentals approach.
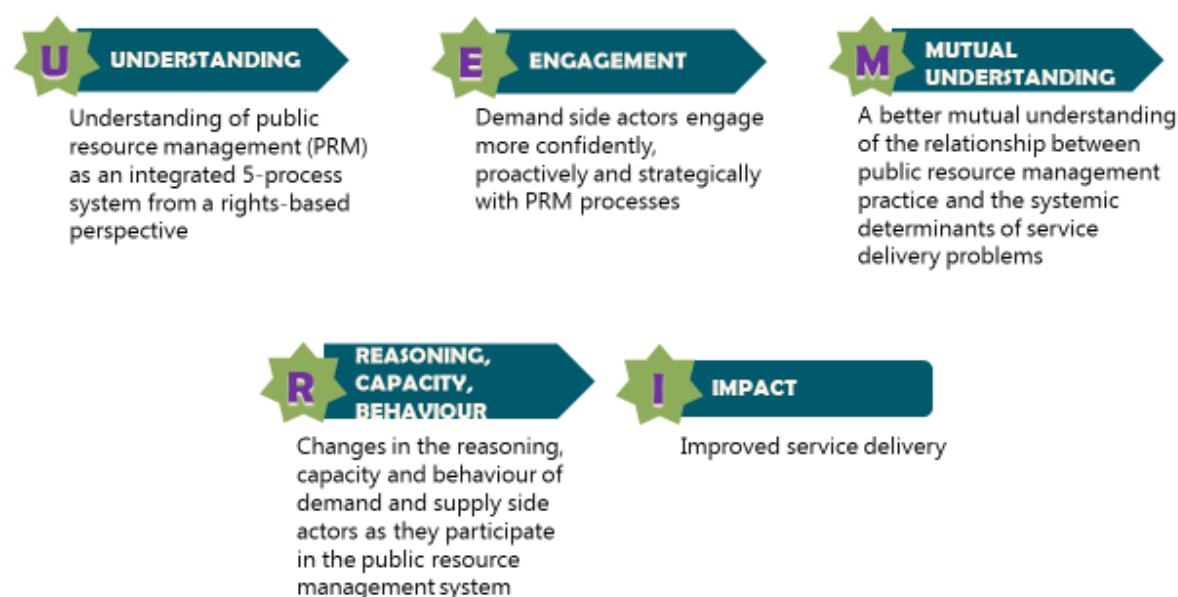
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21 Interrogating Social Accountability in Tanzania: A case study: by G. Mugizi, 2013

The findings emerging from making quick comparisons between "most different cases"[22] suggest plausible links between training in Fundamentals (or in the case of Zambia some aspects of Fundamentals)[23] with the development of practitioners' capacities to apply SAM within their context. Furthermore, it also suggests plausible links between Fundamentals training and/or in some instances practitioners' capacities to improve the conditions in which they can attempt to apply SAM.

Figure 5 (repeated): Assumptions about the contribution of SAM training, contextual inquiry and MEL

U UNDERSTANDING
Understanding of public resource management (PRM) as an integrated 5-process system from a rights-based perspective

E ENGAGEMENT
Demand side actors engage more confidently, proactively and strategically with PRM processes

M MUTUAL UNDERSTANDING
A better mutual understanding of the relationship between public resource management practice and the systemic determinants of service delivery problems

R REASONING, CAPACITY, BEHAVIOUR
Changes in the reasoning, capacity and behaviour of demand and supply side actors as they participate in the public resource management system

I IMPACT
Improved service delivery

Confidence in this finding is reinforced by making further inquiries into similar or recurring links between these results. In all learning pilot case studies, there are instances of achievements/milestones that stem from contextually relevant, sequenced, multi-pronged social accountability strategies over time rather than specific SAM tools. These milestones/achievements speak of gradual and uneven, progress over time despite obstacles, temporary regress, and challenges – rather than one-off engagements with SAM documents, processes, actors and tools (See Table 2 and Annexes for details and individual trajectories).

Where possible, comparisons of the most similar cases added to the authenticity of the findings of previous evaluations and research. Generally, these macro findings are consistent with the broader social accountability literature.[24]

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[22] "Most different" and "Most similar" analysis is a qualitative methodology which allows one to compare and contrast cases which are most similar and/or most different. Applying both most different and most similar analytical methods creates more analytic leverage.
23 PSAM-ZGF partnership in Muchinga trained on the human rights approach to SAM only.
24 Add citation to select literature

Table 2: Partner's trajectories at a glance

Country	Tanzania	Zimbabwe	Mozambique	Zambia
PSAM partnership with the pilot partner	To test the applicability of SAM developed by PSAM in Tanzanian context; to monitor the social accountability relationship between citizens and the state	To facilitate access and training of regional parliaments by PSAM; to test the applicability of SAM in Zim context; to see demand side actors use evidence to engage with the supply side on PRM processes to improve service delivery outcomes.	Since 2008, PSAM has partnered to develop and strengthen Concern Universal capacity to train on Social Accountability Initiatives, as well as jointly map public policy and accountability in Mozambique.	Strengthening & institutionalising social accountability monitoring in Zambia with special emphasis on strengthening CSO & media capacities. Partnership specially focused on building and strengthening civic capacities in affirmative action provinces such as Muchinga.
Time frame analysed	2009 -2016 (8 year partnership)	2013 -2016 (3 year partnership)	2009 – 2016 (8 year partnership)	2015 & 2016 (2 year partnership)
Contextual starting point	Tanzania's Constitution binds the state to uphold socio-economic rights. Efforts in the last 10 years by CSOs to facilitate the realization of rights and improve service delivery outcomes at the local level have largely been unsuccessful. [25]	Since 2009, the Zimbabwean government has been rebuilding and reforming budgeting and planning processes. Between 2009 and 2013 the political context in Zimbabwe is tense as a result of contested election results between ruling party and opposition. [26]	Concern Universal pilot MuniSAM and SAMComs in Zambezia province. The capital Quelimane is a RENAMO opposition stronghold. The culture of accountability is next to non-existent but there are existing networks and civil society platforms with some civic capacities previously built by MASC (Mechanism for Civil Society Support). [27]	Muchinga is a newly proclaimed province which is predominatly rural and traditional in nature. It is a ruling party stronghold. It is also a context with previously high HIV/AIDS rate and as a result has a number of self-help groups but with very weak civic capacities. [28]

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25 PSAM Tz Book
26 UNDP Zimbabwe 2014 Country Analysis Report
27 Baseline study of MuniSAM in Quelimane,2012
28 ZGF Programme Strategy 2017 - 2021

| Key milestones (summarizing partners trajectories)	PF and its members are able to achieve a holistic, coordinated and a bottom up collective strategy which yields government responsiveness as well as improved citizen/community engagement with local councils through social accountability committees. SAMComs build relationships between citizens, assembly members and local council which has helped service delivery implementation and access to information.	SAPST strategic relationships via MoUs with Parliament and PSAM helps to create a more supportive/conducive context for demand side actors to do SAM by addressing legislative gaps through quarterly budget & gender budgeting guidelines; strengthening capacities of demand side actors by training them on SAM; supporting and protecting MPs mandate to execute oversight mandate with limited political interference	Concern and local partners successfully facilitate the creation and training of social accountability committees at the municipal/district level. This creates a culture of citizen engagement and accountability through social audits and public hearings with the support of municipal council, municipal assemblies and local communities & organizations. SAMComs manage to sustain culture of engagement and accountability through joint problem solving with the municipal council.	Through funding, administrative and capacity building support on HRBA and social accountability tools, ZGF Muchinga grantees are better equipped to solve problems by feeling empowered to engage local authorities and communities to collect evidence and make demands. These CBOs and informal groups shift from being survivalist/self-help initiatives to evidence and rights based advocacy organizations who finally manage to make some progress towards solving a service delivery problem.
Select views about the future	Policy Forum are currently reviewing its overall organizational strategy as well as its MEL system.	SAPST want to continue building their reputation in objective research and skill. "We see ourselves being a leader in capacity building for parliaments across the region." Furthermore, SAPST want to ensure their work remains relevant.	"Institutionalization (of SAM) is our ultimate goal." – Mocuba SAMCom "We are now committed to helping increase the Municipalities public resources so that they can meet our demands"- Concern Program Staff member	"We believe social accountability can really help us. We want to teach all our members" – member of NZP+ "The training removed fear. We didn't know. Now we know how, where to ask and take our issues" - Maluba HBC Project coordinator "We feel empowered and ready to go to the local authorities with our issues." – Head of St Johns HBC

Highs and lows in trajectories	**Low points**: PF member Sikika is "banned" or prevented from operating in a district as a result of a controversial finding by the local SAMCom. **High points:** After several years of failing to obtain responsiveness from central government. PF manage to sign an MoU with the Ministry of Local Government	**Low points:** Political tensions during the Government of National Unity mean SAPST is unable to pass PFM reports via parliament; SAPST lose champions in MoF post GNU **High points:** SAPST gain new champion in Parliament with the appointment of new Speaker. SAPST are successful in renewing MoU and drafting a number of SAM related guidelines	**Low points:** Skepticism and resistance by Municipal Council to engage with SAMComs and participate in social audits **High points:** In Mocuba, SAMCom social audits and public hearings have become regular activities; both Mocuba & Quelimane SAMComs successfully run tax awareness campaigns increasing 2015 municipal revenue	**Low points:** Grantees are frustrated with self-help initiatives & lack of government responsiveness **High points:** Grantees manage to get support from traditional authorities and local communities; Grantees use evidence and social accountability advocacy strategies and manage to receive some government responsiveness.

The achievements in the four countries could be interpreted as a glass half-full or half empty in abstract or taking different standpoints to read the data.[29] The evidence of this exercise may contribute to the debate about whether SAM works in Southern Africa, but does not attempt to settle the score.

The goal was to interrogate *how* SAM is applied by practitioners in various contexts in relation to the regional MEL conversation to-date. An additional goal of this learning exercise was to move beyond general macro declarations to specific and practical statements that add further precision and confidence about SAM. The latter will be detailed in relation to capacity development and learning mechanisms.

The main insight from this learning exercise is that the gap between the application of SAM by practitioners and the community MEL conversation is partly explained by a disconnect between the learning conversation and SAM practice. In the SAM regional learning conversation, partners hear each other talk about the core principles of Fundamentals yet most are not finding this sufficiently useful to their practice of SAM (Figure 6 A).

Figure 6: SAM practice and regional learning
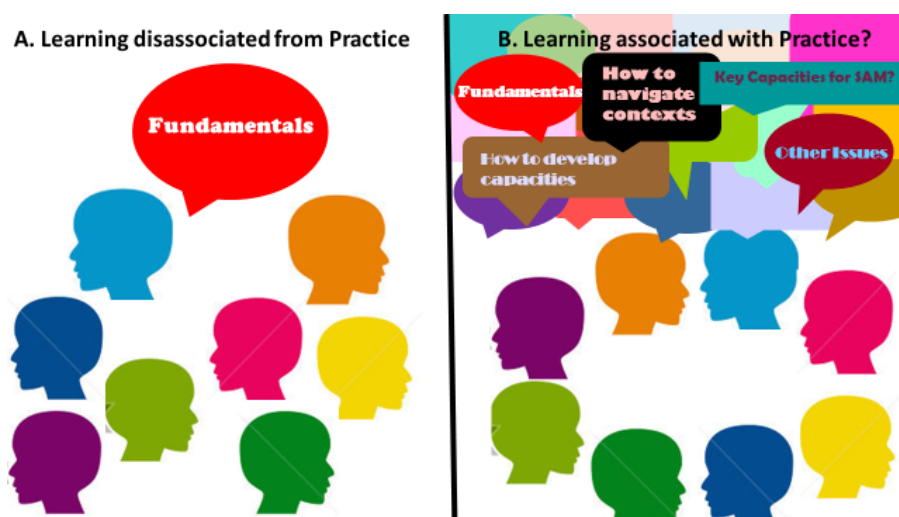
Partners' application of SAM begins with an awareness and understanding of the public resource management system, but the systematic application of SAM does not occur within a silo- it interacts with a range of specific contextual factors, capacities, and capacity development processes that go beyond the core technical principles outlined in Fundamentals. In order to have a regional learning engagement which partners consider useful to feedback to their practices, the parameters of the conversation may need to broadened to incorporate specific aspects that go beyond Fundamentals (see Figure 6B).

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29 See the distinct interpretation of SAM's results in Tanzania in the Annex 11 of the PF Review. Below the paper further discusses the issue of expectations.
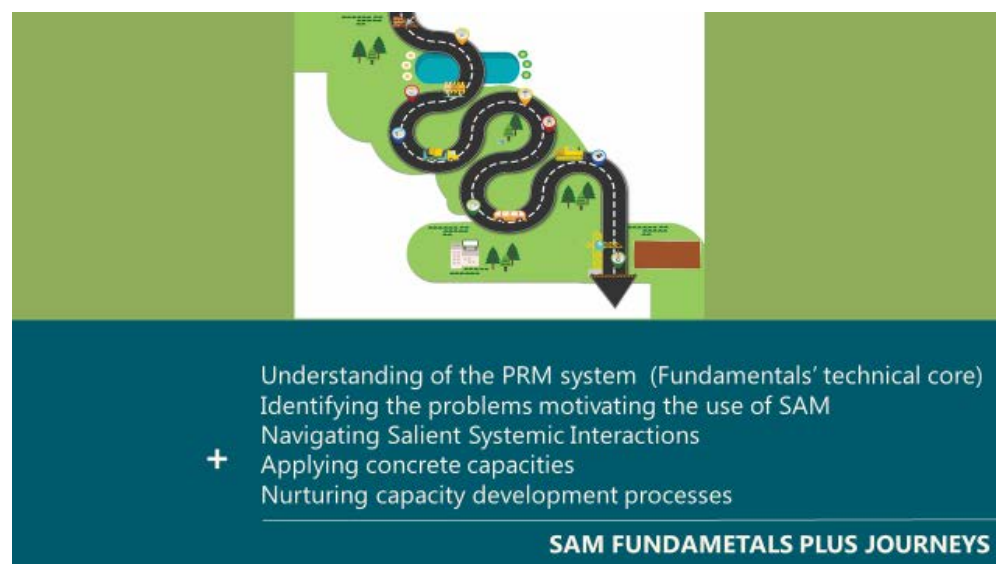
The paper touches on the main insights regarding these issues identified in the dialogue bubbles Figure 6B. Ultimately, it is for PSAM's regional community, rather than a set of external experts to decide what, if any, compromise is possible to address the collective MEL/individual practice gap.

C. SAM Practice is Fundamentals Plus

In a 2015 PSAM paper, Sipondo argues "social accountability should be about learning to build trust-based relationships, allowing local realities and relationships, rather than imported social-accountability tools, to be the primary drivers of change."[30] For years, partner organizations have been acquiring insights from PSAM's Fundamentals training and trying to apply it at home. Their practice entails adaptations that seem to have moved them towards an "advanced" version of Fundamentals. The strategies used to navigate these circumstances benefit from, build on and go beyond the knowledge imparted in the Fundamentals course. It is acknowledging this that helps unpack and understand in detail partners' non-linear, gradual trajectory of change, commonalities and divergences across countries. In this paper, these kinds of learnings, realities and relationships are referred to as 'Plus'.

This section discusses 4 complex elements of Fundamentals Plus which are summarized in Figure 7.

Figure 7: Fundamentals Plus Journeys at a Glance

Understanding of the PRM system (Fundamentals' technical core)
Identifying the problems motivating the use of SAM
Navigating Salient Systemic Interactions
+ Applying concrete capacities
Nurturing capacity development processes

SAM FUNDAMETALS PLUS JOURNEYS

These elements seem to be significant in the trajectories across time and place in all four countries that participated in this learning exercise. They stand out over others

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30 Does Context Matter? A Study of PSAM's Approach to Social Accountability in Mozambique Tanzania and Zambia by A. Sipondo, 2015

because they systematically appear in the trajectories and, as the country Annexes detail, they have plausible causal relevance in those trajectories individually and collectively. These are elements that partners' expressed would be valuable to learn about but are not clearly embedded in the set of hypotheses in Figure 5. Therefore, in an effort to bridge the practice-learning gap, it may be worthy to consider them as triggers to rethink what is the way forward for the SAM community.

i. Identifying the problems motivating the use of SAM

The paper takes the view, common in evaluation and in some development conversations, that focusing on a problem contributes to learning and advancing reform efforts.[31] What are the specific problems SAM practitioners are trying to address? The centre of the SAM cycle as it states is the realization of human rights and capabilities[32]. So, is the realization of rights and capabilities the image of the solution to the SAM community's problem(s) solved in the long term? Perhaps.

The comprehensiveness of the SAM's aspirational goal has many advantages, not least the possibility of bringing together a broad set of civil society groups that have identified public resource management as critical components of the solution to their problem. When one starts looking at partners' questions and what problems they are interested in solving look like solved one finds, at minimum, different prioritizations. The PSAM/RLP questions focus on improving public resource management systems for the achievement of service delivery outcomes. Some partners are interested in solving very specific service delivery problems from increasing the number of boreholes (or access to water) to improved health delivery. Others ultimately

> In SAM and development it is common to aim for the achievement of broadly stated, aspirational goals. The centre of the SAM cycle as it states its goal is the realization of human rights and capabilities. However, focusing on a concrete problem helps learning and advancing reform efforts. What are the specific problems SAM practitioners are trying to address? Attention to specific problems greases the wheels of most, if not all, SAM journeys traced in this paper. SAM partners rely on people who care about access to water and medications in their communities. These service delivery issues point to the direction of the journey, those who will come along in the journey, and the way in which SAM practitioners learn and problem-solve. A learning conversation about SAM among partners who are focused on different problems risk being unproductive unless

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31 http://bsc.cid.harvard.edu/files/bsc/files/doing_problem_driven_work_wp_307.pdf.

32 A body of work pioneered by Professors Amartya Sen and Martha Nussbaum redefined the term 'right' as an 'entitlement to a capability', what one is able to be and do. See "Capabilities as Fundamental Entitlements: Sen and Social Justice" by Nussbaum, M, 2001/

seek to strengthen and protect governance, accountability and democratic processes.

Overly ambitious goals are a theme among social accountability proposals[33] and in development.[34] One common evaluation challenge would be to identify equivalent indicators that allow for aggregation of results across different partners to tell a collective story. Also, it is particularly taxing, but critical, to provide monitoring, evaluation, and learning support in these cases as there are no simple, known solutions to the problems SAM practitioners seek to address. However, before the SAM community can begin to discuss such methodological issues, it is critical to understand what it is that partners are trying to achieve and learn about.

The choice of questions that guide a MEL effort should also identify what problems organizations are trying to address. A shared assumption among SAM practitioners is that the gaps and weaknesses of the public resource management system are among the root causes of service delivery problems that practitioners seek to resolve. A well-functioning and strong PRM system matters because it will contribute to the resolution of the specific problem. In the case of Concern Universal and its partners, learning about the practice of SAM has furthered this means-ends relationship. A staff member said "in Mozambique we have learned that we need to focus on concrete service delivery failures" rather than on SAM because ultimately that is the problem that people in the community care about. It is the problem that is likely to offer a compass pointing towards the direction of the problem solved. It is the service delivery problem that mobilizes action to address the problem. From this perspective, focusing on service delivery results is critical to learning and problem solving. For Concern and others, the insight has meant that they proactively took action to prevent SAM becoming as an end in itself. They actively mitigated against SAM becoming a localized solution in search of a problem.

Contrast this to the approach taken by the review of the effectiveness of the SAM approach in Tanzania. The reviewers focused on the impact of PF activities on strengthening PRM processes for the realization of rights and capabilities as envisioned by the PSAM approach to SAM.[35] Service delivery outcomes were dismissed as irrelevant even if that is what Policy Forum and its partners had been attempting to monitor over a given period.

The assumptions and practice of most, if not all, partners consulted in the Learning Pilot seem to be more consistent with Concern Universal's approach to SAM, which focuses on solving the problems that matter to citizens as opposed to the PRM system in of itself.

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33 Guerzovich and Poli

34 Clemens, M.A., C.J. Kenny, and T.J. Moss. "The trouble with the MDGs: confronting expectations of aid and development success." World development 35.5 (2007): 735-751

35 For the rationale of this contrast of alternative logics see Andrews et.al.

With this in mind and in the spirit of enabling a conversation in which partners engage in useful learning which feedbacks to practice, it may be timely to reconsider collectively what problems to focus on, and more critically which of these problems should be tackled first? Such a decision is not an easy one. Some perspectives may be prioritized at the expense of others. Some may choose not to make a decision as it could prove to be too risky and costly. Not only might this get in the way of a region-wide conversation, but it may open the door for externally imposed benchmarks and judgements. In the case of PF, the choice of those reviewing SAM in Tanzania had consequences for their judgements, and the result of the evaluation for the organizations involved.

The decision to focus on the instrumental or the normative value of social accountability can also shape PSAM's RLP efforts to engage in global conversations in the field. The decision may affect what debates and stakeholders are possible to engage, challenge and support. Either way, it is a strategic decision that needs to take into account PSAM and RLP's partners internal and external circumstances, as well as their unique value add to the field.[36]

Furthermore, if the expected destination of SAM's pathway changes at a particular point in time, it is reasonable to expect that the key assumptions about what the SAM approach aims to achieve will also change in response as one moves towards solving the problem. One must consider: what are the focal points in this pathway, what is the logic connecting them and how are they sequenced? Most importantly, which of the many possible milestones and steps on the path to problem solving are most critical for setting the learning agenda for a regional group of SAM practitioners?

There are many answers to these questions, depending on the path taken towards solving the problem. The following example illustrates the implications of making decisions.

Partners' trajectories consistently suggest than an effective 'deepening' (or targeting of the centre of the SAM cycle which refers to rights/service delivery achievements) requires organizational coordination among different types of actors with different mandates, capacities and networks.[37] Logically and in practice no single organization is likely to pull off work and results across the causal chain. In practice, different organizations target different aspects of the SAM cycle.

SAPST, for instance, focuses on creating, strengthening and promoting the conditions to make SAM possible mostly through capacitating oversight institutions and empowering parliamentary committees in the budget process.[38] When it comes to leveraging the

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36 Consider the case of the Open Government Partnership's 2017-2018 research agenda that seems to be moving to a more instrumental approach than in the past (https://www.opengovpartnership.org/ogp-research-agenda-2017-18-call-proposals). Other organizations, such as COPASAH, remain grounded on a rights based perspective (http://www.copasah.net/knowledge-generation.html) or on an instrumental one, see the Global Partnership for Social Accountability (http://gpsaknowledge.org/knowledge-repository/supporting-politically-smart-social-accountability/). For an example of an organization openly reflecting on balancing these options see
http://www.globalintegrity.org/2016/01/the-value-of-open-governance-adaptive-learning-and-development.
37 Also see PSAM book TZ
38 Southern African Parliamentary Support Trust (SAPST) Strategic Plan 2014 -2018

capacities of the health committee to ensure adequate expenditure of those resources, it realized it would need to partner with sectoral civil society groups. ANSAF and MIICO work together to improve agricultural outcomes and Sikika works with local partners on various health issues at different levels of government which stems from their understanding of the health sector's policy-making processes and pressure-points.[39] The practical systemic understanding of the sector pays off by transforming PRM efforts into contributions towards improved service delivery, such as the timely provision of antiretroviral drugs in government clinics in Tanzania in the case of Sikika.[40] If service delivery is the problem, and the form and sustainability of intra-civil society coordination is a key practice on the path to problem solving, should this issue also be a focal point of the learning agenda so as to inform the decisions that many organizations are struggling with?

A group of external experts should not prescribe how to make use of these alternative approaches. The role is to surface the alternatives and tensions for the community to develop a shared understanding about the possible implications of this distinction, even if potentially related, expected end points of action but starting points for learning and practice.

ii. Navigating Salient Systemic Interactions

The PSAM is a pioneer on systemic thinking in the social accountability field. Partners who have been trained in the SAM approach apply this knowledge to their work. [41] An RLP assumption has been that the process of continued application of the approach is, in essence a process of learning over time about the factors that make the approach applicable or not, including learning more about the factors that affect applicability. So, SAM

> SAM practitioners think about the public resource management processes as part of an interconnected system. They map the legislative, regulatory and normative aspects of the public resource management in law and practice. Partners apply this knowledge to their work. This does not mean that they tackle all the public resource management components, all the time. Part of their savvy, is to know when and what to prioritize given contextual factors. These like many other decisions that shape what SAM journeys look in practice stem from the interaction of the PRM system with concrete aspects of their context. Two systemic interactions with the PRM system are salient in all journeys – the systems that shape how power is exercised and how civil society operates. While these factors are critical to set expectations and learn about SAM practice, they have not been systematically present in the regional learning conversation.

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[39] Also see PSAM book TZ Tanzania SAM Case study

[40] In opposition, In the case of the organizations in Muchinga, limited coordination may be undermining their potential to achieve results beyond producing a report or obtaining a particular borehole (see Annex).

[41] For example, Forum Syd is an international network of more than 200 organisations as well as a member of Policy Forum and SAM implementer. In 2010, Forum Syd initiated a Social Accountability Programme in 24 wards within the Ukerewe District. Its advocacy strategy sought to apply SAM to address health delivery problems. Forum Syd analysed the district's public resource management documents such as budgeting, planning, expenditure and oversight reports. With this analysis, Forum Syd conducted public hearings with the Ukerewe Council management, Councillors and the general public to provide feedback on their analysis and obtain government responsiveness.PF Evaluation, p. 80-82.

practitioners' systems thinking is informed by the contextualization of the PRM systems to their contexts.

The PSAM/RLP – country partnerships entail three components. First, mapping each partner's legislative, regulatory and normative public resource management in-country context. Second, the localization of the Fundamentals course and to that particular context and in some instances sector. Third, sharing and documentation of lessons learnt from testing and applying the approach in context.[42]

The mapping is often done at the beginning of the partnership and the intention is to produce a 'living document' in which the original findings about the legislation, regulatory, and normative aspects of the PRM system are adjusted and amended throughout the partnership culminating in a more rigorous, accurate and relevant country mapping report. In practice, partners' trajectories reinforce the importance of these changes. The PRM environment is not static, it changes over time even if civic groups do not keep up to date with its changes.[43]

The hypotheses in Figure 5, along with the mapping carried out in the localization effort, focus on certain contextual factors and what this means for the actual functioning of the PRM system in reality. Insights from SAM practice suggest that there is another set of contextual factors that consistently pose challenges – those that shape how power is exercised[44] and civil society operates (See Figure 8 for the summary of the argument and Table 3 for illustrations).

Factors associated with these specific systems matter here over others because they consistently prompt decision-making about how SAM practice looks like.[45] Put differently, they set the conditions under which demand side actors engage with the

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[42] PSAM Strategic Plan 2016 -2019, Section 4.2. Regional Learning Programme Strategy, p.15-18

[43]Since 2009, the government of Zimbabwe has been rebuilding and reforming the PRM system "The process of reforming the PRM processes has not been a once off but an ongoing process since 2009."[43] For instance, The Ministry of Finance has started publishing budget documents using programme based budgeting as well as improving timely publication of audit reports.

44 Mazzuca (2010) distinguishes between access and exercise to power. He argues that focus to issues of institutional quality: clientelism, corruption, abuse of executive decree authority, and weak checks and balance are about the latter." Abuses in the exercise of power affecting institutional quality are best characterized not as indicators of authoritarianism and deficiencies in democratization but as reflecting—in Weberian terms—patrimonialism and failures in bureaucratization. Moreover, struggles over the exercise of power involve causes, mechanisms, and actors that can be quite distinct from those at play in conflicts over access to power". We build on this distinction. Mazzuca, S. L. (2010). Access to power versus exercise of power reconceptualizing the quality of democracy in Latin America. *Studies in Comparative International Development (SCID)*, *45*(3), 334-357.

45 While the evaluation of SAM in Tanzania did not analyse why subnational experiences have different abilities to impact on boundary partners and PRM processes, it hypothesizes that the unique mix of civil society commitment, the distribution of political power and vested interests, local government authority openness to engagement and commitment to transparency could have explanatory power. The collection of factors is consistent with the focus here. The focus also prioritizes among contextual factors identified in the Global Partnership for Social Accountability Results Framework, see
http://www.thegpsa.org/sa/Data/gpsa/files/field/documents/gpsa_revised_results_framework_10december2015.pdf.

PRM process more confidently, proactively and strategically[46]. In practicing SAM, partners often assess these interactions to make a call about what the potential is for their contribution to solving problems beyond their direct influence. *For example,* in Zimbabwe, SAPST started out as 'The Institutional Strengthening of the Zimbabwe Parliament Project'. When the Government of Zimbabwe had a falling out with development partners, SAPST found itself without funding support. SAPST reinvented itself as an independent organization with a strategic regional focus, which has provided SAPST the opportunity to do regional work on strengthening social accountability processes when the context becomes difficult.[47]

Figure 8: Salient Systemic Interactions
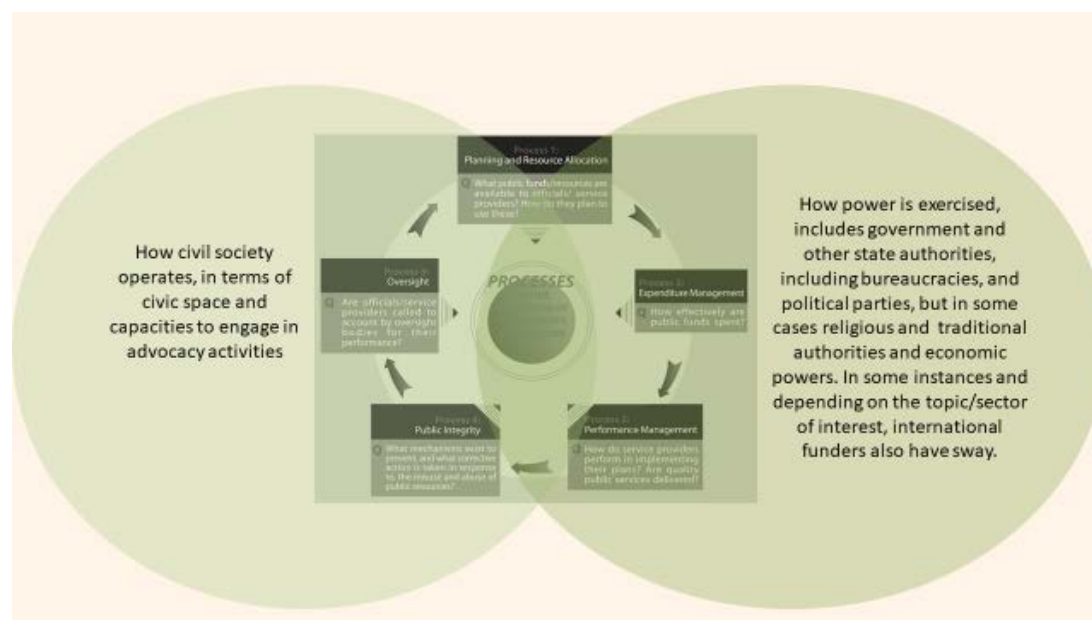
In fact, these two sets of systemic interactions may help understand why partners were found to be routinely selective about which of the 5 processes and how much of them they applied in their practice. Partners practice SAM by not focusing on all the 5 processes –despite it being prescribed by some SAM conceptualizations.[48] Practitioners generally seem to have reached the conclusion that not all 5 processes in the PRM are equally relevant for their work at all times and in all places. In Mozambique we were told that

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46 This exercise did not trace in-country learning partnerships in Zambia and Zimbabwe supported by PSAM/RLP. The civil society mapping, strategy, and lesson learning around civil society capacities seems to reflect a similar circumstance.
47"When SUNI ended in 2007, it was an acrimonious end. The Government decided to end the project abruptly. When we established SAPST we made a strategic decision to work in the region so that if things get hard in country A, we should still be able to work in country B." -SAPST Programme Officer. "Making Social Accountability Work for Zimbabwe" PSAM-SAPST Draft Zimbabwe Learning Output, Slide 19
48 PF Evaluation

"oversight is difficult to monitor due to lack of information, when information is available no one wants to discuss it as they fear persecution, laws do not define clearly which information regarding these processes can be accessed, by whom, how and when, and also there is no law that condemns public officials whom do not share this information.- Concern Universal Staff Member.

Sometimes systemic awareness means that civil society has to introduce activities not considered in the 5 processes. In Mozambique, SAM practitioners learned that local authorities were often unable to meet their demands due to limited revenues. Rather than only demanding the implementation of a recommendation, Concern Universal and local partners have introduced tax campaigns as a way of helping address the challenge and build allies in the public sector. They had to reimagine relationships and learn to engage constructively to problem solve with public officials who are facing these constraints.

The salience of particular systemic interactions may vary at different junctures in the implementation of the SAM approach and in different localities. If learning about these systemic factors is a shared experience and partners regularly deal with challenges/decisions that require incorporating information about them, it may be worth thinking how these aspects of context can be brought in to bear into the Figure 5 hypotheses. Box 3 speculates a possible reason why SAM's learning assumptions may have ignored these factors.[49]

Box 3: Basing systemic PRM expectations on non-systemic conceptualizations of behavior change: a paradox.

In the early years of applying SAM in South Africa, it was diagnosed that the main reasons why PRM demands were not being addressed by public actors was individual in nature. In order to change their behavior, public officials needed to be able to reason differently and develop new capacities (See bottom left of Figure 5). Yet there seems to have been no reference in the SAM approach to how context i.e. the nature of bureaucratic culture, partisan configurations, civil society standing or other structural factors could be affecting the behavior of public officials.

This created a paradox wherein a systemic conceptualization of PRM seems to have been based on a non-systemic conceptualization of public officials' behaviours and state responsiveness. This seems to have contributed to a non-systematic engagement of the structural sources of non-responsiveness by supply side actors. It shaped the learning agenda and indicators by which some practitioners monitored and evaluated their work.

This kind of specification may also help define realistic expectations about what and how action and results are possible in a particular setting at a point in time. If the way power is exercised in a country matters for SAM, it may be easier to limit expectations about what is possible or not in Zimbabwe versus Tanzania, but also about what is possible within each country. Similarly, if the pre-existing state of civil society organization or civic space [50] is more supportive of SAM in Zimbabwe than in Zambia at

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[49] In a 2015, report of an outcome harvesting workshop, the link between the indicators used for learning about SAM are rooted in the 1990s work of C. Allan.
50 http://www.civicus.org/index.php/media-resources/reports-publications/2802-people-power-under-attack-findings-from-the-civicus-monitor

a point in time, one could set more tailored expectations about what the demand-side may realistically achieve at that particular juncture. One could by design craft strategies and MEL systems that pay attention to national and sub-national variations in civic circumstances. This kind of information may help customize lessons from other contexts – an issue that has been associated with more productive cross-context learning.[51] It may also help mitigate the risk of decontextualizing judgements for SAM practice.

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[51] Guerzovich and Poli (2017); also see IEG how the World Bank learns.

Table 3: Salient Systemic Interactions

Salient systemic interaction	Select examples to illustrate why and how engaging a systemic interaction matters for the Fundamentals of SAM 'Plus' work
How civil society operates	Sometimes understanding the systemic interactions means knowing when to focus on the pre-conditions of the SAM system, rather than on the PRM system itself. In Zambia, ZGF's decision going into Muchinga was to enhance the state of civil society prior to focusing on the PRM system. The implementation of SAM was unviable in Muchinga in 2012. In 2017, it was still not realistic for Muchinga CBOs to apply SAM to all 5 processes of the PRM system. However, organizations may benefit from linking their sectoral interests to the flows of resources in those sectors specifically. In Zambezia, Mozambique, Concern Universal found different types of organizations in its search for local partners. In Mocuba, there was a pre-existing platform which had previously received capacity building and established strong working relationships with each other and the communities at the grassroots level. These characteristics helped shape the Mocuba SAMCom and played a vital role in some if its achievements i.e. in obtaining government responsiveness.
How power is exercised	Across the region, partners have had to make explicit efforts to show that they are not practicing SAM on the basis of partisan or personal agendas. They also emphasize the usefulness of constructive engagement with officials, sometimes learned through experience. Different configurations of political forces in Zimbabwe have affected the ability and the way in which SAPST implements SAM. So, SAPST- in efforts to present SAM as apolitical- came up with an approach that focuses on technical issues: "As SAPST our strategy is to take a position on issues and not power struggles" and an approach that pitches SAM as regional best practice agenda as opposed to a politically motivated national issue. In Muchinga, ZGF support is based on the "goal" that tackling the state of civil society will lead to power being exercised more democratically.[52] However, tracing the stories of ZGF Muchinga grantees suggests their interaction with various power structures seems to have emerged on an ad-hoc and self-initiated basis.[53] In particular, everyone we interviewed seems to know that building relationships and engage with traditional authorities is key to getting things done. In a chief's words: " if it doesn't come through me it doesn't happen." Traditional leaders influence helps to open and grease power networks and relationships and spaces for CBOs.

52"Evolution not Revolution: Innovation and sustainable solutions for social accountability: A summary of the ZGF Programme Strategy 2017 -2021, p. 2-5
53"Creating the conditions for Social Accountability in Muchinga: Lessons from the field", PSAM-ZGF Draft Learning Output, June 2017, p.11

'The application of complexity and systems thinking may be a path towards engaging the current "hot" topics in some areas of the social accountability, development and philanthropic fields of practice.[54]

iii. Applying concrete capacities

The concept of capacities is critical for anchoring the causal set of assumptions in Figure 5. Underlying the problem of deficient service delivery or exercise of rights are stakeholders' capacities to understand how to use the PRM framework.[55]

The core Fundamentals of SAM also refers to capabilities. It is important to clarify that these are distinct concepts. Capacities describes "the skills and ability to make and execute decisions in a manner that achieves effective and efficient results".[56] PSAM's rights based approach to social accountability proposes that every member of society has the right to a minimum standard of living that reflects the maximum resources available to the state. The concept of capabilities refers to when a right is realised as a lived experience. According to Fundamentals core, SAM of the PRM system converts rights into capabilities. [57]

> **The paper identifies four types of skills and abilities that SAM practitioners need in order to make and execute decisions and achieve results, as they go about their Fundamentals Plus journeys. These are: analytical, organizational and operational, civic, and adaptation capacities. This finding is consistent with insights from the broader social accountability field (Guerzovich and Poli 2016). The capacities are considered to some extent in the PSAM/RLP documentation and work, but this focus is new and has not been as explicit in the regional learning conversation**

Confusing or conflating the two concepts is possible, undermining the ability to monitor, evaluate and learn about and from them. In this paper, we focus on capacities rather than capabilities.

What capacities are critical for SAM Fundamentals 'Plus'? This paper builds on three sets of inputs to identify these capacities. Firstly, it analyses of the trajectories of SAM practitioners, paying attention to capacities that pre-existed SAM work, capacities that

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54 For a small sample of the range and state of the global conversation on these issues see e.g. http://www.makingallvoicescount.org/publication/accountability-ecosystems-directions-accountability-points-engagement/; http://how-change-happens.com; https://ssir.org/articles/entry/solving_the_worlds_biggest_problems_better_philanthropy_through_systems_cha; https://ieg.worldbankgroup.org/blog/rethinking-evaluation-is-relevance-still-relevant.
55 PSAM intentional design.
56 *http://www.tccgrp.com/pubs/capacity_building_3.php*
57 A body of work pioneered by Professors Amartya Sen and Martha Nussbaum redefined the term 'right' as an 'entitlement to a capability', what one is able to be and do. See "Capabilities as Fundamental Entitlements: Sen and Social Justice" by Nussbaum, M, 2001. Reference taken from PSAM Fundamnetals of SAM Course, Handout Notes, Session 2 – A Rights Based Approach to SAM

were supported to do SAM and that have developed organically since. Secondly, it compares its analysis to other research in the field from the Global Partnership for Social Accountability (GPSA) about the capacities of 1100+ applicants and the pool of grantees.[58] Lastly, its findings are tested against the literature on the broader discussion about capacity development in the nonprofit and development fields. Collectively, these sources suggest that there is a group of mutually reinforcing capacities that are salient and probably significant for the implementation of strategic social accountability and that seem to have affected partners abilities to make progress in the implementation of Fundamentals 'Plus'. Figure 9 identifies these capacities, previously discussed in research about social accountability processes (Guerzovich and Poli 2016). They are illustrated in Table 4 with select examples from SAM journeys in the different countries (the country Annexes provide information about capacities in all 4 SAM Journeys).

Figure 9: Key Capacities for Fundamentals Plus

Figure adapted from Guerzovich and Poli (2016)

Table 4: Focusing on Concrete, Critical Capacities for Fundamentals Plus

Capacities	Why and how developing capacity matters for Fundamentals Plus work
Analytical capacities:	In Muchinga, service delivery organizations have been trained in HRBA approaches that help them apply social accountability monitoring. They have also acquired technical skills to use social accountability tools, which empowered them vis-à-vis local officials. Technical skills were not limited to the PRM/SAM approach and included power mapping; devising action plans; applied field work methods such as how to conduct community score cards and how to draw questionnaires; and report writing.
Organizational and operational capacities:	When Concern Universal approached Mocuba's Organização de Apoio ao Desenvolvimento or Association of Machuabos Residents and Friends of Mocuba (NANA) and its leadership to develop a SAMCom, local stakeholders opted to incorporate the SAMCom as one committee of the existing CSO platform. The decision was to use a structure that is built on existing social movements and governance structures, and yet leave strategic space for Concern Universal to implement SAM. The old and new capacities of the organization were instrumental in its trajectory, including the ability to engage communities.
Civic capacity- the capacity to create and sustain smart collective action:	In Zimbabwe, SAPST has built a team that is focused on understanding and receiving feedback from their main operating ecosystem – parliament. They know when to ask, who to ask, where to ask, what and how much to ask, when to wait, and how to sequence actions: "*It is important to identify who gets along with who, the power struggles between MPs, to be sensitive and aware to what can possibly get in the way of strategy*" – SAPST Programme Officer. As SAPST are training and working with civil society actors that are focused on other problems and operating in other ecosystems – from gender to subnational health delivery outcomes - their SAM work requires enhancing their capacities to understand, receive feedback, and act on this set of relationships, CSO ways of operating and incentive and power structures, among other factors.
Adaptability as a key organizational and civic capacity:	In the Tanzanian context practitioners have been pointing to how their SAM interventions has been changing and adapting over time. During a Tz outcome harvesting workshop highlighted the change in strategies by SAM practitioners as a result of constantly refining various SAM strategies & tools over a time through implementation.[59]

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[59]
Reflection Report of the PSAM- Policy Forum Tanzania Outcome Harvesting Workshop, 2015

An additional clarification should be made here. The different capacities identified above may be considered to some extent in the PSAM/RLP documentation and work. For example, PSAM 2016-2019 strategic plan reads *"while these are encouraging signs and achievements they remain cognisant of the fact that improving accountability systems requires sustained engagement with political processes that are often characterised by limited spaces for meaningful participation and engagement and which often do not provide timeous or detailed access to relevant information that has informed decision-making."*[60] RLP's strategy for learning partnerships is also explicit about seeking to understand and influence the informal politics, rules and relationships, based on political economy analysis, local buy-in and adaptable programming. This seems to be a new focus that has not been equally salient in RLP-partners joint MEL approaches activities and products to-date as they are in partner's Fundamental Plus practice. One of the consequences could be that the learning agenda set by PSAM/RLP learning questions may need to be adjusted to help close the gap between practice and collective learning.

iv. Nurturing capacity enhancing processes

To recap the discussion so far: the ability of SAM Fundamentals 'Plus' to support problem-solving partly depends on the interaction and fit of contextual, strategic and organizational factors that affect its application. The specific trajectories in which partners have been able to achieve outcomes is because they levered particular types of capacities in their organizations and contexts, and developed new ones as they tried and course corrected. Table 2 provides additional information concerning what the trajectories from SAM practitioners look like.

The paper also identifies three types of mechanisms through which organizational, contextual and strategic resources are linked to the development of SAM practitioners' understandings, capacities, and behaviours. These three sets of capacity-development/learning tools have different starting points and vehicles. The first one draws on experts' ability to inform behavior by imparting their technical knowledge/expertise about appropriate or desirable actions. The second one expects action in accordance with lessons drawn from relevant experiences of one's own or from peers. The third one seeks to strengthen and leverage the PRM ecosystem whilst strengthening the capacities of multiple types of stakeholders all at once. The three mechanisms are present and interact in SAM journeys, though it has been challenging for the PSAM/RLP community to support reflective practice through communal learning.

The gradual, uneven process through which change happens in all cases provides some level of confidence about the comparability of cases where similar recurrent macro-level processes regularly shape SAM trajectories across distinct settings. Still, specifying this causal process may not move the conversation sufficiently to be helpful for practitioners' learning, decisions and action.

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60 PSAM Strategic Plan 2016 -2019, p.8

By pointing to the way in which particular forms of capacity building are observable means linking organizational, contextual and strategic resources to capacities and behavior. It also means partners may be able to start a conversation about the entry points and approaches that make up the tasks that SAM practitioners worry about daily. At the same time, they need to start asking what the role and function that capacity building and learning tools such as training and research among others play in the practice and trajectory of SAM. How do they individually contribute to improving understandings, developing capacities and influencing behaviours? Have they done so in practice in or across contexts?

The discussion illustrates 3 learning and capacity development mechanisms[61] that can be observed in relation to specific capacity building/development tools (Figure 10).[62]

Figure 10: Capacity Development Mechanisms
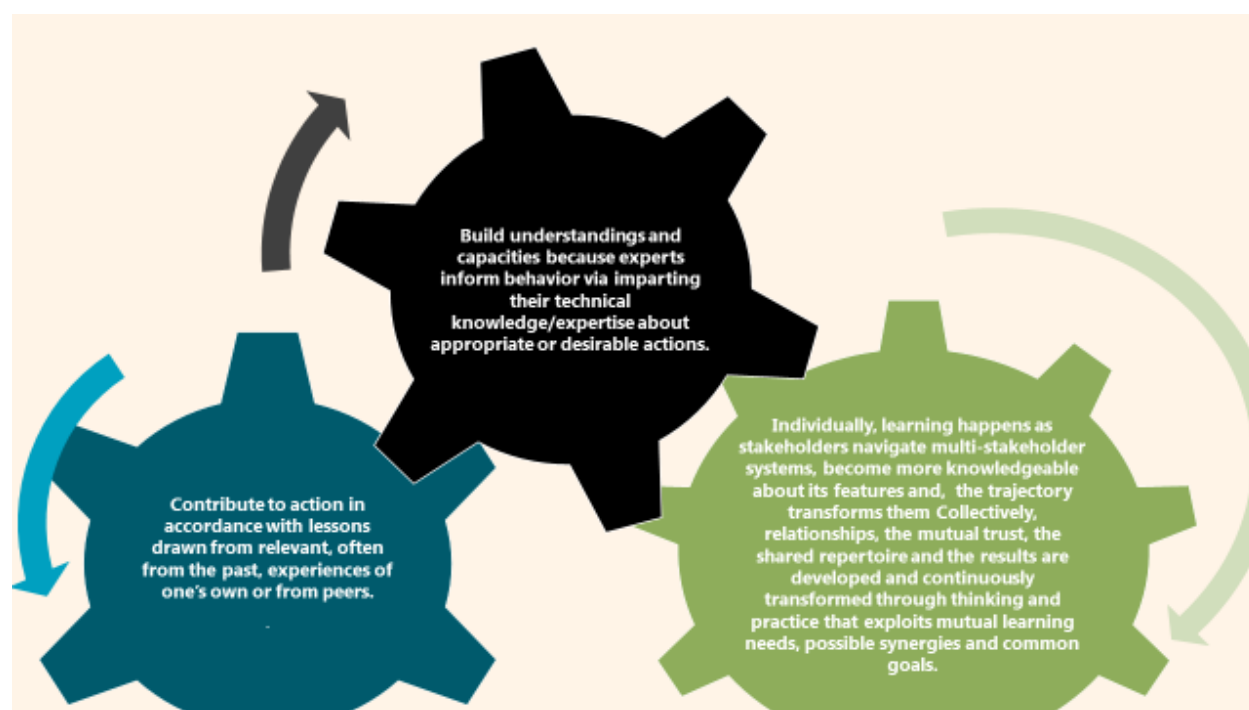
First, think about training, workshops, "off the shelf" technical assistance, referral of resources, or one-off research commissioned to contractors or partners. Generally, these tools presume to build understandings and capacities as experts inform behavior by imparting their technical knowledge/expertise about appropriate or desirable actions. There are multiple examples of how this mechanism has contributed to building capacities and supporting learning in the practice of Fundamentals Plus across countries. Partners in Zimbabwe, Tanzania, Zambia and Mozambique were trained by

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61 The three types of capacity building activities are informed by http://www.tccgrp.com/pubs/capacity_building_3.php among a range of other sources, especially thinking about learning in Wenger and Wenger Trayner (2014).
62 This analysis, of course, would need to be complemented with further work to unpack and understand other multiple, complex sources of solutions, such as service delivery. A task beyond the scope of this exercise.

PSAM/RLP's experts through the Fundamentals course and became trainers who then transmitted the information about the 5-processes through localized courses. PSAM's publications/research provide additional resources. While the partners' trajectories suggests that they have acquired and transmitted to others the technical knowledge, the latter seems to be less used/taken up.

Contrast the examples above with a second set of instruments often used in capacity development and learning: reflective practice and learning by doing, peer exchanges , communities of peer practice, one-on-one mentoring, support of critical friends, progressive and continuous research support. The idea is that these tools will contribute to action in accordance with lessons drawn from relevant experiences of one's own or from peers, which is different from the first set of tools. PSAM/RLP seeks to support the implementation of SAM through a range of approaches from organizing annual learning events with peers and maintaining an online learning community to providing one-on-one mentoring. It supports research about the PRM system in context that is to be taken up by local partners, even if partners often struggle to update these maps as regularly as expected.

When it comes to the collaboration and networking of organizations applying SAM across contexts, sharing experiences and lessons, the diagnostic and learning-practice gap that motivates this research goes some way to accounting for the potentials and limits of the effort to date. Many of the exercises that involve peers volunteering to share knowledge without a clear set of incentives for action and/or uptake strategy do not seem to have resulted in actual practice across partners.[63] As discussed in the previous section, course correction is part of the individual practice. The data collection process that informed this exercise sought to make this tacit knowledge explicit and enable reflection on this knowledge, to answer individual and collective needs. There seems to be an appetite to create opportunities to do peer reflection on these aspects of the Fundamentals of SAM 'Plus'. This learning pilot exercise applied approaches that have been experimented with to learn more consciously and proactively through and from practice for improved outcomes and impacts. [64]

The third set of capacity building activities have a different target audience. If the previous two mechanisms target individuals and organizations or even communities of organizations working on a single practice, the third set of activities can engage, strengthen and leverage the ecosystem whilst strengthening the capacities of multiple types of stakeholders all at once. Systems conveying hopes that new partnerships and activities from people who belong to different practices will in turn attract new capacities

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63 http://wenger-trayner.com/reflections/say-boo-to-collaboration-and-sharing/
64 For example, during the team's visit to Dar Es Salaam it decided to interview practitioners from different organizations with an audience. The goal of the interview was to trace the personal trajectories implementing Fundamentals, identifying the conditions and the ways in which these practitioners implemented Fundamentals in practice over time. Interviews focused on insights about when, where and how adaptations came about. The result were insights for this document, but as importantly a collective reflection in which peers listened to trajectories and challenges they could relate to and jumped into a conversation about past and present problems with stories about how they learned by doing, too. The team heard similar feedback from other partners.

into the system and, ultimately, reconfigure it.[65] Co-production exercises are other forms of 'hands-on' approaches through which different stakeholders share responsibilities, capacities, resources, and risks in the design, planning, delivery, or control of a policy or intervention.[66]

Underlying these learning/capacity development efforts is the idea that the benefits from a particular action and the ability to implement that action changes with the nature of social relationships in an ecosystem. The increase of stakeholders in the ecosystem is informed and supported by their capacities. Individually, learning happens as stakeholders navigate the system, become more knowledgeable about its features and, the trajectory transforms them (practices, people, and places, regimes of competence, communities, and boundaries).[67] Collectively, relationships, the mutual trust, the shared repertoire and the results are developed and continuously transformed through thinking and practice that exploits mutual learning needs, possible synergies and common goals.[68]

This dynamic has strong linkages to civic and adaptable capacities. Where in the two previous sets of capacity development/learning processes, formal and/or external analysis would be put front and center, here, political economy savvy and adaptive skills are the product of engagement, which may or may not be informed by formal research and/or external analysis.[69] The more ambitious bet is that the process can create a self-reinforcing dynamic which encourages the emergence and further adoption of new constituencies and, ultimately, shift the foundation for action.[70]

This distinct mechanism of capacity development and learning sometimes plays out in the practice of SAM, though not always by design. The technical trainings discussed before initially focused on demand side actors as well as groups of organizations. As insights from practice began to feed back into the conceptualization and delivery of capacity support it became clear that trainings had to be multi-stakeholder efforts which explicitly support civic capacities:

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65 Wenger and Wenger Trayner (2014)
https://books.google.com.ar/books?hl=es&lr=&id=cB4WBAAAQBAJ&oi=fnd&pg=PA99&dq=wenger+trayner+system+conveners&ots=sOmJsaKVF6&sig=6B0BbZp5rjpX3ZGFPa-n8Gzj_po#v=onepage&q=wenger%20trayner%20system%20conveners&f=false
66 The co-production of information and control, in particular, is "a mutual and continuous engagement between regular producers of information and control in public administration (government agencies) and users or those interested in information and control (citizens, individually or organized into councils, groups, and associations)" (Schommer et. al, 2015, p. 1377). The general literature on coproduction is broad to cite here. Guerzovich and Schommer (2016) analyzes the links between this literature and the theory and praxis of social accountability. They argue that "Co-Coproduction, social accountability, and open government are distinct but partly overlapping concepts and practices. Their shared goals (improved policy and governance and development outcomes), multi- stakeholder nature, and common pillars such as transparency, state-society engagement and accountability mechanisms link them. Many times one helps to operationalize the other."
67 Wenger and Wenger Trayner (2014)
68 Guerzovich and Schommer (2016) develop this idea and identify the trend in the social accountability and open government fields.
69 For arguments that make this distinction see Guerzovich and Poli (2014) and
https://buildingstatecapability.com/2017/04/11/initiating-action-the-action-learning-in-pdia Cf. discussion in Robinson (2015).
70 For the definition of this mechanism in another context Huber and Stephens (2001).

"PSAM stakeholders expressed that continuing to dialogue among people with similar viewpoints and mandates was not likely to lead to resolution of the service delivery problems they were trying to address. The need to interact more openly with the people who had the power and the mandate to address their problems was repeatedly mentioned as a key strategy that social accountability practitioners in these contexts found valuable."[71]

Currently the regional course and country-level training and monitoring interventions embody this relational understanding of capacities and their development. [72] Effort is made to involve a number of stakeholders in all interventions, including civic actors, oversight bodies (MPs and Counsellors), media practitioners, and government officials (primarily planning officers, internal auditors, and sometimes sector staff).

This has consequences for what and how the community goes about learning. If the main reason for inviting a person to a training is to trigger these dynamics rather than increase their technical competence, then an indicator measuring whether the trainee submitted an assignment is not going to be helpful to make decisions about future action. It seems more helpful to focus on the relationships and civic capacities that are accrued over time rather than how well they answer PRM technical questions.

Co-production is rarely if at all happening,.Partaking in a joint state-society training can help the latter understand what it would take to nudge responsiveness. There are other instances in which stakeholders helped each other to become embedded in key networks and institutions. They helped each other identify allies, to get trust and buy-in, or lent to each other various capacities in favour of concrete SAM gains.[73] Concern Universal staff mentioned how training SAMComs with municipal assembly members and municipal staff helps to establish relationships, which pave the way for SAM interventions such as public relationships.

In a few instances, the team heard first-hand accounts that suggest that jointly navigating the SAM landscape is informing some stakeholders' identities. In Muchinga, these kinds of multi-stakeholder activities involved engaging with traditional authorities, as a way to obtain the buy in and involvement of powerful and influential stakeholders in the context.[74] However, this type of engagement with public authorities by SAM practitioners has been very limited, making this the area where these kinds of capacities

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71 PSAM Strategic Plan
72 On trends in the evolution in the capacity building for nonprofits field in a similar direction see
http://www.tccgrp.com/pubs/capacity_building_3.php.
73. SAPST strategy to chain portfolio committee chairpersons resulted in SAPST finding and creating a champion in the Health portfolio chairperson who stated "I loved the PSAM course especially Tomo! I have been encouraging my colleagues to attend the course." SAPST seems to have maximized their relationship with the Speaker by allow him to be the face of the changes they were advocating for, know when to let someone more strategic and influential do the ask – See PSAM-SAPST Draft Learning Output: Making Social Accountability Monitoring Work for Zimbabwe, June 2017.
74 All ZGF Muchinga Grantees did as part of their SAM strategy and interventions, community sensitization trainings of Traditional Leaders as a way of obtaining the buy in and support from tradiotional leaders which in turn yielded government responsiveness or progress towards problem solving – See PSAM-ZGF Draft Learning Output, "Creating Conditions for Social Accountability in Muchinga: Lessons from the field", p.11

are least developed and opportunities remain untapped. On the positive side, recently a small group of local officials requested to attend SAM trainings.

An important point, is that while the discussion tried to distinguish mechanisms that seem to be contributing to different capacities for the Fundamentals of SAM 'Plus', mechanisms can interact in practice. PSAM/RLP's trajectory shows that a single organization can play different roles depending on the function of the capacity development/learning pathway taken. Yet, this does not diminish the tensions associated with putting different hats at different moments in time. An expert, associated with the first mechanism, comes from a place of knowing, defines the agenda and the practice, and is responsible for outcomes.[75] As one moves to mechanisms two and three, learning leadership entails inviting others to engage in thinking through challenges and opportunities, eliciting stories of practice rather than providing advice in the abstract, making the actual practice of SAM the curriculum and the practitioners the agenda setters, transferring the responsibility of outcomes to practitioners.

Another signal of how the tensions may be playing out in practice relates to the different lines of accountability associated with these different mechanisms.[76] In Bulawayo, PSAM and some members of the SAM community struggled with accepting that partners could be conversant with the entire PRM system and still opt to focus only on some of the steps in practice, given their contexts and own experiences. For many partners, the position that the entire PRM system must be addressed was dogmatic, creating a mandate to do it all.[77]

The evolution of training in a relational direction does not eliminate the technical, expert-led component of trainings. These two mechanisms coexist and reinforce each other and the reflective practice (second mechanism) that brought them together.[78] One could argue that this mix of Fundamentals and Plus, may be helping to mitigate against the risks of copy-pasting best practice solutions that do not function in practice in different contexts – a common critique of support of technical, expert-led capacity building efforts along the ones discussed in the first category.[79]

Investing more in the latter mechanisms for capacity building and learning is also a move away from the 1990s and early 2000s when the good governance approach was at its peak and efforts focused on transferring certain forms of governance across the

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75 http://wenger-trayner.com/all/difference-between-a-social-learning-leader-and-a-teacher/
76 This tension has already been identified in PSAM TZ book.
77 The review of SAM in Tanzania also takes this view, putting strong value on the contribution to changes in all processes and they systemic integration.
78 In fact the feedback that reshaped trainings is another example of interaction. It is one in which competence acquired from experts through the Fundamentals course shapes partners practice but was also shaped by it. The learning that happens through practice across the different countries provided new ways to that update what is accepted like competent. On the interaction between competence and practice in communities of practice, see https://view.officeapps.live.com/op/view.aspx?src=http://www.cross-field.ch/wp-content/uploads/2013/01/Wenger_Learning_in_a_landscape_of_practice.docx
79 For critiques to development investments in expert-led training, see e.g. Andrews et.al. 2017http://ecdpm.org/publications/capacity-change-performance-study-report/; http://securelivelihoods.org/publications_details.aspx?resourceid=461.

world.[80] All too often, carefully designed policies introduced in these ways were not adopted or implemented – a reality partners in Southern Africa are familiar with - and failed to produce desirable outcomes. Despite research investments, evidence about the impact of social accountability work based on best tools, beyond SAM, remains patchy.[81] The evolution of training in a relational direction, and reflective practice are more in line with approaches to support governance that build on this evidence and, consequently, with global debates in the field today.[82].

The trajectories of Fundamentals Plus participants would not be achieved by doing away or tampering with the first mechanism which deals with the analytical capacities to apply fundamentals, nor about ignoring the second and third mechanisms which addresses the other sets of capacities practitioners also bring to bear. The challenge in terms of the way forward seems to be finding a strategy that strikes a balance for the goals pursued whilst taking into account the context and the type organization implementing it. Openness about the process of identifying and supporting these different capacities would also serve the purpose of enriching and contributing to the global debates about these issues in the broader social accountability, governance and development fields.

D. Recap

The insights from SAM practice by partners in 4 countries point to practice that looks like Fundamentals Plus. What does that mean for the collective MEL/practice gap? It means that there are good reasons to have a good think about how to better align the parameters of the collective MEL conversation with aspects of Fundamentals Plus. A relatively easy entry point for that conversation are PSAM/RLP hypotheses that have set the parameters for learning to-date. In particular, it seems timely to broker new agreements about what questions/hypotheses reflect the shared priorities among Fundamentals Plus practitioners. What are problems motivating fundamentals Plus practice, the systems in which Fundamentals Plus is implemented, the capacities that contribute to Fundamentals Plus on the ground and the mechanisms that connect it all.

This update of the focus of the agenda seems timely, taking into account current debates in the broader social accountability and governance fields. As these fields move away from technical, tool-based approaches to social accountability, the insights that are relevant also shift. For a conversation with the global social accountability community (and key stakeholders in it) today, it remains pertinent to question the link between SAM and service delivery. It is also necessary to reflect on why and how social accountability is practiced in complex systems, with an eye to the civic space and

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80 E.g. https://www.hks.harvard.edu/content/download/69359/1250246/version/1/file/202.pdf
81 Fox (2014).
82 The 2017 World Development Report represents this change in paradigm. The publication concludes that successful reforms are not just about "best practice." To be effective, policies must guarantee credible commitment, support coordination, and promote cooperation. Elites, citizens, and international actors can promote change by shifting incentives, reshaping preferences and beliefs, and enhancing the contestability of the decision making process. In this process, adaptive approaches are more promising.

power. How different types of capacities and learning enable social accountability practice and how they can be best supported?

4. M&E in Organizations implementing Fundamentals Plus

So far this paper has referred to a broad range of instruments that can support learning, **but omitted monitoring and evaluation**. And yet monitoring, evaluation and learning is one of PSAM/RLP's three tier effort to support organizations. The reason that the paper devotes a section to this issue is that the group of organizations that met in Bulawayo specifically identified deficiencies in their monitoring and evaluation systems as one of the causes for the gap between practice and learning at the organizational as well as PSAM community levels.

Partners explained that the knowledge that could support practice is tacit, held by a number of colleagues and partners on the ground rather than in whatever MEL system each organization has. Much monitoring and evaluation seems to be done to fulfill external obligations and is not seen as a process for continued learning and improvement.[83] This state of affairs means that partner organizations, like a large proportion of organizations doing social accountability,[84] struggle to use their knowledge from practice in ways that consistently contribute to organizational learning. Consequently, they struggle to bring this knowledge to bear in region-wide conversations. It is also challenging to answer systematically PSAM/RLP's learning questions.

In fact, many of the insights about Fundamentals of SAM 'Plus' practice detailed in the Annexes are already identified in previous PSAM/RLP documents. The framing may be different, the specific observations may also be different but many take-aways are the same. Very little research on SAM is happening and very few partners are making use of research and documentation produced by members of the community. In Tanzania, the team leading this exercise collated lessons found in partners' documents to the appreciation of the partners when presented with the collection of insights. The problem of learning uptake is not unusual in the social accountability field.[85]

An additional challenge when thinking about MEL systems (or the opportunity to learn) is that PSAM/RLP and its partners, particularly in Tanzania, had identified the need for a rigorous yet manageable system of real-time monitoring of SAM interventions to ensure that lessons can be learnt in time to inform any necessary adjustments in SAM intervention a few years ago.[86] PSAM/RLP and some members of the regional community tried to address it through the use of a particular set of tools[87] but have encountered challenges in putting these tools to work.

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83 Also see PSAM TZ book; OH workshop results
84 Ross (2015); Guerzovich and Poli (2014; 2017)
85 Ross (2015); Guerzovich and Poli (2014; 2017
86 PSAM TZ Book
87 Outcome Harvesting workshop and Intentional design

Evaluations of two of the sets of partners that participated of the exercise confirm the diagnostic:

> *part of the challenge facing all SAM practitioners currently, PF and PSAM included, is the absence of a coherent M&E framework and of clear indicators to guide their tracking, reflection on, and learning from their implementation of the SAM approach and associated monitoring and advocacy tools. There is an urgent need for SAM practitioners to invest in the M&E of their impact.[88]*

> *MuniSAM Phase I had a clearly articulated monitoring and evaluation framework, based on the MuniSAM Theory of Change, with a clear methodology for capturing outcome and impact information and reflecting on it (including baseline studies of the five PRM processes in each target municipality, outcome and impact journals) … MuniSAM does not appear to have produced a systematic reporting on changes … It also limits reflection and learning of lessons from activities that did not have an impact in strengthening PRM processes (in other words, SAM failures as well as successes), which could be shared with other groups in Mozambique, and elsewhere, who are using the SAM approach.[89]*

In discussing the source of the practice/learning gap, this paper starts by building on good practice for the design of evaluations: identify the specific people, in the specific positions in specific organizations who will use the learning and who have the capacity to effect change in practice. This focus on specific persons who care about the findings "is the single most important predictor of evaluation finding use."[90]

The identification of these real and specific intended users is intimately connected with the definition of the purposes of the MEL system and concrete intended uses. "It is not enough to state that an evaluation will be used for accountability or for learning. Evaluations for accountability need to be clear about who will be held accountable to whom for what and through what means … Evaluations for learning need to be clear about who will be learning about what and through what means."[91] The purposes of MEL should be informed by timelines, resources, an understanding of options.

Applying this logic: what did colleagues that shaped this exercise in the four sets of in-country partners and PSAM/RLP want to use the learning for? The groups in Tanzania wanted support thinking about how their practice could inform their new monitoring and evaluation and learning framework, due to be designed soon. The partners in Zimbabwe wanted to document their story so that they could use it to communicate to their authorizing environment. Partners in Mozambique wanted to check on the ongoing implementation of a new strategic approach to inform ongoing reflection. Partners in

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88Policy Forum Review. The weakness of the M&E system, the absence of M&E staff and related challenges had been already noted in 2013.
89 (MuniSAM I evaluation).
90 http://www.betterevaluation.org/plan/frame/identify_primary_intended_users. This approach overlaps with utilization-focus evaluation principles (http://www.betterevaluation.org/en/plan/approach/utilization_focused_evaluation). It does not mean that the paper prescribes any particular evaluation method or framework.
91 http://www.betterevaluation.org/plan/frame/decide_purpose

Zambia wanted to gather insights about work on one province to inform future work on another province. PSAM/RLP's diverse goals are detailed in the first section, but PSAM's university location means that they are under pressure to produce academic type papers which do not always address or communicate knowledge that is valuable to SAM practitioners.[92] In preparing the country annexes the team of consultants leading this exercise had to avoid falling into this trap. Moving forward, PSAM/RLP should also broaden the target audience of research and publications beyond the university environment remaining mindful of the way in which they take up knowledge

One learning exercise can have many meanings of learning and uses of learnings as parties.[93] Like in other MEL exercises, addressing several purposes meant making choices about how to allocate limited resources. Whose question, perspective, and need is to be the primary focus in the conceptual framework? Even if using a single framework for exploration, different users find different ways of framing, accessing, and communicating the challenges in more or less user-friendly ways. Whose preferred approach would be used? This means that tough decisions have to be made to address conflicts throughout the exercise. This document and the annexes reflect the benefits and the limits of those decisions. The rule that guided the process was to try to tailor to the extent possible the whole process from concept note and data collection to final products to the primary users' expressed needs. One of the many trade-offs of the approach is that credibility and analytical leverage may be lost in the eyes of an external observer – a trade-off the PSAM/university/practitioner partnership has had to and will continue to have to navigate moving forward.

As it may be apparent from the discussion, this means that the task of defining and sustaining an MEL system is political, as well as technical. The tensions inherent in the SAM community and their broader ecosystem create opportunities and challenges for embarking together in this kind of exercise.[94] PSAM/RLP and its regional community need to put into consideration the following issues:

•Partners in the PSAM community identify with a variety of unrelated, overlapping and competing practices and communities. These demand-side actors are linked by SAM but social accountability is rarely their sole or core set of key competences i.e. SAPST core focus is parliamentary work, while ANSAF is the agricultural sector. In addition to these different focus areas by civil society groups, there is also the issue of differences between CSOs in relation to histories, repertoires, languages, worldviews, etc.

92" PSAM's location within an academic institution has therefore resulted in an incentive structure that values the justification of the theory behind its initiatives over the actual changes achieved in the systemic environment within which public resources are managed, not to mention improvements in service delivery …This is important to be aware of because it cuts to the core of the institutional tensions experienced by PSAM over the years arising from its institutional location". Psam TZ Book At the same time, it is important to note that there are some academic programs and institutions, with different set of disciplinary competences and boundaries, that are developing approaches that marry speed and theory through, e.g. quick testing iterations.
93 On the diverse meanings and uses of learning in the transparency and accountability field,see Ross (2015).
94 Factors identified here build on but adjust those identified in
https://books.google.com.ar/books?hl=es&lr=&id=cB4WBAAAQBAJ&oi=fnd&pg=PA99&dq=wenger+trayner+system+conveners&ots=sOmJt9IPBc&sig=4-qzKPl6KlW-btCG6OEI9BZt4T0#v=onepage&q&f=false

•Partners working in different organizations, with specific missions, projects, capacities, cultures, budgets, internal politics, interests, and abilities join a regional community which complicates knowledge production in the field. Their theories of change and plans are updated sometimes at a faster speed than regional learning questions. MEL staff is integrated with programmatic and strategic areas of the organization to a different degree. Institutional memory about why and how regional decisions have been made varies as a result of staff changes, among other factors. These organizations have different goals, constituencies and are accountable to different sets of stakeholders. They have relationships with different funding agencies and may be differently affected (or not) by the shifts in M&E preferences in some of those global agencies.[95]

•Partners are focused on different levels of the territory, from the very local, to the provincial, national, regional, and at times international. There are potential synergies across these levels, but also tensions.

•Partners have different levels of power. In some cases, there are claims to authority, contractual relationships and flows of money shaping their power relationships. In others, there are not.

•From certain perspectives, things around SAM are constantly changing (e.g. staff rotate, tools are tweaked, newspaper headlines change). From others, critical aspects associated with SAM have long-term effects on power (e.g. deep structures of power). Partners approaching SAM from different vantage points, diverge over time.

Managing these tensions is central to creating the conditions of feasibility for a MEL system that tells a story that brings together the insights from across Fundamentals Plus practice. Sikika is an organization that applies Fundamentals Plus and has made strides in the development of its MEL system. The trajectory of its MEL system has not been a one-shot deal. It has entailed gradual negotiations of these agreements with its internal and external stakeholders. Key stakeholders in the organization and its ecosystem have had to value and support the process, including empowering the individuals in charge of day-to-day management of the system. This slowly unlocked the possibility to build on the existing human capital (knowledge and skills), organizational capital (technical infrastructure and processes) and social capital (supportive networks). This negotiation and navigation has contributed to managing, undertaking and using the MEL. And the process continues of negotiating with partners and funders continues.[96]

This kind of brokering and journey entails transaction costs. The range of stakeholders engaged is diverse. Taking this ongoing, gradual process to the level of a national partnership or a regional community is likely to incur great costs, in financial and organizational circumstances that are more challenging than in a single organization. It also requires leadership and accountability along the lines of those needed for capacity development/learning mechanisms two and three rather than the directive approach associated to the first mechanism. Leadership that is able to invite others to engage in thinking through challenges and opportunities rather than advice in the abstract,

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95 In recent years, some funding agencies (e.g. DFID's Smart Rules and USAID's CLA framework) have taken steps to embrace adaptive approaches and move away from results based management.
96 "Doing SAM is hard work, you need to navigate a lot of internal politics as well as funding issues. You need a good relationship with the network as well as the donor community" – Sikika MEL officer.

understand that the community is responsible for the outcomes, that does not hold back when it comes to sharing insights or finding solutions that acknowledge levels of ownership and engagement among partners are not going to be homogeneous.

What about the MEL methodology for Fundamentals Plus? In abstract, the technical team could repeat many of the recommendations that the SAM community received before about how to design a new MEL system. To pick a few examples:

•Many technical reasons that prompted previous consultants and colleagues to recommend the use of outcome mapping.
•If, like in 2015, the core purpose of providing useful and easily extractable information to improve the work of SAM implementers[97] remains relevant to identifying critical sets of hypotheses that reflect Fundamentals Plus practice and mechanisms, and have the potential to inform primary users' (implementers) decisions in a timely manner.
•It also remains relevant to adopt a methodology that is "simple enough, user-friendly enough and useful enough to partner networks for them to sustain the considerable investment in time that is required for effective monitoring"[98].
•In theory, it also remains relevant to encourage peer review of learning and impact documentation by other community members.[99]

The technical team could also provide alternative recommendations on other points, such as the following for illustration:

•The effort to harvest outcomes was not possible in practice, partly, because partners found that they did not have sufficient time, budgets and processes to collect the information or use it. So, less focus on emergent outcomes and additional data minimalism may be a worthy trade-off. This would mean focusing on few, but meaningful priority indicators as supporters of timely strategy reflection on areas of key interest for decision-making.
•One way colleagues are making choices is to acknowledge (and open up about) the fact that hypotheses about the early steps in the change pathway, are more precise, meaningful and rigid. Assumptions about latter steps towards service delivery should provide the intentional direction of the work (assumptions, expectations, or hopes) but be rendered more precise over time, as learning is incorporated to help define action. The understanding is that learning and practice will help inform better and, in some cases different, hypotheses over time.[100]
•A related recommendation could be to include as part of the MEL system indicators that make assumptions about the value add of this and other critical users and uses of learning explicit.

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97 PSAM TZ book
98 PSAM TZ book
99 TZ outcome harvesting
100 Among the groups that are testing different forms of this logic are Twaweza and other partners of the MIT/GovLab, the Global Partnerneship for Social Accountability. Also see, Matt Andrew's proposal for search frames to replace log frames.

Providing technical recommendations in either direction, without a basic political agreement about the nature of Fundamentals Plus practice, the primary users, priority uses, ambitions and conditions for MEL to be operational, is possible. It would likely repeat a path of the past. As a member of the SAM community put it: *"Our MEL looks like A but in fact we are doing B!."* The soundest technical recommendation at this juncture is that methodological choices follow from political ones. What methodology is fit and feasible for purpose, is dependent on many factors.

5. Conclusions: Possible Ways Forward

The PSAM RLP Learning Pilot presents insights acquired from a group of social accountability practitioners in 4 countries in Southern Africa that have moved towards an "advanced" version of Social Accountability practices called Fundamentals Plus as a result of testing and adapting PSAM's approach over time. It was commissioned to investigate and propose ways to address the gap between the practice and learning of the PSAM RLP and that of the community of SAM practitioners convened by PSAM/RLP.

The main take away of this exercise is that this learning gap is partly explained by the disassociation between the regional learning agenda based on the Fundamentals of SAM and the partners' practice of SAM that builds on the core of fundamentals, but is shaped by the problems partners aim to solve, the systems they need to navigate beyond the PRM system, and the capacities that they need to do so.

In this context, the capacity development and learning processes by which knowledge about the public resource management system turns into results are multifold. They include behavior guided by the transfer of expert knowledge and lessons drawn from own experience or that of peers). Capacities and learning are influenced by social relationships in broader ecosystems. There can be synergies from these processes of capacity building and learning but also tensions in their operation. **These mechanisms interact with each other to inform capacities and behavior.**

It is a combination of these factors, rather than the Fundamentals of SAM or the Fundamentals of SAM 'Plus' that helps to unpack and understand partners' non-linear, gradual trajectory of change, commonalities and divergences across countries in detail. In other words, part of the reason it seems unfeasible, to address PSAM RLP's questions and learn from the application of SAM in countries is that the questions are not sufficiently aligned with the needs, interests, and contents of the practice.

The focus of Fundamentals Plus is better aligned with current debates about social accountability globally, than the original hypotheses about how SAM would deliver. Consequently, rather than building capacities to answer the PSAM RLP questions, the timely action may be to reset the hypotheses that determine the learning agenda. This step seems necessary to produce knowledge that would enable SAM practitioners, PSAM, and the global social accountability ecosystem to learn from the application of SAM.

The weak state of monitoring and evaluation systems of organizations implementing Fundamentals Plus limits the feedback loops between practice and the regional learning conversation, furthering the gap. The paper presents a diagnostic of past M&E efforts

and results and argues that the challenge to move forward is political, first, and technical, second.

The paper concludes by introducing a menu of possible activities aimed at addressing these two issues. Ideally, RLP would advance on a series of activities that tackle individual problems, without losing the "bigger picture" relationships across goals. This means that the work plan should tackle in a reasonable manner all problems rather than focus too much on the same problems/issues at the expense of others.

In the end, it is for PSAM/RLP and its community to determine what is a feasible and relevant value proposition as individual organizations and as a group. This exercise provides some insights about where sources of value for a subset of partners may lie, however it is only one of many sources of consideration to inform decisions about the right mix of actions for the future.

Option A: Use community resources to broker and facilitate agendas and action in which learning is a means towards solving concrete problems/ needs of 2 or more members.
To accomplish this goal, RLP would sustain its ongoing community of practice (planned regional meetings and virtual community) but adjust the agendas/themes based on insights from the learning pilot. The main changes: to restructure work so that learning looks beyond Fundamentals and becomes a means towards adding value towards solving critical, concrete problems of multiple members implementing Fundamentals Plus.
This approach will inform the agenda and work during the regional meeting planned for August 2017 (See Annex). It is also the backbone of the activities spelled out below.

Option B: Specific community activities will continue producing and promoting uptake of knowledge about core elements of Fundamentals Plus. Two possible roads forward:
1)PSAM/RLP, along with regional partners develops a case-study based course to build capacities for implementing Fundamentals Plus. The focus would be on issues such as the development of civic capacities, including coproduction, political thinking, and adaptability. This would lever PSAM/RLP unique experience in the social accountability field, combining competence-based training with systemic convening. In light of partners demands and how thinking about supporting governance is moving in the broader development field, this could be an area of increased interest beyond current partners. Strategically, PSAM could engage a like-minded academic or think tank/non-governmental partner in another part of the global south in this process;
2)The community continues to prioritize actions to produce, disseminate, and reflect on comparative knowledge about core elements of Fundamentals Plus. The focus could be broadened to encompass other aspects such as service delivery results of these adaptations, in relationship to specific service problems. A well-developed user-centered uptake strategy seems essential to define all the research cycle – from the definition of research questions to packaging and communication of research findings.

Option C: Redefine the PSAM/RLP-led MEL systems at work so that they focus on core, realistic and fit for purpose objectives

1)The RLP MEL systems should be redefined so that:

•RLP and community-level MEL systems reflect their related, but distinct goals (also see option E);

•MEL systems are aligned with insights and goals for Fundamental Plus practice;

•MEL expectations for community members are realistic given resources available, including but not limited to bandwidth, and focused on a clear set of joint goals;

•Tensions between documents, questions, and tools focused at the outcome or impact level are solved;

•If the focus of choice are impact level results, such as service delivery, the community should invest resources into understanding and spelling out the plausible links between the SAM cycle and specific types of service delivery and rights results.

2)The community could provide tailored short-term funded technical support to partners making critical decisions regarding their MEL systems that may have positive (learning / capacity building) spillovers for the group. These critical decisions include: developing or negotiating terms of reference for significant evaluations of SAM, redesigning systems for SAM MEL, taking up evaluation recommendations in new SAM strategies/theories of change, etc.

3)Ideally, support to particular organization(s) in a given period would be determined competitively by a committee of community members. Depending on the needs of the selected organization(s), support could be provided by other community members or by external consultant.

Option D: Balance community interests with the different needs of the communities' diverse membership. To achieve this goal, RLP could:

1)Target a broader, more diverse set of stakeholders, in particular, it should include:

•A broader set of stakeholders within partner organizations in select activities;

•A broader group of organizations, so as to reflect the interests and lever and contribute to the knowledge, learning and ongoing capacities of those supported by trainers of trainers.

2)Complement umbrella activities with tailored, smaller group activities to ensure interest, relevance and energy of the largest relevant group of Fundamental's alumni on a more regular basis:

•Continuity of the yearly face to face meetings meeting of key partners;

•Support meetings of key sub-groups of stakeholders during the year for priority agendas (e.g. MEL officers; implementers of SAM in a particular sector; etc.);

•Develop and implement a strategy to virtual platform to increase the regularity of exchanges, in ways that add value to members.

Tailored, in-depth support to select partners that could feed into the broader community conversations. This follows the model used for the pilot this year. Support could also take the shape of on-demand help desks or others.

•Ideally, support to particular organization(s) in a given period would be determined competitively by a committee of community members. Depending on the needs of the selected organization(s), support could be provided by other community members or by external consultant.

Option E: Learning feeds into RLP country and program strategies
The first proposed step to achieve this goal is to ensure that feedback from the pilot feeds into relevant country strategies.

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ANNEXURES

ANNEXURE A: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR LEARNING PILOT EXERCISE FEBRUARY – APRIL 2017 IN ZIMBABWE, ZAMBIA AND MOZAMBIQUE.

NO.	NAME/ORGANIZATION/TITLE	INTERVIEW DATE	LOCATION
1	SAPST Executive Director,Mr John Makamure	13/02/17 & 16/02/17	HARARE,ZIM
2.	SAPST Programme Officer, Henry Ndlovu	13/02/17	HARARE, ZIM
3.	SAPST Programme Officer, Chengetai Kanyungu	13/02/17 & 15/02/17	HARARE,ZIM
4.	Former SAPST employee & Programme Advisor on Economic Affairs & Fundamentals Alumni Rongai Chizema	13/02/17	HARARE,ZIM
5.	Member of Parliament James Maridadi & Fundamentals Alumni – Hon. James Maridadi	14/02/17	HARRARE, ZIM
6.	- Programme Officer CWGH[101], member of the Zimbabwe Learning Partnership technical officer & Fundamentals Alumni - Tafadzwa Nkrumah	14/02/17	HARARE, ZIM
7.	MoF official Mr Polite Chiduwa	15/02/17	HARARE, ZIM
8.	Executive Director Combined Harare Residents Association (CHRA) & Fundamentals Alumni - Mfundo Mlilo	15/02/17	HARARE, ZIM
9.	Member of parliament & chair of health committee – Hon. Labode & Fundamentals Alumni	15/02/17	HARARE, ZIM
10.	Member of Parliament & member of the executive committee of the Women's Caucus as well as Chairperson of the Parliamentary Portfolio Committee on Public Accounts – Hon. Mpariwa	16/02/17	HARARE, ZIM
11.	Director of the Budgets Department, Ministry of Finance - Mr Vela Moyo.	16/02/17	HARARE, ZIM
12.	SAPST Legal officer and fundamentals alumni working on strengthening regional parliament	17/02/17	HARARE, ZIM

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[101] Community Working Group for Health (CWGH) www.cwgh.co.zw

	through the , African Parliamentarians Network Against Corruption（APNAC）is a network – Vivian Mashavave		
13.	Attended & Observed Public Hearing on Constitutional Amendment (organized and facilitated by SAPST in support of the justice & legal portfolio committee)	17/02/17	HARARE, ZIM
14.	Capacity building PO for PACT grantees, Fungayi Zawi	17/02/17	HARARE, ZIM
15.	Health Committee Researcher in National Assembly & Fundamentals Alumni– Yeukai Chuma	24/02/17	HARARE, ZIM
16.	Budget Committee Clerk in National Assembly & Fundamentals Alumni - Christian Ratsakatika	07/03/17	HARARE, ZIM
17.	Public Accounts Committee Researcher in National Assembly & Fundamentals Alumni	08/03/17	HARARE, ZIM
18.	Director of Zimbabwe Women's Resource Centre Network (ZWCRN), Member of the Executive Committee of ZLP	09/03/17	HARARE, ZIM
19.	Mpika FM Community Radio Practitioners – Given Kafumbi & Justin Simukoko	03/04/17	MUCHINGA, ZAMBIA
20.	Executive Director, Development Facilitator, Program Accounts and Community Development Worker of World Vision, Mpika	03/04/17	MUCHINGA, ZAMBIA
21.	Executive Director of CARITAS, Mpika, & Fundamentals Alumni	03/04/17	MUCHINGA, ZAMBIA
22.	Executive Director of Development Organisation for People Empowerment (*DOPE*) – Samson Chisi & Programme Officer Mr Patrick Chelu who are also District Resource Persons for ZGF Muchinga Grantees & Fundamentals alumni	03/04/17	MUCHINGA, ZAMBIA
23.	District Education Board Secretary (DEBS), Chinsali District	04/04/17	MUCHINGA, ZAMBIA
24.	Water and Sanitation Officer, Chinsali District	04/04/17	MUCHINGA, ZAMBIA
25.	Senior Chief Nkula	04/04/17	MUCHINGA, ZAMBIA

26.	Organizational Head and members of Maluba Home Based Care (a ZGF Muchinga Grantee)	04/04/17	MUCHINGA, ZAMBIA
27.	Organizational Head and members of God Visits Orphans (a ZGF Muchinga Grantee)	04/04/17	MUCHINGA, ZAMBIA
28.	Organizational Head and members of St Johns Home Based Care (a ZGF Muchinga Grantee)	04/04/17	MUCHINGA, ZAMBIA
29.	Community members of Chinsali district trained by ZGF Muchinga Grantees on Human Rights Based Approach (HRBA)	04/04/17	MUCHINGA, ZAMBIA
30.	Organizational Head and members of Mpika NZP+ (a ZGF Muchinga Grantee)	05/04/17	MUCHINGA, ZAMBIA
31.	Organizational Head and members of Friends of the Needy (a ZGF Muchinga Grantee)	05/04/17	MUCHINGA, ZAMBIA
32.	Community Health Care Worker & member of NZP+ Mpika trained on HRBA	05/04/17	MUCHINGA, ZAMBIA
33.	Village Headwoman, Traditional Leader trained on HRBA by ZGF Muchinga grantees	05/04/17	MUCHINGA, ZAMBIA
34.	District Administration Officer (DAO), Mpika District	05/04/17	MUCHINGA, ZAMBIA
35.	District Health Planning Officer, Mpika District	05/04/17	MUCHINGA, ZAMBIA
36.	Program Officer at Jesuit Centre for Theological Reflection (JCTR) & Fundamentals Alumni – Innocent Mantanshu	07/04/17	MUCHINGA, ZAMBIA
37.	Director of Alliance for Community Action (ACA) & former PSAM Zambia Program Officer – Laura Miti	07/04/17	MUCHINGA, ZAMBIA
38.	Executive Secretary, Program Officer, Research Officer and Finance Officer of Local Government Association of Zambia (LGAZ)	07/04/17	MUCHINGA, ZAMBIA
39.	Officer at Irish Aid & Fundamentals Alumni – Makani Mzyece	07/04/17	MUCHINGA, ZAMBIA
40.	Decentralization Secretariat	07/04/17	MUCHINGA, ZAMBIA
41.	Head of Mocuba's Organização de Apoio ao Desenvolvimento or Association of Machuabos Residents and Friends of Mocuba	17/04/17	MOCUBA, MOZAMBIQUE
42.	Mayor/President of Mocuba Municipal Council	17/04/17	MOCUBA, MOZAMBIQUE
43.	Speaker of Municipal Assembly	17/04/17	MOCUBA,

	and Members of Mocuba Municipal Assembly		MOZAMBIQUE
44.	Staff members of Mocuba's Organização de Apoio ao Desenvolvimento or Association of Machuabos Residents and Friends of Mocuba (NANA)	18/04/17	MOCUBA, MOZAMBIQUE
45.	Members of Mocuba SAMCom	18/04/17	MOCUBA, MOZAMBIQUE
46.	Former Advisor to Former Mayor of Mocuba	18/04/17	MOCUBA, MOZAMBIQUE
47.	Members of Quelimane SAMCom	19/04/17	QUELIMANE, MOZAMBIQUE
48.	Director of NAFEZA Núcleo das Associações Femininas da Zambézia (Concern Universal's local partner in Quelimane)	19/04/17	QUELIMANE, MOZAMBIQUE
49.	Program Officer for Zambezia Province at Concern Universal – Esvenia Viola	19/04/17	QUELIMANE, MOZAMBIQUE
50.	Head of Quelimane Community Radio	20/04/17	QUELIMANE, MOZAMBIQUE
51.	Head of Quelimane SAMCom	20/04/17	QUELIMANE, MOZAMBIQUE
52.	Quelimane Council Staff member and Fundamentals Alumni	20/04/17	QUELIMANE, MOZAMBIQUE
53.	Head of MuniSAM program at Concern Universal	21/04/17	MAPUTO, MOZAMBIQUE
54.	Program Officer at Concern Universal & Fundamentals Alumni – Deborah Capela	21/04/17	MAPUTO, MOZAMBIQUE
55.	Country Manager, Concern Universal – Helena Skember	21/04/17	MAPUTO, MOZAMBIQUE

ANNEXURE B: FINAL TANZANIA LEARNING PILOT WORKSHOP AGENDA MARCH 2017

Pilot Approach to Strengthen Partners' MEL Capacities: Policy Forum[102]
27-31 March, 2017
Dar Es Salaaam

Day / Time	Activity	Purpose	Who
Monday Working Breakfast (1 hour)	Team preparatory meeting	Align team's work agenda for the day	PSAM's team Ideally, Policy Forum's MEL Officer can accompany the team in these reflection meetings and most activities during the week
Monday Morning (45 minutes)	Introduction meeting	Align expectations	1 representative per organization – Semkae, Patrick, Edna and Adam
Monday Morning	In depth-interviews	Initial in-depth one-on-one interviews with each partner organization	All PSAM team will participate of these interviews Schedule 1 hour per organization with all people from those organizations (Sikkika, Ansaf, and MIICO). This may go into the afternoon
Monday Working Lunch	Team Debrief	Recap day activities and plan ahead	PSAM's team Ideally, Policy Forum's MEL Officer
Monday (2-3 hours)	Opening reflection Meeting facilitated by	Clarify goals, needs/interests of different stakeholders and rules of engagement for the week. Run through our schedule for the week, identify	We need at least 2 people from each organization – ideally their

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[102] This customized brief was prepared on January 23, 2017. For additional background and details, please go to the Roadmap for the Pilot across 4 organizations.

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	the PSAM team	gaps. Identify how the team will provide value to these stakeholders in the short and medium term	programmatic sam person (Richard/Nicholas, TBD Sikkika, Joseph?, Katherine?) AND their MEL person (if the person exist)
		MEL: Expected Users and Uses (Brainstorm and Role Play)	
Monday Evening Working Dinner	Team Debrief	Recap day activities and plan ahead	PSAM's team Policy Forum's MEL Officer
Tuesday	Learning about and putting in context our social accountability work facilitated by the PSAM team	We will host 5 theory of change clinics: 1 for PF, 1 for each PF partner, 1 for PSAM. For this exercise, each partner should bring a diagram of their TOC, if they have it. If not, let us know so we can prepare it ahead. We will try to understand: 1. what problem each organization hopes to tackle and how they think they are contributing to the solution? 2. How context (country, partnerships, and sectoral focus) informs the different TOCs? (for an example see here http://transparencyinitiative.theideabureau.netdna-cdn.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/Think-Piece-TPA-Clinic6.pdf)	For this day we want to make sure that at least 2 persons per organization - the soc acc programmatic expert and MEL person - stays for all the day, others are required or optional for parts of the day Schedule 1 hour per org, plus breaks to help exec directors and others plan Make sure you schedule PF first - for that time slot all PF team and critical stakeholders have to be in. We want at least 1 person from all other organizations present (ideally 2-3 people from other orgs) Then, in any order, ANSAF, SIkkika, MIICO. For their assigned slot all their teams and critical stakeholders have to be in. . We want at least 1 person from all other organizations present (ideally 2-3 people from other

			orgs).
			For the PSAM (should be the last one) – we need to plan in case Yeukai is absent. So let's get a skype connectyion and make sure both Yeukai and Gertrude can jump in online. We want at least 1 person from all other organizations present (ideally 2-3 people from other orgs).
		At the end of the day, we will try connecting the different theories of change and experiences. This exercise aims to help us understand the context in which each TOC is put to work, which includes other partners in the group.	At minimum 1 person per organization – the soc acc person that stayed through the day – and the MEL person. Exec Directors can join in
Tuesday Evening Working Dinner	Team Debrief	Recap day activities and plan ahead	PSAM's team Ideally, Policy Forum's MEL Officer
Wednesday Morning	Uncovering Learning, facilitated by the PSAM team	We will carry out a series of exercises to trace back how different organizations' experience to date has inform their TOC in 2017.	Ideally, we would have a way to "interview" 4 people who have insights about how each organization has implemented social accountability over the years. Interviewees 4 critical stakeholders, 1 per organization Interviewers – 1 person per organization at least (soc acc programmatic and /or MEL)
Wednesday Afternoon	Formal MEL systems Part I, facilitated by the PSAM	PF team and 3 partner teams will participate in a series of exercises/activities about fit for purpose MEL systems.	Mandatory for soc acc and MEL people from each org Exec Dir can join

	team	**Beatrice Mkani (MEL officer Sikika) has kindly agreed to do a presentation on their MEL journey for the workshop. We should provide any guiding questions/focus areas for her talk asap as she prepares it.** We want to make sure we discuss MEL systems' components for individual organizations and for the group. We also want to understand what is relevant for expected users and users of MEL data? And what is feasible?	No externals
Wednesday Evening Working Dinner	Team Debrief	Recap day activities and plan ahead	PSAM's team Ideally, Policy Forum's MEL Officer
Thursday Morning and part of the Afternoon	Formal MEL systems Part II, facilitated by the PSAM team	PF team and 3 partner teams will participate in a series of exercises/activities about fit for purpose MEL systems. We want to make sure we discuss MEL systems' components for individual organizations and for the group. We also want to understand what is relevant for expected users and users of MEL data? And what is feasible?	Mandatory for soc acc and MEL people from each org Exec Dir can join No externals
Thursday Afternoon	Communicatio ns facilitated by the PSAM team	We have identified user and uses of MEL data/systems. How do we communicate to them? **"Intro to setting up a communications strategy for yourself." with Elsie.**	PSAM's team Key Policy Forum Stakeholders TBD Key Staff of the Partner Organization TBD
Friday Morning	Team Debrief	Put together the pieces of information and refine the structure of the closing reflection meeting	PSAM team
Friday Afternoon	Closing Reflection Meeting	Share our initial thinking and give back Next Steps	Mandatory for exec dir, soc acc and MEL people from each org

ANNEXURE C: FINAL SENT BRIEFS

Pilot Approach to Strengthen Partners' MEL Capacities: SAPST[103]

Four organizations will participate of this Pilot (PF, SAPST, ZGF, and CU-Mozambique). The Pilot is tailored to each organizations' interests and needs, but also has an overall cohesiveness to help inform the broader SAM community.

In the case of SAPST, this pilot aims to capture, analyze and reflect on why and how SAPST took on the PSAM approach and what it has accomplished.

Specific Goals:
1. Piloting a process to trace the social accountability journey and learning of SAPST, with a focus on the adoption of PSAM approach, application and its adaptation. The idea is to improve understandings of why and how this partner has experimented with the approach and revised to fit with its contextual and organizational characteristics over time.
2. Using the process as a tool to help build new MEL capacities for SAPST and PSAM.
3. Using these insights to feedback to the PSAM community of practice for social accountability monitoring and its conceptual and MEL approaches.
4. This pilot is neither an academic exercise nor an evaluation of PSAM or individual PSAM partners.

Focus: The focus of the pilot will be the wider SAPST story and the organizations' application of the PSAM approach, with prior attempts through ZLP being a part of the narrative rather than the main focus of it.

The pilot will mainly focus on two strands of SAPST programs which have integrated the social accountability approach: a) The Support to Zimbabwe Budget Process Progamme which strengthens the capacity of the Zimbabwean Budget Committee, and, b) The Strengthening Regional Parliamentary Budget Oversight Programme which strengthens both parliamentarians & civil society to engage in public finance management. This programme empowers both civil society and parliamentarians through training on social accountability.

To the extent possible, the team may explore issues related to the Strengthening Regional Parliamentary Budget Oversight Programme, contingent on time and resources.

Methodology: The methodology to accomplish these goals has the following main components (please note in Red action points for you, so we can keep on the learning pilot schedule)

Background Analysis: The purpose of this analysis is not to produce standalone analysis or deliverables but to inform tailored fieldwork preparation and data collection. The research team has collected a number of documents (see Annex).

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[103] This customized brief was prepared on January 23, 2017. For additional background and details, please go to the Roadmap for the Pilot across 4 organizations.

Field visit The PSAM team will conduct field work between February 12 and 17. During this phase the PSAM/RLP team will carry out a range of activities (in-depth interviews, reflection meetings, and observations) to refine the framing of the activities, collect data about context, processes, results, and learnings, as well as to inform the interpretation of findings. We will also incorporate activities to support the development of SAPSTs' MEL Capacities, to the extent that budget and logistical considerations allow us. [104]

Our current thinking is that this time would be best allocated as follows:

Day / Time	Activity	Purpose	Who
Monday Working Breakfast (1 hour)	Team preparatory meeting	Align team's work agenda for the day	PSAM's team SAPST's MEL Officer is welcome to join the team in these reflection/planning meetings.
Monday Morning (45 minutes)	Introduction meeting	Align expectations	Key SAPST Stakeholders TBD
Monday (2-3 hours)	Opening reflection Meeting	Clarify goals, needs/interests of different stakeholders and rules of engagement for the week. Start a conversation about social accountability work in context to frame and inform other in-depth interviews. Bring to light alternative perspectives. Run through our schedule for the week, identify gaps, and put together a plan to confirm missing interviews. Identify how the team will provide value to these stakeholders in the short and medium term	Key SAPST Stakeholders TBD
Monday Working Lunch	Team Debrief	Recap day activities and plan ahead	PSAM's team We may include in some of these activities staff from the partner organization for

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[104] We encourage the participation of SAPTS and the partner organization's MEL staff in all preparatory thinking and activities. In general, we welcome observation of a member of the SAPST team during interviews and activities– though we may need to consider exceptions on a case by case basis.

			content and logistical support
Monday Afternoon	In depth-interviews	Initial in-depth interviews would ideally include informants from within SAPST, in particular those leading and implementing the two key programs we will look into	All PSAM team will participate of these interviews
Monday Evening Working Dinner	Team Debrief	Recap day activities and plan ahead	PSAM's team Ideally, SAPST's MEL Officer can accompany the team in these reflection meetings and most activities during the week. We may include in some of these activities staff from the partner organization for content and logistical support
Tuesday Working Breakfast (1 hour)	Team preparatory meeting	Align team's work agenda for the day	PSAM's team Ideally, SAPST's MEL Officer can accompany the team in these reflection meetings and most activities during the week
Tuesday Morning	Political Economy Mapping and/or Theory of Change Clinic	Conduct a reflection exercise about social accountability in the local context. Bring to light alternative perspectives. Identify goals, needs/interests of different stakeholders. Identify and act on key gaps in our plan for the week. Engage other members of the RLP Community and manage risks in the SAPTS/ZLP partners' relationship vis-à-vis this pilot.	Key SAPST Stakeholders TBD Key ZLP Stakeholders TBD Other critical stakeholders in the social accountability ecosystem who could contribute to join reflection TBD
Tuesday afternoon – Thursday evening (meal time, ideally for team debrief)	In depth-interviews, collective reflection meetings and clinics, and observations, as relevant	It may pay-off to interview early on external stakeholders that can provide a macro-outlook (e.g. journalists, members of the legislature, or partners) and internal stakeholders that can provide a micro-level take into a change effort (e.g. frontline implementers – current and former, CSOs and MPs who have been trained by SAPST in the past & continued the relationship/partnership; MPs former & current, relevant local funders – especially but not limited to USAID). Then, leave for later stakeholders that may help link both levels of analysis (e.g. program managers; executive directors – current and former) or that are more likely to help you dig into a specific challenging aspect (e.g. a mayor). Insights about specific	PSAM team may split for some of these interviews / observations

		instances may be more productively harvested after we have some broader contextual information.	
Friday Morning	Team Reflection and Preparation Meeting	Put together the pieces of information and refine the structure of the closing reflection meeting	PSAM's team Ideally, SAPST's MEL Officer can accompany the team in these reflection meetings and most activities during the week. We may include in some of these activities staff from the partner organization for content and logistical support
Friday Working Lunch	Recap meeting	Recap / Debrief and next Steps	Key SAPST Stakeholders TBD
Friday Afternoon	Closing Reflection Meeting	Share our initial thinking and give back Next Steps	Key SAPST Stakeholders TBD

We also expect to schedule at least one meeting between RLP and SAPST's MEL Officer for exchanging experiences in their role as the sustainability of this pilot is perched on their ongoing relationship/joint work.

> What we need from *SAPST and partner organization*?
> *SAPST to send the following information by January 26:*
> An initial list of names and positions of stakeholders that may be relevant to interview.
> Confirm a call between the PSAM team and Chengetai to discuss how to make the exercise relevant from her point of view.
> Schedule a call with the teams to be held by January 28.
> **After January 28, 2017 (through field visit)**
> Advise us on best way to obtain info & conduct interviews for each interviewee on the list ie whether to have an informal/formal approach or whether to interview as a group or as a one on one interview as well as to help clarify logistical arrangements for where meetings/interviews will take place for each interview.
> Support with the organization of interviews and other activities, including but not limited to convening and/or supporting collective reflection activities.
> Host collective reflection activities at SAPST.
> Support in making the site visits logistical arrangements

Analysis, Packaging and Sharing The PSAM team will analyze and package the information about the SAPST experience, as agreed. Throughout the process the PSAM team will blog about our learning journey and the SAPST and partner organization's team are encouraged to do so, too. Participating organisations will attend RLP's learning meeting and present, discuss and respond to questions on lessons from the pilot with other members of the wider PSAM partnership.

Pilot Approach to Strengthen Partners' MEL Capacities: Policy Forum[105]

Four organizations will participate of this Pilot (Policy Forum, SAPTS, ZGF, and CU-Mozambique). The Pilot is tailored to each organizations' interests and needs, but also has an overall cohesiveness to help inform the broader SAM community.

In the case of Policy Forum, this pilot aims to build its MEL capacities to improve the way it collects evidence of impact in manner that clearly and indisputably describes its key contributions (i.e. draw causal links between activities and impact at the policy and local levels).

This decision follows an internal process that has prompted the organization to embark in a revision of its **Theory of Change/Action and MEL framework that is relevant for the broader framework.** The latter is led by a new MEL Officer and will determine learning strategies, plans and tools for the organization.

Specific Goals:
5. Piloting a process to trace the social accountability journey and learning of a Policy Forum member, with a focus on the adoption of PSAM approach, application and its adaptation. The idea is to improve collective understandings of why and how this partner has experimented with the approach and revised to fit with its contextual and organizational characteristics over time.
6. Using the process as a tool to help build new MEL capacities for Policy Forum, its members and PSAM. This include a joint reflection process about feasible ways to think about and extract usable lessons from the approach they have been applying and have an opportunity to reflect and be clear about: a) what kind of impact they want to make, and b) what kind of impact they are making.
7. Using these insights to feedback to the PSAM community of practice for social accountability monitoring and its conceptual and MEL approaches.
8. This pilot is neither an academic exercise nor an evaluation of PSAM or individual PSAM partners.

Policy Forum's Focus Case(s): We have limited resources available for this pilot, so we will need to focus on work with 3 Policy Forum members selected among those that have been doing social accountability work and have attended the Bulawayo meeting. These are   Agricultural Non-State Actors Forum (ANSAF), Mbozi Ileje and Isangati Consortium (MIICO) and SIKIKA.

To the extent possible, we will participate in meetings/activities at the Secretariat with broader membership to facilitate broader reflection about the individual process and its possible insights for the organization as a whole.

Methodology: The methodology to answer the question has the following main components (please note in Red action points for you, so we can keep on the learning pilot schedule)

Background Analysis: The purpose of this analysis is not to produce standalone analysis or deliverables but to inform tailored fieldwork preparation and data collection. This will complement the Political Economy Analysis about the broader context in Tanzania shared by Policy Forum, as well as other available documents on the organization's theory of change.

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[105] This customized brief was prepared on January 23, 2017. For additional background and details, please go to the Roadmap for the Pilot across 4 organizations.

Field visit The PSAM team has budget to do fieldwork in Tanzania during a week. Ideally, we would schedule this visit starting March 27, 2017.[106] During this phase the PSAM/RLP team will carry out a range of activities (in-depth interviews, reflection meetings, and observations) to refine the framing of the activities, collect data about context, processes, results, and learnings, as well as to inform the interpretation of findings. We will also incorporate activities to support the development of Policy Forums' MEL Capacities, to the extent that budget and logistical considerations allow us. [107] All activities we be based in Dar Es Salaam[108].

Our current thinking is that this time would be best allocated as follows:

Day / Time	Activity	Purpose	Who
Monday Working Breakfast (1 hour)	Team preparatory meeting	Align team's work agenda for the day	PSAM's team Ideally, Policy Forum's MEL Officer can accompany the team in these reflection meetings and most activities during the week
Monday Morning (45 minutes)	Introduction meeting	Align expectations	Key Policy Forum Stakeholders TBD Key Stakeholders of the Partner Organization TBD
Monday Morning	In depth-interviews	Initial in-depth one-on-one interviews with each partner organization	All PSAM team will participate of these interviews
Monday	Team	Recap day activities and plan ahead	PSAM's team

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[106] April poses a challenge for the team as it would require working through a public holiday in Tanzania.

[107] We encourage the participation of Policy Forum and the partner organization's MEL staff in all preparatory thinking and activities. In general, we welcome observation of a member of the Policy Forum team during interviews and activities– though we may need to consider exceptions on a case by case basis.

[108] Policy Forum and the 3 partner organizations are responsible for funding their travel.

Working Lunch	Debrief		Ideally, Policy Forum's MEL Officer can accompany the team in these reflection meetings and most activities during the week. We may include in some of these activities staff from the partner organization for content and logistical support
Monday (2-3 hours)	Opening reflection Meeting	Clarify goals, needs/interests of different stakeholders and rules of engagement for the week. Start a conversation about social accountability work in context to frame and inform other in-depth interviews. Bring to light alternative perspectives. Run through our schedule for the week, identify gaps, and put together a plan to confirm missing interviews. Identify how the team will provide value to these stakeholders in the short and medium term	Key Policy Forum Stakeholders TBD Key Staff of the Partner Organization TBD
Monday Evening Working Dinner	Team Debrief	Recap day activities and plan ahead	PSAM's team Ideally, Policy Forum's MEL Officer can accompany the team in these reflection meetings and most activities during the week. We may include in some of these activities staff from the partner organization for content and logistical support
Tuesday	collective reflection meetings and clinics facilitated by the PSAM team	PF team and 3 partner teams will participate in a series of exercises/activities to help us learn about relevant issues from the organization's perspectives.	Key Policy Forum Stakeholders TBD Key Staff of the Partner Organization TBD
Wednesday	In depth-interviews	During these interviews we would like to gain understanding of stakeholders outside the organizations – mainly in government, legislative. We need to focus on the PRM system but also on the sector relevant to one of the partner organizations – this is the same organization we will concentrate on for the Thursday visit.	PSAM team may split for some of these interviews / observations
Thursday Morning	Observation of partner organization work	We would like to consider a way to observe and potentially engage on site the organization's local work, focused on concrete rights. Go on-site to listen	PSAM's team Key Policy Forum Stakeholders TBD Key Staff of the Partner

		to communities' voices. We need to focus on the same partner organization selected for the Wednesday exercise.	Organization TBD
Thursday Afternoon	collective reflection meetings and clinics facilitated by the PSAM team	PF team and 3 partner teams will participate in a series of exercises/activities to help us learn about relevant issues from the organization's perspectives.	PSAM's team Key Policy Forum Stakeholders TBD Key Staff of the Partner Organization TBD
Friday Morning	Team Reflection and Preparation Meeting	Put together the pieces of information and refine the structure of the closing reflection meeting	PSAM's team Ideally, Policy Forum's MEL Officer can accompany the team in these reflection meetings and most activities during the week. We may include in some of these activities staff from the partner organization for content and logistical support
Friday Working Lunch	Recap meeting	Recap / Debrief and next Steps	Key Policy Forum Stakeholders TBD Key Stakeholders of the Partner Organization TBD
Friday Afternoon	Closing Reflection Meeting	Share our initial thinking and give back Next Steps	Key Policy Forum Stakeholders TBD Key Staff of the Partner Organization TBD

Two additional considerations:
1. Given Policy Forums' specific goal (see above), ideally, we would add to these activities the observation of a meeting with a   broader group of members who could benefit from reflecting about this pilot and, in turn, inform how this work could support the broader organization. We would also think about facilitating a reflection meeting for this specific purpose. At the moment, given our limited resources, that would be unlikely unless we trade-off some of the activities specified above. Alternatively, if Policy Forum has budget to support our extended stay for 2-3 days or travel to Tanzania, we could consider how best to plan this activity to complement our work in February or later in April, immediately after we conclude fieldwork in the other countries.
2. We also expect to schedule at least one meeting between RLP and PF's MEL Officers for exchanging experiences in their role as the sustainability of this pilot is perched on their ongoing relationship/joint work

What we need from *PF and partner organization*?
Confirm the visit dates and agree on the best organization of our time on the field provided resources by **January 31, 2017**.
By February 20, 2017
Make a collective decision about which organization and right will be the focus on part of the agenda.
Initial information to plan and budget the site visits: suggested accommodation, information on local arrangements, availability of resources that may supplement PSAM's funding to cover specific costs, etc.
After February 20, 2017 (through field visit)
An initial list of names and positions of stakeholders that may be relevant to include in the activities, to be followed by possible interviewees.

Support with the organization of interviews and other activities, including but not limited to convening and/or supporting collective reflection activities
Provide space for collective reflection activities.
Support in making the site visits logistical arrangements

Analysis, Packaging and Sharing The PSAM team will analyze and package the information about the Policy Forum experience, as agreed. Throughout the process the PSAM team will blog about our learning journey and the Policy Forum and partner organization's team are encouraged to do so, too. Participating organisations will attend RLP's learning meeting and present, discuss and respond to questions on lessons from the pilot with other members of the wider PSAM partnership

What we need from *PF and partner organization*?
Provide information, as needed, and review drafts to help the technical advisors complete: a tailored product (document, video, etc.) about your organization and an internal document for PSAM to analyze portfolio-level insights about learning and context. These products will not be circulated beyond the PSAM community unless all relevant parties agree.
Provide feedback to blogs and a document produced by the technical advisors and the PSAM team on what has been learnt from the process, the extent of adaptation to the learning strategy throughout this period, how these changes have affected its implementation, and key lessons and undertakings to be take forward in the PSAM's ongoing strategy for learning during the remainder of this phase of its strategic plan. This document will build on the blog posts produced to-date and will be the basis of a public case study about PSAM and RLP.
Share in the Annual RLP Meeting on experience of participating in pilot and comment on findings/lessons that emerged from the pilot project.
We will provide additional precision in due time, as the pilot evolves.

Important: Our approach puts emphasis in iterative decision-making and action as a way to develop our individual and capacities to achieve our goals. The roadmap is subject to revision as initial phases and joint learning inform purpose driven course-correction in the initial plan.

Pilot Approach to Strengthen Partners' MEL Capacities: ZGF[109]

Four organizations will participate of this Pilot (Policy Forum, SAPST, ZGF, and CU-Mozambique). The Pilot is tailored to each organizations' interests and needs, but also has an overall cohesiveness to help inform the broader SAM community.

In the case of ZGF, this pilot aims to capture, analyze and reflect on why and how ZGF took on the PSAM approach and what ZGF and select members of local communities learned by doing. This effort is intended to inform the expansion of social accountability work to more affirmative action provinces in 2017 as well as to the continuity and improvement of ongoing work.

Specific Goals:

3. Piloting a process to trace the social accountability journey and learning of ZGF, with a focus on the adoption of PSAM approach, application and its adaptation. The idea is to improve understandings of why and how this partner has experimented with the approach and revised to fit with its contextual and organizational characteristics over time. A key contextual area of interest are the characteristics of affirmative action provinces.

4. Using the process as a tool to help build new MEL capacities for ZGF and PSAM, including developing capacities for capturing, reflecting on, and communicating and sharing these lessons with others.

5. Using these insights to feedback to the PSAM community of practice for social accountability monitoring and its conceptual and MEL approaches.

6. This pilot is neither an academic exercise nor an evaluation of PSAM or individual PSAM partners.

Focus: The focus of the pilot will be the ZGF application of the PSAM approach, with a focus on the Muchinga province.

Methodology: The methodology to accomplish these goals has the following main components (please note in Red action points for you, so we can keep on the learning pilot schedule)

Background Analysis: The purpose of this analysis is not to produce standalone analysis or deliverables but to inform tailored fieldwork preparation and data collection.

What we need from ZGF? Discuss the extent of ZGF social accountability work to decide whether and how to frame and focus the exercise during the call the week of **January 16, 2017**.
ZGF to send the following information by January 30:
Information, research, news articles, blogs, and any other available documents that are relevant to understand:

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 This customized brief was prepared on January 3, 2017. For additional background and details, please go to the Roadmap for the Pilot across 4 organizations.

Field visit The PSAM team has budget to do fieldwork in Zambia during a week. Ideally, we would schedule this visit during April, coinciding with ZGF's quarterly visit to Muchinga.[110] During this phase the PSAM/RLP team will carry out a range of activities (in-depth interviews, reflection meetings, and observations) to refine the framing of the activities, collect data about context, processes, results, and learnings, as well as to inform the interpretation of findings. We will also incorporate on-the ground activities tailored to ZGF's interests during this week to the extent that budget and logistical considerations allow us.[111]

Our current thinking is that this time would be best allocated as follows:

Day / Time	Location	Activity	Purpose	Who
Monday Working Breakfast (1 hour)	Muchinga	Team preparatory meeting	Align team's work agenda for the day	PSAM's team Ideally, ZGF's MEL Officer can accompany the team in these reflection meetings and most activities
Monday Morning (45 minutes)	Muchinga	Introduction meeting	Align expectations	Key ZGF Stakeholders TBD
Monday (2-3 hours)	Muchinga	Opening reflection Meeting	Clarify goals, needs/interests of different stakeholders and rules of engagement for the week. Start a conversation about social accountability work in context to frame and inform other in-depth interviews. Bring to light alternative perspectives	Key ZGF Stakeholders TBD Key local partners TBD

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 The PSAM team will also conduct fieldwork in Mozambique in April. We will accommodate each organization's preferences to the extent possible.

111

 We encourage the participation of ZGF and the partner organization's MEL staff in all preparatory thinking and activities. In general, we welcome observation of a member of the ZFG team during interviews and activities– though we may need to consider exceptions on a case by case basis.

			through a reflection exercise e.g. a mapping exercise. Run through our schedule for the week, identify gaps, and put together a plan to confirm missing interviews. Identify how the team will provide value to these stakeholders in the short and medium term	
Monday Working Lunch	Muchinga	Team Debrief	Recap day activities and plan ahead	PSAM's team Ideally, ZGF's MEL Officer can accompany the team in these reflection meetings and most activities during the week.
Monday Afternoon	Muchinga	In depth-interviews	Initial in-depth interviews would ideally include informants from within the organization	All PSAM team will participate of these interviews
Monday Evening Working Dinner	Muchinga	Team Debrief	Recap day activities and plan ahead	PSAM's team Ideally, ZGF's MEL Officer can accompany the team in these reflection meetings and most activities during the week.
Tuesday Working Breakfast (1 hour)	Muchinga	Team preparatory meeting	Align team's work agenda for the day	PSAM's team Ideally, ZGF's MEL Officer can accompany the team in these reflection meetings and most activities during the week
Tuesday–Thursday (meal time, ideally for team debrief)	Muchinga	In depth-interviews, collective reflection meetings and clinics, and observations, as relevant	It may pay-off to interview early on external stakeholders that can provide a macro-outlook (e.g. journalists, members of the legislature, or partners) and internal stakeholders that can provide a micro-level take into a change effort (e.g. frontline implementers – current and former). Then, leave for later stakeholders that may help link both levels of analysis (e.g. program managers; executive directors – current and former) or that are more likely to help you dig into a specific challenging aspect (e.g. a mayor). Insights about specific instances may be more productively harvested after we have some broader contextual information. We are considering a series of reflection	PSAM team may split for some of these interviews / observations

			activities with select community partners, but will make a decision on scope and relevance as we learn and focus more the exercise.	
Friday Morning	Muchinga	Team Reflection and Preparation Meeting	Put together the pieces of information and refine the structure of the closing reflection meeting	PSAM's team Ideally, ZGF's MEL Officer can accompany the team in these reflection meetings and most activities during the week. We may include in some of these activities staff from the partner organization for content and logistical support
Friday Working Lunch	Muchinga	Recap meeting	Recap / Debrief and next Steps	Key ZGF Stakeholders TBD
Friday Afternoon	Muchinga	Closing Reflection Meeting	Share our initial thinking and give back Next Steps	Key ZGF Stakeholders TBD

Two additional considerations:

II. The goals of ZGF require learning about the Muchinga province but thinking beyond it, including other affirmative action provinces as well as the national political context. For instance, it is hard to inform the process of adaptation of lessons from Muchinga to other provinces without devoting time in the field to understand the similarities and differences across provinces. While the background research will illuminate the specific circumstances in Zambia, the articulation of social accountability work many times requires understanding and articulating what is happening in a locality with what happens in the capital city –in terms of the government and in terms of the organization providing capacity support.

This creates a series of challenges for our team and limited budget, particularly considering the distances in Zambia. While we only have budget to concentrate in one site over 5 days of work in Zambia, ideally, we would also carry out a smaller range of activities in Lusaka and, at least, one of the affirmative action provinces. In other provinces, we would concentrate in understanding the sub-national contextual factors vis-à-vis our findings in Muchinga. In Lusaka, the work would be two fold: understanding social accountability work in focus provinces in context and gathering insights to provide more tailored reflection about what this exercise could mean beyond Muchinga. At the moment, these two tasks would be unlikely unless we trade-off some of the activities specified above. Alternatively, should ZGF wish for PSAM team to visit other sites beyond what PSAM's 5 day visit can accommodate, please let us know whether you will be able to cover the costs beyond the 5 day visit.

III. We also expect to schedule at least one meeting between RLP and ZGF's MEL Officer for exchanging experiences in their role as the sustainability of this pilot is perched on their ongoing relationship/joint work.

What we need from *ZGF*?

Analysis, Packaging and Sharing The PSAM team will analyze and package the information about the ZGF experience, as agreed. Throughout the process the PSAM team will blog about our learning journey and the ZGF and partner organization's team are encouraged to do so, too. Participating organisations will attend RLP's learning meeting and present, discuss and respond to questions on lessons from the pilot with other members of the wider PSAM partnership.

ZGF has expressed interest in developing capacities to communicate and share lessons from its work. When we reach this stage of work, we hope to develop a joint plan so that the work of the PSAM team on this front contributes to these capacities. An outline of what this process would look like includes a period of discovery wherein ZGF's current communications practices get discussed, and an analysis of the ZGF communications strategy if such an instrument exists. Following on that, suggestions can be made on how to improve the communications strategy for ZGF's continued work that will take into account matters such as resources, audience and media (appropriate technologies). The end product, if all goes well, would be a simple and adaptable communications strategy that is of use to ZGF primarily and to a wider Social Accountability audience secondarily.

What we need from **ZGF**?
Provide information, as needed, and review drafts to help the technical advisors complete: a tailored product (document, video, etc.) about your organization and an internal document for PSAM to analyze portfolio-level insights about learning and context. These products will not be circulated beyond the PSAM community unless all relevant parties agree. PSAM's RLP Head and RLP MEL Officer will contact you separately to discuss and finalize the terms of the MoU in January 2017.
Provide feedback to blogs and a document produced by the technical advisors and the PSAM team on what has been learnt from the process, the extent of adaptation to the learning strategy throughout this period, how these changes have affected its implementation, and key lessons and undertakings to be take forward in the PSAM's ongoing strategy for learning during the remainder of this phase of its strategic plan. This document will build on the blog posts produced to-date and will be the basis of a public case study about PSAM and RLP.
Share in the Annual RLP Meeting on experience of participating in pilot and comment on findings/lessons that emerged from the pilot project.
We will provide additional precision in due time, as the pilot evolves.

Pilot Approach to Strengthen Partners' MEL Capacities: CU-Mozambique [112]

Four organizations will participate of this Pilot (Policy Forum, SAPST, ZGF, and CU-Mozambique). The Pilot is tailored to each organizations' interests and needs, but also has an overall cohesiveness to help inform the broader SAM community.

In the case of Concern Universal, this pilot aims to capture, analyze and reflect on the trajectory and application of social accountability processes in the MuniSAM (Municipal Social Accountability Monitoring) Program. This program builds on learnings from CU-Mozambique's previous work, including adaptations of the PSAM approach to the context. It is innovative in its integration with the Government-driven broader municipal development program. The pilot would put emphasis in better understanding the pros and cons of this strategy in the current context in Mozambique.

Specific Goals:
1. Piloting a process to trace the social accountability journey and learning of CU-Mozambique, with a focus on the adoption of PSAM approach, application and its adaptation in the case of MuniSAM. The idea is to improve understandings of why and how this partner has experimented with the approach and revised to fit with its contextual and organizational characteristics over time.
2. Using the process as a tool to help build new MEL capacities for CU-Mozambique and PSAM.
3. Using these insights to feedback to the PSAM community of practice for social accountability monitoring and its conceptual and MEL approaches.
4. This pilot is neither an academic exercise nor an evaluation of PSAM or individual PSAM partners.

Focus: The focus of the pilot will be one of the 6 municipalities that has been part of Phase 1 and 2 of the Program: Mocuba Municipality in Zambezia province in the center of the Country. In Mocuba CU has a strong local partner (Association of Machuabos Residents and Friends of Mocuba) which has a good relationship with the municipality. The municipality is also very open about its success and challenges and public hearings are popular with the municipality. If possible, the team would visit nearby Quelimane municipality (also spelt Kilimane) - the capital city of Zambezia province. It is run by an opposition party/coalition which opens interesting insights for a project / strategy as the one associated to MuniSAM. A few interviews will also be organized in Maputo to obtain broader picture of the project. Possible rights to consider at the municipal level include those associated to sanitation, climate change, land as well as the broader governance/revenue collection issues.

Methodology: The methodology to accomplish these goals has the following main components (please note in Red action points for you, so we can keep on the learning pilot schedule)

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[112] This customized brief was prepared on January 3, 2017. For additional background and details, please go to the Roadmap for the Pilot across 4 organizations.

Background Analysis: The purpose of this analysis is not to produce standalone analysis or deliverables but to inform tailored fieldwork preparation and data collection.

What we need from Concern Universal?
CU-MZ to send the information that complements the documents we have already received by February 15:
Additional available information, research, news articles, blogs, and any other available documents that are relevant to understand:
a) the organization, including issues such as theory of change, objectives, programs, approaches as well insights about whether and how it works with partners and/or others to build its capacities;
b) the work of the organization, including but not limited to the goals, genesis, and practice of social accountability;
c) insights about possible instances of very positive results of the organization's social accountability efforts against all odds – insights about other or aggregate results, including but not limited to those included in existing research, reporting, evaluations, are also welcome;
d) the public resources management process in Mozambique;
e) the social accountability system in Mozambique;
f) the sector and rights of focus in the municipality of interest, especially how decisions about the rights of interest are made;
g) the political economy of Mozambique,
h) local conditions and politics in the municipality of focus, etc.

Field visit The PSAM team has budget to do fieldwork in Mozambique during a week – although one of the consultants is likely to spend additional time in the country.[113] Ideally, we would schedule this visit in April or May.[114] During this phase the PSAM/RLP team will carry out a range of activities (in-depth interviews, reflection meetings, and observations) to refine the framing of the activities, collect data about context, processes, results, and learnings, as well as to inform the interpretation of findings. We will also incorporate activities to support the development of CU-MZ MEL Capacities, to the extent that budget and logistical considerations allow us. [115]
Our current thinking is that this time would be best allocated as follows:

Location	Day / Time	Activity	Purpose	Who
Mocuba	Monday Working Breakfast (1 hour)	Team preparatory meeting	Align team's work agenda for the day	PSAM's team Ideally, CU-MZ MEL Officer can accompany the team in these reflection meetings and most activities
Mocuba	Monday (2-3 hours)	Opening reflection Meeting	Clarify goals, needs/interests of different stakeholders and rules of engagement for the week. Start a conversation about social accountability work in context to frame and inform other in-depth interviews. Bring to light alternative perspectives through a reflection exercise e.g. a mapping exercise.	Key CU-MZ Stakeholders TBD Key Association of Machuabos stakeholders

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[113] Depending on the timing this could help conduct preparatory interviews and meetings in Maputo

[114] The PSAM team will also conduct fieldwork in Tanzania and Zambia during this period. We will accommodate each organization's preferences to the extent possible.

[115] We encourage the participation of CU-MZ and the partner organization's MEL staff in all preparatory thinking and activities. In general, we welcome observation of a member of the CU-MZ team during interviews and activities– though we may need to consider exceptions on a case by case basis.

			Run through our schedule for the week, identify gaps, and put together a plan to confirm missing interviews. Identify how the team will provide value to these stakeholders in the short and medium term	
Mocuba	Monday Working Lunch	Team Debrief	Recap day activities and plan ahead	PSAM's team Ideally, CU-MZ MEL Officer can accompany the team in these reflection meetings and most activities during the week.
Mocuba	Monday Afternoon	In depth-interviews	Initial in-depth interviews would ideally include informants from within the organization	All PSAM team will participate of these interviews
Mocuba	Monday Evening Working Dinner	Team Debrief	Recap day activities and plan ahead	PSAM's team Ideally, CU-MZ MEL Officer can accompany the team in these reflection meetings and most activities during the week.
Mocuba	Tuesday Working Breakfast (1 hour)	Team preparatory meeting	Align team's work agenda for the day	PSAM's team Ideally, CU-MZ MEL Officer can accompany the team in these reflection meetings and most activities during the week
Mocuba	Tuesday (meal time, ideally for team debrief)	In depth-interviews, collective reflection meetings and clinics, and observations, as relevant	It may pay-off to interview early on external stakeholders that can provide a macro-outlook (e.g. journalists, members of the legislature, or Civil society groups, political parties representatives, etc.) and internal stakeholders that can provide a micro-level take into a change effort (e.g. frontline implementers – current and former, stakeholders in municipality working on PRM or the sectors/rights of interest). Then, leave for later stakeholders that are more likely to help us dig into a specific challenging aspect (e.g. a mayor). Insights about specific instances may be more productively harvested after we have some broader contextual information. We are considering a series of reflection activities with select community partners, but will make a decision on scope and relevance as we learn and focus more the exercise.	PSAM team may split for some of these interviews / observations

Mocuba	Wednesday or Thursday [116](meal time, ideally for team debrief)	In depth-interviews, collective reflection meetings and clinics, and observations, as relevant	It may pay-off to interview early on external stakeholders that can provide a macro-outlook (e.g. journalists, members of the legislature, or Civil society groups, political parties representatives, etc.) and internal stakeholders that can provide a micro-level take into a change effort (e.g. frontline implementers – current and former, stakeholders in municipality working on PRM or the sectors/rights of interest). Then, leave for later stakeholders that are more likely to help us dig into a specific challenging aspect (e.g. a mayor). Insights about specific instances may be more productively harvested after we have some broader contextual information. We are considering a series of reflection activities with select community partners, but will make a decision on scope and relevance as we learn and focus more the exercise.	PSAM team may split for some of these interviews / observations
Mocuba	Wednesday or Thursday	Closing Reflection Meeting	Share our initial thinking and give back Next Steps	Key CU-MZ Stakeholders TBD Key Association of Machuabos stakeholders
Quelimane	Wednesday or Thursday (meal time, ideally for team debrief)	In depth-interviews, collective reflection meetings and clinics, and observations, as relevant	The focus of these interviews are the local and provincial governments as well as local civil society organizations.	PSAM team may split for some of these interviews / observations
Maputo	Friday Morning	Team Reflection and Preparation Meeting	Put together the pieces of information and refine the structure of the closing reflection meeting	PSAM's team Ideally, CU-MZ MEL Officer can accompany the team in these reflection meetings and most activities during the week.
Maputo	Friday Working Lunch	Recap meeting	Recap / Debrief and next Steps	Key CU-MZ Stakeholders TBD
Maputo	Friday Afternoon	Closing Reflection Meeting	Share our initial thinking and give back Next Steps	Key CU-MZ Stakeholders TBD

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[116] The day will depend on logistical arrangements to travel back to Maputo by Friday morning.

We also expect to schedule at least one meeting between RLP MEL officer and CU-MZ MEL Team for exchanging experiences in their role as the sustainability of this pilot is perched on their ongoing relationship/joint work.

The team will prepare some activities in Portuguese, including sending a short description to reach out to the Association of Machuabos, and will discuss with CU-MZ feasible ways forward.

What we need from *CU-MZ and partner organization*?
CU-MZ to send the following information by February 10
An initial list of names and positions of stakeholders that may be relevant to interview.
Share insights about logistical arrangements and support beginning to make arrangements.
In many contexts, it is possible to schedule interviews as we do fieldwork. This is particularly helpful as we learn and identify key people from informants. Please, let us know if this is the case in your context, so we can decide how much time in our agenda to populate/keep open ahead of the visit.
Initial information to plan and budget the site visits: suggested accommodation, information on local arrangements, availability of resources that may supplement PSAM's funding to cover specific costs, etc.
Help scheduling a call with Key Association of Machuabos to engage them early on the process
After February 10, 2017 (through field visit)
Support with the organization of interviews and other activities, including but not limited to convening and/or supporting collective reflection activities
Helping arrange spaces for collective reflection activities
Support in making the site visits logistical arrangements

Analysis, Packaging and Sharing The PSAM team will analyze and package the information about the CU-MZ experience, as agreed. Throughout the process the PSAM team will blog about our learning journey and the CU-MZ and partner organization's team are encouraged to do so, too. Participating organisations will attend RLP's learning meeting and present, discuss and respond to questions on lessons from the pilot with other members of the wider PSAM partnership

What we need from *CU-MZ and partner organization*?
Provide information, as needed, and review drafts to help the technical advisors complete: a tailored product (document, video, etc.) about your organization and an internal document for PSAM to analyze portfolio-level insights about learning and context. These products will not be circulated beyond the PSAM community unless all relevant parties agree. PSAM's RLP Head and RLP MEL Officer will contact you separately to discuss and finalize the terms of the MoU in January 2017.
Provide feedback to blogs and a document produced by the technical advisors and the PSAM team on what has been learnt from the process, the extent of adaptation to the learning strategy throughout this period, how these changes have affected its implementation, and key lessons and undertakings to be take forward in the PSAM's ongoing strategy for learning during the remainder of this phase of its strategic plan. This document will build on the blog posts produced to-date and will be the basis of a public case study about PSAM and RLP.
Share in the Annual RLP Meeting on experience of participating in pilot and comment on findings/lessons that emerged from the pilot project.
We will provide additional precision in due time, as the pilot evolves.

Important: Our approach puts emphasis in iterative decision-making and action as a way to develop our individual and capacities to achieve our goals. The roadmap is subject to revision as initial phases and joint learning inform purpose driven course-correction in the initial plan.

ANNEXURE D: A ROADMAP FOR PILOTING

A Roadmap for Piloting an Approach to Strengthen Partners' Learning, Monitoring and Evaluation Capacities (Living Document - Version 2)

By Florencia Guerzovich, Elsie Eyakuze and Yeukai Mukorombindo

Introduction

The Public Service Accountability Monitor's (PSAM)'s Regional Learning Programme (RLP), along with partners in 4 countries, are engaging in a process to deepen and improve their monitoring, evaluation, and learning (MEL) functions and approaches with their overall strategies and social accountability practices. This includes the development of practitioners' capacities to learn more consciously and proactively through and from practice for improved outcomes and impacts (fulfillment of the right of social accountability and service delivery results).

In August 2016 members from partner organizations met in Bulawayo, Zimbabwe to reflect on their work to-date. Participants shared insights about difficulties and opportunities to use MEL to improve social accountability practice. They also discussed ways to support the development, implementation, and documentation of learning and ways forward,

This document summarizes the short roadmap for our work together over the next year as discussed in Bulawayo, incorporating additional precisions. We make a brief introduction to the challenges we identified collectively and the path forward for a learning pilot that is neither an evaluation of the work of the organization no is it an impact assessment of the organization's SAM work. This information replicates the information that was shared with the RLP community in September 2016.

Since then, we have received and analyzed expressions of interests of a number of partners for whom it would be timely to join in the pilot exercise. As agreed, we need to go "From Background Scan to Localized Approaches that pay off for the PSAM Community." To do so, we analyzed the individual applications paying attentions to question of interest to RLP community members on their own terms. We also considered whether individually and collectively these questions/themes lend themselves for systematic comparative analysis, so that the RLP team can extract insights that can be informative for the

community beyond the four pilot experiences without creating the illusion of blueprints for opening governance. [117]

The key addition to the post-Bulawayo roadmap is the initial conceptual framework through which we might be able to strike a balance between these alternative goals. The analysis considers alternative avenues to maximize analytical and strategic leverage with country-relevant choices, as well as, key limits and trade-offs entailed in these alternatives. The document highlights decisions that our team needs to make with each individual applicant in order to move forward in a timely manner. It concludes with next steps.

Section 1 lays out an estimated timeline, Section 2 the application template, and Section 3 the rules of engagement for our work together in the coming months.

This is intended to be a decision-making document that evolves over time and is iterated upon as the learning journey evolves. It aims to inform a complex, quick turnaround capacity development process for practitioners, with research and learning exercises paving the way. While we build on theory and methods used in the social sciences to help strengthen the systematicity of lessons that speak to key practitioner audiences, readers should not expect to find a research design document elaborated in the mold of such academic documents. The document should be read along other documents focused on other specific aspects of the project rather than in isolation. We are looking forward to working together to help everyone take RLP and his or her work to the next level!

The Challenges and Opportunities for Learning

In Bulawayo, the group identified three related challenges and opportunities for learning:

1. There seems to be a gap between practices in organizations and the learning conversation and practice. It is difficult to demonstrate the value of learning (learning activities) within the organization itself. It is also difficult to show value from learning activities to different organizations and colleagues. How do we develop a learning journey that bridges the gap with those implementing the PSAM approach? Would it help if we make the conversation more about acknowledging/mapping how learning[118] is already happening at the local level in the implementation of the PSAM approach (as opposed to concepts or tools)?

2. Over the last years, partner organizations have been acquiring insights from PSAM and trying to apply it at home. Your practice entails adaptations because your context diverges from the conditions assumed by the approach. Organizational opportunities and constraints as well as

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[117] For previous applications of this approach see e.g. F. Guerzovich. 2012. Effectiveness of International Anticorruption Conventions on Domestic Policy Changes in Latin America. Washington, DC: Open Society Institute. http://www.opensocietyfoundations.org/reports/effectiveness-international-anticorruption-conventions-domestic-policy-changes-latin-america. Also see, Guerzovich, F. & Moses, M. (2016). Learning to open government: findings and reflections on how the Open Government Partnership is playing out, in practice, in five countries. Global Integrity. Transparency & Accountability Initiative. Access Jul 13, 2016: http://www.globalintegrity.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/Learning-to-Open-Government-full.pdf and Guerzovich, F., & Schommer, P. C. (2016 - to be published). The politics of open contracting for urban service delivery: Brazilian contexts, strategies, and learning. U4 - Anti-Corruption Resource Centre.

[118] Learning presupposes development of capacities, changes in behavior, and new forms of reasoning to justify those changes.

learning by doing may also have created a gap between the PSAM approach taught through the Fundamental's course and what you have been (are) doing? What is common across PSAM practices? What are the divergences and why have they emerged? Are they strategic and purposive? Why and how are they helping organizations achieve desired outcomes and impacts?

3. Largely, the knowledge about practice and results is tacit and held by a number of colleagues and partners on the ground. Previous efforts to collect systematically these insights at the organizational level and learn across organizations have faced many obstacles. For example, PSAM has an elaborate intentional design modeled on the outcome mapping methodology but monitoring the numerous indicators and journaling consistently has been a challenge. PSAM's partners have all indicated that they are struggling with documenting their learning and impact consistently and in a way that contributes to organisational learning and decision-making in a meaningful and systematic way. This, in turn, could be creating challenges for developing organizational capacities for MEL as well as using those capacities to support practice. It is also challenging to answer systematically PSAM's learning questions.[119] How can we pilot a different MEL effort to overcome these challenges with fit for purpose tools? Are there new opportunities and constraints we should consider as we move forward?

The Goals

We will address these challenges by:

9. Piloting a process by which two "critical friends" (technical advisors) and PSAM's team[120] will work with a select group of organizations, ideally in 4 countries, to trace their journeys and strategically capture tacit knowledge, reflect on these insights, and build quick analytic narratives.[121] The focus is to understand why and how different organizations have experimented and adapted PSAM's approach to their contextual and organizational characteristics over time. If possible, we will explore plausible mechanisms by which learning and capacity-building outcomes may lead to service delivery impacts.

10. Using the process as a tool to help build new MEL capacities for these organizations and PSAM, so all can continue to refine their MEL approaches with a view to enabling learning that can inform future social accountability practice beyond this year. In this sense, one of the key objectives of the pilot is not to conduct an academic exercise, though we benefit from insights and

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[119] Whether and how understanding of public resource management (PRM) as an integrated 5-process system from a rights-based perspective helps demand side actors engage more confidently, proactively and strategically with PRM processes.
Whether and how the engagement leads to a better mutual understanding of the relationship between public resource management practice and the systemic determinants of service delivery problems.
Whether and how this new understanding leads to changes in the reasoning, capacity and behaviour of demand and supply side actors as they participate in the
Whether and how the resultant changes lead to improved service delivery

[120] PSAM's MEL Officer will be part of this team, but other members of PSAM may contribute as well. A key objective of their participation is to strengthen PSAM's own capacities to take collective learning forward.

[121] Analytic narratives are a methodological tool that helps document processes over time, such as partner application, iteration, and adaptation of the PSAM framework, highlighting the interactions and effects of key variables in a context of imperfect comparative time-series. For applications of this approach in a number of projects, more recently, http://www.transparency-initiative.org/news/learning-to-open-government-new-evidence-to-inform-the-open-government-partnerships-efforts-to-make-change-happen and http://ssrn.com/abstract=2653868.

approaches, but to help practitioners (partners) to learn about how they go about social accountability and reflect on paths forwards. Indirectly, this exercise may benefit communities, as well.

11. Using these insights to feedback to the PSAM community of practice for social accountability monitoring and its conceptual and MEL approaches, we expect that this process will strengthen PSAM's community of practice for social accountability to have better information about their work in and across contexts. In turn, these insights could help improve support to apply PSAM's approach in practice.

12. This pilot is not an evaluation of PSAM or individual PSAM partners.

Work to Date

This section summarizes the work carried out to date to determine the best set of partner-questions to accomplish the goals agreed with project stakeholders.

The team put together a call for expressions of interests to join the pilot as per the timeline detailed in Annex 1. While the team was open to receiving these expressions of interests in the most convenient format for partners, we had to produce a template application at the request of partners highlighting key conditions and criteria that the team would use to analyze which experiences would be fit for purpose (see Annex 3).

At this stage, we needed a preliminary sense, which will be further tested and agreed with the organizations through preparatory calls, that the organizations:

1) Want to be part of the pilot and see the value of the pilot for organizational learning. It is important for organizations to demonstrate clarity regarding the learning purpose/capacity development objective of the pilot to not create misinformed expectations. One way to identify this interest is to pay attention to the organization context described in the application. Another way is to require an MEL officer or learning person to be part of the learning pilot work. The organization must also be responsive, reachable and serious throughout the pilot exercise.

2) Have key learning questions that are not too specific to the organization but that would provide insight into PSAM's RLP learning questions as well as other organizations who are part of the social accountability ecosystem. The questions must resound with other key questions other partners raised in Bulawayo meeting as well as be relevant to the broader social accountability field. The technical team reviews on a rolling basis social accountability literature and debates to align learning questions being asked by organizations with those being asked in other social accountability platforms – even if no formal literature review is expected from this exercise.

3) Despite differences in terms of form and context, organizations need to share some common traits with other organizations that will be part of the pilot to enable comparative analysis and analytical leverage. We discuss our current thinking of the inductive – deductive conceptual framework that increases our confidence about comparability later in this document. This framework strikes a balance between theory and evidence in the field and insights from the PSAM's community tacit knowledge captured to date.

4) Organization's staff must have been trained in any version of the PSAM Fundamentals' course and have had sufficient time to try applying it on the ground and finding fits and misfits between the general approach and the context.

PSAM officially received four applications from Concern Universal (CU) based in Mozambique, Zambia Governance Foundation (ZGF), Policy Forum based in Tanzania as well as Civic Forum on Human Development (CFHD) based in Zimbabwe. The technical team reviewed the applications and all were found to meet the above criteria with the exception of CFHD. The technical team found that CGHD failed to demonstrate a clear understanding of the purpose of the learning pilot project, furthermore, the organization lacked suitability in terms of sharing common traits with other selected organizations. Another option was explored with the Southern African Parliamentary Support Trust (SAPST) based in Zimbabwe.

Following the technical team's conversations with PSAM's RLP programme and SAPST, it was decided that SAPST presented as a viable second option with a key learning question with potential interest broader social accountability monitor. We discuss the learning questions of individual organizations along with the presentation of the initial building blocks of the conceptual framework we use to guide our analysis.

It is important to underscore that this approach, while more burdensome than others employed in cross-country analysis, seems relevant here as the project seeks to strike a balance between: the richness of day-to-day experiences that are crucial for some pro-reform actors we seek to inform and the macro insights that other audiences need in order to find our findings useful to inform their pro-open government decisions. Our openness about the process enables us to point to the potential as well as the trade-offs and risks of the team's decisions. The idea is to be upfront about the limits of the research but also help us reflect about how we can improve how we go about learning.

A Framework to Understand Localized Approaches that pay off for the PSAM Community

To produce useful guidance, we need a conceptual framework to inform the collection of evidence, to structure the analysis and to facilitate systematic cross-country comparisons that produce relevant information at the portfolio level. At the heart of these conceptual framework is a theory about how change happens and whether and how social accountability interventions may contribute to those broader change processes. See Box 1.

Box 1: Theory of Change

In this exercise, the notion of theory of change is key. According to James (2011), theories of change are "an ongoing process of reflection to explore change and how it happens – and what that means for the part organisations play in a particular context, sector and/or group of people."

• It locates a programme or project within a wider analysis of how change comes about.

• It draws on external learning about development.

• It articulates organisations' understanding of change – but also challenges them to explore it further.

• It acknowledges the complexity of change: the wider systems and actors that influence it

• It is often presented in diagrammatic form with an accompanying narrative summary."

This idea is critical for two reasons. First, it provides a series of presumptions that that will be explored over time through our pilots in order to generate insights about whether and how adaptive learning informs (or not) the fit between an individual strategy, its context, and the organization its implementing the strategy.

Second, and more importantly, these tools capture "a way of thinking" and reflecting about action for learning. In so far as the RLP community has agreed that the process of developing capacities to learn individually, organizationally, and collectively is more important than the product. Our emphasis will be put into this second sense of the notion of theory of change and theory of action. This means that, for instance, we will prioritize in each case on-the ground data collection tools that a priori are more conducive to enabling this process – even if they are functional equivalents of the data collection tools we apply in other contexts. Knowledge about context should also inform reasonable – rather than ideal expectations about the plausible effects of an intervention – considering the limits about our own knowledge about social accountability and its effects.[122]. Ultimately, we need to engage stakeholders considering their starting points, needs, and interests at the moment in which we encounter them.

Our inductive –deductive theory presumes that the ability of PSAM-informed activists to contribute to their desired goals depends fundamentally on the interaction and fit between different types of:

i)theories of action and the strategy (broad plan of action linking inputs to desired outcomes and impacts) that derive from them. In all cases considered, the localization and adaptation over time of the collection of tools for monitoring social accountability systems for the realization of human rights and capabilities introduced in PSAM's Fundamental's course is a critical building block of the strategy we will be looking into (see below diagram depicting PSAM tools for monitoring the social accountability system which will be our starting point);

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[122] Poli, M. y Guerzovich, F. (2014). "Introduction to GPSA Dissemination Notes series", Serie: Are We Ready for Social Accountability? GPSA. Ver artículo.
GPSA (2014). "What next for strategic accountability?", Serie: Are We ready for Strategic Social Accountability?", Note 6. Ver artículo.
Guerzovich, F. y Poli, M. (2014). "Supporting Politically Smart Social Accountability", Serie: Are We Ready for Social Accountability? GPSA. Ver artículo.

Tools for Monitoring the Social Accountability System

Tool 1:
Planning and Budget Evaluation
Activity
Evaluate strategic plans and budget allocations.
Information required
Budget documents, Strategic plans, Programme business plans, Outsourcing contracts, Service level agreements, Infrastructure maintenance plans.
Outputs
Budget Analysis, Strategic Plan Evaluation.

Tool 5:
Monitoring Oversight
Activity
Monitor Auditor General's findings and implementation of oversight committee resolutions.
Information required
Auditor-General's reports, Oversight committee minutes.
Outputs
Accountability to Oversight Report.

TOOLS
FOR THE REALISATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND CAPABILITIES

Tool 2:
Expenditure Tracking
Activity
Compare budget allocations with spending reports.
Information required
Monthly/quarterly financial reports, Audited annual financial report, Internal audit reports.
Outputs
Expenditure Tracking Report.

Tool 4:
Public Integrity Evaluation
Activity
Evaluate public integrity processes and capacity to respond to cases of misuse/abuse of public resources.
Information required
Declarations of interest, Disciplinary databases, Annual reports, Oversight committee minutes, Newspaper reports, Auditor-General's reports.
Outputs
Public Integrity Evaluation, Analysis of Cases of Misuse/Abuse of Resources.

Tool 3:
Performance Monitoring
Activity
Evaluate performance management and assess delivery of services and infrastructure by key programmes.
Information required
Annual report, Auditor-General report, Internal audit report, Reports on business plans, Reports from service providers, Reports from oversight bodies, Infrastructure & maintenance reports.
**Outputs**
Scorecard, Service Delivery Report.

ii) context - a configuration of concrete factors outside the control of practitioners that affect the likely success of their strategies and interventions. We discuss the operationalization of context for this pilot in the next section;

iii) organization that includes the structured relationships, resources, procedures, and knowledge articulated in a regular and continuous basis around a common goal We discuss the operationalization of context for this pilot in the next section.

Our presumption is that context, strategy and organization fit with each other and deliver after cycles of experimentation, learning, and adaptation rather than one-off instances of engagement – in this case after instances of application of the PSAM-informed local social accountability strategy.[123] Whether, how and why do these circles in figure 1 evolve individually and collectively over time (see below)? We are particularly interested in the role of experience and tactic knowledge, on the one hand, and the

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[123] Guerzovich, F., & Schommer, P. C. (2016 - to be published). The politics of open contracting for urban service delivery: Brazilian contexts, strategies, and learning. U4 - Anti-Corruption Resource Centre. Guerzovich, F., & Schommer, P. C. (2015). "Four Ways in Which Social Accountability and Open Government Interventions Bridge the State and Society". Link.

adaptation and application of RLP and local MEL approaches, on the other hand, in this evolution in the practice of social accountability in context by particular organizations?
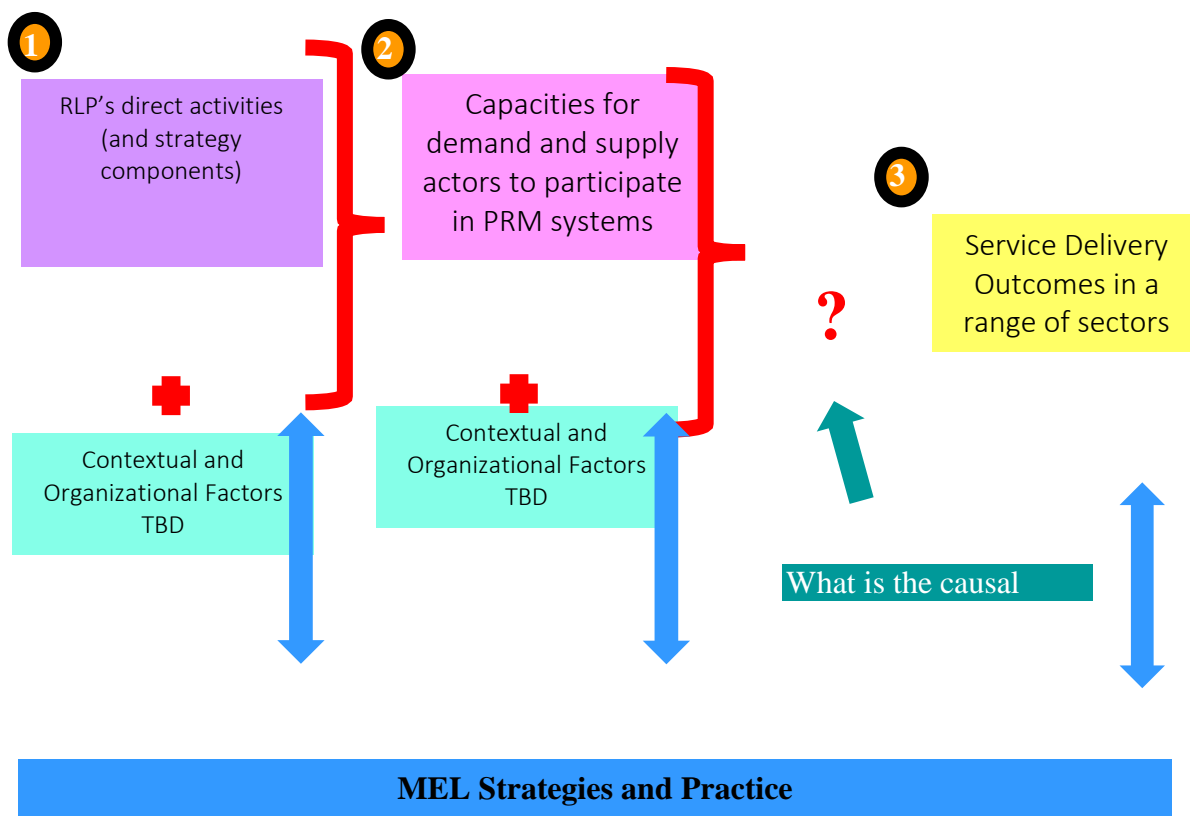
Context, Strategy, and Organizational Structures

Focus: the interactions between the three variables.
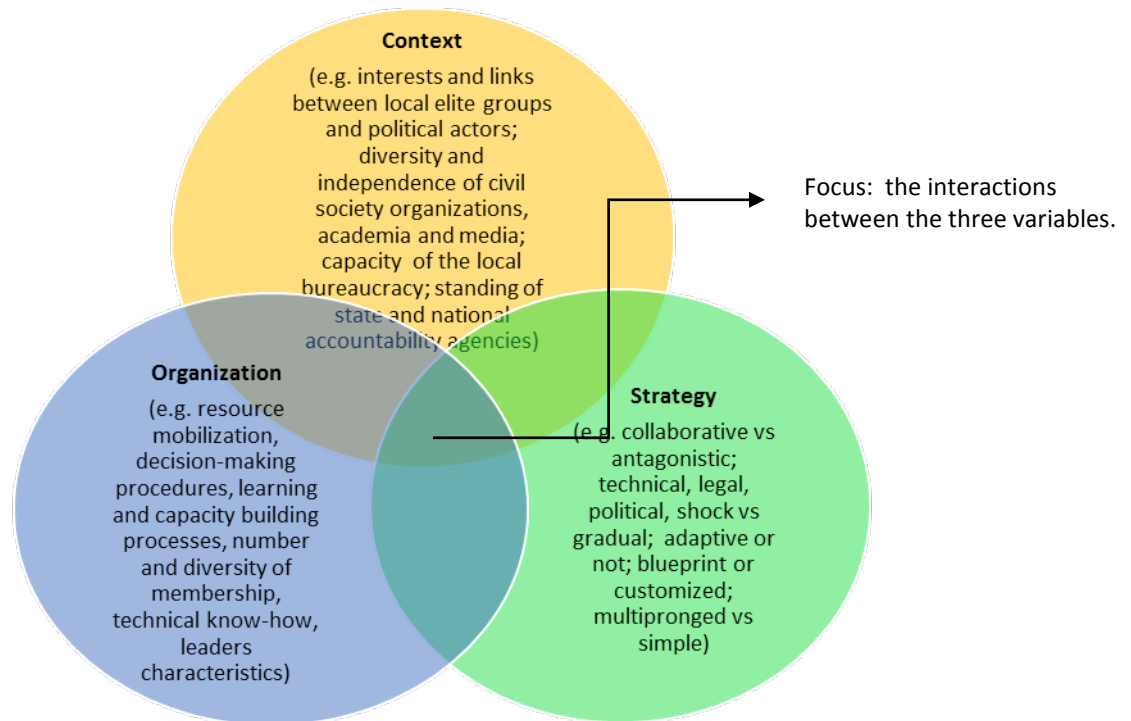
Source: Guerzovich and Schommer (2015; 2016)

Thinking in terms of RLP's questions in the concept note,[124] this focus, consistent with the interest of partners (see below), puts increased attention in the second point of interaction between MEL and those practices and dynamics identified in the Graph below:

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[124] Whether and how understanding of public resource management (PRM) as an integrated 5-process system from a rights-based perspective helps demand side actors engage more confidently, proactively and strategically with PRM processes.
Whether and how the engagement leads to a better mutual understanding of the relationship between public resource management practice and the systemic determinants of service delivery problems.
Whether and how this new understanding leads to changes in the reasoning, capacity and behaviour of demand and supply side actors as they participate in the
Whether and how the resultant changes lead to improved service delivery.

There is another aspect to our way of thinking that should be spelled out upfront. Our focus on strategy, context and organizational types should be understood through a political economy lens. Box 2 discusses what we mean by political economy for a strategic social accountability approach.

Box: Political Economy for Strategic Social Accountability

Political economy analysis is concerned with the interaction of political and economic processes in a society. It focuses on power and resources, how they are distributed and contested in different country and sector contexts between different groups and individuals, and the processes that create, sustain, and transform these relationships over time (see here, also see here, here, here, here).

But applying political economy savviness to social accountability approaches means a lot more than writing up a map of stakeholders and institutional and governance arrangements. For the GPSA (see application template here), strategic social accountability is a process encompassing:
(a) the use of a combined set of linked, fit for purpose tactics, mechanisms and "tools" including formal (i.e., mandated by laws and regulations) and informal (set up or organized by CSOs and citizen groups themselves),

(b) whereby the choice of mechanisms and tools is grounded on several considerations, such as a cost-benefit analysis of alternatives, an analysis of the political-institutional context, an assessment of needs and problems regarding the service delivery chain or the management process, among others, as well as of "entry points" for introducing the process, and of existing capacities and incentives of the actors to be engaged, including service users, CSOs, service providers and public sector institutions. 'Ideally, all these stakeholders learn from each other (and even team up) to figure out options in terms of strategies and

solutions and put them to work. CSOs drive strategic social accountability interventions, but by no means, go it alone.

Poli, M. y Guerzovich, F. (2014). "Introduction to GPSA Dissemination Notes series", Series: Are We Ready for Social Accountability? GPSA. See Article.

Selecting Focus within and Across Partners

With these building blocks in mind, we considered the issues of interest of each one of the four applicants. These are:

- **Policy Forum** is applying to join this initiative with a view of building its MEL capacities to improve the way it collects evidence of impact in manner that clearly and indisputably describes its key contributions (i.e. draw causal links between activities and impact at the policy and local levels). Policy Forum would like to learn how to better extract lessons from the approach they have been applying and have an opportunity to reflect and be clear about: a) what kind of impact they want to make, and b) what kind of impact they are making. This decision follows an internal process that has prompted the organization to embark in a revision of its **Theory of Change/Action and MEL framework that is relevant for the broader framework.** The latter is led by a new MEL Officer and will determine learning strategies, plans and tools for the organization. This is a question that focuses at its core at the interaction between strategy and an aspect of the organizational structure. The pilot will focus on one of the six partners that attended the Bulawayo meeting and will strive to link to pre-planned Policy Forum meeting with the broader membership.
- **SAPST** is interested in exploring how to effectively and sustain efforts of implementing SAM as a partnership? This question reflects a series of attempts, more and less fruitful, to articulate their work with others in the country. The focus of the pilot will be the wider SAPTS story and the organizations' application of the PSAM approach, with prior attempts through ZLP being a part of the narrative rather than the main focus of it. Again, a core focus is to capture, analyze and reflect on why and how SAPTS took on the PSAM approach and what it has accomplished. This question puts an organizational and strategic issue front and center.
- **Concern Universal – Mozambique** are currently implementing MuniSAM (Municipal Social Accountability Monitoring Program) integrated within a Government-driven broader municipal development program and it would be very interesting to get more insights on whether this model is an appropriate strategy for the current context in Mozambique – a context that is becoming increasingly tough for civil society work in with rising political tensions. The strategy is also an attempt to maintain leverage when public officials with whom the organization has built relationships leave office, undermining the sustainability of the work. But is it possible and efficacious for a civil society group engaging in social accountability work to demand transparency whilst at the same time having the kind of relationship with the government established through MuniSAM (i.e. integration of work)? And how could the assessment of the program in context inform future strategic decisions? At the same time, the Concern team expect that some new ideas, approaches and methods could come out of this exercise and could incorporate those in our strategy for the future of MuniSAM. In particular, the team could benefit from support to document adaptations and changes to the PSAM approach in the country. For the pilot we hope to work in one of the 6 municipalities that has been part of Phase 1 and 2 of the Program.

- **ZGF** is applying with a view to informing the expansion of their social accountability work from Muchinga to other affirmative action provinces in 2017. This pilot will therefore partly help to bring together different lessons from different contexts, which will be useful for the expansion of our work around social accountability. This question puts sub-national contexts front and center. Like other partners, ZFG could benefit from support for capturing and reflecting on what they have learned by doing in context and develop capacities to continue doing so in the future. ZGF also expressed interest in developing capacities for communicating and sharing these lessons with others.

We hope to compare these four partners' trajectories' over time and contribute to their analysis of the issues of interest. Collectively, these cases provide us geographical coverage in four countries. The proposed questions, and organizational trajectory implementing PSAM informed strategies, provide confidence that we will be able to trace changes in those localized strategies paying attention to the role of learning as a key driver of strategic-organizational-contextual fit over time. Time enables partners to learn about challenges and opportunities in engaging different stakeholders, contextual characteristics and organizational set ups. Partners have the chance to identify strategies and tactics that are likely to trigger responsiveness from different partners or opponents, implement actions and adjust them.

In fact, during October 2016, with the support of the RLP team, the pilot team tried to situate these questions in the broader organizational, contextual, and strategic trajectory of each partners' work over the years. We discussed what the application and the question of interests told us preliminarily about the intersection of each organization, its context, and its strategy at the time they started implementing SAM and today. The imperfect, preliminary brainstorm sessions summed up in Figure 2 below helped the pilot team check whether and how theoretical insights could help us understand each partner, its trajectory and the concrete question of individual interest.

An inductive – deductive brainstorming exercise
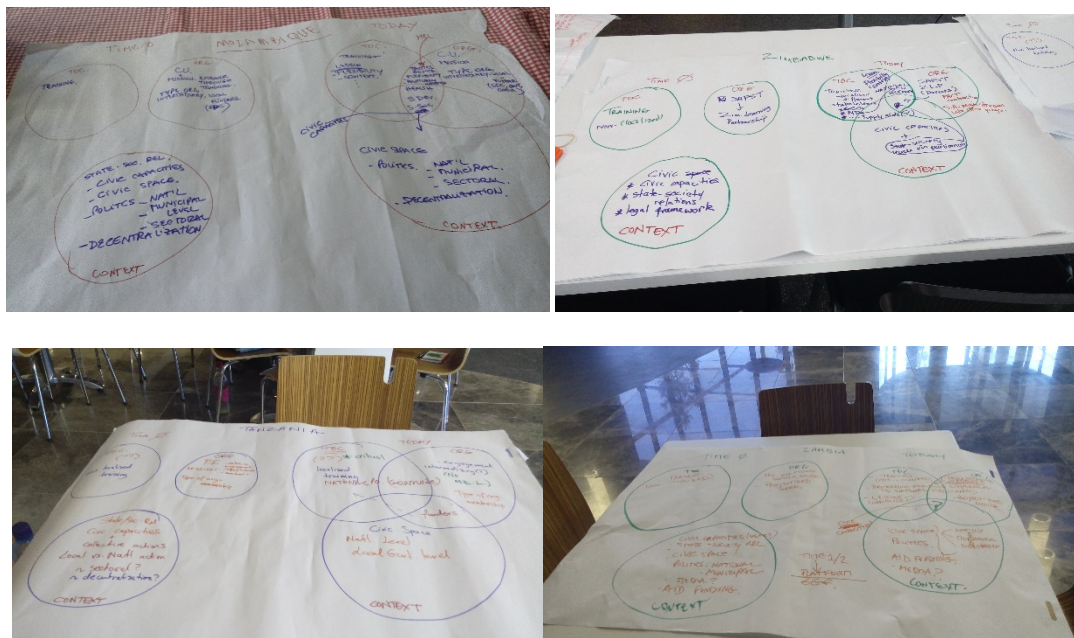
The theoretically and empirically informed exercise also enabled us to prioritize key dimensions of context and organization we hope to keep an eye on while we trace the evolution in practice of the local strategy. This is necessary because PSAM does not have the resources to do an analysis of all dimensions of context, strategy, and organization, nor all the questions the interactions of these variables may raise and be of interest to the community. We need to prioritize a limited number of factors that are tractable (and may have changed albeit unevenly during the timespan analyzed) and provide additional analytical leverage in a context of imperfect data to guide this pilot in ways that help the team accomplish its goals.

In our discussion of each organization's interest, we considered dimensions that are relevant in the literature, in the trajectory of all organizations. This decision is strategic for it will bound the claims PSAM can support with the results of this exercise. We made this decision striking a balance between theory and evidence in the field and insights from the PSAM's community tacit knowledge captured to date. Once finalized, this project's choices hope to enable stakeholders to draw theoretically informed, bounded, practical political knowledge that can help them learn how to spend limited resources more wisely in their effort to promote concrete social accountability-driven changes.

Our current thinking is that we should systematically trace and compare developments in the application of each partners' strategy looking specifically at the issues that help answer questions of concern for each organization as well as one key characteristic of context and one characteristic of the organizations that implement the strategy in that context. These are:

a) the relative level of political pre-conditions, including civic space and civil society capacities, present in the country at a point in time. We presume that the context is relatively more conducive for social accountability work in Tanzania and Mozambique across the period under observation than in Zambia and Zimbabwe. We make this presumption based on information captured to date through the interview / application process as well as looking at a series of indicators that measure different aspects of these pre-conditions for the period under consideration.[125]

b) the locus of definition of social accountability capacity building needs in a given organization. With some of the partners – CU and ZGF – defining those needs on a centralized basis, others defining the needs from implementation/local partners-up - PF- and still other articulations shifting the locus of definition of these needs over time in Zimbabwe.

	Pre-Conditions Relatively less Conducive	Pre-Conditions Relatively more Conducive

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[125] Existing indicators of Civicus (civic space and EEI), World Bank Governance Indicators (Accountability and Voice and Political Stability and Absence of Violence), CSO sustainability Index are imperfect. Our categorization is too. It strives to make sense of the context for social accountability working the broader context through the triangulation of available sources on these issues – we don't have the resources to do otherwise. To be sure, at a given point in time measures may vary and countries can increase or decrease in these measures over time. For instance, the Policy Forum team identified declining civic space i

n Tanzania, the same seems to be the case in Mozambique. To the extent relevant and plausible for our goals we may revise this categorization as the project unfolds.

Implementation/Local Partners Define Capacity Building (CB) Needs	ZLP[126]	PF
Center Defines Capacity Building (CB) Needs	SAPST ZGF	CU

This theorization and initial comparisons gives us some confidence to focus and prioritize areas of interest within and across cases. If relevant, this set up with allow us to consider maximizing analytical leverage by comparing most similar cases and most different paired comparisons of strategy-context-organizational trajectories informed by learning (or not).

Other Methodological considerations

The paper will rely on both qualitative and quantitative data, depending on information available at PSAM and the organizations. We will collect data using desk reviews, on-site interviews with relevant stakeholders, and observation regarding local experiences. In some instance, we may opt for collecting data through focus groups or other participatory methods. We will strive for a functional equivalence of collection methods that make the most of limited resources and common and diverse interests. We will also draw on existing research about these and other participatory initiatives in the countries of interests, the broader social accountability and transparency and accountability literatures as well as our own observations of these fields.

Now in the process we will further develop the methodology through two parallel tools. First, we attach Schommer and Guerzovich (2015) which presents common parameters that will inform the team. Second, we prepared a series of annexes that will discuss specific customization and applications of the methodology to each context and partner.

Section 1: The Roadmap – at a Glance

Below we introduce with a short overview of the process and timeline for the next year:

Phase 1: Committing to Experiment Together

- •**August - September 15, 2016** - You'll discuss with your organization whether you are interested and able to be part of the pilot process? The PSAM team as well as the technical advisors will support this process. You can contact Florencia Guerzovich (florcig@gmail.com) and Elsie Eyakuze (elsieeyakuze@gmail.com).

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[126] Zimbabwe Learning Partnership for Social Accountability Formalised in August 2013, the partnership comprises of the Southern Africa Parliamentary Support Trust (SAPST), Community Working Group on Health (CWGH), Public Service Accountability Monitor (PSAM), and the Zimbabwe Women's Resource Centre and Network (ZWRCN).

- **September 15, 2016** deadline to submit an application to the technical advisers expressing your interest and commitment to participating in the pilot. Participating programmes must meet the following criteria:
  1. At least one member of staff must have been trained on the PSAM approach either in Grahamstown or on one of the localized versions of the PSAM course.
  2. The organization must have been applying the PSAM approach in whatever form the organization has chosen to apply it for at least 2 years.
  3. Your application should state
     - Who was trained, where and when
     - We want to know where and how the approach has been applied in the work of your organization and why. If you have a pre-existing internal document, case study, evaluation, webpage, or document answering this question, please attach it to your application. If you need to write this from scratch, sum up the information in up to a page.
     - A paragraph letting us know any specific circumstances that make this pilot timely/useful for you (see our selection criteria in the next bullet).
- **September 16- October 20, 2016** – the technical advisors and PSAM team will select the group of organizations that will participate in the pilot. We are looking for individual organizations that have the short and medium term interest, needs that this project can help fulfill and willingness to embark in a collective experimentation process that provides insights for the broader PSAM Community. However, the decision to include a particular organization will be made considering whether and how that organization can help illuminate particular aspects of strategy, tactics and context of interests to the broader PSAM community and social accountability field. We will prioritize geographical coverage across all 4 countries. In addition, our discussions in Bulawayo, debates and literature in social accountability, and comparative methods will inform the technical advisors' analysis about the pros and cons of alternative groupings of pilot organizations. This analysis, as well as our budget, will help PSAM and the technical advisors' joint decision about the pilot organizations.

  You may be required to participate in a call during this period.

Phase 2: From Background Scan to Localized Approaches that pay off for the PSAM Community

- **October - December 2016** – during this preparatory phase, the team will develop a conceptual framework and methodological approach for the pilot across countries and organizations. It will also localize this approach with the support of participating partners. You will need to allocate time to:
  1. Identify a contact person to support the coordination of the implementation of the pilot as well as key staff and partners who should be part of decision-making and/or may benefit from participating in the process for capacity building.
  2. Collaborate in the development of the pilot as per this proposal. Provide time for project guidance and review of pilot products upon request. Timely deliverables will be contingent on timely feedback.
  3. Share project related information and background documents, including but not limited to documents that help understand the genesis and goals of the project, its current status, and context information so that the team can conduct desk analysis. The aim of this

exercise is not to produce a systematic or exhaustive stand-alone review, but to inform a tailor-made conceptual framework for the project that helps achieve our goals.

4. Participate in regular, at least monthly, planning and decision-making calls. These calls and other communications aim to: i) adapt key learning questions to the timeframe/budget/priorities, ii) tailor the methodological approach, iii) identify promising examples to explore linkages between PRM interventions and impacts in service delivery, and, iv) develop a field visit plan (dates, methodologies, interviewees and informants, processes for participant observations, participants in reflection meetings logistics, etc.).

5. Support the identification of risks and appropriate risk management.

6. Review draft blog posts about the process, as needed. This blog posts will be published in COPSAM's website as their main goal is to share our journey with the PSAM broader community of practice that will be observing, but not participating in the pilot. We encourage you uploading them to your own platforms.

7. We would also welcome/encourage public comments to our blog posts and/or your own reflections about the process through specific blog posts, short videos, or other tools. We will strive to support the production of your own content to the extent possible, as well as cross-post and disseminate content about the pilot to the broader community.

- **Phase 3: Documentation, Analysis and Reflection on Social Accountability Journeys**
  - **January - May 2017** – the technical advisors and PSAM team will visit you for a week to help uncover tacit knowledge in your organization (and among stakeholders in your context) about your experimentation, implementation, and adaptation of the PSAM approach (and its causes) over time. The process will also include partnering with members of your organizations to develop their capacities to capture, reflect, and use tacit knowledge.
  - Tentatively we will visit Zimbabwe and Tanzania in February and Mozambique and Zambia in April.
  - You will be responsible for:
    1. Providing time for project guidance and review of pilot products upon request. Timely deliverables will be contingent on timely feedback.
    2. Supporting the implementation of the field visit plan, as agreed on the previous phase.
    3. Convening and/or supporting activities designed to facilitate collection of information and reflection, as agreed.
    4. Sharing information to fill gaps and to ensure timely risk management, as needed.
    5. Participating in regular, at least monthly, planning, reflection, and decision-making calls.
    6. Reviewing draft blog posts about the process, as needed. This blog posts will be published in COPSAM's website, but we encourage you uploading them to your own platforms.
    7. We would also welcome/encourage public comments to our blog posts and/or your own reflections about the process through specific blog posts, short videos, or other tools. We will strive to support the production of your own content to the extent possible, as well as cross-post and disseminate content about the pilot to the broader community.

Phase 4: Analysis, Packaging, and Review
  - **June - July 2017** – Participating organisations will provide information, as needed, and review drafts to help the technical advisors complete: a tailored product (document, video, etc.) about your organization and an internal document for PSAM to analyze portfolio-level insights about learning

and context. These products will not be circulated beyond the PSAM community unless all relevant parties agree.

Participating organisations will also provide feedback to a document produced by the technical advisors and the PSAM team on what has been learnt from the process, the extent of adaptation to the learning strategy throughout this period, how these changes have affected its implementation, and key lessons and undertakings to be take forward in the PSAM's ongoing strategy for learning during the remainder of this phase of its strategic plan. This document will build on the blog posts produced to-date and will be the basis of a public case study about PSAM and RLP.

- •**August 2017** - Participating organisations will attend RLP's learning meeting and present, discuss and respond to questions on lessons from the pilot with other members of the wider PSAM partnership.

Important: Our approach puts emphasis in iterative decision-making and action as a way to develop our individual and capacities to achieve our goals. The roadmap is subject to revision as initial phases and joint learning inform purpose driven course-correction in the initial plan.

Section 2: Application Template

Pilot to Strengthen Partners' Learning, Monitoring and Evaluation Capacities Application Template
September 2016

About this document
This is the draft application template created for the **Pilot to Strengthen Partners' Learning, Monitoring and Evaluation Capacities** at the request of PSAM partners. Partners interested in applying for the Pilot can: a) complete this form; OR b) use other formats to answer the questions included in the post-Bulawayo Roadmap for the project. The content of both guidance notes is the same.

Applications are due on September 15, 2016.

They should be sent to Florencia Guerzovich (florcig@gmail.com) and Elsie Eyakuze (elsieeyakuze@gmail.com).

Information about your organization

Organization	
Country (if relevant, note localities/regions)	
Website	
Social Media Contact (Twitter, FB, others)	
How long has the organization been applying the PSAM Approach? (Minimum is 2 years)	
Name of the contact person for the pilot	
Email of the contact person for the pilot	
Skype of the contact person for the pilot	
WhatsApp of the contact person for the pilot	
Social Media of the contact person for the pilot (Twitter, FB, others)	

At least one member of staff must have been trained on the PSAM approach either in Grahamstown or on one of the localized versions of the PSAM course.

Who was trained?	
Where and when was she/he trained?	

Your organization's work with the PSAM Approach

We want to know where and how the approach has been applied in the work of your organization and why. If you have a pre-existing internal document, case study, evaluation, webpage, or document answering this question, please attach it to your application and leave this page blank. If you need to write this from scratch, sum up the information in up to a page.

Is this Pilot a good, timely fit for your organization?

Please, write a paragraph letting us know any specific circumstances that make this pilot timely/useful for you. Check out the Roadmap document for additional information about what we expect from partners to explain why you are a good fit for the pilot.

Section 3: Some additional rules of engagement:

1. *Capitalizing on the process:*   MEL strategy review and development is a collaborative process of doing involving the PSAM, your team and the technical advisors who will support us during this part of our longer joint learning journey. How we go about the process and maximize its value for achieving our objectives is as important as the concrete findings of an activity and deliverable.

2. *Critically thinking about trade-offs:* process and other methodological decisions entail trade-offs. We have made the recommendations specified below informed by previous experience   in our field. All these suggestions are open to conversation and joint decision-making. The idea is that, in practice, the technical assistance should be applying many of the skills required to learn more critically and consciously for the broader MEL strategy.

3. *Comparative contextualized lessons:* One of our key challenges is supporting learning by partners that are working in different political economy (sectoral and geographic) contexts with tailored partnerships and customized activities while, at the same time, helping PSAM/RLP to move towards answers to questions about the portfolio. All of this without creating the illusion of single magic explanations/solutions for all PSAM interventions. This is one of the key areas in which we will need to compromise.

4. *The role of the technical advisors:* is of a "critical friend". This means that while our goal is to assist the RLP and its partners to achieve your shared goals, we will maintain a suitable distance so that we can provide bigger picture and analyze what PSAM/RLP and its partners have been doing. This viewpoint is crucial to create opportunities for openly, but systematically talking about what is working and what is not working, justifying assessments, and working collaboratively to advance projects where the whole is bigger than the sum of its parts.

5. *Safe Space:* For this to work, we also count on all parties' openness about positive and negative experiences. This means that information about individual organizations is confidential unless we agree what to disclose and how to disclose it.

Individual products (case studies or other product that suits all parties) will be produced from each participating site and these will remain the joint property of the PSAM and the participating organization. Whether, when and how the case studies will be shared other than at the next regional learning meeting will need to be agreed in an MOU between PSAM and the participating partner once a final selection is made.

In addition, the public blog posts and other documents about the portfolio will focus on the process of the pilot rather than the findings about adaptations and learning in concrete cases. Through these products PSAM can share our joint insights with the PSAM broader community of practice that will be observing, but not participating in the pilot. This is critical to help the broader group improve individual practices, but also help chart the collective journey beyond the initial year of this pilot.

PSAM will also use these products to contribute PSAM's unique African experience and insights to global debates in the social accountability field.