



Citizen-Led Accountability: Strategies and Tools

Coady International Institute (Canada), in partnership with Tanzanian Gender Network Programme (TGNP Mtandao) and Gender Training Institute (GTI)

July 2 to 13, 2018, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania

Why this course?

Citizens have the right and responsibility to hold state actors and other power holders (e.g., NGOs, corporations) accountable for decisions and actions that affect their lives. Indeed, the participation of active citizens is key to ensuring good governance, which directly affects people on a daily basis (e.g. access to health care, housing, roads, education, and job opportunities) and to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. Yet, around the world, many governance systems lack accountability, leading to problems of poor quality public services, mismanagement of resources, corruption, waste and social injustice. At a time where many countries are experiencing democratic backsliding and a shrinking civic space, many citizens feel powerless to voice their opinions and concerns, let alone to influence government decisions, push for improved responsiveness and accountability, and effect meaningful change.

Citizen-led accountability – or social accountability – refers to a range of approaches and mechanisms that enable citizens to do just that: working with governments in a meaningful, productive and effective way in pursuit of increased transparency, citizen voice, improved governance systems, and ultimately, a culture of accountability leading to positive changes in people's lives.

Based at St. Francis Xavier University, Coady International Institute offers programs relevant for today's community development practitioner and social change actor. The Institute is an educational organization dedicated to identifying, developing and disseminating knowledge on effective development practice. As a leader in the study and practice of community-based development, Coady Institute provides relevant programs that help others make a positive difference in their own communities.



This **10-day certificate course** focuses on developing the knowledge and practical skills participants need to strengthen citizen involvement in the oversight of government, and to improve accountability practices at the local, regional and national level. The course:

- is designed and facilitated according to adult education principles and uses diverse participatory and action-oriented methodologies;
- explores fundamental concepts related to citizen-led accountability;
- guides participants in conducting a contextual analysis to ground their thinking in their own realities;
- offers an exploration of diverse social accountability tools as well as case studies from around the world; and,
- equips participants to apply strategic thinking to develop a proposal around how they might apply citizen-led accountability in their own context.

Who should take this course?

This certificate course is designed for practitioners from civil society organizations and social movements, as well as staff from government, development agencies or the private sector, who are engaged in governance, public services, human rights, advocacy and/or accountability work. Applicants should be open to sharing their knowledge and skills, and motivated to apply their learning in their own work.



What are the expected learning outcomes?

By the end of the course, participants are able to:

- explain the concept of good governance and its link to citizen-led accountability;
- explain the fundamental principles of citizen-led accountability, why it is important and the potential benefits it can bring;
- apply a gender lens in their analysis of governance and accountability;
- describe a range of citizen-led accountability practices and tools such as participatory planning, independent budget analysis, gender budgeting, participatory budgeting, social audit, community scorecard, citizen report card, and participatory monitoring and evaluation of public services.
- describe operational lessons learned with regard to these different practices;
- apply practical skills gained from hands-on experience with at least one social accountability tool.
- identify ways to use citizen-led accountability tools in advocacy to make the case and build momentum for change;
- identify the characteristics of an enabling environment for citizen-led accountability and explore strategies for creating/nurturing enabling conditions;
- describe ways to enhance the accountability of participants' own organizations; and,
- improve their ability to assess government schemes and programs to ensure the quality of public service delivery to all citizens.

What is the key content and how is it organized?

The course is structured around three main streams:

Stream 1. Setting a foundation: Key concepts and contextual analysis

The course begins by establishing a climate for effective co-learning among participants and facilitators. Building on their unique and shared experiences, participants analyze their contexts by exploring the concepts of 'good' governance, power, active citizenship and accountability. They conduct an initial power mapping of key stakeholders and accountability relationships in their context, and apply a gender and social inclusion analysis to ensure equity.

Stream 2. Analyzing citizen-led accountability mechanisms and tools

Participants explore the conceptual, practical and operational dimensions of citizen-led accountability by analyzing mechanisms and tools designed to build accountability into the public governance cycle (policy making, planning, budgeting, public spending and service delivery). They are provided with an in-depth look at one or two of these tools (e.g., by practicing the community scorecard methodology, and/or through field visits of community or civil society actors leading citizen-led accountability practices on the ground). This stream emphasizes skills building (e.g. communication, facilitation, participatory monitoring, data analysis, persuasion) through practical experience, first-hand exposure, and exchange with stakeholders involved in citizen-led accountability.

Stream 3. Achieving change through strategic citizen-led accountability

Building on participants' analyses and the citizen-led accountability mechanisms and tools explored, this stream focuses on applying the learning in a strategic manner to transform accountability relationships in participants' contexts. Participants revisit their previous analysis, conduct additional research, and are introduced to advocacy as a complementary approach to citizen-led accountability. They reflect on the accountability of their own organizations and its implications for this work. This stream also emphasizes adopting a strategic approach to citizen-led accountability (e.g. through the development of multi-stakeholder

partnerships, networks and coalitions). Together, these elements form core portions of the course assignment: a proposal to put strategic citizen-led accountability into practice in participants' contexts (details below), to be presented for feedback and mutual learning at the end of the course.

How are participants assessed?

Participants prepare a written assignment. They also present their assignment to the group, either in the form of a poster, a PowerPoint or an alternative (creative!) presentation format. The written assignment proposes a specific citizen-led accountability practice to strategically address a priority problem or issue in the participant's home organization, community or country.

Course participation: As this course relies heavily on learner engagement, participants are also assessed on their active participation.

Who are the facilitators?

Carmen Malena

Carmen is a specialist in social accountability and participatory governance with more than 25 years' experience in civil society and development organizations. She has worked and studied throughout the world, sharing her expertise in citizen participation, civil society and gender. For several years Carmen served as part-time Director of the global Participatory Governance programme of CIVICUS: World Alliance for Citizen Participation. Her experience also includes senior assignments on behalf of the World Bank, the African Development Bank, United Nations Development Programme, USAID, The Asia Foundation, the Transparency and Accountability Initiative and numerous international NGOs. She obtained her MPhil with Distinction in International Development at the University of Sussex and holds an Advanced B.A with Double Honours from the University of Saskatchewan and l'Université Laval. Carmen is also a graduate (1988) of Coady International Institute.

Julien Landry

Julien is Senior Program Staff at the Coady International Institute and brings close to 15 years of experience at the intersection of citizen participation, community development and adult education. His work, both in Canada and internationally, is grounded in the belief that any development initiative must enable citizens and communities to participate meaningfully in the decisions that affect their lives. He has worked in the fields of participatory planning, collaborative governance, human rights education, social mobilization, and youth-centered community development. At Coady, he facilitates educational programs and leads research and knowledge-building initiatives in the areas of citizen engagement, advocacy, social accountability, good governance and accountable democracy. Julien holds a Master's Degree in Urban Planning (Community Development and Social Planning) from the University of British Columbia and a B.A. in International Development and Political Science from McGill University.

Resource Persons

A number key sessions will be facilitated by GTI and TGNP facilitators who will act as resource persons throughout the course.

"My studies at Coady have not only increased my knowledge and skills in community development, but have changed my attitude and given me the skills essential for leadership."

-- Coady Graduate

How do I apply?

For information on scholarships, detailed admission requirements and how to apply, please visit our website at: coady.stfx.ca

Applications will be reviewed on an ongoing basis until **May 18, 2018**, and until limited spaces are filled.

What are the fees and what is included?

Total fees for the course are \$2,650.00 CAD with scholarships worth \$1,650.00 CAD available in limited numbers. Remaining fees for individual participants are **\$1,000.00 CAD**, and cover:

- Tuition;
- Transportation for learning activities during the course (e.g., field visits) and shuttle service from training venue to select hotels
- All course materials: course manual, handouts, access to all online resources and additional reading materials;
- Lunches and tea breaks during the course; and
- Access to Coady Connects online network of over 4,000 graduates.

It is the responsibility of participants to make arrangements and cover costs related to:

- Accommodations;
- Evening meals (breakfast included in hotels);
- Visa fees (if required); and
- Vaccinations (if required).