



CSO Engagement in Public Procurement: An Experience in Malawi

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Overview

- Partnership for Transparency (PTF) implemented a 3+-year project (Nov 2020 – Jan 2024) aimed at enhancing the capacity of civil society organizations (CSOs) and journalists to engage in informed and responsible monitoring of public procurement infrastructure projects.
- The project, financed by the European Union, is entitled ‘Strengthening the Capacity of CSOs in Promoting Transparency and Accountability in Public Procurement’
- The project was implemented in partnership with the African Institute of Corporate Citizenship/Integrity Platform (AICC/IP), the National Construction Industry Council/CoST-Infrastructure Transparency Initiative Malawi (NCIC/CoST Malawi) and in association with CoST International Secretariat (CoST IS) based in the United Kingdom.
- The project will contribute to enhancing the transparency, fairness, and effectiveness of the public procurement process for infrastructure in Malawi through training and empowering civil society actors and investigative journalists to understand and monitor public procurement transactions.
- The project is responsive to the CoST Malawi Multi Stakeholder Group (MSG), which provides guidance and assistance in implementing infrastructure reforms.



Overall Goal/Specific Objectives

The overall Project **goal** was to enhance the capacity of CSOs, at national and local levels in Malawi, to demand increased **transparency and accountability** in public financial management (PFM) as it pertains to all stages of infrastructure procurement in the project cycle.

Specific Objectives:

- A sufficient number of CSOs are **trained** to monitor public infrastructure procurement and budget expenditures
- CSOs will have demonstrated the capacity to **monitor** public infrastructure procurement and to analyze budget expenditures in public infrastructure
- Full **operationalization** of the Information Platform in Public Infrastructure Procurement (IPPI)
- SECTORS – Transportation; Water Supply and Sanitation; and Building



Key Stakeholder Groups

- **CSOs**, including
 - Non-governmental organizations (NGOs)
 - The media
 - Other organizations committed to demanding transparency and accountability from duty bearers, at national and local level, particularly in relation to public infrastructure procurement
- **Duty bearers**, including
 - Agencies/institutions responsible for proposing, approving, implementing, and monitoring budgeting expenditures on infrastructure, at the national and local levels
 - The Ministry of Finance, Economic Planning and Development, the Parliamentary Committees on Accounts, Budget and Transport and Public Works, and the National Audit Office
 - Parastatals; Ministries, Departments or Agencies (MDAs); District-level agencies



Project Activities (1)

- *Capacity Development of CSOs in Monitoring Public Infrastructure Procurement*
 - Focus on the complete project cycle
 - Training materials drew on *inter alia* the experience of PTF (Ukraine, Moldova) and the CoST worldwide and Africa-wide network, as well as the CoST Malawi experience
- *Full Operationalization of the IPPI*
 - Updating of the platform's software
 - Adaptation and development, where necessary, of training modules for use by CSOs and procurement entities (PEs) on working with the platform
 - Training of CSOs, Media Representatives and PEs in the use of the platform
 - Has been certified as a publisher by the #OC4IDS

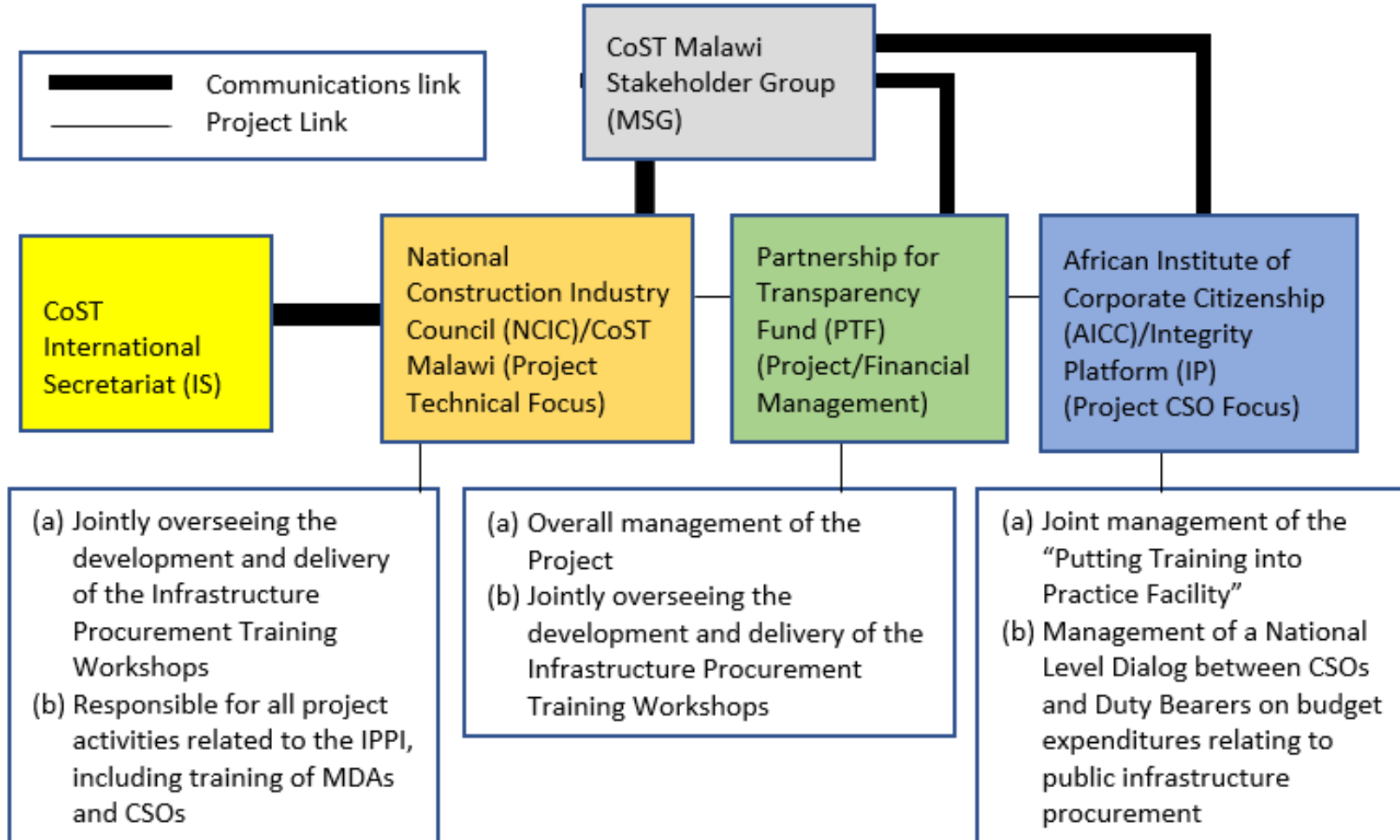


Project Activities (2)

- *Putting Training into Practice (Special Facility)*
 - Selection of 9 Projects and 3 Districts for Infrastructure Procurement Monitoring
 - Competitive Selection of CSO Monitors
 - Monitoring started in 2022 and continues through 2023 (beyond the November end of the Project due to no-cost extension to 31 January 2024)
- *Supporting a Dialog between CSOs and Duty Bearers on Budget Expenditures Pertaining to Public Expenditures in Infrastructure Procurement*
 - Undertake a budget survey with a special focus on budget expenditures pertaining to public infrastructure procurement
 - Develop an advocacy strategy to address transparency and accountability issues in budgeting expenditures pertaining to public infrastructure procurement
 - Organize a dialog between CSOs and duty bearers



Project Set-Up





Project Communications Strategy

- Geared to Maximizing Results at National and Local Levels
- Drew on CoST-Malawi's award-winning communication strategies, including working with journalist organizations, such as Misa-Malawi
- Engaged with media (radio, TV and newspapers) and social media
- Was fully consistent (and has been well received) with the approach set out in the 'Communications and Visibility Manual for European External Action'
- Televised debates on infrastructure development sponsored by project



Project results of the first two years-1

Specific Objective -A: CSO's are equipped -

- A consultant was hired and developed training manuals and delivered the actual trainings.
- Two series of trainings were conducted: three on advocacy using open data, one in each of the three regions of Malawi [North, Central, and Southern Region].
- Another series of trainings was on public procurement, targeting selected CSOs in each of the regions in the country. About 140 representatives of CSOs and procuring entities have been trained.

Specific Objective -B: The IPPI is fully operationalized

- Upgraded user-friendly IPPI was launched in July 2022, around mid-way of the project cycle. Software enhancements made and maintenance contract being initiated
- IPPI Malawi was officially accredited by the Open Contracting for Infrastructure Data Standards (OC4IDS).
- Started the google analytics to measure accessibility of people that have visited the website and downloaded
- Was fully supported by HE President Chakwera's pronouncement at the launch of M1 road rehab work



Project results of the first two years -2

Specific Objective -C: CSO's will have demonstrated their capacities to monitor public infrastructure procurement

- CSOs were selected in two tranches and monitoring work near completion with final reports being received now – funding of nine CSOs to monitor infrastructure projects in the North, Central and Southern regions for projects involving water and sanitation, Buildings or Roads under competitive process
- An additional three CSOs funded to monitor budget process in 3 regional Districts

Specific Objective -D: Evidence-based dialogue is promoted between duty bearers and CSO's

- Monitoring encouraged interaction with duty bearers but project information often not provided
- The Multi Stakeholder Group (MSG) includes various actors and they are playing a role in improving communication with CSOs



Final 15 Month Program

Increased Quality and Quantity of Infrastructure Project Data in the IPPI

- NCIC undertook several seminars with agencies and CSOs to promote increased use of IPPI
 - A total of 757 projects are now uploaded onto the IPPI portal.
 - Of the 757, 572 projects can be viewed by the public. This means that 185 projects are yet to be authorized by implementing agencies to appear to the public (on the Front End).
 - The projects cover education, health, security, water and sanitation, and transport sectors
 - Some uploaded data is incomplete and NCIC working with concerned implementing agencies to ensure completeness.
 - Delays in completion of projects range from 4 months to 51 months on average.
- CSO Monitoring of
 - Nine Infrastructure Projects
 - Infrastructure Budgeting in three Districts
- Deepened dialog between the CoST Malawi Champion (President of Malawi: Lazarus McCarthy Chakwera) and the CoST Malawi MSG



Indicator – (TARGETS HAVE BEEN REALIZED)	Target	Realized
Number of training manuals on public procurement prepared/distributed	2	2
Number of CSOs trained	61	61
Number of media representatives trained	21	21
Number of PDEs trained	32	32
Number of CSO reps trained	68	68
Number of media reps trained	33	33
Number of CSOs monitoring infrastructure project procurement	9	9
Number of CSOs monitoring budgetary expenditures on infrastructure project procurement at national and district levels	3	3
Number of reports prepared by CSOs	12	12
Number of national level meetings between duty bearers and CSOs in relation to analyses undertaken by CSOs on budget expenditure pertaining to infrastructure procurement	5	2
Number of analytical reports prepared by CSOs	5	48

Indicator – (TARGETS HAVE BEEN REALIZED)	Target	Realized
Number of engagements between CSOs and government agencies and parastatals, at national and local level as well as the media, in relation to infrastructure procurement	12	12
Number of CSOs reporting on monitoring public procurement as well as analysing budget expenditures in public infrastructure procurement	9	9
Number of new projects (and their value in local currency and EURs) in compliance with the Open Contracting for Infrastructure Data Standard (#OC4IDS).	9	TBD
Number of unique visitors to the IPPI portal	3000	3700
Number of projects on the IPPI portal	100	572
Number of PDEs having uploaded at least one project on the IPPI portal	30	50
Government actions that improve future public infrastructure programs	3	3
Government actions that improve the delivery of a specific and current project	12 3	3



Sustainability

Continued support of IPPI such as:

- Presidential order and subsequent directive from OPC
- Upgrading of the IPPI
- Continued Training of CSOs and Media on IPPI and Public Infrastructure Procurement system
- Continued maintenance by NCIC/CoST Malawi of the IPPI portal, especially the uploading of information and improved public interface
- Continued capacity building for MDAs responsible for uploading information on the portal
- Routine analysis and reports of uploaded data and sharing with relevant stakeholders.



Areas of Interest Requiring Further Action

- Overriding Lessons from Project
 - With some notable exceptions, Implementation of infrastructure projects in Malawi currently does not provide value for money and is deficient in accountability
 - CSOs can help promote Transparency, Accountability and Anti-Corruption in the infrastructure sector
- Areas of Interest Requiring Further Action
 - Advocacy for increased action on findings from the contracts monitoring, including FDR
 - Institutionalization of contracts/procurement monitoring to enhance performance of projects
 - Supporting development by MDAs of Decentralized Communications Strategies in relation to infrastructure projects in accord with FDR/FOI
 - Popularization and scale up of usage of the IPPI, across the country, to increase transparency and accountability.
 - Adapt the IPPI to handle Climate Change Projects.



Final Slide

THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION!