

About: HERE (Health, Education, Resource Equity) and Now Project

The 'HERE and Now' project hinges heavily on the power of social movements amongst citizens and civil society.

The project focuses not only on changing legislative policies and monitoring the actions and in-actions of public office holders, but also challenge institutional policies and practices at the local government level, as well as unpack popular beliefs and common behaviours, so as to make the changes achieved long lasting.

The HERE and Now project is conceptualised to leverage on Right to Information provisions that exist in the proposed project countries-Ghana and MALI, to promote citizens' access to quality, inclusive public health and education. This will be done by helping to mobilise/empower the citizens of both countries to form movements to demand for better public service delivery in the two sectors, within the framework of political and social accountability.

To do this effectively, the project will deploy innovative technologies (i.e., build an App - #Shortchanged) backed by offline interventions such as story-telling, blogging and effective media messaging campaigns, to illuminate and sustain public attention/interest on social protection policies in health and education.

The "Here and Now" project will also focus on creating community monitoring groups to undertake participatory monitoring and evaluation to provide direct feedback to the project team, who will use low-cost tech to monitor and track policy implementation and advocate for best practices from the supply side (government) to meet the needs of the citizens.

Finally, the two project locations - Mali and Ghana – offer a strategic opportunity to analyse and compare factors that create an enabling environment or drawbacks in government's efforts in making and implementing social protection policies that seeks to improve the livelihoods of their people.

This new project will gather evidence on how social protection policies work differently in French and Anglophone West Africa and add to that knowledge base and it is expected to help inform future advocacy work in policy formulation in the sub region.

Our proposed solution will equip citizens with usable information, methods, online and mobile based platform which will enable them to monitor health and education sector policies, indicators and programs while actively engaging duty-bearers to demand for better service delivery. Practically, our project will combine innovative digital technology mashed-up with participatory public expenditure on health and education tracking survey, relevant health and education sector policy scorecards and effective advocacy. Without provision of high-quality health and education services, citizens' aspiration to be free and enjoy the dividends of an open society will be impossible.

Intended Outcomes

The project will seek to create a culture where citizens are equipped to actively engage in policy implementation and demand accountability by increasing citizen-driven accountability mechanisms to monitor public service delivery and also empowering citizens ability to demand sanction of elected officials for poor service delivery