

NATO, IOC and IAEA among the world's least accountable organisations

Many of the world's most powerful corporate (TNC), intergovernmental (IGO) and non-governmental (INGO) organisations are not answerable to the people they affect according to 'The Global Accountability Report', released today by one of the world's leading global governance think tanks, the One World Trust. At a time when serious global challenges such as the credit crunch are devastating lives, businesses and economies across the globe, all thirty organisations in the report, which includes investment banking giant Goldman Sachs, failed to score over 80% when assessed against the think tanks accountability indicators – a level the One World Trust says indicates accountability reforms beyond the basic minimum. The International Olympics Committee (IOC) received the lowest overall score in the report with 32%, closely followed by The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) (33%), which promotes the peaceful use of nuclear energy, and NATO (36%), which accounts for over 70% of the world's defence spending.

Unique in nature, the report assesses the policies and systems of organisations according to four widely-accepted dimensions of accountability; transparency (T), participation (P), evaluation (E) and complaint and response mechanisms (C&R). Data is collected from documents provided by the organisations themselves, interviews with their key officials and publicly available information. In addition, stakeholders and experts on each of the organisations are engaged in the data collection and verification stages of the research. The top 10 assessed organisations, along with their individual dimension scores, are revealed in the report to be:

(Please note – additional figures are included at the end of the release)

Organisation	T	P	E	C&R	%
International Foundation for Organic Agriculture	66	98	76	44	71
European Bank for Reconstruction and Development	65	65	82	69	70
International Finance Corporation	76	46	84	71	69
UNICEF	26	89	98	64	69
Plan International	51	82	83	60	69
Transparency International	53	90	47	84	68
Catholic Relief Services	38	82	90	63	68
Islamic Relief	54	81	72	66	68
BHP Billiton	52	82	86	43	66
European Investment Bank	76	56	76	56	66

IGOs	Yellow
INGOs	Pink
TNCs	Blue

With eight top performing organisations grouped around the 70% mark, Michael Hammer, Executive Director of One World Trust, believes “a step change is required if we are to avoid more global crises that can affect millions of people in the not so distant future. Today it is finance; tomorrow the accountability problem may hit people failing to respond to climate change or health care issues”. For Michael Hammer the report indicates that while the “majority of top performing organisations have implemented the easier accountability-related reforms, they struggle to implement the more challenging reforms relating to transparency and dealing with complaints from external stakeholders”.

The top performers per sector are the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) for IGOs, the International Federation of Organic Agricultural Movements (IFOAM) for INGOs and BHP Billiton among the corporations. Now in its third year, the report confirms that each sector stands out in one dimension – whilst IGOs show strong transparency and evaluation systems, INGOs show the best capabilities for encouraging participation and TNCs tend to show superior complaint and response mechanisms.

Says Michael Hammer, Executive Director of One World Trust: “The current lack of accountability is a serious global issue, with serious global consequences. The credit crunch has demonstrated the devastating impact this can have on the world and it is imperative that improvements are made now before more issues arise. The organisations we reviewed this year in the report, however, should be applauded for taking part. Most have voluntarily engaged with us and continue efforts to enhance their accountability.”

Michael Hammer continues: “Organisations need to look at accountability as an opportunity rather than a problem. It can, for instance, make powerful organisations more effective.”

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For further information or interviews with key spokespeople please contact Henry Jakins at The SPA Way on 020 7403 6900.

Notes to Editors:

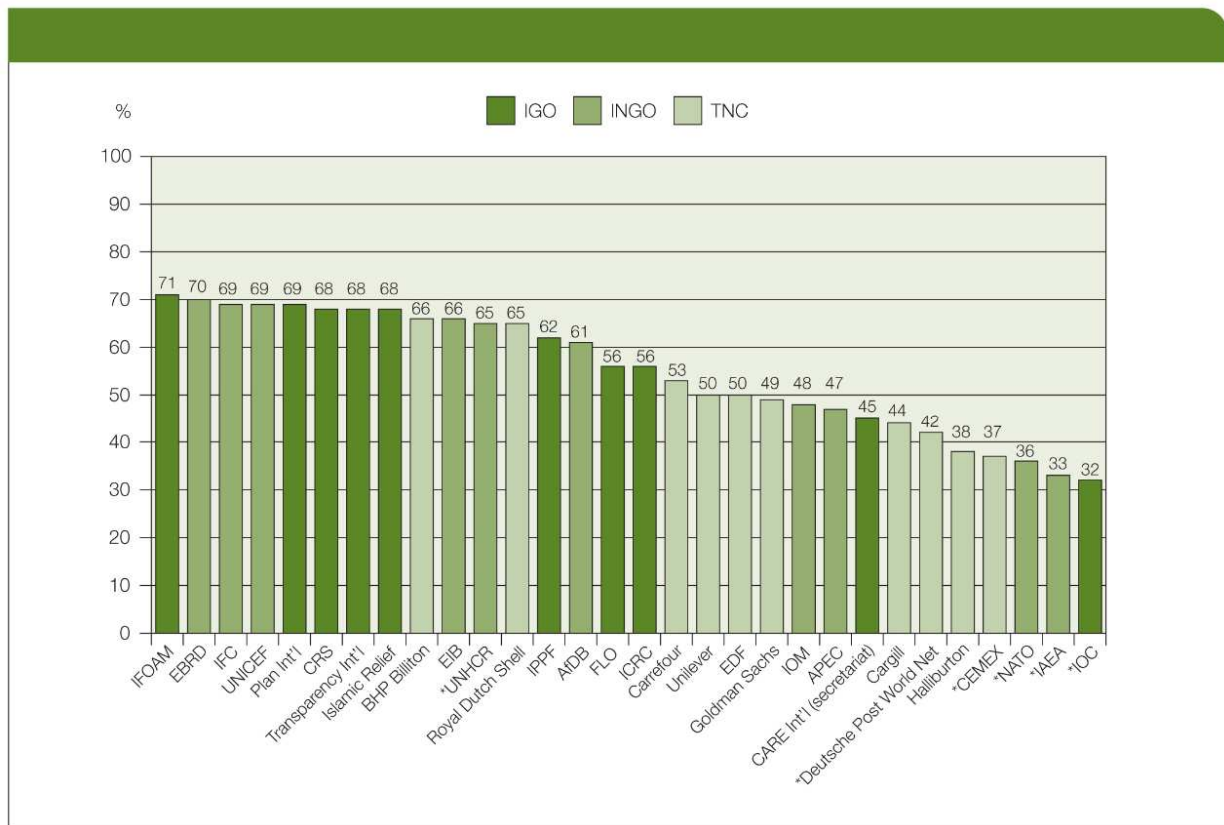
For more details on the Global Accountability Report, please visit www.oneworldtrust.org

For international enquiries please contact:

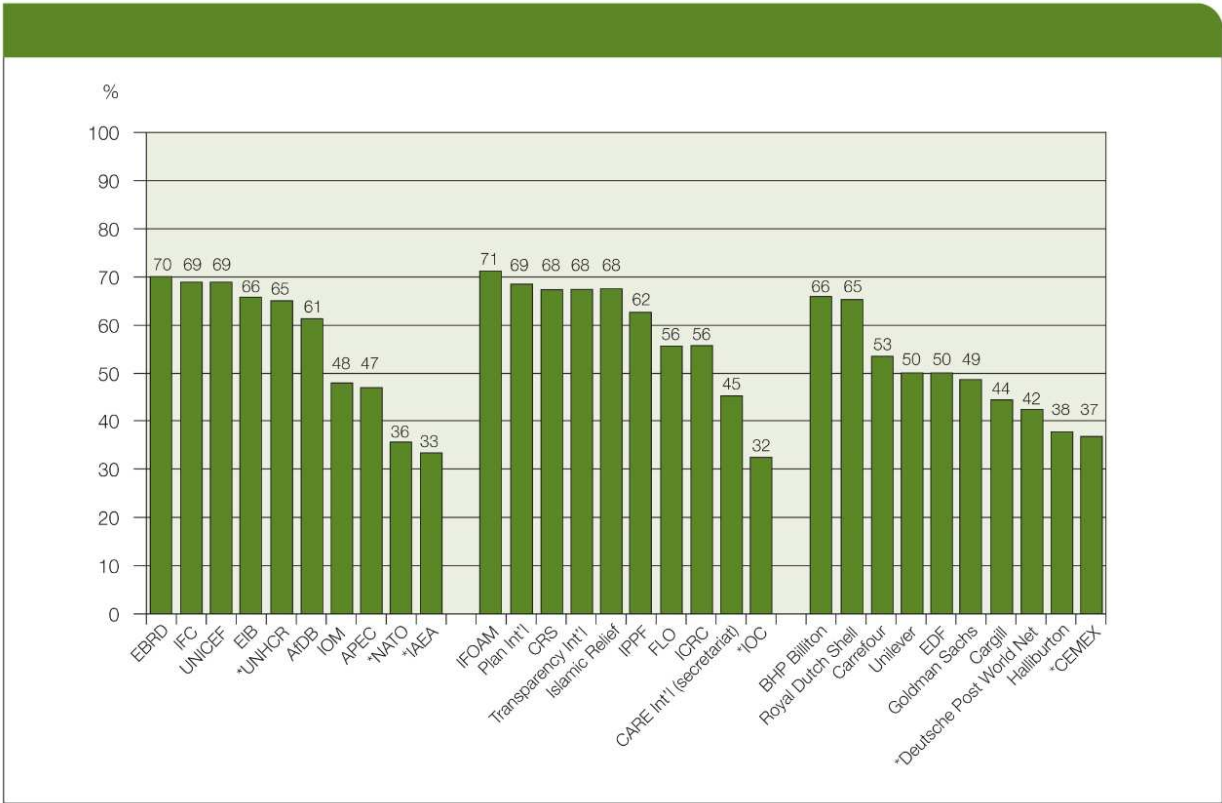
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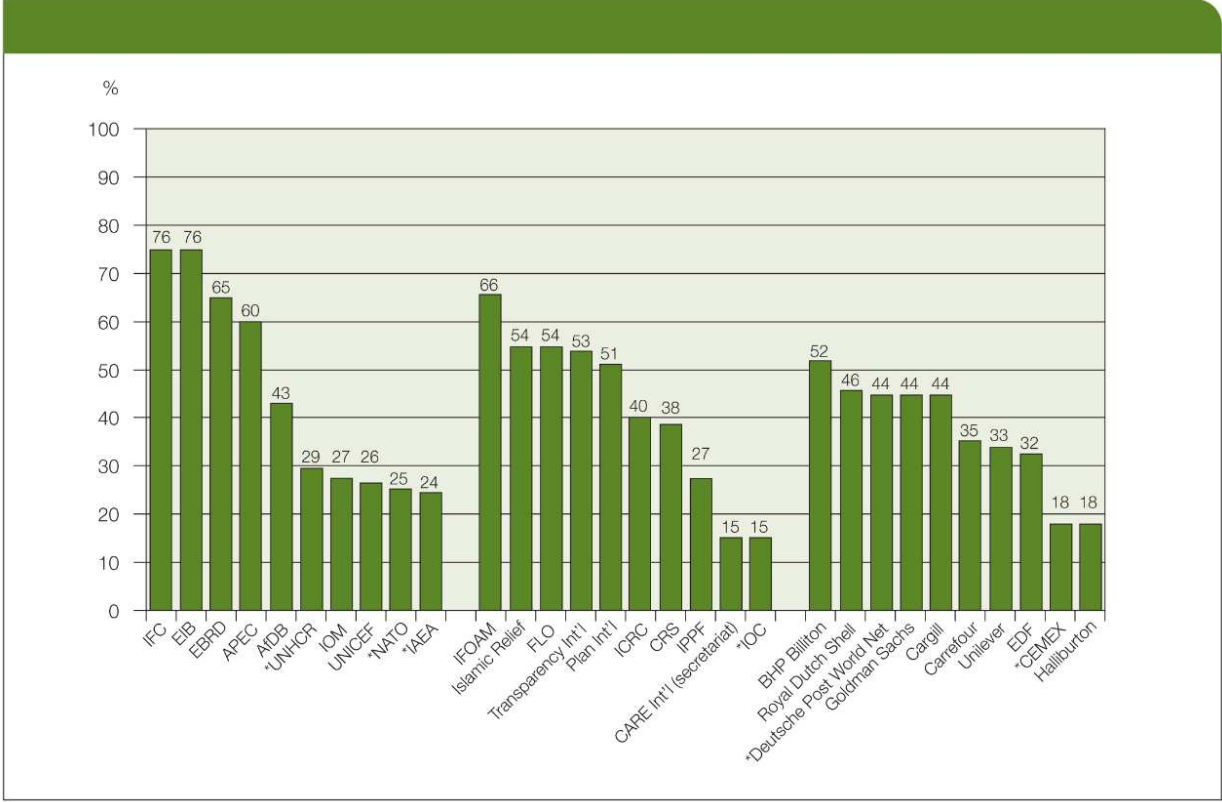
Graph 1: Overall accountability rankings



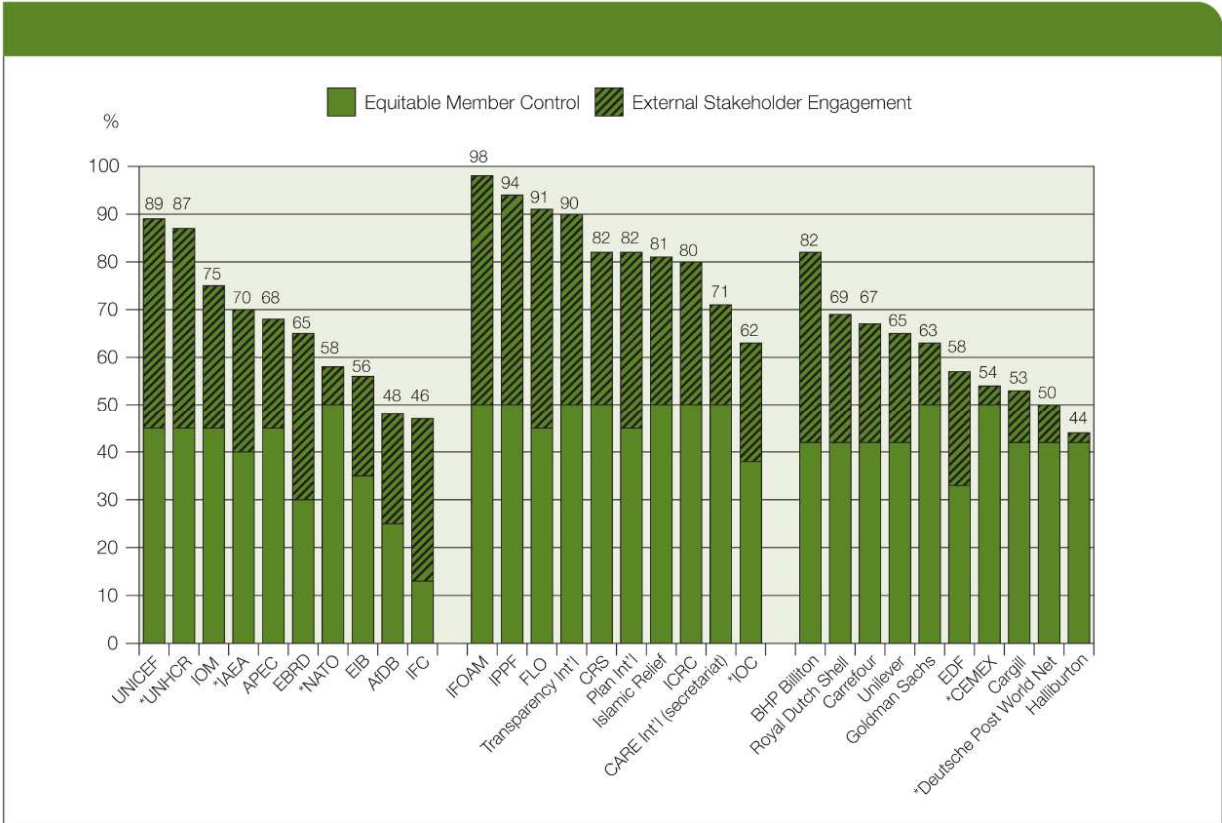
Graph 2: Overall accountability rankings, per sector



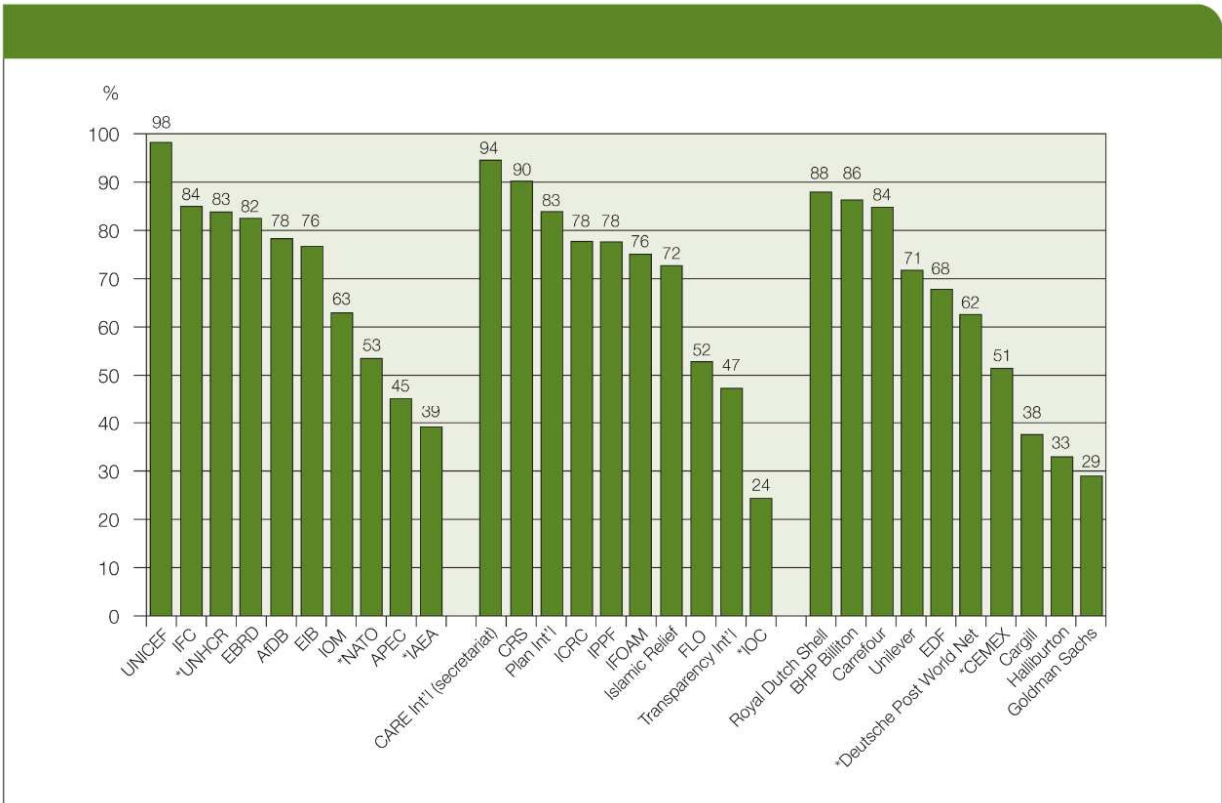
Graph 3: Organisational scores on transparency capabilities



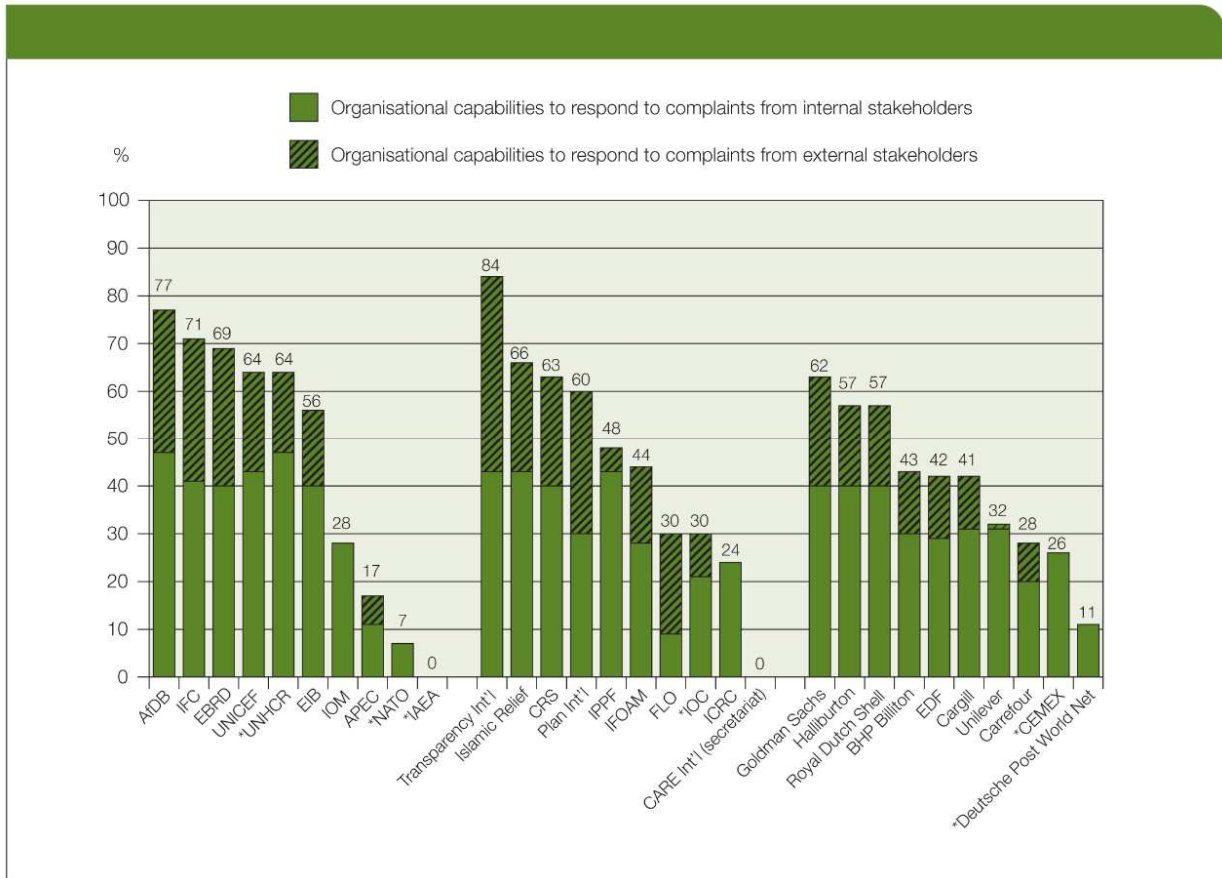
Graph 4: Organisational scores on participation capabilities



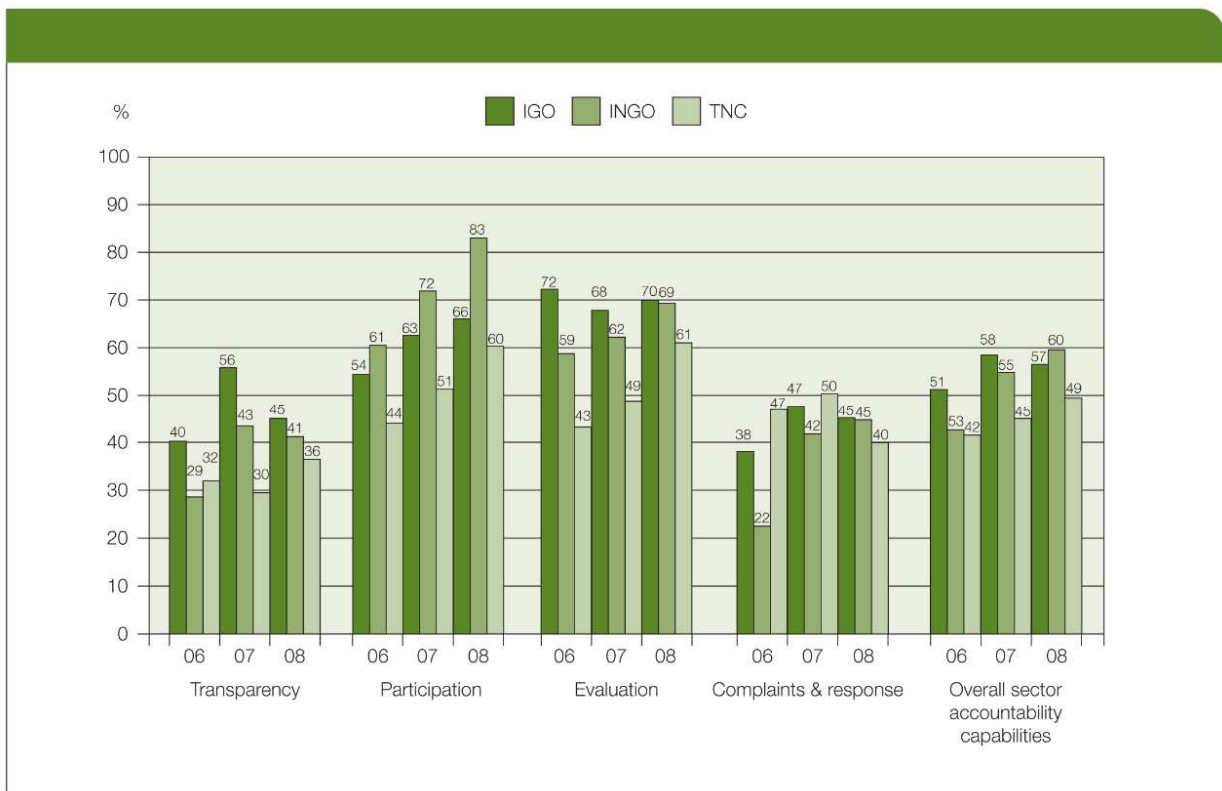
Graph 5: Organisational scores on evaluation capabilities



Graph 6: Organisational scores on complaint and response capabilities



Graph 7: Average accountability dimension scores by sector for 2006, 2007, 2008



Examples of the benefits of accountability

Asian Development Bank (ADB)

ADB approved its Public Communications Policy in 2005, the public has enjoyed easy access to information about the bank's operations. Increased access to information has improved awareness and understanding of ADB, as well as the development challenges facing the Asia and Pacific region, home to two-thirds of the world's poor people. Greater transparency has also strengthened two-way communications and meaningful dialogue with all stakeholders. The Public Communications Policy has enabled the ADB to create strong and productive partnerships with other organisations and gain trust and support from its stakeholders.

ActionAid

In 2002, ActionAid Nepal introduced social audits which made information about project performance and resources open to public scrutiny. Since then they have noted strengthened trust from the communities they work in. Communities as well have become more proactive in pressuring other government and non-government agencies to be more transparent. For instance, empowered by the social audit, women's groups in the Sarlahi district have managed to pressurise the village development council to make their budget transparent, enabling them to claim resources which were allocated to their group.

World Vision

Accountability systems such as community complaint mechanisms are a formal recognition of the power imbalance between beneficiaries and international organisations that deliver services to the community. Social justice occurs when power imbalances are addressed.

In 2007, the World Vision Sri Lanka Tsunami Response Team developed and implemented a beneficiary complaints and feedback system for their local housing projects. Beneficiaries have attested that because they no longer have to travel 1.5 hours to the head office and instead have a system within the community, it is easier to alert World Vision when something related to the project has gone wrong. They have also attested that they were much happier with the project knowing that there was an outlet for resolving related issues. The system has so far proved to be credible and effective, informing people of their rights and the mechanisms through which they can exercise these.

GE

GE's Ecomagination initiative which integrates environmental concerns into core business strategy to develop new energy efficient products proves that environmental accountability makes business sense. Since the initiative was begun in 2005, GE has created more than 60 Ecomagination products that produce cleaner energy and water, or improve efficiency. The company has tripled the size of its clean product portfolio, and has rolled the initiative out globally. It set a target of \$20 billion in revenues from Ecomagination products by 2010 but is surpassing that target a year early.