

## Civic engagement in local governance: beyond the usual suspects?

**Synthesis of facilitated e-dialogue by SDC's Democratisation, Decentralisation and Local Governance Network (DLGN) on 7-8 May 2014**

*This synthesis provides a summary of key themes emerging from a two-day facilitated e-dialogue on civic engagement in local governance. The e-dialogue was coordinated by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) and the Institute of Development Studies (IDS), and was hosted SDC's Democratisation, Decentralisation and Local Governance Network DGroups online space.*

A year on from SDC's DLGN Face to Face discussions in Aswan, Egypt, where the need for continued learning around the issue of civic engagement and local governance was identified, SDC and the Institute of Development Studies organised a facilitated two-day e-dialogue on the DGroups platform. All members of the DLGN were invited to take part while external contributors, who could enrich the discussion, were identified and invited to take part by IDS leads, Anuradha Joshi and Jethro Pettit. Corinne Huser, SDC, also approached SDC Cooperation offices to identify interesting resource persons from SDC projects or partners who could play an active part in this, also in case they were not yet member of the DLGN.

The e-dialogue was selected as both a cost-effective format and one that was sensitive to time constraints on contributors and enabled participation across different global time-zones. Additionally, the format allows for a comprehensive capture of all participant contributions.

Following the initial announcement of the e-dialogue, SDC received feedback and comments from network members, which helped narrow down the focus for the two days on the following areas:

**Day 1:** experiences of support for civil society participation; problematising existing spaces and traditional civil society support; considering new and unusual actors, spaces, unorganised / informal civil society

**Day 2:** meanings and practices of active citizenship in different contexts (geographical, political, cultural etc); supporting active at individual, collective and public levels; identifying useful tools, methods, approaches, spaces, processes

The two-day discussion received 118 contributions from 43 contributors on Day 1 and 29 contributors on Day 2. Some key themes emerged from these discussions which are summarised overleaf.

## Summary of themes emerging from the e-dialogue

### 1. Three types of citizen action

#### a. Individual actors/citizens as conduits for change

- *The importance of engagement by individuals in agencies and institutions*
- *A closer look at local civil society reveals a myriad of engagement individuals with different motivations, values, incentives and ways of working*

#### b. Non-formalised and locally trusted forms of collective action

- *The importance of engaging with existing or re-emerging community-level groups*
- *Sustaining citizen action could lead to patronage politics and/or donor- manufactured local participation*
- *Distinguishing between horizontal and vertical citizenship can help prioritise action*

#### c. Challenges and weaknesses of formal civil society and local institutions

- *Shortage/absence of skills and capacity*

### 2. Policy influence: cooperation vs confrontation?

- *Under what conditions can the collaborative/cooperative approaches work?*
- *Challenges of taking a confrontational approach*

### 3. Strategies in the face of political constraint

- *Conducting a power analysis of local contexts can help identify roles and relationships (and potential conflict)*
- *Economic citizenship – tax as a means for citizens to leverage power*

### 4. How can civil society become more inclusive, and better at mediating inclusion?

- *Engaging children and young people*
- *Successful approaches to inclusive participation*

## Detail of themes emerging from the e-dialogue

### 1. Three types of citizens action

#### a. Individual actors/citizens as conduits for change

*A closer look at local civil society reveals a myriad of engagement individuals with different motivations, values, incentives and ways of working*

Local level civil society should not be viewed as monolithic bloc of 'organisations', but as diverse engaged individuals, who have their own ethos, commitment and ways of working. In the discussion, they were described "as endogenous actors because local development is about how people relate to each other and their environments and less about NGOs and how they should be structured". Semkae Kilonzo, Policy Forum, Tanzania

In addition, questions need to be asked about the conventional notion of "citizens" having rights and responsibilities only in relation to their national governments. In the context of global issues and institutions, citizenship and the fulfilment of citizens' rights need to be reconsidered. "Isn't citizenship about entitlement to the full range of human rights, and to a relationship with the respective duty bearers, whether these are the government of the country where I was born, the World Trade Organisation, or the clinic in the village where I now live? I appreciate that these are not available to everybody, but I see citizenship thus defined, as the central aspiration that all democratic governance work is struggling for and must go on struggling for." Rosemary McGee, Fellow in the Governance team, IDS, UK

#### Country experience: young people and "active citizenship" in Pakistan



In Pakistan, the term 'active citizens' is increasingly being used to highlight social and civic responsibilities, especially among young people. There has been an increase in 'active citizenship' as is evident by the relatively high election turnout in 2013, the successful lawyers protest movement in 2007 (in response to the Chief Justice's removal by the then military dictator. He was reinstated after the protest movement) and the increasing public discussion on the accountability of the military. This is distinct from 'civil society'.

*Amna Khalid, National Program Officer, Swiss Development Cooperation, Pakistan*

### *The importance of engagement by individuals in agencies and institutions*

Project intervention alone is not sufficient, it's important to have commitment and buy-in from duty bearers and rights holders: *“Decentralisation cannot be developed through project intervention, it requires long-term institutional, functional and strategic intervention to pave the ground for duty bearers and right holders to mutually build the obligatory responsibilities and relationships”* Hussain Akhlaqi, National Program Officer, Swiss Development Cooperation, Afghanistan.

*“Project gains depend very significantly on community ownership and local authority acceptance of its content and action. The single most important factor is probably having local partners and staff who are fully engaged with communities”* Duncan Green, Oxfam, UK.

Local government actors are much like citizens themselves, with the same enablers and constraints. *“In other words, the local government actor needs her/his powerlessness to be analysed and understood, her/his voice to be strengthened, her/his empowerment to be supported, if s/he is to manage to push citizens' concerns up to the point where not only do they get a government response, but where the governance model as a whole becomes more responsive and accountable, and sustainably so”* Rosemary McGee, Fellow in the Governance team, IDS, UK.

#### **Country experience: middle-men and intermediaries in India**



In India, another set of actors has been playing a more important role than organised civil society in delivering accountability. In most parts of India, numerous small-time political entrepreneurs (known as 'fixers' – although this term was challenged by Alok Pandey from PRIA who described them as 'change agents') in villages travel back and forth to government offices at higher levels, seeking to ensure that resources from government programmes actually reach their villages.

When elected councils are allowed to become effective, something curious happens to 'fixers'. They see that the way to get things done in their villages is not to shuttle back and forth to government offices at higher levels, but to engage with - and better yet, get themselves elected to - their local council, because it has substantial resources and discretionary powers. So where democratic decentralisation is strong, there is less need for 'fixers' to 'commute' between the village and higher levels.

It should be noted that these roles are nearly always played by men, and there are questions over their relative legitimacy, 'rootedness' and effectiveness as conduits to poor and marginalised people.

*James Manor, Professor of Commonwealth Studies at the Institute of Commonwealth Studies, School of Advanced Study, University of London, UK.*

Sometimes citizens are actively disengaged from duty-bearers and institutions which are meant to represent them. Ephrem Tadesse Gebre, Regional Programme Manager – Governance SDC Regional Programme Southern Africa (RPSA) discusses the role of protest in South Africa. He argues that what is at the centre of the wide ranging public protests is ‘the inability of citizen, particularly the poor, to participate in decisions that affect their lives and the feeling of not being listened to by their elected local government officials’. In response to this, the Swiss Cooperation Office for Southern Africa, has been supporting two regional initiatives in five countries of the region: (1) the promotion of social accountability tool and processes; and (2) the local governance barometer to enhance citizen participation in governance processes. The tools offer ways for people to enter into discussion with local governments and institutions beyond violent protests, supporting their need to be listened to. It is an example of how existing groups, protesters and communities can be empowered to engage with those who should represent them.

#### **b. Non-formalised and locally trusted forms of collective action**

There was a lot of discussion here about the opportunities and challenges of working with collective, but often informal, groups.

##### *The importance of engaging with existing or re-emerging community-level groups*

In the African context, for example, this would involve working with local and traditional (but also newer) forms of collective action, linked with government to create 'practical hybrids' (from contribution by Richard Crook, Governance team, IDS, UK). Abdoul Wahab Dieng, from SDC Mali, highlighted the value giving support to community-owned or -initiated projects, such as neighbourhood committees which have come to symbolise *“the transition from representative democracy to participatory democracy”*.

In Afghanistan, Hussain Akhlaqi sees community-driven civil society forums as vital: *“They could be the best qualified cement to create social fabrics and serve as sustainable bridge between right holders and duty bearers in all spheres”* while Amna Khalid described the importance of supporting existing networks such as CSOs and journalists rather than creating 'artificial demand'.

Alma Zukorlic described the re-emergence of *mjesne zajednice* (MZ), a traditional community-level institution that is playing a growing role in local governance in Bosnia and Herzegovina, while Fatmir Curri described non-formal civic movements and some of the challenges for SDC in supporting these. In response, Peter Theunisz suggests that donors can support the spaces and forums where they engage and learn, and with funds granted through more formal and registered CSOs, but does could this risk in creating patronage networks, or cooptation?

In Albania, Sarah Byrne and Valbona Karakaçi share similar examples of working with 'interest-oriented' movements, networks and informal associations, and that these can be linked to formal structures such as local governments - and may even be preferable to work with (for governments) than NGOs, because of their more precise objectives and needs.

In Bolivia active citizenry is promoted through country wide contests which promote leadership, co-responsibility and innovation to solve local concerns.

*Sustaining citizen action could lead to patronage politics or donor manufactured local participation*

A number of contributions were concerned with how to sustain citizen action and void either patronage politics or 'donor manufactured' participation.

Joy Aseron talked about the challenge of sustaining practices of citizen action in the Philippines, and the risk of fragmented efforts and 'backsliding' to patronage politics. James Manor made an encouraging point about democratic skills consolidating over time, however Joy responded that active citizenship can also decline as government becomes more open. This is certainly the experience of mature democracies where citizen participation (and electoral participation) are notoriously low, sadly.

Alma Zukorlic talked about the need to develop ownership and buy-in from the ground up, through skills gained in 'neighbourhood democracy' in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Referring to recent protest movements in Bosnia, Harald Schenker asked how can we relate to and sustain processes in which entirely new actors and informal citizen movements emerge and power shifts? How can these movements be supported without affecting their independence and authenticity? And there is also the challenge of moving to cooperation so soon after a confrontational process, where there is little trust.

Salvador Forquilha in Mozambique gives an account of the 'instituições de participação e consulta comunitária' (community participation and consultation institutions) (IPCCs). 'Rather than enlarge and strengthen the basis of participation at the local level, they contributed to accentuate inequalities and differentiation in terms of participation of local communities in local development. How can this be avoided?'

### Country experience: The challenge of Donor support to collective action in Kosovo



The SDC project [Local Governance and Decentralisation Support \(LOGOS\)](#) supported new actors in the Kosovo context, the so-called 'operational groups' (OGs) which were composed of community members. The OGs triggered the demand of citizens for their inclusion and transparency of their local governments. They were equally prepared to assist municipalities. The work of the OGs included informing citizens, organising meetings, mobilising communities to participate in public debates, and organising elections for village leaders and village councils. During the 2 year period, the work of OGs resulted in about 200 meetings and about 13,000 participants in 9 municipalities, as well as elected leaderships in 138 villages. There is a commitment from local governments to continue such work, but now through the elected village leaders/councils instead of operational groups. Village leaders/councils have been trained to actively participate in local government affairs and monitor the quality of capital investments in their communities. This 'institutionalisation' is promising in terms of continuity and financial sustainability, but it remains to be seen how far the Kosovo local governments will use these resources? Can it sustain?

The Democratic Society Promotion - DSP ([www.kcsfoundation.org/dsp](http://www.kcsfoundation.org/dsp)) is another example recognizing the importance of supporting constituencies that mobilize around a cause at the local level, increase demand for better public services and promote good governance. Often such constituencies operate informally. The question is, if donors should be supporting such informal collective action? "Is the risk worth the intervention?"

"Civil society runs a risk of being donor driven and dependent upon the political parties and/or government. What can be done to avoid this? How can places and spaces be created for an independent and active citizenry?"

*Sarandra Cana, Senior National Programme Officer, Swiss Cooperation Office Kosovo*

Richard Crook stressed how difficult and dangerous it can be for citizens and forms of civil society when there is such an historic legacy of deep distrust and fear of government, and any attempt to monitor or challenge it can lead to violence or exclusion, or 'unruly politics' -- unless there is a political party ready and willing to take up these protests. He argues that the best 'civil society' groups to work with are those that had emerged from local society and were organised by local people with a specific collective purpose --such as traders associations, hometown development associations, mutual credit unions and burial societies, school parents groups, women's corn milling groups, youth groups etc. -- NOT newly invented institutions with a generic 'participatory' or representative function which are somehow additional to the local government system itself; the realities of poverty mean that its almost inevitable that such institutions quickly become led by the better educated and local leaders, or semi-professional NGO activists.

*Distinguishing between horizontal and vertical citizenship can help prioritise action*

Horizontal forms of citizenship	Vertical citizenship
These are found in the associational life where relationships of mutual solidarity and networking occurs; in some country contexts this would also be described as ways in which people act out of a sense of civic duty, contributing to community life.	This has more to do with the individual or groups' relationship to the state-- acting as a citizen in the sense of participating in local government decision-making and/or advocating for government attention to a particular issue, or holding government accountable.

Alison Mathie, from the Coady International Institute describes how distinguishing between horizontal and vertical citizenship is useful when it comes to helping communities move from horizontal to vertical forms, or strengthening both.

A simple way of drawing community attention to this is by carrying out an inventory of associations and discussing what they accomplish in community (i.e. the horizontal forms of citizenship), the numbers of people involved, the leadership, and so on. At minimum this pays attention to what people are already doing as "citizens" so that political engagement is another step in a larger configuration of "community", as well as a way of drawing the links between the work they do and the services of government institutions.

**c. Challenges and weaknesses of formal civil society and local institutions**

*“ [CSOs] rarely have the skills to understand and analyze public policy...[They] are basing their actions on the personal relationships of their members with national authorities and government agents. Moreover, the political and administrative authorities tend to collaborate more with CSOs active on complaint and service delivery.”* Nathalie Nikiema, Swiss Development Cooperation, Burkina Faso.

Institutions, such as Parent Teacher Associations, local courts, political parties, etc., are all linked this chain is only as strong as its weakest link, Anirudh Krishna argued. However, does project-based funding, with its limited timeframe and expectation of tangible results, mean that we miss the linked nature of governance?, asked Joyce. *“ This for me is crucial because we could be seeing how our way of looking at our problems and how we are addressing those problems are being determined and conditioned by the way support for our action is designed and structured and not the other way around. Actions are being projectized to target very specific areas of governance to show immediate results that are hardly sustainable because they do not address the root of the problems they are addressing.”*



### *Shortage/absence of skills and capacity*

In Mozambique, municipal actors need concrete skills such as how to do a needs analysis, and community members need skills in how to evaluate the effectiveness of services (Colm Allan). In Kosovo, Fatime Rrahmani shared a nice example of a handbook with guidelines for both citizen groups and municipalities. The question remains as to how such skills and capacities can be gained and supported without falling into traditional 'transfer' models of learning?

James Manor made a nice statement about the value of 'political capacity' for actors on all sides. Colm Allan makes the point that it would be more productive to be able to identify the practical capacities (including the resources, tools and skills) that are needed by supply-side and by demand-side actors and groups to participate in a number of processes that appear to be logically necessary to convert public resources into goods and service that meet their priority needs (be these physiological needs, basic functioning needs or enhancement/flourishing needs).

## **2. Policy influence: cooperation vs confrontation?**

While most discussants expressed preference for cooperation and collaboration, it was also recognised that different strategies may be needed in different moments and contexts, and that there are times for confrontation. However, Richard Crook pointed out that confrontation can sometimes be counter-productive, e.g. where religious or cultural sensitivities are being challenged (like girls' right to education, issues of child marriage and domestic violence in Ghana).

Lilia Tverdun argued that strong citizens have to enter in alliances with those in power to get into the decision-making circle. This means they have to decide whether they want to engage collaboratively or be combative, and defining for themselves whether they are standing for themselves (personal) or for others (political). This has implications for how they choose to exercise their powers (through closed spaces, invited spaces, etc). For stronger citizenship, there needs to be a horizontal or 'flat' partnership, although as other discussants have observed: some platforms are just for participation, others for advocacy and still others to push through policy transformation.

Irenei Kiria from Sikika, reminds us that actors are not homogenous in their interests and attitudes: 'It remains in the ability of citizen groups to be aware of these dynamics (power, attitudes, and behavior) and master how to apply different approaches differently for different actors at different stages.'

*Under what conditions can the collaborative/cooperative approaches work?*

- Councils, committees and groups that can enable co-construction - such as Jim's example of local elected health councils as credible brokers and advocates of health services, and Amna's example of local committees in Pakistan.
- Support from above by government and CSOs is important for enabling collaborative approaches to work. This includes, new ways of engaging with government, carving out new spaces, and *"identifying individuals in public institutions that have an open ear and attitude"* (Stefanie Conrad, Global Advisor for Citizenship and Governance, Plan International)
- Presence of open-minded officials and opening of spaces sometimes happens despite the wider political trends in a country (where space for civil society and citizenship may be closing)
- CSOs can play a role as intermediaries between people and governments, in enabling collaboration but, what are the risks of their assuming this representation?

**Country experience: radio phone-in airs and pursues answers to citizen complaints about local government services in Ghana**



Commercial FM radio stations in Accra developed 'phone-in' programmes in which listeners could phone in with complaints about local government services and, most importantly, the programme broadcaster would then follow up the complaint and get answers from local government officials.

Local government officials and local politicians gradually came to be worried about the adverse publicity which the radio programmes could generate (especially near election time!) and started to respond and change behaviour towards citizens. In some ways, the individual callers were acting as informal 'representatives' of community or collective interests without actually engaging in the difficult process of collective action.

What is more interesting was that a group of individuals emerged who became 'serial callers', specialising in constantly raising issues with the various radio stations. They seemed to be known to local people and were sought out to make calls about various issues of concern. Some of course, turned out to have links to political parties; but not all. Again, this was a new phenomenon which emerged spontaneously out of Ghanaian urban society in response to a commercial radio station--it wasn't organised or invented by donors or NGOs.

*Richard Crook, Governance team, Institute of Development studies*

### 3. Strategies in the face of political constraint

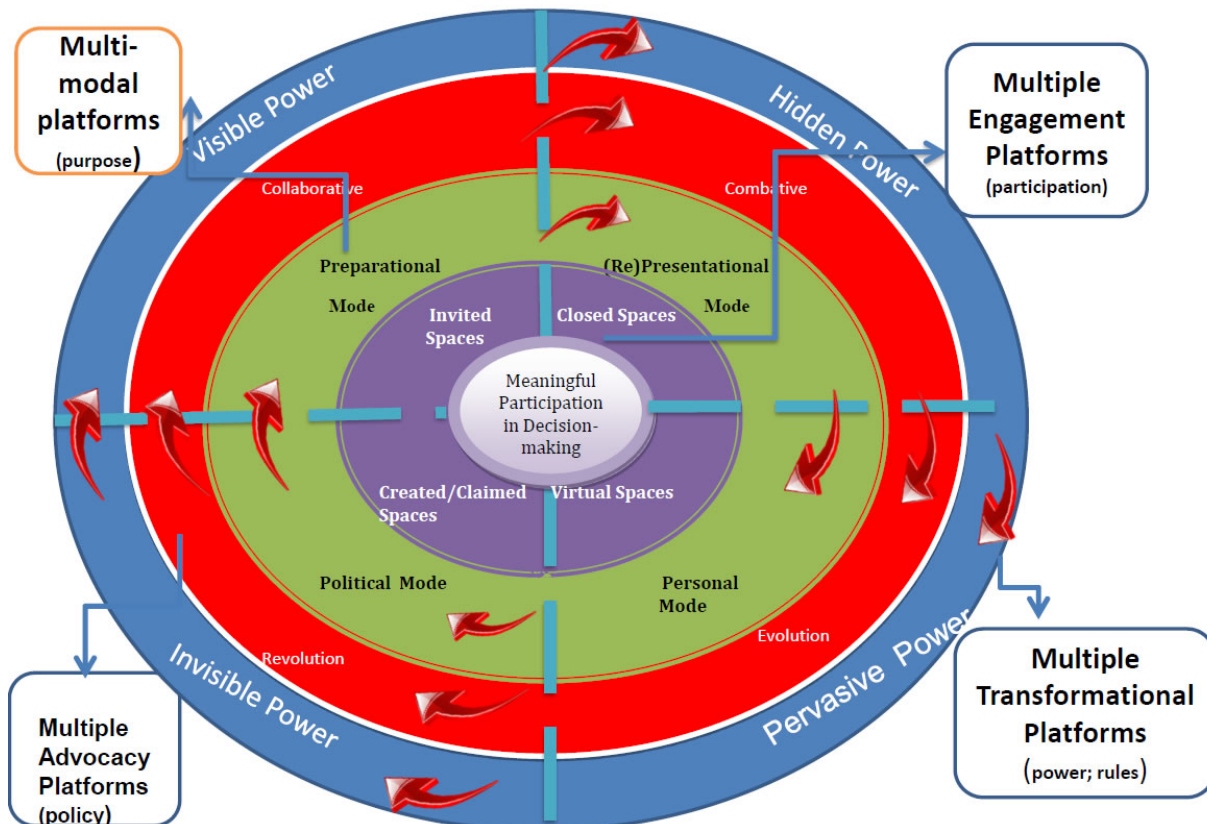
*Conducting a power analysis of local contexts can help identify roles and relationships (and potential conflict)*

In addition to power analysis, having an explicit and shared Theory of Change (ToC) can make a difference. The MuniSAM programme in Mozambique developed a clear ToC that was shared by key stakeholders and “transparently engaged with both supply and demand actors for purposes of explaining this theory of change and proposed programme outcomes” (Colm Allan from Rhodes University, South Africa).

The SDC-supported Sharique project in Bangladesh recently did a context analysis of power relations in the local government system. It was a complex scenario with formal and informal as well as hidden powers. The mapping ended up with an intricate web of formal and informal powers that play at the different levels with conflicts arising out of this. How do we address this?

Steadman Noble, from Plan UK, shared his power analysis tool: Wheel of Power and Change which addresses different levels of power and different types of power.

### Wheel of Power and Change- An advocacy reflection tool



### *Economic citizenship – tax as a means for citizens to leverage power*

Discussants shared interesting examples of tax collection improving when spending-power was devolved to citizens. Lilia shared an example from Bangladesh: *I found out that tax collection was unusually high (for Bangladesh). I asked them why. The Chair answered: "I have 9 wards (villages) and I told them: whoever is the first to collect 100% taxes will receive all the collected money back into the community for its development and they can decide how and on what to spend the money! Once citizens know they have the power to do something they are willing to contribute. But the power has to be 'given'.*

Anuradha Joshi develops these points by discussing the idea of economic citizenship. She asks what provides legitimacy to the state when large proportions of the population works outside formally regulated spheres? How can the taxation relationship be translated into active citizenship that involves bargaining with the state around revenue and services?

#### **Country experience: linking tax revenue to devolved budgets and decision making in Kosovo**



In the LOGOS project in Kosovo we piloted a scheme where property tax payments in neighborhoods were related to capital investments of the municipality in neighborhoods: the more a neighborhood would pay, the more 'points' their capital investment plan would get and the higher the chance it would be implemented. Municipalities would regularly inform the neighborhood council leaders of the level of payment, who then would go back to the citizens to encourage them to pay more. In the end the Municipal Assembly would take a balanced decision on where the capital investment for the next year would go (allowing them to take into consideration neighborhoods with more poor people that would not be able to benefit from this system). The system only works if the municipality can breakdown the tax collection per neighborhood easily. That is possible in Kosovo because the administration is sufficiently digitalized.

The pilot led to a strong increase in property tax collection in that municipality in 2013 (from 35% to 50% of the annual invoiced amount). It is too soon to say if the (new) tax payers will increase the pressure on the municipality in question to deliver better services.

*Norbert Pils, Programme Manager at Decentralization and Municipal Support (DEMOS)*

#### 4. How can civil society become more inclusive, and better at mediating inclusion?

Working with informal and grassroots groups and movements is seen as one way to overcome the social exclusion that often creeps into civil society - government participation, democracy and collaboration initiatives. For example, in Mozambique, Colm describes engaging with new and previously excluded grassroots actors by opening up new spaces where 'previously unorganised actors within civil society' can become involved,' articulating their interests and even assuming leadership roles).

##### *Engaging children and young people*

However, organised civil society and informal community groups can often exclude certain people, such as children and youth.

Sam makes the point that the term 'citizen' can be exclusionary, especially in relation to young people. He gives some powerful examples of the kinds of challenges Plan faces when they argue the young people should participate: How can someone who has nor birth certificate, ID card, voters card or passport participate in decision making? How can someone who has not attained the right age to join any organized or registered groups be invited to decision making platforms? And where do they derive their legitimacy?

##### **Country experience: engaging youth in monitoring of the Service Improvement Action Plans (SIAP) in Tajikistan**



In this example, if the local government jointly with the community committed to improve the environment (cleanness), youth were trained to identify 4 levels of street cleanness by pictures they were provided. Groups of youth volunteers were given photo cameras and once a week they were checking and rating the cleanness of their streets. Once a month they would join the local council and make presentations. It worked quite well. The youth were quite active in addressing education, health, governance issues through radio talk shows and other programmes.

*Lilia Tverdun, Helvetas, Bangladesh*

*Participation takes time and resources (and confidence) ordinary citizens often don't have*

A major factor in exclusion is poverty itself, and the opportunity cost of participation. Guillermo Incer Medina, from Instituto de Investigaciones y Gestión Social (Nicaragua) reminds us that there are limits to unpaid voluntarism, as participation takes time and resources that poor people often don't have. Joy, from the Philippines adds that capacity and lack of confidence are also constraints.

This was illustrated nicely in Bangladesh by Tirtha Sarathi Sikder, from HELVETAS Swiss Intercooperation. She described how the Sharique programme successfully engaged with groups of people living in poverty who had been primarily (and understandably) focused on their own survival needs. The programme enabled them to play a wider citizen monitoring role. But the challenge of sustaining participation (opportunity cost) remains.

*Successful approaches to inclusive participation*

**Country experience: support socially excluded groups to access their rights and benefits in India**



The Pudhu Vaazhvu Project (PVP) is institutionally linked to the local government. A federation of the Self Help Groups (SHGs) is created at the panchayat level called 'the Village Poverty Reduction committee' with membership drawn from all project induced SHGs( all women). It acts as a one stop shop for accessing various welfare schemes at the village level for excluded groups, for example Old age pension, widow pensions, job cards under NREGS, housing schemes, assistance to differently abled people, etc.

*Kripa Ananthpur, Madras Institute of Development Studies*

**Country experience: “DeMayoring the Mayor” in the Philippines**



The Mayor wanted to encourage groups of citizens in Opol to take more responsibility to "drive" community development in their respective neighborhoods. He began by having his management team attend weekly zonal (neighborhood) assemblies, during the middle of the day when unemployed youth and retired people were more likely to be in the majority. The assemblies encouraged these groups to come up with ideas for improving neighborhood life - from communal garden projects to planning and hosting one of the city's annual seasonal festivals. Once these groups coalesced around an idea and starting mobilizing their own resources, his management team would look for ways the municipality could "responsively invest" in what these groups were doing. He devised a points system to provide special recognition for those neighborhoods that were the most active. Over a ten year period, Opol developed into an excellent example of how a local government can encourage inclusive participation and build "collective agency" among its citizenry.

*Gord Cunningham, Assistant Director, Coady International Institute*

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## Resources shared by participants

Blogs and documents from SDC's Decentralisation and Local Governance Network F2F 2013, Aswan, Egypt <http://www.blog4dev.ch/dlgn-f2f2013/documents/>

Additionally, e-dialogue participants shared a number of blogs, publications, videos and websites – we have listed these below, under very broad categories.

### Citizenship and democracy

Holsten, J. 2008. *Insurgent citizenship: disjunctions of democracy and modernity in Brazil*, Princeton: Princeton University Press [BOOK].

Wilson, F. 2013, *Citizenship and political violence in Peru: an Andean town, 1870s - 1970s*, New York: Palgrave Macmillan [BOOK]

Shared by Fiona Wilson

### Democratic accountability

[Democratic Accountability and Service Delivery: A Desk Review \[PUBLICATION\]](#)

*This includes close to 20 case studies, and notes that almost all the cases with low service delivery scores have no provision for effective sanctions. Government officials appear to have greater incentives to respond to citizens' demands when organized voters mobilize, when they appeal to existing legal provisions, and there are credible sanctions for government inaction.*

[International IDEA's State of Democracy \[WEBSITE\]](#)

*The frameworks and the assessment reports of more than 25 countries are freely available on our website.*

["How democratic is your country?" \[VIDEO\]](#)

*Explains how the assessment has been applied in the Autonomous Region of in Muslim Mindanao, the Philippines*

All shared by Helena Bjuremalm from International IDEA.

### Active/empowered citizens and social accountability

[What Nepal can teach us about social accountability \[BLOG\]](#)

Shared by Andrea Rossi

[Mwaloni Fish Market Association - Case Study \[PUBLICATION\]](#)

*In Tanzania, the Mwaloni Fish Market Association (by using social accountability tools) discovered that its' tax contribution constitutes 14% of the local revenue of the municipality while there is no budget allocated by the municipality to rehabilitate the fish market's water and sanitation infrastructure. Using this evidence, a no-tax civil disobedience was staged that led to the invitation of the Association by the municipality to a participatory planning and budget process. For the financial year 2009/10, the municipality has also allocated budget to rehabilitate the fish market. The attached case study provides a tangible evidence on the importance of the social accountability tools for proper utilisation of public resources.*

Shared by Ephrem Tadesse Gebre

### [Changing times in Mozambique \[VIDEO\]](#)

*This digital story from Fionino Constantino explains how Concern Universal's Municipal Social Accountability project educated him on how to approach local government to improve the conditions of his local marketplace. It provides a sense of how the MuniSAM programme has succeeded in creating spaces for participation by previously unorganised members of communities:*

### [Mocuba Public Hearing \[VIDEO\]](#)

*Watch the latest public hearing in Mocuba- Mozambique, as part of Concern Universal's MuniSAM programme to help people hold local council to account and develop local infrastructure.*

### [Public hearing in Cuamba, Mozambique \[VIDEO\]](#)

*As part of the MuniSAM project in Mozambique, the social accountability monitoring committee (SAMcom) organized public hearing to discuss municipal performance and service delivery challenges in the Cuamba Municipality. The meeting counted with the presence of the President of the Municipal Council, members of Municipal Government, District Administrator, citizens, civil society organization, media and others..*  
Shared by Colm Allan

### [Building accountability in Tanzania: applying an evolutionary/venture capitalist theory of change \[BLOG\]](#)

### [Protecting communities in the DRC: understanding gender dynamics and empowering women and men \(Oxfam\) \[PUBLICATION\]](#)

### [The power of information : evidence from a newspaper campaign to reduce capture \(World Bank Working Paper\) \[PUBLICATION\]](#)

*The authors exploit an unusual policy experiment to evaluate the effects of increased public access to information as a tool to reduce capture and corruption of public funds. In the late 1990s, the Ugandan government initiated a newspaper campaign to boost schools' and parents' ability to monitor local officials' handling of a large school-grant program. The results were striking: capture was reduced from 80 percent in 1995 to less than 20 percent in 2001....*

### [Putting the Power of Transparency in Context: Information's Role in Reducing Corruption in Uganda's Education Sector \(CGDev Working Paper\) \[PUBLICATION\]](#)

*One of the popular stories told (and taught) in development circles is how corruption was slashed in Uganda simply by publishing the amount of monthly grants to schools. This paper takes a deeper look at the facts behind the Uganda story and finds that while information did indeed play a critical role, the story is much more complicated than we have been led to believe. A dramatic drop did occur in the percentage of funds being diverted from Uganda's capitation grant. But to attribute this leakage solely to the monthly release of grant data by the government risks ignoring the major funding in which this transparency campaign was imbedded.*

All shared by Duncan Green

[Citizen participation in municipal decision-making: “municipal forums” in Kosovo – manual and guidelines for improving public meetings and active citizens’ participation \[PUBLICATION\]](#)

*In 2012 LOGOS adopted a methodology for the organization of citizens meetings. The so-called forum approach supported municipalities in the increase of citizen mobilization and in the preparation and moderation of the meetings at the municipal level itself. The forum methodology allows the organizer to gather more and better-informed citizens to budget meetings and leads to more effective participation. Particular attention is given to the participation of the sub-municipal level, and thus the inclusion of village representatives in the meetings. In order to apply the forum approach effectively within LOGOS partner municipalities, a handbook has been designed that should serve the implementation of sessions for active citizen participation. This handbook was provided to the municipalities. Guidelines are given on the roles and functions of key stakeholders for successful preparation and implementation of sessions. A focus lies on the role of the moderator, the co-moderator and the working body of municipal residents, also called the “operational group”. A second chapter is dedicated to methods for mobilization and motivation of potential participants of the forums. Different recruiting methods are described, and recommendations are provided for the use of press releases and ways of distribution of information about the meetings.*

[Citizen Participation / Pjesëmarrja e qytetarëve \[VIDEO\]](#)

*LOGOS actively supports the improvement of citizen participation at the local level. LOGOS therefore applies the practice of public consultations in the field of spatial planning, waste management and budgeting and financial management.*

Shared by Fatime Rrahmani

**Alternatives to donor-supported social accountability: citizenship and participation in local governance**

[Africa, Power and Politics Programme \[WEBSITE\]](#)

*Research carried out by this programme over the past 6 years suggests, however, that the pendulum has swung too far, and that informal, locally based approaches cannot succeed on their own; a ‘practical hybridity’ is required which combines the coordinating and disciplining powers of central authority with locally trusted forms of collective action which provide practical solutions in the local context.*

[Development as a collective action problem: Addressing the real challenges of African governance \(APPP Policy Brief\) \[PUBLICATION\]](#)

*Governance challenges are not fundamentally about one set of people getting another set of people to behave better. They are about both sets of people finding ways of being able to act collectively in their own best interests. They are about collective problem-solving in fragmented societies hampered by low levels of trust.*

[The state and accessible justice in Africa: is Ghana unique \(APPP Policy Brief\) \[PUBLICATION\]](#)

*In Ghana, we researched the provision of local justice services by comparing three institutions: the Magistrates Courts, the district level Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) service of the Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice (CHRAJ), and the neo-traditional Customary Land Secretariats run by Ghana’s powerful traditional chiefs. It was found that the Magistrates Courts and the CHRAJ were both quite successful in providing justice which was congruent with popular beliefs concerning fairness, were sufficiently informal to reflect and use local culture, and yet provided the authoritative enforcement of*

*settlements which disputants really wanted. The Customary Land Secretariats, on the other hand, were more formal and hierarchical, less congruent with popular values and less popular....*

Shared by Richard Crook

[Civil society accountability and participation in local governance processes \(resources from DLGN F2F 2013\) \[WEBSITE\]](#)

Shared by Sarah Byrne

### **Local governance and civic decision-making**

[Hill, A \(2011\) 'A helping hand and many green thumbs: local government, citizens and the growth of a community-based food economy'](#), *Local Environment*, 16:6, 539-553 shared by Gord Cunningham, describing it as a good summary of the Opol experience

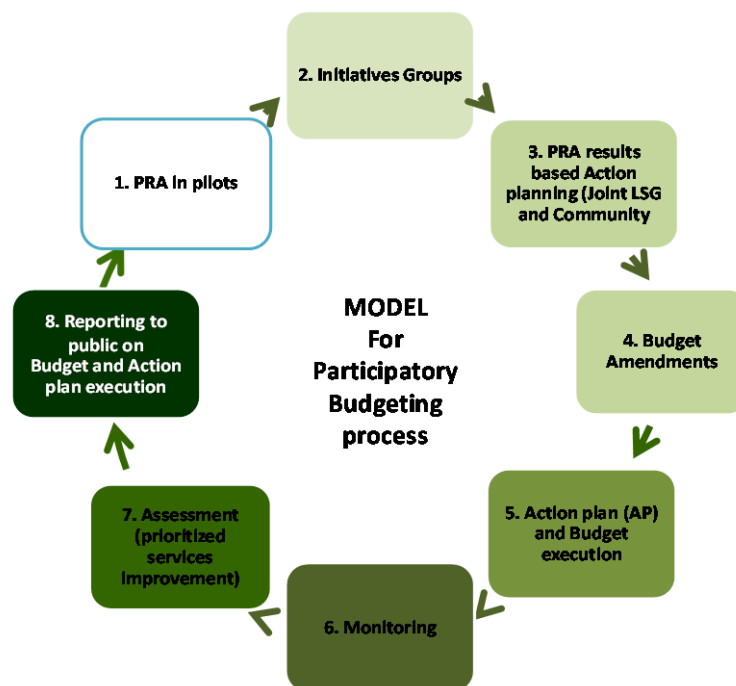
## Model for participatory budgeting process (shared by Elvira Muratalieva, National Programme Officer, Swiss Cooperation Office Kyrgyzstan)

*I would like to share with you the experience of the SDC funded “Voice and Accountability” project. The project’s main objective is: Ability of citizens to participate in the budget process at local level is strengthened, local governments perform their responsibilities in using funds adequately for public services. As far as our discussion is mainly on community engagement the following information will be limited to that and will not touch the part on capacity development of the LGSs. Within 5 month period (November 2011-March 2012) the project designed and tested the Model for participatory budgeting process, which is currently rolling out to the 2 districts and covering 26 Municipalities (LSGs). Detailed model provided in the attachment.*

Achieved results for today are:

- Number of citizens participating in the budget process has increased substantially (2011 – 1,275; 2012 – 8,857; 2013 – 13 600);
- Number of changes and suggestions introduced to the local budget by citizens and approved by Local councils has also increased from 15 in 2012 to 44 in 2013.
- Level of satisfaction with local services, looked through survey resulted at: baseline –22%; 2012 – 42%; 2013 – data to be collected in late 2014;
- % of improved level of knowledge on budgetary process among citizens has increased to 35% against baseline 8% in 2011.

*All these results have demonstrated effectiveness of the Model and we find that it’s relatively quick and not very complicated to ensure citizen’s engagement with their Municipalities. The project’s second component on capacity development of municipal servants is complementing this Model. Focus on transparency and accountability of this project has created mutual trust between municipalities and its citizens.*



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**About dlgn**

The Democratisation, Decentralisation and Local Governance Network (dlgn) is a learning network linking professionals of the Swiss Agency for Development Cooperation (SDC) (Headquarters, field offices), of partner organisations and programmes in partner countries and associated experts, and competence centres.

Its primary aim is to enhance thematic knowledge of its members, thematic quality and effectiveness of SDC-financed support programmes on democratization, decentralisation, local governance and state reforms. Thematic issues and standards are collectively developed and disseminated, to offer guidance for policy dialogue and operations.

Dlgn hosts online discussions on Dgroups at:

<https://dgroups.org/sdc/decentralisation1/>

**About IDS**

The Institute of Development Studies (IDS) is a leading global charity for international development research, teaching and communications. Our vision is a world in which poverty does not exist, social justice prevails and economic growth is focused on improving human wellbeing. We believe that research knowledge can drive the change that must happen in order for this vision to be realised.

[www.ids.ac.uk](http://www.ids.ac.uk)

**About SDC**

The Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) is Switzerland's international cooperation agency within the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (FDFA). In operating with other federal offices concerned, SDC is responsible for the overall coordination of development activities and cooperation with Eastern Europe, as well as for the humanitarian aid delivered by the Swiss Confederation.

[www.sdc.admin.ch](http://www.sdc.admin.ch)