

III. DEPTH AND BREADTH OF PARTICIPATION

Participation can be viewed from two main perspectives: depth and breadth. Depth is a measure of stakeholders' influence on decision making. Breadth is a measure of the range of stakeholders involved. The way that the two are approached and made to interact determines the intensity of DMC ownership and commitment. Inadequate depth can create frustration, better mobilized opposition, and charges of tokenism in ADB's stated participatory intentions. This outcome can be found in the World Bank's participatory approach to CAS processes in Mozambique, South Africa, and Brazil, where its reputation within civil society has suffered.²⁴ Inadequate breadth leads to fragility in the local institutional foundations required for later implementation. One effect may be delayed disbursement due to lack of sufficient local awareness, and conviction. Attaining sufficient depth and breadth points to a need to set criteria for participation and to define clear 'rules of the game' to establish DMC confidence in the merits of this approach.

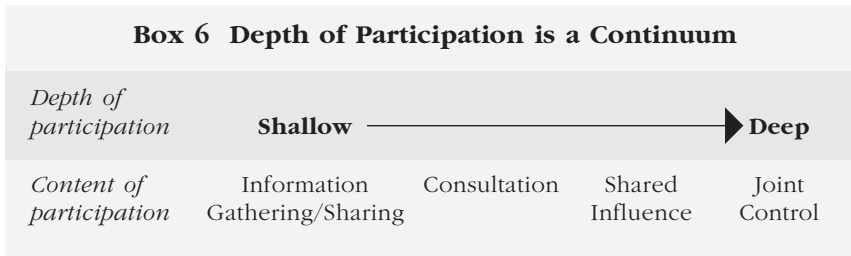
Good practice in expanded participation in a CSP matches depth and breadth according to the possibilities of the local situation. The challenge, the skill, is to balance both aspects of participation. When depth outstrips breadth, the high motivations of individuals within DMCs who have helped define strategies are made vulnerable by narrow support and by their transfer. When breadth outstrips depth, wide understanding may not be complemented by commitment to implement strategies that are not seen as relevant to local conditions.

Depth of Participation

ADB's definition of participation recognizes full or deep participation as being achieved when there is shared influence and joint control over decision making between ADB and DMC stakeholders.²⁵ This is a challenging criterion. Realistically, this

condition is unlikely to be attained in the short term. Consequently, in actively striving toward this goal, CSP teams will need to explore, and when applicable argue, why 'deep' participation is not (yet) feasible.

Depth can be understood as a continuum of stakeholder involvement shown in Box 6. Depth of participation is shown as shallow to deep. These extremes correspond to the degree to which power over decisions about a CSP is totally concentrated in ADB or fairly shared with the categories of stakeholders described below. Different types or 'contents' of participation can be plotted along the depth continuum.



Information Sharing. For effective participation in a CSP, information must be two-way, not simply ADB delivering information about itself and its ideas to others. The task is to create a level playing field where relevant parties are involved on the basis of mutual understanding. A common observation is that the degree of DMC understanding about MDBs and their country strategy processes decreases the further one moves away from ministries of finance and planning. Early effort must be made to redress this situation. Success in moving toward fuller participation requires all stakeholders to have sufficient knowledge about each other to make dialogue meaningful. Timely distribution of information is vital. However, questions of DMC sovereignty and ADB policies on information disclosure can prevent nonstate actors from gaining sufficient information about the country or the CSP to be worthy counterparts. In addition, withholding information can have a negative impact on the next level, consultation, and hence on the credibility of the whole exercise.

Before the CSP exercise in Pakistan, ADB provided an information packet about itself, devoted half a day to explaining ADB products, processes, and procedures, and a further period to discuss ADB social sectors. The World Bank's CAS process in Malawi sought to prevent a credibility problem by providing, over a six-month period, summaries and a synopsis of the CAS at different stages of processing.

In information gathering, a significant aspect of social learning is lost if various stakeholders do not have access to the information provided by other DMC stakeholders. As a guiding rule, therefore, a CSP participatory process should always contain activities that ensure that information is fed back, shared, and debated.

Consultation. Often, information gathering is based on consultation. Consultation needs to be tailored to the country setting and to the type and capabilities of stakeholders: generally it implies (only) the presentation of a predetermined plan for approval by DMC stakeholders. What is required depends partly on the information currently available. Wherever possible, methods of consultation should have a capacity-building character. Workshops involving government staff, academic institutions, and nonprofit 'think tanks' can generate social learning as participant information is shared, compared, and debated. The process can add value in terms of mutual learning that is not achieved when ADB staff simply visit each stakeholder or collect publications by mail.

Creative methods of consultation in poverty assessments have been employed to map and understand poverty through the eyes of the poor. In the World Bank CAS in Burkina Faso, for example, villagers—men, women, and children—were given cameras and asked to photograph what they saw that constituted poverty in their village. The results formed the basis of debate and discussion between villagers themselves, the assessment team, and senior government policymakers.²⁶ Large-scale qualitative studies have generated results that corroborate household survey data while identifying, for inclusion in future surveys, variables of which

outsiders were unaware. Such studies have contributed significantly to amplification of the concept of poverty to include the important dimensions of powerlessness and hopelessness, inability to fight corruption, and the corrosive effects of social violence. Complimentary employment of qualitative research methods based on purposive sampling and less extensive quantitative studies lead to better information at lower overall costs.

Usually, consultation requires establishing mechanisms for structuring dialogue. They can take many forms and contain different implications in terms of raising (false) expectations. Introductory workshops as in ADB's CSP in Pakistan are one method. National and local conferences and seminars are others. However, feedback from civic actors previously involved in such dialogues may show signs of 'consultation fatigue'. In other words, too often the same developmental groups, especially NGOs and business associations, are being over-consulted by the large number of international organizations. The issue of 'fatigue' revolves around whether or not consultation leads to any follow-up. Examples of follow-up are providing drafts of the CSP to key stakeholders as it moves through the different stages of preparation and agreed periodic verbal briefings on progress. Again, the issue of disclosure arises. Consequently, it is important that CSP teams are clear about ADB policy on access to information and how the DMC government regards this. It is a conventional wisdom that for many civic groups, access to information about their country's policies is easier to obtain from various ADB information centers than from their own government. In such cases, ADB-DMC relations can be negatively affected, especially where joint formulation is the goal.

A common experience is that consultations progress better if external 'neutral' facilitation is used. The presence of a neutral facilitator can reduce the perception that one party is more privileged than others because they lead the event. This unfortunate perception arose in the Philippine CSP, where ADB staff had been asked to chair working group sessions at the LGU conference, and sometimes advocated ADB's agenda, instead of facilitating the small groups. A skilled facilitator can create a 'shared space' or a

'commons' equally accessible to all, enhancing a sense of joint value and mutual respect. It mitigates against the creation of a feeling that one type of participant has a monopoly of knowledge or experience.

Creating national policy frameworks and funding strategies calls for interpretation of the information gathered, often introducing political and ideological considerations into the process. This cannot be avoided and must be constructively addressed. For example, the World Bank's policy advice to the South African Government with respect to macroeconomic, trade, and investment strategies is at variance with that of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the International Labour Organisation (ILO), and the United Nations Commission on Trade and Development (UNCTAD).²⁷ Consultation can be used as a way for advocates of contending positions to reinforce themselves and then claim local support. This rationale for consultation should be avoided. A more appropriate approach would be to organize a joint multi-agency consultation where contending positions are explained and explored.

Shared Influence. There is no evidence to date of DMC stakeholders being accorded a formal role in a participatory process when it comes to influencing the content of an MDB's strategy. Commonly, after in-country discussion, the MDB finalizes the strategy alone. The World Bank Operations Manual makes clear that a CAS, while to be prepared in a participatory way, is a non-negotiable, internal document.²⁸ This is an important principle. It sets a precondition limiting the depth of participation of the DMC government and others. That this principle can work against local ownership and commitment is clear because formal participation in CAS processes currently ends after preliminary consultation. This is not to say that different DMC stakeholders have no (informal) input or influence, far from it. Given sole ownership of a CAS, the World Bank may, in fact, be at greater liberty to engage and use inputs from nonstate stakeholders even if the DMC government does not agree.²⁹ But the World Bank's principal position limits everyone else's inputs to discretionary acceptance. Shared influence is not

a right of borrower or citizen, since the CAS is a non-negotiable internal World Bank document.

ADB's principle position on CSP ownership differs from that of the World Bank. Albeit initiated by and the responsibility of ADB to complete, the CSP is regarded as a document whose content and intentions are to be jointly owned with the DMC government. This may constrain ADB's ability to involve nonstate stakeholders if the DMC government disapproves. Moreover, the involvement of DMC stakeholders, including government, is neither a formal requirement when the CSP is reviewed by the Board nor is it an advisory recommendation for ADB staff. The implication is that the depth of participation required for joint ownership is optional. Formalizing the joint nature of a CSP in the Guidelines on Operational Procedures clarifies the principle. Without this step, the depth of participation achieved may be arbitrary and the assertion of joint ownership unconvincing.

Alternative policy positions toward deeper (or wider) DMC ownership of country strategies create different dilemmas. On the one hand, MDB ownership of a strategy should allow more room for greater participation, especially of marginalized groups. But this would probably be counterproductive in the long run because the DMC government (1) is less likely to feel a sense of ownership and (2) may seriously disapprove of the other stakeholders the MDB has consulted. Where (2) is not the case, implementation of the CSP may not be jeopardized but is potentially weakened by not fostering DMC commitment. Where (2) is the case, the CSP may be at risk of rejection or selective nonborrowing. On the other hand, joint formulation may give greater ownership by the DMC government but exclude some groups in which ADB is interested. One solution would be to enter a sustained dialogue with government on the principal and technical merits of greater participation, as set out in Chapter II. The topic can also form part of ADB discussions on governance as well as on the merits of domestic partnerships and capacity building. In the final analysis, the borrower will determine the assistance requested from an MDB. While continuing to argue the case for enhanced participation,

forcing assistance, especially through conditions on weaker DMCs, will probably be counterproductive and weaken the performance of the resulting portfolio.

Irrespective of the principle of CSP ownership adopted, it is important to ensure that there is feedback and discussion about the ideas and considerations in CSP decision making. The credibility of a CSP will be bolstered by sharing arguments for and against different options as ideas evolve. Systematic feedback is vital for ADB's transparency.

In sum, the attitude of the DMC government is a crucial factor in determining the depth of participation achieved by nonstate stakeholders. The government stance varies from country to country between active encouragement to active rejection of the idea. This calls for sound judgement on the part of ADB staff in each country setting with the respect to which nonstate stakeholders can be involved and to what extent. A guide to such an assessment is to be found in Chapter IV.

Joint Control. At present, MDBs do not formally share final approval or endorsement of their strategies with DMCs. This situation may be changing. Brazil might be an example of a trend associated with good governance and greater transparency. In this case, after prompting by an NGO network, the National Congress required access to the World Bank's CAS in order to approve it. Under Brazilian law, this request could not be refused by the Executive, bringing it into conflict with the World Bank. This created tensions because the document is 'owned' by the World Bank, not by the DMC, which, technically, is not at liberty to share it.³⁰ This episode indicates the dilemma a CSP team may face. It also signals that MDB transparency, essentially the information disclosure policy, should not be more restrictive than that of the borrower. In fact, the opposite is the case. ADB disclosure should set an example of the transparency that it is promoting within DMCs. In the Brazil case, the World Bank's Executive Directors approved the public release of the document.³¹ The CAS is now being used by, amongst others, civic stakeholders to plan their collaboration in project

formulation and to monitor Bank investments and relations with the Brazilian Government.

Governments, businesses, and civic organizations in DMCs have, in fact, the last say about the proposals and decisions contained in a CSP (see Chapter III). If they do not attain a 'voice' through adequate participation, they can adopt an 'exit option' of not borrowing, not committing, not owning, not engaging, and delaying or even sabotaging policy implementation. The extent to which this occurs is difficult to judge; operational evaluations of subsequent implementation set against country strategies are not yet available. However, portfolio performance for project lending is a sign that this type of DMC response is real.³² In all probability, the likelihood of 'exit' behavior is correlated with the extent to which the priorities and competencies of ADB vis à vis the views and priorities of DMC stakeholders are reflected in the final document.

For a CSP team and the participation process to retain credibility, it is imperative that limits to depth of participation are clarified from the outset. If this does not occur, false expectations coupled with subsequent disappointment with the strategy could translate into damaging effects 'downstream'. There is no hard and fast rule about a minimum depth needed to foster commitment. The rule of thumb is to gain as much depth as possible and appropriate. Here, the skill and commitment of the CSP team to participation becomes a vital factor.

Along the depth continuum, there is no fixed line between gathering information and consultation. ADB staff commonly use consultation when gathering information, but this is not always the case; for example they may simply gather reports. When, after consultation, ADB staff adopt elements of stakeholders' perspectives, a degree of shared influence is indirectly achieved. However, this fact may not be very transparent. One important way of recognizing and demonstrating the depth of participation beyond formal, direct activities is to note in the CSP where stakeholders' inputs have had an influence, no matter where they

belong on the continuum. It is also important for the CSP team to recognize that adopting a DMC's own national development plan is already a form of shared influence and should be considered a vital initial framework for a CSP.

Shared influence is the level at which, according to ADB's definition, 'true' participation starts. Information gathering and consultation are only important preconditions for participation in the strict sense of sharing and controlling CSP decisions. However, influence and control are also not absolute. They will differ, for example, by type of stakeholder and type of decision. Civic and NGO stakeholders are unlikely to influence or share control over government budget ceilings or exchange rates, but they may well influence and jointly control education or health strategies. CSP teams need to be fully aware of the shift in the nature of 'depth' that arises when they embark on systems to share influence on and control over a CSP process. Attaining this depth needs to be done consciously and with care.

No matter what depth of participation is achieved, a participatory CSP should always generate joint learning for ADB and within the DMC. Without this outcome, the CSP team will not have created the conditions necessary for stakeholders within the DMC to want and know how to implement strategic choices. The team will also not fully understand DMC views, capabilities, and ways of working of others. Yet, it is stakeholders and the CSP team working together that makes a CSP real. Without joint learning, the CSP team will have monopolized information, becoming the center of the process. This result is not only a likely indicator of low DMC ownership and commitment, but also it increases the vulnerability of ADB staff if disagreements ensue in DMC endorsement of the CSP.

Breadth of Participation

Breadth means the range of interested parties, i.e. stakeholders who are involved or whose views and actions must be taken into account. ADB's policy document *Mainstreaming Participatory*

Box 7 Categories of ADB's Stakeholders

The DMC government: national, subnational bodies, and state enterprises. National government comprises elected officials, central coordinating ministries, including finance and planning and line ministries with an operational role, such as in education, agriculture, communications, energy, environment, health and social affairs. This category also embraces local government bodies such as councils and municipalities and semistate entities, such as parastatals. It may also include political parties that are part of the governance system but not in government.

Directly affected groups: those expected to benefit or lose from a proposed strategy. Given ADB's development objectives and policies, these would include the poor and vulnerable groups in terms of gender, ethnicity, age, race, cultural identity, or displacement.

Indirectly affected, interested, and capable: others within a DMC or even internationally with an interest in the outcomes of ADB's strategies and operations and the means to affect ADB outcomes and impact. This includes the private sector, consultants, civic entities such as NGOs with technical expertise to share, and groups with imperative concerns about ADB's behavior on which they will act in support or opposition.

Sister agencies: other MDBs, UN agencies, regional economic commissions, and bi- and multilateral donors.

ADB: comprising management, staff, and shareholders, represented by the Board.

*Development Processes*³³ identifies different types of relevant stakeholders, including the government, those directly and indirectly affected, sister agencies, and ADB itself (Box 7). Each type of stakeholder has an interest in ADB's behavior, can affect or will be affected by what ADB intends or does, and will behave accordingly.

Recognizing Stakeholders. One practical problem faced by CSP teams in enhancing participation in a CSP, as opposed to more tightly focused projects, is that many aspects of a national strategy imply that everyone is a stakeholder. In addition, widening

stakeholder involvement makes the exercise less manageable and less easy to focus on concrete project-type goals. To the extent that national development plans are the product of participatory national processes it could be assumed that the views and interests of society are already included. But as pointed out previously, nationally aggregated policies will not satisfy everyone's interests. Hence, there is still a need to select stakeholders of particular relevance to ADB's concerns and strategic objectives.

Inevitably, therefore, the CSP team will have to start in a nonparticipatory way to delineate likely stakeholders within the framework set by ADB's strategic development objectives, with particular attention to those with a representative mandate. Obviously, this does not necessarily mean starting from scratch because a portfolio of ADB assistance is already in place. But where new types of support are envisaged, as in the Philippines to assist the relatively recent Local Government Code, CSP teams will need to find out which stakeholders are important and enjoy a mandate. Here, experience shows that the local knowledge of RMs is a highly valuable and a cost-effective asset in stakeholder identification.

The Government. Each CSP exercise will need to determine what breadth of participation is possible and desirable. A CSP team's challenge in initiating a more participatory CSP process is to analyze the different components of government and then assess the motivation and capacity of each for engagement. Two factors need to be taken into account: the allocation of previous aid and government strategic capabilities. Government motivation to participate substantively is likely to be correlated with the amount of funds involved compared to other external sources and their proportion in relation to national, sector, or local budgets. The more significant the amount in relation to national accounts, sector investments or finance available at the local level, the more likely will be a government's interest in participating and agreeing to in-depth involvement of other stakeholders, including local people and community groups.

Broadening ADB's development approach will increasingly call for social-sector investments. Historically, in many countries, social service provision has been an endeavor shared with the private sector and nonprofit organizations, leading to complex institutional arrangements. It is becoming increasingly necessary to identify what these arrangements are and how they work. ADB must also respond to ongoing reform in DMC government structure and functioning. Typically, this revolves around decentralization of public functions to subnational administrative units and hybrid forms of public investment, such as joint ventures with commercial financing. These trends combine to increase the demand on ADB to recognize and deal with agencies outside the 'traditional' partners of ministries of finance and planning. In such cases, ADB must be careful not to substitute for or take over the DMC's management of aid where this is weak.

A good starting point in assessing DMC strategic capacity is the availability, comprehensiveness, and quality of its own national development plan. Where this exists, the CSP should be developed in a supportive, but not necessarily uncritical, way.

Where ADB's aid is a small proportion of the national or sector budgets and inputs from other external resources, the government may not be interested in putting much time and energy into a CSP. Participation may, therefore, be a product of convention and considerations of maintaining good relations, international image, and influence. The national development plan may be accompanied by a list of 'projects' for aid financing, which effectively dictate the strategy. In countries with strong strategic capabilities and pre-prepared project requirements, such as India and the People's Republic of China, entering strategic dialogue on policy with top policymakers is probably difficult. Participation is more likely to be filled in by midlevel officials from finance ministries with additional representation from line ministries with an interest in a particular (project) loan. Away from the capital, motivation to participate is likely to be greater if the proportion of ADB aid is locally significant.

The situation is likely to be the reverse in DMCs that are highly aid dependent. A national plan enjoying broad support may or may not exist. Whatever the case, high-level government participation is a fair probability because of the significance of the funds involved. But the importance of external aid brings a danger of imposing external policy perspectives and priorities, the situation in much of sub-Saharan Africa and smaller Pacific and Asian countries. Where a plan exists, it is important to ensure participation of key policymakers so that any modifications have support at the highest level. Where the timing of a CSP can contribute to the formulation of a (new) national plan, the breadth of dialogue must be wide. In this way, local ownership will have a firm base, reducing susceptibility to changes in government staffing. Table 1 summarizes basic DMC participation scenarios that CSP teams are likely to face.

How can CSP teams proceed in the 'low-low' situation shown in Table 1? Experience suggests that officials are more inclined to be motivated and to put their skepticism about participation aside if the CSP team can refer to other positive experiences. This is especially true when these experiences include the enhanced status of government officials because of the new expertise they have acquired. Governments are not homogenous. There could always be the possibility of striking an alliance with someone interested in championing participation.

Also, if activities are focused on a few (sub)sectors, ADB's finance and role may be significant and merit greater interest in collaboration. In addition, CSP teams can invest time in one-on-one consultations to address concerns that may not be voiced publicly, such as problems with low motivation or high turnover of staff, embarrassment about the validity of statistics, internal corruption, etc. Where ADB financial assistance is a low proportion of the whole and DMCs are not very interested in loan finance, CSP teams can place more emphasis on the other aspects of ADB's services as points of entry for wider dialogue, such as fostering regional collaboration and capacity building. Creativity and flexibility are the key to identifying the types of ADB services that are most likely to stimulate government engagement.

Directly Affected Groups. The breadth of participation possible for directly affected stakeholders is conditioned by three major factors. First is the nature of relations between state and civil society. Second is the availability of such stakeholders with the capacity to contribute. Third is the degree to which each stakeholder expects to benefit. Further discussion on disaggregation of stakeholders into those directly affected and those less so is contained in Box 8.

Relations between state and (civil) society are pivotal in gaining the participation in policy or strategy formulation of the groups most likely to be directly affected. In some settings, relations between state and civil society are tense and any dealing with nonstate actors needs to be cautious and probably informal. The challenge in a CSP participation is to gain maximum breadth of

Table 1: Scenarios for Government Participation

Government Interest and Capacity	Proportion of ADB Assistance in National Budgets and External Flows	
	High	Low
High	Motivation likely to be high with a national plan setting a strong framework for a CSP	Motivation likely to be low, with participation out of respect and image. CSP dialogue is limited
Low	Motivation likely to be ambivalent with danger of external imposition	Motivation indeterminate—likely to be depend on relations between the individuals involved

civic participation within the limits set by the government, but pushing those limits wherever feasible. Major groups that are likely to directly feature in the intentions of a CSP and its implementation are poor people, women's associations, social service suppliers, sections of the businesses community, trade unions, and environmental groups. The Uganda case (Box 2) illustrates, for example, that poor people can directly contribute to CSP design by showing how differences in poverty perceptions and causes call for flexible, adaptive investment strategies supported by appropriate technical assistance. Selection of directly affected stakeholders is a common problem and is addressed below.

It is not a priori the case that all DMC stakeholders have the (spare) capacity or necessarily the interest to engage in strategic processes. A vital part of the CSP team's task is to judge the extent to which such capacity should be supported and participation encouraged as part of the process. Selective support of capacity building, as planned for LGUs and their Leagues in the Philippines through a cluster of three capacity-building TAs, is essential to ensure that voices are not lost because they are too weak or disorganized to be heard. What people have to say is potentially more significant than their skill in addressing formal audiences. Supporting stakeholder capacity can be through TAs, by organizing pre-CSP workshops to help stakeholders get to know each other and then organize themselves, by teaming up weak and strong stakeholders with sufficiently similar interests and points of view, etc. Here, local knowledge of the RM can play a crucial role. Again, the social learning value of this type of participatory investment should not

Box 8 Disaggregating DMC Stakeholders

Growing complexity and delegation in public management are calling for external funders to look beyond the ministries of finance and central banks to other central ministries that house strategic, policy, and technical expertise. Detailed dialogue with specialists is necessary to fully understand the nuances of policy choices in different settings and how to structure assistance accordingly. But for many aspects of the CSP, key discussions will be on the quality of resources to be made available in terms of transparency and good governance, regional cooperation, nonfinancial support, linkages to sector policies, and behavior, and through investment to subnational entities. To do this well, ADB will need to discriminate between, and develop more intensive relationships with, responsible national government agencies like health and education ministries and administrative coordinating structures, such as ministries of foreign and home affairs.

Expansion and consolidation of competitive market-based economies on a global scale are also altering the role of the State from direct owner of wealth-creating enterprise to a regulator and enforcer of market rules and arbiters of the public good. These phenomena are also stimulating reform of the state's role in providing social welfare services and ensuring a minimum adequate livelihood for all citizens. Consequently, the actual

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be ignored. Also, there is a need to ensure that participation does not lead to influence as the sole motivating factor for stakeholder involvement.

Some donors have experimented with methods for systematically bringing the voices of citizens in diverse areas of nations where they work directly into the national strategic planning process. For example, USAID sponsored an innovative planning process in Senegal in 1996 (Box 9). Discussions about past changes and problems and about aspirations for the future were held in communities throughout the country. The results of were analyzed and offered to a workshop attended by representatives of government, NGOs, other civil society groups, and the private sector. They were asked to use this information to plan a national strategy that USAID would adopt for the next eight years. Rather than commenting on national strategy goals and plans previously

Box 8 (Cont.)

players in making policy work are increasingly outside the State. In addition, States are decentralizing themselves, allocating greater responsibilities, if not always authority, to more localized units. Increasingly, country strategies will have to be understood and endorsed by subunits of the total governance structure. ADB's understanding of how the total public service works will be vital for identifying the right stakeholders within the government. Relations with central government will no longer be enough to ensure DMC commitment to and ownership of aid initiatives.

In parallel, but not always in step with reform in government role and structure, nonstate actors in the private sector and civil society are growing in number and size and in their insistence to be heard. In part, this trend is fed by growing government expectations about role and responsibilities of all institutions for creating national wealth and addressing social and environmental problems. In part, it is fed by citizen's increasing appreciation and assertion of their rights as taxpayers: the ultimate source of loan repayments. In part, it is fed by the opening up of political space in which competing interests can express themselves and seek to influence policy outcomes. In part, it is fed by firmer demands for good governance through public accountability and transparency. Together, these factors require nonstate actors to be differentiated and factored into country strategies, but not as a residual. Getting country strategies to work will require active cooperation of nonstate actors; their acquiescence will not be enough.

Box 9 Bringing in the Voices of Citizens: USAID/Senegal

In 1996, USAID designed its strategic program in Senegal for the succeeding eight years. Initially, three workshops were held to gauge the views of the US and Senegalese governments, plus those of Senegalese NGOs, civic associations, and the private sector. USAID also assembled a team of Senegalese advisors. Typically, the work of the USAID staff in identifying strategic needs and suggesting programs would have been offered for review by the team of Senegalese advisors at this stage.

Instead, the mission director resolved to increase the 'P's: participation to build partnerships under a new development paradigm. She wanted to expand the process to include both USAID's 'customers' and partners. Others in the Senegal mission thought she was going to extremes, especially given the amount of work already scheduled. Senegal Government officials offered to provide any necessary information without the trouble of visiting all ten regions of the country. USAID/Washington was alarmed over possible political ramifications. Some worried that the Muslim month of fasting would make it especially difficult. Nevertheless, they went ahead.

A two-day seminar was held for 120 surveyors, including USAID, government, and NGO staff, in which they practiced listening and cross-cultural skills and also reached consensus on the content of a questionnaire. By virtue of designing the questions together they shared a belief in the importance of what they were asking. A second group, of facilitators, was then trained to visit villages and introduce the questions that the surveyors would be asking when they came a few days later. Villagers and residents of urban and peri-urban neighborhoods had a few days to think through the issues they raised about what had changed in the past few decades,

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determined by outsiders, participants worked directly with data from citizens and other information, formulated their own proposals, and developed a strong sense of ownership of and commitment to the resulting strategic plan as a result of the process.

The Indirectly Affected, Interested, and Capable. Included here are civil society, NGOs, academic resources, and opponents with imperative interests.

Civil society. Civil society is built up from an array of formal and informal groups and associations. Most of these groups

Box 9 (Cont.)

where they felt they were heading, and what their priorities were for directing their own development.

Citizens clearly appreciated the sincerity with which their views were solicited. At first they thought they would be asked about some intended project that might bring money to their community. Government officials were amazed by some of the things they heard. Other donors were impressed. USAID staff whose work usually kept them in the office (those in finance, contracting, library, etc.) were very grateful for the opportunity to talk with people.

All responses were translated, correlated, and analyzed by a sociologist. The results were presented to a three-day workshop of about 200 Senegalese who had been invited in their own capacity because they knew the country, not because of their profession or office. Additional information was provided about the Government's Ninth Development Plan, about the health and population situation (from the point of view of outsiders), and about USAID's structure and constraints.

A local firm facilitated the meeting. Ten groups were formed; eight were charged with delivering a single product: a strategic objective for USAID's program for the next several years. The other two groups were assigned the task of commenting on the future role of USAID in Senegal.

Two strategic objectives were recommended by the workshop participants. The first focused on employment generation, the second on decentralization. Although USAID headquarters had some difficulty fitting the latter into the overall Agency program, both strategic objectives were adopted by USAID in its strategic plan.

have nothing to do with the aid system as such. Religious organizations, employers' federations, associations of petty traders, trade unions, nonprofit service providers, consumers' associations, professional bodies, etc. have a rationale that is not premised on external resource flows. They are often more rooted in and responsive to their constituencies than the development NGOs discussed below. Their potential contribution to a strategy process is not always obvious. Yet, their participation can provide deep insights on how public policies and investments actually work—their members live them every day. Identifying which of this wide array of actors

can substantively contribute to CSP formulation is a difficult task requiring detailed local knowledge.

NGOs. By and large, NGOs involved in development work have been the civic actors most engaged with previous country strategy processes. The NGO community is highly diverse. NGOs seldom have an homogenous view on aid or on the role of MDBs. NGOs vary in type from organizations dedicated to public policy reform and lobbying to those with purely an operational interest. ADB's recent Policy Paper on NGOs accords them a role in programming, country-level work, and in policy cooperation.³⁴ This will counter the previous tendency—and complaint—that NGOs in some countries are used as instruments of policy implementation. Deciding which NGOs to involve is not straightforward. Chapter IV suggests how selection can be done. Experience indicates that self-selection by the NGO community for participation in a CSP process tends to work best. The specter of development banks or governments selecting whom they want to participate should be avoided wherever possible. Such an approach reduces credibility.

Academic resources. 'Natural' participants in a participatory CSP are academic institutions and think tanks. They are likely to have the capacity and knowledge to enrich dialogue. They may also have vested interests and agenda that are at variance with those of ADB. Government is often a guide to local institutions with a respected record in policy analysis.

Opponents with an imperative interest. Inevitably, there will be groups in society with a counter view to existing government policies or the role of foreign aid. Opposition parties are a clear example. Especially when well reasoned, there is no cause to assume, a priori, that opposing views do not have merit. Arguments put forward by opposition groups often reflect standards of criticism against which the quality of a CSP will be judged. Understanding and responding to alternative positions on strategic issues can therefore serve as a CSP quality benchmark. A concern for cooption makes the enlistment of

opposing groups difficult and unlikely. Where groups of opposing opinion have good access to the media, it makes sense for a CSP team to build-in strategies for dealing with adverse publicity; especially if the opposition is politically inspired or aligned.

Sister agencies. Incoherence and competition between donors place a serious coordination burden on DMCs. Strenuous efforts are currently being made to harmonize and bring better coherence to the aid system. For example, UN agencies are in the process of collaborating to formulate national framework agreements for their assistance. The CSP process must be linked to the intentions of other sources of foreign aid if it is to complement their efforts. Hence, as a matter of course, a CSP should include the participation of relevant funding and programming agencies of the UN system. In addition, as the Philippine CSP showed, other donors, including bilateral agencies and foundations, are likely to have relevant experience to share, for example in public and civic capacity building. Their inclusion is part of participatory good practice.

ADB. ADB has its own interests in a CSP. The Board wants a CSP that reflects ADB objectives, policies, and targets, and is not publicly contentious. Management wants a CSP that is jointly supported by the DMC, is qualitatively sound, and organizationally and financially viable. Staff want a CSP that, within the time and resources available, is professionally crafted in all its aspects and appropriate for effective downstream operations. A legitimate concern is that greater DMC participation may work against one or more of these interests. Applying good practices in participation cannot guarantee that all these concerns will be satisfied—stakeholders are likely to have different and potentially conflicting interests. But what is certain is that without proper DMC participation, a CSP is unlikely to meet many of them adequately. For example, without significant DMC participation and guidance, ADB may define local requirements to simply mirror what it has to offer. It may ignore strong interest groups that can impede project selection and implementation. ADB could also find itself competing with sister agencies.

Recognizing the Political Process

The government of the day is the final party of concern to ADB. That government is not only the bureaucracy, but also the political regime in power. With a few exceptions, an elected body is mandated to be the instigators and arbiters of society's development choices, and the policies and strategies that bring them about. Frequently, but not always, political leaders set out the main policy directions and leave the bureaucracy to fill in the operational details, including foreign aid. Brazil is one example where this is not the case because legislation requires congressional endorsement of all intended loans. There may be more such examples in the future as ADB supports governance reforms that make the public realm more transparent and accountable to citizens. In other words, ADB's own policy directions will necessitate recognition of and respect for a DMC's political processes. Because ADB has an apolitical mandate, dealing with governance creates a number of challenges and dilemmas.

Talking to 'the opposition' should be regarded as a necessary aspect of retaining political neutrality. This is a justification for ADB's dialogue with opposition groups in Mongolia. Also, in Gujarat, ADB had discussions with the main opposition groups about power tariff reforms. If all recognized and organized political groupings understand ADB's role and work, there will be fewer false starts and less vulnerability to effects of a subsequent change in regime. Such dialogue also shows that ADB's perspective is one of national interest, not that of any political group.

One further 'political' challenge is to ensure that a more participatory CSP does not give rise to a perception that ADB is circumventing or undermining fairness in policymaking; more specifically, that the participation of local stakeholders in a CSP is not equated with their using ADB strategies to gain indirect leverage for policy choices they prefer. Some DMCs are making this case against (international) NGOs.³⁵ Put another way, the process must ensure that some groups are not given an unfair advantage over others in policy options that should be the subject of public debate

and resolution through political mechanisms. Guidelines from ADB on this dimension of participation may be of benefit to CSP teams. Guidelines could include (1) criteria for talking with politicians from across the political spectrum; (2) requirements in relation to the representative mandate that nonstate actors should have in order to engage in a CSP; and (3) the weighting given to participation of local versus foreign organizations.