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ABSTRACT

This paper examines different approaches for promoting empowerment and discusses conditions required for effective empowerment. It focuses on three empowerment models, including grievance redress, participatory performance monitoring, and community-driven development. There are three sets of factors that affect people's ability to influence service delivery: institutional properties of empowerment models, citizen participation, and responses of service providers and public officials.

Evidence suggests that all three models can enhance people's capacity to engage with service providers and government agencies, articulate their needs, and demand better service quality and accountability. Yet, these models are based on distinct institutional arrangements that account for the variation in their empowerment and service delivery outcomes.

Citizen empowerment in service delivery necessitates the need to enhance people's ability and willingness to participate and express their voice. It also requires commitment of service providers and government agencies to facilitate fair and effective redress. To address these conditions, policy makers need to ensure careful design and effective outreach as well as support broader policies to allow opportunities for citizen participation, enforce the rule of law, and ensure inclusive access to services.

Keywords: citizen empowerment, participation, governance, service delivery, community-driven development, grievance redress, participatory performance monitoring

JEL Classification: C93, D72, H4, 012
I. MAIN OBJECTIVES AND CONTRIBUTION

This paper seeks to contribute to the understanding of mechanisms for promoting citizen empowerment in service delivery. It examines different empowerment models and discusses conditions required for effective empowerment. In particular, the paper first reviews approaches for promoting citizen participation in service delivery and considers their potential to enable citizens to influence service delivery. It then studies operational and contextual factors that affect their empowerment success. The paper focuses on three empowerment models: grievance redress, participatory performance monitoring (PPM), and community-driven development (CDD).

The issue of citizen participation in service delivery is currently prominent in the development agenda of many governments as well as major development agencies and donors. The last 2 decades have seen a proliferation of approaches and institutional arrangements that seek to promote citizen participation and empowerment in service delivery. The paper refers to these mechanisms as empowerment models. Citizen empowerment models encompass a plethora of instruments, which have different objectives, institutional properties, and operational procedures. They seek to enhance citizens’ ability to monitor service delivery; voice their needs, preferences, and concerns; demand transparent and fair allocation of benefits and resources; and claim their rights. It is assumed that citizen participation can improve service delivery outcomes. It can lead to a better match with the local needs, improve service quality and access, and reduce corruption and resource misallocation.

Several extensive reviews of participation and empowerment initiatives have been supported by the World Bank (Mansuri and Rao 2013; Ringold et al. 2012; Wong 2012) and the Department for International Development (DFID) of the United Kingdom (DFID 2011; McGee and Gaventa 2010). The most extensive review of literature to date on the impact and effectiveness of social accountability in service delivery—including PPM—was conducted as part of the DFID-commissioned study on “accountability and transparency” initiatives (Joshi 2010; also see McGee and Gaventa 2010).

The paper focuses on institutional arrangements that have originated in the public sphere (grievance redress and CDD) and those promoted by civil society, often in collaboration with donor organizations (PPM). In terms of its origin, one can classify participation as “spontaneous” and “induced” (Oakley and Marsden 1984, p. 18). Spontaneous participation is grassroots driven, and it is based on local initiative and voluntary action. It occurs when people organize without the involvement of external agents. Induced participation is sustained due to the project requirements and funding support of donor agencies. In practice, this distinction can be blurred, as, for example, when government agencies or donors collaborate with civil society organizations, community groups, or movements with prior experience of involvement in service delivery and support them through provision of funding and technical assistance.

The paper discusses three sets of factors that affect people’s ability to influence service delivery: (i) institutional properties of empowerment models, (ii) the nature and depth of citizen participation, and (iii) responses of service providers and public officials. Let us consider these in turn.

First, the intrinsic institutional characteristics of different models affect the empowerment potential of different empowerment models (i.e., the scope and nature of participation) and the resulting service delivery outcomes. Institutional properties in this paper refer to the innate functional characteristics of empowerment models that reflect their intended objectives and the theories that underpin them. For example, grievance redress is different from PPM in that it seeks to provide channels for individual feedback, while the latter facilitates collective action.
Nuanced understanding of the strengths and limitations of different models can help policy
makers make informed choices about the appropriateness and relevance of different models for meeting
desired objectives in different contexts and set realistic expectations about their potential impacts.
The need for greater clarity in our understanding of the empowerment potential of different models
is significant, especially as the existing literature often does not adequately discuss the empowerment
implications of different institutional models. For example, a recent World Bank Policy Research Report
(Mansuri and Rao 2013) provides a comprehensive and up-to-date review of literature on citizen
participation in local development initiatives, but offers little consideration of institutional, instrument-,
and sector-specific factors that may affect specific participation and service delivery outcomes.

Second, people’s willingness and ability to participate and express their voice is a major
precondition to effective empowerment. The ability to promote meaningful participation of citizens is
crucial for enhancing their ability to influence service delivery.

Third, the ability to influence service delivery largely depends on the responses of government
officials and service providers. Participation may not necessarily result in the citizens’ ability to influence or
control service delivery. Rather, it is contingent upon the willingness of service providers and government
agencies to respond to citizens’ claims and feedback and ensure fair and effective grievance redress.

The analytical differentiation between citizen participation and agency responses is important
for designing, operationalizing, and evaluating policies. It can help identify and assess the inputs and
policy actions required to address the specific bottlenecks that impede these processes.

II. STRUCTURE OF THE PAPER

The paper has the following structure: After reviewing the main objective and contribution of the study,
the paper unpacks the notion of citizen empowerment and discusses the benefits of citizen participation
in service delivery in sections III and IV. Section V examines the implications of rights-based entitlement
to services for citizen participation and accountability.

The central sections of the paper examine select empowerment models and instruments. Sections VI and VII respectively provide detailed accounts of grievance redress and PPM, while section VIII reviews CDD. These sections consider how the specific institutional properties of different instruments affect their empowerment potential, and discuss factors that affect the efforts to promote citizen empowerment and ensure adequate responses of service providers and government agencies.

Section IX takes the stock from the analysis and offers recommendations for policy and practice,
highlighting broader operational and contextual issues that need to be considered for effective citizen
empowerment in service delivery.
The concept of empowerment has been greatly influenced by political and philosophical discourse pertaining to human well-being and rights. In its policy application, it has been defined as “the process of enhancing individuals’ or a group’s capacity to make purposive choices and to transform those choices into desired actions and outcomes” (Alsop, Bertelsen, and Holland 2006, p. 1). This definition has been adopted by the World Bank in its conceptualization of empowerment. Empowerment in this definition refers to the process that is facilitated by service providers, government agencies, or donors. On many occasions, power can be claimed and ceased by citizens or grassroots groups from the bottom up, without external facilitation. This is of course contingent upon a specific constellation of circumstances, which tends to involve shared grievances, successful citizen mobilization, and civil society alliances with progressive politicians.

Empowerment can have different degrees of intensity. The World Bank (2003a, 6–7) defines four sequential forms of empowerment, ranging from weak to intense. These include (i) passive access defined as the capacity to be present (but not necessarily exercise voice); (ii) active participation, in which people can exercise voice (but not necessarily exercise influence); (iii) influence, defined as the capacity to influence an agenda; and (iv) control, a position of “ultimate power,” when people are free to make choices and transform them into desired actions and outcomes.

In operational terms, development interventions seek to foster citizen empowerment by promoting citizen participation in specific aspects and stages of service delivery (see Figure 1). Participation is the main mechanism strengthening people’s capacity to express voice and influence service delivery. The main feature that all empowerment models share is that they promote citizen participation in service delivery by providing spaces, resources, and communication channels.

**Figure 1: Process of Empowerment in Service Delivery**

Source: Author’s illustration.

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Citizen participation can contribute to empowerment outcomes on two levels: in relation to specific initiatives, programs, or services; and citizen empowerment in more general terms, outside the scope of specific initiatives or projects. In the first scenario, citizens can participate within a framework of specific empowerment initiatives, such as social audits under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA or NREGA) program in India; or they can be involved in the identification and implementation of community projects supported through CDD programs.

Participation can also be a means for empowering people more broadly, in order to allow engagement in community development and local governance outside specific initiatives or projects. The process of participation in specific initiatives is assumed to build individual and collective capacities—including knowledge, skills, rights awareness, confidence, and social capital—which can enhance the willingness and ability of citizens to engage with government officials, local leaders, and service providers. More specifically, it is thought that the engagement in social accountability initiatives, such as community scorecards and social audits, can enhance citizen awareness of their rights and willingness to continue engagement with service providers. Similarly, it is assumed that participation in CDD initiatives can “spill-over” (Wong 2012) outside the scope of specific subprojects and empower people to take part in local planning and resource mobilization and engage with their leaders to demand greater accountability and transparency.

Development activities may not necessarily promote participation for the achievement of empowerment objectives. Participation in development projects can be seen as a “means” and as an “end” in itself (Oakley and Marsden 1984, p. 27; Nelson and Wright 1995, p. 1). Participation as a means is viewed as an input to a development activity. For example, participation can be a means to accomplish the aims of a project more efficiently, effectively, and cheaply (Nelson and Wright 1995, p. 1). Donor-supported programs in the 1980s and 1990s were often criticized for using participation to benefit from financial and voluntary labor contribution of local communities and off-load the burden on governments. According to Midgley (1986, p. 9), such participation is “instrumental” rather than “developmental.” Participation as “an end” denotes the ability of individuals to take part in local development and influence decisions that affect their lives.

IV. WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF CITIZEN PARTICIPATION?

Literature suggests that citizen participation can contribute to three key dimensions of service delivery. In particular, it can help improve responsiveness to local needs; access, inclusion, and equity; and service performance (see examples of citizen actions in Box 1). In addition, citizen participation in specific activities is seen as a means for strengthening personal agency and civic engagement in a broader sense. It can contribute to greater ability and willingness of citizens to engage in the public domain.

**Responsiveness to local needs.** Citizens can engage in local planning decisions and convey priorities with regard to the relevance, type, mix, and quantity of services. Top-down decisions about local investment priorities by civil servants and technical experts may not adequately address the existing demand and preferences of the population and result in inefficient allocation of public resources. In contrast, the bottom-up CDD model allows immediate involvement of citizens in the identification, prioritization, and planning of local services, while PPM enables citizens to articulate their immediate needs and preferences. This can result in greater responsiveness or better match of services to local needs and conditions and improve well-being outcomes.
**Access to services, inclusion, and equity.** Citizen participation can improve access to services and equity in service delivery. More generally, citizens can demand the extension of legal and service entitlements to specific groups who were not previously covered by statutory service entitlements or programs. For example, this may involve provision of specialized health and social care services to individuals with disabilities, or extension of social security benefits to the elderly.

Using grievance redress systems, individuals can demand inclusion in the existing services and programs for which they feel they satisfy eligibility criteria. For example, they can contest decisions of program administrators and/or local leaders about noninclusion in specific programs (e.g., targeted cash benefit schemes).

Finally, using PPM tools, citizens can demand fair and inclusive access to services and social entitlements for which they are formally eligible, but which they cannot adequately access or utilize. For example, through community scorecards and social audits, citizens can challenge informal practices, such as discriminatory behavior of service providers, rent seeking, and bureaucratic harassment. Citizen report cards and other participatory surveys can help expose formal barriers, such as user charges and administrative fees that may restrict service utilization by the poor and marginalized residents.

**Service performance.** Using individual grievance redress and collective PPM tools, citizens can influence service performance, including quality, cost, and effectiveness. For example, they can express preferences about the service delivery outcomes, such as water cleanliness, level of teaching instruction, and skills of medical professionals. They can also voice their feedback with regard to the appropriateness of service delivery procedures and practices, such as payment methods of cash benefits, bureaucratic red tape or the level of customer orientation, and behavior of service providers. Finally, citizens can exact transparency and accountability from their leaders and prevent rent-seeking behavior and attempts to misappropriate local resources.

**Personal agency and civic engagement.** The processes of participation and social mobilization to demand better services can generate greater personal and collective ability to engage with service providers and government agencies. For example, the review of 100 research studies by Gaventa and Barrett (2010, p. 25) suggests that the process of citizen engagement in development initiatives contributed to “the construction of citizenship.” In particular, the majority of cases resulted in greater knowledge and awareness about citizen rights as well as a greater sense of confidence and willingness to engage in further action. Similarly, available evidence from PPM initiatives, such as social audits, suggests that the experience of participation results in greater rights awareness and engagement with service providers of poor residents.

The theory of social funds and other CDD initiatives suggests that participation in CDD activities can promote people's ability to engage in the public domain outside the scope of interventions (although the evidence of the actual impacts is mixed and inconclusive). Participation is thought to enhance access to information, skills, and experience, and lead to changes in attitudes, behavior, and confidence. Frequent interactions among community members and positive problem-solving experiences can reinforce and cultivate social capital based on norms of trust and relations of solidarity. Citizen empowerment through CDD is assumed to manifest in people's ability to exercise voice and leadership, exact accountability from local leaders, and engage in local planning and resource mobilization.
The nature of citizen entitlement to services can be “rights-based,” or it can be “discretionary” or “program-based.” Rights-based entitlement implies that eligible citizens have the right to specific services and it is the binding obligation of the state to ensure they receive them. Rights-based entitlements are enforceable rights and are enshrined in the legal framework. In particular, they are recognized in national legislation as well as in national constitutions of many countries. The legal framework sets out the specific roles and responsibilities of implementing authorities (line ministries, specialized agencies, or service providers) as well as criteria for beneficiary eligibility and procedures for identification. In contrast, discretionary services allocate benefits based on program-specific rules establishing eligibility requirements and do not bear legal entitlements.

The rights-based approach to social protection (and social services more broadly) identifies a set of minimum state obligations in relation to economic, social, and cultural rights (Piron 2004, p. 26). This implies that the state undertakes responsibility to ensure an adequate standard of living for all. In operational terms, this implies (i) provision of at least minimum levels of social services, and (ii) a focus on equal accessibility to these services.

The rights-based approach in education, health, water, and social protection has been adopted in many low- and middle-income countries. There is currently strong international support for institutionalizing rights-based provision of social services. In 2009, the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination launched the Social Protection Floor (SPF) Initiative as a tool to promote the rights-based approach. SPF is an “integrated set of social policies designed to guarantee income security and access to essential services for all, paying particular attention to vulnerable groups and protecting and empowering people across the life cycle” (ILO 2012, p. xxii). It incorporates

- basic income security in the form of cash or in-kind transfers; and
- universal access to essential affordable social services, including health, water and sanitation, education, food security, and housing, among others

Box 1: Service Delivery: What Can Citizens Do?

- Demand legal rights and negotiate the terms of formal social entitlements, including extension of rights and access to services.
- Contest decisions of program administrators and/or community leaders about non-inclusion in specific programs (e.g., targeted cash benefit schemes, exclusion from services).
- Influence the behavior of leaders and exact honest, fair, and transparent allocation of resources and benefits.
- Influence service delivery performance, including regular monitoring and feedback on the relevance, quality, and timeliness of services.
- Challenge informal norms and behavior that restrict access to services to specific population groups, including the poor, ethnic or religious minorities, and women.
- Engage in local planning decisions and convey priorities with regard to the type, mix, and quantity of services.

Source: Author’s compilation.
About 135 countries have made education a fundamental right through their constitutions and/or national legislation. The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act 2009 in India serves as a building block to ensure that every child has a right to quality elementary education, and that the state, with the help of families and communities, fulfills this obligation. Constitutional provisions in Pakistan and Bangladesh require the state to provide free and compulsory primary education. In South Africa and Brazil, courts have held that constitutional provisions on the right to education require access to education for migrant children and the provision of transportation for children who could not otherwise attend school.

The National Commission for Protection of Child Rights in India has been appointed to review the safeguards for rights provided under the Right to Education Act, investigate complaints, and have the powers of a civil court in trying cases. States have been mandated to form a State Commission for Protection of Child Rights (SCPCR) or the Right to Education Protection Authority (REPA). Any person wishing to file a grievance must submit a written complaint to the local authority.

Many countries have enshrined the right to water in their national constitutions, or have framed this right implicitly or explicitly in national legislation. In Asia, these include Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, the Philippines, and Sri Lanka. Many countries in Latin America and Africa have also recognized the right to water.

The right to health has been recognized in the constitutions of Indonesia, Maldives, Nepal, Thailand, and Timor-Leste (WHO 2011). These constitutions employ the local equivalent of the word “right” in describing entitlement to health. The constitutions of Bhutan, Bangladesh, India, Myanmar, and Sri Lanka do not recognize the right to health as a fundamental right, but “compel” the state to provide health services.

The rights-based approach to social protection has been especially prominent in the former Soviet Union, including the countries of the South Caucasus and Central Asia, such as Armenia, Georgia, Kazakhstan, and the Kyrgyz Republic. In these countries, despite the collapse of the socialist welfare model, many have retained the right to social protection for specific population groups. Some of the key rights-based instruments include child and maternity benefits, disability allowance, and old-age pensions. The governments of Nepal and Thailand have institutionalized social or noncontributory pensions for older people as a universal entitlement (Handayani and Babajanian 2012).

The rights-based approach has been utilized in the Government of India’s flagship MGNREGA program (Box 2).

Rights-based services enable citizens to claim rights. As argued earlier, unlike program-based approaches, rights-based service delivery represents legally binding obligations, which implies that individuals have a formal, legally enforced basis for claiming their rights. Citizens can claim their rights to services through administrative grievance redress mechanisms or by using judicial appeals. This is different from program-based approaches, where service entitlement is not guaranteed and which involves a significant degree of administrative discretion in determining eligibility.

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The absence of legal rights for services does not diminish the importance of citizen participation in service delivery. Citizens must be entitled to claim accountability and influence service delivery outcomes. Beneficiaries of rights-based and non-rights-based programs must equally be able to have a say with regard to the quality of services they receive and the processes of benefit administration or service delivery. They must be able to challenge discriminatory norms that may restrict their access to benefits and services, and demand transparency and honesty from the service providers. Finally, individuals must also be able to claim inclusion in non-rights-based programs if they adhere to specified eligibility requirements and feel they were unfairly excluded from services.

VI. GRIEVANCE REDRESS MECHANISMS

This section examines first the key features of grievance redress mechanisms. It then discusses their empowerment potential and key issues that affect fair and effective grievance redress.

A. Main Features

Grievance redress systems are formal accountability mechanisms for citizens to provide feedback on services and programs when problems arise (Ringold et al. 2012). A review of the World Bank projects in the human development sector supported between fiscal year (FY) 2005 and FY2010 found that grievance redress procedures were most commonly integrated in the social protection (cash transfer) and community-driven development programs (Ringold et al. 2012). The grievance redress mechanisms in health care exist at various levels, including health care facilities, line agencies, and the judiciary. The World Bank review did not find many examples of formal grievance mechanisms in education (Ringold et al. 2012). It suggests that grievances in primary and secondary education are most likely to be raised and addressed at the school level.

Grievance redress mechanisms are usually integrated in service delivery systems. They can also be set up as part of program-based contractual obligations of service providers to program beneficiaries or service users. Grievance redress can also be noninstitutionalized, such as personal appeals and interaction between service providers and beneficiaries, as for example in schools. Not all programs in practice may be accompanied with effective or well-functioning grievance redress mechanisms.

Box 2: Rights-Based Approach in the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act

The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA or NREGA) program seeks to promote employment creation, regeneration of the natural resource base and creation of productive assets in rural areas, and strengthening of democratic and accountable governance at the local level. MGNREGA is enshrined in the Indian Constitution, which guarantees its sustainability and stability in the future. The rights-based framework makes it a legally binding obligation for the government to provide employment to those who seek it (Holmes, Morgan, and Hagen-Zanker 2011). The implementation of MGNREGA has been supported through the Payment of Wages Act (1936) and the Equal Remuneration Act (1976), which ensure that both men and women receive equal wages. The Right to Information (RTI) Act (2005) provides a basis for citizen empowerment by enabling them to access information, and, in particular, access any work-related records. MGNREGA uses social audits to reinforce transparent and accountable service provision.

Sources: Holmes, Morgan, and Hagen-Zanker (2011).
There are three types of grievance redress mechanisms at different levels: redress within government agencies, independent redress, and courts. The existing grievance redress arrangements within government institutions encompass a plethora of arrangements, including dedicated mailboxes, e-mail addresses, text messaging systems, telephone hotlines, interactive websites, and designated complaint handling officials (Ringold et al. 2012). Independent redress includes ombudspersons, tribunals, labor relations boards, and community-based organizations. These arrangements are located outside the government bureaucracy and often do not have the discretionary authority to enforce findings of complaint investigation. The role of courts varies depending on the specific country context and governance arrangements, but in many instances courts can hear and redress the shortcomings of formal agencies and service providers and compel them to comply with their obligations.

Let us consider grievance redress in social protection. The system of appeals in social protection programs must function on three levels (Grosh et al. 2008). The first level involves frontline service providers. This can allow a quick response, especially on matters that concern errors and misunderstanding. For example, the grievance may concern a clerical error in the applicants file, which can be easily rectified, or it may require explanation and greater information about application procedures.

The second level of appeal takes place when the frontline service provider cannot satisfy the appeal. This includes the program agency at the district or subdistrict level, or a specialized branch within the same agency (e.g., office of appeals within the ministry or municipality).

This line of appeal may give a greater sense of recourse to complainants who are not happy with the decision of the first-line appeals. This is especially relevant with regard to eligibility decisions. In some cases, this may help rectify the problems of the targeting system that may leave out eligible applicants. For example, the Community Appeals Committee in Armenia composed of five representatives of local government social sector departments and five representatives of nongovernment organizations, hear appeals from those deemed ineligible for the cash family benefit by the proxy-means test, but who consider themselves in need (Grosh et al. 2008). The committees have the right to grant entry up to 5% of the roster to rectify for the error of the proxy-means system.

Finally, there are judicial appeals, through applicants’ access to the legal system. As discussed earlier, grievance redress in rights-based approaches includes legal appeals and redress. Judicial scrutiny is increasingly playing a role in upholding economic and social rights granted by constitutional provisions, including rights in education and health. The judiciary in some low- and middle-income countries, including national supreme courts, have dealt with individual grievances in different sectors, including health (Ringold et al. 2012). Brazil is one of the countries in which the courts are used to claim economic and social rights. This is especially prevalent in health care. For example, since the late 1990s, the courts in Brazil have reviewed an estimated of 100,000 cases concerning whether individuals received medications for which there were entitled under the 1988 Constitution and the guidelines of the national health system (Ferraz 2009 in Ringold et al. 2012). There were 120 health care right court cases per million in Brazil, which is especially significant if compared with India (0.10) and Indonesia (0.012) (Gauri and Brinks 2008).
B. Empowerment Potential

To date, there is limited consolidated knowledge about the outcomes and effectiveness of different grievance regress mechanisms. The effectiveness of specific institutional arrangements is usually examined in program or project evaluations, based on the results produced by the management information systems (MIS) and administrative records. These records allow identifying patterns of access to the system by individuals with different social characteristics (e.g., women, men, ethnic minorities, the poor), the extent of responsiveness of programs to citizen complaints (e.g., investigation and redress actions), and actions taken with regard to illegal cases (e.g., administrative reprimand and sanctions). This information is often intended for internal use, in order to enable program administrators and policy makers to make adjustments in service delivery.

Grievance redress is an effective and simple way to enable citizens to engage with service providers, voice their concerns and feedback, and seek redress, including correction of errors, exclusion from benefits, or negative attitude of service providers. It is a useful instrument to promote social accountability and enable citizens to promote their individual interests and entitlements. Grievance redress mechanisms address individual complaints about services rather than collective grievances, and thus it is crucial for protecting citizen rights and entitlements enshrined in legal frameworks or contractual obligations with service providers. Grievance redress can promote collective interests when groups of citizens mobilize to appeal with a common grievance. Further, when the feedback is aggregated, it can be used for improvement at the program or policy level (Ringold et al. 2012). In this way, grievance redress has important significance with regard to improving collective and not only individual welfare.

Legal redress through judiciary appeal is an especially effective channel for claiming and upholding rights. It is a potent instrument for introducing changes in the governance systems, such as alterations in rules as well as their interpretations (Grosh et al. 2008). For example, the Constitutional Court in South Africa lowered the eligibility age for social pensions for men from 65 to 60 to equalize it with that of women, after a case had been brought up against it.

Grievance redress enables individuals to claim entitlements, influence service quality, and demand accountability. In most cases, this does not allow participation in deliberative processes and the important decisions are made by service providers and program agencies based on their consideration of appeals or court decisions.

Individuals have direct engagement with service providers, or agencies responsible with their supervision or regulation. In case of judicial appeals, the court acts as an intermediary between the citizen and the service providers. In most cases, this system allows people to receive responses to their specific individual grievances. This is different from collective forms of grievance redress used in PPM, where individual grievances may not necessarily be addressed; rather, they serve as a feedback mechanism to trigger adjustments in service delivery.

Judicial appeals can be rather expensive and require the ability to navigate the legal system. Preliminary analysis suggests that legalizing the demands of social and economic rights may favor the more affluent rather than poor segments of the population (Gauri and Brinks 2008). This is exemplified by the concentration of litigation cases in the richer south and southeast parts of Brazil rather than the poorer northeast, and more cases in Delhi rather than the poorer states of India. In addition, there are more cases addressing university education, rather than primary education, which reflects a bias toward the middle classes.
The ability of individuals from disadvantaged groups to claim inclusion in the program through grievance redress in program-based approaches can be restricted by administrative provisions for service delivery. For example, targeted social transfer programs often set quotas for the number of eligible beneficiaries, which limit the intake even if the number of eligible individuals exceeds the quota.

The analysis of the Citizen Complaints System (Sistema de Atencion Ciudadana) set up under Mexico’s Oportunidades conditional cash transfer program in 2003 suggests that individual action may not be sufficient to promote the rights of beneficiaries in dealing with the government officers. The system in Mexico allows the beneficiary families to directly communicate with the program through a letter and telephone. This does not offer an effective counterbalance to the interests of the elites, who can be “overpowering” for the poor and marginalized individuals (Hevia de la Hara 2008). The analysis concludes that grievance systems must allow room for collective action, which can be more forceful in promoting the interests of the poor.

Many programs incorporate mechanisms for the involvement of local community groups and civil society organizations for supporting citizens in grievance redress, for example, the pilot Hunger Safety Net Programme (HSNP) in northern Kenya. There are examples of grassroots-based older people’s associations in Viet Nam (Giang and Wesumperuma 2012) and Older People’s Groups in India (HelpAge International 2007), which were successful in promoting the interests of older persons in social pension programs.

C. Citizen Participation

The specific design features of grievance redress mechanisms can significantly influence people’s decisions to lodge complaints. In particular, the ability to appeal first of all requires adequate communication channels—physical and virtual venues for lodging complaints (Ringold et al. 2012). This includes proximity to local centers for social services and easy access to internet-based complaint systems. Furthermore, appeals registration must be simple and not require significant time and resource investments from beneficiaries. Information technology provides an effective tool for linking citizens with service providers and government officials and for channeling citizen grievances.

Limited information and rights awareness can undermine citizens’ ability to articulate demands for services and claim rights. Effective outreach and information dissemination are crucial for informing people about the opportunities for complaints and feedback and for ensuring that rights-based service delivery benefits all citizens. In particular, service providers and sectoral agencies must ensure that grievance redress mechanisms incorporate adequate measures and resources to support widespread information campaigns, especially in remote areas and among disadvantaged groups.

D. Agency Response

Effective accountability requires a comprehensive management information system for monitoring and evaluation. MIS is a tool to manage data for all program processes, at different steps of a program cycle, including planning implementation, supervision, and evaluation (Villalobos, Blanco, and Bassett 2010). It can be used to generate and manage information on services and institutions that are linked to a particular program. It can store information on beneficiary registration, identification, targeting, payments, service delivery, case management, termination, and others. This can allow effective program monitoring, management and supervision. It can also help in generating readily available information for managers at the central and local level as well as for public dissemination and scrutiny and thus facilitate greater accountability and transparency.
It is important to establish mechanisms for horizontal accountability. Effective and fair redress largely depends on the strength of democratic institutions and the ability of the state to enforce the rule of law. It is important that the judiciary not be influenced by public agencies and service providers and can offer fair and impartial treatment of citizen claims. Institutional checks and balances are important to ensure remedial action and sanctions against those who violated rules. They can enhance the credibility of the system and utilization of grievance redress mechanisms. As Ringold et al. (2012, 85) put it, when “people are not convinced that they will get a response, they are unlikely to bother to lodge complaint.”

Effective grievance redress requires adequate institutional capacity so as to ensure availability of quality services and citizens’ access to benefits. Citizen complaints may not be adequately addressed due to constraints in funding and administrative capacity of program agencies and service providers. Rights-based entitlements must be reflected in government budget allocations and annual social spending. There are of course trade-offs in terms of realization of human rights and the existing resource constraints that most governments face. Rights have significant resource implications and many economic and social rights—in social protection, health, and education—are particularly “resource-intensive” (Munro 2008, 33).

Table 1 summarizes the main strengths and weaknesses of grievance redress mechanisms as well as conditions required for their successful enforcement.
VII. PARTICIPATORY PERFORMANCE MONITORING

This section examines PPM and discusses its empowerment potential and conditions for success. It focuses on the most popular PPM instruments, including citizen report cards, scorecards, and social audits.

A. Main Features

PPM in the World Bank’s definition entails a process whereby citizen groups or communities monitor and evaluate the implementation and performance of public services or projects, often according to indicators they themselves have selected. Social monitoring involves observing and scrutinizing service delivery and demanding explanations when the actions of service providers or government agents deviate from the expected standards (Joshi 2008, p. 4). PPM can improve service delivery outcomes by generating user perspectives about service delivery performance and providing institutional channels for engaging with service providers and expressing grievances.

Citizen report cards gather information about the users’ perceptions and views of service delivery performance, outcomes, and usefulness. They seek to provide stakeholders with feedback about the strengths and shortcomings in service delivery and offer an impetus for remedial action. This tool is especially useful in situations where agencies do not use participatory beneficiary assessments to solicit feedback and generate understanding of service delivery perceptions and impacts (World Bank 2004). Citizen report cards aggregate scores given by users for the quality and satisfaction of services (World Bank 2004). They are informed through quantitative data, which often can be complemented with qualitative data through focus groups and key informant interviews. Citizen report cards vary in terms of the number and type of quality indicators used.

Social audits of public services promote direct involvement of citizens in monitoring service quality, access, and performance—a process that often culminates in a direct engagement between the public and service providers at community interface meetings. Social audits have been used especially actively by the civil society and citizens in India. This has been greatly facilitated by the 2005 Right to Information Act that gives citizens unrestricted access to government records (Posani and Aiyar 2009). The nongovernment Mazdoor Kisan Shakti Sangathan (MKSS) movement in Rajasthan first used social audits (or “public hearings”), which were replicated and institutionalized in MGNREGA.5

Community scorecards are a “hybrid” (World Bank 2005) of the institutional arrangements for citizen report cards and social audits. They combine participatory tracking of service performance (or “input tracking”), service providers’ self-evaluation, and community interface meetings, in which performance assessments are discussed and remedial action plans developed. Community scorecards rely on the information generated by scoring and focus groups discussions, while information for citizen report cards is gathered through surveys. In contrast to citizen report cards, community scorecards rely heavily on participation of community members in the assessment of service quality and performance and negotiating the findings with service providers. The example of Gambia provides an illustration of the key stages involved in the community scorecard process (Figure 2).

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5 The program was initially called National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA) and renamed the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) in 2009.
Most PPM initiatives are not integrated in public service delivery systems. They often represent specific activities undertaken by civil society organizations, often in cooperation with international donors. These initiatives are largely sustained thanks to efforts of civil society organizations. Often, these are one-off initiatives (e.g., Citizen Report in Manila, Philippines; or Report Card on Public Services in Bharatpur, Nepal), but in some instances they have been repeated and carried out on a continuous basis, as for example the Report Card on Public Services in Ahmedabad, India; Parivartan’s Social Audits in Delhi, India; and Citizens’ Charter of Lok Satta in Hyderabad, India. MGNREGA is one of the few public sector programs that have successfully institutionalized social audits (Aiyar et al. 2009, p. 59).

B. Empowerment Potential

Based on their review of social accountability interventions supported by the World Bank, Agarwal, Heltberg, and Diachok (2009, p. 1) maintain that despite a large number of social accountability initiatives, the existing evidence on impacts of social accountability approaches is “thin” and that there is a need for rigorous impact evaluations that can isolate and measure the impact of these approaches. The existing evidence suggests that these approaches can be effective for facilitating citizen engagement in service delivery, exposing corruption, and improving service quality (Box 3).

There is some evidence about the positive PPM effects on increasing people’s awareness of entitlements and building citizens’ capacity to claim rights. For example, participation in the social audit of MGNREGA in Andhra Pradesh had a significant empowering effect in terms of raising people’s awareness of their rights and strengthening their personal agency (Aiyar and Samji 2009). This has been manifested in the twofold rise of the number of people who considered themselves “powerful enough” to confront the MGNREGA officials after the initiation of the social audits.

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Box 3: Successful Participatory Performance Monitoring Initiatives

The Bangalore Citizen Report Card conducted by the Public Affairs Centre (PAC) nongovernment organization in 1994 and 1999 contributed to the improvement of public services in Bangalore (Ravindra 2004). The report card in Ahmedabad, India conducted in 1997 by Self-Employed Women’s Association (SEWA) and Foundation for Public Interest (FPI) documented poor women’s assessment of municipal services, including water, electricity, and sewerage, and resulted in improvements in service delivery.a

Social audits have been especially effective in India. The “activist government” in the state of Andhra Pradesh has institutionalized social audits in the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) public works program across the entire state (Posani and Aiyar 2009, 26). The social audits here were helped impose sanctions against corrupt officials and improve accountability (Aiyar and Samji 2009). Social audits of the targeted Public Distribution System (PDS) supported by the administration of Warangal District in Andhra Pradesh allowed local residents to identify discrepancies in the lists of eligible beneficiaries and to verify possible leakages in the distribution of food supplies (Narayanan 2011).

The community scorecard by the Center of Good Governance, Hyderabad, India, assessed the performance of two primary health centers in Visakhapatnam District led to improved customer orientation and transparency (World Bank 2007).

PPM mechanisms are effective tools for promoting collective interests, and they are less suitable for promoting individual rights and addressing individual grievances. Citizen report cards, community scorecards, and social audits represent collective grievance mechanisms. These methods can be used to solicit feedback from a large number of users. Community scorecards in the health and education sectors in Gambia solicited feedback from 3,500 stakeholders, including teachers, pupils, health workers, and community members.7 Social audits on health and family planning services in Bangladesh solicited feedback from 125,000 people, mostly women, from 250 communities.8

PPM is reliant on collective action and thus has greater potential to achieve far-reaching changes in accountability and service performance as compared with individual complaints. Sekhar (2010) suggests that the outcomes of these mechanisms have greater credibility in the eyes of service providers and government officials. She maintains that the advantage of the report cards is that they represent collective feedback, rather than opinions or complaints of few individuals. This information is systematized and segregated to represent the views and experiences of different social groups based on careful sampling and research design.

The nature of citizens’ decision-making authority in PPM is limited by the intrinsic institutional properties of this model. In particular, citizens do not take part in deliberative structures and most decisions about adjustments in service delivery are taken by service providers or program agencies (Joshi 2008). In contrast, participatory governance instruments, such as governance councils, participatory budgeting, and participatory planning initiatives, enable citizens to take part in deliberative bodies, but do not adequately support monitoring functions.

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Sources: Aiyar and Samji (2009); Narayanan (2011); Posani and Aiyar (2009); Ravindra (2004); World Bank (2007).
A process of social monitoring that involves participatory methods is likely to generate greater empowerment than non-participatory programs. Community scorecards and social audits are more participatory than citizen report cards in that they solicit citizen mobilization from the inception. In particular, the indicators for community scorecards are developed by community members themselves, while the indicators for citizen report cards are determined by researchers. Social audits require community participation in the process of feedback and joint assessments. Citizen report cards do not provide direct forums for engaging with service providers and their findings are usually disseminated indirectly, through the media and civil society organizations. The involvement of community members in developing assessment scores and verifying records can stimulate a sense of ownership and strengthen personal agency.

The immediate engagement of citizens with public agencies and service providers in PPM is likely to prompt action and further motivate citizen engagement in service delivery. Citizen report card findings are usually communicated to policy makers through the media and civil society activists. Social audits and community scorecards facilitate direct engagement with stakeholders and provide a forum for immediate discussion and action. Considering that citizens generally have limited spaces for direct engagement with state officials and service providers, these instruments provide a valuable opportunity to debate and negotiate change. For example, the MGNREGA social audit system in Andhra Pradesh provides immediate, tangible grievance redress, which encourages the willingness of the rural poor to participate in the audit process (Aiyar and Samji 2009).

Women and disadvantaged individuals may not be able to take part in social monitoring, express their voice, and seek redress. For example, they may be restricted from participation in consultative forums or from being given the opportunity to articulate their preferences (see Box 4).

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**Box 4: Barriers to Women’s Empowerment**

Women often experience greater difficulty in exercising their agency than men. The World Bank World Development Report 2012 (World Bank 2011a) suggests that strong agency implies the ability to make choices, and it can be manifested in a number of outcomes, including control over resources, ability to move freely, ability to make decisions over family formation, freedom from the risk of violence, and ability to have a choice in society and influence policy. Women's agency is shaped by economic growth, formal institutions, informal social norms, and markets.

The ability of women to take part in service delivery and in the local policy arena is constrained by a range of factors. These include ineffective and biased formal institutions that do not allow adequate channels for women’s participation and representation. Restrictive informal social norms often rigidly prescribe women’s roles in the public space and limit their ability to express voice and influence important decision making. Women face enormous time pressure due the heavy burden of domestic and child care responsibilities, which can preclude them from participating in public meetings (MacPherson 2008). Women may not always be aware of their rights and appropriate avenues for public engagement. Participatory mechanisms for promoting women’s empowerment in service delivery must be accompanied with policies that tackle the existing structural obstacles to women’s participation.

Sources: MacPherson (2008); World Bank (2011a).
C. Citizen Participation

An important precondition to sustaining citizen willingness and capacity to act is to ensure that PPM tools are institutionalized in service delivery, or supported through continuous activities of civil society organizations. It is unlikely that one-off initiatives can result in long-lasting changes in citizen's ability to participate in service delivery in the absence of institutional spaces for engagement with service providers and channeling grievances.

Effective information dissemination and social mobilization are crucial for promoting people's willingness and ability to take part in consultations and social monitoring activities. For example, the experience of the World Bank in Gambia suggests that an effective community scorecard process requires adequate time for information dissemination, consultation, and sensitization (World Bank 2005). Thus, introductory workshops with stakeholders need to be followed with community mobilization and sensitization.

Successful PPM design and implementation require adequate technical capacity for survey design and social outreach. Community scorecards rely on the information generated by scoring and focus groups discussions, while information for citizen report cards is gathered through surveys. As a result, the design of citizen report cards requires technical skills in designing and implementing surveys, but it does not require citizen mobilization for the initiation of the PPM processes. In contrast, community scorecards and social audits involve less sampling and survey design input; instead, they necessitate resources and expertise to support and facilitate adequate community mobilization and awareness. Service providers and community members must be sufficiently trained to develop facility performance assessment indicators.

An important lesson from Nicaragua and Honduras suggests that successful implementation of social accountability approaches “requires time, money, expertise, patience and commitment” (Agarwal, Heltberg, and Diachok 2009, p. 5). This has implications for scaling up pilots, which may not be possible to achieve without significant resource commitments. Agarwal, Heltberg, and Diachok (2009) suggest that mobilizing communities and generating awareness around social accountability is a resource-intensive process, especially when it concerns marginalized people.

Socially excluded and disadvantaged individuals may be restricted from participation in consultative forums or the opportunity to articulate their preferences. Therefore, effective social outreach requires explicit strategies and dedicated resources. At the same time, the ability of disadvantaged groups to speak up and demand accountability from service providers and their leaders must be encouraged by broader policies that can tackle constraints to their participation in deliberative forums and public domain.

A certain level of state–society collaboration can ensure favorable conditions for citizen mobilization and engagement in the policy domain. Depending on the nature of the political regime and a specific government's approach, there are a number of ways in which governments can relate to civil society organizations. These include, for example, refraining from strong engagement, repression, co-optation, patronage, and pro-active engagement (Manor 1999 quoted in World Bank 2003b). States that have sufficient capacity to enforce the rule of law, determine clear rules for civil engagement, and formulate and implement public policies tend to be most effective in establishing an enabling environment for civic engagement (World Bank 2003b). The ability of citizen groups to mobilize and articulate organized interests is often contingent upon the existing legal and institutional frameworks that allow citizens to register formal organizations.
D. Agency Response

The role of the media and information dissemination is essential in reporting the findings of citizen report cards and creating leverage on public sector officials to act upon critical issues raised by citizens. It, however, may not be sufficient for compelling them to take note of the discrepancies and take action to improve them. Civil society and citizen activism are crucial for effectively negotiating service entitlements and influencing service delivery outcomes. Ravindra (2004, p. 18) for example, notes the key stages in citizen action in Bangalore included “limited impact (with dissemination of feedback) to more impact (with dialogue and public pressure for change) to greater impact (with advice on reform).” These correspond to “reactive, proactive and reformist” roles of citizen action. Citizen report cards solicit information about service performance, but success in service delivery outcomes requires that citizens act on this information and mobilize to pressure service procedures. The results of the surveys must be used to advocate policy reform and improvements. Similarly, social audits and community scorecards are largely reliant on community mobilization and citizen action to engage with service providers and exact accountability.

Demands for accountability and exposure of corruption are not sufficient to improve service delivery outcomes, unless they are accompanied with horizontal accountability measures, such as investigations into corruption and imposition of formal sanctions (Joshi 2010, 12). In all of the cases where citizen monitoring improved service delivery outcomes and generated citizen empowerment, citizen action was accompanied with adequate compensation measures to offer redress to citizens and punishment of those involved in illegal activities.

There is evidence that reformist leadership within government agencies can be crucial for encouraging citizen action and dialogue with citizens. The support of senior state officials was essential for the effective institutionalization and implementation of MGNREGA in Andhra Pradesh (Singh and Vutukuru 2008). Similarly, the success of the social audits in Warangal was achieved partly because of the commitment and initiative of the reformist leadership (Narayanan 2011). The contribution of the report cards in Bangalore was facilitated by the overall positive environment created by the reform initiatives of the government to improve services, and was driven by the congruence of efforts of proactive civil servants and active citizens (Ravindra 2004).

Citizen participation can be supported by service delivery agencies themselves. Based on her review, Sekhar (2010) notes that one of the determinants of the success of citizen report cards in India was proactive leadership in the service provider agencies, who had the vision and realized that citizen monitoring and feedback could help them promote their reform agenda.

Table 2 summarizes the main PPM strengths and weaknesses as well as conditions required for its success.
### Table 2: Participatory Performance Monitoring

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Empowerment Potential</th>
<th>Weaknesses</th>
<th>Conditions for Success</th>
<th>Agency Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Provides effective channels for claiming legal and program-based rights and influencing service delivery</td>
<td>Often sustained through civil society activism and/or donor actions rather than institutionalized in service delivery systems</td>
<td>Integration in service delivery systems</td>
<td>Effective media and information dissemination</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increases awareness of citizens of their rights and propensity for collective action</td>
<td>Does not directly promote individual rights and address individual grievances</td>
<td>Effective outreach, information dissemination and social mobilization</td>
<td>Successful citizen mobilization to engage with service providers and government agencies and make claims</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improves service delivery performance by generating user perspectives (CRC, SA, CSC) and promoting direct engagement with service providers (SA, CSC)</td>
<td>Does not allow citizen participation in deliberative processes</td>
<td>Sufficient financial and technical capacity to design and implement community surveys</td>
<td>Threat of credible sanctions and provisions for horizontal accountability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increases user awareness of service standards and actual delivery outcomes</td>
<td>CRC require financial resources and technical capacity to design and implement surveys</td>
<td>Resources and capacity to carry out effective community outreach and social mobilization</td>
<td>Support of reformist government officials and service providers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Generates feedback from a large number of beneficiaries and has a strong potential to stimulate change</td>
<td>CSC and SA require significant financial and time investment in community outreach and social mobilization</td>
<td>Favorable conditions for civic engagement</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CSC and SA are more participatory and can result in greater empowerment than CRC</td>
<td>CRC do not provide forums for direct engagement with service providers</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

CRC = citizen report cards, CSC = community scorecards, SA = social audits.

Source: Author.

### VIII. COMMUNITY-DRIVEN DEVELOPMENT

This section examines CDD model and discusses its empowerment potential and conditions for success.

#### A. Main Features

CDD programs provide grant financing for small-scale projects (or subprojects) generated and managed by local agents, including community groups, local governments, nongovernment organizations, local offices of line ministries and other local actors. CDD projects include a variety of instruments, social investment funds (or social funds), local development funds, and other participatory activities and vary in their institutional design and methods of operation. Most commonly, they provide finance for construction and rehabilitation of essential social and economic infrastructure, including schools, clinics, irrigation systems, water supply and sanitation, roads, and communal areas.

The CDD model has been widely used by international development agencies, such as the World Bank and the Inter-American Development Bank, to promote local development in many transition and developing countries. The World Bank currently supports approximately 400 CDD projects in 94
countries estimated at almost $30 billion (Wong 2012). Over the past 10 years, 5%–10% of the overall World Bank lending portfolio was spent on CDD. Some of the most prominent CDD initiatives in Asia are discussed in Box 5.

**Box 5: Prominent Community-Driven Development Programs in Asia**

The National Community Empowerment Program (PNPM-Mandiri) in Indonesia is an expansion of the well-known Kecamatan Development Project (KDP) and is part of the government’s national poverty reduction agenda. It is an umbrella that includes different empowerment projects in the country. KDP, acclaimed as one of the most successful community-driven development (CDD) projects, was initiated in 1998 and continued through 2007, when it was expanded into PNPM-Rural. The PNPM-Rural, which constitutes part of the broader PNPM program reaches over 77,000 villages in over 5,000 subdistricts, including all rural districts in Indonesia (PNPM Support Facility 2011).

The first phase of the Kapitbisig Laban sa Kahirapan – Comprehensive and Integrated Delivery of Social Services (KALAHI-CIDSS) in the Philippines was implemented in 42 of the poorest provinces, or half of the entire territory of the Philippines, with the support of the World Bank between 2003 and 2010. The extension phase of KALAHI-CIDSS, started in 2011, builds on the lessons of the first operation and covers 48 provinces (ADB 2012).

The Village Investment Project (VIP) in the Kyrgyz Republic represents the “latest generation” of CDD projects, and, in addition to supporting infrastructure rehabilitation, it aims at improving transparency and accountability at the local level. The VIP project has been acclaimed as one of the “success stories” of the World Bank not only in its Europe and Central Asia region, but also globally (Babajanian 2009). The project was established in 2003 with the financial support of the World Bank and other donors, including the Government of Japan and the Department for International Development of the United Kingdom. Between 2004 and 2010, the project supported more than 7,000 infrastructure subprojects covering all village councils in the country (ARIS 2011).

Sources: ADB (2012); ARIS (2011); Babajanian (2009); PNPM Support Facility (2011).

Most CDD programs share a “bottom–up development model” for service delivery and capacity building (Babajanian 2005). In particular, they provide resources and decision-making responsibility for identification, planning, and implementation of important infrastructure and service delivery to local community groups. It is assumed that the transfer of resources and discretionary authority can empower local communities to influence local development and exact accountability from service providers, local authorities, and informal leaders. This will in turn result in greater responsiveness to local needs as well as fair and inclusive allocation of local resources. CDD programs often finance multiple subprojects in the same community over the overall life cycle of the program in order to extend the process of empowerment and capacity building.

CDD programs originated through the initiative and funding (both loans and grants) of international development agencies and bilateral donors. Initially designed to last 3–5 years, they, in many instances, were extended several times and thus became an integral part of public service delivery. For example, the Armenian Social Investment Fund (ASIF) has been in operation since 1995, the National Community Empowerment Program (PNPM) in Indonesia builds on the Kecamatan Development Project (KDP) originated in 1998, and Kapitbisig Laban sa Kahirapan – Comprehensive and Integrated Delivery of Social Services (KALAHI-CIDSS) in the Philippines has been active since 2003.

PNPM is embedded within Indonesia’s poverty alleviation strategy comprising three clusters: income support through targeted poverty and social protection programs at the household level; community development and empowerment; and micro-level growth through programs that target microfinance and support to small and medium-sized enterprises (World Bank 2011b). Many CDD programs, such as PNPM in Indonesia and the Village Investment Project (VIP) in the Kyrgyz Republic have nationwide coverage across rural areas.
B. Empowerment Potential

The CDD bottom-up model is thought to enable citizens to influence service delivery priorities and thus improve responsiveness (or “demand orientation”) in service delivery. The decisions about service provision in CDD are not made by governments based on their definitions of citizens’ “needs”; instead, users have the opportunity to make service delivery choices that correspond to their immediate needs and priorities.

Second, the CDD model assumes that the subprojects will not only enable citizens to have a voice in community investment decisions, but also help them influence service performance. Due to their immediate involvement in the subproject processes, citizens can closely monitor their leaders and local contractors and influence the quality standards of services delivered by the CDD subprojects. They can prevent attempts to misappropriate subproject funds and ensure that local leaders manage the subproject funds in a transparent and efficient manner. Finally, it is thought that CDD can promote broader empowerment to enable communities to take part in local development outside the parameters of subprojects.

Community members directly participate in the processes of subproject identification and prioritization through public consultations, such as focus group discussions and community-wide meetings. During subproject preparation and implementation, members of the broader community participate in the subproject processes indirectly, through intermediary local agents. In particular, they are required to elect subproject implementing agencies or implementing committees, which act on their behalf during the subproject preparation and implementation stages. These implementing agencies then directly interact with local and regional authorities, contractors, and service providers. As part of their operational requirements, CDD programs support outreach and mobilization processes to promote community participation in the subproject cycle (Box 6).

Evidence suggests that community participation in the identification and prioritization of local services generates positive service delivery outcomes and benefits the majority of community members, including the poor (Wong 2012; World Bank 2011c; PNPM Support Facility 2011; Babajanian 2009; ADB 2012). More specifically, CDD sub-projects tend to increase access to and utilization of services, especially in health, education and drinking water.

Box 6: Community Mobilization in Community-Driven Development

Community-driven development (CDD) programs use participatory methodologies for promoting community outreach, awareness, and involvement in CDD activities. For example, during the needs identification phase under the Village Investment Project (VIP) in the Kyrgyz Republic, the project outreach teams carry out public consultations with women, youth, professionals, and a mixed group of “average” residents, with the inclusion of the poor in each group (World Bank 2006, 69). Participatory planning in the expanded National Community Empowerment Program PNPM-Rural in Indonesia involves a “socialisation and planning” process, during which facilitators hold groups meetings, including separate meetings with women to discuss their needs and priorities (PNPM Support Facility 2011). Each village can submit two proposals, but the second must come from a women’s group.


CDD interventions may not necessarily benefit some of the poorest and weakest residents. There are indications these people often have limited roles and influence in CDD-led participatory processes. Qualitative studies of PNPM-Rural suggest that the influence of female-headed households
and household heads with no primary education in the decision-making processes was minimal (Syukri, Mawardi, and Akhmadi 2010; Akatiga 2010). Many poor residents and women were not confident to speak out at formal meetings, especially in the presence of more affluent and influential community members (Syukri, Mawardi, and Akhmadi 2010, 16). Similarly, leadership roles among women in the VIP project in the Kyrgyz Republic were mostly taken up by local activists and influential persons, such as teachers and local administrators, while some of the poorest and marginalized women did not feel confident to take part in meetings and promote their views (Babajanian 2009).

The ability of less vocal and disadvantaged individuals to advance their goals is often limited by their leadership skills and social standing. Evidence suggests that the success of subprojects often depends on the role that key local leaders and influential persons play in preparing proposals, mobilizing community contributions, and managing subproject implementation (World Bank 2002; Vajja and White 2008; Babajanian 2005). Leadership skills, formal authority, and informal influence of community leaders are important attributes that enhance the capacity of community groups to comply with the CDD requirements. This implies that individuals with weak leadership capacity may not be able to effectively articulate their interests, mobilize community support, and comply with the procedural requirements. Thus, they can be less successful in initiating activities and benefiting from CDD investments.

In addition to improving service delivery responsiveness, CDD programs are assumed to influence the relationships between citizens and their leaders outside the scope of CDD subprojects. In particular, participation in CDD subprojects is thought to improve governance – i.e., empower local communities to engage in local development issues and hold their leaders accountable.

In the most up-to-date review of CDD projects, Wong (2012) asserts that the evidence on CDD “governance” impacts, which include a wide range of indicators (Box 7), is very limited. Only 4 of 17 projects in her review explicitly measured the governance impacts. The review suggests “positive to mixed results” (Wong 2012, 29). In Afghanistan and the Philippines, CDD programs contributed to greater attendance of village assembly meetings (outside CDD domain), greater awareness of community issues, and improved attitude toward government. In Sierra Leone, the program helped increase confidence of community members toward their leaders). Indonesia’s KDP-Aceh Reintegration Agency (BRA) project did not lead to any improvement in local governance.

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**Box 7: Measuring Governance Effects in Community-Driven Development**

A World Bank review of community-driven development projects (Wong 2012, p. 29) highlights a number of dimensions used in measuring local governance impacts. These include

- public attitudes of different levels of government,
- participation in public meetings inside and outside the project domain,
- awareness of subproject-related information and other local activities, and
- use of participatory approaches and community-driven decision making in other activities.

It is difficult to establish the degree of sustainability of governance impacts. For example, Wong (2012) notes that the governance impacts of Kapitbisig Laban sa Kahirapan – Comprehensive and Integrated Delivery of Social Services (KALAHI-CIDSS) in the Philippines decreased over time, from strong impacts during the 2006 midterm evaluation and smaller impacts at the time of the end-line survey in 2010. The existing studies suggest that the impacts may be tied to project implementation.

Qualitative studies suggest that CDD interventions may not succeed in addressing deeply entrenched local power structures that perpetuate social inequalities and clientelistic and hierarchical relations. Box 8 discusses how clientelism restricts citizenship rights.

**Box 8: Clientelism and Participation**

It is especially challenging for ordinary people to utilize participatory structures in the contexts with a high degree of clientelism. Patron–client relations generate dependence of citizens on their leaders and pose a significant constraint to community empowerment. Kabeer (2002, p. 23) argues that informal relations based on patronage represent an obstacle to claiming and exercising citizenship rights and tend to reproduce social inequalities. Dependence on patronage networks in obtaining access to resources implies that individuals may choose not to exercise and claim their rights, fearing the consequences for their livelihoods. As a consequence, the public domain remains privatized and imbued with inequalities and hierarchies that exist in the private domain.

Source: Kabeer (2002).

The qualitative study of PNPM–Rural in Indonesia (Syukri, Mawardi, and Akhmadi 2010) found that citizen participation, transparency, and accountability “did not spill over into general local/village governance as the capacity of communities to impact elite control of decision-making was limited” (PNPM Support Facility 2011, pp. 3 and 25–26). It suggests that the project cannot affect decision-making processes outside its boundaries, which are predominantly governed by the existing traditional and religious norms.

The study suggests that the poor have “many layers of relationships,” which restricts their ability to challenge the existing order. These include economic relationships as employers and employees, sociocultural relationships, for example, of *kaum* with *kaum* members, and *mamak*-nephew/niece in West Sumatra, as well as familial relationships. It suggests that “[E]ach layer of relationship has its consequences which are not to be viewed lightly if someone does something to jeopardize the relationship: losing a job, banned from the *kaum*, disowned by the family, etc.” (Syukri, Mawardi, and Akhmadi 2010, p. 17). The respondents of the qualitative study did not view their participation in PNPM as having the potential to change the governance structures. They suggested that the project cycle was not long enough to promote transformative changes and that there was little incentive for the local elites to alter the existing governance system.

Based on his research in the Kyrgyz Republic, Babajanian (2009) suggests the processes of collective engagement induced by VIP interventions did not affect local governance outside the project. The project only managed to “control” local power relations, rather than “transform” them. In particular, the subprojects were strictly monitored and supervised, which in most cases insulated them from outside interference and ensured that citizen groups were able to pursue their interests. This ensured the availability of channels for the expression of genuine priority demands of ordinary residents. At the same time, the project interventions did not alter the existing “rules of the game” in the local communities, i.e., the ways local authorities made decisions, allocated resources, and related to the citizens in their communities outside the project domain.

The CDD bottom-up model tends to downplay the structural roots of powerlessness and social inequalities. It overlooks the complex and unequal relationships between citizens and local leaders outside the subproject boundaries. Powerful elites in corrupt contexts are often not willing nor committed to serving the interests of citizens as they derive economic and political benefits from patronage and rent seeking. At the same time, they play a key role in governing local development and securing livelihoods for community residents, which narrows the power base of citizens and weakens the
impact of their demands. In this context, “project-controlled” CDD interventions may not be sufficient for altering power relations that determine the relationships between leaders and local residents.

C. Citizen Participation

One of the challenging questions pertaining to CDD programs is how to ensure that the poorest and marginalized take part in participatory processes and articulate their interests. It is important that CDD programs incorporate rules and procedures to ensure that diverse social groups are involved in the participatory processes. These measures must be incorporated in all aspects of the project cycle, and they must be reflected in the operational manuals, technical guidelines, and supervision and monitoring systems.

Rules and procedures must be complemented with appropriate methodologies and implementation practices for outreach and social mobilization. For example, instituting requirements for participation of women or disadvantaged groups in implementing committees by itself does not necessarily ensure that they will be willing and able to express their voices and exert influence. CDD programs must have appropriate financial and administrative resources to undertake participatory techniques and hands-on engagement. In addition, CDD efforts must be combined with broader policies to address discrimination and promote legal, economic, and political empowerment of women and other disadvantaged groups.

It is necessary to invest in the capacity building of outreach workers and facilitators in order to carry out effective outreach in the local communities. The limited participation of women and marginalized members in PNPM-Rural can be partly explained by the insufficient capacity of outreach workers and inadequate processes of community mobilization (Syukri, Mawardi, and Akhmadi 2010).

D. Agency Response

Community participation is crucial for soliciting the willingness of local leaders to address local demand, but it may not be a sufficient precondition. An important factor that contributes to the success of CDD programs to uphold accountability and transparency is the availability of effective monitoring and accountability mechanisms. In particular, CDD interventions must introduce strict supervision of service delivery processes, including procurement and disbursements by CDD project officers and public sector officials.

One of the mechanisms to promote democratic governance outside the boundaries of CDD subprojects is to establish formal requirements for citizen participation in the governance sphere. The introduction of formal rules does not automatically lead to a change in informal norms and behavior, but it is a necessary precondition for institutionalizing citizen participation.

CDD projects alone may not be sufficient to tackle deeply rooted structural barriers that restrict empowered participation. The bottom-up method is “localised” (Murray Li 2007, p. 259) not only geographically but also institutionally. Thus, it can only reach out to and interact with a subset of local institutions, without addressing institutional barriers at the macro-level. In order to be more effective in tackling governance issues, bottom-up projects must be combined with state-driven democratization efforts. The weakness in the broader legal and normative governance framework reinforces local power structures based on rent seeking and patron-client relationships. Bottom-up action cannot be effective without institutional arrangements that would sanction any violations of citizen rights and would ensure that ruling elites comply with legal norms.
Table 3 summarizes the main strengths and weaknesses of CDD as well as conditions required for their success.

Table 3: Community-Driven Development

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Empowerment Potential</th>
<th>Weaknesses</th>
<th>Conditions for Success</th>
<th>Agency Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strengths</td>
<td>Weaknesses</td>
<td>Citizen Participation</td>
<td>Agency Response</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provides channels for citizen participation in decision making with regard to planning, prioritization, implementation, and monitoring</td>
<td>Requires significant investments in outreach and social mobilization</td>
<td>Incorporate rules and procedures to ensure inclusion of diverse social groups</td>
<td>Establish close monitoring and supervision to prevent elite capture and support transparency and accountability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promotes demand-driven and responsive service delivery</td>
<td>May not allow meaningful participation of marginalized individuals</td>
<td>Conduct effective community outreach and information dissemination to promote meaningful participation and social inclusion</td>
<td>Establish formal requirements for citizen participation in the governance sphere</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promotes collective interests</td>
<td>May not benefit disadvantaged groups who are unable to articulate their interests and mobilize residents</td>
<td>Invest in the capacity building of outreach workers and facilitators</td>
<td>Implement broader policies to support democratic governance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promotes direct engagement with authorities and service providers</td>
<td>May not promote participatory governance in the absence of supportive broader macro-level policies</td>
<td>Support broader policies to promote female empowerment and social inclusion</td>
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<td>Integrated in the public sector programs and strategies</td>
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Source: Author

IX. POLICY LESSONS FOR SUPPORTING CITIZEN EMPOWERMENT

The empowerment models reviewed in this paper, such as grievance redress, PPM, and CDD, can enhance the capacity of individuals to participate in service delivery and shape service delivery outcomes. The core institutional properties of these models affect the nature and depth of citizen participation and their ability to influence service delivery outcomes. These institutional characteristics determine whether citizens participate in service delivery on an individual or collective basis, whether they engage with service providers directly, and the extent to which they are involved in decision-making structures.

Grievance redress systems enable citizens to claim rights and influence service delivery outcomes. As an integral part of service delivery systems and programs, grievance redress can offer regular and direct communication channels and opportunities for citizen feedback and complaints. Generally, grievance redress has an advantage over collective forms of citizen participation (such as PPM and CDD) in that it allows consideration and redress of specific grievances that individuals face. Judicial appeal in rights-based service delivery systems is an especially potent form of grievance redress; however, it may not be utilized by marginalized individuals. Grievance redress systems usually do not allow citizen involvement in decision-making structures and they largely rely on discretion of service providers, government agencies, or the judiciary. Grievance redress relies on individual action, which is less effective in promoting the interests of disadvantaged groups than citizen initiatives based on collective action.
from a large number of beneficiaries and has a stronger potential to stimulate changes in the service delivery practices and procedures than individual grievance redress. PPM tools, such as community scorecards and social audits, allow citizens to become immediately involved in assessing service quality and negotiating with service providers and thus can strengthen their personal agency and capacity for future action. These instruments are more participatory than citizen report cards and are likely to generate greater citizen empowerment. Other instruments, such as citizen report cards, offer indirect engagement by soliciting citizen perceptions through surveys. Participation in PPM tends to serve collective goals and may not address specific individual grievances. PPM allows limited citizen involvement in deliberative structures and thus constrains citizens’ ability to share discretionary authority on important service delivery matters.

The CDD approach offers an effective institutional channel for promoting citizen participation in local development. It enables citizens to engage in planning, prioritization of services, service delivery processes, and monitoring and evaluation to influence service responsiveness and performance. Community members can be directly involved in important decision making by attending public consultations, or indirectly through an elected committee representing the community. The ability of community members to influence service delivery in CDD, however, is largely contingent on the extent to which CDD programs solicit genuine participation and establish effective systems of monitoring and accountability. CDD interventions may not necessarily benefit some of the poorest and weakest residents, who often have limited power, leadership capacity, and social connections to engage in contestation in the public arena, articulate their interests, and mobilize other residents for a common goal. The CDD bottom–up model may not be effective in promoting participatory local governance without proactive efforts by the state to foster the rule of law and curb clientelism and rent seeking.

As discussed in this paper, promoting citizen participation in service delivery is challenging. It not only requires the willingness and capacity of citizens, including the poor and marginalized, to claim rights, express their views, and demand accountability from service providers, but also the willingness and ability of service providers and government agencies to ensure fair and effective redress and integration of citizen feedback in service delivery. There are a number of conditions required for promoting meaningful participation and for supporting the ability of citizens to influence service delivery.

Participation may not be sustained if citizen empowerment mechanisms are not institutionalized in service delivery systems and programs. Aiyar et al. (2009) suggest that institutionalization implies that the deployment of social accountability tools is guaranteed at regular intervals. This can ensure that citizens are not just reliant on civil society organizations and the goodwill of service providers or public officials, but that their participation is supported and sustained through formal requirements. The introduction of predictable and reliable channels for participation can enable citizens to exercise voice and influence service delivery when they choose to do so. The ability to monitor service delivery on a regular basis increases the likelihood that improvements in service delivery practices and procedures can be sustained over time.

Government agencies and service providers must proactively support citizen participation through effective outreach, information dissemination, and social mobilization. It is not sufficient to introduce formal processes and spaces for participation. Evidence demonstrates that successful empowerment in service delivery requires significant investment in program design and implementation. It is important that service delivery systems incorporate procedures and resources to support effective outreach and participatory processes and that the implementation practices support the established objectives and procedures. Information dissemination must be accompanied with participatory processes of social mobilization, through which community facilitators and local leaders proactively promote the inclusion of poor and marginalized community members in service delivery processes.
The important question is who participates in service delivery and whose voice is heard. The literature expresses concerns about the ability of all three approaches to promote inclusion of disadvantaged groups, including the poorest residents, women, and ethnic and religious minorities. Participation of these groups must be explicitly promoted through operational requirements and participatory procedures for outreach, information dissemination, and social mobilization. Programs must contain in-built indicators to allow policy makers to assess the effectiveness of outreach efforts to promote participation. It is also important to establish quantitative and qualitative criteria for assessing the nature and depth of participation.

Social inclusion also requires broader policies to tackle discrimination and promote equity. For example, women’s empowerment must be promoted as part of broader development policies to advance economic, political, and social status of women. Promoting women’s participation in development projects is not sufficient to uphold women’s rights and address structural barriers to participation. It is important to strengthen women’s ability to earn an independent income, promote women’s ownership rights, and guarantee unrestricted access to education. Service delivery reforms must counter power relations in the household and community that place restrictions on women’s public participation and independent decision making.

Meaningful citizen participation and empowerment cannot be fostered in the absence of a favorable governance environment. People’s ability to influence government agencies and service providers depends on the extent to which public institutions enforce the rule of law and tackle discriminatory practices and patron-client relationships. Strengthening the legal and normative governance framework at the macro level can help tackle power structures based on rent seeking and patron-client relationships at the local level, which restrict democratic participation. This can help reduce people’s dependence on local patrons and enhance their capacity to speak up and challenge injustice. A strong and independent judiciary is crucial for guaranteeing fair scrutiny of public institutions. It is also important to introduce sectoral reforms to improve the efficiency of the public sector institutions and ensure that civil servants have sufficient incentives to deliver public services in an honest and accountable manner. Most importantly, changes in governance require a genuine willingness and commitment of national elites to promote democratic development and establish inclusive institutions.
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Citizen Empowerment in Service Delivery

Empowerment models, such as grievance redress, participatory performance monitoring, and community-driven development can enhance people’s ability to influence service delivery. They are based on distinct institutional arrangements, which account for the variation in their empowerment and service delivery outcomes. To promote empowerment, policy-makers need to ensure careful design and effective outreach as well as support broader policies to tackle structural constraints to participation and democratic governance.

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