The relevance of social accountability mechanisms to addressing challenges created by urbanization

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The relevance of social accountability mechanisms to addressing challenges created by urbanization

David Satterthwaite, Sheela Patel and Diana Mitlin[1]

1: INTRODUCTION

1.1: What this chapter covers

The main interest of this chapter is in how urban residents and the organizations they form or in which they engage can hold government organizations to account for their policies, investment priorities and expenditures. Also how they can influence what infrastructure and services they get, especially those related to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. This includes their influence on the quality and extent of provision and on prices charged. It includes their influence on how government decisions are made and implemented, how government funding is allocated and how diverging (and often conflicting) interests are reconciled in accordance with the rule of law.[2] It also includes the modalities that governments choose to use to deliver basic services to their citizens. So at its core is an interest in social accountability in the relationships between urban governments and the citizens within their boundaries. It is also interested in when and how such social accountability actually brings change on a scale that reduces the often very large deficits in infrastructure and service provision in urban areas.

The increased interest in social accountability evident mostly in the publications of international agencies over the last decade is driven by the belief that service provision will improve if the providers are more accountable to their 'clients' – or more specifically to low-income dwellers. Accountability can be considered as the institutionalization of "voice" in Hirschman's classic characterization of citizen responses with the distinction between voice and exit.[3] The *World Development Report 2004* on "Making services work for poor people" noted that service delivery can be improved "by putting poor people at the center of service provision: by enabling them to monitor and discipline service providers, by amplifying their voice in policymaking, and by strengthening the incentives for providers to serve the poor."[4] Figure 1 shows the framework suggested by this Report – with the demands for improvement coming from low-income groups and with the level of improvement depending upon the influence that low-income groups can bring to bear on the service providers, either directly ('client power') or via the state. It distinguishes between two routes of accountability: the short route whereby the poor (and non-poor) exert an influence directly on the provider, and the long route whereby they influence politicians and policy makers, who in turn influence the providers. Both involve "voice", or articulated public demands for improvements.

But for such accountability channels to be effective, the service provider needs to see low-income groups as 'clients' (which they often do not) i.e. they need to be responsive to the messages articulated by those using or demanding their services. Urban poor groups also need mechanisms and channels other than voting through which to hold politicians and civil servants to account – as discussions with women in one low-income ward of Dhaka noted: "*Without this vote we have no importance to them. Only during election times do they come and seek our votes…*"[5] Local government also needs some capacity to be able to respond; in many urban centres, local politicians and civil servants can do very little to address large deficiencies in infrastructure and service provision because they lack the power, funding and revenue-raising capacity.
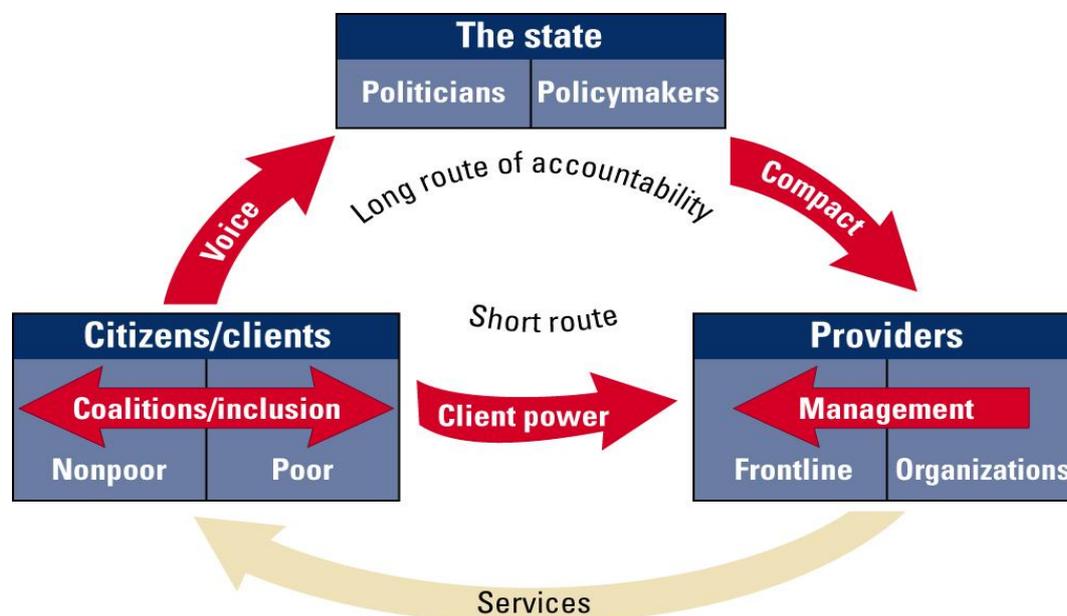
Figure 1: Key relationships of power and accountability

Source: World Bank (2003) *World Development Report 2004: Making Services Work for Poor People,* The World Bank and Oxford University Press, Washington D.C.

As individuals, there are very limited possibilities for the urban poor to exercise voice. Individual voices are unlikely to be listened to, and they may lack the information required. The fact that urban poor groups have very little "market" power, and often limited possibilities as individuals or households of getting state entitlements, makes collective organization their only means of increasing their power.

But in many locations and settlements, it is difficult get the necessary consensus for collective organizations because of diversity among the urban poor in (among other things) their priorities, political allegiances and ethnic ties. It is not uncommon for there to be language barriers or religious barriers to collective organization. Moreover, the almost ubiquitous use of clientelistic relations by politicians and political parties means that the collective political organizations that do exist are likely to be neither representative nor accountable to their members for their actions. It is unlikely that pressure for accountability on state providers will be supportive of the needs of the lowest-income groups unless these community organizations have systems of internal accountability. Even if practices are more democratic, in informal settlements, there are often tricky divisions of interest such as those between landlords and tenants (and often between absentee and local landlords). There is also the issue of whether social accountability mechanisms that were first developed to help individuals or households get more accountability from service providers can also support collective demands and respond to collective pressures. In addition, while Figure 1's suggestion that the poor and the non-poor work together in coalitions to get more inclusion may be constructive, it is often not borne out in practice; indeed, as discussed later, the demands and pressures brought by middle- and upper-income groups and their organizations are often anti-poor.

In terms of countries covered in this Chapter, the focus is on low- and middle-income nations. As described below, these now house most of the world's urban population. These also have a very high concentration of the urban population most marginalized in regard to receiving public services and holding government bodies (and individual politicians and civil servants) to account.

In terms of urban residents and their organizations, this chapter has a particular interest in those that have had the greatest difficulties in getting social accountability – and in urban centres, this is mostly those with low-incomes (including a large proportion that have incomes below the poverty line[6]) and those living in informal settlements and other forms of poor quality housing (with a very large overlap between these two groups).

In terms of government, this chapter focuses mainly on urban local governments (municipal, city-wide and for most larger cities metropolitan), although with an interest in higher levels of government where relevant, especially where these have critical roles in supporting scaling up for social accountability or increasing possibilities for more social accountability. At the core of this discussion is thus **when, where and how** the one billion or so urban dwellers who live in poor quality and usually overcrowded housing in informal and generally illegal settlements, tenements and cheap boarding houses can secure accountability from local governments and official providers (including those that are not within government). Such accountabilities are primarily required in regard to the infrastructure and services their homes and neighbourhoods need. This also includes whether they are served by the rule of law, have provision for voice and whether they can get their human rights respected, including protection from eviction and other arbitrary actions that harm them by governments, private enterprises and other forces.[7] It includes a particular interest in the sub-groups within this billion or so people that face the greatest difficulties – for instance those with the lowest incomes and those whose poverty is intimately linked to the discrimination they face (for instance on the basis of their age, gender or ethnicity) and how this influences their possibilities of holding government to account.

But our discussion of the accountability of government agencies has to go beyond a focus on services for two reasons. The first is that for a large proportion of this one billion urban dwellers, local governments see them as 'illegal' as they live in homes and settlements that have elements of illegality (for instance the land occupation or the fact that the land-use or the buildings may contravene regulations). Local government bodies (and often other official infrastructure or service providers) may not be allowed to provide those living in informal settlements with infrastructure and services. If local governments can intervene in these settlements, there may be particular difficulties facing service providers or public works agencies – for instance the lack of maps, street names and data on who lives there, including often a lack of a legal address – which makes it difficult to install infrastructure and to charge households for this and for services. So there may be a reluctance to provide services to households (for instance water piped into their homes) because of anticipated difficulties in getting payments. Or only poorer quality services are provided because these are much cheaper to provide and also easier to get payments (e.g. water kiosks rather than pipes to each person's home). For many informal settlements, the settlement layouts also need adjustment to allow trunk infrastructure to be brought in and getting residents' consensus on the needed reblocking can be difficult for external agencies.

As a result of this, local governments often find it convenient to suggest that the residents of informal settlements have no right to receive or have access to public services. So this means that residents also have no right to hold them to account for the lack of provision. It is also common for many of those in government to view negatively all those that live in informal settlements and work in the informal economy, even as the city economy depends on these and as housing conditions would be much worse without the informal settlements. If politicians and civil servants believe that those living in informal settlements are not only illegal but also "migrants who should go back to rural areas", there is not much of a base for the informal settlement dwellers to build social accountability with them. As discussed in more detail later, where grassroots organizations formed by those living in informal settlements have got more social accountability from their local governments, the first step was often to change these negative and inaccurate stereotypes. As described in more detail later, many grassroots organizations have done this by showing their capacities (for instance in building houses or upgrading), by producing

documentation that questions official beliefs or assumptions (for instance to show the contributions that residents make to the city economy) and increasingly by preparing the maps and detailed 'slum' censuses that provide the information needed to install or improve infrastructure and services there.[8]

The second reason why the discussion of accountability has to go beyond a focus on services is that a large proportion of those who live in informal settlements have no official documentation or lack the particular official documentation required to get access to government (or private sector) services – for instance a legal address may be required to get children into government schools or access to government health care services or get onto the voter register or to open a bank account. Hence not only are they not able to demand accountabilities because of where they live, but they are also not recognised as legitimate "voices".

Because of these two reasons, this chapter has a particular interest in the ways in which those living in informal settlements have sought to overcome these structural constraints on their ability to exercise voice. The discussion considers how the organized urban poor living in informal settlements build relationships with local governments (that then provide possibilities of greater social accountability) and how they map, profile and enumerate their own settlements to provide the data needed for achieving or negotiating inclusion in government policies and plans. There is a particular interest in the initiatives of residents and grassroots organizations from informal settlements to hold local governments to account, as well as an interest in how other civil society organizations do this (including those that primarily represent middle and upper income groups). The experiences of those living in informal settlements, as they seek to overcome systemic exclusion due to both social and spatial status, provide insights into the challenges of government accountability, and how such challenges might be overcome. As this chapter describes, over the last ten years, there have been a growing number of examples of civil society organizations formed by low-income urban residents (including those in informal settlements) that have developed partnerships with local governments that include far more social accountability to these organizations – and that have contributed to poverty reduction and to the achievement of some of the MDGs. Some of these have also gone to scale – reaching hundreds of thousands of low-income groups with improvements <u>and</u> with better relations with city and municipal governments. There are now national federations of 'slum' or shack dwellers in 15 nations and as this chapter will describe, they have formed a transnational network (Slum/Shack Dwellers International) to support their own learning and their influence.

During this period, there has also been a growing interest in initiatives by city and municipal governments (and higher levels of government) to ensure more social accountability (much of it driven by citizen pressure) – and as described later, there have been many significant innovations in this. There is also an interest in the role of local, national and international NGOs in social accountability.

These initiatives, whether initiated by government, NGOs or grassroots organizations, seek broadly similar goals. They seek to improve public infrastructure and service delivery (both in terms of who gets these and their quality and cost), to monitor government performance and foster responsive (and more transparent) governance, and to increase the possibilities for low-income groups and their organizations to influence government programmes and practices. To understand the challenges and opportunities facing such initiatives, this chapter also discusses the constraints on urban governments (and governance structures) to become more responsive and accountable – and the implications of scaling up social accountability initiatives related to urban governance structures and the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals

1.2: Rapid urbanization

The world's urban population has grown from around 260 million in 1900 to over 3.7 billion today.[9] During this period, the ratio of rural to urban dwellers changed from 7:1 in 1900 to 1:1 in 2010. This was underpinned by the fact that most new investment, economic value and employment have been in industry and service enterprises and most such enterprises have chosen to locate in urban areas. In almost all nations, increases in the level of urbanization tracks the increase in the proportion of GDP from

industry and services and the increase in the proportion of the workforce working in industry and services.[10] Thus, in the last few decades, there is an economic logic to where rapid urbanization has taken place; all high-income nations and most upper-middle income nations have predominantly urban populations. Nations that urbanized most rapidly were generally those with the most successful economies.[11] Most large cities are also in the world's largest economies.[12] The World Bank suggested that sub-Saharan Africa is an exception, in that during the 1990s it continued to urbanize rapidly without economic growth[13] – but this suggestion was made before census data were available to show whether this was the case and more recent census data suggests that increases in urbanization levels have slowed in many African nations, especially those with weak economies.[14] Projections by the UN Population Division suggest that almost all the increase in the world's population in the next two to three decades will be in urban areas in low- and middle-income nations[15] and much of this will be in cities where a third to two thirds of their population already live in informal settlements lacking infrastructure and services. If their local governments have failed so dramatically to keep up the expansion in their population and economy, what does the future hold if they continue to grow rapidly?

1.3: The MDGs applied to urban areas and social accountability

Social accountability mechanisms need to be understood as among a number of ways that seek to improve the provision of the infrastructure and services that fall within the responsibilities of governments. They fit well with the promotion of the MDGs in that most of the MDG targets depend directly or indirectly on improved provision for infrastructure and services. Social accountability mechanisms focus on improving the performance of governments through increasing their interaction with the citizens who are meant to benefit from their activities. Ironically, they have been promoted by international agencies that are not themselves subjected to the kinds of accountability and transparency measures that they seek to promote within the countries where they work. For instance, social accountability measures promoted may seek to hold urban governments to account for the inadequacies in their provision for water, sanitation and health care yet many of the international agencies that support these measures choose to give a very low priority to funding improved provision for water, sanitation and health care in urban areas.[16]

As development assistance agencies make a more explicit commitment to the rights based approach, they do more to encourage those whose entitlements they recognise to hold them to account.[17] But they have long been more worried about their accountability to those that fund them than to those who are meant to benefit from their funding. For instance, for bilateral agencies, this is to the state that funds and manages their work and the citizens to whom their government is accountable. If they are committed to more social accountability, then these agencies should be doing more to be accountable to the populations that they seek to assist through more transparent statements about their intentions and commitments and more detail about what gets funded. In the UK, the International Development Act of 2002 required that DFID prioritise poverty elimination rather than other purposes such as British trade interests. But the ability of these agencies to realize their commitment to the poor may be constrained by the orientation of their programmes to national governments, and by an implicit assumption that such governments act in the interests of those most in need of development assistance funds (although this is clearly often not the case).

For many of these international agencies, the interest in social accountability was preceded by support for privatization. But at least in regard to provision for water and sanitation, in most nations, this did not produce the hoped-for increase in capital investment, efficiency and response to demand. Improvements and extensions of provision have often not been correlated with increased private sector involvement (nor necessarily with continued public sector ownerships and management).[18] It is hoped that attention to social accountability for both public and private service providers would improve provision with the assumptions that these agencies will respond to consumer demands and frustrations. But civil society groups within many countries actively lobbied against such privatization, in part because of the lack of transparency, accountability and public participation in the discussions.[19]

All the MDGs are relevant for urban populations but perhaps especially those relating to improvements in health outcomes (lower infant, child and maternal mortality and less under-nutrition), living conditions (provision for water and sanitation) and incomes.[20] There is also a sub goal specifically related to urban areas (under the goal of enhancing environmental sustainability) that seeks a significant improvement in the lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers by 2020. But this is notable, both in the time set for its achievement (2020 instead of 2015) and in being so much less ambitious (why for instance did it not seek to halve the number of people living in slums, which is the target for many other goals and sub-goals). This target of 100 million is also such a small proportion of those in need; around one tenth of those in need and a smaller proportion in relation to 2015 or 2020 because of the growth in the number of 'slum' dwellers between now and then.

2. SOCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY IN URBAN AREAS

2.1: The channels by which urban dwellers can hold their governments to account

One difficulty facing any general discussion of the means by which urban dwellers can hold their governments to account is the very large differences in local contexts, especially in the extent to which the urban dwellers have public services and have any relationship with local government. This is illustrated by Table 1. To state the obvious, a household has to have a public service or be served by public infrastructure with legitimate access to be able to complain about its quality or price. This household must also be seen by government bodies to have the right to such infrastructure or service, if it is to be able to put pressure on these bodies to provide or improve these. It is usually in local governments where residents have the greatest need for social accountability (because they are so inadequately served or simply ignored by local governments), that there may be no social accountability channels. For almost all urban residents in high-income nations and many in middle-income nations, there is little need to use social accountability mechanisms (either as individuals or collectively) to make sure their homes and neighbourhoods get infrastructure and basic services. They also do not have to organize to provide these for themselves because they cannot get these from local government or another designated service provider.

Table 1: The two extremes in regard to urban contexts for social accountability

Characteristics of the urban area	Characteristics of high-income districts (and of urban populations in high-income nations)	Characteristics of many informal settlements with a high concentration of the lowest-income groups
Housing and other buildings	All housing legal, meeting health and safety standards	All housing illegal and the occupation of the land site considered illegal.
Provision for water	24 hours a day piped supply of drinking quality into each building	No official provision for water – or very inadequate provision e.g. standpipes with water of poor quality that is irregular or kiosks at which there are often long queues. If there is no official provision, there is no official service provider than can be held to account
Provision for sanitation	High quality provision with each household having their own toilet connected to a sewer or septic tank with provision for washing	No provision within the home; reliance on shared pit latrines, public toilets and open defecation. Often no official service provider so no possibility of these being held to account.
Provision for drainage	Comprehensive provision with drains maintained and able to cope with heavy rainfall	No drains
Provision for solid waste collection	Universal provision with a regular door-to-door collection service	No provision
Access to government schools	Universal access to pre-school, primary and secondary school	No access to government schools; often even low-income groups having to use cheap poor quality private education that they struggle to afford
Access to safety nets and	Social wage for those who are	None of these

pensions	unemployed, pensions for elderly, safety nets	
Access to government health care and emergency services	Universal provision	No government provision
Political representation	Elected politicians from this area in national and local government with small enough constituencies to make the politician more easily accountable	Often, no elected politicians or no-one in the settlement able to get on voter register. Or if able to vote, dependent on clientelist political structure that has little or no accountability to 'clients'
Channels for making demands on government	Politicians accessible, local government with clear channels for making demands	None. Or clientelist systems that are of limited effectiveness with intermediaries between individuals and politicians. Often need for corrupt practices to get things done.
Channels for complaints	Ombudsmen, courts or other means to complain if official channels are unsatisfactory	None
Rule of law	Police force of adequate size in each district with channels of accountability and consultation	No police presence in district
New private or public sector plans	Details published, subject to regulations, often with public consultation	No provision for this
Changes in land use	Subject to government control with decisions about this transparent and recorded – and with consultation	No provision for this
Disaster risk reduction	Organizations in each district with responsibility and capacity to identify and act on disaster risks – and also to create local systems for acting before extreme weather events to reduce impacts	No provision for this

The means by which urban dwellers seek to hold their governments to account can be through each individual's relations with these governments – for instance direct contact with service providers or with politicians or civil servants. Or this contact with service providers, politicians or civil servants may be through collective organizations of which they are part – for instance resident organizations, trade unions or business associations. These organizations may choose to put pressure on the state, and this often includes the use of the media or of legal channels (for instance using the courts to influence government policy and practice).

Social accountability mechanisms may favour individual engagement (for instance those that allow individuals to get a quicker and more effective response to their complaints) or collective engagement (for instance public forums). Of course, the means chosen by any individual or group to engage with local government depends on the political and bureaucratic structures and the opportunities or constraints this provides for holding government to account. This obviously includes how politicians and civil servants view the legitimacy of the claims or complaints made by individuals or groups or the legitimacy of the groups – for instance differences in their responses between those made by middle income groups living in legal settlements and those made by low-income groups living in informal settlements. It also includes the power and political contacts of the individual or group – and low-income and middle-income groups often form larger coalitions or federations to give their members more political leverage.

A study in São Paulo and Mexico City examined the ways in which citizens in associational life engage with government.[21] This concluded that many individuals fail to achieve what they see as the best relationship with the state i.e. "…direct relations to government officials who treat citizens as legal equals and as carriers of rights and entitlements."[22] Citizen relationships with government were more likely to be improved by directly engaging political actors and institutions, than by participation in

associations. The authors note two substantive developments in citizenship during the 20th century - the recognition of rights and entitlements with the growth of a state administration (and hence the positive potential for civil relations as citizens try to access these rights and entitlements), and the expansion of participation and civil rights. But their research shows how most people face high levels of political inequality and are either unable to access the state or face costs they cannot afford if they were to do so. Participating in organizations does not, in their study, improve relations with the state, primarily because, at least in the case of São Paulo, such participation is highly stratified. In this city only 6.8 per cent of those with primary education participate in associations, compared to 25.3 per cent of the population with some higher educational qualifications.

The issue of what non-poor groups are doing in regard to social accountability is important. They may be choosing not to engage with government service providers by arranging or using private provision. An analysis of how changes in urban governance in Delhi over the last two decades influenced the provision of health care services found little interest among resident associations (formed primarily by non-poor groups) in government provided local primary health care because their members had private health care; as one resident commented, "we are not concerned with this dispensary, we don't use it, only the servants go there."[23]

If middle and upper income groups are active in pressing for social accountability, there is the issue of how this affects low-income groups. For instance, it may be that association of residents' associations makes efforts to include representatives from all districts. Or these associations may be active in measures that have negative consequences for many low-income groups. In Delhi, the increasing frequency of demolitions of long-established informal settlements has been underpinned by the use of public interest litigation by non-poor groups and by stereotyping those living in informal settlements as encroachers and criminals taking public land for which they do not pay.[24] In the late 1970s and early 1980s, the regional high courts and the Supreme Court were perceived as institutions that protected the rights of citizens from the executive and a series of judicial innovations supported the poor. The requirements for filing proceedings in court were made easier and this led to growth in Public Interest Litigation. But this litigation came be used by non-poor groups to clear informal settlements.[25] Thus, in India, middle-class groups have been active in expanding their political and public space, including developing forms of cooperation with local governments that often excludes "unwanted people."[26] The role of Resident Welfare Associations in Delhi has been studied in this regard.[27] These are essentially neighbourhood management committees mostly formed by the residents of apartment blocks and legal housing colonies (i.e. mostly middle and upper income groups) to which residents pay regular charges for security and to maintain common resources. These have become more organized politically (including forming umbrella groups) in making demands on local government and in protesting about increased prices charged for electricity (that had been privatized), plans to privatize the water utility and changes in master plan guidelines that sought to regularize illegal commercial establishments. They have also been active in filing public interest litigation against informal settlements.[28]

Research in Delhi, São Paulo and Mexico City on political participation, associational activity and citizen-state relations drew from citizen surveys of 1,400 respondents in each city and interviews with civil and social organizations.[29] The questionnaire focussed on five needs or sets of needs: access to health care; access to basic needs (which may be claimed as an economic and social right); protection from violence and crime; access to basic urban services (public goods); and air pollution. At least four of these were seen as a major problem for those interviewed in all three cities. Despite neo-liberal policies, at least 76 per cent of interviewees said the state was responsible for urban public services. In regard to actions to solve problems, in Delhi, 37 per cent of respondents went direct to the government for assistance and a further 29 per cent to a political party, while in Sao Paulo and Mexico City the figures for the government are 54 and 33 per cent respectively, and for the party, 4 and 9 per cent. Self help as a solution to problems is particularly high at 42 per cent in Mexico City. Why are political parties used more frequently by the poor in Delhi than elsewhere? Harriss suggests that this is because of caste and class prejudice from government officials and the efficacy of using an intermediary (ibid, 454). Parties are, he suggests, orientated to these groups in Delhi, mobilizing them as an electoral base and operating through local influentials (*pradhans*).[30]

Ethnographic research in Chennai and Bangalore leads Harriss to suggest that there is a division between associations for professional, well-funded groups that use a language of citizenship but do not have a popular base, and those within the informal working class which are orientated to rights of livelihood and shelter.[31] While the former use the language of public private partnership, the latter follow strategies of protest. Harriss uses the term denizen (or inhabitant) to differentiate the discourse of the latter from that of the former (who use citizen). In South Chennai, citizen associations are primarily concerned with middle class interests (including slum clearance), and Harriss classifies these associations and their members as "consumer citizens" to differentiate them from those concerned with issues of public services rather than consumption. In North Chennai there are overlaps across civil and social organizations through women's groups (including *Mahila Milan,* the federation of savings groups formed by women 'slum' dwellers). Harriss concludes by emphasising that associational life in India is dominated by the middle class, quoting one of his interviewees who explains that "the rich *operate* while the poor *agitate.*"[32] One group of associations address the needs of consumer-citizens, while another group seeks to serve the people with a greater emphasis on the language of rights (often with vertical relations towards the poor themselves). There is an interest in a new politics built around local associations, but Harriss argues that there are few membership organizations to be found. Within the informal working class, problems are solved through links to political parties rather than through mass mobilization. Meanwhile civil society, Harriss suggests, is addressing the needs of the middle class rather than working poor people.

As elaborated in Harriss' work in India, an important distinction is which channels are used by different income groups. There is a considerable literature discussing this that focuses on patron-client relationships between low-income groups and politicians and civil servants and the intermediaries that benefit from this. These often operate because those living in informal settlements cannot use conventional channels. But it is also important to recognise that in many urban contexts, local capacities are insufficient to expand public service provision so everyone is serviced and in a context of resource scarcity, clientelism can flourish. Such systems certainly do not promote accountability and transparency and may involve corrupt practices (for instance illegal payments needed to get responses) and other illegal practices (for instance violence). But they may be the only channel available to those living in informal settlements. The state may be using clientelism to pre-empt the potential of community organizations or larger collective organizations or social movements, to negotiate changes in public policies. This can be achieved by politicians developing relations with community leaders that allow these leaders to "deliver" something to their organization or movement (or simply co-opt community leaders through, for instance, bringing them onto the government payroll). See, for instance, the *mastaans* in low-income settlements in Dhaka, who have a role that is somewhere between that of a local strongman and a leader, an intermediary between local government and the population, and a vote mobilizer.[33] Another example of this are the community members who are paid regularly by municipal governments in Argentina at the end of each month, but who do no work; these are termed *noquis*, as there is a tradition of eating *noquis* at the end of the month when money is running out.[34]

In India, as described above, and in many other nations, different social classes use different strategies to approach the state. The urban poor may rely on these political channels whereas middle and upper income groups use bureaucratic and legal channels and also the media to put pressure on governments.[35] But as discussed in more detail later, in recent years, there are many more examples of urban poor groups organizing into larger networks and federations and using bureaucratic and legal channels – and also the media.

*2.2: **The role of social accountability mechanisms in meeting the MDGs in urban areas***

2.2.1 Introduction

If we take social accountability mechanisms to include all the mechanisms by which urban residents and the organizations they form or in which they engage can hold government organizations to account and influence what infrastructure and services they get and how they are governed, then it is likely to include

a very large number of mechanisms that do not get documented. In any city with deficiencies in provision for infrastructure and services, there are many mechanisms being used or tried by individuals, households, neighbourhood organizations, NGOs and professional groups that seek provision (or improved provision) of infrastructure and services. These generally involve contact or negotiation with specific government agencies or private sector enterprises that provide (for instance) water, sanitation, or electricity. A high proportion of those who live in informal settlements are also seeking to avoid eviction and perhaps (if it is politically feasible to do so) to secure tenure of the land they occupy. At its most basic, this includes individuals who are making demands or complaints – for instance in response to poor quality services or over-charging. It often includes groups of individuals that have chosen to work together in making demands. For instance, parents with children at school may be meeting and pressing collectively for improvements in teaching or in facilities in schools (including sanitation). Community organizations that are not formed for social accountability – for instance sports clubs or youth organizations or social or religious organizations – may include among their activities collective demands or pressures on government agencies.[36] Then there are the measures and organizations that are explicitly aimed at social accountability – for instance particular groups seeking to scrutinize funding allocations (and the processes by which these were arrived at) and how public money is actually spent or groups seeking to evaluate the quality of service provision.

If we review social accountability measures in urban areas that have been documented and that have relevance for meeting the MDGs, these can be divided into those that are government led and those led by civil society. Within civil society led initiatives, a further distinction can be drawn between those led by NGOs and those led by grassroots organizations. Of course, the boundaries between these are blurred in that the government-led social accountability mechanisms are often in response to citizen pressures (for instance as discussed below participatory budgeting) while many of the civil society led initiatives are responding to more open governments and may indeed be supported by governments. In addition, many social accountability measures involve grassroots organizations and NGOs working together.

2.2.2 Government led social accountability measures

To consider first the measures led by governments, in many middle-income nations, perhaps most especially in Latin America, there have been some fundamental changes in the whole framework for urban governments and governance that has had large implications for social accountability. These include returns to democratic governments in many nations and such national level reforms as more powers, funding and revenue raising capacities decentralized to city and municipal governments and stronger local democracies as mayors and city councillors came to be directly elected. In many nations, these changes were underpinned by changes in the national constitution.[37] In Brazil, this was backed by the setting up of a new ministry of cities.[38]

These help explain why the proportion of the urban population with good quality provision for water (water piped into people's homes) and connection to sewers and drains increased from the 1970s or 1980s to the present; it is now common for Latin American cities to have universal provision or close to universal provision for these.[39] This also helps explain the wave of innovation in city governments in this region in more participatory and accountable governance – including participatory budgeting and provision for including representatives from urban poor groups on government committees. It also helps explain why city and municipal governments in this region give far more attention to 'slum' and 'squatter' upgrading. This is a profound change in the relations between the residents of these settlements and governments, as the residents of these 'illegal' settlements are seen as having the right to government funded infrastructure and services.

It is also more common to have what might be termed comprehensive upgrading. Upgrading programmes range from those that have very basic improvements in provision – for instance some standpipes for water (often at the edge of the settlement to reduce costs), paved roads and street lighting – to far more comprehensive provision with piped water and sanitation improvements for each house, better health care and school provision and legal tenure. "Comprehensive" upgrading implies a far stronger relationship between government bodies and residents and much more possibility of residents using

social accountability mechanisms as they become registered property owners with legal addresses and official (and conventional) connection to piped water supplies, sewers, electricity, health care and schools. This stands as a very strong contrast to what was evident during the 1970s and 1980s when illegal settlements were seen as contravening the law and bulldozed or at best ignored.[40] There was little or no basis for social accountability in regard to infrastructure and services. Although the eviction of residents from informal settlements do still happen in Latin America, they are much less common and the scale and scope of upgrading within the region has increased dramatically. Upgrading of informal settlements is now seen as a conventional part of what city or municipal governments do. Of course, strong citizen pressure and the influence of grassroots organizations and federations had importance in this. Here too, the changes can be ascribed both to votes and to social accountability measures.

Participatory budgeting is one important example of more participatory governance and it includes measures for increased social accountability. First developed in Brazil, it has been applied in over 250 urban centres around the world.[41] Most are in Brazil, but participatory budgeting initiatives are also flourishing in urban centres in many other Latin American nations and in some European nations.

Participatory budgeting gives more scope for citizen groups and community-based representatives in setting priorities for local government expenditures; it also implies a local government budgeting system that is more transparent and available to public scrutiny.[42] At its core are citizen assemblies in each district of a city that can influence priorities for the use of a portion of the city's revenues and a city government that makes information widely available about its budget. In effect, community participation gets more influence at the expense of bureaucrats, the local executive and local councillors and this combined with a more open process helps make city government investments more linked to local priorities and helps limit clientelism and corruption.[43]

There are many differences between cities where it is implemented in, for instance, the form of participation (e.g. everyone entitled to participate and vote in assemblies or these are mainly for delegates and leaders from social movements, neighbourhood associations and trade unions). There are also differences in which body is in charge; in Brazil, this was usually a council of the participatory budget, in many non Brazilian cases this was within existing political frameworks. The extent of control over how public funding was spent varies a lot - from an influence on the whole investment budget to a small proportion of it.[44]

Some cities made special provision within participatory budgeting for groups that have particular difficulties getting their priorities heard (for instance, committees for women or children and youth). Some have delegates elected for particular groups – for instance, the elderly, adolescents, indigenous groups and the disabled. Participatory budgeting generally meant more funding going to the poorer areas of a city and an increase in expenditure in social provision (for instance education and health care). In some cities, the contribution of the population through collective works increased the value of the work done significantly. The process also provides possibilities for low income groups to see themselves as citizens and thus an important step in building democratic institutions.[45]

The systems used within arrangements for participatory budgeting for monitoring expenditures (to see if the commitments influenced by this process were fulfilled), the projects that are developed and the performance of the agencies that are commissioned to undertake them have obvious relevance for social accountability

However, effective participatory budgeting is not easily implemented. The comment of Martin Pumar, a former Mayor of Villa El Salvador (one of the municipalities within Lima) has particular relevance – as he introduced participatory budgeting.

"The municipal structure and bureaucracy were not yet capable of dealing with the changes. First of all the participatory budgeting of course implies relinquishing power, also the everyday power of councillors, municipal workers. Personal favours, clientelistic relations are part and parcel of our municipal culture. So there was quite some resistance in the municipal apparatus. Yet even for those who

understand and support the change it was not easy. All of a sudden urban development received tens of project proposals to be implemented, where the municipality had to develop all the technical plans to prepare the construction"[46]
.

But the introduction and expansion of participatory budgeting in Brazil needs to be understood within the many political changes during the late 1970s and 1980s with the return to democracy, decentralization and the strengthening of local democracy (so redemocratization was not limited to national institutions) and the new constitution. It was also part of an agenda for rebuilding democratic institutions to fight corruption, improve access to government and strengthening government accountability.[47] The New Constitution in 1988 gave more powers to the legislative (reducing the dominance of the executive) and mandated more revenue to municipalities and more responsibilities (including social assistance). Municipalities' capacity to intervene in land use in favour of urban poor was also strengthened through an array of new urban planning instruments introduced by the new Constitution.[48] Some municipalities (notably Porto Alegre and Belo Horizonte) were able to do more because they improved tax collection and this increased their budgets. Participatory budgeting was also served by the growing citizen support for the PT (Workers Party) with the increasing number of mayors from this party (although participatory budgeting was also supported by some non PT mayors). In some cities, participatory budgeting helped sustain the party in power – as in Porto Alegre and Belo Horizonte and this also meant a greater impact. For instance, as shown in Porto Alegre, it takes time for civic organizations with a history of confrontation or dominated by clientelist practices to change.[49]

Although participatory budgeting was introduced by governments, its introduction was influenced by these larger processes and by pressure from social movements, especially neighbourhood based social movements linked to the Catholic church and new trade unionism.[50] There were also innovations in participation by mayors and city governments that precede participatory budgeting (and that helped to influence it).[51] Such contextual issues may affect the degree to which participatory budgeting catalyses changes in relations between citizens and the state. While participatory budgeting has been redistributive in Porto Alegre because of the strength of social organizations, it is not clear that the political benefits will emerge within these institutions.[52] Analysing these processes against a number of dimensions of political inequality across both Porto Alegre and Belo Horizonte shows that the lowest-income citizens are less likely to participate with the greatest participation being from those with average incomes (ibid, 630); even in Porto Alegre the lowest-income participants were much less likely to speak and speak frequently in the regional and thematic assemblies to debate priorities.[53] Drawing on data on participatory budgeting in 138 urban centres, Avritzer argues that there is evidence to support the redistributional impact of participatory budgeting with increasing capital investment in low-income neighbourhoods, and that clientelist politics may be reduced. However, without a strong associative movement, evidence suggests then the gains in democratization do not take place and practices of clientelism do not change.[54]

Thus, in many Latin American nations, changes in local governments to which citizen and social movement pressure contributed have also contributed to the achievement of many of the MDG targets as it increased the proportion of the urban population with better provision for water, sanitation, health care and schools – and thus also contributions to lower infant, child and maternal mortality. However, they may not have changed bottom up accountability.

One government initiative that has great relevance to social accountability and to meeting the MDGs is the Baan Mankong (secure housing) programme in Thailand.[55] This is implemented by the government agency, the Community Organizations Development Institute. This channels government funds in the form of infrastructure subsidies and housing loans direct to community organizations formed by low-income inhabitants in informal settlements. It is these community organizations who plan and carry out improvements to their housing or develop new housing and work with local governments and utilities to provide or improve infrastructure and services. By 2010 the total number of households reached by the programme had grown to more than 25 per cent of the numbers that Baan Mankong targeted, but they still represented only about 13 per cent of the 600,000 families in need within towns and cities in Thailand. During the same period, grants for infrastructure upgrading exceeded US $46 million; and

loans for land and housing exceeded US $52 million. More than 82 per cent of households are now living in settlements that have also achieved tenure security, via long-term leases or collective land ownership.

In terms of social accountability, this made government funding directly available to community organizations and it supported their engagement with their local governments. Support was also provided to networks of community organizations formed by the urban poor, to allow them to work with municipal authorities and other local actors and with national agencies on urban centre-wide upgrading programmes. Those living in illegal settlements were able to get legal land tenure by a variety of means – for instance by the inhabitants purchasing the land from the landowner (supported by a government loan), negotiating a community lease, agreeing to move to another location provided by the government agency on whose land they are squatting, or agreeing to move to part of the site they are occupying in return for tenure of that site (land sharing). CODI also provides loans to community organizations to on-lend to their members to help build or improve their homes. Prior to CODI, the Urban Community Development Office (UCDO) was active in the same area of work. UCDO had community leaders on its board and these leaders were instrumental in setting interests rates for housing loans at 3 per cent. The nature of such engagement changed relations between Board members, and helped the community leaders feel that the organization was accountable to the urban poor for its interventions.

The Bhagidari programme in Delhi is an example of a government programme that sought to provide a collective forum for government agencies and citizen groups to address problems (Chakrabarti 2008). It organized workshops that brought neighbourhood level Resident Welfare Associations together with officials and political representatives. It also provided these Associations with more direct access to senior bureaucrats (and thus to bypass local politicians). Initially, the Programme was restricted to planned parts of city, as the government wanted to avoid negotiation with 'slum' dwellers that would raise land tenure issues. But the resident welfare associations are mostly neighbourhood management committees formed by the residents of apartment blocks and legal housing colonies (i.e. mostly middle and upper income groups).

to which residents pay regular charges for security and to maintain common resources. These have become more organized politically (including forming umbrella groups) in making demands on local government and in protesting about increased prices charged for electricity (that had been privatized), plans to privatize the water utility and changes in master plan guidelines that sought to regularize illegal commercial establishments. They have also been active in filing public interest litigation against informal settlements

In Delhi, 'slum' dwellers tend to use political representatives to make voices heard. By contrast, the middle class are more likely to use bureaucratic and judicial channels and the media rather than formal electoral politics (ibid, Harriss 2005).

Middle and upper income groups are also in a better position to use the rights based approach – as they know the law, their housing is legal and most work within the formal economy. The Bhagidari programme in Delhi sought to provide a collective forum for government agencies and citizen groups to address problems (Chakrabarti 2008). It organized workshops that brought neighbourhood level Resident Welfare Associations together with officials and political representatives. It also provided these Associations with more direct access to senior bureaucrats (and thus to bypass local politicians). But the resident welfare associations are mostly neighbourhood management committees formed by the residents of apartment blocks and legal housing colonies (i.e. mostly middle and upper income groups).

Initially, the Programme was restricted to planned parts of city, as the government wanted to avoid negotiation with 'slum' dwellers that would

However, the focus of Bhagidari shifted away from the Resident Welfare Associations to focus on improving provision for health care and education and extending programmes to informal settlements where land title was not disputed.

A review of how changes in urban governance in Delhi influenced health care provision also suggested that the opening by the state government of new invited spaces for resident welfare associations meant that local elected politicians were bypassed (both the members of the legislative assembly and the municipal government). NGOs were drawn in as health care service providers, so their advocacy role lessened, especially as they came to rely on government contracts.[56] These two examples from Delhi illustrate the complex and often changing relations between a range of different citizen groups that often have different priorities and bureaucrats and politicians which in Delhi is further complicated having the political and bureaucratic systems of municipal and state government.

Various local governments have introduced measures to increase their accountability to citizens. In India, there are various examples of city government measures to do so. For instance, an e-governance initiative set up kiosks in various cities with computers and internet connections managed by women that can handle more than 100 services ranging from getting birth certificates to paying examination fees, taxes and utility and service bills, reserving water tankers and bus tickets, cash withdrawals from bank accounts and buying tickets to railways and cultural events. These allow users to draw on these services direct and more quickly (and also avoid going through a government employee who may demand 'speed money' for doing so). Sasanet (no date)

Some official service providers have also introduced measures to increase their accountability but they usually see themselves as providing a service to individual customers and being accountable to these customers, not to collective groups or to unserved groups demanding services. One exception to this was the Social Development Unit set up within the Bangalore Water Supply and Sewage Board to provide piped water to homes in 'slums'   About 10,000 households in Bangalore's slums are reported to have water piped to their homes. Among the innovations are reduced connection fees (that can also be paid in instalments), acceptance of alternative proof of residence for getting connection to land tenure documents (that most do not have) such as ration cards, voter's ID, and ID issued by the Karnataka Slum Clearance Board and a cheaper tariff for low consumers

 (Connors 2005).

One example of an initiative taken by a public utility to extend service provision to informal settlements is the work of the Social Development Unit set up within the Bangalore Water Supply and Sewage Board.[57] This was set up after pilot projects funded by international agencies showed that water could be piped to slums legally and that residents were willing to pay for household connections. For the first time, slums are being serviced as a distinct category by the water utility and new working relationships are being forged between the utility, NGOs, and residents as they learn to cooperate and bargain with one another. About 10,000 households in Bangalore's slums are reported to have water piped to their homes. Among the innovations are reduced connection fees (that can also be paid in instalments), acceptance of alternative proof of residence for getting connection to land tenure documents (that most do not have) such as ration cards, voter's ID, and ID issued by the Karnataka Slum Clearance Board and a cheaper tariff for low consumers.[58]

2.2.3 Civil society led social accountability measures

In regard to civil society led social accountability initiatives, there is a considerable diversity in who led these, what they involved and in what they sought. An important part of this has been the emergence of a group of NGOs who sought to hold governments to account, especially over the allocation and use of funding and over the quality of service provision. The social accountability mechanisms included a focus on funding priorities, on actual provision of infrastructure and services, on the processes by which public money was spent (sometimes including the tendering and contracting process) and on the actions and decisions of particular politicians. Most examples are funded by international agencies but this may in part be because those that are so funded get documented. But civil society led measures that are funded by international agencies meant a focus on NGOs that can meet the institutional requirements for receiving support from international agencies and so little or no support for grassroots organizations.

There are issues here around the social accountability of NGOs to citizens – and in particular to urban poor groups. Even where NGOs claim to speak on behalf of 'the poor', they may provide little or no scope for 'the poor' themselves to speak. In addition, many social accountability mechanisms do not increase the power of poorer groups.

A stocktaking of social accountability initiatives applied to budget management in Anglophone Africa[59] noted four different stages where civil society can apply these: the formation of the budget (for instance participatory budgeting as discussed already although this is usually government led), budget review and analysis, expenditure tracking and performance monitoring.

Budget review and analysis includes research, advocacy and dissemination of information on issues related to official budgets by civil society or other groups independent of government. The goals here are to analyze the implications of government budgets for different groups, particularly poor and underprivileged groups, raise the overall level of budget literacy among the public and inform legislatures and policy makers so they can engage in more informed debate. This demystifies what is usually a highly technical and inaccessible financial document.[60]

Expenditure tracking focuses on how the public sector spends the money allocated to it. What can make this so powerful is that actual users of services collect data on inputs and expenditures.

Performance monitoring seeks to get citizen and community assessments of infrastructure and service provision in terms of quality and satisfaction. It can serve as a surrogate for competition for services that are monopolies where the service provider lacks the incentive to be responsive. Community scorecards can include meetings with service providers that provide them with immediate feedback.

Public Record of Operations and Finance (PROOF) in Bangalore seeks to subject the city corporation and municipality to regular monitoring and auditing. The Centre for Budget and Policy Studies in Bangalore does careful analyses of budgets. The director of this Centre commented that "The poor are not involved. We have tried to include slum dwellers associations but this has not been successful, we work with locally elected representatives and because of reservations in the Indian system many of them are poor, we are trying to build their capacity in this regard."[61] Another Indian NGO, Parivartan, held public hearings in two resettlement colonies to assess whether contracts awarded had actually been provided. Of 68 contracts read out, 64 were found to have irregular appropriations. This initiative helped mobilize the residents of these camps and led to more open reporting of public works and their progress. Local area committees were formed in the settlements with residents monitoring civil works and demanding redress. Local contractors and some local officials opposed this – but the public hearing did mean that contractors became more careful in completing works.[62] In the Philippines, Procurement Watch, a non profit civil society organization monitors the procurement process and works with local government to train their staff in the procurement process.

In regard to the application of these to urban areas, performance monitoring through c**itizen report cards** are among the most widely documented mechanisms for improving social accountability. These were initiated in Bangalore by the Public Affairs Centre and they provide quantitative feedback on user perceptions of the quality, adequacy and efficiency of public services. They go beyond the collection of data to being an instrument to extract public accountability through the media coverage and civil society advocacy that accompanies it. The first survey was done in Bangalore in 1993 and after its publication generated heavy media coverage, it became one of the core functions of a new non profit society established in 1994: the Public Affairs Centre. In 1999, the survey was repeated but before the findings were published, a summary of these was presented to the key service providers for telephones, water, and electricity and to the municipality. After the findings were published, a workshop was held involving senior officials from the agencies and the public. Over the five years between the two report card initiatives, there had been partial improvements in services such as telephones and hospitals. But overall citizen satisfaction remained low, even for the better performing services. The findings suggest that the scale of corruption had grown both in how often bribes (including 'voluntary speed payments') had to be paid and in the amount that had to be paid. Some of the service providers responded to these findings by

taking part in public forums and reviewing their systems for service provision and complaints. For instance, the Bangalore Water Supply and Sewage Board made a concerted effort to improve services to current consumers, including a new phone and on-line complaint monitoring with heavy penalties for engineers if not addressed and monthly water forums to help in maintenance.[63] But most informal settlements are not served by this utility.[64] In addition, highlighting public dissatisfaction and the level of corruption does not of itself generate the needed governance changes.[65]

The utility of citizen report cards for urban poor groups depends on their orientation and coverage. Of course, there are issues of representativeness to be considered – for instance does the survey interview a large enough sample for the data collected to be able to report on public service provision in small areas or is the sample size only large enough to provide aggregate figures for the city. If the sample size is large enough to provide relevant data on service provision in particular wards or neighbourhoods, it serves to inform policies and investments to address problems in these wards or neighbourhoods. In addition, do the government or private sector service providers recognize that everyone within their jurisdiction has a right to infrastructure and services? If these report only on user perceptions of the quality of provision for services, then it may not record citizen dissatisfaction for those that have no service including those living in informal settlements deemed to have no right to services. But these are issues that can be addressed – for instance through collaboration with urban poor groups and their organizations. A Citizens Report Card survey in Ahmedabad was done in association with the Self Employed Women's Association (SEWA) with SEWA members influencing the questions asked and helping undertake the survey.[66] The survey also focused on districts (wards) with poor services. Its findings showed that only 33% of the women surveyed were satisfied with water supplies; the main complaints were irregular supply, distance of water source from home, long queues and poor water quality. Less than half the respondents were satisfied with sewerage facilities; the major reasons for dissatisfaction were poor maintenance and the continuous overflow of gutters. Garbage disposal services were available to only 65% of respondents of whom only 40% were satisfied with the service. This survey also found that only 6% had contacted the municipal corporation to complain, discouraged due to poor behaviour of the municipal corporation staff and the lengthy response time. A quarter of respondents reported paying speed money (bribes) to solve problems related to urban public services.[67]

A Report Card survey on public services in Hyderabad in 2000 included a focus on 'slum' dwellers and a third of its sample of 1000 interviewees lived in slums. Satisfaction ratings for solid waste disposal, storm water drains, roads, other pubic services, water supply, sewerage, electricity and telephones were below 25%. Only two out of five slum dwellers had individual water connections. Most commonly sited problems facing slum dwellers were the absence of street lights, choked drains and gutters, clogged and leaking sewerage, inadequate telephone connections, contaminated water and irregular unscheduled power cuts. 42% of slum dweller respondents reported paying speed money for water. 85% of those with complaints did not do anything because of their lack of faith in the system.

An interesting and detailed report on citizen's report card on provision for water, sanitation and solid waste collection in Kenya's three largest cities describes how large a proportion of their populations did not receive any public provision.[68] It includes details of the most common complaints by those living in informal settlements – for instance for water, the time spent in fetching water from sources outside the home (especially in times of scarcity), the long queues and the queue jumping; for sanitation, the proportion relying on their neighbour's pit toilet, public/community toilet or defecation on open ground.[69] But it is not clear that showing this helps change this, although it is more likely to put pressure on service providers to provide better quality provision for those who get provision. This initiative also suffers the limitation of all surveys based on representative samples – they do not provide the data needed for action i.e. to indicate which streets and neighbourhoods are worst served (unlike the surveys and enumerations undertaken by resident organizations in informal settlements that are discussed in the next section). There is also the worry that any professionally managed survey may be under-sampling the residents of informal settlements as these are seen by those employed to do the surveys as dangerous and difficult to work in (especially if there are no maps and street names). Two other initiatives in urban areas in Kenya deserve attention in regard to social accountability. The first is the role of resident associations in Nairobi that began as protests against the inadequacies of government by resident

associations in specific areas (mostly middle-class areas) and that developed into a Nairobi wide and Kenya wide association of resident associations.[70] The second is the research of the African Population and Health Research Centre. This Centre has long had a research programme working in the informal settlements that house half of Nairobi's population. Its work has highlighted how urban poor groups in Nairobi face very serious health problems, including very high levels of infant and child mortality – with statistics on these and other key health issues available for each large informal settlement.[71] This might not be considered as a social accountability measure yet detailed data on the very large (and mostly preventable) health burdens suffered by low-income groups for cities has long been one of the more effective measures to get government attention. The work of the Urban Health Resource Centre in Delhi highlighting how the poorest quartile of the urban population in many states in India have much worse health and health care services than the rest of the urban population is another example of this.[72]

Another organization that seeks to hold government to account is the Jesuit Centre for Theological Reflection (JCTR) in Zambia. Although its focus is on the national level, its work has importance for urban areas as it includes surveys of living costs in Lusaka and other Zambian towns. The Centre has been collecting data on living costs since the early 1990s. This has shown up the deficiencies in the official definition of poverty and in the monetary amounts set as poverty lines. This includes a significant under-provision in the allowance for non-food needs.[73] Its data suggest that the poverty line for Lusaka should be around $2.22 per person per day and so using the Millennium Development Goal indicator of US$1 per person per day is not appropriate for Lusaka. In other urban centres in Zambia, the costs of non-food needs also meant that setting a poverty line at a dollar a day was unrealistic.

One of the most innovative civil society institutions that seeks more government accountability across all sectors is the Urban Resource Centre – first set up in Karachi and then in other urban centres in Pakistan.[74] This is also more rooted in the needs and priorities of those living in informal settlements. The first Urban Resource Centre was set up in 1989 by urban planning professionals and teachers, NGOs and community organizations to serve as a centre of research, information and discussion for all civil society groups within the city. It reviews all proposed major urban development projects from the point of view of low-income communities and interest groups and makes these reviews widely available – for instance through quarterly reports, monographs and a monthly publication *Facts and Figures*. It organizes forums that allow different interest groups to discuss key issues relevant to Karachi – and by doing so, has been able to develop much more interaction between low-income, informal communities, NGOs, private (formal and informal) sector interest groups, academic institutions and government agencies. For instance, research and forums have examined in detail the problems faced by flat owners, scavengers, theatre groups, commuters residents of historic districts, working women, wholesale markets and transport companies. It also arranges discussions and negotiations between civil society groups and political parties and different tiers of government.

This Urban Resource Centre and the network of NGOs of which it is part helped to get the Lyari Expressway stopped (it would have uprooted 100,000 people and caused immense environmental damage to the city) and replaced with the Northern Bypass. Its proposal for the extension of the Karachi circular railway into Orangi and other areas of Karachi has been accepted. It has also supported many other initiatives that changed government policies or the way government agencies work.[75] Comparable Urban Resource Centres have been set up in other cities.

The Orangi Pilot Project-Research and Training Institute is perhaps best known for developing an approach to supporting the residents of a street or lane to work together installing sewers and drains – and doing so in ways that keep down costs and allow full cost-recovery from the users. This approach has provided much improved sanitation and drainage for hundreds of thousands of low-income groups in Karachi and other urban centres.[76] But there are two other aspects of its work that have particular interest for social accountability. The first is its careful mapping of each neighbourhood in Karachi to show where and how the larger system of sanitation and drainage could be improved and supporting the local government water utility to install the 'big pipes' into which community-level installation of 'small pipes' could integrate. The second was the preparation of handbooks for local politicians on what the

main problems were and what could be done in their political constituency to improve provision of services using the funds over which they had control.[77]

In a stocktaking of social accountability initiatives by civil society in Anglophone Africa, most focused on greater social accountability in national or provincial policies - for instance reviewing funding allocations in poverty reduction strategies or reviewing funding in national budgets for education or children or considering whether gender perspectives were incorporated into national budgets for education and health.[78] Where the focus was below the national or provincial, it was mostly for districts or for rural areas. There was much less focus on monitoring public services and very few of the initiatives looked at urban public services. Almost all the initiatives described were by professional NGOs, not grassroots organizations (although some sought to include consultation with such organizations). The reasons for this lack of attention to urban areas are not clear, especially since urban governments have such importance for service delivery in urban areas. Perhaps this reflects the lack of interest in urban on the part of international agencies who fund social accountability initiatives. Or perhaps it is in part the political and institutional constraints that most international agencies face in engaging more in local processes.[79]

3: **ALTERNATIVE PATHS TO BUILDING RESPONSIVE GOVERNMENT INSTITUTIONS**

This section has a particular interest in how grassroots organizations among low-income urban dwellers are seeking to hold local governments to account. This includes the ways in which such organizations and federations formed by those living in 'slums' or informal settlements are developing better relations with their local governments and applying a range of methods to do so. This includes the use of a range of social accountability mechanisms that these federations have developed. It also includes an important international dimension as these federations formed their own transnational network to allow them to exchange ideas, learn from each other and where possible support each other.[80] Surprisingly, although these have been applied in many nations, these get little or no coverage in the 'stocktaking' of social accountability initiatives in Africa and Asia. It gets little coverage in the growing volume of literature on transnational social movements. Yet at least in regard to urban areas, these must rank as among the most important, effective and widely used social accountability mechanisms.

If we consider the billion or so urban dwellers who live in homes and neighbourhoods with inadequate or no provision of infrastructure and services, two concerns need highlighting. The first is for those who live in urban centres with governments with little capacity to meet their responsibilities. There is not much point in a residents association formed by those in an informal settlement lobbying a government agency to extend piped water supplies, sewers or drains to them if this agency has no funds to invest in this and no possibilities of getting such funds. *Social accountability initiatives need a capacity to respond in whatever organization these seek to hold to account*. The second concern is for where local governments do not accept that those living in informal settlements have any right to public provision of infrastructure and services (or where they are prevented by law from doing so). If informal settlements are seen as illegal and thus their inhabitants having no rights or entitlements, it is difficult to use conventional social accountability mechanisms to get better government responses.

So what social accountability mechanisms have relevance where local government is disinterested in informal settlements or actively hostile to them, even when a third or more of the city population live in them? And even in long-standing democracies so conventional citizen pressure has not produced solutions. India has had a democracy for over 60 years yet a high proportion of its urban population live in informal settlements, overcrowded tenements or on the streets. Democracy has not stopped massive evictions.[81] One key characteristic of urban government is how much it can help create or exacerbate poverty and social exclusion through the imposition of inappropriate regulations and policies.

There are a range of social accountability mechanisms that are now widely used in many nations in Africa and Asia and some in Latin America through which the organizations formed by residents of informal settlements have got more social accountability from their local governments. But the first step

in most nations is getting local (and national) governments to change their attitudes to informal settlements and their residents. This includes a recognition of the importance of these settlements for housing the city population and the importance of their residents for the city economy and labour force. From this can come recognition of their needs (and rights) to infrastructure and services. When it has become so common for a third to two thirds of a city's population (and workforce) to live in settlements that are 'illegal', it suggests that it is not these settlements that are at fault but the laws and regulations that deem them illegal.[82] Most of the national slum/shack dweller federations have gone beyond this to show local governments their capacities to contribute to solutions – building new houses, upgrading their settlements, mapping and enumerating informal settlements. These often lead to local governments recognizing the value of working with them – and developing partnerships with them. Such partnerships have improved housing conditions and infrastructure and service provision. There are also examples of where these slum/shack dwellers organizations have got important changes in regulatory frameworks and even in national policies.[83]

One reason why there is a range of social accountability mechanisms that are widely used in many nations is because the grassroots organizations and federations in these nations have visited each other and learned from each other – and have even set up their own small umbrella organization to support them doing so – Slum/Shack Dwellers International (SDI).[84] Many of these mechanisms were developed first in India. The National Slum Dwellers Federation was formed in the 1970s to support city-level slum dweller federations to fight against evictions. In the mid 1980s, a new federation was formed - a federation of women slum and pavement dweller savings groups – *Mahila Milan* (women together), supported by a Mumbai based NGO SPARC. *Mahila Milan*, the National Slum Dwellers Federation and SPARC have been working in close alliance with each other since the mid 1980s. These Federations do not pursue their members' priorities by protest and lobbying politicians but by seeking to show local (and other) governments their capacities – for instance to build or upgrade housing, to design, build and manage community toilets and to support the formation of community-police partnerships to serve those living in informal settlements.[85] These federations also developed a capacity to map and enumerate informal settlements – in effect to do censuses of households in informal settlements – and to undertake city-wide surveys that cover all informal settlements.[86] They recently added to this the production of digital maps and GIS systems with data on all informal settlements. These have particular importance in addressing two concerns noted in the introduction. First, this presents local governments with the data and maps that help them see the informal settlements and their inhabitants as part of the city. For instance, when *Mahila Milan* and SPARC did a census of pavement dwellers in 1986,[87] it surprised government officials to see how most pavement dwellers were fully employed and how many had lived there for many years (so they were not unemployed recent migrants which is how government officials had previously viewed them). The maps, profiles of informal settlements and data about all households and their plots that the Indian federations gather also provides the information base for designing upgrading and, where politically possible, providing secure tenure. The second concern addressed is that residents get 'official' documentation that has importance for establishing their legitimacy. The community-managed enumerations number each house structure and take a photo of the household standing in front of their structure and each household gets a photo-card back with a summary of the data collected on them. Although this photo card is not official in the sense that it is issued by government, the federations have found that this and the mapping can lead to them being seen as having an official address – that then also gets them some key entitlements. For instance, after the pavement dwellers census, pavement dwellers could get ration cards through which they get access to low-price food and fuel. This card is often the first official document that those living in informal settlements get – and in India and elsewhere, to have a document that is dated and that proves residence in a particular structure has importance for supporting negotiation of tenure or of resettlement if evicted. In effect, the photo card is what legitimates that household's right to be there and to make demands.

The two Indian federations with the support of SPARC have also long supported and promoted 'daily' savings groups. These also have importance for social accountability. These are informal savings groups. mostly formed by women and managed by women. They are 'daily' savings because the savings group manager visits each saver or potential saver every day to collect savings or repayments on loans or to provide loans. The members of these savings groups learn how to manage finance collectively – and

also to negotiate collectively with government agencies. As they federate, so their capacity to negotiate increases – especially as they form city-wide *Mahila Milan* federations.

These same tools and methods have been adopted by federations of slum/shack dwellers in many other nations, as they have visited each other. There are now national federations or networks of 'slum'/shack/urban poor dwellers in at least 13 nations with city federations in 6 more and grassroots groups developing or with the potential to develop into federations in many more nations. All have savings groups at their foundation. Many have savings groups that are engaged in initiatives – negotiating land and building houses, upgrading their settlement, building community toilets…. All are doing the surveying, mapping and enumerations that provide the information base for negotiating inclusion.[88] As noted already, this learning from each other has been facilitated by the federations forming their own umbrella organization, Slum/Shack Dwellers International (SDI) that helps them visit, support and learn from each other – and also help new city or national federations develop.[89]

In regard to the social accountability mechanisms used by the federations, the savings groups formed by the residents of informal settlements are the foundation of the federations. These serve and are accountable to their members – who save and who can draw funding from the savings group when needed. But the skills needed to save and manage loans collectively develops the trust within the group and the capacity to work collectively – and this can extend to start to save for housing and taking on initiatives – for instance to design, build and manage community toilets or to negotiate for land on which to organize the construction of their houses. Theses mechanisms also develop the capacity to review financial records and ensure that all the funds are accounted for. As these groups begin to work more actively with the state, and become engaged in state programmes, so they use these skills to monitor these monies.

One of the most common ways in which the federations seek to show government agencies and politicians their capacities is through precedent setting projects. When federation members take politicians and civil servants to see the 200 or 300 houses they have built (as in Zimbabwe and Malawi) or the community toilets that they designed, built and are managing (as in India) - with detailed costings – it has very different impacts from more conventional lobbying – for instance several hundred women seeking a meeting with a senior civil servant or politician to "demand" housing. The precedent setting projects help change the relationship between the federation groups and politicians and civil servants to one where there are channels of social accountability. In effect, for the first time building a productive relationship with local government (and in many instances with national government).

The paths developed by the federations are not by seeking to hold government to account for its failings but to develop their own solutions that work for their members and getting the approval and where possible the support of local governments to allow them to act on a larger scale. So the censuses and surveys of informal settlements they undertake then produce the data and maps needed for planning and installing infrastructure and developing upgrading plans. Mapping risk and vulnerability for the whole city identifies communities most at risk.[90]

In many nations, this has led to co-production as the federations and local governments work together in improving housing, infrastructure and services.[91] This forms a strong partnership with the federations having influence in decision making as well as federation groups directly involved in implementation of state policy. If often includes local governments also providing financial support to development strategies defined and undertaken by the federations. It might be considered second rate compared to state provision but it is often more appropriate to the informality of everyday life that formalized strategies cannot support and it also makes limited state funding go further. Alternatives put forward by the residents in informal settlement to a state that has limited capacity and funding work better for them.

One other example of federation-government partnerships in co-production is the setting up of 'police panchayats' in informal settlements in Pune and Mumbai. In most informal settlements, there is little or no police presence and no police station. Discussions with those who live in informal settlements highlight how the police are often reluctant to act on any complaint brought to them by a resident of an

informal settlement and often reluctant to go into informal settlements. The police in Pune and Mumbai (India) have a partnership with two federations who work together - the National Slum Dwellers Federation and *Mahila Milan* to provide police services in the informal settlements.[92] Each police panchayat is made up of ten representatives from the settlement (seven women, three men) and a local police officer. The community also makes available a room in each settlement for the police so there is a police presence in their settlement and the inhabitants know the police officer that is responsible for policing in their settlement. The members of the police panchayats help patrol the settlement to maintain law and order. They also seek to resolve disputes before they escalate into violence or other crimes. There are over 60 police panchayats active in Mumbai – but their expansion to cover all informal settlements needs the support of the police in each area and not all police force personnel are supportive of this model. Police officers and representatives of grassroots federations from Tanzania, Kenya and Zimbabwe have come to visit the police panchayats in Mumbai. Tanzania has begun to adopt the Police Panchayat process for Dar es Salaam.

There are also many other organizations and federations formed by urban poor groups that have engaged with local government around demonstrating their capacities and contributions to city economies – for instance organizations of recyclers/waste pickers.[93] Experiences have demonstrated the effectiveness of an engagement with local government.[94] In Naga City in the Philippines, a community micro-drainage project enabled the forging of a dynamic new relationship between the NCUPFI (Naga City Urban Poor Federations, Inc.), the city government and the World Bank. Three low-income barangays (urban neighbourhood communities) benefited from the rehabilitation and de-clogging of existing canals, and the construction of micro-drainage systems. The community organizations argued that the local government should pay the user cost fees as they would benefit from increased land values, and high tax revenues. The community members would make a contribution to the waste management costs. Through joint participation in activities, community groups, government officials, and politicians can identify common goals and work out how to realise them.

Responses by governments to the urban poor can be characterized as bureaucratic (urban poor groups having to use formalized channels and procedures), clientelistic, authoritarian or participatory. State responses are often a combination of these – so, for instance, in part bureaucratic in part clientelist. Co-production can be seen as an extension of participatory governance. Table 2 outlines the different types of interaction between community organizations formed primarily by low-income groups and local governments.

Table 2: Types of interaction between local government and community organizations formed by low-income groups

Type of community engagement with local government	*Purpose of interaction*	*Examples*	*Strengths*
Provisions by local government for political inclusion of grassroots organizations in forms of decentralized decision making	Local governments engage low-income residents and community leaders in political institutions that augment representative democracy (and accountability)	Participatory budgeting Participation of slum-dweller organizations in local government committees (e.g. in the Philippines)	Systemic and transparent engagement. Repeat events improve outcomes. Accountability as results from one year are reported on to form the basis for next year's choices.
Community organizations seek to influence government policy so that it is more effective in meeting their needs	Community/grassroots organizations and federations seek to influence local government policies and the rules and	Reduction in minimum plot size across urban southern Africa. Less expensive infrastructure allowed. Permission for community toilets for	Enables regulatory and policy reforms based on the experiences of the urban poor in house construction or improvement. But

	regulations that affect their livelihoods and access to housing, infrastructure and services	settlements where individual toilets are not possible or too expensive	government may ignore these perspectives.
Community organizations establishing accountability conditionalities on local government actions	Community organizations establish monitoring activities to review local government practices (for instance in procurement) and use/disbursement of public funding	The way in which communities linked to the Orangi Pilot Project were able to monitor investment practices and challenge high cost development models. Organized community groups in Cuttack (India) improve the "slum lists" to ensure inclusion.	Helps prevent local government being captured by elite or middle-class self-interested groups. Helps improve supervision of local government officials
Co-production and community implementation. As groups build up experience, they can collaborate more effectively.	Community organizations and local government jointly implement agreed programmes of work generally to improve basic services and install or improve infrastructure	Condominial sanitation in Brazil, police panchayats in India, state financed community housing construction in South Africa, upgrading supported by CODI in Thailand	Joint implementation facilities and the development of new models and approaches adjusted to the realities and capacities of government and low-income settlements

5: SCALING UP

As noted earlier, in many Latin American nations, the provision of infrastructure and services and support for upgrading of informal settlements has 'gone to scale' through changes in government policies and practices. The other route for going to scale is where national and city governments work with and support the organizations and federations of the urban poor – as illustrated by the programme of the Community Organizations Development Institute in Thailand and by the state support in India for community-toilets and police panchayats. Here, most or all the scaling up was done without international support. Many of the slum/shack dweller federations have set up national and city urban poor funds that provide financial frameworks to support scaling up and can draw support from local, regional or national governments or international agencies.[95]

But the international network of slum/shack dweller federations and its secretariat (SDI) has also had importance in scaling up. These helped support national federations to expand and extend the range of their initiatives and helped new federations develop and learn from the more established federations. They have also supported federation leaders to visit many nations where local groups had an interest in the federation methodologies but where as yet no federation has begun. Federations often took senior civil servants or politicians with them to show how other federations had developed successful partnerships with governments. These have provided the federations with a voice and a visibility within nations and also with international agencies. This network is an example of the kind of cross-border network that Keck and Sikkink identified as having influence in local and international politics,[96] although it may be unusual in the extent of the influence of grassroots organizations in it, rather than NGOs or other professionals. The international networking also came out of the older federations' experience with city-wide and national networking.

Two international initiatives to support scaling up are the Urban Poor Fund International that supports the work of the slum/shack dweller federations and is managed by SDI and the Asian Coalition for

Community Action (ACCA). The first of these has operated since 2001 and has channelled around US$ 6.93 million to over 100 grassroots initiatives and activities in 17 nations.[97] It produced a new way of financing community-led development as it was the federations that brought proposals to it and decided on what got funded. So for once, there was an international fund that was not only accountable to the organizations of the urban poor but whose funding priorities were set by them. This Fund also demonstrated the possibilities of its support being used to encourage and leverage support from local and national governments.

The second is more recent – set up in 2009 by the Asian Coalition for Housing Rights.[98] This seeks to catalyze and support community-initiatives and city-wide upgrading and partnerships between community organizations and local governments. By January 2012, it had helped fund initiatives in 708 settlements in 153 cities in 19 Asian nations. In each city, small grants and loans support a range of community-led initiatives - for instance roads and walkways, drains, community centres and parks/playground, and toilets, water supply and waste management improvements. These encourage city-wide networks to form where members share skills with each other and learn to negotiate with their local governments. Further support was available as local governments engage and then came to support this, including the formation of jointly managed community development funds.[99]

All the ACCA initiatives seek to engage government and work at the scale of the city. When a few communities living in informal settlements in a city start saving, undertake surveys and networking and implement their first small improvement projects, these may not bring much change. But when these are being conceived and carried out by communities all over a city, the local authorities start noticing and often begin accepting these and then collaborating in small ways. Joint city development committees, set up, as part of ACCA intervention, are becoming important new structural platforms which allow poor communities to work as equals with their local governments and other urban partners and so provide a new basis for social accountability. The process of jointly planning and implementing projects together is one of the most immediate ways to begin changing power relations in a city. Most of the cities where ACCA is operating have some kind of committee which formalizes this city-community partnership. National-level collaborative mechanisms are also working in eight countries (Cambodia, Nepal, Vietnam, Sri Lanka, Mongolia, Fiji, Thailand and Lao PDR). In several cities in Cambodia, Indonesia, Nepal, Philippines, Vietnam, Sri Lanka, Fiji, Thailand and Lao PDR, local governments have provided some infrastructure (such as paved access roads, drains, sewers, electric and water connections) in the big ACCA projects, and many have provided communities with technical help, building materials and the loan of heavy construction equipment. Local governments have contributed to 21 of the 70 city based development funds

The ACCA Program has been designed to spread opportunities to as many community groups in as many cities as possible, to generate more possibilities, build more partnerships, unlock more local resources and create a much larger field of learning, of new strategies and possibilities. This challenges the prevailing culture of isolated pilot projects which are so common in Asia – so called "best practices" that never got replicated, while the needs of thousands of poor communities get bypassed. This programme has also sought to build a horizontal assessment process for comparing, assessing, learning from and refining projects in different countries.

6: **KEY LESSONS**

Social accountability measures, whether initiated by governments, NGOs or grassroots organizations, are among a range of measures that have improved service provision in urban areas and the accountability to citizens of service providers. They also have importance in the long-term pressure they help provide for more efficient, accountable and transparent governments. Many social accountability mechanisms applied in urban areas focus on improving the quality and efficiency of service provision but not on extending provision to those who are unserved. So this may not contribute to the numerical MDG targets for decreasing the number of those without services.[100]

The main exception to this is when those groups that are unserved are able to develop a relationship with local authorities or other service providers and get provision (and this then provides the possibility of social accountability). This paper has given many examples of this, including those undertaken by federations or networks of 'slum'/shack dwellers. This has certainly contributed to extending public provision for water supplies, sanitation, health care and schools and supporting more secure, better quality housing for 'slum' dwellers, thus contributing directly or indirectly to various MDG targets.

But in regard to international support for social accountability, so much of what urban poor organizations and federations are doing falls below the radar of international agencies. Most of these international agencies lack the staff and structure to be able to engage with grassroots organizations – or indeed with staff capable of talking to them because of language barriers. These grassroots organizations usually lack the formal structures for financial management that international funders require for any support. Grassroots organizations usually lack the capacity to develop proposals that international funders require (and these too are usually required in languages that the grassroots organizations do not speak). *The key issue here is how the social accountability of international agencies to the urban poor and their organizations can be developed.*

Since most international agencies do not actually implement initiatives – i.e. their staff do not install piped water supplies or build and staff health care centres - they are only as effective as the intermediary agencies they fund. If improving service provision that reaches the poorest groups is served by the precedent-setting initiatives of grassroots organizations and federations and their willingness to work with government, international agencies need to consider ways to support them. Of course, this is easier when there are representative organizations of the urban poor with whom international agencies can work. Otherwise, international support may simply reinforce patron-client structures. As noted above, most of the federations or networks of 'slum'/shack dwellers have also set up national or city "urban poor funds" to which international agencies can contribute and which provide these agencies with the accountability they require (and, critically, are accountable to the federations or networks too). However, some bilateral agencies and international funding agencies have developed ways to fund these federations, either directly through their urban poor funds or through the Urban Poor Fund International, managed by Slum/Shack Dwellers International.[101] But what is needed is a more systematic, long-term, flexible international support for representative organizations of the urban poor. To support what they prioritize and to assist in what they judge to be the most effective ways of getting social accountability from their governments and service providers. To work with them to develop the <u>local</u> maps and data needed for initiatives to provide infrastructure and service provision at scale. And from which these same international agencies can learn.

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[6] Many official government poverty lines and the dollar a day poverty line enormously understate the scale and depth of poverty in locations where the costs of non-food needs are particularly high – i.e. in most cities. This is because they make inadequate provision for the high costs that most low-income urban dwellers face including rent for their accommodation, water (often purchased from kiosks or vendors where prices are much higher than for those with piped connections), sanitation (especially the costs of using public toilets for those without toilets in their home), health care, transport (many live in peripheral areas far from income-earning opportunities), fuels and keeping their children at school (often expensive as in for instance purchasing school uniforms, books, meals and payments requested by teachers; it is also common for them to have to pay for private schools because they cannot

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[79] McNeil and Mumvuma 2006, op. cit.

[80] See http://www.sdinet.org/

[81] See Bhan 2009 and Hardoy and Satterthwaite 1989, op. cit; also the many publications by the Centre on Housing Rights and Evictions (COHRE).

[82] Hardoy and Satterthwaite 1989, op. cit.

[83] For more details of the work of these organizations and federations and their international umbrella groups, see Satterthwaite, David, Sheela Patel and Diana Mitlin (2011), *Engaging with the urban poor and their organizations for poverty reduction and urban governance*, UNDP, Civil Society Division, New York, 22 pages; available at http://pubs.iied.org/G03346.html

[84] See http://www.sdinet.org/

[85] Ibid.

[86] Karanja, Irene (2010), "An enumeration and mapping of informal settlements in Kisumu, Kenya, implemented by their inhabitants", Environment and Urbanization, Vol. 22, No. 1, pages 217-239; Livengood, Avery and Keya Kunte (2011), "Enabling participatory planning with GIS: a case study of settlement mapping in Cuttack, India, *Environment and Urbanization*, Vol. 23, No. 1 (there are also case studies of community driven enumerations and mapping in many other nations in this issue).

[87] SPARC (1985), "We the Invisible"; a Census of Pavement Dwellers, Bombay, 41 pages.

[88] See the April 2012 issue of *Environment and Urbanization*; see also Appadurai, Arjun (2012), "Why enumeration counts", *Environment and Urbanization*,Vol. 24, No. 2, available on on-line first at http://eau.sagepub.com/

[89] See http://www.sdinet.org/

[90] Livengood and Kunte 2012, op. cit.

[91] Mitlin, Diana (2008), "With and beyond the state; co-production as a route to political influence, power and transformation for grassroots organizations", *Environment and Urbanization*, Vol. 20, No. 2, pages 339-360.

[92] Roy, Jockin and Javed 2004, op. cit; SPARC-NSDF-Mahila Milan (2010), *Citywatch India*, Issue 6, June.

[93] See Fergutz, Oscar Sonia Dias and Diana Mitlin (2011), "Developing urban waste management in Brazil with waste picker organizations", *Environment and Urbanization*, Vol. 23, No. 2, pages 597-608.

[94] Racelis, M (2008) Anxieties and Affirmations: NGO–Donor Partnerships for Social Transformation, in Bebbington, T, Hickey S and D. Mitlin (edited) *Can NGOs make a difference: The challenge of development alternatives* Zed Books,. London and New York, pages 196-219

[95] Mitlin, Diana (2008), *Urban Poor Funds; Development by the People for the People*, Poverty Reduction in Urban Areas Working Paper, IIED, London

[96] Keck, Margaret and Kathryn Sikkink. (1998), *Activists Beyond Borders*, Cornell University Press, Ithica, 240 pages.

[97] ACHR (2010), *107 Cities in Asia; Second Yearly Report of the Asian Coalition for Community Action Program*, Asian Coalition for Housing Rights, Bangkok, 48 pages.

[98] Ibid.

[99] Boonyabancha, Somsook and Diana Mitlin (2012), "Urban poverty reduction: learning by doing in Asia", *Environment and Urbanization*, Vol, 24, No, 2, October.

[100] For instance, social accountability measures applied to provision for water and sanitation often increase the quality of provision within households that were already classified as having 'improved' provision before this improvement.

[101] Satterthwaite, Patel and Mitlin 2011 op. cit.