'Seeing Like a Citizen'[1]
Re-claiming citizenship in a neoliberal world

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Introduction

Five years ago this month, many of us gathered at the University of Sussex for the first time to launch the Development Research Centre on Citizenship, Participation and Accountability. In a draft concept note developed at the time we had argued, 'if development assistance is to be effective in meeting the poverty targets, new approaches, which attempt to rebuild the concept of citizenship and the ways in which citizens influence and contribute to more responsive and accountable institutions, are absolutely critical.' In the proposal for future work in March 2001 we went on to say:

> If poverty is to be alleviated, new attention must be paid to the relationships between poor people and the institutions which affect their lives. To do so requires re-examining in different development contexts contemporary understandings for rights and citizenship and their implications for related issues of participation and accountability…'

With this challenge in mind, various working groups have examined how poor people in different countries understand their roles and identities as citizens; the spaces and dynamics through which they engage and participate to articulate their interests, the new relationships of accountability that emerge between non-state actors, the state and the market as citizens mobilize to claim their rights; and the relationship of citizenship to issues of science, knowledge and policy. We have had dozens of workshops and dialogues across each of the countries in which we are located, and produced literally dozens of empirically grounded case studies which speak to these larger themes.

It is not possible for any one paper to synthesise the lessons from across this large body of work. Other papers prepared for this conference are focusing on other aspects of it. This paper has a limited focus:

- First, drawing from DRC research from across the Working Groups, I will argue that dominate ways of constructing citizenship - especially those associated with neo-liberalism and with 'thin' forms of democracy - are re-shaping the terrain of citizen-state relations;

[1] This title is a play on the work of James C. Scott, 'Seeing Like a State'. However, beyond the title, the approach here and that taken by Scott are not similar.
[2] This paper is in draft form. It will be revised and developed further following critique, input and debate from colleagues in the Citizenship DRC at this conference.

- Second, I will argue that the 'seeing like a citizen' approach which the DRC has taken offers an important counterpoint to the way that citizens are constructed in these neo-liberal approaches;
- Third, I will draw from the findings of each of the Working Groups to see what they tell us about how citizens navigate this new terrain in order to express their citizenship, claim their rights and exact accountability.
- Finally, I will briefly suggest several larger implications of the 'seeing like a citizen' approach both for citizen action and for the emerging concerns in development policy about building effective states which respond to the needs and interests of those affected by poverty and social injustice.

In its current form, the paper draws largely from the book chapters and working papers prepared for the DRC. In later forms, it will link these more strongly to other literature.

The changing terrain of citizenship in a neo-liberal world

Throughout the work of the DRC, we have sought to 'see like a citizen', by using empirically-grounded case study research to bring the perspectives of citizens to the centre of analysis of broader debates on rights, participation and accountability. In one of the early working papers which helped to define our work, Celestine Nyamu-Musembi (2002:1) described this actor-based approach as one in which rights and citizenship are 'shaped through actual struggles informed by people's own understanding of what they are justly entitled to.' Over time it has become clear that this approach stands in sharp contrast to how the concepts of citizenship and citizen action are framed in other dominant approaches to development.

Though to do so risks great oversimplification, I will briefly argue that a citizenship-based approach can be seen in contrast to four other approaches, each of which are under-girded by broad tenets of neo-liberalism: a) a neo-liberal market-based approach; b) a neo-liberal state reform approach; c) a 'thin' democracy approach and d) the type of civil society approach which focuses largely on NGOs as the organised representatives of citizen voices in the development process. Each of these approaches, I shall argue, focuses on getting particular institutional forms of development right, with the assumption that if this is done, stylised views of citizenship will follow. In each, 'citizens' are treated as a residual category, who act and respond as a by-product of other forces of development. As we have written about elsewhere, these various approaches frame citizens as consumers, users and choosers, voters, or beneficiaries, not as rights-bearing actors in and of themselves (Cornwall and Gaventa 2000, Gaventa 2002). Yet at the same time, each approach sees an important role for citizen participation, though often for very different purposes.

Thus, a neo-liberal market approach argues for transforming the category of citizen in relationship to the state by focusing on citizens as consumers in the global market. As Dagnino observes in the book on *Inclusive Citizenship:*

> neo-liberal discourses establish an alluring connection between citizenship and market. To be a citizen comes to mean individual integration into the market as consumer and producer. This seems to be the basic principle implicit in a vast number of projects to enable people to 'acquire citizenship', that is to say, learning how to initiate micro-enterprises, how to be become qualified for the few jobs still on offer, and so on. In a context where the state progressively withdraws from its role as guarantor of rights, the market is offered as a surrogate arena of citizenship. (Dagnino, 2005:159).

Other critiques go further. Munck, for instance, argues that neo-liberal approaches devalue democracy and re-define 'basic social conquests' (such as labour rights) and political freedoms into 'backward-looking anachronisms' (Munck 2005:65). In the process, neo-liberalism seeks to convert the citizen into a consumer, with meaning described through the slogan, 'I shop therefore I am':

> The complex and empowering vision of citizenship in its classic democratic presentation was reduced, in the era of neo-liberalism, to the power of the credit card and the pleasures of the shopping mall, realizable or not according to one's position in a sharply hierarchised class structure between and within nation-states....the individual could express his or her identity much better through consumption went the unsaid argument...the public space of politics is seen as more static and as not fulfilling the needs of the citizen-come-consumer. (Munck 2005: 65-66).

Through such an approach, citizens theoretically exercise power through market choice – yet, clearly, such a route is limited if we are concerned with poor people who, by definition, lack market or consumptive power.

Throughout the DRC's work, we have seen examples of the ways in which the rise of market forces have altered and changed the citizenship terrain, thus challenging many assumptions about traditional patterns of authority and ways in which rights are protected. Kabeer describes how in the Bangladesh context, neoliberalism has led NGOs to a focus on 'market participation as the route to empowerment', and contrasts a more rights-based approach taken by the NGO Neeja Kori (Kabeer 2003). Work by Robins (2005b) shows how approaches by the NHS in the UK which treat persons with HIV-AIDS as consumer citizens actually served to de-politicise notions of citizenship and to 'kill activism'. The work by Pare and Robles in Mexico (forthcoming, Zed Volume IV) demonstrates how 'the neoliberal development model's privileging of market forces has accelerated environmental destruction and the erosion of traditional institutions' and in so doing has altered the balances of power between citizens and the state. Throughout the work, but especially in the focus of the Rights and Accountability Working Group on corporate actors, we see ways in which the rise of market forces, accentuated by globalization, create the need for new forms of citizen engagement in order to exercise and protect their rights, and the emergence of new forms of citizen-based market regulation.

Neoliberal approaches also carry with them project to reform the state, seen as re-designing institutions and streamlining bureaucracies in order to increase efficiency and accountability. Such approaches, critics argue, in turn weaken the state as a protector of the rights of citizens, and

focus more on its role within the global market order. Again to quote Munck, 'so in terms of reconfiguring the state we can say that neoliberalism has transformed the state rather than driven it back as Hayek would have liked...The much-vaunted policies of "deregulation" (removal of state regulatory systems) have, in fact, been creating new forms of regulation with new market-oriented rules and policies to facilitate the development of the new "new" capitalism... As the new function of the state become reorganized to fit with the new global order, so the state begins to act even more clearly as a market 'player' itself and not a 'referee' as in the old national order of states'(Munck 2005:63). The focus on technocratic approaches to design emphasises rules and procedures, downplaying the importance of power and politics. Yet even within this view, citizens are often called upon to play a conflicting role both as providers of services, and also as 'users' and clients of the state, who through the expression of their voices can help to make it more accountable and transparent.

Others argue that with the rise of neo-liberal market actors, the state must therefore become stronger, to protect the rights of citizens in relationship. But, the cases studies from the DRC illustrate time and again how as the state is being reconfigured, it is also weakened as the arbiter of rights or even as the deliverer of basic services, thus challenging liberal, state-based assumptions about where and how rights and citizenship can be realized. For instance, in her work examining the right to water in South Africa, Lyla Mehta examines the conflicts between market-based frameworks in which citizens are expected to gain rights as consumers through implied contracts with private water utilities rather than through rights-based frameworks, where rights are mediated by the state. (Mehta, forthcoming, Zed Volume IV). Nyamu examines the failure of the state to enforce key rights in the area of housing in Kenya, and the importance therefore of local citizens' struggle to try and keep 'well-connected business interests at bay' (Nyamu, forthcoming, Zed Volume IV). Work by Wheeler (2005) on citizenship and the delivery of public services in the *favelas* of Brazil, for instance, shows how neoliberal policies slashed the resources for public services, making access to health and education, more difficult and demeaning, even though such services are provided as a right in the Constitution. While acknowledging that a weakening of the state should not allow for the 'negation of the core responsibilities of the state towards its citizens', Newell also shows that ' in the context of debates about corporate accountability, this becomes problematic in so far as the dual roles of the state as promoter and regulator of investment may create conflicting responsibilities.' (forthcoming, Zed Volume IV).

Neoliberal forms of the state also carry with them notions about democracy and how it is to be constructed. Rather than seeing democracy in its 'thicker' and 'deeper forms' in which citizens mobilize and struggle to express their voice and claim their interests (Fung and Wright 2003;), 'the new democracy is thin and anaemic, it is restricted and delegative at best. Personal freedoms hitherhto submerged by the weight of the state were highlighted by neoliberalism's ideologies, but democracy as a system of political representation was devalorised' (Munck 2005:66). Democracy in this view focuses not on struggles of citizens, but on a uniform set of institutional designed approaches to elections, representation and the rule of law (Gaventa forthcoming; Carothers 1999). In such a weaker view, citizens are viewed largely as voters, who express their consent from time to time, but leave governance to the elected rulers and informed elites.

Even where states are 'democratic', they may not play the role expected by liberal theory as the protector of rights. As Mahmud (2004:13) writes about Bangladesh, the prevalent perception is that of the state as guarantor or citizen status and custodian of all rights, legal, political, economic and social. However the actual experience of rights is implicitly shaped by the culture of the paternalistic state and dependent citizen, causing a gap between formal recognised rights and real experienced rights.' Kabeer (2002) also makes the point: The state does not merely fail to protect the rights of citizens, it actively contributes to their violation.' Mehta (forthcoming), Thompson (forthcoming) and Williams (2005) each write about the gap that exists between the Constitution in South Africa, and the reality of realising rights on the ground. Wheeler shows how the failure of the state to deliver to poor *favelas* strips citizens of their self-respect. 'Dignity is everything for a citizen,' she quotes one woman, 'and we have no dignity. We are treated like cattle in the clinics, on the buses and in the shops. Only in rich neighbourhoods are people treated with dignity' (Wheeler 2005:109). Other work in Nigeria and India shows the power of social exclusion drawing from ethnic identity or caste to create and re-enforce citizenship as a form of 'exclusion' rather than its more 'inclusive forms' (Abah and Okwori, 2005, Pant, 2005). And, work by Kabeer and others also explores the history of this exclusionary view of citizenship, rooted for many countries in long histories of colonialism (Kabeer 2002).

While each of the above approaches reduce citizens to consumers, users, voters or beneficiaries, it is important to remember that they, through civil society, are also expected to play a role in relationship to the state. While more robust conceptions of civil society see it as the terrain in which citizens mobilise and organise for their rights, non-state actors from NGOS to trade unions can equally well be used 'to supplant or reign in the state' (Munck 2005:66). As Dagnino (2005:158) points out

> In recent years... this concept *[participation ciudadana or citizen participation]*has been appropriated and reinterpreted by the state as part of its strategy for the implementation of neo-liberal structural adjustment. There is thus a perverse confluence between, on the one hand, participation as part of a project constructed around the extension of citizenship and the deepening of democracy, and on the other hand, participation associated with the project of a reconfiguration of the state that requires the shrinking of its social responsibilities and its progressive exemption from the role of guarantor of rights. The perversity of this confluence reflects that fact that, although pointing in opposite and even antagonistic directions, both projects require an *active, proactive civil society.*

At the same time, in the neo-liberal discourses we have seen a depoliticized view of citizen participation emerge, in which civic engagement is seen as the involvement of the civil society sector, through more professionalized organizations and associations such as NGOs, who enter new consultative spaces to speak for the citizens themselves. Such an approach, Thelda Skocpol (2003:11) warns, leads to the emergence of 'diminished democracy', in which public involvement has lost its link to political life.' Similarly, Crenson and Ginsberg (2002) warn of the 'downsizing of democracy', in which collective citizen action has given way to narrow interest groups, and in which citizens are treated like customers, who communicate to elites through opinion polls and electronic market research processes. The arena of civil society becomes the arena of

professionalized non-state organisations and activists who also, in the name of effectiveness, adopt public relations or celebrity-based tactics to speak for the citizens they claim to represent.

As we shall discuss later, the work of the DRC also illustrates multiple ways in which such non-political and 'thin' versions of civil society are being promoted, whether in 'new democratic spaces' (Cornwall and Coelho, forthcoming), in policy processes that surround science and technology (Leach, Scoones and Wynne 2005), or in technical approaches to 'accountancy' (Newell and Wheeler, forthcoming.) At the same time, the work challenges the idea that such civil society participation can serve as an effective means to hold the state accountable. As the work by the Spaces and Places working group has effectively shown, simply creating new spaces for institutionalized participation with the state does not necessarily alter power relations, and may in fact re-enforce the status quo. And as the work on representation by Houtzager (2003) and others in this group show, the assumption that civil society may be seen as independent from the state is itself called into question by overlapping identities and allegiances of civil society actors.

Reversing the telescope: Seeing Like a Citizen

While perhaps portrayed in a stereotyped way, each of the above approaches construct and use the concept of citizenship as a residual to other approaches. For the market approach, the assumption is that if one can get the market right, the benefits will follow for the citizen as consumer. If one can get the institutions of the state right, then citizens can also play a role in holding it accountable and delivering its services. If democracy can be designed and spread effectively, then citizens can play a role as voters and watchdogs of those in power. If the NGO and civil society sector can grow and become more professional, it can help communicate the messages for citizens as its constituents to market, state and elected leaders.

The 'seeing like a citizen' approach 'reverses the telescope' on the other dominant approaches. Rather than focusing on institutional designs as a starting point, it starts with the perceptions of citizens themselves and asks how they interact and view the institutions from which they are expected to benefit. In doing so, the actor-oriented view taken by the DRC across each of its thematic areas suggests a picture of citizenship, participation and accountability that goes beyond citizenship as a residual, or as a product of legal status or institutional design alone.

Such an approach to citizenship builds upon and re-enforces a number of traditions and debates which attempt to stand counter to the dominant approach. Picking up themes and debates from emergent 'rights-based' approaches to development, it focuses on issues of inclusion, participation through organised collective action, and the development of democratic institutions which have obligations to protect and promote rights (DFID 2000). Building on debates about the multiple forms of citizenship, especially from Latin America, citizenship is seen as an important arena of contestation, in which full democratic citizenship is attained not only through the exercise of political and civic rights, but also through social rights, which in turn may be gained through participatory processes and struggles (Dagnino 2005; Avritzer 2002). In such a view, citizen participation itself may be seen as a social right, which enables the capacity to claim other rights (for more on this approach see Gaventa 2002).

Such an actor-based approach also re-politicises our understandings of participation, moving it from that of 'beneficiaries' of the development process to one of rights-bearing citizens. Interacting with debates in the literature on deepening democracy (Gaventa forthcoming), this approach focuses on the process in which citizen exercise ever-deepening power over decisions which affect their lives, and in which democracy is extended from a 'democracy of voters to a democracy of citizens.' (UNDP 2004). In this view, David Beetham argues:

> the core idea of democracy is that of popular rule or popular control over collective decision making. Its *starting point is with the citizen rather with the institutions of government.* Its defining principles are that all citizens are entitled to a say in public affairs, both through the associations of civil society and through participation in government; and that this entitlement should be available in terms of equality of all. Control by citizens over their collective affairs, and equality between citizens in the exercise of that control, are the key democratic principles (1999, p. 3, emphasis added)

In this view, 'thicker' and more participatory forms of citizenship move beyond passive engagement as voters, beneficiaries or consumers. Citizens are seen as the 'makers and shapers' of policies not only the 'users and choosers' of development or as the 'clients' of other actors (Cornwall and Gaventa 2001).

By taking such a view, research across each of the working groups of the DRC offers a dramatically different view from those of the dominant approaches to how citizenship is constructed. It also gives us insights into how neo-liberalism and globalisation, while on the one hand promoting de-politicised and 'thinner' forms of citizenship, are simultaneously reshaping the terrain in which citizens can claim their rights and demand accountability in 'thicker' and more robust ways. It is to those dynamics that we now turn.

Citizenship as a process of construction and contestation

One set of projects in the DRC explored local meanings of rights and citizenship in differing contexts, and how these meanings are acted upon through political and social mobilisation. The cases and the methods used were far-ranging, including, for instance, video interviews to understand of perceptions of rights of women in Chiapas, popular theatre to explore the meanings of citizenship in Nigeria and more traditional forms of case study interviews with nomads in Rajasthan, tribals in the new state of Jharkand in India, and the slum dwellers asserting their rights to housing in South Africa. Our research spanned north and south, including struggles for legal identity by illegal immigrants in the US (Ansley 2005), and perceptions of young people in the UK (Lister 2005). From this Working Group as well as from others, several key points emerge which challenge the neo-liberal, more dominant ideas about the substance of citizenship, as well as where and how it is constructed.

First, while acknowledging in its work the colonial and often exclusionary origins of the concept of citizenship, case studies from the DRC, also contribute to a view of citizenship-in-practice which is far more robust notion than that portrayed and constructed in its more neo-liberal forms. Citizens **are** engaging on key issues that affect their lives, and in ways that challenge traditional notions of passivity or disengagement. Case studies from contexts as diverse as Nigeria, South

Africa, Brazil, Mexico, India, Bangladesh signal common impulses at the grassroots for values of justice, recognition, self-determination and horizontal solidarity, which offer potential for building more vibrant forms of citizenship, and for realisation of fundamental rights (Kabeer 2005). The work of the Science and Citizenship Group similarly argues that citizenship is emergent, realised through practised engagement, often through global, social solidarities, and through the expression and creation of citizens' own knowledge and identities. In the absence of an effective role of the state as mediator and protector of rights, the Working Group on Rights and Accountabilities argues, citizens seek and create new avenues for claiming rights and demanding social regulation, which challenge passive views of citizenship associated with minimalist views of democracy (Newell, forthcoming, Zed Volume IV.)

While citizens are acting to claim their rights and assert their voice, it is not always done in relationship to the state. Rather, the DRC's work argues for understanding citizenship in a more multi-dimensional way, in which citizens may express their voice and demands not only in the political realm of the nation-state, but also in relationship to other social, ethnic and religious identities and in other social, economic, household, global, or local spheres.

Case studies, for instance, show the articulation of citizenship in struggles for the right to have a recognized identity by migrant populations in both India (Pant 2005) and the United States (Ansley 2005); for a sense of place and sense of belonging in Kenya (Nyamu-Musembi) and Brazil (Wheeler); in the workplace struggles 'for dignity and daily bread', (Mahmud and Kabeer, forthcoming) and in terms of biological citizenship, or control over one's own health (Robins 2005). The work also points to the fact that citizenship is expressed not only in vertical linkages to the state, but in horizontal, social relations as well; and that in everyday practice, citizenship is not a singular identity, but an ensemble of identities, affiliations, and forms of action. Just as participatory approaches to understanding of poverty over the last decade have led to a more multi-dimensional understanding of what poverty entails, so too do the empirical investigations of rights and citizenship call for more robust understandings of these concepts, and argue for dimensions of citizenship which go beyond the nation-state based understanding alone.

Much of the empirical work from the DRC thus supports recent trends in citizenship studies which suggest that citizenship must be understood in social as well as in political spheres, and expressed in non-state as well state arenas (Hoffman 2005). In everyday life, it maybe seen as struggles for 'belonging' as well as for 'political agency' (Taylor and Wilson 2004), and is linked to practice from below as well as a set of rights and obligations handed down from above (Lister 1997; 1998). In this sense, like the concept of democracy, citizenship may have 'thick' and 'thin' versions:

> So-called 'thick' citizenship' which gives people real power over their lives is desirable, but 'thin' citizenship (in terms of formal legal and political entitlements) is better than no citizenship at all. The right to self-rule is important and central to citizenship: but it becomes absurd and paradoxical when placed in the context of the state. This is why the case for an inclusive citizenship makes it essential that we look beyond the state...(Hoffman 2005:13).

In the 'thick' view of citizenship, a sense of citizenship is deeply related to a sense of personhood and identity. As Kabeer (2003) writes, 'how people define themselves, and are defined by others, is relevant to citizenship as practice because of its implications for their capacity to act as citizens'. Yet, as she goes on to write 'while individual agency may be a central aspect of claiming rights and observing duties, history tells us it has been the collective struggles of those who have been denied citizenship status that have driven processes of transformation towards more inclusive definitions and practices' *(ibid)*. Such struggles for inclusive citizenship often begin with demands for recognition and dignity and around concrete issues and immediate needs in the social and community sphere, not in the first instance with struggles for greater political voice in state-based processes. Such engagement is not always by invitation, nor inspired by liberal or even neo-liberal concepts of what a citizen ought to do or be. Rather, it springs from impulses for social justice, for desires for recognition and dignity, and from the need to confront concrete social needs and issues that affect everyday life (Kabeer 2005, Chapter 1).

While such action for social inclusion may begin outside the state sphere, there are political consequences: it is through engagement for recognition, identity or local issues that broader awareness, skills and networks are acquired, and through which social citizenship is converted to political engagement. Though acting and mobilising on key issues and identities, citizens learn and acquire new identities as political actors; they become conscious of their rights, and their right to have rights. They build the alliances and solidarities which allow them to exercise power.

Case studies from the DRC provide very powerful examples of these linkages. For instance, Robins (2005b) writes about how

> the 'extremity of "near death" experiences of full-blown AIDS, and the profound stigma and "social death" associated with the later stages of the disease...can produce the conditions for ADIS survivors' commitment to "new Life", social activism and "responsibilised' citizenship.'

In sharp contrast to the biomedical interventions which treat HIV/AIDS patients as clients to be protected through anonymity, the activist discourses associated with the Treatment Action Campaign serve to reintegrate and to revitalise 'isolated and stigmatised AIDS sufferers' as social activists, aware of their rights and responsibilities as citizens. Similarly, Shireen Huq (2005)writes that in relationship to the work of Naripokko

> our experience of discrimination as women led us to demand fair treatment and respect for our dignity as human beings, and only thereafter to claim our rights and entitlements as *citizens.* (quoted by Stammers 2005)

In turn, Neil Stammers affirms this view in his work on human rights struggles in the north, arguing that it through the struggles against power that common understandings of human rights have emerged: 'The claimed universality of rights...needs to be understood in terms of situated social actors struggling against power.' (2005:63).

In this sense, political citizenship is constructed **through** engagement, nor the other way around. That is, one does not create citizens who then act; rather action creates the sense and practice of citizenship itself. From this perspective citizenship is constructed from below, not given from above. It is claimed, not bestowed.

The notion of citizenship as practiced, as claimed, also makes it emergent.[3] Citizenship at any moment and in any context will be incomplete, bounded and shaped by power relations, which work to shape peoples conceptions of themselves as actors, who enters public spaces and who does no, who speaks, and with what authority, who wins and who loses. In this sense, citizenship in the midst of social inequality is not experienced equally, and itself contributes to the power field, serving as a source of inclusion for some, while simultaneously constructed boundaries of exclusion for others.

Yet, the claims for rights and citizenship also can serve to challenge and change power. It is through the mobilisation and demands of citizenship that rights are made real, new legal rights are created, and meanings of citizenship are expanded. While citizenship is contextual, it is also historical – it is created and realised over time, in different ways in different places and points in time. Again, we have seen this in a number of ways. Dagnino in Brazil (2005) and Cortez (2005) in reference to Mexico write about the importance of struggles around the 'right to have rights' which extend and make real other rights. Mahmud and Kabeer (forthcoming in Zed Volume IV) discuss the importance of the evolution of consciousness over time in analysing the struggles of garment workers in relationship to labour rights. Nyamu-Musembi (2005:45), outlines a series of examples of in the south through which 'specific social movements struggles at particular times have been crucial in moving the discourse and practice of human rights beyond the impasse of conventional debates...These struggles have transformed the pre-defined normative parameters of human rights, questioned established categories, expanded the range of claims that could be characterised as rights, and in some cases altered institutional structures while Stammers (2005) makes similar arguments in the evolution of human rights in the north, over a period of several centuries.

One of the contemporary arenas in which the 'horizons of rights discourses have also been expanded Nyamu-Musembi argues, is in the field of knowledge rights, as witnessed in struggles over natural resources and over intellectual property agreements. This argument is taken further by the Working Group on Citizenship and Science, especially in its articulation of ideas of 'cognitive justice' (Leach, et. al 2005). Research by this group poses enormous challenges to policy processes that assume science and technology to be independent of various cultural, institutional and power-laden processes, which also embody forms of subjectivity and citizenship. Challenging mainstream approaches to 'citizen involvement' in science and technology – and the uni-dimensional, liberal theory of knowledge and citizenship on which they are often built—this group calls for a 'model of the citizen as more autonomous creator and bearer of knowledges located in particular practices, subjectivities and identities, who engages in more active ways with the politicised institutions of science.' The concept of 'cognitive justice' emerges as an important

contribution to the rights and citizenship debate, as well as a lens through which to view science an technology, in that it emphasises the right to recognition and co-existence of different forms of knowledge in policy processes.

Navigating the sites of citizenship: A power perspective

This more robust, multidimensional view of citizenship also points us a broader understanding of the multiplicity of sites in which citizenship can be claimed. As citizens assert claims from below, or as pressures for more inclusive policy processes are created from above, new spaces for participation are often created, either in the form of fleeting consultative spaces or through institutionalised fora, which link citizens, elected representatives, and technical officials in ostensibly more 'participatory' ways (Cornwall 2002).

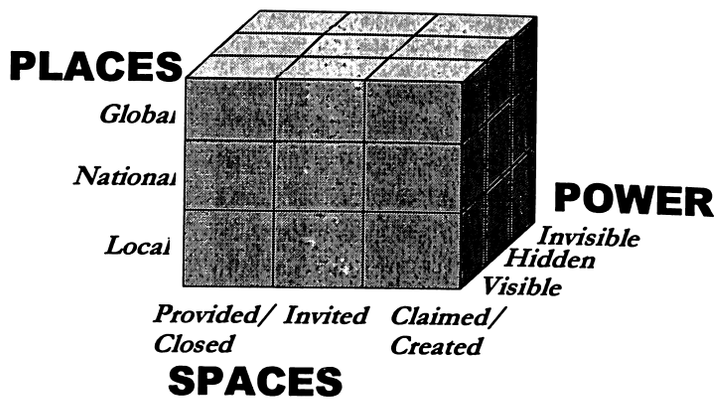
The 'Spaces for Change' Working Group has made important contributions to the understanding of what actually happens in and across these spaces, as found in the rich case studies from the IDS Bulletin on *New Democratic Spaces* (2004), as well as those in the forthcoming Zed (on *Spaces for Change?* (Cornwall and Coelho). In turn, the spaces theme has also been picked up across all of the working groups. For instance, in their introduction to the book on Rights and Accountability (forthcoming), Newell and Wheeler point to the multiple formal and informal spaces and strategies for engagement in struggles over rights and resources Work by Ian Scoones (2005:2-3) as well as others in the working paper series on science and mobilization also elaborate the array of spaces for engagement, from local to global levels, including the legal system and the courts, electoral and parliamentary processes, the media, etc., activist research, protest and direct action. Together findings from these groups suggest that the changing nature of power in a globalised, neo-liberal world is not only reconfiguring the meanings of citizenship, but it is also reconfiguring the sites and strategies through which citizen engagement may occur.

In the midst of such reconfigurations, the very spread and adoption by powerful actors of the language and discourse of participation and inclusion confuses boundaries of who has authority and who does not, who should be on the 'inside' and who is on the 'outside' of decision-making and policy making arenas. Changing governance arrangements, which call for 'co-governance' and 'participatory governance' challenge our traditional categories of the rulers and the ruled, the policy-makers and the public. The use of terms such as 'partnership' and 'shared ownership' by large, powerful actors like the World Bank and the IMF invite engagement on a 'level playing field' but obscures inequalities of resources and power. The adoption by multinational corporate actors of notions of 'corporate citizenship', blurs traditional 'us' and 'them' distinctions between economic power holders and those who might negatively be affected by their corporate practices (Newell and Garvey 2004). Rapid processes of globalisation challenge ideas of 'community' and the 'nation-state', reconfiguring the spatial dynamics of power, and changing the assumptions about the entry points for citizen action.

All of these changes point to the need for activists, researchers, policy makers and donors who are concerned about development and change to turn our attention to how to analyse and understand the changing configurations of power, and they affect the transformative potential of the multiple

spaces for change. Towards this end, in 2002 I wrote a short paper for a DRC workshop which proposed one approach to analysing the spaces, places and dynamics of power, subsequently referred to as 'the power cube' (Gaventa 2002). In this approach, I argued, power must be understood in relation to how spaces for engagement are created, the levels of power (from local to global), as well as different forms of power across them. By applying such analysis, I argued, we could begin to assess the possibilities of transformative action in new democratic spaces, and how transformative possibilities of citizen action might be enlarged. (See Gaventa 2005 for further development of this approach.)

Figure 1: The 'Power Cube': Power in Spaces and Places of Participation



A review of the DRC case studies since that time, also confirms the importance of understanding how power and spaces interact, and the consequences for forms of citizen action. These may be seen in the changing dynamics of power 'vertically' between local and global spaces; horizontally in the types of spaces that are created; and in what occurs within the spaces themselves.

Looking 'vertically' the work has given us a number of examples of the changing relationships of local, national and global spaces for action. As we have seen earlier, the weakening of the state also carries with it the formation of new spaces for engagement, as well as changing the configuration of power between local, national and global arenas. In his work in relationship to the regulation of GM foods in India, South Africa and Brazil, for instance, Scoones (2005) describes how the changing global economy is 'fundamentally affecting the political transition and the nature and possibility of democracy and protest in all three countries'. In their work on citizen engagement in watershed management in Veracruz, Mexcio, Pare and Robles (forthcoming Zed Volume IV) illustrate how global forces are reconfiguring the possibilities of action at the local level in the *ejidos*, villages and barrios. Social mobilisation at the global level can also serve to re-enforce marginalization of social actors at the local level, as Linda Waldman's work (2005) on 'when social movements bypass the poor' so nicely illustrates. Looking at the disconnections of local and global forms of authority as citizens mobilise around asbestos-related health claims,

Waldman also show how power relations mediate citizenship, and how the capacity of citizen action to claim power is itself bounded by power.

At the same time, changing local discourses in some cases can be used to open and close spaces for action, as we have seen in the work by Thompson (2005) and by Mehta (2005) on struggles around water rights in South Africa. Reconfigurations of power 'from above' Kabeer argues lead also for the need to explore the global reconnections being made 'from below', and the case studies in the volume on *Inclusive Citizenship* illustrate several examples where this is being done (Kabeer 2005:23-25).

While much of the work with the DRC has been framed along a continuum of local, national, global spaces of engagement, and their interaction, further adaptations of this power approach illustrates the importance of other 'vertical' spaces for engagement. Using a power approach to analyse spaces for citizen action in Colombia, for instance, Pearce and Vera (2005) list eight different levels of civil society engagement in the public sphere, each of which has its own types of spaces, including the international, national, departmental, regional/provincial, municipal, communal, and neighbourhood levels. Many of these are shaped by the relevant legal frameworks of governmental administration, and may differ across rural and urban communities. In Guinea, where the framework was used to examine the work of PLAN on promoting and protecting the rights of children, the research team cited the importance of the family level as an arena of decision-making which affects the life of the child. They were also able to notice how work with a Children's Parliament had contributed to impacts not only at the community level, but within families, where children said that their role had changed, and that adults listen to them more. (Buechy and Curtis 2005).

The work in the DRC has also examined a number of spaces of engagement along a horizontal continuum. In one earlier formulation, this was seen as the continuum of 'closed' spaces, 'invited' and 'claimed' spaces (Cornwall 2002; Gaventa 2002; Brock, McGee, Gaventa 2004). Others in the DRC have used other formulations (e.g. Scoones 2005). Whatever the typology, many of the case studies have given insights into the dynamics across social movements that begin apart from the state and those which engage with the state, in state-created deliberative or participatory fora. Cornwall (2004), for instance, argues that institutionalized spaces are embedded in a web of other spaces, and must be examined from that view. The work by Carlos Cortez on differences and relationships in the spaces created by the Zapatista movement compared to the more formal government spaces illustrates this view Cortez (2004). Work by the group on Science and Citizenship moved from looking at the 'institutionally - orchestrated attempts at public participation', to understand how and why citizens mobilise around scientific and technological issues in different contexts. The Rights and Accountability group also examined processes of mobilisation for claiming accountabilities that involved the interaction of formal and informal means of accountability by state and non-state actors in different types of spaces for engagement. Lisa Thompson's work (2005) on 'management and mobilisation' in the Berg Water Project in the western Cape in South Africa illustrates very nicely the complex interactions of participatory action in government created spaces, with those spaces formed more by popular resistance. While government discourse served to neutralize peoples' spaces, it also created room for manoeuvre within them. Throughout, a key message of these studies is that while each of these types of

spaces for engagement are important, given the inter-relationships of power, their potential for change must also be examined in relationship to what is happening in the spaces that surround them. Promoting change in one space implies the need for alliances with those in others as well.

The work by the DRC illustrates not only the importance of the interactions of power *across* spaces but also it argues for the importance of understanding the micro-dynamics of what goes on *within* them as well. As the work of the Spaces for Change group confirms, participation in these new 'invited' spaces does not necessarily lead to pro-poor outcomes, greater equity, or better public policy. Simply creating new institutional spaces or processes does not mean that they will be filled with new actors and voices, nor that they will challenge existing forms of inequality. Such spaces are imbued with power relationships, affecting who enters, with what identity, knowledge and legitimacy (See for instance work by Mahmud, Williams and Mohanty 2004 and forthcoming chapters in Zed Volume III). Similarly, the work associated with the Science and Citizenship group highlights the ways in which knowledge can be used for inclusion or exclusion in participatory spaces, while work within the Accountabilities group illustrates how mobilisation of different forms of knowledge can also be used as an accountability strategy. In her work in the UK on the MMR controversy, Leach (2005) illustrates that much of the challenge in such for a is not only around agendas, but also around meanings associated with key issues, while the work by Shankland (forthcoming) on the interaction of indigenous and formal knowledge in health councils in the Amazon also illustrates the broad challenges of bringing together very different forms of understanding. As Shankland writes in a forthcoming policy briefing, 'unless attention is paid to the quality of the process...people can be excluded from discussions even when they are physically present.'[4]

Overall, the success of engagement *within* participatory spaces, Cornwall and Schattan (2004) point out, must take into account a range of other factors such as the complexities of the wider political environment, the characteristics and identities of different actors, linkages with other institutions, the framing of rules of the game, the relation of participation in formal spaces to other struggles for inclusion, and the influence of other actors at different levels. Moreover, the issues of who enters participatory spaces, with what identity and knowledge, raises significant challenges of representation, both within and across such spaces (Houtzager, 2005 and Castello, et. al., forthcoming).

Implications for strategies of citizen engagement

The ways in which spaces for engagement are constantly changing along vertical and horizontal continua, as well as the complexities of the dynamics of power within them, pose significant challenges for strategies for citizen engagement. And yet, throughout the work of the DRC, we see multiple case studies of where citizens are engaging, often with some success in claiming rights and exacting accountability from state and non-state actors. Together these cases offer some important insights for strategies of citizen engagement in light of the changing sites of where such engagement might occur.

[4] There is much more material that illustrates this theme in the forthcoming Zed volume, 'Spaces for Change? (Cornwall and Coelho) which I have not yet been able to fully incorporate.

First, if, we understand citizenship as being multi-dimensional and expressed not only in relationship to the state, as argued in the previous section, then we must also see the sites of citizen action to claim rights and accountability as multiple as well. The multi-dimensionality of citizenship suggests a multi-dimensionality of the space and places where people assert their citizenship, and the importance of multiple strategies of change. For instance, a Newell and Wheeler observe in the introduction of the forthcoming book from the Rights and Accountability Working Group, 'Contexts of globalisation and neo-liberal reform have...fundamentally changed the division of rights and responsibilities between states, market actors and civil society in ways that directly affect the livelihoods of the poor. As the roles and power of key actors in development change so, therefore, do the processes by which people seek to hold them to account.' The book goes on to document a range of strategies which citizens employ, be they 'formal and informal, legal and non-legal, collaborative and confrontational.'

The sites and strategies of engagement depend a great deal on the trajectories of citizenship within a given context. From the cases across the DRC, some key contextual factors for 'successful' engagement begin to emerge, including a) the historical context of prior mobilisation and forms of engagement; b) the political culture of citizenship which already exists; c) the degree to which legal frameworks which enable participation as a right, not just an invitation; d) the degree of political commitment from above and clear rules of engagement that level the playing field; e) the extent to which there is something real to engage about – e.g. real power or distribution of resources, not just token consultation; f) the capacity and institutional design of the state (and other institutions) to deliver a response to participation and to maintain a pro-poor political agenda. The potential of such spaces to be transformative will vary by context even within country, as illustrated in the work by von Lieres (forthcoming) comparing rural and urban social movements which attempt to engage with the state in South Africa.

The DRC work also suggests the importance of new forms of association which can link citizen action across the multiple sites and strategies through which it occurs. The work by Kabeer (2005), for instance, argues for the importance of horizontal networks and alliances, and the work on science and mobilisation illustrates as well the important local-global forms of association and coalition building, both formally, as well as in ways of mobilising around knowledge and discourses. All of the work points to the importance in the future round of the DRC of looking at how interconnections are made across spaces of engagement, both between citizen and state, and across local, national and global sites of engagement. Such interconnections also pose new challenges for understanding the politics of representation and solidarity across such multiple sites.

Implications for contemporary development policies

While the work of the DRC thus has implications for the strategies of citizen engagement, it also has implications for broader debates that are relevant to development policy, in particular to current debates of how to build 'effective states' and to create more responsible forms of citizenship. These implications may briefly be presented as a) the importance of going beyond the 'residual' approach to citizenship; b) rethinking the state-society binary; c) challenging the

institutional design approach to change, and d) understanding the rights and citizenship as emergent in development processes, not given from above. In concluding, I briefly consider each of these points.

In this paper, I have argued that neo-liberalism and globalisation are radically reshaping the terrain of citizenship in a way that particularly challenges our understandings of how citizenship is constructed and the sites in which it is claimed. Taking a 'seeing like a citizen' approach, I have argued that dominant approaches to citizenship as shaped in the neo-liberal model are producing 'thin' versions of the concept, in which citizens are treated as residuals to other categories, be they the market, the state, 'democracy (in certain forms)', or even to organised forms of civil society. Where such forces are failing to recognize to the needs, identities, and voices of ordinary people – e.g. where they simply re-enforce processes of exclusion – then citizens unsurprisingly may withdraw from political processes, or find other ways of expressing voice and identity as actors through other channels. The absence of responsiveness and accountability, and the failure to recognize citizens as actors, can contribute to conflict and violence (Newell and Wheeler, forthcoming).

Reversing the telescope – e.g. looking at citizenship through the perspective of citizens as actors in the development process - gives us a very different view. First, we gain an image that citizens are engaging to claim their rights and to assert their voice, but not necessarily in the ways or spaces ascribed to them by the dominant institutions. A 'thick' form of citizenship is multi-dimensional – that is, it grows from action and identities in multiple spheres, not only in relationship to the state or the market alone. 'Thicker' forms of citizenship also support and require 'thicker' forms of democracy, in which citizen engagement takes places in multiple places and forms, within invited spaces, and outside of them, in relationship to the state and in non-state spheres. A concern with 'active' citizenship, as espoused by the UK government in its domestic agenda, must recognize that such citizenship is rooted in a sense of self-identity and respect, gained in the social as well as the state sphere, and will be expressed in many different forms. 'Citizenship', without respect for the personhood and identities on which it is based, will contribute to hollow forms of engagement, or to action based on 'victimhood' and frustration, rather than on self-confidence and autonomy.[5] In the broader development arena, building effective and stable states over the long term also means finding new ways to support empowered, self-aware and effective citizens as well.

Such an approach means going beyond the state-society binary which has often affected approaches to development. On the one hand, as we have seen, the re-configuring of the state and changing patterns of authority are themselves pointing the importance of non-state actors – in holding the state and market accountable, in delivering services, and in claiming rights. The state itself is increasingly relying on other social actors to do what the state once did.

On the other hand, we have also seen that the social sphere itself is an important arena in which citizenship is expressed and constructed. But to emphasise the importance of the social sphere is not to ignore the importance of the political, nor of the state, as some political scientists would

[5] This point was made quite strongly by Tarik Ramadan in a DFID seminar, November 2005.

want to argue. Alternatively, as we have seen, it is through action on immediate issues in daily life through which citizens build their political skills, identities and self-awareness as actors. Building responsible and empowered forms of citizenship sometimes means starting with recognition of identities and action that in the first instance are not constituted in relationship to the state. But, as a sense of citizenship is constructed outside of the state, it can in turn contribute to the emergence of citizens who engage with the state and who, in turn, contribute to the claiming of rights and accountabilities from the state.

This recognition of the ways in which the changing state opens up and requires new roles for non-state actors on the one hand, while society-based action can help to create forms of citizenship which enable effective and democratic states on the other, suggests that the process of strengthening social or state-based approaches for dealing with poverty must look more deliberately at the of engagement between the two. This confirms a very early argument of the DRC that building effective relationships between states and citizens, means 'working on both sides of the equation.'[6]The in-depth work by Coelho on the health councils in Brazil provides demonstrable empirical evidence on this point. In testing the significance of a) committed public managers, b) civil society activism or c) an appropriate institutional design in building more inclusive health care services, her work confirms the importance of all three acting together. It is the 'the *simultaneous* presence in a given *subprefeitura* of managers committed to the project of social participation; a wide spectrum of popular movements, civil associations and citizens that display interest in participating in the health policy; and a certain know-how about the organisation of participatory institutions that leads to a more inclusive range of participants (Coelho, forthcoming in Zed Books Volume III).

While such an approach supports, to a degree, the importance of institutional design, it simultaneously challenges the validity of technical design approaches to citizenship, participation or accountability which fail to consider intervening factors of identity, power and contestation. For instance, the work by Newell and Wheeler challenges 'technocratic framings of accountability', arguing that they 'generate a kind of naiveté that reform processes can generate pro-poor change without challenging power inequities' (Newell and Wheeler 2005, Chapter 1). The work by Lisa Thompson on water services illustrates how by treating water as a technical problem fails to understand the highly politicized debate between citizenship rights and neo-liberal ideology which surrounds it. 'In terms of participation, one of the offshoots of this approach to natural resource management is that participants in formal processes must become either proficient in the language of scientific policy discourse or remain silent' (Thompson 2005:4). Similarly, work by Robins, as mentioned earlier, illustrates how in the field of HIV/AIDS the neoliberal state depoliticises the role of the citizen-state contract, emphasising self-regulation by the individual (Robins 2005b).

Alternatively, the case studies in the DRC calls also for recognition of the multiple ways in which power and identity serves to intermediate between the legal frameworks and institutional procedures which designed to support the rights of citizenship and what actually happens in everyday life. It argues for a much more nuanced approach, which recognizes the importance of

[6] This phrase was used in the first DRC proposal, and has been elaborated in several articles since, e.g. Gaventa, 2004.

citizens as actors who are located in particular contexts and cultures, and recognizes too that rights and citizenship in practice are constructed through the interaction of actors and broader institutional frameworks. The failure to locate and acknowledge these mediating factors not only contribute to a gap between the state and its citizens, but can also contribute to and reinforce the sense of exclusion and marginalisation by the very citizens which laws and procedures may be designed to serve.

Yet simultaneously, the claims for rights and citizenship also can serve to challenge and change power. It is through the mobilisation and demands of citizenship that rights are made real, new legal rights are created, and meanings of citizenship are expanded. Citizenship in this sense is contextual but also historical – it is created and realised over time, in different ways in different places and points in time. Hoffman (2005:13) similarly agues that citizenship is a 'momentum' concept, understood in three ways:

> first, the struggle for citizenship can be developed even by those who seek only limited steps forward and are oblivious of a more wide-ranging agenda. Second, citizenship involves a process of change that is both revolutionary and evolutionary... and third, citizenship is an on-going struggle with no stopping point. It is not that the ends of inclusive citizenship are important: it is rather that achieving one, enables us to move to the next, ad infinitum.

Understanding the ways in which power mediates between the legalities and realities of citizenship, and how citizenship emerges from below, also challenges the idea that rights and citizenship can be handed down from above. Rather, as we have seen earlier, citizenship in its more robust forms must be understood as gained not as given, realised not only through effective laws and institutions but also through the expression rights-claims in practice. In this sense, 'to be a citizen in the legal and sociological sense means to enjoy the rights of citizenship necessary for action and social and political participation. To act as a citizen involves fulfilling the potential of that states' (Lister 1997:41).

To suggest that citizenship is gained through practice, and that a fundamental right of participation is the right to create rights, in turn makes both rights and citizenship emergent concepts, as discussed earlier. If that is the case, to support the realisation of rights and citizenship is not only to support the capacities of states and citizens to realise *existing* rights, but also to enable and support the process by which new formulations emerge. For instance, if we look historically, at the beginning of the last century not a single nation-state could claim to provide even the legal right of universal adult suffrage, a right which today is considered a minimal expectation of democratic states, and is now, theoretically, a right in some 130 countries (for further discussion, see Gaventa 2005a). And, as the work by Stammers and Kabeer (in Kabeer 2005) reminds us, the broadening and deepening of conceptions of rights and citizenship even in the so-called mature democracies, grew not only out of government reform, but also out of decades – in some cases centuries – of active engagement, mobilisation and demand. If one had simply applied an agenda of building more effective states to these settings, e.g. to build the capacity of states to uphold *existing* rather than *emergent* rights, then the state would simply have strengthened the status quo (in the case of the US, for instance, a democracy of white, male property owners). Alternatively,

forces from below pressing for more substantive and inclusive formulations – such as inclusion of women and minorities in democratic processes - would have been ignored.

To understand this emergent character of citizenship has important implications for development practice. First, it suggests that the success of new democratic experiments and assertions of citizenship seen in our work can only be measured in decades, not in the course of a few years. Struggles for inclusive forms of citizenship do not fit neatly with approaches to development that measure success through indicators of efficiency and performance, delivered within project or budget cycles. Neither will support for the deepening of rights and citizenship from below mesh easily with new aid approaches which focus on budget support, aid harmonisation and national ownership – almost by definition emergent demands against exclusions are not likely to be key budget priorities, nationally owned nor harmonious.

Rather, the work for the DRC points to the need for approaches that affirm the central role which demands for recognition, rights and citizenship can play in constructing more inclusive and robust forms of citizenship. These in turn contribute to deeper democracies and more inclusive states over time. In this approach, the emergence of non-state actors in non-state spheres need not always be seen as undermining effective states nor as contributing to insecurity. On the contrary, they can be seen as indicators of the emergence of new demands and aspirations which have the potential to contribute to creating stronger citizens, and in turn strengthening the relationship between citizens and state institutions. On the other hand, if such aspirations for rights and recognition continue to be discounted or dismissed in their neo-liberal, technical and residual constructions, than one suspects they will be expressed in less positive forms.

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