Enhancing Political Governance

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Outline

- Objectives of Presentation
- Widening Political Participation
    1. Representation of women and youth
    2. Making participation more powerful
    3. Encouraging civic engagement
- Enhancing Accountability
    1. What government can do
    2. What media and civil society can do
- Take Aways for Discussion

Objectives of Presentation

- Review research and experience on effective strategies to improve political governance in developing countries
- Focus on policies and interventions that are:
  - Practical
  - Have been rigorously evaluated
  - Promise a big development impact
- Put concrete ideas onto the table for discussion and potential adoption by the SLDTC

Widening Political Participation: A Voice for All

1. Representation of women and youth
2. Making participation more powerful
3. Encouraging civic engagement

Representation: What is the problem?

- Women and youth - underrepresented in Sierra Leonean politics
  - Women: 13% of Parliamentary and 19% of Local Council seats (below 30% target, further below their population share)
- Underrepresentation deprives women and youth of basic right to have a say in government
- Without a direct voice, policies most important to women and youth unlikely to be enacted

Representation: What works?

- Reservation System for Women
  - In 1992, India devolved power over expenditures to village councils (Beaman, Chattopadhyay, Duflo, Pande, Topalova (2004))
  - 1/3 village councils randomly chosen to be headed by women
  - Set of "reserved" seats changes for each election
- What happened?
  - **Policies changed:** Women leaders implemented policies favored by female constituents (i.e. water over roads)
  - **Perceptions changed**: After seeing women in action, citizens less biased against the ability of women as capable leaders
  - **Twice as many women got elected:** After reservation lifted more women ran for office and more women won

Participation: What is the problem?

- In Sierra Leone, voter turnout high but participation could be made more powerful
  - 2007/8 Election participation: 76% national, 39% local election
- Traditional ethnic group-political party ties remain strong
  - 2007/8 Elections: 86% voted for the party traditionally affiliated with their tribe in national and 75% in local elections
- Voters know more about Councilors than MPs
- This may prevent citizens from voting for most capable candidate –if don't know candidates, makes sense to vote on traditional lines
- Thus parties have less incentive to find the best candidates - can rely on ethnic loyalties to deliver the vote

Participation: What works?

- ## Giving Voters More Information
  - In India, Electoral Commission mandated all candidates disclose their educational qualifications, assets and liabilities, and past criminal charges. NGOs distributed information to voters (Banerjee, Kumar, Pande and Su (2010))
  - In Sierra Leone, voters have more information about Local Council candidates and less information about Parliamentary candidates (Casey (2010))

- ## What Happened?
  - In India, 3% increase in voter turnout, 20% **fewer cash bribes** for votes, 7% higher vote share for **better qualified candidates**
  - In Sierra Leone, citizens **vote across ethnic-party lines** 11% more often in Local Council elections compared to MP elections

Giving Voters More Information -Whats next in Sierra Leone?
- OGI plans to host presidential debates for 2012 elections
- Pilot project (IPA and Search for Common Ground) aims to host debates between MPs and potentially Local Councils candidates– results early 2013
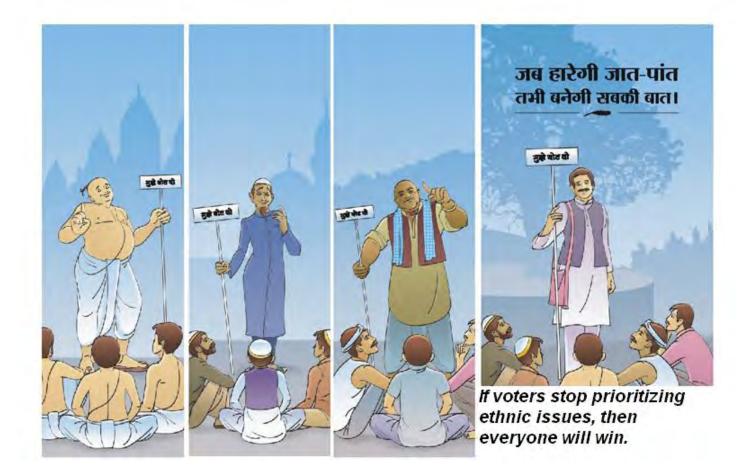
Civic Engagement: What is the problem?

- Information about government performance is limited
  - Information hard to access, rarely widely or effectively distributed
  - In India, 2010 survey among slum dwellers in Dehli found only 3%-5% aware of the services they were entitled to
- Even when available voters may not be willing to act
  - Sierra Leone Local Government Act requires Local Councils post meeting minutes and budget
  - National survey: fewer than 6% ever looked at Ward notice boards in Sierra Leone

Civic Engagement: What works?

- Encourage action, interactive and compelling dissemination
  - In Kenya, graphic pictures of accidents and posters telling passengers to "stand up, speak up, now!" motivated poda-poda riders to challenge reckless drivers (Habyarimana and Jack (2009))
  - In India, an NGO campaign of puppets and street theatre encouraging people to "vote for development, not caste" and another to "vote for clean politicians, not corrupt ones"(Banerjee, Green, Green and Pande (2010))
  - In Nigeria, "Say No to Election Violence" campaign with town meetings, informational flyers, community theater – encourage voting to remove poor performing politicians (Collier, Fafchamps, Vicente (2010))

- What happened?
  - In Kenya, **reduction in road accidents**
  - In India, raised turn-out and **reduced caste-based voting** by 5%
  - In Nigeria, suggests potential for reduction in violence

No Caste Voting Poster

Enhancing Accountability: Information is Power

1. What can government do?
2. What can media and civil society do?

Accountability: What Can Government Do?

1. ## Mandate Disclosure
   - Sierra Leone has not yet passed a Freedom of Information Act
   - 2/3 of countries have disclosure laws (Djankov et al (2010)) however
     - Disclosures publically available in less than 1/3 countries
     - Useful information truly publicly available less than 1/6 countries

2. ## Audit elected officials and public projects
   - In Brazil, the federal anti-corruption commission randomly audited mayors and released the reports. When reports were released before elections, citizens were more likely to **vote out corrupt mayors** and retain honest ones. (**Ferraz and Finan (May 2008)**)
   - In Indonesia, top-down audits of roads projects **reduced corruption** by 8.5% (Olken 2007)

What Can Government Do?   Audit Lottery

- Government anticorruption program and civil society/media dissemination
- Audits of municipal expenditures of federal funds
- Municipalities selected for audit via lottery (photo of public lottery)
- Local election while audit lottery ongoing
- Audit reports disseminated via mass media – some pre/some post election
- To measure impact of information on citizens behavior - compare reelection rates of mayors where audit conducted before election vs mayors not audited until after the election
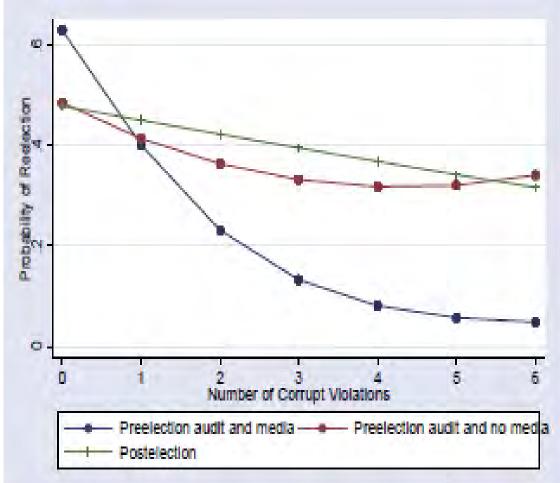

"I think the Brazilian society needs to understand once and for all, that we are only going to be able to truly fight corruption when the civil society, with the instruments made available, can act as a watch dog." President Lula da Silva

What Can Government Do? Audit Lottery

Results:

- Voters care and act

- Where radio stations and high levels of corruption uncovered - reelection rates dropped by 32 %

- The effect was stronger in municipalities with local radio stations

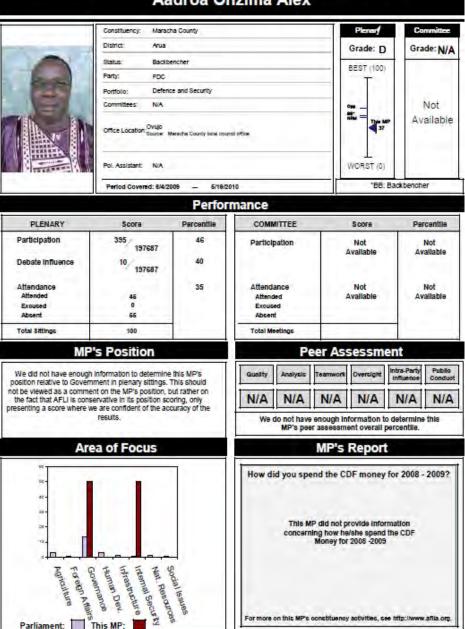# Accountability: What Can Civil Society Do?

1. Act as intermediary between government and people
    - Collect information from government, get it to the people
    - Use media and civil society distribution networks

2. Repackage information into user friendly format, make accessible both in content and format
    - Help people access and understand information
    - Mobilize people to act

3. Specifically, publicize performance of officials
    - In Uganda, newspapers published public expenditure tracking survey, **reduced leakage** of school grants by 44% (Reinikka and Svensson (2004))
    - Compile and publicize scorecards of incumbent performance
    - In Sierra Leone, a planned pilot project with IPA and CGG - give parties and voters more information on incumbents and challengers – results early 2013 (without Freedom of Information Act civil society has to collect information directly)

What Can Civil Society and Government Do Together? Score Card for MPs

- Uganda has Freedom of Info Act (2006) – MP information publically available
- Info still difficult to access, 80% rural and 30% illiterate
- Scorecard lays out info such as MP performance, attendance, votes, CDF spending, peer assessment
- Workshops held in select areas by civil society – explaining findings and content of scorecard
- Example of joint govt and civil society effort

(Humphreys and Weinstein (2010))

Take Aways for Discussion

- Widening Participation – A Voice for All
  - Instituting quotas for women and youth in Local Councils and Parliament starting in 2012
  - NEC collecting more information about candidates and allowing NGOs to distribute to voters
  - Other information dissemination interventions ie debates
  - Interactive interventions, facilitate civic engagement
- Enhancing Accountability – Information is Power
  - Passing Freedom of Information Act and other mandated disclosure laws
  - Auditing elected officials
  - Disseminating PETS and score cards before election