



Institute of
Development Studies

**Citizenship and Social
Justice: Realising the Rights
to Participation**

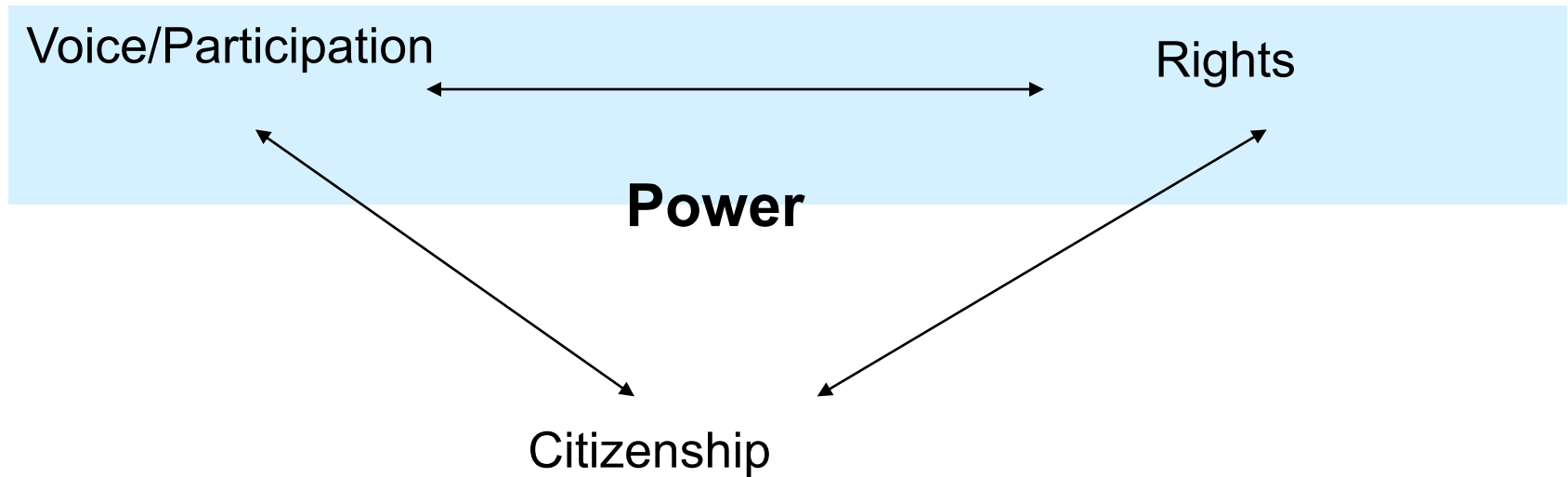
**John Gaventa
University of York
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In this presentation

- **What does it mean to link rights and participation in the struggle for social justice?**
- **How and under what conditions does citizen engagement contribute to social justice?**

***Drawing from work with the
Development Research Centre on
Citizenship, Participation and
Accountability***

The core concepts: Participation, Rights and Citizenship



Proposition: *Participatory, rights-bearing forms of citizenship will contribute to more responsive and accountable forms of governance, which in turn will be pro-social justice, but only we suggest if they confront power as well.*

Linking Citizenship, Rights and Participation

Citizenship and rights

These are seen as 'attained' through action, not only 'bestowed' by law – as actor based, and as practice based,

The right to participation

The right to claim existing rights, and to create new ones through participation.

Considers citizens as the 'makers and shapers' of rights and policies, not only beneficiaries

Participatory citizenship

Moves beyond passive engagement in elections to more active engagement in decision-making and democracy at every level

A Rights-Based Approach puts rights-bearing ‘citizens’ as actors at the heart

- **A neo-liberal market approach – focus on market mechanisms, with citizens as consumers and customers**
- **A state-based approach – focuses on state institutions, citizens as users and clients**
- **A ‘thin democracy’ approach – focuses on electoral processes, with citizens as voters**
- **A civil society (NGO) approach – citizens as beneficiaries of projects and programmes**

Reversing the Telescope: Seeing Like a Citizen

- **Sees citizens themselves as key social actors, rights bearers, and sources of knowledge about rights and social justice**
- **Asks how citizens perceive their rights and identities as actors and how they engage with the institutions that affect their lives.**
- **Taking this perspective gives us a very different view - in some cases the institutions being strengthened by external assistance are the very ones seen by citizens as most anti-justice**

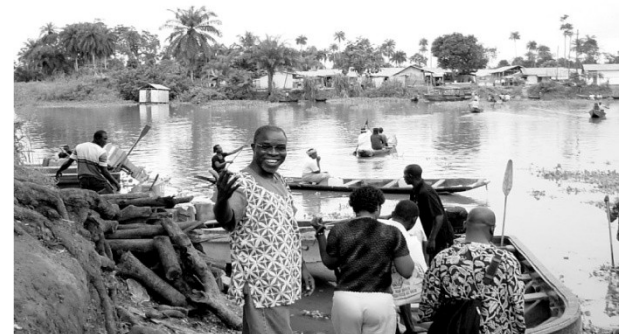
An emerging picture: Citizenship as...

- ✓ **A widespread sense of fairness, injustice and solidarity**
- ✓ **Multidimensional: Linked to recognition and identity, and around concrete issues**
- ✓ **Emergent and changing**

CLAIMING CITIZENSHIP
RIGHTS • PARTICIPATION • ACCOUNTABILITY

Inclusive Citizenship

MEANINGS & EXPRESSIONS



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Development Research Centre on Citizenship, Participation, and
Accountability



Rights and justice are mediated through power:

The Power Cube

LEVELS

Global

National

Local

SPACES

*Claimed
Invited
Closed*

Visible Hidden Invisible

Forms of POWER

‘Successful’ citizen engagement for claiming and creating rights (www.ids.ac.uk/go/citizens)

<u>Case Example</u>	<u>Positive Gains</u>
National Campaign for Land Reform – Philippines	Six million hectares of land (half of country’s farmland), redistributed to 3 million poor households
Treatment Action Campaign	Public recognition and debate’ 60,000 people benefiting from publicly supplied ARVs’
Right to Information Campaign – India	National Right to Information Bill passed in 2005, and in nine of 28 states – contributing to greater public accountability
Campaign to reduce Maternal Mortality – Mexico	Put issue on national agenda; contributed to major budget shift; changed ‘paradigm’ of delivery

‘Successful’ Cases – (continued)

<u><i>Case Example</i></u>	<u><i>Positive Gains</i></u>
Right to the City Campaign – Brazil	Established national framework for participation in urban planning
Child Rights and social policies – Chile	New framework, resources and social policies for children, leading to concrete improvements in child poverty
Re/forming the Penal Code for Women’s Rights- Turkey	New Turkish Penal Code with 35 amendments for women’s sexual rights
Campaign for Reform of the <i>Moudawana</i> - Morocco	Reform of Islamic family law affecting women’s rights

Key Factors of Success

- **The importance of democratic space**
- **Diverse, nationally grounded coalitions – not necessarily lead by INGOs**
- **Alliances across spaces - Civil society organisations rarely change policy by themselves**
- **Contentiousness action for contentious issues**

Measuring Sustainable Success

	Tangible	Intangible
National	Change of policy/legal system	New patterns of decision-making and participation
Intermediate	Better programme implementation	Greater government accountability and capability
Local	Material improvement in quality of life	Sense of citizenship and capabilities to claim rights

The 'deeper' the CSO campaign, the more sustainable the gain.

The Next Frontier?

Emerging Global Citizenship

- **Globalisation creates new landscapes of authority - multi layered and multi-polar**
- **In many cases – but not all – emerging sense of citizenship**
 - **Rights based demands on global authorities**
 - **Horizontal solidarities with others**
- **But is highly mediated by it, creating new forms of inclusion and exclusion**
- **What will global social justice, deeply linked to local realities, look like?**

Check out further work at IDS...

- Participation, Power and Social Change Team
 - www.ids.ac.uk/ids/Part/
- DRC on Citizenship, Participation and Accountability
 - www.drc-citizenship.org
- In Focus Policy Brief
 - www.ids.ac.uk/go/citizens
- Pathways of Women's Empowerment RPC
 - www.pathwaysofempowerment.org