

## Studying Local Representation

## **Responsive Forest Governance Initiative (RFGI) Research Programme**

The Responsive Forest Governance Initiative (RFGI) is a research and training program, focusing on environmental governance in Africa. It is jointly managed by the Council for the Development of Social Sciences Research in Africa (CODESRIA), the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) and the University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign (UIUC). It is funded by the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA). The RFGI activities are focused on 12 countries: Burkina Faso, Cameroon, DR Congo, Ghana, Kenya, Mozambique, Nigeria, Senegal, South Africa, South Sudan, Tanzania, and Uganda. The initiative is also training young, in-country policy researchers in order to build an Africa-wide network of environmental governance analysts.

Nations worldwide have introduced decentralization reforms aspiring to make local government responsive and accountable to the needs and aspirations of citizens so as to improve equity, service delivery and resource management. Natural resources, especially forests, play an important role in these decentralizations since they provide local governments and local people with needed revenue, wealth, and subsistence. Responsive local governments can provide forest resource-dependent populations the flexibility they need to manage, adapt to and remain resilient in their changing environment. RFGI aims to enhance and help institutionalize widespread responsive and accountable local governance processes that reduce vulnerability, enhance local wellbeing, and improve forest management with a special focus on developing safeguards and guidelines to ensure fair and equitable implementation of the Reduced Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD+) and climate-adaptation interventions.

REDD+ is a global Programme for disbursing funds, primarily to pay national governments of developing countries, to reduce forest carbon emission. REDD+ will require permanent local institutions that can integrate local needs with national and international objectives. The results from RFGI Africa research will be compared with results from collaborators in Asia and South America in order to enhance RFGI comparative scope, and to broaden its geographic policy relevance.

**RFGI Working Paper No. 4**

**Responsive Forest Governance Initiative (RFGI)**  
Supporting Resilient Forest Livelihoods  
through Local Representation

**Studying Local Representation**  
A Critical Review

**Prakash Kashwan**



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CODESRIA publishes *Africa Development*, the longest standing Africa based social science journal; *Afrika Zamani*, a journal of history; the *African Sociological Review*; the *African Journal of International Affairs*; *Africa Review of Books* and the *Journal of Higher Education in Africa*. The Council also co-publishes the *Africa Media Review*; *Identity, Culture and Politics: An Afro-Asian Dialogue*; *The African Anthropologist* and the *Afro-Arab Selections for Social Sciences*. The results of its research and other activities are also disseminated through its Working Paper Series, Green Book Series, Monograph Series, Book Series, Policy Briefs and the CODESRIA Bulletin. Select CODESRIA publications are also accessible online at [www.codesria.org](http://www.codesria.org).

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## About the Author

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# Preface

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James Murombedzi, Jesse Ribot  
and Gretchen Walters

Struggles for control over and access to nature and natural resources; struggles over land, forests, pastures and fisheries, are struggles for survival, self determination, and meaning. Natural resources are central to rural lives and livelihoods: they provide the material resources for survival, security, and freedom. To engage in the world requires assets that enable individuals, households, and communities to act in and on the world around them. The ability to accumulate assets and the ability to access government and market services depends partly on such resources along with the political-economic infrastructure – rights, recourse, representation, markets, and social services – that are the domain of government. Democracy, which both enables and requires the freedom to act, is predicated on these assets and infrastructures. Since the 1980s, African governments have been implementing local government decentralization reforms aimed at making local government more democratic by making them responsive and accountable to citizen needs and aspirations; in many places this has been done through a decentralisation of natural resource governance to local administrations. In order to be responsive to individual, household and community demands, local governments, too, need resources and decision-making powers. There must be a public domain – a set of public resources, such as forests or fisheries, which constitute this domain of democracy, the domain of decisions and services that citizens can demand of government. Natural resources, when decentralized into the domain of local authority, form an important part of the resources of individuals, households, communities and governments, making possible this move toward local democracy.

Natural resources provide local governments and people with wealth and subsistence. While nature is not the only source of rural income, the decentralization of natural resources governance is a core component of local government reform. However, governance reforms have been implemented in a context broadly characterized by an enduring crisis of the Western economic and financial systems, which in turn has stimulated privatization and liberalization in every sphere of life, including nature. The process has deprived local governments of public resources – depriving individuals and communities of a reason to engage, as a powerless government is not worth trying to influence. Privatization is depriving forest-dependent peoples of their access to formerly ‘public’ or traditionally managed resources. National governments, as well as international bodies such as the United Nations programme, titled the Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and forest Degradation (REDD), further this trend as they collaborate with private interests to promote the privatization of natural resources. The resulting enclosures threaten the wellbeing of resource-dependent populations and the viability of democratic reforms.

The specter of climate change is deepening the crisis of enclosure. A key response to climate change has been the attempt to mitigate greenhouse gas emissions through enhancing the capacity of forests in the developing world to store carbon, ostensibly for the benefit of the atmosphere as well as the communities who use these forests. UN REDD seeks to pay communities, through their national governments, to conserve their forests as carbon storage. A plus ‘+’ was added to REDD, forming REDD +, to call for improved ecosystems services, forest management, conservation, forest restoration and afforestation to enhance the capacity for carbon storage. Designed on the basis of similar payments for environmental services (PES) schemes, REDD+ has the potential to inject vast new sums of money into local resource use and governance. In the context of fragile local governments, nascent democracies and powerful private interests, such cash inflows result in the commercialization and privatization of forests and natural resources and the dispossession of local resource users. This financialization of natural resources grossly diminishes the scope for democratic natural resource governance schemes. To be sure, the implementation of REDD+ can also learn from and avoid the pitfalls experienced in these PES schemes, especially if they represent local interests in natural resource governance decision making.

The Responsive Forest Governance Initiative (RFGI) is an Africa-wide environmental-governance research and training program focusing on enabling responsive and accountable decentralization to strengthen the representation of forest-based rural people in local-government decision making. Since January 2012, the programme has carried out 33 case studies in 12 African countries, with comparative cases Nepal and Peru, to assess the conditions under which central authorities devolve forest management and use decisions to local government, and the conditions that enable local government to engage in sound, equitable and pro-poor forest management. Aimed at enabling local government to play an integrative role in rural development and natural resource management, these case studies are now being finalized and published to elicit public discourse and debate on local government and local democracy. This Working Paper series will publish the RFGI case studies as well as other comparative studies of decentralized natural resources governance in Africa and elsewhere that focus on the intersection between local democracy and natural resource management schemes. Using the concepts of institutional choice and recognition, the cases deal with a comprehensive range of issues in decentralized forest management in the context of REDD+, including the institutional choices of intervening agencies; the effects of such choices on accountability and representation; and the relationships between local government and other local institutions. The series will also include syntheses discussing the main findings of the RFGI research programme.

Based at CODESRIA, and funded by the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA), the RFGI is a three year collaborative initiative of CODESRIA, the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (UIUC) and the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN). RFGI working papers and documents, including the background papers, the RFGI programme description, and the RFGI Methods Handbook, can be found online at <http://www.codesria.org/spip.php>, IUCN [http://www.iucn.org/fr/propos/union/secretariat/bureaux/paco/programmes/paco\\_forest/thematiques\\_et\\_projets/gouvernance\\_and\\_iucn\\_tools/projets\\_en\\_cours/\\_programme\\_de\\_recherche\\_initiative\\_pour\\_la\\_gouvernance\\_democratique\\_des\\_forets/](http://www.iucn.org/fr/propos/union/secretariat/bureaux/paco/programmes/paco_forest/thematiques_et_projets/gouvernance_and_iucn_tools/projets_en_cours/_programme_de_recherche_initiative_pour_la_gouvernance_democratique_des_forets/) and UIUC <http://sdep.beckman.illinois.edu/programs/democracyenvironment.aspx#RFGI>



## Foreword

This review evolved into a broad-ranging dialogue on questions of representation and accountability, so much so that it no longer is a 'review' in the technical sense of the phrase. Even though the terms of reference mentioned institutional choice and recognition as a point of departure, the political science literature founded by Przeworski *et al.* (2009) was also similarly at the centre of initial discussion that I had with the RFGI core team. This provided a very productive avenue for exploring the questions of representation and accountability in the context of forest governance. While very little of the discussion in the following pages pertains specifically to 'forests', it is structured entirely around the core socio-political features of the forested regionsworld over (see, Brechin *et al.* 2002): power asymmetries, landlessness and land tenure conflicts, high levels of poverty and marginalization, and last, but perhaps most important, disarticulated political systems that are a far cry from Schumpeterian notions of competitive democracy. It is important to consider these characteristics in the context of the UNFCCC negotiations, not for the sake of normative consideration, but for scrutinizing the robustness of the policies and programs being proposed. Such a comprehensive view of the context of 'forest governance' informs this document.

I did not attempt a full review of the extensive political science literature that is based on a core idea: elections are the principal means of accountability in democracy. Viewed from the forested landscapes, the aspiration of making elections as an effective tool of accountability is closer to being a normative statement, i.e. something that we aspire to achieve. However, the premises underlying the assumption of election being the central tool of accountability, and the entire body of literature founded on this statement are not adequately informed of the questions and concerns that are of relevance to citizens living in and around forested regions. Such sensitivity to the context means that producing an extensive review of the literature that has been written with theoretical assumptions that are generally not met in the African and other developing country contexts,

would not serve the purpose. Two, within the literature that does account for the context specificity, much of it is focused on sectoral policy outcomes, which is not the central focus of RFGI. RFGI seeks to explore the effects on democracy of institutional *choices* that policymakers make.

With such consideration, the reviewer has employed a strategy of selective engagement with a number of different bodies of literature on electoral accountability, post-colonialism, democratization, forest governance, and decentralization. The task of putting these elements together gives this review the feeling of an argument. However, each of the different elements that go into this narrative is backed by scholarly work of the stalwarts in the field, and hence should be seen as part of an eclectic review. Such a brisk walk through a number of different literatures is meant to provoke researchers to explore the possibilities of raising a variety of questions that may be relevant to their cases. At the same time, the review has also sought to emphasize the core theoretical and analytical focus so that individual researchers and research teams are able to link their different projects to a broader analysis of representation and accountability.

Finally, prior to getting into this review the reviewer had precious little exposure to the African context. This was compensated for by situating the review at the level of fundamental theoretical constructs such as citizenship, power, public domain, and democracy. Fortunately, the RFGI research proposal has a very similar focus. The suggestions made in the review are not meant as blueprints. Instead, the idea is to put forth elements that the RFGI researchers may use selectively by adapting to the context of their research.

**Prakash Kashwan**



# Introduction

This literature review on the empirical study of local representation is divided into three parts. Part I reviews the theoretical and conceptual literature on accountability and representation looking for elements of literature that can inform the Responsive Forest Governance Initiative (RFGI), a research program of CODESRIA, IUCN and The University of Illinois. This theoretical and conceptual discussion in Part I is eclectic, with the intent to raise questions about a range of perspectives. The conclusion of this first section brings these observations into dialogue with multiple aspects of RFGI's core research agenda. Researchers applying the RFGI framework (Ribot, Chhatre and Lankina 2008; Ribot 2011) will benefit from a critical engagement with this part of the review.

Part II takes the form of a traditional review document. It cites and summarizes the key studies that have sought to measure and analyse aspects directly related to representation and accountability. Much of this literature relates to the themes of democratization and decentralization in the developing countries. This part also refers to literature on forest governance.

Part III identifies questions and tools that help illustrate how the theoretical framework that informs RFGI could be organized into manageable subcomponents of research. Each subcomponent may be more relevant to some country studies than to others. Similarly, this part also lays out specific questions that may be asked in the field to get a grip over the theoretical arguments laid out in Part I above. This section is supported by an Appendix that includes some of the key survey instruments that have been used by other research projects and researchers for research that looked into questions similar to those explored under RFGI.



# Review of Theoretical and Conceptual Issues in Representation and Accountability

## **Accountability: Formal/Institutionalist Perspectives**

What does it mean for a government or an authority to be representative? Obviously, when democratic governments rule according to what ‘people/citizens’ desire they can be said to be representative. However, citizens’ expressed desires are shaped by the environment within which they live. In those cases, desires cannot be taken to be the benchmark against which actions of representative governments can be judged. Hence, Przeworski (1999:2 citing Pitkin 1967) defines representation more broadly as ‘acting in the best interest of the public’. The use of the phrase ‘interest of the public’ begs a simple but critical question: Who constitutes as ‘the public’? And, who decides what is in the interest of ‘the public’: the leader, the scholar, or the activists? An obvious way out of this tussle would be to let citizens decide for themselves. And, the argument goes, in a democracy, citizens communicate their interests through the ballot box, which is a means by which citizens can hold their leaders to account, i.e. they can reward representatives who the citizens see as working in their interest, and punish others who have failed in their role as representatives. And, since elected representatives fear being punished at the ballot box, at the least, they want to be *seen* by the voting public to be acting in public interests. Accordingly, the fear of reprisal may force elected representatives to act in the interest of

their constituents. This is the logic that Przeworski *et al.* (1999) follow in arguing that election foster 'accountability', which in turn helps achieve representation.

Before moving on with the framework, it is important to reflect a bit on the previous paragraph. It articulates the gist of the accountability framework that is still the gold standard for most of the scholarly literature on representation (see Mansbridge 2003). Clearly, anyone familiar with politics in most of the world (to paraphrase Chatterjee 2004) would realize that there are numerous gaps in the chain of accountability argued above. One of those big holes pertains to elections, which in most of the world, are not necessarily about citizens approving or disapproving actions of, or the policy proposals put forward by the candidates and their parties. *Effective* representation and accountability could be achieved only by plugging those gaps within the democratic processes. How that might be achieved has been debated and explained at length in the literature on decentralization. Ribot (2004, appendix) lists numerous *accountability mechanisms beyond* the electoral mechanisms underlying Przeworski *et al.*'s (1999) approach (also see Agrawal and Ribot 2012).

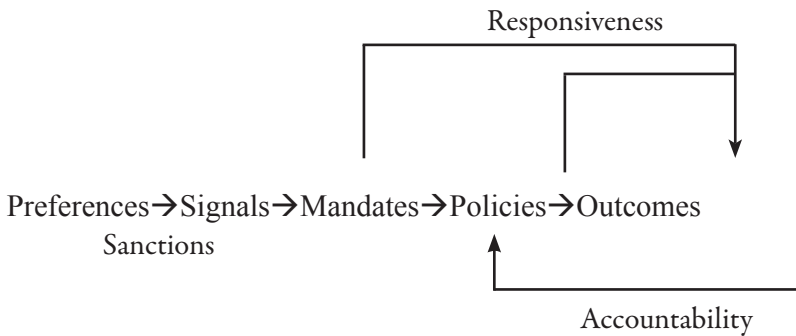
More generally, Przeworski *et al.*'s (1999) accountability framework is built on a formal/institutionalist view of democracy emphasizing parliaments, presidential offices, and citizens' actions, including their electoral choices, directed to these institutions. Contrast this with Dewey's (1925) views on democracy:

Democracy is much broader than a special political form, a method of conducting government, of making laws and carrying on governmental administration by means of popular suffrage and elected officers.... The key-note of democracy as a way of life may be expressed, it seems to me, as the necessity for the participation of every mature human being in formation of the values that regulate the living of men together: which is necessary from the standpoint of both the general social welfare and the full development of human beings as individuals.

The quote above is not meant to transport readers into a philosophical discourse, but to point to the empirical territory over which democracy and its various elements are founded. Dewey forcefully advocated for an appreciation of the role that social and economic institutions and organizations played in shaping individuals, their dispositions, and the effect that such dispositions had on de-

mocracy. This has important implications for the manner in which relations of accountability are conceptualized and formalized for the purpose of conducting formal research on these topics. This review seeks to bring in these inputs to serve the immediate objectives of research being conducted under the RFGI program. Having said this, the framework proposed by Przeworski *et al.* (1999) might serve as a very useful heuristic device. Important elements of their framework are outlined below.

**Figure 1:** Representation process (Przeworski *et al.* 1999)



As suggested above, Przeworski *et al.*'s approach to representation relies on voters' ability to sanction elected representatives through the ballot box. The definition of 'mandate' is premised on a clearly defined idea of programmatic parties (such as the democratic and republican parties in the U.S.A.). When citizens' votes are not based on such clearly identifiable programmatic parties or programmatic candidates, mandate responsiveness cannot be operationalized. At the same time, if enactment of policies and programs is beyond the power of individual representatives, a representative's tangible support for programs and policies (articulated through crucial votes etc.) may indicate representativeness even if such policies/programs do not actually materialize. This is possible, again, in the context of the United States of America (and, perhaps, other industrial democracies) where elected leaders can vote independent of party whips, and a record of each vote is available for public scrutiny. Failing this, measuring mandate responsiveness of particular leaders can be a Herculean task. The most important lacuna in relying on a measure of mandate responsiveness is that even the

best of measures is likely to misread the preferences of citizens who might have voted for a mandate different than the one supported by an electoral majority. Considering the tenuous links between individual citizens' policy preferences and mandate responsiveness, it seems worthwhile to measure responsiveness, i.e. the correspondence between voter preferences and public policies and programs supported by their representatives. This is particularly important for non-western countries in which data requirements for measuring 'mandate responsiveness' is rarely met. Obviously, a *direct* correspondence between 'preferences' and 'policies' can be made only if citizens are asked to articulate their preferences through surveys, and if they believed their preferences were reflected in programs and policies supported by a representative or a government.

The difference between responsiveness and mandate responsiveness is a profound one though, and goes to the heart of electoral democracy: do elections provide the best means of representing interests of different groups of citizens, in particular the marginalized forest-dependent groups at the heart of RFGI? Dunn (1999:335) suggests that attempts at enforcing accountability through 'well-calibrated instrumental sanctions' have led to 'prudent institutional design'. However, Dunn goes on to argue that the institutional design approach is 'an astonishingly optimistic way of envisaging political relations'. These observations bring us back to the literature in democratization, in particular three key threads. One, a focus on agency of voters between the elections; two, the meso-level socio-political and economic drivers of democratization (à la Dewey); and three, the need to scrutinize the important role that national and international actors play outside of the constituent-representative relationships. The third component is particularly important in the context of forest governance. The following section reviews the literature on the entire array of actors and power they exercise to shape accountability and representation.

### **Institutional Choice: When Central Actors Dictate Decentralization**

Interestingly, the recent surge of support for strengthening elected institutions is based on a critical scrutiny of decentralization where citizens were supposed to exercise autonomous decision-making powers (cf. Conyers 1983; Heller 2001). Yet, in many cases, the decision to decentralize and the nature of decentraliza-

tion are often preordained by donor agencies wielding influence over national governments (Lele 2000), without a demand from actively mobilized citizens (Agrawal and Ostrom 2001). While these are important findings, at times they have led scholars to portray national governments as helpless and ignorant actors implementing decentralization policies and programs 'dictated' by donors and other international actors. Responding to this Ascher (2000) asks an important question: "why do national governments waste resources"? With the help of case studies representing a number of developing countries, Ascher (2000) demonstrates how governments and policy elites often employ resource 'management' and 'conservation' policies and programs merely as alibi for achieving political and economic interests that may have little to do with the goals of resource management (see also Sundar 2001; Bates 1981).

Accordingly, instead of taking decentralization policies as given, and analysing their local effects, scholars have argued for a scrutiny of the policy choices made by policy elites. Agrawal and Ribot (1999) argue for a focus on 'Actors, Powers, and Accountability', but their primary focus is on understanding the conditions that foster successful decentralization. The scholars of institutional choice and recognition have focused on the policy choices that powerful actors make, and the need to hold these actors to account (Ribot *et al.* 2008; Ribot 2011; Poteete and Ribot 2011). The parameters of 'success' in this framework are not necessarily the policy and programmatic outcomes, but the manner in which policymaking processes are representative and foster accountability of decision-makers. The core tenets of the framework are summarized below.

Institutional choices by national leaders – choosing from among a variety of local actors vying for decision-making powers in the arena of local governance – lead to recognition of the local actors vested with resources and decision making powers. Recognition of local actors, institutions, and authorities through 'transfers of powers, partnering in projects... contracts or via participation in dialogue and decision-making...strengthens the chosen authorities and organizations with resources and backing... [and shapes] representation, citizenship and public domain' (Ribot *et al.* 2008:5).

The choice and recognition scholars emphasize, in the main, the role of high-level policy elites in shaping local political dynamics through institutional *choices* they make, i.e. which local actors, authorities, and institutions they recognize; the impact of these choices in terms of the investment of resources and

decision-making powers among a competing array of actors and authority; and, the impact choice and recognition has on representation, citizenship, and the public domain. Actions of powerful actors that lead to important resources and powers being transferred to non-elected local committees have three kinds of effects. One, the transfer of resources and power enhances the power of non-elected organizations/committees can delegitimize elected authorities. Two, all else remaining equal, the leaders and actors in control of the non-elected bodies are likely to be less accountable compared to those elected, in which case citizens are less able to punish non-performing leaders. Three, by creating disincentives for citizens to engage with locally elected authorities, powerful actors indirectly contribute to a local democratic vacuum. Depriving locally elected bodies of the power and resources has the effect of making local democracy irrelevant, which in turn deprives citizens of the experiences that would otherwise serve as a laboratory for democracy (see Grindle 2007 cited in Ribot 2011, endnote 3).

### **Recognition and Representation**

Above, we discussed the choice part of Institutional Choice and Recognition (ICR) framework. The second important part of the ICR framework links the institutional choices that powerful actors make to the effects those choices produce. The full sequence of analytical and policy linkages proposed by ICR is presented in the schematic diagram below (Figure 2). Keeping up with a focus on democracy, the ICR framework conceptualizes the effects of institutional choice in terms of representation, citizenship and public domain. It is helpful to briefly define some of the key concepts. Ribot (2011) offers the following definition:

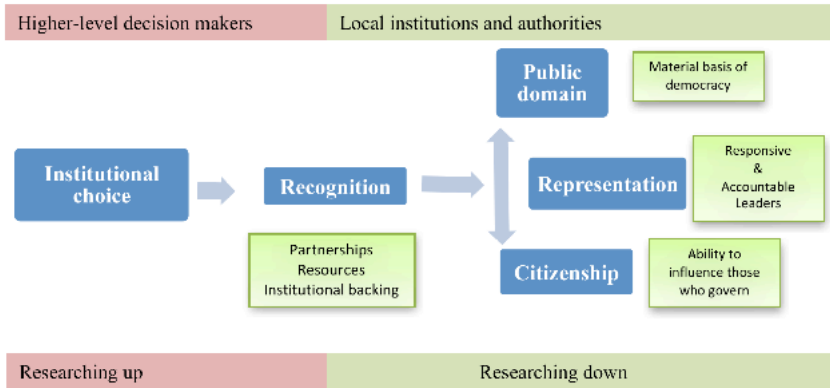
**Representation** : correspondence between citizens' interests and the policies so that 'leaders are both responsive and accountable to the people';

**Citizenship** : the right and ability of people to shape the politics that govern them;

**Public domain** : 'the material resources and decisions under public control', and the 'space of integrative collective action that constitutes democracy' (Ribot 2011:11).



Figure 2 : Institutional Choice and Recognition Framework



As Figure 2 illustrates, public domain, citizenship, and representation are closely related to each other in complex ways. The presence of a meaningful public domain is critical to democratic representation. However, such citizens may not choose to engage if for historical or sociological reasons, the idea of citizenship itself is yet to find wide-based acceptance within a society. After all, subjects cannot hold their masters to account. On the other hand, citizen engagement with public authorities is unlikely to last long if the authorities are not responsive and accountable to citizens. In other words, democratic representation also contributes to effective realization of citizen rights, and legitimacy of democracy as a system of governance (Fails and Pierce 2010).

Such a complex and multipronged relationship among these three key concepts has significant implications for measuring representation, an issue that will be explored in the subsequent sections. Moreover, as the literature on democracy and political economy suggests, the extent to which institutional choices shape citizenship, public domain, and representation, depends on the socio-political and economic context (Ribot *et al.* 2008; Chhatre 2008), as well as historical processes such as colonialism (Mamdani 1996). The following section briefly discusses this literature on local democracy and political economy to prepare the ground for a comprehensive discussion of how different elements of ICR might be related to specific socio-political contexts.

## Democracy in the Midst of Inequalities and Power Asymmetries

The debate that the ICR framework speaks to relates centrally to the foundations of democracy. Substantive meanings of democracy have been debated among the classical thinkers (Dewey 1925), and the debate continues (Beckman 1989; Bryan 2003; Diamond and Morlino 2004; Dryzek 2005; Mutz 2008). In representative democracy, elected representatives rule on behalf of the *demos*, i.e. 'the people'. The formal view of representative democracy is articulated by Kateb (1981:357):

In representative democracy the source of laws and public policies is a collection of office holders who have attained office by winning contested elections. The contested elections, by their very nature, provide some general guidance to the winners concerning public opinion and preferences on laws and public policies that have been and are to be made. The offices are specified by a constitution originally ratified by the people and subject always to their amendment, or by a basic common understanding. Thus, the fundamental institution of representative democracy is the electoral system.

There is a great value in basing theories and formal models of democracy on the foundational tenets of formal democracy. However, by its very definition, *empirical* research should be structured to study 'actually existing democracies' (Arendt 1959; Fraser 1990; for a discussion of the failure of the rational choice paradigm to contribute to empirical research, see Green and Shapiro 1994). These democracies are characterized by a great deal of socio-economic inequities, which affect citizens' ability to participate in the institutions of democracy and their ability to hold the leaders to account. The majority of the population in most of the world is not in a position to act as political principals (who hire agents to do their political bidding, as the principal-agent models of democracy presume). Accordingly, the gains from the allocation of the resources via the institutions of democracy are distributed unequally, which, in turn, reinforces historical inequities (see Olsen 1965; March and Olsen 1995).

Moe (2005) argues that for a more robust theoretical understanding of politics (and by implication, democracy), scholars should bring questions of power to the centre stage (see also Dahl 2005). Other scholars too have emphasized the

understanding of how power plays shape politics and democracy. Heller (2001) argues that to govern is to exercise power. Others have conceptualized representation as an 'institutional technique by which power is structured in a political society' (Pollak 2007:94 citing Schwartz 1988).<sup>1</sup> By implication, instead of taking the virtues of representative democracy for granted, one has to go with the converse assumption – self-interested elected representatives are likely to abuse power whenever it is possible to do that (Tullock *et al.* 2002).<sup>2</sup> Clearly, an investigation into the form and content of institutional arrangements necessary for securing an effective representative democracy entails a full and proper understanding of the barriers against achieving the ideals of representative democracy.

Dunn (1999) characterizes the challenges of democracy mainly into two types of socio-political hazards: vertical and horizontal hazards. Vertical hazards are the risks that elected leaders and governments pose to citizens' freedoms. An example would be governments banning associational activities on the pretext that such associations might threaten internal security.

Horizontal hazards are the barriers that citizens put up against fellow citizens' active participation in democracy. Examples of these hazards would be an instance in which caste hierarchies render members of so-called lower caste groups from raising their voices against corruption. Clearly, the presence of effective public authority and institutions could check horizontal hazards, a type that is particularly salient in hierarchical societies of particular concern to this review (Bardhan 2002). Yet, an attempt to counter horizontal hazards by giving significant powers to public authorities might increase the prospects of vertical hazards.

Usually scholars emphasize either of these two kinds of hazards, i.e. by advocating for a very strong state that plays protector against local inequities (typically in the developing countries), or by advocating for limiting the powers vested in the state to minimize vertical hazards in the form of the state intruding into citizens' freedoms (typically in the western liberal democracies).<sup>3</sup> Diverging from this trend, Dunn (1999) argues that the *principal* threat to accountability inheres from the transposition of horizontal threat onto vertical hazard, and not from vertical hazard *per se* (Dunn 1999:333). In other words, abuse of public office is more likely to be rooted insocial relations that lead to horizontal hazards. A suitable example would be a strongman getting elected to local government and then using his offices to punish those who had been against him in the past. A slightly

more detailed discussion in the following of an example from the literature illustrates the point even better.

The Indian state of Kerala has received accolades for its progressive human development policies that worked for a large majority of its population (Dreze and Sen 2002; Heller 2009). Yet the Kerala success story, led jointly by a leftist civil society and the ruling left parties, almost entirely bypassed the indigenous populations within the state (Damodaran 2006). This failure eventually contributed to a bloody conflict between a politically mobilized indigenous group of Adivasis and the state officials in forest and police departments (Bijoy and Raman 2003). Damodaran (2006) shows these conflicts were a consequence of the failure of left parties to address questions of indigenous land rights in Kerala. Instead of initiating forestland reforms relevant to these groups, the left-led government in Kerala sought to promote development among the 'backward' indigenous groups by setting up large tea plantations in lands that the local people used for subsistence. While the tea plantations and processing plants failed because of bureaucratic inefficiencies, and were eventually shut down, a variety of public agencies had permanently gained control over the plantation land (Damodaran 2006). In other words, the local people lost control over the land without gaining in any significant way. The root cause of this outcome can be attributed to the highly unequal political relations between the communist parties and the historically marginalized indigenous groups (Hardiman 2000).

What implications do these insights have for our present discussion on representation and accountability? For one, while formal institutional mechanisms are necessary, institutions alone are not sufficient to achieve democratic representation (see Heller 2000, 2001). Prevalence of high rates of corruptions and frequent abuses of power in apparently democratic countries such as India all point to the significant gap between necessary and sufficient conditions.<sup>4</sup> Moreover, the prospect of transposition of horizontal hazards on to vertical hazards (such as the politics of social difference between the indigenous groups and the communist elite in Kerala transformed into a vertical hazard of government taking over indigenous lands) need to be analyzed carefully. In the following section, the literature on local democracy is discussed with reference to the three key elements of focus within RFGI: *citizenship, public domain, and representation* mediated by a multitude of authority relations.

## **State Society Interface and the Foundations of Local Democracy**

A recap of the broad themes from the literature reviewed thus far is in place. The electoral theories of representation and accountability, founded on the assumptions of Schumpeterian notions of competitive democracy, presume that the basic building blocks of democracy are in place and work more or less as predicted in theory (see Schumpeter 1943). For example, it is assumed that the political parties and the candidates they put forth contest elections based on a clearly distinguishable programmatic agenda. These theories also assume that citizens' articulate their preferences exclusively through votes, as expression of both future mandate and a sanction for past performances (see Przeworski *et al.* 1999). However, past research shows that these assumptions are too demanding for the context of local governments in the developing countries (Agrawal and Ribot 1999; Grindle 2007; Ribot *et al.* 2008; Brockington 2008; Chandhoke 2009).

Politics in most of the world engenders a struggle for control over the state's resources (Chatterjee 2004). The gains that actors achieve in these struggles is shaped by their ability to negotiate development pathways dotted with multiple authorities; public officials, influential local and regional leaders with a strong social standing, and market players with significant advantages over smallholders and subsistence producers, to name a few.<sup>5</sup> This section touches upon the literature that integrates historical and political economic analysis with questions of representation and accountability. The robustness of citizens' rights, i.e. the extent to which citizens can claim, without discrimination or without having to rely on particularistic linkages, their entitlements is fundamental to these notions of democracy (Heller 2009 citing Dagnino 1998).

### Citizenship: Countering entrenched inequalities and barriers

Citizenship pertains to the right and ability of people to participate in shaping the policies that govern them. Marshall (cited in Kymlicka and Norman 1994) proposed three key categories of rights as part of citizenship: civil rights, political rights and, social rights (public education, health care, unemployment benefits). For a long time, political rights such as the right to vote were restricted to males within the propertied classes in Europe and North America; access to temples

and even the community wells was restricted to higher castes in India, and so forth (Beteille 1999).

Failures of representative democracy at advancing the cause of marginalized groups have prompted scholars and activists to advance a 'rights agenda' (Korpi 1989; Nickel 2005). For instance, Hickey and Bracking (2005) suggest relocating the politics of chronic poverty from the domain of representation to a 'project of justice'. Rights, particularly those related to subsistence resources such as forest and land, are a critical medium between citizens and public authorities (Newell and Wheeler 2006; Nickel 2005). However, the rights advocates may have focused a little too much on the *lack* of rights while being ineffective to the effects that exclusion produces.

As Mamdani (1996) argues, the patterns of incorporation into colonial and post-colonial forms of socio-political and economic control significantly shape the manner in which different groups, including the marginalized, conceive citizenship and citizens' rights. For instance, while the activists and researchers often talk about valiant struggles waged by historically marginalized groups, their struggles are often framed in the very terms of exclusion that they are supposed to be fighting against (Liers 1999 citing Mamdani). Kashwan (2011a) documents the case of forestland right holders, many of who have internalized the discourses of criminality of forest use promoted by forest departments. In other words, not only the entitlements of historically marginalized groups, particularly land and forest rights, are considered to be illegitimate and illegal by administrators (Larson 2010), the ability of the members within marginalized groups to fight for their rights is also compromised by internalization of such discourses (Kashwan 2011a). Such desecration of the idea of citizenship has major consequences for the demand for citizenship and democracy, a question as important as that pertaining to the supply of institutions.

Given a history of marginalization and illegality surrounding the subsistence rights, the majority of citizens do not believe they have a 'legitimate footing from which to demand accountability (notwithstanding the)...new democratic openings' (Dauda 2006:26). Disenfranchised citizens, uncertain of their entitlements, are hardly in a position to hold public authorities to account (Ribot 1999; Agarwal 2003; Campese *et al.* 2009). On the contrary, citizens believe they must bribe local bureaucrats, and ensure a favourable reputation with the local strongman or customary chiefs. In other cases, constituents may have genuine respect

for their customs and customary chiefs (Peters 1994; Walters 2010). Wilshusen (2003, endnote2) uses the term 'structural-cultural' to incorporate the material and symbolic-expressive aspects of the authority relations as perceived by citizens. A path towards realization of citizenship must address these entrenched effects of marginality, which entangle in complex ways with cultural sanctity attached to the institutions of customary authorities.

Even so, rights for the marginalized groups may help create a level playing field. Societies where the idea of right-bearing citizens who are regarded as 'equals' is not well entrenched need *de jure* rights as a foundation for the struggle towards equality. Therefore, citizens' rights should be regarded as an important step in challenging the *status quo* of power asymmetries within a society (Joshi 2010). An important element in these struggles for equality and empowerment of historically marginalized sections, one that is often ignored, is the presence of a strong public domain, which is the topic of discussion in the following subsection.

### Public domain

Public domain – powers vested in publicly accountable authorities (Ribot 2011) – is important for the simple reason that without 'public domain' there is little reason – no stakes – for citizens to engage with the state or the policymaking processes led by it. The propositions for strengthening the public domain are reflected in the increasingly visible concerns about the thinning of the state. Simultaneously, important spheres of public policies such as conservation are being redirected into the sphere of commodification and privatization, prompting scholars to warn against the dangers of neoliberal conservation (Brockington and Igoe 2007; Brockington and Duffy 2010). Withdrawal of the state and yielding of the space of governance to private actors not directly accountable to citizens raises new questions about meanings of accountability (Haque 1998, 2000).

That notwithstanding, others have sought to caution us against shifting our focus from 'the state' to the 'neoliberal state'. Randeria (2003) uses the term 'cunning state' to signify the ability of the state, and powerful actors dominating the state apparatus to employ neoliberalism in the service of patrimonialism. The contributors to Gupta and Sivaramakrishnan (2011) argue for going beyond a focus on economic sphere, to carefully analyse the relationships, new and old, that neoliberalism supports. The resilience of the state, and the ability of power-

ful actors to improvise in the face of changes imposed from above, can be understood from a similar history of ‘policy changes’ introduced under decentralization (for a ‘positive’ analysis, see Kiser and Sacks 2011). For the political elites, decentralization offers a way of ‘penetration by state agencies of control in countryside, and [distribution of] autonomy ... to local powerbrokers’ (Crook and Sverrisson 1999:4, citing Boone 1998). Under these conditions, the local public domain is likely to become a site dominated by neo-elites within rural societies. Such outcomes are all the more likely in cases where local electoral processes are orchestrated through party machines that work to facilitate the transaction of votes in anticipation of particularistic benefits following the elections (Bailey 1963). As Murombedzi (2012: 3, emphasis mine) argues, the struggle for control over state resources is enacted most of the time ‘*outside* the bounds of formal institutions, revolving around kinship ties and relationships based on personal and communal patronage’.

Given the neo-patrimonial nature of states in Africa and elsewhere (Englebert 2000; Boone 2003), observers of African polity have urged for a greater attention to the context of complex interplay of formal and informal institutions and processes (Murombedzi 2012). In other words, while devolving authority and resources to locally elected authorities is the first critical step, the extent to which such devolution translates into effective representation of people depends on how multiple authorities intervene in the process (see also Beck 2001). More important, it depends greatly on how citizens, individually or as socially and politically mobilized groups, negotiate their way through the labyrinth of authority structures. It is perhaps this interplay between the operation of multiple authority structures and citizens’ efforts at raising their own demands, where we can find answers to the simmering debates on citizenship and democracy in the African context (Mamdani 1996; Liers 1999). The following section refers to the literature on the interplay of plurality of authorities, in particular at the local level.

### Negotiating the Webs of Authority Relations: Capture, Adaptation, Displacement, or Democratization?

Democratization is fundamentally about the reworking of authority relations so that citizens can hold the authorities to account (cf. Lund 2001). Therefore, a research project such as RFGI must account for the ‘reworking of the political geography of power relations through the institutions of democracy and those per-



taining to specific goals of resource governance' (Kashwan 2011a: 24). Such an approach to democratization demands a careful scrutiny of authority relations, and an inquiry into how authorities that hold an advantage within the *status quo* respond to the proposals aimed at reworking of authority relations and improving accountability.

The topic of elite capture, researched extensively, need not be repeated here (Platteau and Abraham 2002; Olowy 2003; Platteau 2004). It is important to underline that elite capture is sustained partly through the acquiescence of individual citizens in accepting and legitimating elite power in a variety of ways. Investigating a case of the enclosure of group ranches in Botswana, Pauline Peters (1994) finds that the policy led to inequitable outcomes putting non-elites at a disadvantage. Notwithstanding that the negotiations for enclosures were marked by competition and even conflict, the cultural notions of rank significantly blunted citizens' responses to the inequitable outcomes (ibid.). Many among those who lost out on the promised benefits attributed the inequitable effects of ranch enclosures to 'the situationally different fortunes of individual families and individual persons' (Peters 1994:200).<sup>6</sup> Other scholars too have documented cases in which the customary authorities continue to command legitimacy (see Walters 2010). Such respect often propels chiefs and their family members to the positions of power in elected authorities. It is important to map such reproduction of customary authorities within democratically elected authorities (cf. Liers 1999).

Rata (2011) describes how the indigenous Maori authorities exploited the discourse of indigenous culture (which is posited against the 'material' western culture) to consolidate their own authority in the face of increasing pressures for democratization. Such adaptive responses effectively freeze the majority of the population in an indigenous past while the elites tap into the global indigenous rights movements, which reinforce their authority within the domestic indigenous domain. Ironically, the leaders benefiting from the globalization of indigenous rights movements argue that the affairs within the communities they lead should be governed by the laws of indigenous culture, which clash many a time with democratic norms. Yet, democratic devolution of authority and resources to locally elected local governments, even if they are dominated initially by customary authorities, could, in the long run, contribute to improved accountability and responsiveness (see Karlström 1996).

Beck (2001) presents the fascinating case of a tax revolt by local merchants in the holy city of Touba Mosque in Senegal, apparently because the merchants were not convinced of the sincerity of the elected head of the rural council. The case was entangled in the rivalry between different strands of customary authority and the new leadership, and the merchants' attempts at minimizing the taxes they owed to the council. Yet, Beck (2001) demonstrates that the Khalife's handling of the situation forced merchants to accept the legitimacy of the council's tax collection efforts. As Mamdani (1996) argues, instead of essentialising particular concepts and particular authorities, analysing the 'systems of power' and the conditions that enable citizens to challenge those systems on the margins, is likely to offer productive insights about democratization.

In the context of post-colonial societies, Partha Chatterjee's (2004) notion of political society offer perhaps the most incisive look into the 'politics of the governed'. Such a view of 'citizens' stands in contrast to the liberal perspective on citizens as autonomous and empowered individuals whose key problem is the intrusion of the state into their lives. To recognize citizens as 'governed' is helpful in understanding the effects of incorporation discussed by Mamdani (1996). Seen in this light, 'political society' emphasizes the asymmetries implicit in the relationships between the governors and the governed (Chatterjee 2004:36-41). Attempts at employing any of the accountability mechanisms proposed in the literature (see, Ribot 2004) require dealing with the asymmetries between the governed and the governors. This is a challenge that the literature on democratic deepening, much of which has emerged from South Asia and Latin America (Fox 1996; Heller 2009) has deal with, and is discussed in the following subsection.

### Mechanisms of Accountability: What role for a politically mobilized citizenry?

The discussion above suggests that elections as the core mechanisms of accountability have had limited success. Clearly, elections are one of the necessary conditions for democratic accountability but they are not sufficient (Agrawal and Ribot 1999; Ribot 1999). A variety of other non-electoral accountability mechanisms have been described in the literature (Blair 2000). Some of these mechanisms include media, official audits, NGOs, social embeddedness of the authorities, and social ties, which often factor into the individuals' interest in maintaining social reputation, etc. A detailed note on these mechanisms is in-

cluded as Appendix C in Ribot (2004). This section briefly summarizes a few experiments in decentralization, which help citizens engage *politically* with questions that affect them the most. One of the most insightful discussions of the potential for constructive role played by non-state, non-elected groups is discussed in Patrick Heller's comparative work on democratization in India, Brazil, and South Africa (Heller *et al.* 2007).

The People's Campaign for Decentralized Planning in Kerala brought together the energies of civil society and the elected representatives mobilized by a programmatic leftist party. The campaign helped expand effective participation across class and gender divides and improved delivery of services to poor households.<sup>7</sup> In Porto Alegre, the elected citywide and district budget councils engage actively in the process of debating and deciding on priorities for public budgeting at respective levels. Heller *et al.* (2007) argue that the success of these two experiments can be attributed to an active synergy between ruling parties and social movements. Thus, decisions taken by state governments provided the institutional space within which social movements could engineer wide-based citizen participation. On the other hand, social movements helped transform politics to make it accessible to citizens. On the other hand, an overzealous African National Congress that portrayed itself as the sole arbiter of resurgent post-apartheid nationalism has ended up closing the space for citizen engagement, with the public domain increasingly being tightly controlled by the party machine (*ibid.*).

Bolivia's Law of Popular Participation provides for creation of 'Vigilance Committees' charged with monitoring the activities of elected local governments (World Bank, n.d.). The committees also participate in local planning and budgeting. Members of vigilance committees are drawn from civil society groups including the peasant associations and indigenous communal institutions (see also Blair 2001). Vigilance committees are authorized to invoke a legal complaints procedure demanding inquiry into wrongdoings by elected local governments.<sup>8</sup> Even though vigilance committees researched by Roper (2003) did not perform spectacularly, many of their limitations were related to the entrenched powers of the provincial governments and 'misunderstandings' about the provisions of the law. Ribot (2004:110) discusses similar roles vested in elected town controllers in the United States. Similarly, Brazil, and the Philippines have sought to formally incorporate people's organizations, social movements, and even NGO representatives into local governance systems (Crook and Sverrisson 1999).

Another important example of such mechanisms is the provision of social audits introduced by the federal and some provincial governments in India (Pandey 2008). The formerly hallowed domains of official audits have been thus brought into public domain through provisions for the participation of local communities in defining the norms of audit and intervening directly in the functions of audit. While the provisions of social audits have hit the usual entrenched barriers and instances of manipulations by nexus among politicians, bureaucrats, and contractors, it is an important step forward. More importantly, the ideas and mechanisms of social audits were innovated and perfected by Mazdoor Kisan Shakti Sangathan (MKSS), a civil society movement working among marginalized groups (Jenkins and Goetz 1999; Jenkins 2006). The MKSS was also instrumental in demanding and securing the Indian Right to Information Act of 2005, which is recognized to be one of the strongest, the world over.<sup>9</sup> Each of the cases discussed above illustrate critical steps toward opening up the public domain for greater citizen engagement leading to on-going monitoring.

These comparative studies and other examples mentioned have important lessons for the scholars and policymakers interested in investigating and analysing factors that contribute to democratic representation and accountability. Whether decentralization of powers and resources to local government end up 'creating fragmented forms of authority and local belonging', or lead to 'democratic consolidation and production of citizenship' (Ribot 2011), would depend on how the particular political configurations affect the balance of power between different groups within a society. Even as institutional configuration shapes incentives and influences the legitimacy of particular authorities among citizens, the consolidation or fragmentation of democracy in a society depends on the distribution of 'voice and power' between citizens and the public authorities (Fox 2007:10).

## Review of Empirical Literature in Measuring Representation

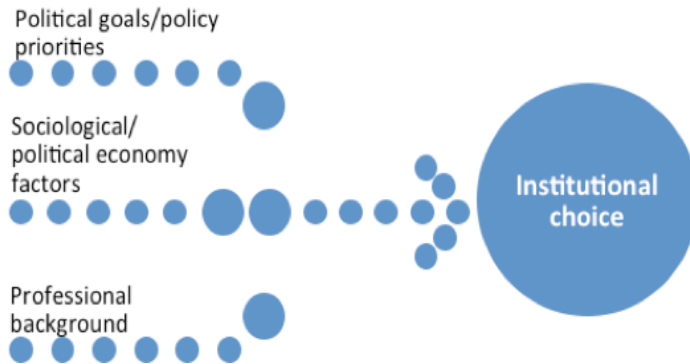
A research focused on the broader questions of accountability and representation may account for any of the complex aspects discussed in the theoretical literature above. Clearly, no one study can do justice to a topic as vast and as complex this one. Even so, the expansive chain of accountability portrayed in Figure 2 above is rendered somewhat manageable by breaking it up into two parts. The portion of the chain related to the institutional choices made by powerful actors is anticipated to be covered by the section labelled as ‘studying up’ in the RFGI research handbook. I touch upon this portion of the research only briefly by referring to some existing papers on the theme. As for the second part of the accountability chain in Figure 2 (which I have labelled as ‘researching down’), there is very little specific empirical research other than the case studies by Ribot and colleagues (Ribot 2004; Ribot and Larson 2005; Faye 2006; Kante 2006; Bandiak 2007; Ribot, Chhatre and Lankina 2008). Much of the literature investigating one or more of the links in the chain of accountability was summarized in Part I above. The quantitative/cross-sectional political science literature on accountability and representation, in the vein of Przeworski *et al.* (1999), for reasons discussed in section 1.1 above, has limited relevance to the questions of accountability and responsiveness in forest governance. On the other hand, a significant body of research focused on decentralization is directly relevant to the scale and goals of RFGI. A number of examples from relevant decentralization literature are presented in this section below.

## Understanding and Explaining Institutional Choice

RFGI seeks to *explain* why policy elites make the choices they do. A detailed review of the literature investigating the factors that affect policy elites' decision making is beyond the scope of this paper (see Grindle and Thomas 1989; Scharpf 1989). Even so, a few exemplary studies are discussed below.

For instance, investigating six sub-regions of three West African countries - Senegal, Cote d'Ivoire, and Ghana, Boone (2003) explains African elites' choice of decentralization policies in terms of elites' interest in maintaining territorial integration. For the elites, argues Boone (2003), decentralization provides a medium for executing political deals with regional and local elites in return for local elites' cooperation toward the goals of national territorial integration. Brady and Mo (1992) find that a party's preferred electoral systems can be explained by the spatial distribution of its votes, and the bargaining power that a particular party can wield vis-à-vis other political parties. The common thread between these studies (see also Frye 1997) is that they identify a theoretically plausible explanation for the policy choices that elites make. Yet, much of this research is also rooted in the standard liberal formal institutional view of democracy.

**Figure 3a:** Explaining Institutional Choice



In light of the theoretical discussions above, RFGI researchers could tap into a much broader suit of theoretical causal explanations for the policy choices that political elites in Africa make *vis-à-vis* forest governance. Some of the reasons that potentially explain the choices that policy elites make in the realm of forest governance are listed in Figure 3a. Figure 3b focuses on the effects of institutional choice and recognition that can be observed in terms of observable consequences on resources, partnerships, and institutional backing.

**Figure 3b:** Effects of Institutional Choice & Recognition



### **Empirical Evidence on Representation in Local Government**

The theoretical debates pertaining to local representation and accountability, reviewed above, are at an incipient stage. Much of the literature is founded in the traditions of liberal democracy with recent extensions to the context of local representation. On the other hand, there seems to be a rich empirical literature aimed at measuring success of democratic decentralization in terms of policy outcomes. Since many decentralization programs are pursued with goals of social justice and equity, significant efforts have been put into investigating the impact of decentralization policies on achieving these progressive ideals (in addition to the goals of efficient public service delivery). This section reviews the nature of empirical evidence linking representation with policy outcomes.

Perhaps the single largest study of the effects of decentralization programs is the one reported by Manor and Crook (1998) covering 2,030 respondents (including mass and elite surveys) across four countries (India, Bangladesh, Cote

d'Ivoire, and Ghana). Yet, these veterans of decentralization studies present their results, perhaps deliberately, more or less in a case study format suggesting the challenges of generalizing across context and different kinds of decentralization programs. Authors suggest 'strong mayor' systems that gave overriding powers to elected representatives were not successful in the absence of a strong and counterbalancing bureaucracy. Similarly, while the authors found the Ghanaian system of no-party local elections to be relatively successful they caution against such an approach in general as the lack of party competition hurt local councils' interests in monitoring bureaucrats. Manor and Crook (1998) also suggest that the most effective local governments are monitored through a system of multiple committees and commissions. In addition, citing the cases of Chile and West Bengal in India, the authors argue that decentralization succeeds at redistribution and poverty alleviation only under the direction of a strong provincial and central government directly pushing for these reforms.

Bardhan *et al.* (2008) report results of household surveys conducted to ascertain the effectiveness of local service delivery. They conclude that inequities in distribution of benefits from local service delivery were far more pronounced across villages as compared to within villages. Villages with a higher proportion of landless households received consistently lower levels of allocation of public resources from the sub-district level tier of local government. Bardhan *et al.* attribute these results to the fact that the village council is subject to direct pressures of local democracy. However, the lowest level of village government in India is at the level of *Gram Panchayat*, which includes multiple villages. Considering this it is difficult to judge whether Bardhan *et al.* analyse the distribution of benefits across villages or the multi-village *Gram Panchayats*. On the other hand, Bardhan *et al.* (2008) show that the allocations from the next higher level of government is contingent on negotiations between the bureaucrats and elected leaders across multiple tiers, leading to lower levels of transparency and public participation. In a related paper Bardhan and Mookherjee (2008) analyse the impact on 'targeting of private and local public goods to landless, low caste and female-headed households' of affirmative action ensuring representation from particular social groups, or 'representation by presence' in West Bengal. While joint gender-ethnicity-based representation led to an increased per capita allocation of resources, it did not improve targeting of benefits of either of these vulnerable groups. In fact, Bardhan and Mookherjee (2008) find some evidence that the



representation of women on village councils decreased the share of benefits for Adivasi (Indian indigenous groups) households, and representation of Adivasis led to a cut in the share of women-headed households.

In a meta-analysis of studies on public service delivery, Besley and Ghatak (2007) conclude that accountability in decentralized service delivery is contingent on information flows, political competition, and a separation of powers between the legislator and the executive. However, they also caution the readers about the cases of local ethnic homogeneity in which a local politician might have a 'large personal vote or belong to an unassailable political coalition' (ibid. 147). Such a situation is not uncommon in the context of local governance which is often characterized by conditions of asymmetry and low political competition. On the other hand, these studies raise an important theoretical question – is it possible to measure the success of local representation by the outcomes of local service delivery? Or, is it reasonable to assume that the 'inefficiencies' associated with long-drawn democratic deliberations is likely to yield less than perfect service delivery outcomes. In other words, does better representation come at the cost of 'efficient' service delivery? Or, could the long-term political effects of representation offset the efficiency losses in service delivery?

While more research is needed to resolve questions pertaining to the efficiency-democracy trade off, the above questions presume that efficient service delivery can be accomplished without proper participation of the intended recipients of public services. The available empirical literature seems to suggest that services are rarely delivered to intended recipients. To gain a better appreciation of these challenges, the literatures on representation and decentralization must tap into the research pertaining to strategies that individuals employ to negotiate access to democratic institutions (Chatterjee 2004; Krishna 2006, 2010). This is even more important considering the implications of the 'crisis of representation thesis', which suggest that citizens have lost faith in elected leaders and electoral politics (Mainwaring 2006). In other words, instead of reaching out to elected representatives and authorities, individual citizens turn to civil society organizations to have their voices represented.

Chandhoke (2005, 2009) and colleagues investigated the thesis in a survey covering over 1,400 individuals across Delhi only to find that the loss of faith in political parties has not been replaced by a faith in NGOs. Instead citizens relied on their personal associations with influential individuals to get things done.

This evidence is supported by another long-term study conducted by Anirudh Krishna in North Indian rural communities. Krishna (2011) concludes that individual citizens prefer young and educated leaders ('new leaders' in his terminology) over their elected representatives for gaining access to the state and services offered by state agencies.

Other than shedding light on the representational strategies that citizens in India employ, these studies also point to a worrisome factor – for a large number of citizens, the public domain is accessible only through informal, non-democratic and clientelistic channels. That is to say, that the ability to influence policy in the form of voice or sanction is highly stratified – selective citizens and civil society actors are appropriately endowed (with the material resources, the knowledge, and the channels of access) to engage effectively. These findings, while intuitively in line with the presumed predominance of clientelistic politics, need to be verified in different contexts. However, if these findings are valid across countries in Africa and Latin America, making citizens repose their faith in the public domain requires a two-fold strategy: one, making the public domain worth engaging with, as argued in the institutional choice and recognition framework (Ribot et al. 2008); and perhaps more important, demonstrating simultaneously that the public domain can be freed from the shackles of clientelistic networks. Interestingly, the existing literature, some of which is discussed below, offers support for the utility of such a twin strategy for facilitating citizen engagement with the public domain.

Analysing six regional rural development councils in Mexico, Fox (2007) concluded that inadequate discretion in the hands of the council representative, state government veto powers, and dependence on federal government program funding prevented the councils from being effective. These findings support the choice and recognition thesis (Ribot 2011). Subsequently, Fox's (ibid.) comparative empirical analysis of community food councils and the *Oportunidades* (the so-called conditional cash-transfer programs) suggested that effective representation across multiple levels of governments was critical for improving accountability and effective service delivery. These findings are supported by Deininger et al. (2011) whose analysis of a 15-year-long panel dataset suggested that a female quota in locally elected local governments in India led to gender differentiated effects, which improved the 'individuals' willingness to contribute to public goods, participation in political processes, and ability to access, process, and use

information to hold leaders to account.’ Along similar lines, Pande (2003) found that a quota for marginalized groups allowed greater influence of these groups over the provincial-level policy outcomes and improved targeted redistribution in favour of these groups over more than half a century.

Each of the above studies underlines the importance of specific measures aimed at facilitating the access of the marginalized groups to public domain. In other words, attempts for expanding the public domain to make it worth the citizens’ while to seek access to it, must be combined with measures which help break the barriers against such an access that people have faced in the past. Moreover, insights from the research on the political economy of institutions suggests that making citizens *believe* that the public domain is within their reach is as, if not more, important as is creating the conditions permitting egalitarian access to entitlements (Wilshusen 2003, 2009; Kashwan 2011a).

### **Local Representation: Application to Questions of Forest Governance**

Recent years have witnessed a number of research projects and publications on the theme of representation and accountability in the context of forest governance (Agrawal and Ribot 1999; Larson 2004; Xu and Ribot 2004; Chhatre and Saberwal 2005; Wollenberg *et al.* 2006; Ribot *et al.* 2008; Chhatre 2007a). These studies have created a strong foundation for cross-sectional empirical research focusing on actors, institutions, authorities and powers devolved to them. While the normative claims of this research regarding the superiority of elected institutions cannot be put to the test (particularly given the contextual environment that makes it difficult to achieve normative ideals in practice), the distributive effects of specific forest governance policies and programs on different groups of citizens must be investigated.

The research related to the outcomes of decentralized service delivery by local governments reviewed above is relevant to the context of forest governance. From the perspective of cross-sectional research, the pertinent question is, what factors might be consistently associated with accountability in representation? And, what factors might prevent systematic achievement of representation and accountability?

In other situations, elite capture may not be understood as such by local populations. Studies investigating the impact of devolution policies several years after they have been introduced and implemented miss the critical analysis of how rights are understood, and how the process of claiming rights is shaped by the contingencies of political economies understood by people themselves. Seeking to bridge this gap, Kashwan (2011a) analyses the process and outcomes of claim making led by locally elected committees in India's Forest Rights Act of 2006. Empirical analysis suggests that social movements played a critical part in facilitating claims, but the effect of electoral competition is uncertain and weak. More interesting, the pre-existing village-level forest conservation arrangements attenuated the extent of subsistence rights claimed in the process. Kashwan (2011a) attributes these somewhat counter-intuitive results to the interplay of political subjectivities and political economies of interdependence between citizens and the local official. The legitimacy of institutional *status quo*s sustained through a long history of marginalization and the past attempts at reforms which failed repeatedly. The significance of political micro-foundations of forest governance is underlined in an extensive review of factors affecting the legitimacy of forest governance by Pierce-Colfer (2011:2160), who concludes:

Meaningful 'rule of law' cannot come about in the world's tropical forests without more attention to justice, rights, local systems, and genuine (and more widely perceived) legitimacy in the world's customary and statutory-legal systems. Some of this work can be done in global policy arenas, some in nation state's legal communities; but a significant amount of it will have to be done in, with and by the communities where such people live.

One of the factors that affect forest governance across difference levels is related to entrenched and pervasive gender inequity. A significant body of feminist forest governance is emerging as well. The work of Bina Agarwal (1994, 2001) arguing for the importance of women's land and resource rights is well known. More recently, she presents empirical support for the claim that greater representation of women on the key decision-making bodies within local forest management groups significantly contributes to better conservation outcomes in India and Nepal (Agarwal 2009). Agarwal (2010) also presents evidence to show that increased representation of women in decision-making bodies increases the wom-

en members' participation in deliberations in the general body. She also shows that increased representation of landless women on decision-making bodies led to increased participation of similarly disadvantaged women within the general membership (*ibid.*). Conversely, Bandiaky-Badji (2011) argues that poor gender outcomes of forest policy are related to lack of political representation for women in political institutions at all levels, including political parties, legislature, in local governments. By implication, forest governance reforms are unlikely to succeed as an island of progressivism if it continues to be embedded within an otherwise entrenched political system.

The correspondence between interests of forest users and the approach to policy-making that elected representatives employ is of great significance in making the transition possible. Wellstead *et al.* (2003) found remarkable differences between the 'beliefs, values, and attitudes' towards forest management of constituents and their forest committee representatives. This amounts to a poor 'descriptive representation', or 'representation by presence' (see Pitkin 1967). However, the authors suggest that such descriptive differences do not necessarily hamper the representatives' ability to influence forest management policies and programs in a way that amounts to 'acting' in the interests of the constituents. Parkins (2002:177) arrives at a similar conclusion but attributes the success of representation to 'other regarding' behaviour of the representatives.

Relying on a combination of survey and qualitative data on Alberta's public forest advisory groups, Parkins (2002) argues that the potential for these bodies to create a public sphere was hampered by the influence of private corporations. McFarlane and Boxall (2001, cited in Parkins 2002) concluded that the views of advisory group members were closely aligned with the professional foresters commonly employed by government forestry agencies and forestry companies. These findings beg another important question – what would prevent locally elected bodies from becoming 'closely controlled groups of citizens who are educated selectively' (Parkins 2002:178). Such concerns are particularly pertinent for the situations in which mimicking the positions and perspectives of government officials and donors may put elected representatives in a better position to leverage outside funds and influence (such as through REDD forestry projects). What kinds of processes and mechanisms could be put in place to ensure that leaders are accountable to their constituents in between the elections?

Kashwan and Holahan (2011) propose what they refer to as enduring nested governance for REDD+, combining institutional incentives and political mobilization of forest-dependent groups to demand accountability of the state. The institutional aspects of nested governance refer to the mandatory and secured rights for forest users involved in forest protection and a properly recognized role for regional forest federations and association in the domain of regional decision-making. Such a nested approach is shown to lead to political benefits in terms of the mobilized and informed forest users demanding accountability of state and other powerful actors. Even with these types of cross-scale institutional and political arrangements, democratic accountability may not be in sight, as long as public officials continue to be answerable solely to the provincial or national forestry service with its own command structure.

Few studies have examined the intersection of democratic politics with resource governance outcomes. One of the exceptions includes Chhatre (2007b)'s research in the North Indian state of Himachal Pradesh. Chhatre argues that inclusive political mobilization and party competition has brought natural resource policies to the fore of democratic politics, and such increased attention has led to positive effects on resource outcomes. Better representation of sub-group interests in community affairs, and the linkages community leaders developed with multiple political parties led to improved cooperation. At the same time, Chhatre cautions about what he calls 'multiple impulses' unleashed by democratic politics. His research suggests that high electoral competition, which attracts increased interference from political parties, makes it difficult for communities to cooperate in governing. These effects are particularly serious in communities divided along politically salient identities (Chhatre 2007b).

While few studies have systematically offered cross-sectional analysis of the effect of democratic politics and representation, the ones reviewed above offer cues into the kind of analyses that can be undertaken in the domain of forest governance. Even so, cross-sectional research will have to be supplemented by a hard-nosed historical and qualitative inquiry into the complex interplay of social and political forces that shape the way in which individuals and social groups are embedded within power relations within a polity. The following section makes a first attempt at listing the key elements of qualitative and quantitative research protocols aimed at better understanding the imperatives of representation and accountability within local forest governance.

## Illustrative Suggestions for Structuring RFGI Research

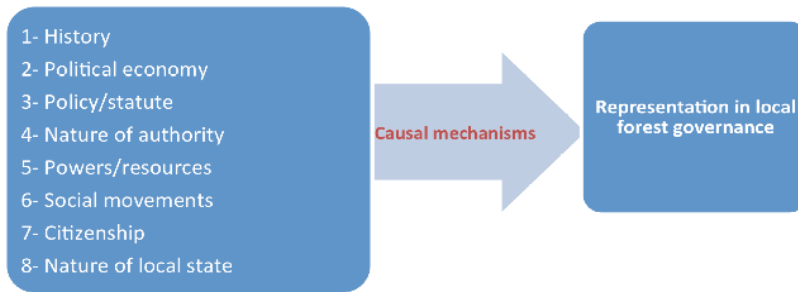
This review is premised on the assumption that methodological pluralism is a fruitful strategy for understanding complex processes and outcomes across related settings. Qualitative and quantitative research methods offer complementary advantages with regards to understanding different facets of questions under investigation (see Brady and Collier 2004). At the same time, it must be pointed out that combining the two types of methodological approaches entails significant investments as well as trade-offs that the researchers must be aware of (see Mahoney and Goetz 2006). This section offers practical tools and illustrative questions that could help RFGI researchers conceptualize and organize case studies and quantitative data collection. The following section begins by listing sample questions that RFGI researchers could ask as part of the qualitative case study research, which is followed in Section 3.2 by listing of variables that may be of use in organizing data collection centred on the questions of representation and accountability.

### **Organizing Inquiries for Qualitative Case Analysis**

One of the great risks of documenting a case is the potential for the documentation to become a free-flowing narrative that touches upon innumerable aspects related to the case without linking the discussion to the central analytical concern. A simple trick that is likely to help researchers to discipline their inquiry and narrative is to conceptualize a mental map placing theoretical concepts in

some kind of a relationship. For the sake of simplicity, I present a very simple linear model of factors, processes, and forces that contribute to shaping outcomes on representation in local forest governance. Indeed, a conceptual map could be drawn as well as a circular process. The key goal here is to lay out the linkages and relationships that a researcher may go about looking for in the real world.

**Figure 4:** A general approach to researching representation



Once such a broad theoretical model has been worked out, it would be easier to focus on particular theoretical elements of what I have referred to above as the ‘chain of accountability’ represented in Figure 2. Illustrative questions that may be asked about each of the elements are listed below.

#### **Citizenship – the ability to influence those who govern**

- Are the most fundamental economic and social rights (of subsistence and living a dignified life) secured for all social groups?
- If not, what steps do the individuals and households take to cope with the disenfranchisement, and how might that relate to their ability to demand accountability?
- What potential accountability means are available to the population that could counter-balance the beneficiaries of *status quo* exist locally or regionally?
- What opportunities exist for the marginalized groups to collectively mobilize in demanding their fundamental rights?



**Public Domain – the material basis for democratic responsiveness**

- What powers and resources are vested in locally elected public authorities, i.e. how robust is the local public domain?
- What is the social and gender composition of the leadership vested with decision-making powers in the local public domain?
- Is there evidence to suggest an apparent progress towards increased inclusiveness in the circles of public leaders over the years?
- What are the channels through which information on public domain might be accessed publicly?

**Representation – Responsiveness ensured through means of accountability**

- Are there local groups and authorities that receive donor/government funds, but are not accountable to locally elected governments?
- What channels are available for constituents to exercise their voice over how the local public domain is managed?
- Do the social movements and organized citizen groups have a say in local rulemaking and distribution of benefits?
- If yes, are the citizen groups project-based or broadly inclusive?
- What kind of formal oversight mechanisms (with legally backed powers and procedures in place) are in place to hold locally elected governments to account?
- Which particular ethnic/social groups benefit most from such support?

**Organizing quantitative analysis under RFGI**

To collect data for quantitative analyses, key variables (i.e. outcomes and explanatory variables) must be operationalized, i.e. represented in terms of real life events/instances/facts that can be recorded quantitatively. Considering the focus of this research on representation RFGI researchers are investigating political outcomes of representation -- composed of accountability and responsiveness within the realm of forest governance. Thus, accountability and responsiveness are the key outcome variables (also called the dependent variables). The second step would be to think of explanatory variables (the variables/factors that cause/affector correlate with the outcomes of the researcher's interest). Each of the explanatory variables is linked to the outcome variable through a causal mecha-

nism, denoted by the arrow in the middle of Figure 5 below. In other words, the researcher must have a concrete reason to believe that any given explanatory variable affects the outcome of interest either positively or negatively. Such reasons, or causal mechanisms, can be derived from a deep understanding of the context, or from the expectation defined by a theory. For example, in RFGI, representation is being explored as a function of or outcome of institutional choice – here institutional choice is the independent variable. Finally, the researcher must decide on a unit of analysis, which is the entity/level for which data is collected.

In planning the data collection, it is important to consider the unit of analysis. Indeed, each of the outcomes mentioned above can be studied at different levels ranging from an individual person to a large geographic unit such as a district. For example, let us assume that the political outcome of responsiveness in forest governance was to be studied at the level of an individual (a particularly tricky combination chosen for the sake of illustration). In that case, the researcher will need to operationalize outcome and explanatory variables with regards to an individual person. It is not as difficult as it might sound at first, at least within the boundaries of quantitative research methods.

For example, responsiveness in forest governance could be operationalized based on an individual's experience with the authority empowered with adjudication of powers at the local level. We could ask individual respondents to rank (say, on a scale of 1 to 10) the authority on changes in its success at meeting the individual's expectations of local forest management. So, a higher score could be taken to mean that the authority has been responsive to the respondent's concerns. In undertaking such simplifications, researchers should ensure whether and to what extent a particular operationalization of a variable reflects the concept we seek to measure. Similarly, each of the explanatory variables listed in Figure 3 needs to be operationalized so that it relates to the individual respondent.

Consider the first among the list of explanatory variables in Figure 5 above. How might the income of a respondent relate to responsiveness in forest governance? Given the discussion above of how socioeconomic inequities shape the ability of citizens to influence policy, one could hypothesize that forest management authority is less likely to be responsive to the needs of low-income social groups. We are trying to test that proposition by linking an individual's income to their assessment of how responsive the authority has been (the Likert scale measure of the outcome variable mentioned above).

The institutional choice and recognition framework hypothesizes that elected authorities to be more responsive compared to authorities that are not elected. Accordingly, the explanatory variable number 4 records whether the individual respondent lives in a jurisdiction governed by an elected authority. If the hypothesis proposed by institutional choice and recognition framework is borne out in our sample, we are likely to see a positive relationship between the explanatory variable 4 (elected authority) and responsiveness in forest governance. However, this also means that our sample should have several individual respondents that live in jurisdictions with an elected authority, and an approximately equal number live in jurisdictions without an elected authority. All else being equal, comparing the ranking on the responsiveness of authorities offered by citizens living in two different types of jurisdictions will provide some evidence on whether elected authorities are likely to be more responsive compared to their non-elected counterparts.

It is reasonable to argue that such a crude representation of the effects of elected authority might be inadequate at best and misleading at worst. An innovative researcher seeks to get as accurate information about the phenomenon of interest as is possible. That being the case, in addition to collecting data on whether a forest authority is led by an elected leader, one could think of other variables that may potentially affect the level of accountability. For instance, one may think of collecting data on the number of individuals who participated in the general assembly meetings organized by a local forest authority or the number that exercise any given kind of accountability mechanism. Statistical analysis allows us to parse out the effects of multiple variables that are hypothesized to affect the outcome of a researcher's interest (i.e. accountability or representation in the context of RFGI).

Finally, the crudeness of quantitative data can often be compensated for by rigorous qualitative research. Continuing with the example of elected authorities discussed above, the researcher could go about investigating what difference the institutions of the election might have made to the manner in which a forest authority went about the business of forest governance. Rigorousness of the research is manifest in the extent to which a researcher is able to trace the effects of elections *per se*, as opposed to things that any authority would do irrespective of whether it is led by an elected leader or not. Or the degree to which they are able to trace the effects of other accountability mechanisms. Alternatively qualitative

research could be done on why any instance of responsiveness actually occurred – helping us to understand what drove the specific response quantified by the quantitative research.

For instance, did the fact that the leader was elected mean that some of the unpopular restrictions on forest use were relaxed immediately following the elections, or in case of an incumbent, right before the elections? In another case, we may trace the reactions of elected and non-elected leaders to a similar proposition about, say, the inclusion of a community forest in a carbon forestry program. As the researcher goes about interviewing the leaders, s/he has an opportunity to gather clues on whether the two leaders differed in the extent to which they talked about the interests of forest-dependent households. Over a good number of local forest-management authorities you may observe a systematic difference in the responses of leaders who were elected as compared to those who were appointed by public agencies. Indeed, other factors related to leaders' background etc. may affect their decisions as well. A careful inquiry often helps explain how different factors and processes affect the outcome of interest to the researcher. If the institution of election turns out to be systematically related to pro-poor outcomes, you can argue that elected leaders acted in the interest of forest-dependent groups far better than did those who were appointed. Maybe not, but those are the kind of effects that a researcher interested in questions of accountability and representation may look for.

To recap, a mixed-methods research program should be split into a number of different components. A historically informed and rigorous qualitative research is an essential foundation for framing research questions, revisiting the relevant but well established theoretical wisdoms, and in designing a research project that seeks to address the gaps that are thus identified. On the other hand, a more dispassionately conceived set of quantifiable indicators/data as part of a survey instrument/questionnaire is likely to help researchers in conducting crude but more generalizable tests across a large number of units of analyses. Indeed, further qualitative research may be needed to understand if the results of statistical analysis are not merely an artefact of the survey design (which is possible). A judicious combination of in-depth qualitative research and the cross-sectional quantitative data collection is likely to offer better leverage in addressing the questions of interest, in particular about the causal relations between the explanatory and the outcome variables. Equally important is to engage with other bod-

ies of research irrespective of whether they are primarily qualitative enterprises or in the vein of quantitative programs aiming at formal modelling. Each one is equally important for developing robust theories of what it means to have a representative and accountable forest governance in place, or for that matter, to deepen democracy in the imperfect world in which we live.



## Conclusion

This review was aimed at locating the predominant theoretical paradigms of electoral theories of accountability in light of the challenges of democratization and local governance analyzed in other bodies of literature. While motivating an appreciation of the parsimonious approach to representation and accountability developed by Przeworski *et al.* (1999), the review suggests that the formalization comes at considerable costs in terms of sacrificing a focus on critical aspects of the ‘actually existing democracies’ (Fraser 1990). The electoral theories of accountability assume that the terms of reference for the operation of liberal democracy are well understood, accepted, and practiced across the world. Once that assumption is relaxed, and the historically constructed nature of citizenship, authority, and legitimacy of institutions is accounted for, it becomes clear that the complexities of authority relations between elected leaders, constituents, and public officials who gate-keep access to the state-led development programs (as depicted in Figure 2) need to be understood holistically. Such a holistic understanding is likely to afford us significant progress on grappling with the important questions of representation and accountability in local governance.

This review employed a bifocal approach. In Part I, the review sought to bring forth the complexity of theoretical construction of accountability relations in the context of local democracies. The broad spectrum of state-society dynamics rooted both in historical and contemporary political economies, summarized in Part I above, reflect Fox (2007)’s formulation of accountability politics: an interface view rooted in understanding of accountability as negotiations over power

that different actors hold, exercise, and are answerable for. Such a 'polity-centred approach', as Lavalle *et al.* (2005) propose, is related to the consideration in Part II of the review of extant empirical research on specific linkages between constituent interests and the policy outcomes. Arguably, the forest authorities that successfully address the livelihood needs of forest-dependent individuals and groups are likely to find support among the people. At the same time, for the reasons to do with the interplay of historically shaped patterns of norms and expectations (i.e. institutions) and the local political economies, marginalized forest-dependent groups are unlikely to take on the authorities and authoritarian leaders unless they are mobilized by longstanding social movements (Heller 2009).

The network of social activists that are most likely to offer countervailing sources of power are likely to be 'dense, locally grounded representative social actors' (Fox 2007:220 citing Fung and Wright 2003). To use Tania Murray Li's insightful formulation, forest-dependent groups and their representatives are likely to adopt 'the way of the ant ... identifying small openings and digging tiny paths, winning by persistence' (Li 2007:284). Accordingly, an inquiry aimed at uncovering conditions that facilitate resilient forest governance is bound to be complex and multi-faceted. The synergistic state-society networks, which combine the strength of local political mobilization with a strategic collaboration with actors in government and political parties, seem to have enhanced accountability relations in many cases documented in this review (Fox 1996). On the contrary, elected representatives, left to their own instrumental-strategic logic of electoral politics, have been far more uneven in their pro-poor actions (Véron *et al.* 2003; Heller 2001, 2009). Empirical research on representation and accountability would do well to account for how different actors enter a variety of 'bargaining arenas' to contribute to dynamic interaction across the state-society divide and across local-regional-national scales (Fox 2007:219). Instead of either reducing this rich array of interactions to linear voter-leader interactions for the sake of formal modelling, or giving up on cross-sectional research in favour of in-depth case analysis, the state of affairs in the actually existing democracies, in particular the local politics, can be better dealt with through a suit of research approaches as discussed above.

While the focus of this review has been on local representation and accountability, the vast body of emerging literature on carbon forestry can be drawn on productively (Chhatre and Agrawal 2009; Sandbrook *et al.* 2010). A framework



for empirical research on representation and accountability in forest governance should also account for macro-political and institutional variables (e.g. whether secured carbon rights for forest dependent groups are legally mandated within a future REDD+ treaty), the political mediation of these policies and institutions at the national and provincial level (e.g. whether forest governance arrangements are deemed by politicians to be in their political interests; the nature of rights that are devolved to locally elected bodies depending on how higher level politicians are aligned vis-à-vis local elites), as well as the local institutional and accountability mechanisms (e.g. to what extent institutional arrangements channelize interests of the historically marginalized groups).

The complex and dynamic relationship between actors operating across scales must be empirically recorded and analyzed before pinning normative expectation to any particular configuration of institutional arrangement (including where significant discretionary powers are devolved to locally elected bodies). This entails simplifying the theoretical burden associated with the conceptual disagreements over the concepts of representation and accountability. *To the extent possible, research protocols should record the actual policy outcomes at the local level, and see if the variation in outcomes can be mapped on to any of the hypothesized mechanisms of accountability and representation – or for that matter can be explained by any non-hypothesized or surprising set of variables.* As Max Weber (cited in Mehta 2001) remarked with regard to politics in general, responsive forest governance is better seen as a ‘slow boring of the hard boards’ of socio-political systems entrenched in longstanding power asymmetries.



## Notes

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1. Analyzing programs of decentralization from the perspective of central leaders, Crook and Sverrisson (1999) refer to this as the sociological view of devolution.
2. The fact that one comes across virtuous leaders should not detract from the necessity of putting in place systems (i.e. institutions, organizations, and processes) that will prevent office holders from violating democracy, in its spirit and letter (Przeworski *et al.* 1999, Przeworski 2006).
3. Public choice scholars tend to oppose vesting of authority in public authorities and governments. On the other hand, left-leaning scholars and activists tend to argue for states exercising their authorities to curb abuses of market power by corporations.
4. According to Transparency International, India ranked 95 among a corruption index of 182 countries (a higher number meaning high levels of corruption). The global data set is available at <https://www.google.com/fusiontables/DataSource?dsrcid=2313444>
5. Ribot and Peluso (2003) framed similar questions in their discussion of access mechanisms in the context of natural resource governance.
6. This paragraph draws liberally upon Kashwan (2011a:21).
7. It must be pointed out that the Kerala mobilization led jointly by a leftist civil society and the left parties almost entirely bypassed the indigenous populations within the state (Damodaran 2006). This failure eventually contributed to a bloody conflict between a politically mobilized group of Adivasis and the state officials in forest and police departments (Bijoy and Raman 2003). This is perhaps the least studied and dark underbelly of the 'success' of Kerala's experiment in human development and

broad-based development, and points to the need for a constant check on the priorities of and coordination among even politically mobilized *civil societies*.

8. [http://www.worldbank.org/socialaccountability\\_sourcebook/Thematic\\_SectorAppl/Decentralization/dec\\_ep4ex1.html](http://www.worldbank.org/socialaccountability_sourcebook/Thematic_SectorAppl/Decentralization/dec_ep4ex1.html)
9. [http://www.law-democracy.org/?page\\_id=1114](http://www.law-democracy.org/?page_id=1114)

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# List of Selected Research Instruments

## Relevant to RFGI

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1. Bovens (2005): Evaluation frameworks for public accountability.
2. Colfer's (2011): List of factors associated with gender, age, ethnicity, and occupation affected marginalized group's forest legitimacy.
3. Manor and Crook's (1998): Instruments used in decentralization research in Asia and Africa.
4. Johanson (2003): Survey instruments used in the politics of service delivery in local governments in Asia and Africa.
5. Krishna and Shrader's (2000): Instruments, which evaluate individual choices in seeking state access.
6. Kashwan (2011a): Instruments tracing leadership flows and its effects over claim making process in a forest rights legislation.
7. Wilshusen's (2003): Instruments on political economy of local forest governance.





