With and beyond the state – co-production as a route to political influence, power and transformation for grassroots organizations

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ABSTRACT   This paper reviews the use of co-production – with state and citizens working together – as a grassroots strategy to secure political influence and access resources and services. To date, the literature on social movements has concentrated on more explicitly political strategies used by such movements to contest for power and influence. Co-production, when considered, is viewed as a strategy used by citizens and the state to extend access to basic services with relatively little consideration given to its wider political ramifications. However, co-production is used increasingly by grassroots organizations and federations as part of an explicit political strategy. This paper examines the use of co-productive strategies by citizen groups and social movement organizations to enable individual members and their associations to secure effective relations with state institutions that address both immediate basic needs and enable them to negotiate for greater benefits.

KEYWORDS   citizen–state relations / co-production / social movement strategies

I. INTRODUCTION

The scale of shelter need is widely accepted. At least 900 million urban residents are in need of improved shelter in towns and cities in the global South.[1] This may mean a lack of any one of numerous essential services, including regular access to safe water, or access to sanitation and drainage; also a lack of safe and secure dwellings, or secure tenure without threat of eviction. The cause of such a lack of safe and secure shelter is related partly to a lack of income, but it is also related to the inability of the state to provide a framework within which adequate shelter is plentiful and affordable, and hence access to secure tenure and basic needs are met.

   Even if household incomes rise, it is not easy for these urban households to improve their shelter options. Shelter is, almost universally, informal for those with low-incomes in the South; in some countries, the same is true of those with middle or even high incomes. The sources of informality are multiple, including the illegal occupation of land, or its illegal use (e.g. contravening zoning and sub-division regulations), or the contravention of building regulations. In the absence of state provision, much service provision is also informal. This means that, if the urban poor are to address their shelter needs at scale, a level of engagement with the state is required to reform practices (and standards) and provide needed investments. Low-income citizens have a variety of strategies to engage

the state, and equally the state has a variety of strategies to relate to these communities. Each such strategy is associated with different political and social processes, favouring different interests and outcomes.

The concept of co-production has been explored within literature on state and citizen relations in the North and South alike. The concept refers to the joint production of public services between citizen and state, with any one or more elements of the production process being shared. Co-production has been primarily considered as a route to improve the delivery of services, and it has rarely been considered as a route through which the organized urban poor may choose to consolidate their local organizational base and augment their capacity to negotiate successfully with the state. Nevertheless, there is evidence that some grass-roots organizations have chosen to go down this route in order to strengthen their political position as well as address their more immediate development needs; and it is this history that is explored in this paper.

Following the introduction, there is a brief review of urban poverty that highlights the need to transform local neighbourhoods, and specifically tenure, shelter and services (Section II). This is followed by another introductory section that considers the different strategies followed by local residents, including self-help and collective political action (Section III). Co-production has been widely discussed in relation to the provision of state services both in the context of North and South. The concept of co-production is defined and reviewed in Section IV. Section V analyzes social movement organization strategies in the context of a co-production framework, demonstrating the strengths of this approach, and in so doing argues that co-production activities need to be understood within a wider political discourse. Section VI discusses these experiences and Section VII concludes.

II. URBAN POVERTY AND WHY THE STATE HAS AN ESSENTIAL ROLE TO PLAY IN POVERTY REDUCTION

It is the combination of spatial characteristics (lack of services and unsafe physical environment) with an incapacity to flourish in the cash economy and the denial of legal and political rights that characterizes the situation of the urban poor.[2] A number of factors have been identified as being important in the creation and maintenance of urban poverty,[3] one of the most notable being the need for income to exist with the highly commodified cash economies of towns and cities, and hence the need to enter the labour market in order to secure the required income. However, equally evident from existing studies is that income alone is unlikely to result in improvements in well-being. Other factors include the lack of basic services, discrimination in labour and commodity markets and also in terms of access to services, and the lack of political and civil rights.[4] Arguably, it is the addressing of the lack of basic services that has been the particular focus of co-production strategies.

Official statistics on urban poverty rarely take into account the quality of housing or the extent of provision of basic services. However, the extent of the deficiencies in provision for, for instance, water, sanitation and drainage is well documented, and these deficiencies in provision are not confined to the poorer nations or smaller or poorer urban centres.[5] The experiences associated with poverty go far beyond monetary incomes.

2. Meikle, Sheilah (2002), "The urban context and poor people", in Carole Rakodi with Tony Lloyd-Jones (editors), *Urban Livelihoods: A People-centred Approach to Reducing Poverty*, Earthscan Publications, London, pages 37–51; also *Environment and Urbanization* (1995), "Editorial: the underestimation and misrepresentation of urban poverty", *Environment and Urbanization* Vol 7, No 1, April, pages 3–10.

3. Mitlin, D (2003), "The economic and social processes influencing the level and nature of chronic poverty in urban areas", Chronic Poverty Research Centre Working Paper 29, University of Manchester, Manchester.

4. Satterthwaite, D (1997), "Urban poverty: reconsidering its scale and nature", *IDS Bulletin* Vol 28, No 2, pages 9–23.

5. Hardoy, Jorge E, Diana Mitlin and David Satterthwaite (2001), *Environmental Problems in an Urbanizing World: Finding Solutions for Cities in Africa, Asia and Latin America*, Earthscan Publications, London, 448 pages; also see reference 1, UN–Habitat (2003); and *Water and Sanitation in the World's Cities; Local Action for Global Goals*, Earthscan Publications, London, 274 pages.

On the one hand, many low-income settlements have some inhabitants with higher incomes who are unable to find better accommodation with improved access to services. On the other hand, the lack of basic services in many residential locations means that the poor spend a considerable proportion of their income on paying private sector enterprises for basic needs such as water, transport and health services; also, in many urban centres, for private schools either because there are no public schools or because their children are denied access to them. In the case of water, for example, it is not uncommon to see a figure of 10 per cent of income being spent on access to water.[6] At the same time, the problems of inadequate access to services go well beyond the high costs of access. In low-income settlements in Dhaka, "… *poor sanitation, cramped housing, absence of waste removal and inadequate ventilation are reflected in high levels of diarrhoeal and respiratory infections…*", and a related problem is high expenditure on health care.[7] A later study concludes that "*…ill-health was the most important cause of deterioration in financial status among the Dhaka slum households featured in this paper, explaining 22 per cent of cases where households reported deterioration in financial status.*"[8] Hence, not only do low-income households pay a lot for inadequate access, but the consequences of inadequate service provision include poor health and falling incomes. A lack of services causes additional difficulties such as the time taken in securing water or simply in travelling to work, leaving less time for alternative activities.

Strategies for securing shelter and basic services are not the only areas where low-income citizens have potential for interface with the state. Discrimination is a problem faced in labour and commodity markets as well as in residential settlements, increasing the problems faced by some groups. Its prevalence is partly related to the lack of appropriate legal and political safeguards and rights, meaning that the urban poor are vulnerable to abuse and exploitation. Illegality itself is a source of discrimination and, in addition to aspects of residency, may be associated with employment and/or trading.[9] Laws, norms and standards, even when prepared with good intentions, may result in considerable difficulties for the poor (for example, regulations that determine or influence access to state benefits).

This is the context that the poor have to overcome if they are to move away from poverty. In most cases, their context is characterized by a weak state unable to provide basic services and/or the conditions under which good quality private support is affordable. There is a prevalence of the informal sector. The condition is complex and multi-faceted, with multiple factors that cause and maintain a situation of disadvantage that goes significantly beyond low incomes. This condition is linked to state actions and inactions including policies, programmes and the general politics of resource allocation. It is, to put the case bluntly, impossible for the urban poor to secure improved development opportunities simply through improved incomes; much more comprehensive change is required, with a notable increase in the ability of city governments to establish systems and structures that produce adequate supplies of land and the infrastructure required for the delivery of basic services. In many cases, the difficulties associated with particular aspects of their poverty are compounded through discriminatory actions by the state and other powerful groups. Addressing these factors requires more wide-reaching political and social change.

However, the urban poor are not passive in this situation. Section III looks in more detail at the specific strategies used by the poor to address

6. McGranahan, G, C Njiru, M Albu, M Smith and D Mitlin (2006), *How Small Water Enterprises can Contribute to the Millennium Development Goals*, WEDC, University of Loughborough.

7. Kabir, M D A, A Rahman, S Salway and J Pryer (2000), "Sickness among the urban poor: a barrier to livelihood security", *Journal for International Development* Vol 12, page 711.

8. Jane Pryer, in a further study with Rogers and Rahman. See Pryer, J, S Rogers and A Rahman (2005), "Work-disabling illness as a shock for livelihoods and poverty in Dhaka slums," *International Planning Studies* Vol 10, No 1, page 70.

9. Brown, Alison (2006), "Challenging street livelihoods", in Alison Brown (editor), *Contested Space: Street Trading, Public Space and Livelihoods in Developing Cities*, Intermediate Technology Publications, London, pages 3–16.

their poverty, with a particular focus on collective action and the interface of local groups with the political system. In their struggles to advance their interests, citizens have to build their relations with more powerful structures that function very differently (being more formalized) and that protect and promote different values and interests. In some cases, this is with the national state, but often it is with local government. It is in part through such struggles that the concept of co-production can be analyzed and understood.

III. THE MULTIPLE STRATEGIES USED BY THE URBAN POOR TO ENGAGE THE STATE AND SECURE ACCESS TO ESSENTIAL SERVICES

Faced with acute needs, very limited financial resources, high levels of commodification and informality, and governments with a demonstrated incapacity and/or unwillingness to address needs at the required scale, the poor use a number of strategies to improve their development options. Drawing on a previous analysis,[10] the strategies of the poor may be (somewhat crudely) grouped into five broad categories:

- **Individualized (or household) market-based strategies** in which the poor use avenues of labour (and product) market advancement, particularly around income generation, employment and education. The resources for such strategies may be secured from other family members, who may then receive support as incomes increase. However, the focus of effort is on individual advancement within the opportunities offered by existing structures and systems.
- **Collective self-help strategies** in which residents of a neighbourhood, workers within a trade, or others facing a common need come together to provide collective goods and services. Faced with the conditions described above, residents do much to improve their individual situations, particularly when they are in fairly stable residential communities. Such strategies are often undertaken in the complete absence of any state involvement.
- **Dependency-based strategies** in which the poor broadly accept their structural situation, and seek to improve their returns within the current institutional framework by using and extending patron–client relationships. The poor seek more advantageous outcomes without challenging the structural constraints within these relations. The prevalence of clientelist politics as a way of allocating resources in Southern towns and cities has been noted by many.[11] Central to this process is the practice of allocating state resources such as services, regulatory approvals and public employment, not as rights to those with proven entitlements but, rather, to benefit those powerful groups and individuals with the ability to influence the allocation of such resources, and a selected number of their loyal clients.
- **Exclusion strategies** in which the poor accept the impossibility of advancement through "socially acceptable" means, and adopt methods associated with criminality (including both personalized criminal behaviour and that associated with groups such as gangs).
- **Social movement strategies** – which are politicized mass action undertaken by collectives of the urban poor – in any one of a number

10. Mitlin, D (2007), "Urban social movements in southern towns and cities", Chronic Poverty Research Centre Working Paper 64, University of Manchester, Manchester.

11. See, for example, Abers, R (1998), "From clientelism to cooperation: local government, participatory policy and civil organizing in Porto Alegre, Brazil," *Politics and Society* Vol 26, No 4, pages 511–537; also Nance, E and L Ortolano (2007), "Community participation in urban sanitation: experiences in northeastern Brazil", *Journal of Planning Education and Research* Vol 26, pages 284–300.

12. Mitlin, D and A Bebbington (2006), "Social movements and chronic poverty across the urban–rural divide: concepts and experiences", CPRC Working Paper Series 65, University of Manchester, Manchester.

13. Tilly, Charles (2004), *Social Movements: 1768–2004*, Paradigm Publishers, Boulder, Colorado, 262 pages.

14. Crossley, N (2002), *Making Sense of Social Movements*, Open University Press, Buckingham, 224 pages.

15. Kabeer, N (2002), "Citizenship, affiliation and exclusion: perspectives from the South", *IDS Bulletin* Vol 33, No 2, pages 12–23.

of areas. Social movement activities may be concerned with the scale and security of income (including collective consumption goods), the defence of existing assets, and/or issues of identity and self-determination.[12] Most definitions of social movement activity emphasize the collective nature of the process, with at least some explicit political demands and rich social interaction that extends beyond formal organizational processes and associated alliances and coalitions to organic activities that citizens commit to and participate in.[13]

Few strategies identified above involve explicit political action, and most avoid contesting for inclusion in more rewarding and developmental social processes. However, just because the politics is not explicit does not mean that it is not present. The kinds of citizen actions that are easily recognized as social movements are associated with the modern state,[14] and the political systems in at least some Southern countries are not necessarily fully "modern"; more traditional forms of politics may favour less explicit political strategizing.[15] In this context, it appears that while many of the collective activities undertaken by Southern residents may not involve direct political claims, nevertheless through their focus on state services (as well as other kinds of resource) they involve some engagement with the state and the realm of politics.

Some collective self-help is commonplace within many low-income and informal settlements because there is simply no way in which households can manage their situation without a degree of collective action, for example to improve water supplies, establish a common garbage dump, improve drainage and reduce pools of stagnant water and/or flooding. Collective action is also needed to develop new sites, clear undergrowth and lay out settlements to enable plots to be marked out and to facilitate service provision; to provide each other with emergency help, and build and/or improve facilities such as schools and community centres; and any other services and facilities that groups agree to provide collectively. In some cases, self-help strategies operate entirely without the contribution of the state, even though collective self-help is generally provided in areas considered to be the responsibility of the state in higher-income countries. Many of these activities link to actual and/or potential state areas of activity. In some cases, as Castells describes in Monterrey (Mexico), there is a conscious withdrawal of the community from an engagement with the state, however this appears relatively rare and, even in this case, accommodation was achieved. The squatter movement in this city rejected state help during their first stages of development so as to preserve their autonomy.[16]

16. Castells, M (1983), *The City and the Grassroots: A Cross-cultural Theory of Urban Social Movements*, Edward Arnold, London, 450 pages.

17. See reference 16; also Pickvance, C (2003), "From urban social movements to urban movements: a review and introduction to a symposium on urban movements", *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* Vol 27, No 1, pages 102–109.

As evidenced by Castells and Pickvance,[17] citizens' struggles with the state for land and basic services are longstanding and remain important in the context of poverty reduction. Movements and their organizations have developed a wide range of different tools to further their chances of success. Movements may move between autonomy and dependency on party politics and/or clientelist relations, and back again in a context that is often fluid. In some cases, movement organizations (such as federations and associations) may have explicit party affiliations, but in other cases they see themselves as independent. Movements may be confrontational, undertaking demonstrations and other forms of direct action, but they may also prefer alternative approaches to secure their objectives. Generally speaking, research on social movements has focused

on contentious types of movement activities, rather than a slow and deliberate occupation of space typically filled by the state.[18] While the first grouping of strategies identified above may not be interested in co-production, there are more evident associations between co-production strategies and the second, third and fifth grouping of strategies used by the urban poor.[19]

Both self-help activism and movement activities are frequently place based, both at a micro level, in that people realize their shelter within neighbourhoods (particularly in the case of self-help); and at a meso level as the poor struggle for political inclusion (citizenship) at the level of the city (of more interest to movements). As acknowledged by Castells and Sassen,[20] much action happens at the level of the city. In the case of movements, city-based action is a primary sphere because of the significance of local authorities in influencing the conditions under which informal enterprise activity takes place and also the rules and regulations governing access to land and basic services (see Section II). In some countries (for example India, South Africa and Brazil), the provincial level is also important as a source of investment finance.

The urban poor may engage with the state in a number of areas, such as grievances related to work and income, issues related to access to land, basic services (such as water) and housing, other consumption-related issues such as food and subsidy payments, and campaigns for greater inclusion (for example, on groups of ethnicity, gender or other).[21] In many cases, their positions are defensive, seeking to protect what is already there, or where they face a threat of dispossession by other groups (for example, struggles against evictions). But on other occasions, the urban poor are more proactive, seeking strategies that enable them to advance their interests in the face of continuing and numerous struggles. As elaborated in Section V, some such strategies appear to fit within a co-production framework, but at the same time go beyond it in terms of their contribution to political reform.

IV. THE CONCEPT OF CO-PRODUCTION: GOING BEYOND AN IDEALIZED "WEBERIAN" MODEL OF BUREAUCRACY TO THE MESSY REALITY OF DAY TO DAY SERVICE DELIVERY

The concept of co-production appears to have come to prominence in the early 1980s, when a particular set of citizen–state interaction was "discovered" in US cities.[22] As remarked on in these papers, this was in the context of reducing state expenditures, however, a central theme of this work is the recognition that state agencies were not unambiguously providing a lower-cost and lower-quality service by involving local residents. These authors argued that they might be improving on services because of the particular benefits of citizen involvement. Whitaker argues that, in the case of services in which behavioural change is sought, participant involvement is likely to be critical to effective service delivery.[23] For instance, in the case of crime, he argues, it should be more widely recognized that police manage the streets through a set of negotiated interactions rather than the authoritative imposition of order. To achieve street security, personal and collective changes are required, with some dependence on the participation of local residents.[24] State service delivery organizations recognize that they need to catalyze desirable behaviour

18. See reference 13 for a categorization of movements that has contentious activity as a necessary characteristic. It is not clear that this is helpful in understanding movement activity in the South for reasons elaborated in this paper.

19. It should be noted that these strategies are especially to engage the state and are not the individualised kinds of resistant type strategies.

20. See reference 16; also Sassen, S (2004), "Local actors in global politics", *Current Sociology* Vol 52, No 4, pages 649–670.

21. See reference 12.

22. Various sources date the concept to discussions in the United States in the late 1970s. See Whitaker, G P (1980), "Co-production: citizen participation in service delivery", *Public Administration Review* Vol 40, No 3, pages 240–246; also Parks, R B, Paula C Baker, Larry Kiser, Ronald Oakerson, Elinor Ostrom, Vincent Ostrom, Stephen L Percy, Martha B Vandivot, Gordon Whitaker and Rick Wilson (1981), "Consumers as co-producers of public services: some economic and institutional considerations", *Policy Studies Journal* Vol 9, No 7, pages 1001–1011; Brudney, J L and R E England (1983), "Towards a definition of the co-production concept", *Public Administration Review* Vol 43, No 1, pages 59–65; and Ostrom, E (1996), "Crossing the great divide: co-production, synergy and development", *World Development* Vol 24, No 6, pages 1073–1087.

23. See reference 22, Whitaker (1980).

24. There are interesting parallels here in the support of the police for new police

stations in informal settlements in Mumbai, served and supported by elected citizen representatives; these were formed through an agreement between slum dweller federations and the police – see Roy, A N, A Jockin and Ahmad Javed (2004), "Community police stations in Mumbai's slums," *Environment and Urbanization* Vol 16, No 2, October, pages 135–138.

25. See reference 22, Whitaker (1980), page 243.

26. See reference 22, Parks et al. (1981); this was later elaborated in Ostrom (1996), see reference 22.

27. See reference 22, Parks et al. (1981), page 1003.

28. See reference 22, Parks et al. (1981), page 1006.

29. Marschall, M (2004), "Citizen participation in the neighbourhood context: a new look at co-production of local public goods", *Political Research Quarterly* Vol 57, No 2, pages 231–244; also see reference 22, Ostrom (1996).

30. See reference 29, Marschall (2004), page 232.

31. See reference 22, Brudney and England (1983), page 62; also see Bovaird, T (2007), "Beyond engagement and participation: user and community co-production of public services", *Public Administration Review* Vol 67, No 5, pages 846–860.

32. See reference 22, Brudney and England (1983), pages 63–64; also see reference 31, Bovaird (2007).

33. See reference 22, Brudney and England (1983), page 64.

and that coercive strategies are likely to be limited in what they can achieve. As Whitaker points out, to be fully effective in this task, state organizations need to respond in turn to the experiences of citizens, if the benefits of co-production are to be realized. This is exemplified in the case of agencies addressing domestic violence: "*[T]here is a continual shaping of what an agency does by the kinds of requests made on it by citizens.*"[25]

A paper published in 1981 develops these observations on the effectiveness of citizen contributions to state service delivery through their representation within an economic model.[26] The authors distinguish between production functions where the service provider and citizen provider are independent and can easily be substituted for each other, and those where a degree of interdependence is required. For instance: "*Police have very little capacity to affect community safety and security without citizen input.*"[27] If provider are substitutes, then it is simply a question of which is the most cost-effective for any given scale of production, and the answer depends on the relative costs of each potential supplier of the service (wage rates for officials, for example to the opportunity cost for the citizens). However, the authors argue, if they are interdependent (complementary), then some minimum input from one is required for any output to be obtained, and the most efficient (and sometimes only) outcomes will be when both participate in the production (service delivery) process. In this context, appropriate institutional arrangements are critical.[28]

Generally, and perhaps reflecting much of the way in which government action and development processes have been considered, research has focused on the contribution of co-production to service delivery rather than looking at more fundamental political issues such as its implications for the distribution of power between organized citizens and the state. The research focus has been on joint forms of service delivery within contextual and institutional analysis rather than on contributing to new forms of democracy and democratic practice.[29] However, there has been some recognition of the implications for co-production in citizen involvement and participation. On the one hand, this analysis recognized that state power is necessarily limited when dealing with situations where it is reliant on changes in human behaviour, for example police, health, education: "*…the fundamental point is that without active citizen participation the capacity of government to provide public goods and services is severely compromised.*"[30] Bureaucracies, rather than being cast in the role of all-knowing, all-able institutions, are recognized as being institutions that coexist with others, also with a degree of power, with boundary issues that need to be managed.[31] On the other hand, it recognizes that co-production extends citizen action into areas where it was previously not present, building skills and capacities, including those to recognize and realize collective will; and this is particularly significant in group and collective co-production activities.[32] Hence, although much of the literature discussing co-production is based within the context of a weak and reducing state, this literature identifies and discusses more fundamental and lasting limitations of state power. Moreover, this is not simply a question of cultural differences between professional and subaltern groups (the "downtown" streets), with professionals needing community participation to relate to the "poor"; research has demonstrated that co-production also involves neighbourhood groups in higher-income areas.[33] "*The contribution of co-production seems to be driven by the need for*

a different kind of authority for some kinds of service delivery, not one that is imposed from above and maintained through coercion but, rather, one that is agreed between the parties for the common welfare, and maintained through ongoing social relations and associated group support and/or sanctions." Whitaker ends his paper by reflecting back to a past era in which, he suggests, such practices were more common.[34]

Despite the above discussion, many of those writing about co-production, and particularly those writing in the context of development, view it to be a secondary strategy for service delivery, which is being used prior to the state gaining in political will and bureaucratic capacity.[35] Ostrom looks at its contribution to condominial sewerage systems to address sanitation needs in the northeast of Brazil, and to education in Nigeria. She describes a system through which low-income settlements are linked to city sewerage systems, by reducing conventional engineering standards and involving local residents in local planning decisions, some financing and voluntary labour.[36] Ostrom concludes: "*[M]any of these systems have been successful and have dramatically increased the availability of lower-cost, essential urban services to the poorest neighbourhoods in Brazilian cities.*"[37] In a context in which the labour of low-income residents is under-utilized, she suggests that the opportunity costs of citizen labour are low, and hence the economics of co-production will favour high inputs from citizens.[38] Joshi and Moore summarize two very different examples. The first is an elite intervention to strengthen police services in Karachi (Pakistan), the Citizen's Liaison Committee; and the second is a business association of commercial vehicles in Ghana, which collects income tax for the government and provides services at lorry parks (the Tanker's Association).[39] They conclude that in both cases, the organizations "*…help to fulfil a core state function in response to a clear decline in state capacity*", and that they offer lessons for "*…other contexts where conventional public provision is under stress.*"[40]

Drawing on her empirical work, Ostrom defines co-production as "*…the process through which inputs used to provide a good or service are contributions by individuals who are not in the same organization.*"[41] Joshi and Moore refine this definition to suggest that "*…institutionalized co-production is the provision of public services (broadly defined to include regulation) through regular, long-term relations between state agencies and organized groups of citizens, who both make substantial resource contributions.*"[42] They emphasize that such arrangements are not temporary and may not involve formal agreements, rather, potentially being "*…undefined, informal and renegotiated almost continuously*",[43] in a context in which "Weberian" institutional boundaries are blurred. Both Ostrom and Joshi and Moore mention resource contributions.[44] Brandsen and Pestoff differentiate between co-governance (planning and delivery), co-management (joint production) and co-production (citizen production).[45] Bovaird suggests that Ostrom's definition is now too wide, given the proliferation of partnership arrangements, but that Joshi and Moore's is too narrow, as it only has a focus on state agencies and does not consider other professional providers.[46]

Joshi and Moore, analyzing reasons for co-production in the South, suggest that there are two "drivers" that are "*…variants of the imperfections or incompleteness of states.*"[47] The first is a failure of government to provide services (governance drivers), and the second is where the context makes it particularly difficult to provide services (logistical drivers) due,

34. See reference 22, Whitaker (1980), page 243.

35. See Leftwich, Adrian (2005), "Politics in command: development studies and the rediscovery of social science", *New Political Economy* Vol 10, No 4, pages 573–606 (see, in particular, page 598); also Joshi, A and M Moore (2004), "Institutionalized co-production: unorthodox public service delivery in challenging environments", *The Journal of Development Studies* Vol 40, No 4, pages 31–49 (see, in particular, pages 32–33 and 38); and see reference 22, Ostrom (1996), pages 1080 and 1083.

36. See reference 22, Ostrom (1996).

37. See reference 22, Ostrom (1996), page 1075.

38. See reference 22, Ostrom (1996), page 1080.

39. See reference 35, Joshi and Moore (2004).

40. See reference 35, Joshi and Moore (2004), page 38.

41. See reference 22, Ostrom (1996), page 1073.

42. See reference 35, Joshi and Moore (2004), page 40.

43. See reference 35, Joshi and Moore (2004), page 40.

44. See reference 22, Ostrom (1996), page 1073; also see reference 35, Joshi and Moore (2004) page 40.

45. Brandsen, T and V Pestoff (2006), "Co-production, the third sector and the delivery of public services", *Public Management Review* Vol 8, No 4, pages 493–501 (see page 497).

46. See reference 31, Bovaird (2007), page 847.

47. See reference 35, Joshi and Moore (2004), page 41.

In this context, it is particularly relevant to note that neither of the case studies considered in this paper involves large-scale citizen action. In the case of the Citizen Liaison Committee, the role of the group is to add reputation and institutional qualities to the police service. This is a group of elite individuals who wish to support and augment existing security services so as to increase existing police action and improve outcomes for their society. In the case of the Tankers Association, the co-production effort is a collective of commercial enterprises that make money providing transport services. In this case, co-production ensures that the association's competitive advantage is realized and protected, and their commercial interests advanced.

48. See reference 31, Bovaird (2007), especially page 855.

49. Ackerman, John (2004), "Co-governance for accountability: beyond 'exit' and 'voice'", *World Development* Vol 24, No 6, pages 447–463.

50. See reference 31, Bovaird (2007), especially page 846.

51. See reference 31, Bovaird (2007), page 844.

52. The description of OPP's work draws on Hasan, A (2006), "Orangi Pilot Project; the expansion of work beyond Orangi and the mapping of informal settlements and infrastructure", *Environment and Urbanization* Vol 18, No 2, October, pages 451–480.

for example, to large numbers of clients, the need for local variation in service delivery, and a lack of information, personnel and/or authority. Bovaird (who focuses primarily on the North) extends the logistical drivers to recognize that, in the case of some personal services, client participation is essential (and the example he offers is fitness training for obese children), and hence he suggests that while the first driver may be temporary, the second is not.[48] Ackerman discusses the contribution of citizen involvement in state activities in the South as a way of improving the accountability of the state and directly addressing governance issues.[49] Hence, the literature either views the state as evolving (and hence co-production as temporary) and/or recognizes the need for micro level collaboration in personal services. But it does not locate co-production within a broader struggle for choice, self-determination and meso level political relations in which citizens both seek an engagement with the state (to secure redistribution, reduce free riders, etc.) and also are oriented towards self-management and local control over local provision in areas related to basic needs (i.e. services with development significance).

Bovaird argues that public administration is now recognizing the involvement of service users and their communities and that this "…*has major democratic implications because it locates users and communities more centrally in the decision-making process… [and] demands that politicians and professionals find new ways to interface with service users and their communities*."[50] He suggests that there is room for system transformation as a result of citizen involvement, "…*[o]nce clients and community activists become engaged in the co-planning and co-delivery of services alongside professional staff, the networks created may behave as complex adaptive systems, with very different dynamics from provider-centric services*."[51] However, the cases he examines are either state programmes (in which the government sets the parameters of citizen involvement) or are individual communities with a very limited reach. Nevertheless, in understanding the orientation and interests of some citizen movements in the South in co-production, his comments may offer an insightful starting point.

V. EXAMPLES OF BOTTOM-UP CO-PRODUCTION IN SOUTHERN TOWNS AND CITIES

The following examples help to illustrate the strategies that have been followed by grassroots organizations in Southern towns and cities and illustrate how grassroots associations (either as self-help agencies or through their membership of movement type organizations) have used co-production as a means to advance access to services and goods that meet basic needs, and also to change the role of citizens in relation to the state programmes. They have been selected due to their scale and/or significance in terms of national state policy.

In Pakistan, a local NGO the Orangi Pilot Project (OPP) developed a new solution to sanitation to address the appalling living conditions and related health problems, including high child mortality rates in Orangi, a large informal settlement in Karachi.[52] When this work began in 1982, Orangi was on the periphery of the city. Some of the communities were represented by residents' associations that followed clientelist strategies to try to improve services. They lobbied local politicians and promised votes in return for water pipes and public standpoints. OPP staff argued

that such a strategy was never going to work at the spatial scale that was required or with an adequate quality of investment. So they developed an alternative model whereby the residents of a lane or street paid for the lane investment in sanitation while the municipality took on responsibility for the sewer network into which this fed, and also the waste treatment plants. At first, the municipality refused to participate in this work and the people discharged the wastewater from the lane sewers into *nalas* (streams). The settlement is relatively hilly and gravity carried the waste away. Over time, the authorities recognized that this was a workable strategy for sanitation provision, and were more interested in participating in the role that had been designed for them. OPP staff have argued in favour of this model of co-produced services from a number of perspectives. First, with respect to affordability, they suggested that the state lacked the resources to invest adequately. However, despite the lack of state investment, the people paid the costs in terms of high bills for health, so they were better off making the small investment (originally costed at about US$ 20 per household) in lane sanitation. The models of state provision developed in the North were, staff suggested, simply inappropriate in lower-income nations. Second, and in respect of state capacity, the Northern model assumed that the state had the ability to monitor the quality of investment that was taking place and ensure high standards. But corruption was endemic and often the contractors cheated on the quality of materials, sometimes in collusion with state officials. Only the people who needed the service cared enough to ensure adequate quality; hence they had to be actively involved in preparation, management and installation. Equally, having made the investment, the staff argued the people would maintain it, while the state could not be trusted to do so. Third, there are benefits to stronger local organizations, they suggested, in terms of other development objectives that require citizen action. Involvement in sanitation provision has helped to shift residents' groups away from those concerned with using clientelist networks and towards those concerned with representing the interests of their members in a more open and transparent engagement with the political system. What is notable, in this case, is how rapidly the idea of community-installed and managed sanitation spread through the informal settlement once it was understood. In Orangi, 96,994 houses have built their neighbourhood sanitation systems, by investing Rs. 94.29 million (US$ 1.57 million), and similar strategies have worked well in many other settlements and other urban centres. Some 20 years after the work began, the city of Karachi conceded that this was an effective strategy that should be supported throughout the city.

A second example of where co-production has been introduced to provide sanitation services can be found in the work of the Shack Dwellers Federation of Namibia.[53] The federation is a grassroots organization made up of women-led savings schemes within very low-income settlements. Many of these women lack legal tenure of the land on which they live and wanted to find a way of purchasing affordable plots. Together with the city government of Windhoek, the federation devised a policy whereby organized groups were able to occupy land with only communal services (i.e. toilet blocks and standpipes). The cost of these plots is relatively low, and hence affordable by many of the lowest-income women. The women wanted to improve their living conditions and in many settlements, once they had secure tenure, they saved or borrowed to be able to invest in

individual plot services. In some cases, municipal staff supported them with technical assistance. The motivation was very much the need to find low-cost solutions so that all members could have the development opportunities that they sought. At the same time, there was a broader objective, which was to demonstrate that low-income organized communities have a capacity to collaborate effectively with the state to address common problems, and that policy making should be open to influence by citizens, rather than simply being seen as the prerogative of politicians and professionals. The federation has consistently taken up invitations to participate in state processes, including the recent review of housing policy in Namibia. Their experience suggests that effective participation in government decision-making processes is enhanced by an active engagement with the day to day practicalities of service provision. It is such grounded experience that enables the federation and its support NGO to represent policies that are derived from the preferences and priorities of their members, designed through low-income women's everyday struggles and their members' involvement in development projects. To date 3,100 federation members have secured land, 1,174 of whom have also accessed loans for improved services and infrastructure.[54] The state has also recognized these grassroots efforts by offering grant finance to a community loan fund.[55] Those with secure tenure who have not taken loans have used their savings to upgrade infrastructure. This total is about 5 per cent of those living in shacks in urban Namibia.

The use of co-production to create openings for citizen involvement in areas that have been reserved for the state within conventional delivery models has been used more widely. The Namibian federation belongs to a network of grassroots organizations (Shack or Slum Dwellers' International (SDI)) that have consistently sought to influence policy through entry into delivery and pragmatic engagement, rather than through lobbying "from the outside" (Box 1).

In some cases, SDI affiliates create new construction or installation strategies that the state has not previously used. In other cases, they seek to create a devolved citizen-managed space within existing state programmes. For example, the South African Homeless People's Federation negotiated with their government to have a distinct component within the state capital subsidy for housing, the People's Housing Process (PHP), that enables citizens to produce housing with the state subsidy rather than receive housing produced by private contractors and/or municipal authorities. While the PHP route has received only a small proportion of total funds, the experience has been influential in housing policy, encouraging an equity component and minimum house size within the other subsidy delivery routes.[56]

The evident ability of local grassroots organizations within SDI's network to manage social relations at the settlement level leads to other activities. In some cases, government officials have been interested in working with SDI affiliates to enhance their capacity to implement their plans. The grassroots organizations are motivated to participate because of their need to address the immediate needs of their members and the long-term wish to establish their credibility and legitimize the potential contribution of their members in state programmes through demonstrated capacity. One of the most significant examples of where SDI has responded to a request for help from the state is in the resettlement of 20,000 families in Mumbai (India). The state wished to clear the areas adjacent to the

54. Muller, A and D Mitlin (2007), "Securing inclusion: strategies for community empowerment and state redistribution", *Environment and Urbanization* Vol 19, No 2, October, pages 425–440.

55. See reference 54.

56. Tomlinson, M (2007), "The development of a low-income housing finance sector in South Africa: have we finally found a way forward?", *Habitat International* Vol 31, pages 77–86.

BOX 1
Shack/Slum Dwellers International (SDI)

Shack/Slum Dwellers International (SDI) is a transnational network of people's organizations. Membership is made up of grassroots organizations, primarily women-led savings schemes based in settlements with insecure tenure and inadequate shelter. SDI's methodology (in summary) uses savings to rebuild neighbourhood social capital; peer exchanges to offer skills, ambition and confidence to the urban poor; and federative structures to institutionalize learning and negotiate political deals with local, city and national governments. A common initial challenge is to find ways in which local residents can work together to achieve a locally determined development plan. The methodology is notably resistant to domination by professionals – SDI believes the solutions have to emerge from the shack/slum dwellers themselves. The activities are centred primarily on tenure security, basic services and, in some contexts, housing and/or income generation. Donor finance is used to catalyze state contributions – aiming at solutions that can be replicated at scale. What is remarkable is the rapid spread of SDI organizing methodologies: ten years ago, there were just six affiliates; current members and associates are listed below. This growth suggests that there is evident interest within grassroots communities to work with both community initiatives and political change to address the needs of low-income settlements.

Fully-fledged federations exist in the following countries:

Asia: Cambodia, India, Nepal, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand
Africa: Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, Namibia, South Africa, Tanzania, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Uganda
Latin America: Brazil

Savings groups have been formed in the following countries, although fully-fledged federations have yet to emerge:
Asia: Indonesia, East Timor, Mongolia
Africa: Lesotho, Swaziland, Madagascar, Angola
Latin America: Colombia

Countries exploring options to engage the SDI network as an affiliate include:
Africa: Mozambique, Nigeria, Sierra Leone
Latin America: Argentina, Venezuela

SOURCE: SDI secretariat and author's own notes.

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railway line of all shacks to enable the trains to go faster. However, it was unable to do this in a way that prevented spurious claims to entitlements by individual citizens seeking to exploit this commitment for personal benefit, and resultant court cases that would delay the project. In this sense, the state recognized that it lacked the necessary capacity to manage the complexities of social relations in this informal settlement, and that their formal systems were unable to prevent abuse. The grassroots organization (the National Slum Dwellers' Federation) was able to establish a system that enabled entitlements to be proven beyond doubt through a mapping system in which residency claims had to be verified by neighbours and which local organizations accepted as legitimate.[57]

An analysis of the experiences of affiliates of SDI suggests that this strategy works for their members for multiple reasons.

- **Design benefits.** It is more effective than lobbying the state for improvements in service provision and state intervention in shelter

57. Patel, S, C d'Cruz and S Burra (2002), "Beyond evictions in a global city: people-managed resettlement in Mumbai", *Environment and Urbanization* Vol 14, No 1, April, pages 159–172.

markets because it enables real delivery problems to be considered by those who suffer the consequences of poor quality programmes and policies. There are lots of problems in the professional models and they need to be revised, but the urban poor design through experience not through abstract conceptual models.

- **Relational benefits.** A practical engagement with the state avoids the confrontation often associated with the claims of civil society groups that tends to provoke a defensive reaction from the state. A practical engagement builds strong positive social relations and, in many cases, there are further opportunities for collaboration.

- **Inclusive benefits** in terms of local organization. The emphasis on the practical and non-confrontational encourages low-income women to play a central role in the local process. This participation secures one objective of the SDI process, to provide a collective entity through which this disadvantaged group can strategize to address their needs.

- **Political benefits.** The scale and nature of a mass movement based around women's engagement with their practical development needs is a latent political promise and a threat; politicians are drawn into the process in part because they want to secure the electoral support of this group.

- **Empowerment and poverty reduction benefits.** Engagement in this process has proved effective in encouraging those involved to feel positive about their work and gain growing confidence in their skills and capacities. In so doing, it addresses the insidious nature of poverty and inequality in which low-income and otherwise disadvantaged citizens are treated as less worthy than others.

58. Barbosa, R, Y Cabannes and L Morães (1997), "Tenant today, *posserio* tomorrow", *Environment and Urbanization* Vol 9, No 2, October, pages17–46.

A further example of co-production by a federation of local residents' associations is illustrated by FEGIP in Brazil.[58] In this case, a people's organization, the Goiânia Federation for Tenants and *Posseiros*, organized the invasion of public land (common land) so as to provide improved shelter for hundreds of thousands of families living in informal rental accommodation. The strategy was successful in improving the shelter options of a significant proportion of tenants. Its popularity was evidenced not only by the numbers taking part in FEGIP's own activities but also by the copycat occupations, as other residents organized their own autonomous occupations. The federation had to manage difficult relations, first with an authoritarian government and then with the transition to democracy, as the state remained nervous about the potential power of a separate organizing capacity and sought to weaken FEGIP. This experience appears to be insightful in exposing some of the power dynamics and politics behind co-production and reminding us that an autonomous organizing capacity can be seen as a threat by those in power, in part because it adds to the ability of local grassroots organizations to secure outcomes that favour the poor, sometimes with costs for political elites.

In all four examples, organized citizen groups have taken over relational and physical space that is typically seen as state "territory" and have reached some level of cooperation with the responsible state agencies. In this sense, these examples are all co-production, as traditionally viewed. However, these activities have not been promoted by the state and its officials, nor are these examples of provision motivated by income generation (which might perhaps be viewed as public–private partnerships).

These examples are all self-organized co-production, with grassroots organizations engaging the state while at the same time maintaining a degree of autonomy within the delivery process. The objective is not simply to develop a model that is passed over to state employees to manage and/or to take over as the state gains in capacity. The objectives include practical delivery issues – but also more ambitious goals to change the way in which the state functions towards a more decentralized form of operation, with greater citizen control over state resources (through linkage with citizen action and/or state transfers). Not surprisingly, there are differences within the examples considered. OPP's activities and model do not involve extensive support for social movement organizations, as it restricts its role to that of professional advisor albeit one providing free advice to low-income communities. Nevertheless, the professional intervention is premised on the understanding that previous political practices were not working in the interests of those living in low-income settlements, and direct involvement in sanitation offers an opportunity for residents' associations to work differently, and this has been taken up. Other institutional interventions by the OPP, and particularly the formation of the Urban Resource Centre in Karachi and in other urban centres, have helped to provide a space for citizen public action.[59] The other examples are cases where there is an explicit intent to change political outcomes by the citizen groups involved in co-production activities. The following section reconsiders the literature on co-production in an attempt to consider the implications of these experiences for existing analytical and conceptual frameworks within this area, and to deepen our understanding of these strategies.

VI. WHY ARE SOCIAL MOVEMENTS INTERESTED IN CO-PRODUCTION? THE DEVIL IS IN THE DETAIL

What does consideration of the examples in Section V add to the analysis of co-production summarized in Section IV? This section discusses the extent to which the examples map onto how co-production has been considered, and then reflects on the motivations of and strategies used by citizen-led co-production.

There are evident analytical limitations that arise from a focus on the product of co-production rather than on the politics of the process in an attempt to incorporate the examples given above into the existing frameworks. As noted in Section IV, much of the analysis, especially in the context of the global South, has been from the perspective of the functionality of operational services, i.e. an instrumental approach that focuses on how to improve outcomes in terms of the particular service being considered. Much less attention has been given to co-production as a political process that citizens engage with to secure changes in their relations with government and state agencies, in addition to improvements in basic services. Nevertheless, looking at the motivation behind the cases described in Section V, it is evident that their engagement with service provision in co-productive enterprise goes well beyond service functionality. In particular, all of the activities described in Section V strengthen local citizen organization, and in so doing provide a platform for wider civic engagement and greater political engagement by the urban poor. The synergy that emerges is not just between state and citizen[60]

59. Hasan, A (2007), "The Urban Resource Centre, Karachi", *Environment and Urbanization* Vol 19, No 1, April, pages 275–292.

60. Evans, P (1996), "Introduction: development strategies across the public–private divide", *World Development* Vol 24, No 6, pages 1033–1037.

but also between the movements' engagement in the practical day to day needs of citizens, and their political aspirations for political inclusion and redistribution goals; goals that, arguably, can only be achieved with an organized mass of citizenry negotiating improved outcomes from the state through a political process.[61]

Reading across the literature and looking at the cases examined in Section V, there are evident constraints to what the state can do. This is perhaps more evident in the global South where there is less state capacity and greater informality in the lives of residents but, as described above, this has also been recognized to be the case in the North.[62] There are systemic weaknesses in a "Weberian" model of an authoritative bureaucracy and, in practice, the state needs to negotiate with local citizens to ensure their participative involvement, not only with respect to individual changes in behaviour but also because some things can most effectively be managed locally, with citizen engagement. Such a reality has encouraged many citizen groups to be involved in locally based self-help action. However, grassroots-organized co-production, with its more deliberate engagement with the state, appears to have a dynamic that encourages it to move beyond a local orientation and towards more substantive change. From the perspective of citizen groups, interest in being involved appears to be both because such activities respond to immediate needs and because it prepares communities for a more substantive engagement with the political system, particularly around issues of collective consumption, which enables them to negotiate for greater control and additional resources. The cases above operate with a triad of practical local action, engagement with the state and some kind of networking or federating above the level of the individual neighbourhood. As argued in Mitlin and Muller in the case of Namibia, not only do the co-production activities help the Shack Dwellers Federation to build strong positive relations with the state, but it also helps to advance the political solutions that are believed to be necessary.[63]

These experiences suggest that the nature of grassroots civil society groups matters in terms of their ability to negotiate political outcomes that are favourable to the poor. And, more specifically, that the nature of groups arising from a co-production process (practical action, engagement with the state, networking of neighbourhood groups) appears to offer particular benefits to the poor, extending political practice through drawing in new groups and persuading the state to respond positively. Both our case studies and the literature note that this process brings a new kind of citizen into these political activities, one who was not previously active. At the same time, in at least some cases, existing leadership chooses to become involved, but to practice a different kind of politics. Bovaird argues that the approach draws in those who "...*want to deal with common concerns at the 'small politics'*" level, concretely and personally, but who distrust political parties and old grassroots organization and do not wish to become "expert activists".[64] Abers recognized " ...*a new kind of neighbourhood organization emerging in Brazilian cities that refused to play according to clientelist rules*", which used a mixture of pressure and protest strategies rather than clientelist negotiations to advance the needs of low-income settlements.[65] As in the case of Bovaird: "*Few of the participants in the Extremo Sul forum had previously been activists – for the most part, they were just ordinary people hoping to improve their neighbourhoods.*"[66] SDI affiliates are also very conscious that, at least in part, they draw in

61. Moore, M (2003), "Arguing the politics of inclusion", in P Houtzager and M Moore (editors), *Changing Paths: International Development and the New Politics of Inclusion*, University of Michigan Press, Ann Arbor, pages 261–284.

62. See reference 22, Whitakar (1980), page 246.

63. See reference 54.

64. See reference 31, Bovaird (2007), page 856.

65. See reference 11, Abers (1998), page 515.

66. See reference 11, Abers (1998), page 526.

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women many of whom have not had previous experience of political involvement.[67] The practical nature of local organizing helps to build strong links between residents, resulting in significant demonstrations of popular support, most typically through the scale of financial contribution and participation in events (some of which include politicians). As one state politician said to an NGO activist at a meeting of more than 5,000 members of two Indian grassroots federations that work together in India: "*I can see this is not a rent-a-mob.*"[68] The nature and depth of activism is likely to provoke a positive response from politicians (once they accept that they cannot control the process), in part because such groups are not politically aligned and therefore have votes that can be secured.

Jockin Arputham, leader of the National Slum Dwellers' Federation in India, reflects on the unsuccessful nature of past political practice, when grassroots organizations followed union organizing practices, because it did not build a sufficiently effective activist base but tended to be oppositional and therefore easily dismissed.[69] At the same time, in 1993, he warned the informal shack dwellers in South Africa that they could not depend on the forthcoming democratic government to address their needs but, rather, needed to organize to further their own interests.[70] With this advice, he highlighted a recognized failing of present-day democracy to address the needs of many citizens, particularly those of the lowest-income groups.

Grassroots co-production seeks to resolve a paradox. Effective local services available to all citizens require some level of local democratic practice, a genuine need to work together (to plan and construct infrastructure networks, to identify and support those in acute need); but this is difficult within a modern democratic state. State agencies see themselves (whether central or local) as the key agencies controlling activities (to the exclusion of others). If supervised by elected politicians, these agencies also consider that they have the right to do so, legitimated by the elections. State involvement tends towards centralized control and away from those directly involved, and tends to professionalize state activities, promoting a very different kind of authority from that of democratic collective practice. Superficial participation only in micro-management does not lead to successful community involvement.[71] Appadurai has cast the strategies of SDI as "deep democracy", an attempt to further democratic principles such as inclusion, participation, transparency, accountability and redistribution among and for the pavement dwellers of Mumbai and their organizational allies (the Alliance).[72]

This situation is not restricted to the South. Castells' analysis of the citizen movements in Madrid describes both their energy and success,[73] and their demise with the advent of a democratic national state[74] that was, at least in part, due to the inability of national party politics to accommodate alternative democratic practice.[75] Neighbourhood movements support local identities based on day to day interactions and with a strong orientation towards both self-reliance and citizen participation. But the very pressure they exert to bringing the state down to the community level is resisted by centralizing political forces.[76] Castells argues that these kinds of organized citizen action secured significant success with very positive implications for urban development, but that this did not survive the transition to democracy because of the inability of citizen groups to manage a political transformation in which their leadership was drawn off into political parties and chose to contest alternative political issues.[77] In this

67. Podlashuc, L (2008), "Voices from the slums", CORC, Cape Town.

68. See reference 10.

69. D'Cruz, C and D Mitlin (2007), "Shack/Slum Dwellers International: one experience of the contribution of membership organizations to pro-poor urban development", in R Kanbur, M Chen, R Jhabvala and C Richards (editors), *Membership-based Organizations of the Poor*, Routledge, Abingdon, pages 221–239; also Arputham, Jockin (2008), "Developing new approaches for people-centred development", in this volume of *Environment and Urbanization*.

70. Baumann, T, J Bolnick and D Mitlin (2004), "The age of cities and organizations of the urban poor: the work of the South African Homeless People's Federation", in D Mitlin and D Satterthwaite (2004), *Empowering Squatter Citizen*, Earthscan, London, pages 193–215.

71. See reference 11, Nance and Ortolano (2007).

72. Appadurai, A (2001), "Deep democracy: urban governmentality and the horizon of politics", *Environment and Urbanization* Vol 13, No 2, October, pages 23–43.

73. Castells summarizes the contribution of the citizen movement to housing renewal and redevelopment, urban services, planning, the preservation of historic centres and cultural activities. See reference 16, pages 258–261.

74. See reference 16, pages 268–269 and 274.

75. See reference 16, page 277.

76. See reference 16, page 285.

77. See also Davila, Julio D (1990), "Mexico's urban popular movements: a conversation with Pedro Moctezuma", *Environment and Urbanization* Vol 2, No 1, April, pages 35–50, reflecting on this with regard to Mexico.

78. See reference 35, Joshi and Moore (2004), page 45.

79. See reference 35, Joshi and Moore (2004), page 46.

80. Evans, P (1996), "Government action, social capital and development: reviewing the action on synergy", *World Development* Vol 24, No 6, pages 1119–1132.

81. See reference 31, Bovaird (2007), pages 857–858.

82. See reference 49, page 455.

83. See reference 11, Abers (1998), pages 533–534.

84. See reference 11, Abers (1998), page 534.

85. *Posseiro* is the name given to those claiming a right to use land that has not been subject to sub-division and that is without formal owners.

86. See reference 58, page 28.

87. Avritzer, L (2006), "New public spaces in Brazil: local democracy and deliberative politics", *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* Vol 30, No 3, pages 623–637 (see, in particular, page 626).

sense, co-production strategies can be understood as a modern response to the paradoxes of democratic will and practice and, as Joshi and Moore suggest, it is a mistake to see these arrangements as relics of traditional arrangements.[78] But while Joshi and Moore suggest that the approach is particularly recommended where "…*public authority is unusually weak*",[79] this argument suggests that this is not necessarily the case.

Much of the existing literature sees the state as a key instigator of co-production. Evans argues that if appropriate local organizations are not in place to promote the required social capital needed for co-production, then the most likely candidate to assist in their development is a "…*competent engaged set of public institutions*."[80] Bovaird also discusses the importance of a sympathetic political elite, and identifies the need for politicians to support the contestation of professional roles (after recognizing that professionals may be uncomfortable with greater citizen involvement).[81] Ackerman emphasizes the importance of the reform-minded bureaucrat in holding the city government to account in Mumbai (India), and goes on to conclude that the "…*supply side of the equation is crucial. Without a capacity and well-financed state apparatus that can actually respond to popular demands and participation, such accountability mechanisms would create more disenchantment than hope*."[82] Abers also recognizes the contribution of the state – both in the context of providing the finance for capital investments at neighbourhood level and in hiring community organizers who attend neighbourhood meetings and who "…*reflected a new type of governing that privileged accessibility, flexibility and negotiation*."[83] In part, she suggests, this happened because the political interests of the party in power, the PT (Workers' Party), coincided with those of the neighbourhood organizations: "…*both sought a transparent process through which neighbourhoods could obtain access to government infrastructure and services*."[84]

Our analysis suggests that the contribution of the state may be more ambivalent that these authors suggest. FEGIP, despite its very considerable contribution to meeting the needs of the lowest-income groups, found that the transition to democracy in Brazil did not result in appreciation and support but, rather, the state continued to consider grassroots organizing a threat: "..*the government tried to weaken the posseiros*[85] *movement by offering public services and state housing programmes. During the dictatorship, the repression of the urban posses was brutal and vicious; today, the repression is more subtle and polite*."[86] As evident in FEGIP's experience, the reaction of the state is ambivalent – it would prefer to retain control, and it may consider organized communities to be a threat rather than an opportunity. In part, this relates to the prevalence of clientelist politics to manage resource scarcity and support existing political interests. Avritzer, in his account of the development of participatory budgeting in Porto Alegre, explains that the initial negotiating position of the PT (Workers' Party) was that local assemblies should not have decision-making powers, but that these should be vested in a citywide structure, and that participation should be by individual citizens, not as neighbourhood associations (leading to the withdrawal of one of the unions of local associations from the process in the early 1990s).[87]

The notable conclusion with respect to the experiences in Section V is that these social organizations have managed in spite of the state rather than because of them. In the case of Pakistan, the negotiations have taken many years and only recently has substantive progress at the city and

national level been achieved.[88] For FEGIP, as elaborated above, the state has been ambivalent. In the case of the national federations of slum and shack dwellers that are affiliates of SDI, the state response has been mixed. Governments wish to be seen to be positive but use a range of arguments to limit their commitment. They may resist formalizing inclusion into government policy-making groups by arguing that those residents not organized by SDI are not representative of all interests, and they cannot be seen to be making a special case. Bureaucracies may resist federation attempts to secure community management for fear that standards will not be maintained.[89] However, SDI's experience is that the adoption of co-production strategies in terms of basic services helps to draw a positive response from the state. Just as Whitaker concludes in respect of US citizens that making positive demands on state agencies encourages those agencies to be more responsive and increases the likelihood that, in at least some cases, the state will shift from being authoritative to being willing to negotiate.[90] By being proactive in what they offer, the experiences of groups such as those described in Section III show that they encourage the state to change, offering new alternatives to conventional forms of state delivery. As described in the cases of Namibia, Pakistan and India above, and as elaborated by Abers,[91] this happens in part because the state begins to understand how these strategies can contribution to state functions and/or political objectives. However, it also happens because of political realities – governments resist until they judge it to be in their political interests to negotiate. However, state-sponsored co-production may be limited in what it can achieve, in part because of such ambiguities. Avritzer, in a deeper analysis of participatory budgeting in Porto Alegre and other Brazilian cities, concludes that the spread of the approach is successful in improving access by residents of low-income settlements to public goods, but that, especially in the smaller cities, "… *it is not possible to see changes in democratic practices such as greater participation of associated actors in decision-making processes at the local level.*"[92] The effectiveness of participatory budgeting in Porto Alegre and some other larger cities is, he suggests, more related to the pre-existing political culture of the area, which helped to prepare the ground for a new way of interacting with the public administration.

A deeper analysis is helped by Foucault's work on governmentality and state power. Foucaldian analysis helps provide a framework through which we can understand the strategy of co-production. Co-production (whether promoted by the state or civil society) strengthens civil society capacity; it teaches these groups new things and new ways of acting and, in particular, it strengthens collective practice.[93] In the case of Extremo Sul (the district discussed by Abers), "*…the policy also tended to promote* **cooperation** *among neighbourhoods. This is because the dynamics of decision making in the forums not only encouraged neighbourhood associations to mobilize residents but also to make alliances with other neighbourhoods.*"[94] The national federations that are affiliates of SDI strengthen local organizations with savings, a process requiring regular day to day contacts between neighbours, and then link the savings groups through federations; federating is a critical link whereby local groups are drawn into processes that both emphasize their solidarity one with another (resisting individualization) and create a political union able to negotiate directly with the state. Individualization, according to Foucault, is one of the ways through which the state reinforces its own power through its control of

88. See reference 52; also Hasan, A (2008), "Financing the sanitation programme of the Orangi Pilot Project – Research and Training Institute in Pakistan", *Environment and Urbanization* Vol 20, No 1, April, pages 109–120.

89. See Baumann, Ted and Joel Bolnick (2001), "Out of the frying pan into the fire: the limits of loan finance in a capital subsidy context," *Environment and Urbanization* Vol 13, No 2, October, pages 103–116.

90. See reference 22, Whitaker (1980). Mitlin explains in more detail how the affiliates of SDI seek to engage with the state in ways that both maintain their autonomy and enable their members to access state resources to support community-led development programmes. See Mitlin, D (2008), *Urban Poor Funds; development by the people for the people*, Poverty Reduction in Urban Areas Series, Working Paper 18, IIED, London. This can be downloaded at no charge from http://www.iied.org/HS/index.html#pub.

91. See reference 11, Abers (1998).

92. See reference 87, page 624.

93. See reference 11, Abers (1998).

94. See reference 11, Abers (1998), page 524.

95. Rabinow, Paul (1984), *The Foucault Reader: An Introduction to Foucault's Thought*, Penguin Books, London, 390 pages; also Dreyfus, H L and P Rabinow (1982), *Michel Foucault: Beyond Structuralism and Hermeneutics*, Harvester Wheatsheaf, Hemel Hempstead, 231 pages (see, in particular, pages 139–140).

96. See Dean, M (1999), *Governmentality: Power and Rule in Modern Society*, Sage Publications, London, pages 20–27 for an elaboration of the concept of governmentality.

97. See reference 72, page 33.

individuals.[95] As these examples demonstrate, the process of co-production resists individualization, both increasing the density of working relations between groups and strengthening their consciousness about the benefits of such collaboration.

Co-production also provides an arena within which to challenge particular modes of governmentality, or the systems and processes of government in various dimensions.[96] The processes of government include the concepts, techniques and rationalities through which services are delivered. As civil society gains knowledge of the processes of the state (through co-production), so it occupies such spaces of governmentality in its own right. As Appadurai notes, it may be argued that in so doing, community organizations merely replicate oppressive tendencies of the state. But in his observations of the federation in Mumbai, he draws more positive conclusions: "...*my own view is that this sort of governmentality from below, in the world of the urban poor, is a kind of counter-governmentality, animated by the social relations of shared poverty, by the excitement of active participation in the politics of knowledge, and by its openness to correction through other forms of intimate knowledge and spontaneous everyday politics.*"[97] Drawing conclusions across a range of examples is clearly difficult. In practice, it is likely that in some cases citizen groups succeed in occupying these spaces and making them their own; and in others, such groups take on the interests of state. As an agent of the state, it might be argued, lower-cost services might be achieved, but little contribution is made towards broader issues of democratic practice. In all of the examples above, civil society groups have been able to engage actively with the practical improvements that they require in state-financed service delivery, as a result of their direct involvement in service provision and hence their interface with the rules and regulations of the state.

VII. CONCLUSION

This paper has reviewed experiences with co-production in the context of citizen action and social movement strategies. In many cities of the South, the evident weakness of the state and issues of affordability increase the size of the constituency that supports self-help. However, the perspective of the citizen groups profiled here goes well beyond the immediate material advantages of co-production. As shown above, a number of grassroots organizations have sought to develop and sustain co-production approaches both because of the immediate benefits to service delivery and also to achieve a broader set of political objectives. Co-production is attractive to movements both because it strengthens local organizations and because it equips these groups with an understanding of the changes in state delivery practices that are required if they are to address citizen needs (particularly in the area of collective consumption). As a result of their direct engagement, they are better equipped to campaign for the required changes through an understanding of service delivery at multiple levels.

Arguably, such a process fits well within the informal practices that prevail in many low-income settlements. As Bovaird elaborates, co-production helps to achieve change through recognizing the "...*need to reconceptualize service provision as a process of social construction in which actors in self-organizing systems negotiate rules, norms and institutional*

frameworks rather than taking the rules as given."[98] Rather that expecting low-income residents to adopt the professionalized practices of the rich, co-production builds on much more familiar social relations, albeit within a context of transparency and practical collaboration between state and citizens. Rather than looking back at a romantic idea of how things used to be, co-production offers a chance to address systemic weaknesses in a "Weberian" model of service delivery to identify new solutions that support local democratic practice as well as improved services.

Finally, it should be noted that not only does co-production help to address the political and material needs of those living in low-income settlements, it also helps to build a consciousness of self-worth among these residents who become aware of their own central contribution to progressive social change.

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