MAKING ALL
VOICES COUNT

A GRAND CHALLENGE
FOR DEVELOPMENT

Appropriating technology for accountability: messages from Making All Voices Count

Rosie McGee with Duncan Edwards, Colin Anderson,
Hannah Hudson and Francesca Feruglio

IDS Institute of
Development Studies

About the authors

Rosie McGee is a Senior Fellow at the Institute of Development Studies (IDS) in the UK. She coordinated the Research, Evidence and Learning component of Making all Voices Count, which managed a portfolio of 61 research projects and accompanying learning processes. Over the past ten years, she has conducted and managed extensive research on accountable governance, power and politics.

Duncan Edwards was the Programme Manager for Making All Voices Count's Research, Evidence and Learning component. His work was focused on building an evidence base in the field of citizen engagement and accountable responsive governance. In this programme, his interests were the role of innovation and technology in governance, voice, transparency and accountability work.

Hannah Hudson was the Programme Officer for the Research, Evidence and Learning component of Making All Voices Count. She has an MA in Governance and Development from IDS. She has also conducted research on social protection strategies, and coordinated a water, sanitation and hygiene programme in Uganda.

Colin Anderson is an independent consultant working with research institutions and civil society organisations on issues of empowerment, accountability, advocacy and government responsiveness. His work has a particular focus on education, child welfare and youth inclusion.

Francesca Feruglio is a researcher and activist working on socio-economic justice, human rights and citizen-led accountability. She co-founded Nazdeek, a legal empowerment organisation based in Delhi, India, before joining Making All Voices Count as a Research Officer. She has also worked with groups in India, Italy and Europe, conducting advocacy, research and litigation on socio-economic rights, equality and non-discrimination.

Reference and copyright

IDS requests due acknowledgement and quotes from this publication to be referenced as: McGee, R. with Edwards, D.; Anderson, C.; Hudson, H. and Feruglio, F. (2018) *Appropriating technology for accountability: messages from Making All Voices Count*, Making All Voices Count Research Report, Brighton: IDS

Contents

Summary

Making All Voices Count was a programme designed to solve the 'grand challenge' of creating more effective democratic governance and accountability around the world. Conceived in an era of optimism about the use of tech to open up government and allow more fluid communication between citizens and governments, it used funding from four donors to support the development and spread of innovative ideas for solving governance problems – many of them involving tools and platforms based on mobile phone and web technologies.

Between 2013 and 2017, the programme made grants for innovation and scaling projects that aimed to amplify the voices of citizens and enable governments to listen and respond. It also conducted research and issued research grants to explore the roles that technology can play in securing responsive, accountable government.

This synthesis report reviews the Making All Voices Count's four-and-a-half years of operational experience and learning. In doing so, it revisits and assesses the key working assumptions and expectations about the roles that technologies can play in governance, which underpinned the programme at the outset.

The report draws on a synthesis of evidence from Making All Voices Count's 120+ research, evidence and learning-focused publications, and the insights and knowledge that arose from the innovation, scaling and research projects funded through the programme, and the related grant accompaniment activities. It shares 14 key messages on the roles technologies can play in enabling citizen voice and accountable and responsive governance. These messages are presented in four sections:

- Applying technologies as technical fixes to solve service delivery problems
- Applying technologies to broader, systemic governance challenges
- Applying technologies to build the foundations of democratic and accountable governance systems
- Applying technologies for the public 'bad'.

The research concludes that the tech optimism of the era in which the programme was conceived can now be reappraised from the better-informed vantage point of hindsight. Making All Voices Count's wealth of diverse and grounded experience and documentation provides an evidence base that should enable a more sober and mature position of tech realism as the field of tech for accountable governance continues to evolve.

Introduction

The big idea: using technology to make all voices count

In 2012, in the wake of the 'Arab Spring'[1] and the launch of the Open Government Partnership,[2] a 'big idea' emerged among a group of donors who sought to contribute to open, responsive government and increased citizen engagement. Recognising the inadequacies of formal electoral democracies to fairly, fully and continuously represent the views of citizens[3] to their governments, they saw in technology the power to open up government and allow more fluid communication between citizens and governments.

These donors envisaged that this would help to solve the 'grand challenge' of creating more effective democratic governance and accountability around the world. They articulated their aim as contributing to enabling "all people, including the poor […] to engage and call to account public and private institutions on policy issues that matter most to them". 'Open government', as they called this aspiration, "depends on closing [the] feedback loop between citizens and the government" (DFID 2012a).

The programme they designed, known as Making All Voices Count, sought to support the development and spread of 'innovative solutions' – tools and platforms based on mobile phone and web technologies ('tech') – as well as some non-technological approaches. This would enable different sets of actors – notably those focused on technology innovation and development, and those engaged in socio-political development processes at the grass-roots level – to harness the potential of these technologies and of open data to expand their reach and impact.

Making All Voices Count would help to create that feedback loop by supporting:

- greater opportunities for citizens to provide feedback

- improved capacity for governments to translate citizen feedback into policy action

- incentives and capacity for citizens to engage with government to improve policy

- opportunities for governments to engage with, and respond to, citizens (Ibid.).

The programme design emphasised 'reach' and 'engagement' as key mechanisms (Box 1).

The mood at that time was one of great confidence and enthusiasm about the potential power of technologies to bring about voice, empowerment and democratisation. Scholarship and practice in the field had already generated a solid and fast-growing knowledge base about citizen voice and engagement, government accountability and responsiveness,[4] but at that point this was weakly connected – if at all – to the rapidly emerging tech innovation field. Making All Voices Count was a way to strengthen that connection.

Making All Voices Count's initial theory of change highlighted a number of important underlying assumptions, some about governance processes and relationships and how they change, and others about technology and the roles it can play in these change processes. While the assumptions about governance were grounded in evidence from the literature, no evidence base yet existed from which to derive sound assumptions about the roles technologies could play in governance.

To address this, the programme's initial design included a research and evidence component to operate alongside the significant granting mechanisms that would fund technological innovation in the governance field. This component was intended to "build an evidence base and test the hypothesis that closing the feedback loop between citizens and their government [through backing innovative ideas and technology solutions] is a catalytic force that enables better governance, enhances service delivery and strengthens democracy" and would "make a unique contribution to learning in the field [by advancing] understanding of which interventions work (or not), how, why, and when" (DFID 2012b).

---

1 A wave of violent and non-violent uprisings in North Africa and the Middle East that began in Tunisia in 2010. See: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Arab_Spring

2 An international platform, launched in 2011, that aims to support champions of open government who are working to make their governments more accountable and responsive. See: www.opengovpartnership.org

3 Citizenship is used variously to relate to belonging, status, national identity, and rights and duties. Throughout this document and in Making All Voices Count more broadly, 'citizen' connotes someone with rights, aspirations and responsibilities in relation to others in the community and to the state, and is a political term, capturing a relationship both among citizens themselves and between the state and all those living within its borders. 'Citizenship' connotes the corresponding status of having rights, aspirations and responsibilities (Eyben and Ladbury 2006).

4 For reviews of these, see: Gaventa and Barrett (2010); McGee and Gaventa (2010); and Rocha Menocal and Sharma (2008).

Box 1. 'Reach' and 'engagement'

Making All Voices Count's theory of change about the roles that technologies could play in achieving accountable, responsive governance posited that the programme needed to provide:

- increased 'reach': larger numbers of citizens and government agencies having access to larger numbers of tested mobile and Internet technologies that would enable them to interact with each other

- increased 'engagement': more citizens and organisations taking up innovative solutions – which would be contextually appropriate, at 'scale' (over wider geographic areas), and developed both as new initiatives and within existing change strategies – and doing so with sufficient confidence in the tools and in their likelihood of securing a response, thanks to effective brokerage between innovators and users.

Source: DFID (2012a)

An overview of Making All Voices Count's approach

Making All Voices Count started work in June 2013, implemented by a consortium consisting of Hivos (as the lead agency), the Institute of Development Studies (IDS) and Ushahidi. Focusing on six countries across Africa and Asia,[5] it used funding from the UK Department for International Development (DFID), the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida), the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and the Omidyar Network to support new ideas. These took the form of innovation and scaling projects that amplified the voices of citizens and enabled governments to listen and respond. The programme also conducted research and issued research grants with the aim of exploring the roles that technology can play in securing responsive, accountable government, and building an evidence base.

From its inception until its end in November 2017, Making All Voices Count issued 178 grants (72 to innovation projects, 38 to scaling projects, seven to tech hubs, and 61 to research projects)[6] for work on themes of citizen engagement and voice, inclusive governance, and open and responsive government. A wide range of technology types were used across these projects,[7] and Figure 1 provides a breakdown of their thematic focuses.[8]
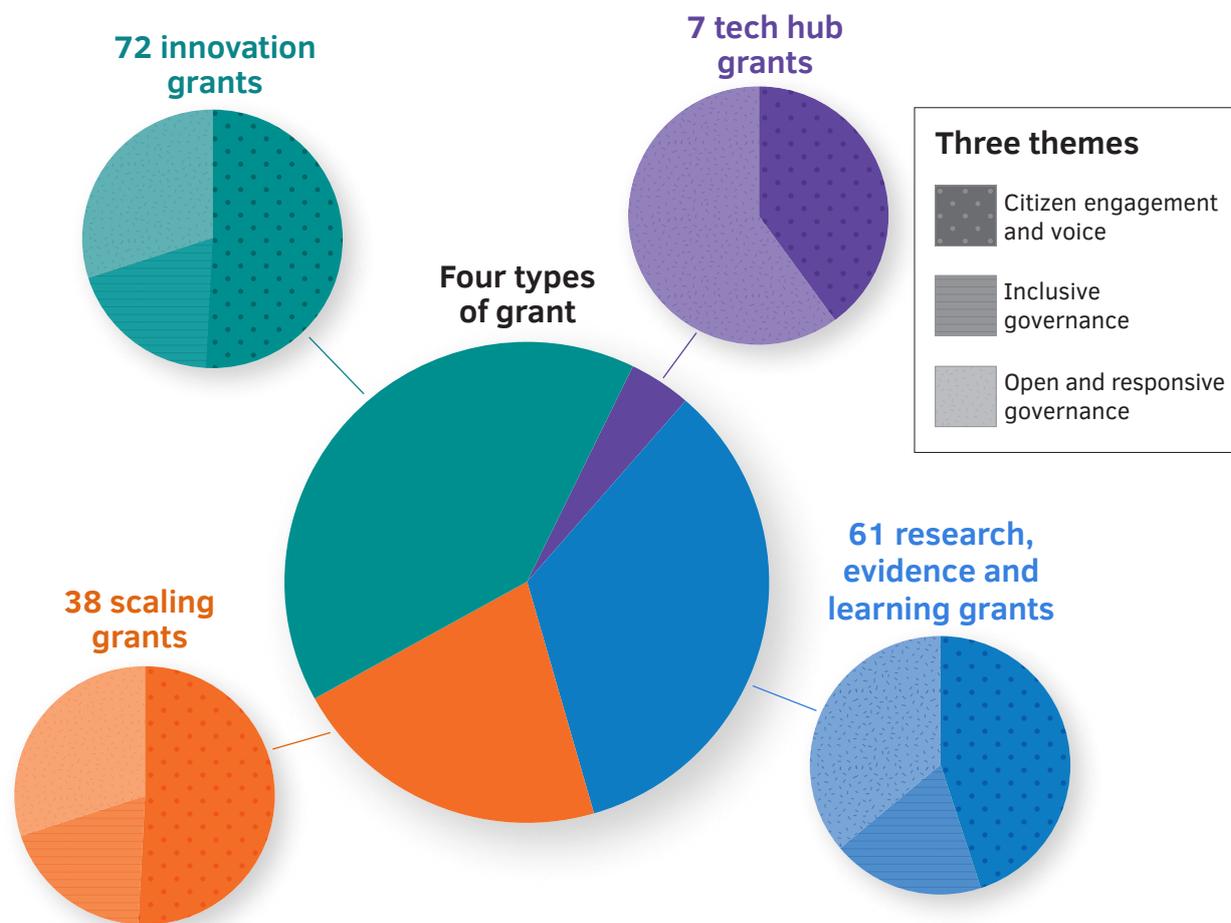
Throughout the programme, operational lessons were continually harvested from the innovation, scaling and research granting and grant accompaniment activities. These were used to inform future cycles of granting. At the same time, substantive lessons and evidence of what works, how and why were generated by the Research, Evidence and Learning component. These operational and substantive lessons were communicated throughout the programme, via publications, events and fora of many kinds, and applied so as to catalyse and shape action on citizen engagement and government responsiveness within the priority countries (Ghana, Indonesia, Kenya, Philippines, South Africa and Tanzania) and at a global level.

---

[5] In order of prominence in the programme's grants portfolio, these were: South Africa, Kenya, Philippines, Indonesia, Ghana and Tanzania. Making All Voices Count operated in a further six countries at a lower intensity (in terms of grants and accompanying activities): Liberia, Uganda, Pakistan, Nigeria, Mozambique and Bangladesh.

[6] The 61 research projects were of three different kinds, tailored to different kinds of researchers, needs and users. There were 25 practitioner research and learning grant-funded initiatives in practice, including projects supported by the programme's innovation and scaling components, which aimed to improve the quality of their interventions, gather evidence and test hypotheses, propositions and assumptions from the theory of change and the wider transparency and accountability field. The average grant for these was £25,000. A further 22 'third-party grants' were awarded in or on Making All Voices Count priority countries or key issues, to build theory and evidence by filling specific knowledge gaps. The average grant for these was £80,000. Lastly, there were 14 research projects conducted by IDS researchers that focused on specific research questions and themes set out by Making All Voices Count, often exploring particular aspects of the theory of change at global or country levels. Some of these projects used evidence and experiences from practice to draw out generalisable lessons or build theory; others applied concepts and theory to the challenge of improving practice. The average grant for these was £36,000.

[7] These included: complaints and ratings platforms; digital mapping; interactive voice response; mobile applications (apps); online crowdsourcing platforms; radio; tech innovation hubs; and video.

[8] The categorisation of Making All Voices Count-funded projects was non-exclusive, so several projects were categorised as addressing more than one theme.

Figure 1 The Making All Voices Count grant portfolio: four types of grant and three themes

72 innovation grants

7 tech hub grants

Three themes

- Citizen engagement and voice
- Inclusive governance
- Open and responsive governance

Four types of grant

61 research, evidence and learning grants

38 scaling grants

About this report

This synthesis report, Making All Voices Count's final publication, reviews the programme's four-and-a-half years of operational experience and learning, and uses this as a lens to revisit and assess the key working assumptions and expectations about the roles that technologies can play in governance, which underpinned the programme at the outset (see Box 2).

Box 2. Making All Voices Count's starting expectations and assumptions

Expectations about how increased access to and engagement with technologies would contribute to making governance responsive and accountable rested on some key assumptions, variously implicit and explicitly stated in Making All Voices Count's theory of change:

- Increasing the number of citizens who can relate directly and individually with their government will increase the chances of citizens' voices 'counting', in the sense of contributing to more accountable, responsive governance.

- It will soon be possible for all citizens' voices everywhere to be expressed through tech-enabled channels.

- Innovative solutions will be appropriate for the context of their application.

- 'Use cases' will exist in every application – that is, for every potential use of a technology (its 'affordance', in technologists' language) there is a reason or purpose to make use of the affordance.

- Potential users will have sufficient confidence in the innovations, and their likelihood of effectiveness, to take them up and use them.

Source: DFID (2012a)

The evidence synthesised here is of two kinds. One dataset is Making All Voices Count's 120+ research, evidence and learning-focused publications, each of which is available on the Making All Voices Count website. For ease of access, we have added a hyperlink to each of these where cited; other published sources are cited in the conventional way.

The other dataset is the insights and knowledge that arose from the innovation, scaling and research projects funded through the programme, and the related grant accompaniment activities. Although these are not available in published form, they have been harvested, analysed and processed through several monitoring- and learning-focused activities throughout the programme.[9] Specific evidence for particular points made in this report is cited in the form of descriptive paragraphs culled from these two datasets by the report's authors, and hyperlinked to project information on the programme website.

Each of the Making All Voices Count Research Reports drawn on in this synthesis are situated within the relevant literature, and the entire Making All Voices Count learning output – from both operational and research work, published and unpublished – has been honed through myriad conversations involving practitioners and scholars around the world. But this report, despite making reference to some sources outside of Making All Voices Count, does not attempt to thoroughly or systematically situate Making All Voices Count's key messages in relation to the work of others outside the programme; that task is still to come, and is beyond the programme's time frame. Rather, our aim has been to analyse and synthesise what we have learned in relation to the original assumptions and expectations of the programme.

Synthesising lessons from such extensive and diverse activities is no simple task. The activities ranged from research studies to interventions; the perspectives ranged from scholarly to practical; the insights ranged from published academic knowledge to tacit practitioner knowledge. To finalise the messages shared in this report, we have reviewed all of the programme's published outputs and key internal documentation, coded these using NVivo to identify patterns, explored and analysed these further, and then distilled the key lessons and messages. Further, the emerging insights were put to participants at Making All Voices Count's last major event (a 'Policy and Practice Dialogue' held in October 2017) and, based on the feedback from this event, further reworked, refined and more systematically linked to the programme's evidence base.

The team who conducted this analysis and synthesis worked, in the main, as Making All Voices Count's grant managers, researchers and communicators during the programme's lifetime. We ourselves were actors in the programme, part of its theory of change. This positioning afforded us unusually well-informed and contextualised perspectives on the evidence, but also called for measures to guard against our own biases in the analysis process.

Structure of this report

This report has four main parts. Each describes a number of substantive messages drawn from our synthesis of Making All Voices Count projects and research, describes the evidence, and discusses some of the nuances of those messages. Over the programme's life cycle, the implementing consortium also learnt a great deal about the art of managing and delivering a programme of this kind; we have published those lessons in a companion publication (Edwards *et al.* 2018).

Yet this synthesis, and the companion publication, are only contributions to Making All Voices Count's legacy of learning; the rest lies in the people and the networks variously supported by the programme, and the individual publications from which we draw here. We hope that these will help policy-makers, practitioners and researchers in this field to ensure that future governance programmes seeking to capitalise on the transformative potential of innovation and technology are better informed and achieve maximum impact.

Message 1. Not all voices can be expressed via technologies

A fundamental caveat needs to be borne in mind when considering Making All Voices Count's messages about technologically enabled approaches to citizen voice and government accountability and responsiveness. Around half of the world's population is online, and growth rates in the number of users have been falling rather than increasing over the past few years (IWS 2017; Internet Society 2016).

As captured in a Making All Voices Count-supported ethnographic study on the everyday lives of the 'less connected', (de Lanerolle *et al.* 2017) the daily realities of most people in all 12 countries where Making All Voices Count worked afford them only 'fragile' and 'frugal' Internet connections and access to

---

9 Principal among these were a cycle of reflective learning by programme staff, based on self-assessment using a qualitative assessment scorecard methodology; three programme-wide learning events, held in 2014, 2016 and 2017; the identification and development of stories of change and impact, based on the Most Significant Change approach; a reflective learning trajectory with six partners in 2016–17; Practice Papers produced through a critical dialogue process between research grant managers and grantees; and exit interviews conducted with grantees.

"The common imaginary of the Internet – as an always-on web, stretching across the planet, connecting all those who have access to it and to the information resources that those people have placed on it – does not describe the daily practices of the less connected" (de Lanerolle et al. 2017: 26).

technologies: "The common imaginary of the Internet – as an always-on web, stretching across the planet, connecting all those who have access to it and to the information resources that those people have placed on it – does not describe the daily practices of the less connected" (2017: 26). This study focused not on rural people in the least connected of Making All Voices Count's priority countries, but on rural and urban people in South Africa – the most connected of the 12 countries, which currently enjoys Internet penetration rates some ten times higher than the least connected.[10]

Whatever the powers of technology to make citizens' voices count, for now there remains an important proviso: only about half of the world's population can avail themselves of these powers.

Applying technologies as technical fixes to solve service delivery problems

For places and populations that do have access to them, information and communications technologies (ICTs) can play discernible, direct roles in improving services. Service delivery shortcomings – inadequate coverage, poor quality or questionable prioritisation – are sometimes due to a lack of information or data. There may be political will to put things right, but elected representatives, bureaucrats or technicians may lack data that is big enough, representative enough, or processed and presented in useable ways.

Message 2. Technologies can play decisive roles in improving services where the problem is a lack of planning data or user feedback

Numerous projects supported by Making All Voices Count set out to follow one or both of two pathways to change. We describe these as: (1) the 'information stream' – information generated, channelled or opened up with the help of technologies fills an information gap and the problem is solved; and (2) the 'feedback stream' – through feedback provided by citizens or users, governments or service providers know what citizens or users think of them and their performance, and respond by becoming more accountable and responsive to citizens.[11]

In these projects:

- Cheaper, quicker, simpler generation of real-time data, by governments or by citizens, helped target resources, resolve distributive conflicts and allow better decisions and choices to be made generally in the provision of public goods. The TIMBY project in Liberia, for example, used an online platform to enable reporting of illegal logging, while Trac FM in Uganda used SMS[12] polling and radio programmes to gather inputs from thousands of people to inform local government decision-making. The MOPA project in Mozambique gathered electronic reports of waste removal and delivered them in real time to waste collectors.

- Technologies helped overcome geographical barriers, minimise the 'last mile' problem,[13] and achieve better reach and coverage in service delivery generally (Hrynick and Waldman 2017). This has proven particularly important for remote areas and marginalised populations, for example farmers in far-flung places who feel invisible to government extension services (Gilberds *et al.* 2016) or survivors of natural disasters (Opulencia-Calub *et al.* 2017).

- Bottlenecks in service provision have been made more tractable by technologies that analyse and present administrative data in enlightening ways.

---

10 Internet penetration in Africa is stated to be 10% by World Internet Statistics (www.internetworldstats.com/stats1.htm) and 20% by the Internet Society (2016).
11 See Brock with McGee (2017) for an expanded discussion of these streams and their assumptions on processes of change.
12 Short messaging service, or text message.
13 A phrase used in service delivery referring to the final leg of a supply network.

These include gathering data, and engaging service providers and community members to validate and reflect on it during collaborative sessions (Hrynick and Waldman 2017).

- Tech-based feedback initiatives for monitoring public services or managing user complaints can help to address or mitigate capacity constraints (Siregar *et al.* 2017). For example, the Connect-Tech project in South Africa used the Yowzit online rating and review platform to generate a large volume of user feedback on public services and channel these to government providers; thousands of individual comments on services were gathered in this way. Also in South Africa, the MobiSAM project used a variety of platforms to log service delivery issues in a specific municipality, providing the aggregated data on these to government officials and to the local residents' association.

- Video and digital-mapping technologies have proven particularly useful for moving issues up the agendas of government actors. These inject a human interest angle or sense of urgency, riding on an emotional resonance that is lacking from the usual bureaucratic priority-setting exercises. For example, through using geotagging and smartphone photography, an ANSA-EAP project on increasing accountability in disaster risk reduction work in the Philippines enabled citizens to present data that was more trusted and influential in public hearings.

Many of these projects succeeded by applying technologies which generate and manage information or data directly, which in turn makes the design, provision, monitoring and delivery of services respond better to people's needs and priorities.

Yet despite these successes, and the opportunities and possibilities attested to in the examples cited, the impacts on service delivery were limited in other cases due to a number of design flaws, some of a technological nature and others of a social or 'process' nature – as Message 3 explains in more detail.

Message 3. Common design flaws in tech-for-governance initiatives often limit their effectiveness or their governance outcomes

Not all the information- and feedback-focused projects Making All Voices Count supported managed to 'close the feedback loop'. Like many transparency, accountability and open data projects of this kind, they struggled to use technologies effectively. This situation is exacerbated by the tendency – found among plenty of governance practitioners, but also among some technologists and innovators – to see 'technology' as an undifferentiated 'black box'. Making All Voices Count's innovation projects generated several fresh insights, and reinforced other known but little-heeded principles, about the design of technology initiatives for development and governance purposes.

Box 3. Practical insights into tech-for-governance design

Making All Voices Count helped to prise open the 'black box of technology', building up evidence on design issues and insights into how to design effective tech-supported approaches to claiming accountability:

- Technologies need to be suited or adapted to the contexts in which they are introduced. Success often lies in using existing technologies that are already part of the lives of the users. If new tech systems are introduced, the incentives to use these need to be 'designed in' to the project.

- Different technologies offer different affordances: they give users the potential to do certain kinds of things. If technologies are to generate change in accountability processes, these affordances need to match the needs, desires and agency of intended users.

- Technology initiatives need to take a systemic perspective, being mindful of the skills, training and support that citizens need to use the technologies, and ensuring that supportive civic infrastructure is in place.

- Tech initiatives based on user research and trials are more likely to be taken up and achieve their aims. Despite the long-term gains from these steps, many organisations don't take them, often due to a short-term lack of time or money.

- Projects that continuously adapt to meet changing contexts and user needs are more likely to sustain citizen engagement. Adaptation should be built into project design and budgets.

- If implemented adaptively, many tech-for-governance projects end up using simpler technologies than they had originally anticipated, or altering the foreseen balance of online and offline activities.

Sources: de Lanerolle (2017); Herringshaw (2017); Kaliati *et al.* (2017); Prieto Martin *et al.* (2017); Walker (2017); Engine Room (2016); Leighninger (2016)

Message 4. Transparency, information or open data are not sufficient to generate accountability

Some projects managed to use technologies effectively to generate information, to the extent that they provided information or feedback and elicited responses from service providers or government agencies. But they found that this alone was not sufficient to improve the service or the aspect of government performance targeted in a sustainable way. As a result, they achieved little for government responsiveness and accountability in the long term. In this, they confirmed a conclusion reached a decade ago, before the advent of technologies into the transparency field: that the relationship between transparency and accountability is an uncertain one (Fox 2007).

These flaws in 'social' or 'process' design took many forms. Examples abound, within Making All Voices Count's portfolio and elsewhere, of citizen-generated feedback data going into a 'black hole' or being treated as suspicious or invalid by decision-makers. Making All Voices Count-supported studies of complaint and grievance platforms highlighted how frequently citizens simply didn't feel they received an appropriate – or sometimes any – response (Gurumurthy *et al.* 2017; Siregar *et al.* 2017). In Kenya and Uganda, for example, a study by Development Initiatives found that data generated by citizens outside formal government spaces was not trusted or accepted by government officials as a basis for decision-making (Pegus and Rono-Bett 2017; Ssanyu *et al.* 2017). Such a lack of response and recognition quickly leads to disillusionment, disengagement and a lower likelihood of these citizens engaging with such processes in future.

More abundant still are cases where the provision of data does not smoothly lead to action – or not to the action that those producing the data might have intended. Among the 55 projects Making All Voices Count supported that incorporated new citizen- or government-generated data, effectiveness was limited in many cases. This was often because of excessively positive assumptions about how much people would trust the data, how pivotal a role the data would play in decision-making, and how many people would actually look at or use it:

- In several cases, the data was not considered legitimate or credible by all of those involved. Research in South Africa with activists and civil society organisations (CSOs) reminded us that, just as government may not heed citizen-generated data (as in the Development Initiatives example), citizens can in turn be deeply sceptical about the accuracy of government data (Kaliati *et al.* 2017).

- A number of projects highlighted the need for 'infomediaries' to act as a bridge between the data and the users. The limited quality and intelligibility of available data was a particular challenge for projects that aimed to generate 'citizen journalism' based on public data, such as Sauti Ya Mtaa in Kenya or Code4Ghana.

- In the information- or feedback-centred projects that succeeded, the actions of accountability activists, who functioned as intermediary 'agents', proved to be a critical link in getting the data taken up and in advocating for action to be taken in response to it. It is worth noting that this link was often missing at the design stage, and only incorporated once the need for it became clear. As an example, the organisation Black Sash used Making All Voices Count funding to incorporate technologies in their social justice work. While this allowed more flexible use of evidence on how ordinary people experienced health services, a whole range of careful intermediation strategies underpinned the work.

- Many projects illustrated the need for data to be made available in ways that are accessible, useable and actionable for the users in question. For example, projects focusing on fiscal transparency and government budget data struggled with how abstract this information is for ordinary citizens.

- Challenges of 'reach' were also apparent in some projects, illustrating that many open data initiatives place more information in the hands of those who are relatively more powerful in the first place (McGee and Edwards 2016).

A look across the information- and feedback-centred projects reveals some tendencies that merit careful attention in the future evolution of the field. Firstly, the current explosion of tech-enabled ways of gathering and channelling data for the purposes of service planning and budgeting may be narrowing the range of data, feedback and voice that planners and service providers consider acceptable and compelling. The risk is that only what can be 'datified' gets heeded as valid evidence, and that the 'online' gets reified while the offline gets dismissed, deprioritised or even stigmatised. Datification comes more readily to accountability-claiming processes that are polite and consensus-oriented than to processes involving active contestation, campaigning and social action (Gurumurthy *et al.* 2017) – but these might be the ones that are particularly needed, meaningful and transformative.

Secondly, the portfolio of projects reveals that certain technologies and processes have rapidly come to dominate the field of tech-enabled citizen

voice and government responsiveness, almost by default: building new SMS systems and online portals, publishing and 'opening up' data, channelling and aggregating feedback. These have become dominant 'tropes' even though they are not necessarily the right technologies and mechanisms to be focusing on, are not always deployed in the most strategic relationships with each other and, as the examples given show, are often unsuccessful in their – often limited – aims. Their popularity appears to be associated with a dominant perception that the governance 'problem' that needs 'solving' – deficient service delivery – can be remedied through better, or better communicated, information.

This is turn corresponds to a technocratic vision of governance that – explicitly or implicitly – underpins many tech for transparency and accountability initiatives, in which information asymmetry is the key issue to be resolved in order for citizens and governments to work together effectively. The problem with this vision is that it perpetuates and extends the illusion that transparency, information or 'openness' alone are sufficient for achieving accountable, responsive governance, and that technologies alone can deliver them.

But service delivery problems are not all about data, and service delivery is only one core function of the modern state. There are many others in which transparency and accountability matter – such as the dispensation of justice, financial and macroeconomic management, and the provision of security. Moreover, many modern states are now service regulators rather than service providers, posing new governance problems related less to the services themselves and more to systemic issues such as the governance and regulation of suppliers. These suppliers include a wide range of actors in the public and private sector and, in some cases, in civil society. These actors should be designated as 'new accountability actors', but can hardly be so until regulatory frameworks exist that delimit and articulate their rights and responsibilities, and until they fully assume ownership of these responsibilities.

Overall, within Making All Voices Count's portfolio, a number of innovation projects demonstrated the role that tech-enabled information can play in improving services. These tended to be in cases where the political will existed to 'put it right' and bureaucrats, technicians or elected representatives lacked only the capacity and information to do so. Those that achieved sustainable and transformative impacts on responsiveness and accountability – distinct from eliciting short-term responses or fixes, or those that succeeded under relatively favourable conditions – have done so by deploying technology as one among many factors, and often a much less significant factor than anticipated in the initial project design.

Transparency, information and open data are often essential to the success of citizen voice and accountability efforts, but they are insufficient on their own. They are only useful as part of broader accountability-claiming processes. This holds true today – when there are multiple tech-enabled tools at the disposal of those seeking to claim accountability and reform government – just as much as it did a decade ago, despite the cost- and efficiency-savings and the increased reach and scale that technologies might add.

Applying technologies to broader, systemic governance challenges

Questioning an oversimplified vision of accountability problems as information problems brings into sight not only a different vision of governance, but other roles that technologies can play in improving it. A different way of looking at governance is as an arena of contestation, in which government actors interact with each other and with non-government actors – both organised collectives and relatively unorganised citizens – in struggles over the distribution of public resources and over the very meaning of 'the public good'.

Seen through this lens, unaccountable and unresponsive governance problems are deeper, more complex and more intractable than information asymmetry. They relate to systemic weaknesses in performance, corruption, malpractice, systematic discrimination against certain population groups or the alienation of people by those who govern them. Information is but one factor among many that need to be addressed: the various actors and their behaviours, attitudes and capacities; their relationships with each other; the dynamics and processes in which they engage each other; the key sites of opportunity for seeding changes in governance processes and outcomes.

Whatever the capacity available, some government actors may lack the political will to address these problems. Resolving them involves not applying technical fixes but engaging with, contesting and

disrupting power relations. Technologies may help in this endeavour, insofar as they can contribute to building the 'critical mass' needed for citizens to push effectively for change in the face of opposition or inertia. But to be effective, tech-enabled pathways to change need to intersect with and complement non-tech or offline ways of reforming governance.

Message 5. Technologies can support social mobilisation and collective action by connecting citizens

Citizens' claims for accountability and responsiveness are more effective when exerted by organised, mobilised collectives of poor and marginalised people than when exercised by individuals operating in isolation from each other (Gaventa and Barrett 2012). Some Making All Voices Count projects used technologies to aggregate multiple disconnected voices into large-scale expressions of citizen voice. Carefully mediated through activist organisations, these projects showed that it is possible for this approach to go beyond individualised service feedback and be part of wider strategies of campaigning and mobilisation:

- The Trac FM International Common Matters programme in Uganda partnered with five CSOs to run strategically designed, issues-based campaigns using Trac FM's model of combining radio debates with SMS citizen polling. The campaigns saw over 66,000 people respond to SMS polls over the course of the five different campaign cycles, each of which ran for two months. The aggregated responses provided an avenue for the CSOs to engage lawmakers grounded in public opinion and the pressure of public involvement, which led to policy reforms.

- The organisation Local Empowerment for Good Governance (LENGGO) in Kenya developed a two-way SMS platform to increase mass participation in county-level planning. It provided citizens with a diverse education and sensitisation campaign, including murals, a 'digital bus', theatre, and musical budget-tracking messages. This campaign helped to raise awareness of county planning and stimulate citizen engagement in it. LENGGO also targeted participatory governance structures to improve their functioning. The SMS platform built on these foundations by broadcasting budgetary information, crowdsourcing citizen-generated updates, and providing information on upcoming participatory governance sessions to increase commitment to offline participatory budgeting activities. Messages were targeted to specific user groups, such as fishermen, youth, men or women; this successfully increased these users'

engagement and attendance at budget forums.

There were many other projects in Making All Voices Count's portfolio where accountability claims required political struggle rather than technical capacity enhancements. Here, the use of technologies to connect citizens helped to build collective agency – referred to in power terminology as 'power with' (VeneKlasen and Miller 2002) – and constitute themselves as a critical mass to mobilise around their causes. In these cases, the affordance of the technology went beyond the aggregation of multiple voices, to affecting qualitatively the chances of success of a collective action. This was a particularly strong theme of the Making All Voices Count-funded projects in South Africa:

- Illustrating the potential to build collective consciousness and solidarity, the Southern Cape Land Committee used a WhatsApp group to discuss relevant issues and violations. The South Africa Human Rights Commission, as part of its stated commitment to work with farmworkers to address rights violations, joined this group and now maintains a direct link with farmworkers to enhance their knowledge and ability to act as accountability champions.

- The Free State Housing Campaign used a participatory action research model that enabled citizens to build their 'power with' to enact change towards more equitable housing practices. This approach utilised mobile phones as part of the documentation process, and WhatsApp as a mobilising tool. Photos of the ensuing protest action – the largest to happen locally since 1994 – were used to further mobilise the community to ongoing action.

- Amandla.mobi uses a tech platform that integrates SMS, missed calls, WhatsApp and a mobile website to run multilingual campaigns that primarily target black women from low-income households. Collaborating with a wide range of CSO actors, and allowing citizens to initiate their own campaigns, the platform focuses on campaigns for changes demanded by its grass-roots constituents, or cases where decision-makers are already considering a change in policy or budget that the constituents want. Citizens sign up to lists of demands, creating 'critical mass' campaigns to present to decision-makers while also providing people with tools to make formal government submissions in public consultation processes.

- Grass Root Nation LPC shows the potential for technologies to be efficient ways to communicate among and grow groups that are already mobilised. With Making All Voices Count's support, the

organisation developed an app to streamline communication for activist groups and enable easier mass mobilisation. The app worked on multiple platforms, including non-Internet-enabled phones, and in an offline mode to maximise its reach. Using this platform, an activist group working on the fair allocation of public housing in Freedom Park, Soweto, used it to grow from a small group of a few dozen activists to more than 1,400 members. With increased organisation and structure, this aggregated critical mass was able to successfully demand that the Premier (head of government) of Gauteng province complete a forensic audit into the designation of unused land near the settlement for public housing.

Large-scale aggregations of citizen voice and well-articulated, mobilised collectives can both be achieved through everyday technologies that people already use, such as WhatsApp, SMS or Facebook. They are harder to ignore than multiple isolated individual voices, and can be decisive in shifting the power balance in favour of citizens whose voices or concerns have previously received scant public attention.

In certain cases, where many relatively isolated, powerless individuals were constituted into more powerful collective actors, they were capable of contesting and challenging government policies, decisions or behaviours and getting credible, compelling alternative proposals accepted. This stands in contrast to feedback platforms for improved service delivery, which are often based on an assumed consensus of intentions and the use of tightly prescribed methods aimed only at circumscribed 'feedback'.

Message 6. Technologies can create new spaces for engagement between citizen and state

The effectiveness of citizen mobilisation can be enhanced when technologies are used to provide new spaces or channels for engagement between mobilised citizens and state actors. There is evidence that for some public officials, new technologies have afforded them a greater awareness of citizen's day-to-day experiences and priorities, and that some have embraced these as ways to better connect with, and familiarise themselves with, sub-sets of their electorates (Joshi and McCluskey 2018; Siregar *et al.* 2017).

In some cases, where citizens use technologies such as WhatsApp groups to connect and discuss issues, government officials are included within these networks. This engages them more closely and helps to position them as reformers and champions of accountability:

- The Bojonegoro Regency in Indonesia is one of 15 local governments participating in the Subnational Government Pilot Programme of the Open Government Partnership. Suyoto Ngartep Mustajab, the Regent of Bojonegoro, has embraced technology as a way to strengthen communication with his citizens. He has supported the use of the radio station 'Radio Malowopati' as a complaints-handling system, and receives citizen complaints and reports on his mobile phone from the complaints channel 'SMS Halo Bupati' (Siregar *et al.* 2017).

- PATTIRO undertook practitioner research to examine the implementation of the Village Law in seven villages and three districts of Indonesia. A particularly successful part of their approach was a WhatsApp group; this brought together a large number of community members and local government officials within a shared network, creating a space for citizens to raise issues directly with officials.

- The Kijana Wajibika project in Tanzania found that mobile messaging groups were effective in connecting the Youth Accountability Advocates they trained with decision-makers, decreasing the gap between young people and local leaders in a project that saw young people's advocacy claims legitimated and, in part, resolved.

Used in these ways, technologies not only perform the technical function of communicating information; they also help to bridge gaps between different realities and thicken relationships between elected representatives and their constituents.

Message 7. Technologies can help to empower citizens and strengthen their agency for engagement

Technologies have the potential to empower citizens to claim accountability by increasing their awareness of their rights, by strengthening individuals' agency through the experience of exercising voice – referred to in the power literature as 'power within' (VeneKlasen and Miller 2002) – and when used as the centrepieces of participatory processes that build collective agency.

In several Making All Voices Count projects, technologies were used by governments or intermediaries to inform citizens about rights and entitlements, for example their right to participate in local development planning and participatory budgeting. Some did this in ways which enabled citizens and government actors alike to realise and fulfil better their full range of rights and responsibilities, and some to make 'real' the right to

information – which is itself a citizen right in most modern democracies, and a vital enabling factor for citizens to hold the state to account more broadly:

- Through the Bua Mzansi project, Corruption Watch in South Africa led a mass public awareness and engagement campaign focused on ensuring transparency in the appointment of a new public protector (an important part of the formal political accountability architecture in the country). Partnering with the media, the campaign contributed to doubling the nominations for the position, increasing transparency and mass citizen engagement, and ensuring that the choice of the public protector stayed in the media spotlight.

- The Community Information and Communication Support Centre in Mozambique ran a project, 'Face 2 Face', which used community radio as a vehicle for disseminating information about the Right to Information law. It facilitated call-in radio debates with government officials, and conducted and shared video interviews with citizens in ways that increased people's knowledge of these laws and unearthed relevant community issues. The community radio stations acted as intermediaries, putting forward formal requests for information to government officials.

When voice doesn't lead to responsiveness, there are of course risks of disillusionment and disempowerment. However, in some Making All Voices Count projects, the act of exercising voice through technology gave citizens an increased sense of confidence and agency and, for some, the accompanying self-affirmation and recognition they experienced was empowering:

- The Suara Kita project, run by the Women Youth and Development Institute of Indonesia, used SMS surveys and consultative meetings with women to increase their role in local government decision-making in Tunjungtirto Village, Indonesia. The SMS surveys acted as a first step in empowering women to participate in discussions on local governance, making it clear that their views were welcomed.

- The Sustainable Livelihoods Foundation's practitioner research explored the potential of tech-enabled processes (including geospatial mapping, collaborative video and digital storytelling) to empower citizens in South Africa. They shared positive examples of using these technologies with informal traders, traditional medicine practitioners and community safety activists in ways that addressed their exclusion from political spaces and dialogue (Bivens *et al.* 2017).

- Research examining the application of participatory mapping with informal traders in a South African marketplace highlighted the potential for tech-informed practices to surface and legitimise the health and safety risks they faced, and engage local officials in taking responsibility for these (Diga 2017).

When technologies are introduced and shared within well-facilitated participatory processes, they can provide a focus around which collective citizen agency builds up and coalesces prior to, or preparatory to, engaging with government. The development of tech-based 'artefacts' for sharing or use in advocacy can be part of an empowering process in which participants choose how they are represented, and construct their own individual or collective narratives. Effective facilitation of such processes is crucial, given how alien and distancing digital tools can be for more marginalised groups.

The extent to which the inclusion of technologies in these processes contributes to the building of individual and collective agency and engagement capacity depends heavily on how they are integrated into the wider process:

- A Making All Voices Count-supported research project looking at how participatory video processes can strengthen accountability, based on case studies in Kenya and Indonesia, strongly emphasised the long-term and sensitively undertaken nature of successful projects (Shaw 2017).

- Ground Truth's practitioner research in Kenya looked at the effects of Map Kibera's community mapping on citizens and their engagement with government, building capacities and legitimacy over time (Hagen 2017).

Some technologies, then, offer informational and communicational affordances that are more sophisticated than simple, direct information-processing, or one-to-one or one-to-many communication. They can therefore contribute in more subtle, indirect ways to improving citizen voice and government accountability and responsiveness – as long as they are applied within the right social context and process.

However, judging from the projects within the Making All Voices Count portfolio, it would seem that technology innovations have yet to be developed that can sustain and promote nuanced, interrogative and deliberative forms of engagement between states and citizens, or service providers and citizens, in the absence of carefully designed and facilitated social processes and the purposeful agency of social actors (Feruglio and Gilberds 2017).

Research exploring how technologies can reshape democracy argues: "[W]hile it may be possible [for technologies] to disrupt governance systems in the interest of making them more efficient or more equitable, at some point it is also necessary to renovate them, add to them, or design new ones." For these tasks, deliberation is indispensable.

Applying technologies to build the foundations of democratic and accountable governance systems

There are certain vital, foundational ingredients of accountable governance to which technologies currently contribute little: democratic deliberation, relationships of trust and the construction of democratic social norms.

Message 8. The kinds of democratic deliberation needed to challenge a systemic lack of accountability are rarely well supported by technologies

Accountable, democratic governance requires deliberation: over policy and budget choices, but also over what sort of governance systems and norms people want. A Making All Voices Count Research Report exploring how technologies can reshape democracy argues: "[W]hile it may be possible [for technologies] to disrupt governance systems in the interest of making them more efficient or more equitable, at some point it is also necessary to renovate them, add to them, or design new ones" (Leighninger 2016: 5). For these tasks, deliberation is indispensable.

However, evidence from the Making All Voices Count portfolio suggests that the online and digital systems commonly found in the contemporary governance landscape do not lend themselves to deliberation.[14] These systems tend to prescribe tightly controlled, narrow and one-off interactions aimed at 'feedback', rather than enabling contestation, joint prioritisation,

the negotiation of trade-offs, and discussion on the rights and expectations of the state – all fundamental elements for constructing democratic governance.

A closer look at the ICT-based complaint-handling or grievance-management systems developed in many countries and sectors illustrates this point. Typically reinforcing a narrow framing of governance problems as service delivery failures, they tend to atomise and individualise negative experiences and citizens' articulation of them, leaving no space for questions about why the services are deficient and who or what is responsible, nor allowing individual complaints to be situated within broader collective grievances (Gurumurthy *et al.* 2017).

In the governance literature, this distinction has been variously framed as allowing citizens a 'petitioning' but not an 'interrogative' voice (Oosterom 2014), or only allowing citizens a foot on the lower rungs of the 'ladder of citizen participation' (Arnstein 1969). Only in the hands of tech-savvy accountability activists have we seen these complaint-handling and grievance-management systems subverted so as to stimulate wider debates on issues of structural disadvantage and the realisation of rights:

- The people's organisation Mazdoor Kisan Shakti Sangathan made creative use of a digital platform intended for individual complaints, run by the Rajasthan State Government. Volunteers from the organisation conducted a 100-day collective action campaign, collecting and uploading individual

---

14 A possible exception is Fishkin's work on deliberative polling (Fishkin and Luskin 2005). Deliberative polling and derivatives rooted in the deliberative democracy tradition have given rise to experiments that utilise technologies creatively to enable meaningful online deliberation and decision-making (see also Davies and Peña Gangadharan 2009). These are far from widespread, though, and are generally at an experimental stage at this point.

According to the 'Voice or Chatter' study, in Brazil "the results of direct participation were watered down by traditional lobbies influencing elected representatives in Parliament", leading to legislation that did not reflect the citizen input, or was ultimately not enacted.

grievances on delays and stoppages of welfare entitlements. It tagged the complaints so that it could then track them, building a repository of thousands with which to campaign about systemic accountability gaps and the need for a state-level right to information. These activities helped to underpin the organisation's ongoing critical dialogue with the state government over accountability (Gurumurthy *et al.* 2017).

Initiatives or spaces designed to enable citizen engagement in forward-looking or 'upstream' decision-making processes – such as contributions to budgeting, policy-making and prioritisation – might be expected to offer citizens more meaningful forms of engagement than the 'thin' engagement of voicing dissatisfaction through an online complaint-handling mechanism. Making All Voices Count has supported various participatory budgeting initiatives involving online consultation mechanisms. Our research on these shows that while participatory budgeting can be a broad-based, democratic, distributive and progressive approach to revealing public preferences and enabling collective organising, not all cases achieve this. Instead, some reveal how using online or digital tools for participatory budgeting can exclude the voices of the digitally marginalised and increase the risks of co-option of the relatively powerless by those who already enjoy relative power and influence (Feruglio and Rifai 2017; Wampler and Touchton 2017; Rifai *et al.* 2016).

These exclusions and failure to address the existing balance of power are not the only problems, however. Even where online forms of engagement have been designed carefully, with the aim of enabling meaningful citizen engagement and participation, citizens' views can be overtaken by other political forces. This was evident in the online consultations in Brazil explored by Valente *et al.* (2017). According to Gurumurthy *et al.*'s synthesis of findings from Valente *et al.*'s Brazil case and seven other country case studies, in the Brazilian case "the results of direct participation were watered down by traditional lobbies influencing elected representatives in

Parliament", leading to legislation that did not reflect the citizen input, or was ultimately not enacted (Gurumurthy *et al.* 2017: 36).

Ultimately, meaningful deliberation requires dialogue – communication back and forth within and between groups – rather than the one-way transmission of information, or the provision of circumscribed input that is afforded by most mechanisms that connect citizens and states. The rare counter-examples within Making All Voices Count's research are cases where tech-based means of interaction were carefully situated within, and interwoven with, wider, offline processes of democratic renewal, triggered by political contestation.

- The decidim.barcelona online platform increased citizen participation in wider processes of governance and led to citizen-generated policy being adopted. It provides a record of offline engagements, and actually grew out of experiments within the institutions of local democracy and the introduction of new actors to those institutions (Peña-Lopez 2017).

The creation of more and more virtual spaces suggests that sites for deliberation and debate are proliferating. However, this can be illusory. In many contexts, including in some Making All Voices Count priority countries, the proliferation of virtual spaces is taking place against a backdrop of systematic, state-led narrowing or closing of real spaces for civic action and civil society organising.[15] Virtual spaces might afford more room and more reach to meaningful, democratic, pluralist debate when this is going on in offline spaces, but can hardly enable it to happen effectively where real civil society spaces and debates are being systematically shut down. The 'fear factor' (Fox 2014) and pervasive distrust that surrounds such closing of real spaces spills over. Neither can these online spaces act as a substitute for vibrant, independent communications media in acting as vocal, public checks and balances on possible excesses of the state, nor for formally established legal and judicial checks and balances.

---

15 CIVICUS's 'Tracking Civic Space' initiative monitors the extent to which civil society rights are being respected and how far governments are protecting civil society. See: https://monitor.civicus.org

Message 9. Technologies alone don't foster the trusting relationships needed between governments and citizens, and within each group of actors

Often, problems of unaccountable, unresponsive governance involve underlying social norms. One of these is a lack of trust: the trust of government actors' in citizens, citizens' trust in their governments, and sometimes citizens' lack of trust in each other, which can hinder collective action or simply peaceful co-existence. While technologies can improve communication and information flows between these actors, overcoming entrenched social norms or histories that make up for a serious absence of trust is not easy, and possibly too much to ask.

For example, mobile surveys of rape victims in South Africa may have provided evidence for improving care services, but they cannot be expected to fix the victims' lack of trust in the police and criminal justice systems that act as powerful deterrents from approaching the authorities in the first place (Johnson *et al.* 2017). Likewise, the online mobilising potential that social media offers to socially and politically marginalised communities does not cancel out the 'negative exposure' factor which puts the same communities at risk through their online activities.

- Making All Voices Count supported Tactical Tech to research how lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and queer (LGBTQ) people in Kenya, and economically marginalised housing and urban development rights activists in South Africa, use technologies, and its limitations from their perspective. They found that the risks and barriers that LGBTQ Kenyans faced online were similar to the barriers and risks they experienced offline, and that South African activists did not trust that the information they might submit to a platform would be handled securely, transparently and accountably (Ganesh *et al.* 2016).

We have seen digital technologies that do enable trust-building between citizens and the state in Making All Voices Count projects, but under a limited range of conditions. These cases were generally at the lower levels of government, often in the context of other governance changes, and where the technology stimulated or created a focal point for repeated in-person interactions.

- Evaluation of the Suara Kita ('Our Voice') project led by Women and Youth Development Institute of

Indonesia found substantial increases in mutual trust at a local governance level in Indonesia, for example in an SMS survey that stimulated debate and regular engagement regarding how to spend resources that had been newly delegated to the village level.[16]

- The Map Kibera project in Kenya, led by GroundTruth, used open access technologies to gather and map data on an informal settlement in Nairobi. This allowed collaboration with district authorities to resolve issues in the community and stimulated citizen-state engagement (Hagen 2017).

- The non-governmental organisation (NGO) Asiye eTafuleni in e-Thekwini Municipality, South Africa, used mapping and survey technologies to create a site for interaction between informal traders and local officials. Over time, distrust decreased as traders saw their requests and production of information legitimated, while officials came to understand the working conditions of the traders (Diga 2017).

Projects funded by Making All Voices Count very often needed to overcome significant distrust between citizens and state officials / politicians – including citizens' fear of reprisal for speaking out, and fear of being used by politicians for their own gains.

- A local government representative participating in the Suara Kita project in Indonesia described how, even once social media channels with citizens were opened, he needed to carefully 'nurture' the communication through repeated responses and encouragement, in order for people to become 'braver' in approaching him.[17]

- The Check My Barangay project in the Philippines had to overcome significant distrust in order for citizens and officials to be able to discuss in person the data collected through new technologies, including citizens' fears of being 'caught in a political game'.[18]

While these projects may have been tech-enabled, and the technologies may have acted as catalysts in engaging citizen and state actors, it was the repeated interactions and behaviours that made the difference – and these were largely offline. This trust-building typically took place with pivotal assistance from experienced intermediaries: organisations or actors who facilitated and brokered the multiple layers and kinds of formal and informal interactions needed to pursue change.

In Making All Voices Count's early years, when a number of innovation projects involved bespoke applications unfamiliar to the people who were

---

16 Internal evaluation report.
17 Internal project documentation.
18 Internal project documentation.

expected to take them up and use them, their design tended to omit the necessary mediation between intended users and unfamiliar technologies or tech-processed data. In the programme's later years, fewer innovation projects involved bespoke technologies and, of those that did, more explicitly included outreach, 'infomediation' or capacity-building elements to ensure that the intended users could engage with them.

Sometimes, the intermediary role involved connecting the online and digital processes with offline, face-to-face processes. Sometimes, it was about lending legitimacy to claims or responses – which requires intermediaries perceived to hold significant legitimacy themselves (Feruglio 2017). It was noted that successful intermediation in Making All Voices Count projects required long-term relationship-building on the ground (Hrynrick and Waldman 2017) and was quite distinct from the far narrower notions of 'infomediation', which focus on finding and channelling information to those who can act on it. Technologies do little to build or enable the kind of intermediation these processes of social change require.

It was not only relationships between different groups of governance actors that suffered from an absence of trust: the intended users of technologies in Making All Voices Count projects often distrusted the actual technologies. For instance, Indonesian citizens in one of the most tech-savvy districts of the country still report more trust in offline than online modes of communicating with their leaders (Feruglio and Rifai 2017). The real or perceived risks of surveillance, stemming in part from distrust in the anonymity of tech-enabled systems, is one of the reasons for suspicion of new technologies (Treré 2016). These suspicions stop many citizens from engaging with initiatives that use new technologies.

- Black Sash used digital technologies to aggregate and analyse information from social grant recipients, but found that recording this directly onto mobile devices in interviews was not well received, and that recording the information on paper led to better interviews.

- The Southern Cape Land Committee in South Africa found that farmworkers were reluctant to use ICTs to report violations of their rights. The public platform contributed to a fear of victimisation by their employers, who monitored the group's public Facebook page; in some instances, employers installed cameras to check on the use of phones on their farms, and confiscated some farmworkers' phones.

- Making All Voices Count-funded research also noted citizen distrust in the accuracy of information shared by public officials, through data platforms and in person (Kaliati et al. 2017), and the specific concerns of those that are already marginalised, such as those identifying as LGBTQ (Ganesh et al. 2016).

Citizens' trust in government actors' good faith and in the likelihood of government responsiveness, and government actors' trust in citizens' good faith and the validity of their claims, are crucial determinants of responsiveness.

Box 4. Insights into how to enhance government responsiveness

Decades of governance scholarship and practice have highlighted gaps in understanding and obstacles to achieving greater impact in efforts to promote citizen voice and improve accountability and responsiveness.

Making All Voices Count-supported research has addressed some of these challenges, generating fresh insights to inform more effective practice:

- Key factors in reducing the distance between public officials and citizens claiming responsiveness include the way that public officials perceive the legitimacy of citizen claims, the credibility of claims-makers, and trust between public officials and citizens.

- Important challenges in the everyday work of reformist bureaucrats are the need to convince colleagues and other actors within their bureaucracies of the importance of their proposed reforms, and to create coalitions with actors – both within and outside the state.

- For ICT-enabled 'voice and feedback' mechanisms to deliver results for citizens, three elements need careful and equal attention: (1) government willingness is one of the most important factors, but it is useful to give equal consideration to (2) government 'processing' of the inputs it receives (analysis and channelling of the input, and preparing to respond) and (3) government response (initial and ongoing responsiveness to the specific inputs).

- Problematising and understanding the issue of scale is helpful for addressing the anti-accountability forces that are systemically embedded in multiple levels and branches of the state, and for working towards more responsive government.

Sources: Joshi and McCluskey (2018); Herringshaw (2017); Fox (2016)

Message 10. The capacities needed to transform governance relationships are developed offline and in social and political processes, rather than by technologies

Often, mass mobilisation and collective action are the best tools at the disposal of relatively powerless people when they want to engage critically with their governments. Yet the contribution of technologies to constructing collective governance actors out of scattered individuals appears to be small, compared to the role of offline processes of awareness-raising and the development of what, in movement-building and power analysis circles, are referred to as 'power within', 'power with' and the 'power to' make change happen (VeneKlasen and Miller 2002).

This was recognised in many Making All Voices Count-supported initiatives, either from the outset or part-way through. Consequently, they adapted their approaches by, for instance, adding the provision of rights-awareness training to citizens as an offline accompaniment to the technological component of their project; or supporting the development of participants' individual and collective power to engage more effectively with more powerful actors.

- The design of the Eastern Cape NGO Coalition project in South Africa recognised that in order to get local residents' views in surveys, they needed to design these interview and collection processes so that, first of all, they increased citizens' awareness of civic structures and processes, and the responsibilities of the municipal authorities.

- The Women Voices-ICT Choices project in Kenya[19] worked with community-nominated women champions and trained them to be citizen advocates who could engage directly with municipal authorities. An important part of this training was in people's basic rights and entitlements, and the responsibilities of different parts of the devolved government structure.

- The Kijana Wajibika project in Tanzania incorporated rights-awareness training as part of developing a network of Youth Accountability Advocates, acknowledging this as a basis for working with others around community issues.

In contexts where citizens' engagement is constrained by their limited understanding of the workings of government and state bureaucracy, technologies and Internet-based resources might be able to help. However, where the capacity lacking is the experience and skills to conduct effective advocacy and influence government policy or practice, these can only be acquired offline and over time, through citizens' or local associations learning from their own victories and defeats, or through the support and intermediation of more established, accountability-focused NGOs or advocacy activists.

As noted earlier, where political will to improve government accountability and responsiveness exists and it is government capacity that is lacking, technologies can supplement or substitute for capacity in various ways. But even when government actors' take-up and use of a technology is key to its effectiveness, tech initiatives are rarely designed in ways that make them effective at reaching out to, and engaging with, government actors and institutions, or at building their technical capacity to use the innovation in question. When it comes to the other kinds of government capacities that might be needed for accountability and responsiveness to improve, such as leadership or political entrepreneurship, there is little that technologies can do.

Message 11. Technologies can't overturn the social norms that underpin many accountability gaps and silence some voices

Besides the norm of trust, the accountability problem might reside in the lack of other democratic norms and practices in the relationship between citizens and government, or within governments, or within citizen groupings. These norms, both formal and informal, underpin relationships and actions. They operate as what power analysts and theorists call 'invisible power' (VeneKlasen and Miller 2002), setting the limits of what is considered normal, acceptable and desirable in governance relationships, processes and actors' behaviours.

Providing new technologies or channels is not sufficient to engage, enable and hear from people whose voices have rarely been heard and never been recognised or heeded – whose experience of governance power relationships makes them feel they have nothing of value to say. In-depth research with projects in the Philippines that used technology to engage citizens found that "contextual social norms and power relations prevent marginalised people from taking full advantage of citizen participation technologies even when the technology and data are provided" (Roberts and Hernandez 2017: 23–24).

---

19 Umande Trust received a Making All Voices Count Silver prize for this project in the programme's 2016 Global Innovation Competition.

One example of these cultural norms in operation is the bias towards male voices when new channels are opened to allow people to communicate with government and state services. Even where prior analysis and trialling have given rise to carefully crafted ways to reach women with information – for example, scheduling radio broadcasts at particular times of day – they have not been able to overturn deeply embedded and internalised gender norms, according to which women are not decision-makers and therefore do not see the broadcasts' content as relevant to them (Feruglio and Gilberds 2017: 11–12).

Some of our evidence also suggests that assumptions of women's access to technology are over-optimistic and ignore how far this access can be controlled by others in some settings. During a learning event, staff from Making All Voices Count projects working in Pakistan reflected that they had underestimated how far women feared 'punishment' for using the Internet, for example (Yaseen 2017).[20] An insight arising from other projects was that when women reported having access to a phone or Internet-enabled device, it was very often not their own, they didn't have sole use, or their use was controlled by someone else (Mahlalela *et al.* 2017).

Many Making All Voices Count-funded projects specifically sought to use technologies to expand the inclusion of women in governance processes. Successful projects focused on challenging the norms by which women were generally not included in such processes, through building knowledge and confidence, legitimating women's voices, and allowing for prior deliberation outside of formal structures.

- Suara Kita, run by WYDII in Indonesia, worked at the community level to run face-to-face training on citizen rights and newly delegated funds to the local level, to build relationships between citizens and local officials, and to gather views about local priorities through SMS surveys that also served as preparation for people to make their views known at local meetings. An external evaluation noted the impact this had on sending the message that women's views were welcome in these decision-making processes.

- Caritas Kitui in Kenya worked with established women's groups at the ward level to provide in-person training and education on opportunities to be involved in local governance and rights to participation. These were then conveyed by women leaders through a variety of media, including regular radio shows. An evaluation showed that, at the end of the project, women's engagement in community decision-making meetings had increased.

Given the historical weight and embeddedness of such social norms, and even though technologies can facilitate processes that attempt to change them, the innovations that are really needed are in governance practices and social relations, not technologies. Achieving government responsiveness and citizen voice that gets heeded as well as heard involves changes in the attitudes and behaviours of various governance actors towards each other. These include legitimated and meaningful inclusion in democratic deliberation, and challenging norms that exclude and produce self-exclusion; these changes ultimately rely on those who hold power and privilege stepping back and actively making space for others. This might mean government actors giving citizens and their representatives respect and legitimacy as participants in policy, planning or budgeting processes. It may mean male senior citizens standing back to allow younger female citizens to take part in deliberative spaces. It may mean senior bureaucrats and politicians recognising local government actors who act as champions of accountability or integrity.

There are certainly limits, then, to what technologies can contribute to efforts to promote citizen voice and achieve government accountability and responsiveness. As these limits became clear to Making All Voices Count staff and project actors, some grantees admitted that they had initially overemphasised the role they expected the tech components to play, so as to increase their chances of securing Making All Voices Count funding. Others had started with excessively optimistic expectations about technologies' transformative power, and underestimated how much purposeful human agency and socio-political intermediation would be needed for their innovations to contribute to making a difference. In response, they shifted the emphasis onto different activities in their projects, or built new elements into projects; in many cases, these adaptations salvaged projects from failure and led to positive outcomes.

Acknowledging the limitations of technology, and adapting to these through more strategic design processes, will surely lead to fewer failed projects and greater impact. But in acknowledging the limits to the good that technologies can do, there is also a need to recognise a less welcome lesson that has emerged from the past few years, as technologies in the field of citizen voice and government accountability have spread rapidly: that technologies can also do harm to this cause.

---

20 Internal learning event report.

Applying technologies for the public bad

Many observers met the rise of social media and Internet technology in the early 21st century with unstinted optimism about its transformative potential (UNDP 2012; Yonazi *et al.* 2012). This optimism is starting to wane in some quarters, not only on seeing high hopes fall by the wayside, but also on recognising the risks that come with using technologies for enabling citizen voice, as part of an overall digitisation of governance and governance processes and relationships.[21]

The positive contributions technologies can make to transparency, accountability and government responsiveness need to be weighed up against the risks that they can be used to eclipse and constrain citizens' voices, and undermine and obstruct accountability and responsiveness. These risks became particularly apparent through the work of Making All Voices Count.

Message 12. A deepening digital divide risks compounding existing exclusions

Not only is everyone not online, but the drive to digitise the processes of governance threatens to deepen the disenfranchisement and disempowerment of those who, for whatever reason, can't – or don't want to – engage with ICTs and tech-enabled forms of governance. Citizens and their representatives all too often lack the basic ICT skills needed to navigate the new institutional environment that is ushered in by the increasingly common 'digital by default' approach to governance.

Making All Voices Count-funded research highlighted how risky common assumptions about the ubiquity and acceptability of new technologies are, even in what are seen as relatively well-connected countries (de Lanerolle *et al.* 2017; Roberts and Hernandez 2017). We risk significant blind spots in our approaches to accountable governance if we assume that everyone who has a mobile phone uses it in the same way, or that online systems are equally accessible to all. In fact, the application of technologies often amplifies existing inequalities of power and influence, and newer technologies can be inherently excluding (Roberts and Hernandez 2017).

- The LAPOR! platform established in Indonesia to generate more citizen feedback was found to be used predominantly by urban, educated men (Siregar *et al.* 2017), reminding us of immediate issues in who sees and is comfortable responding to information delivered online.

- A number of Making All Voices Count projects – including that of International Media Link in Uganda,[22] Oil Journey in Ghana, and the Stop Stock Outs project in South Africa – initially developed mobile apps, but found that these didn't reach, or couldn't be used by, intended beneficiaries; in response, these projects adapted to using lower tech and offline approaches.

As discussed, many Making All Voices Count-funded projects included extensive attempts to reach out in person, alongside technology, to address these issues. But the scale of these efforts was dwarfed by the scale and speed at which e-governance is spreading globally. Given Internet penetration rates that range from 7% to 54% in Making All Voices Count countries (World Bank 2016), this carries the very real risk of disempowerment and disenfranchisement of very significant proportions of their populations, and the recentralisation and de-democratisation of their states. 'Digital by default' translates all too easily into 'disenfranchised by default' (Gurumurthy *et al.* 2017).

Message 13. New technologies expand the possibilities for surveillance, repression and the manufacturing of consent

Technological advances and their incorporation into patterns of governance threaten the spaces available for legitimate citizen and civic action, wherever this action challenges entrenched power dynamics. Virtual spaces for discussion and debate, afforded by technologies, sometimes create an impression of increasingly equitable governance relationships and expanding civil society space. Yet in several of Making All Voices Count's priority countries, the government's commitment to openness is articulated against a backdrop of narrowing and closing spaces

---

21 See, for instance, Dencik and Leistert (2015).
22 A finalist in Making All Voices Count's Global Innovation Competition 2015.

"While there are undoubtedly benefits from mobilising a wide range of actors [around 'openness'], what happens when the actors start to recognise their diversity, sense that they are not pulling together but in parallel or even against each other, suffer disillusionment, lose interest, and abandon the common project, or even undermine it?" (McGee and Edwards 2016: 18).

for pluralist, democratic citizens to organise and act. This makes illusory the sense of enhanced freedom provided by virtual spaces for debate.

While technologies afford some citizen activists and state reformers access to new information and new, faster ways to communicate, they also bring with them significant new opportunities for state surveillance and repression. Tech-enabled surveillance and repression affects both online and offline spaces.

- The mass resignation of CSO members of Mexico's Open Government Partnership steering group in April 2017, which was a response to finding themselves targeted by digital surveillance, illustrates the extent to which online surveillance has become a significant issue for civil society.[23]

- The experiences of Jamii Media, which runs the popular Jamii Forums message boards in Tanzania, and ran a Making All Voices Count-funded programme to facilitate local democracy through online discussion, illustrates the pressure that can be exerted to close down and censor online spaces. The founder was arrested for refusing to give police data that would have identified whistle-blowers using the site.[24]

- At programme learning events, some Making All Voices Count grant recipients described how participation in their projects exposed citizens to surveillance and harassment, either online in the case of those logging complaints through apps or platforms (Smit *et al.* 2017), or offline in the case of physical harassment and intimidation at Internet access points established for citizen journalists in informal settlements.

ICTs sometimes offer an illusion of anonymity and free speech, while actually assisting others in identifying and curtailing dissent. In the increasingly noisy and complex digital landscape, the nature of political dialogue is open to new forms of manipulation. Online activism is now targeted by increasingly sophisticated campaigns

of misinformation, and ICTs are frequently used to give false impressions of public opinions and drown out critical voices with 'manufactured consent' (Treré 2016). Taken together, these are crucial countervailing forces in struggles to claim greater accountability and responsiveness from the state.

Message 14. Uncritical attitudes towards new technologies, data and the online risk narrowing the frame of necessary debates about accountable governance

As the digitalisation of governance relationships proceeds apace, it is important to stand back and ask whether we are designing the solutions and having the debates that bring about the kind of governance that we want to see. Making All Voices Count's research and learning processes provide some insights into how the contemporary governance and accountability landscape is shaped by new technologies.

Debates around accountable governance are frequently figured through the concept of 'open government' and the normative adoption of 'openness' as a tenet of contemporary governance discourse.

- McGee and Edwards (2016) noted the many and diverse actors that have aligned themselves behind some ostensibly common causes related to openness since the turn of the century, and how the resulting movement has undoubtedly focused energies and catalysed action. They asked, though, "[…] while there are undoubtedly benefits from mobilising a wide range of actors [around 'openness'], what happens when the actors start to recognise their diversity, sense that they are not pulling together but in parallel or even against each other, suffer disillusionment, lose interest, and abandon the common project, or even undermine it?" (McGee and Edwards 2016: 18).

23 See: https://idfi.ge/en/csos_left_ogp_steering_committee and www.opengovpartnership.org/sites/default/files/Mexican_Letter_Civil-Society_May23-2017.pdf
24 See: www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-38341151

- A number of Making All Voices Count research outputs have pointed to the political capital that elected representatives can gain from behaviour that appears to be transparent or responsive (Gurumurthy *et al.* 2017; Moses 2017).

It is possible for governments to be transparent but undemocratic, and release large amounts of data but clamp down heavily on any dissent and criticism that might result. Openness is only one element of accountable governance, and only part of how we should measure it. And certain interpretations – for example making available the data which constitutes the least politically contentious or useful information, in unmanageably large quantities, and in barely actionable formats – amount to little more than 'open-washing'.[25] Some of these processes may actively obscure some of the more important decisions and choices of government.

Additionally, the uses of technology in governance may have significant 'framing effects'. A Making All Voices Count Research Report argues that many technology initiatives are designed to validate less contentious, confrontational interactions, which do not allow for challenging the discourse for transformational change (Leighninger 2016). As noted, a great many Making All Voices Count-supported projects were based on conceptions of governance challenges – or at least those amenable to change, or to tech-enabled change – as fairly technical, service delivery-oriented problems. This is a particularly limited conception of the state and what we might expect of it. Synthesising from in-depth country- and technology-specific case studies, another of our research programmes suggests that where technology shapes citizen participation as collaboration and 'administrative problem-solving' like this – rather than challenging power – this has negative implications for democracy, distancing it from social justice struggles and discourses (Gurumurthy *et al.* 2017).

Conclusions

Box 5. The key messages from Making All Voices Count

To summarise, the most important messages on the roles technologies can play in enabling citizen voice and accountable and responsive governance are:

1. Not all voices can be expressed via technologies
2. Technologies can play decisive roles in improving services where the problem is a lack of planning data or user feedback
3. Common design flaws in tech-for-governance initiatives often limit their effectiveness or their governance outcomes
4. Transparency, information or open data are not sufficient to generate accountability
5. Technologies can support social mobilisation and collective action by connecting citizens
6. Technologies can create new spaces for engagement between citizen and state
7. Technologies can help to empower citizens and strengthen their agency for engagement
8. The kinds of democratic deliberation needed to challenge a systemic lack of accountability are rarely well supported by technologies
9. Technologies alone don't foster the trusting relationships needed between governments and citizens, and within each group of actors
10. The capacities needed to transform governance relationships are developed offline and in social and political processes, rather than by technologies
11. Technologies can't overturn the social norms that underpin many accountability gaps and silence some voices
12. A deepening digital divide risks compounding existing exclusions
13. New technologies expand the possibilities for surveillance, repression and the manufacturing of consent
14. Uncritical attitudes towards new technologies, data and the online risk narrowing the frame of necessary debates about accountable governance

25 'Open-washing' is the difference between opening your data and simply making them available (Villum 2014).

The key messages from the Making All Voices Count programme (Box 5) may not be entirely new to some working in this field, but they are new to many of the actors with whom Making All Voices Count engaged, in particular technologists and civic tech activists, many of them relative newcomers to governance issues and challenges. In any case, the programme's legacy is a large and rich contribution to the body of evidence, one that underpins, expands and deepens what was known before, adding nuance and highlighting that many of the 'old' lessons are still not being put into practice, and that when they are, the results can be exciting.

In sharp contrast to the relatively uncritical and optimistic views that shaped Making All Voices Count in the beginning, we now have reason to pause and consider the wider impacts of technologies on our governance landscape. New exclusions are becoming apparent. New technologies are being shown to have affordances for those who wish to see less accountable and less democratic governance. New, tech-enabled norms of self-service, self-help and crowdsourcing sit alongside the ascendance of the transnational 'tech giants' that own the infrastructures, algorithms and data on which much e-governance depends. In some cases, these combine to require less accountability and responsiveness on the part of governments – the opposite of what Making All Voices Count set out to achieve.

Looking back through four-and-a-half years of operational and research work on the assumptions that underpinned Making All Voices Count's theory of change at the outset, it is clear that expectations about growth in access to the internet and other technologies were excessive. Seen in relation to an end goal of improving the accountability and responsiveness of governance, the contribution of tech-enabled, individual, direct voice has been weak compared to the importance of collective, organised processes that combine online and offline approaches. Put differently, the contribution of tech innovation has been less than that of tech-aware social innovation in making voices count. That tech solutions have made only a moderate contribution is due in part to design and implementation flaws, for which today's stock of knowledge provides abundant evidence, and to which it offers more than sufficient remedies. But it is also partly due to the complexity of the task of making governance accountable, which was under-recognised by many at the outset.

The tech optimism of the era in which Making All Voices Count was conceived can now be reappraised from the better-informed vantage point of hindsight. Making All Voices Count's wealth of diverse and grounded experience and documentation provides an evidence base that should enable a more sober and mature position of tech realism as the field continues to evolve.

References

Arnstein, S. (1969) 'A Ladder of Citizen Participation', *Journal of the American Institute of Planners* 35.4: 216–24

Bivens, F.; Black, G.; Hartnack, A.; Waltz, M. and Wheeler, J. (2017) 'Translating Complex Realities Through Technologies: Lessons About Participatory Accountability from South Africa', Making All Voices Count Research Report, Brighton: IDS, https://opendocs.ids.ac.uk/opendocs/handle/123456789/13127 (accessed 19 December 2017)

Brock, K. with McGee, R. (2017) 'More Accountable and Responsive Governance: How Do Technologies Help Make It Happen?', Making All Voices Count Event Report, Brighton: IDS, https://opendocs.ids.ac.uk/opendocs/handle/123456789/12975 (accessed 25 July 2017)

Davies, T. and Peña Gangadharan, S. (eds) (2009) *Online Deliberation: Design, Research and Practice*, Stanford, CA: Centre for the Study of Language and Information, https://philpapers.org/archive/DAVODD.pdf (accessed 13 December 2017)

de Lanerolle, I. (2017) 'Tech is not neutral: Reflections on the specific affordances of new technologies in citizen voice, government responsiveness and accountability', unpublished paper

de Lanerolle, I.; Walton, M. and Schoon, A. (2017) 'Izolo: Mobile Diaries of the Less Connected', Making All Voices Count Research Report, Brighton: IDS, https://opendocs.ids.ac.uk/opendocs/handle/123456789/13348 (accessed 19 December 2017)

Dencik, L. and Leistert, O. (eds) (2015) *Critical Perspectives on Social Media and Protest: Between Control and Emancipation*, London: Rowman & Littlefield International

DFID (2012a) 'Business case and intervention summary: Making All Voices Count: A grand challenge for development 2012–2016', London: Department for International Development

DFID (2012b) 'Fund manager terms of reference for Making All Voices Count: A grand challenge for development', London: Department for International Development

Diga, K. (2017) 'Digital Mapping in Warwick Junction and the Remaking of 'Space': Notes from South Africa', Research Brief, IT for Change and Making All Voices Count, Brighton: IDS, https://opendocs.ids.ac.uk/opendocs/handle/123456789/13007 (accessed 24 July 2017)

Edwards, D. with Hudson, H.; Anderson, C.; McGee, R. and Brock, K. (2018) 'Supporting Innovation and the Use of Technologies in Accountability Initiatives: Lessons from Making All Voices Count', Making All Voices Count Programme Learning Report, Brighton: IDS, https://opendocs.ids.ac.uk/opendocs/handle/123456789/13451 (accessed 19 December 2017)

Engine Room (2017) 'What Does the Research Tell Us?', Engine Room, https://researchfindings.tech (accessed 11 December 2017)

Eyben, R. and Ladbury, S. (2006) Building Effective States: Taking a Citizen's Perspective, Citizenship DRC Report 06, Brighton: Development Research Centre, https://opendocs.ids.ac.uk/opendocs/handle/123456789/12429 (accessed 19 December 2017)

Feruglio, F. (2017) 'Do More Empowered Citizens Make More Accountable States? Power and Legitimacy in Legal Empowerment Initiatives in Kenya and South Africa', Making All Voices Count Research Report, Brighton: IDS, https://opendocs.ids.ac.uk/opendocs/handle/123456789/13172 (accessed 6 September 2017)

Feruglio, F. and Gilberds, H. (2017) 'Building an Ecosystem Around Data: Using Interactive Radio for Accountability to Farmers in Tanzania', Making All Voices Count Practice Paper, Brighton: IDS, https://opendocs.ids.ac.uk/opendocs/handle/123456789/12850 (accessed 25 July 2017)

Feruglio, F. and Rifai A. (2017) 'Participatory Budgeting in Indonesia: Past, Present and Future', Making All Voices Count Practice Paper, Brighton: IDS, https://opendocs.ids.ac.uk/opendocs/handle/123456789/12733 (accessed 25 July 2017)

Fishkin, J. and Luskin, R. (2005) 'Experimenting with a Democratic Ideal: Deliberative Polling and Public Opinion', *Acta Politica* 40.3: 284–98

Fox, J. (2016) 'Scaling Accountability Through Vertically Integrated Civil Society Policy Monitoring and Advocacy', Making All Voices Count Working Paper, Brighton: IDS, https://opendocs.ids.ac.uk/opendocs/handle/123456789/12683 (accessed 25 July 2017)

Fox, J. (2014) 'Social Accountability: What Does the Evidence Really Say?' GPSA Working Paper No. 1, Washington, DC: World Bank, http://gpsaknowledge.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/Social-Accountability-What-Does-Evidence-Really-Say-

GPSA-Working-Paper-1.pdf (accessed 13 December 2017)

Fox, J. (2007) 'The Uncertain Relationship Between Transparency and Accountability', *Development in Practice* 17.4: 663–71

Ganesh, M.I.; Deutch, J. and Schulte, J. (2016) 'Privacy, Anonymity, Visibility: Dilemmas in Tech Use by Marginalised Communities', Making All Voices Count Research Report, Brighton: IDS, https://opendocs.ids.ac.uk/opendocs/handle/123456789/12110 (accessed 25 July 2017)

Gaventa, J. and Barrett, G. (2012) 'Mapping the Outcomes of Citizen Engagement', *World Development* 40.12: 2399–410

Gaventa, J. and Barrett, G. (2010) 'So What Difference Does It Make? Mapping the Outcomes of Citizen Engagement', IDS Working Paper 347, Brighton: IDS, www.ids.ac.uk/files/dmfile/Wp347.pdf (accessed 13 December 2017)

Gilberds, H.; Handforth, C. and Leclair, M. (2016) 'Exploring the Potential for Interactive Radio to Improve Accountability and Responsiveness to Small-scale Farmers in Tanzania', Special Report, Ontario: Farm Radio International, https://opendocs.ids.ac.uk/opendocs/handle/123456789/12770 (accessed 25 July 2017)

Gurumurthy, A.; Bharthur, D. and Chami, N. (2017) 'Voice or Chatter? Making ICTs Work for Transformative Engagement', Making All Voices Count Research Report, Brighton: IDS, https://opendocs.ids.ac.uk/opendocs/handle/123456789/13205 (accessed 14 September 2017)

Hagen, E. (2017) 'Open Mapping from the Ground Up: Learning from Map Kibera', Making All Voices Count Research Report, Brighton: IDS, https://opendocs.ids.ac.uk/opendocs/handle/123456789/13244 (accessed 13 December 2017)

Herringshaw, V. (2017) 'Are You Doing What's Needed to Get the State to Respond to Its Citizens? Or Are You Part of the Problem?', Making All Voices Count Blog, 23 October, www.makingallvoicescount.org/blog/whats-needed-get-state-respond-citizens-part-problem (accessed 11 December 2017)

Hrynick, T. and Waldman, L. (2017) 'ICT-facilitated Accountability and Engagement in Health Systems: A Review of Making All Voices Count mHealth for Accountability Projects', Making All Voices Count Research Report, Brighton: IDS, https://opendocs.ids.ac.uk/opendocs/handle/123456789/13075 (accessed 24 July 2017)

Internet Society (2016) 'Global Internet Report 2016', Reston, VA/Geneva: Internet Society, www.internetsociety.org/globalinternetreport/2016/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/ISOC_GIR_2016-v1.pdf (accessed 13 December 2017)

IWS (2017) 'Internet users in Africa June 2017', www.internetworldstats.com/stats1.htm, Bogota: Internet World Stats

Johnson, S.; Mahlalela, N.B. and Mills, E. (2017) 'Client Experience of Rape Victims Accessing Governmental Post-Rape Services in South Africa', Making All Voices Count Research Report, Brighton: IDS, https://opendocs.ids.ac.uk/opendocs/handle/123456789/12857 (accessed 25 July 2017)

Joshi, A. and McCluskey, R. (2018), 'The Art of 'Bureaucraft': Why and How Bureaucrats Respond to Citizen Voice', Making All Voices Count Research Briefing, Brighton: IDS, https://opendocs.ids.ac.uk/opendocs/handle/123456789/13446

Kaliati, A.; Kachieng'a, P. and de Lanerolle, I. (2017) 'What Data Do We Want? Understanding Demands for Open Data Among Civil Society Organisations in South Africa', Making All Voices Count Research Report, Brighton: IDS, https://opendocs.ids.ac.uk/opendocs/handle/123456789/12971 (accessed 25 July 2017)

Leighninger, M. (2016) 'Transforming Governance: How Can Technology Help Reshape Democracy?', Making All Voices Count Research Briefing, Brighton: IDS, https://opendocs.ids.ac.uk/opendocs/handle/123456789/11738 (accessed 25 July 2017)

Mahlalela, N.B.; Johnson, S. and Mills, E. (2017) 'Feasibility and Acceptability of a Mobile Phone Intervention to Improve Post-Rape Service Delivery in South Africa', Making All Voices Count Research Report, Brighton: IDS, https://opendocs.ids.ac.uk/opendocs/handle/123456789/12771 (accessed 25 July 2017)

McGee, R. and Edwards, D. (2016) 'Introduction: Opening Governance – Change, Continuity and Conceptual Ambiguity', *IDS Bulletin* 47.1: 1–22, https://opendocs.ids.ac.uk/opendocs/handle/123456789/7686 (accessed 25 July 2017)

McGee, R. and Gaventa, J. (2010) 'Synthesis Paper: Review of Impact and Effectiveness of Transparency and Accountability Initiatives', London: Transparency and Accountability Initiative, www.transparency-initiative.org/uncategorized/607/synthesis-report-review-of-impact-and-effectiveness-of-transparency-and-accountability-initiatives (accessed 13 December 2017)

Moses, M. (2017) 'Learning to Make All Voices Count: Lessons and Reflection on Localising the Open Government Partnership', Making All Voices Count Research Report, Brighton: IDS, https://opendocs.ids.ac.uk/opendocs/handle/123456789/13351 (accessed 27 November 2017)

Oosterom, M.A. (2014) 'The Effects of Violent Conflict and Displacement on Citizen Engagement: A Case Study from Northern Uganda', Unpublished PhD thesis, University of Sussex, Institute of Development Studies

Opulencia-Calub, S.; Luna, E.; Molina, J.; Pontejos, G. and Chico, J. (2017) 'Tools, Platforms and Mechanisms to Support Accountability to Disaster-Affected Populations in the Philippines', Making All Voices Count Research Report, Brighton: IDS, https://opendocs. ids.ac.uk/opendocs/handle/123456789/13212 (accessed 20 September 2017)

Pegus, C-M. and Rono-Bett, K. (2017) 'It matters who produces data: reflections on two citizen-generated data initiatives', Making All Voices Count Practice Paper, Brighton: IDS, https://opendocs.ids.ac.uk/ opendocs/handle/123456789/12997 (accessed 25 July 2017)

Peña-López, I. (2017) 'Citizen Participation and the Rise of the Open Source City in Spain', Research Brief, IT for Change and Making All Voices Count, Bengaluru: IT for Change, https://opendocs.ids.ac.uk/opendocs/ handle/123456789/13006 (accessed 24 July 2017)

Prieto-Martin, P.; Faith, B.; Hernandez, K. and Ramalingam, B. (2017) 'Doing Digital Development Differently: Lessons in Adaptive Management from Technology for Governance Initiatives in Kenya', Making All Voices Count Research Report, Brighton: IDS, https://opendocs.ids.ac.uk/opendocs/ handle/123456789/13285 (accessed 13 December 2017)

Rifai, A.; Asterina, N. and Hidayani, R. (2016) 'Improving the Transparency, Inclusivity and Impact of Participatory Budgeting in Indonesian Cities', Research Report, Making All Voices Count and Kota Kita, Surakarta: Kota Kita, https://opendocs. ids.ac.uk/opendocs/handle/123456789/12966 (accessed 25 July 2017)

Roberts, T. and Hernandez, K. (2017) 'The Techno-Centric Gaze: Incorporating Citizen Participation Technologies into Participatory Governance Processes in the Philippines', Making All Voices Count Research Report, Brighton: IDS, https://opendocs.ids.ac.uk/ opendocs/handle/123456789/13344 (accessed 13 December 2017)

Rocha Menocal, A. and Sharma, B. (2008) 'Joint Evaluation of Citizens' Voice and Accountability: Synthesis Report', London: Department for International Development

Shaw, J. (2017) 'Pathways to Accountability from the Margins: Reflections on Participatory Video Practice', Making All Voices Count Research Report, Brighton: IDS, https://opendocs.ids.ac.uk/opendocs/ handle/123456789/13149 (accessed 25 August 2017)

Siregar, F.; Luthfina Usmani, M.; Kumaralalita, L.; Nufaisa, H. and Andriani Putri, D. (2017) 'Complaining to Improve Governance: Four Stories of Complaint-Handling Systems in Indonesia', Making All Voices Count Research Report, Brighton: IDS, https://opendocs.ids.ac.uk/opendocs/ handle/123456789/12837 (accessed 25 July 2017)

Smit, D.; de Lanerolle, I.; Braam, T.; Byrne, D. and Legong, G. (2017) 'I Know What I Know (But How Do I Know What I Don't?)', Making All Voices Count Event Report, Brighton: IDS, https://opendocs.ids.ac.uk/ opendocs/handle/123456789/12952 (accessed 25 July 2017)

Ssanyu, R.; Rono-Bett, K. and Kenei, S. (2017) 'Citizen-Generated Data and Sustainable Development: Evidence from Case Studies in Kenya and Uganda', Special Report, Bristol/ Nairobi/Kampala/Washington, DC: Development Initiatives, https://opendocs.ids.ac.uk/opendocs/ handle/123456789/12947 (accessed 25 July 2017)

Treré, E. (2016) 'The Dark Side of Digital Politics: Understanding the Algorithmic Manufacturing of Consent and the Hindering of Online Dissidence', IDS Bulletin 47.1: 127–38, https://opendocs.ids.ac.uk/ opendocs/handle/123456789/7697 (accessed 25 July 2017)

UNDP (2012) Mobile Technologies and Empowerment: Enhancing Human Development Through Participation and Innovation, New York: United Nations Development Programme, www.undp.org/content/ dam/undp/library/Democratic%20Governance/ Access%20to%20Information%20and%20 E-governance/Mobile%20Technologies%20and%20 Empowerment_EN.pdf (accessed 13 December 2017)

VeneKlasen, L. and Miller, V. (2002) A New Weave of Power, People and Politics: The Action Guide for Advocacy and Citizen Participation, Oklahoma City, OK: World Neighbors, https://justassociates.org/en/ resources/new-weave-power-people-politics-action-guide-advocacy-and-citizen-participation (accessed 15 December 2017)

Wampler, B. and Touchton, M. (2017) 'Participatory Budgeting: Adoption and Transformation', Making All Voices Count Research Report, Brighton: IDS, https:// opendocs.ids.ac.uk/opendocs/handle/123456789/13366 (accessed 11 December 2017)

Walker, T. (2017) 'Using what we know: How to ensure tech projects meet the brief', Making All Voices Count Blog, 24 October, www.makingallvoicescount.org/ blog/using-know-ensure-tech-projects-meet-brief (accessed 11 December 2017)

World Bank (2016) 'Individuals using the Internet (% of population)' World Development Indicators,

https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/IT.NET.USER.ZS?locations=BD-PH-GH-TZ-ZA-KE-UG-ID-LR-PK-NG-MZ, Washington, DC: World Bank (accessed 19 December 2017)

Valente, M.; Kira, B. and Ruiz J (2017) 'Marco Civil vs. Copyright Reform: A Comparative Study', IT for Change Case Study, Bengaluru: IT for Change, http://opendocs.ids.ac.uk/opendocs/handle/123456789/13272 (accessed 11 December 2017)

Villum, C. (2014) '"Open-washing" – The Difference Between Opening Your Data and Simply Making Them Available', Open Knowledge International Blog, 10 March, https://blog.okfn.org/2014/03/10/open-washing-the-difference-between-opening-your-data-and-simply-making-them-available (accessed 15 December 2017)

Yaseen, F. (2017) 'The Effects of Tech-driven Accountability Approaches on Power, Politics and Change in Pakistan', Making All Voices Count Blog, 7 November, www.makingallvoicescount.org/blog/tech-driven-accountability-approaches-power-politics-change-pakisthan (accessed 15 December 2017)

Yonazi, E.; Kelly, T.; Halewood, N. and Blackman, C. (2012) 'The Transformational Use of Information and Communication Technologies in Africa', Washington, DC: World Bank / Tunis: African Development Bank, https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/26791 (accessed 19 December 2017)

About Making All Voices Count

Making All Voices Count is a programme working towards a world in which open, effective and participatory governance is the norm and not the exception. It focuses global attention on creative and cutting-edge solutions to transform the relationship between citizens and their governments. The programme is inspired by and supports the goals of the Open Government Partnership.

Making All Voices Count is supported by the UK Department for International Development (DFID), the US Agency for International Development (USAID), the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA) and the Omidyar Network, and is implemented by a consortium consisting of Hivos, IDS and Ushahidi.

Research, Evidence and Learning component

The programme's Research, Evidence and Learning component, managed by IDS, contributes to improving performance and practice, and builds an evidence base in the field of citizen voice, government responsiveness, transparency and accountability (T&A) and technology for T&A (Tech4T&A).

Web   www.makingallvoicescount.org
Email   info@makingallvoicescount.org
Twitter @allvoicescount

Implemented by: