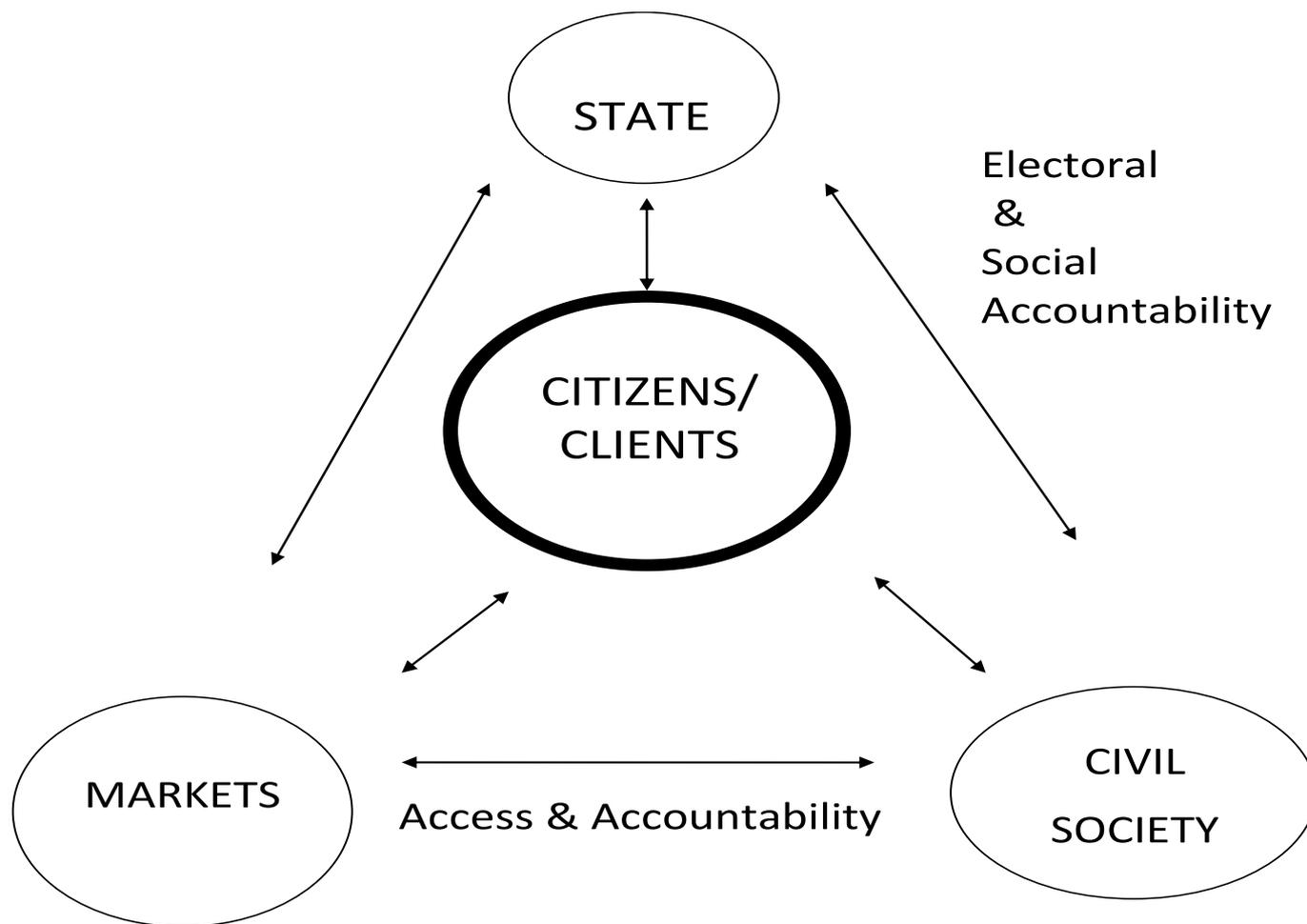


The Social Observatory

*Developing a Science of
Adaptive Delivery*

The “Theory”



Challenges

- Repairing civil society and political failures is a much harder task that needs a fundamentally different approach to development
 - Variability of local context and the unpredictable nature of change-trajectories highlight the importance of developing effective systems of internal learning and monitoring
- Such projects require constant adjustment, learning in the field, and experimentation in order to be effective
- “Scaling-Up” is one of the biggest challenges - Interventions that work well with small populations routinely face serious challenges in expanding to a larger number of communities.

Mansuri and Rao, Localizing Development: Does Participation Work?, 2012

Hence Adaptive Capacity → Social Observatory

- Improving the project's ability to see, learn, and adapt is critical for complex projects and for scaling up
 - Development as Prozac and Development as Therapy
 - Lots of talk:
 - Hirschman (1967), Rao and Walton (2004), Ellerman (2005), Easterly (2006), Woolcock (2009), Mansuri and Rao (2012), Ramalingam (2013), WDR (2015)
 - But little action:
 - VP South Asia, Isabel Guerrero – Put up or Shut Up
 - 2011: The SO set up as a joint initiative between DECPI and the South Asia Livelihoods team
 - Funding: South Asia Food and Nutrition Security Initiative SAFANSI; Also DIME, 3ie, SAGE
 - Leverage \$4 per \$1
-

Principles of the SO

- “Embedded” Research
 - Collaboration between research and project staff
 - TTLs, Project Director, M&E in Charge, and grass roots functionaries

 - Inter-disciplinary
 - Question Drives Method(s)
 - Team of economists, sociologists, management information specialists, behavioral scientists

 - Objective:
 - Research for better implementation
 - Help projects build adaptive capacity
-

Our partners

\$ 2 billion India Livelihoods Portfolio

- Bihar – The JEEViKA Project
 - Tamil Nadu – Pudhu Vaazhvu Project

 - Also,
 - Odisha – Tripti
 - Maharashtra- MSRLM
-

Livelihoods Projects: Women's Empowerment and Poverty Reduction

- CORE: Facilitated credit intervention. SHG mobilization. 7-12 women. 10-15 per village. Headed by a Village Organization
 - SHG Federation: Village-Block-District
 - VERTICALS: Think of SHGs as a highway. Roll out various anti-poverty programs, nutrition interventions, women centered interventions (about 30 verticals currently in operation)
 - GOALS: Women's Empowerment, Poverty Alleviation, Building Sustainable Livelihoods
-

Adaptive capacity in practice

- 1. Long-Term Feedback:** Mixed-Method IEs (Quant to understand magnitude of impact – “how much”), Qualitative (to understand mechanisms - “why”)
 - 2. Everyday Feedback:** Management Information Systems, Decision Support Systems, Process Monitoring
 - 3. Citizen/Beneficiary Feedback:** To give beneficiaries a role in improving design and implementation
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LONG TERM FEEDBACK

Mixed methods evaluations in Bihar

Long-Term Feedback

- 6 IEs of the “Core Intervention” in Four States for External Validity
 - 4 IEs of “Verticals”
 - Will focus on two sequential mixed-method evaluations of JEEViKA in Bihar to understand the added value of integrating qualitative and quantitative methods in evaluation
-

JEEViKA timeline

Project Timeline

Phase 1	Phase 2		Phase 3		Target
375,692	741,847		2,908,010		12 million
2006	2011	2014	2015	2016	2022

PSM Data

RCT Baseline

RCT Midline

RCT Endline

Qualitative Start

12 cycles

Qualitative End

Research Timeline

Impact of JEEViKA in Phase 1: Propensity Score Matched on Project Selection Variables

Savings and Debt (Diff-in-Diff)	Effect Size (Percent)
Savings	290.63
Percent HH with high cost loans(from 2008)	-43.39
Amount borrowed (New loans)	-46.72

Empowerment (Diff-in Diff)	Effect Size (Percent)
Visit Panchayat Meetings	534.61
Visit local shop	21.54
Visit PDS	58.99
Visit Health Center	44.30
Visit Relative	37.08
Provide input on decisions on Children's Education	36.65
Report having an opinion on politics	333.33

* Datta, Upamanyu (2015), *World Development*, Volume 16

Why qualitative?

- How did the project change culture and social norms to help equalize gender relations?
 - Sanyal, Rao and Majumdar (2015),
"Recasting Culture to Undo Gender: A Sociological Analysis of the Jeevika Intervention in Bihar, India."
World Bank Policy Research Working Paper
-

Qualitative: Methodology

District	Village	No. of open-ended Interviews				No. of FGDs
		Joiner	Non-joiner	Husband	General Informant	
Madhubani	Phase I	120	48	24	24	24
	Phase II	120	48	24	24	24
	Control		168	24	24	24
Muzafarpur	Phase I	120	48	24	24	24
	Phase II	120	48	24	24	24
	Control		168	24	24	24
Madhepura	Phase II	120	48	24	24	24
	Control		168	24	24	24
Saharsa	Phase II	120	48	24	24	24
	Control		168	24	24	24

- **Subset of quantitative sample – 5 matched treatment (Phase I) and 5 control**
- **3 years, 10 villages, 12 cycles of data collection**
- **1 cycle = 200 interviews, focus group discussions and direct observation of group activities, which amounted to 2400 transcripts.**
- **Five ethnographers entered each village every quarter for a week**

Qualitative: Inductive coding in NVivo

▼ Social

Acceptance	38	49
Actualisation of...	69	104
Alcoholism	2	2
Aspirations	49	63
Awareness	20	22
Collective Action	42	50
Domestic Viole...	4	4
Household Voice	16	18
Intergenerational	19	25
Leadership Build...	24	31
Marriage	1	1
Mobility	48	64
Purdha	15	17
Social Network	59	68

▼ Economic

Access to Credit	159	240
Collective Action	7	7
▼ Individual Income	0	0
CRP	10	11
PG	12	15
Self Business	6	6
Intrahousehold Financial Deci...	21	25
▶ Loans	0	0
Migration	2	3
Moneylender versus Jeevika	118	169
Repayment Convenience	14	17
Signature and Financial Literacy	84	118

▼ Political

Collective Action	6	7
Contesting Elections	4	6
Interfacing with institutions	3	3
Perception of Sarkar	23	31
Voting	2	3

Economic themes

Sub-themes	Treatment	Control
Act of borrowing	Less humiliating and more dignity when borrowing from SHG versus moneylender	Considered begging; do not like borrowing or being rejected or defaulting with a moneylender
Ability to obtain a loan	Depends on collective capacity to bargain	Depends on individual capacity to bargain
Decision on taking loans	Made by women themselves	Women typically act on behalf of husbands
Information on village credit	Women are better informed on village moneylending networks and interest rates	Women lack village-wide information on credit networks

Social and Political themes

Sub-themes	Treatment	Control
Capabilities	Women see themselves as capable of being active participants in public debate	Women see public sphere as 'masculine'
Opinions on local govt.	Women voice opinion on corruption and necessity of bringing change	Women seldom give their opinion on a public forum
Problem-solving	Jeevika women arbitrate among themselves, e.g. land conflicts, domestic violence.	Women's issues are rarely taken up by themselves or in Aam Sabhas i.e. public forums
Fighting elections	For Sarpanch, Mukhiya, ward members	Only proxy-Mukhiya i.e. on behalf of husband

How did change come about?

- JEEViKA gives women *exclusive* access to a set of physical resources, symbolic resources, and an institutional environment – all of which were perceived as ‘masculine’ prior to project
 - PHYSICAL RESOURCES
 - Group money, a passbook, a moneybox
 - SYMBOLIC RESOURCES
 - Creating an alternative identity for poor women that cuts across caste
 - Democratizing financial decision making on disbursement of loans, signature and financial literacy
 - INSTITUTIONAL ENVIRONMENT
 - SHGs, VOs, CLFs, rituals
 - Access to an alternative source of credit than moneylenders
-

How JEEViKA alters deeply entrenched social norms

Culture is not an immutable constraint for development: can be undone by giving economically and socially disadvantaged women access to a well-defined network of peer-women and new systems of 'knowledge'



Norms can be changed in a short period of time: a *re-iterative process of collective violation of behavioral injunctions on women is key* (Butler 2004)

Impact of JEEViKA in Phase 2: RCT with Pre-Analysis Plan*

- Randomized Phase-in across 7 project districts
 - Evaluation sample: 9000 households in 180 Villages
- 90 villages randomly assigned to project treatment
 - Project did not know which villages were part of the evaluation sample
- Baseline Survey- 2011
- First follow up - 2014
 - Exposure of around 2.25 years to the project
- Second follow up scheduled for 2016

**Datta, Hoffmann, Rao, Surendra, "Report on the Impact of JEEViKA: Evidence from a Randomized Rollout," November 2015*

Impact of JEEViKA: Phase 1 Vs. Phase 2

	Phase 1: PSM Diff-in-Diff	Phase 2: RCT ANCOVA estimates
Savings and Debt	Percentage Change	Percentage Change
Savings	290.63	60.02
Does household have any high cost loans	-43.39	-7.48
Total high cost Debt	-46.72	-15.15
Empowerment		
Visit Panchayat Meetings	534.61	Not Significant
Visit local shop	21.54	Not Significant
Visit PDS	58.99	Not Significant
Visit Health Center	44.30	Not Significant
Visit Relative	37.08	Not Significant
Provide input on decisions on Children's Education	36.65	Not Significant
Report having an opinion on politics	333.33	Not Significant

* Due to the retrospective nature of the PSM, some variables were defined in slightly different ways

Why the difference in results?

1. Difference in methodology
 2. Shorter time lines:
Five years in Phase 1, and two years in Phase 2
 3. Difference in implementation quality
-

What went wrong with implementation in Phase 2?

Common Knowledge:

A. Doubling coverage

- Large number of new staff hired

B. Poor decision support systems to manage expansion:

- Proper MIS not set up
- Poor process monitoring

→ Insights from our qualitative research

- Differences in the quality of project facilitation between Phase 1 and Phase 2
-

Initial Mobilization

Phase I	Phase II
Doing a thorough power analysis / informal information gathering	Getting 'buy-in' for the project
Social mapping as a means of taking the site of knowledge production to the village	Social mapping is done as a means of arriving at a number of target households
Making self-help the end goal	Making jobs or lower interest rates the end goal
Turning first movers into 'eyes and ears' of the community	Turning first movers into 'eyes and ears' of the facilitators

Group Meeting Stage

Phase I	Phase II
Ritualization / 'performing' of participation	Rituals are seen as burdensome
Community ownership over the project is taken literally	Community ownership over the project is rhetoric
Engaging head-on with the messy business of preventing elite capture	Keeping community politics at bay
Enrolling a nexus of supporters through the project's life cycle	Building support is limited to the beginning of the project

Learning and Adapting from Evaluation

- Qualitative evidence critical in interpreting quantitative results
 - Decision support systems for everyday learning are essential to manage expansion/scale-up
 - Next element of our work on building adaptive capacity
-

EVERYDAY FEEDBACK

Supporting Grassroots decision making in Bihar

Everyday Feedback

- Process Monitoring Systems in 2 states
 - Decision Support Systems for JEEViKA's Core intervention (Huge Challenges)
 - Improved Data Validation for MIS
 - [Alert-Based Monitoring Systems for Community-Based Nutrition Interventions](#)
-

CITIZEN FEEDBACK

Participatory Tracking in Tamil Nadu*

**Palaniswamy, Rao, Sakhamuri, Shajeevana, Xia, "Democratizing Data: Participatory-Tracking in Tamil Nadu, India," (forthcoming)*

Origin

- Modernize PRA with new technology and methods
 - Democratizing Data
 - Census of program participants
 - Pilot of 32000 women in PVP
 - Government has requested an extension to 10 million women in Tamil Nadu
-

Step 1: Develop Questionnaire

- Community Based
 - Uses women's networks
 - Tested by community members with community members
 - Finalized questionnaire should take no more than 30 minutes
-

What makes this questionnaire different?

- Overlap in themes covered
 - NSS: 17 %
 - LSMS type survey: 70 %
 - Covered a range of themes:
 - Livelihoods, Economic Welfare, Food Security and Nutrition, Empowerment, Access to public services and programs, Political Participation
 - Differed in framing and emphasis
-

A sample of questions

Food and Nutrition

How much do you spend on the purchase of vegetables in a month?

Does the person who eats last get enough to eat?

Marriage

What was your age at the time of your marriage?

Was your decision taken into account at the time of your marriage?

Did you marry your relative?

Empowerment

Who makes decisions on assets and loans in your family?

Do you decide on what clothes to wear based on your own preferences?

Have there been any instances of violence against women in your village?

Digital Participation

Can you use a mobile phone on your own?

Can you read and send text messages?

Step 2: Data collection and management

- Participatory
 - Implemented and managed by CBO members
 - PVP project staff- Coordinating role
 - Other Key features
 - Tablet based
 - Data Quality and Validation
 - Designed for users with low digital literacy
-

Step 3: Data visualization

→ Empower respondents to analyze and act on their own data

உங்களது காட்சிபடுத்துதல் பக்கத்திற்கு வரவேற்கிறோன். இங்கே நமக்கு ஒரு கிராமத்தை வரைபடக்காட்சி மூலம் அறிந்து கொள்ளும் வகையில் சித்தரிக்கப்பட்டுள்ளன. இங்குள்ள வரைபடக்காட்சிகளில் இடம்பெற்றுள்ள ஒவ்வொரு வரைபடத்தையும் அழுத்தும் போது அந்தந்த கிராமத்தின் வரைபடத்திற்கான முழு தகவலையும் ஒப்பீட்டு பார்க்க இயலும். வரைபடத்தை பார்த்த நிமிடத்திலேயே பலமானது அல்லது பலவீனமானது என்று மிக எளிதாக அறியமுடியும். அந்தந்த பகுதியின் சுகாதாரத்தை பொருத்து வரைபடங்கள் பல்வேறு கலர்களில் அமைந்திருக்கும். ஒரு குறிப்பிட்ட வரைபடத்தில் சிறந்த சுகாதாரம் மற்றும் அதன் கலர் பிரகாசமாக தென்பட்டால் அங்கு பதிலளித்தவர்கள் அதிகம் மற்றும் சிறந்த பதில்கள் தரப்பட்டுள்ளன என்பது பொருள். நீங்கள் மேலே உள்ள மெனுவை பயன்படுத்தி எந்த பகுதியை வேண்டுமானாலும் தேர்வு செய்து படக்காட்சியையும் மற்றும் ஒவ்வொருவரையும் ஒப்பீட்டும் பார்க்க இயலும்.

all | none



Step 4: Data Feedback



Some Uses of Participatory Tracking

- An alternate citizen narrative of poverty and well-being
 - High frequency census data
 - Public goods decision making
-

SO: Challenges

- No institutional structure for this kind of research-operational collaboration
 - Have been working against the grain
 - No incentives for TTLs to acknowledge or learn from failure
 - Requires a stable project with an engaged TTL + an engaged Project Director
 - So personnel changes can be a stumbling block
 - Funding is a big issue – who pays?
-

Conclusion

- Projects have been very open and brave to allow us to observe them from such close quarters
 - Extremely difficult to get implementation right in the field, especially for complex, large scale projects
 - Embedded approach has been critical to the successes we've had
 - Improving the adaptive capacity of projects by changing the culture of implementation is difficult but can be done
-

SO Team

Core team: *Vijayendra Rao (Head)*

Nethra Palaniswamy (Coordinator), Upamanyu Datta, Shruti Majumdar, Smriti Sakhamuri, Samrat Ghosh, Nandini Krishnan, Madhulika Khanna, Nishtha Kochhar, G. Manivannan

DECRG Collaborators:

Paul Christian, Karla Hoff, Eeshani Kandpal, Ghazala Mansuri

- + 11 Academic Collaborators
 - + 13 Implementation Partners
-