

Navigating possibilities of collaboration

How representative roles of diverse CSOs take shape

A literature review

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Table of contents

Chapter 1. Introduction	5
Part 1. Theoretical foundations	
Chapter 2. Civil society collaborations.....	14
Chapter 3. Autonomy and ownership.....	28
Chapter 4. Representation.....	47
Part 2. The Indian context	
Chapter 5. The state and civil society in India	61
Chapter 6. Composition of civil society in India.....	74
Chapter 7. Conclusion: innovation and policy relevance	88

Chapter 1. Introduction

The Dialogue and Dissent Theory of Change takes the starting point that CSOs can contribute to inclusive and sustainable development. Articulating and communicating the voice of the people, they can address important inequalities in society. In our research, we relate to five (implicit and explicit) assumptions in the Dialogue and Dissent Theory of Change regarding this representative role of CSOs. These assumptions all concern the nature of the representative role of CSOs and how these are shaped in interactions between CSOs, in the contexts in which they move and operate. Firstly, we relate to the assumption that CSOs represent societal groupings and interests and thereby can contribute to inclusive development. Secondly, we relate to the assumption that collaborations with Northern NGOs and donors contribute to the enabling of representative roles for Southern CSOs. Thirdly, we relate to the assumption that CSOs require autonomy and ownership to perform their representative roles. Fourthly, we engage with the assumption that different types of CSO have different and complementary representative roles. Finally, we relate to the assumption that the strengthening of civil society's representative roles will contribute to inclusive and sustainable development.

All these assumptions, while diverse in nature, express hopes and aspirations about the role of CSOs. While the Theory of Change does problematize some key dimensions of the assumptions, it appears to be still limited in its engagement with the complex dynamics in which CSOs find themselves, when it comes to the shaping of representative roles.

In our understanding, the above assumptions deserve to be unpacked further and insights on them deepened and in some aspects, possibly challenged. First, there are many different ways in which CSOs constitute their representative role, from different understandings of who and how to represent, with what aims. Moreover, relevant diversities within contexts will shape the representative roles of different CSOs differently. In many cases, CSOs represent sections of society from highly specific ideological and organisational backgrounds. For example, knowledge-based organisations offering expertise on disaster risk reduction may represent interests of what they would call 'vulnerable' or 'marginal' people, but in ways highly different from rights-based advocates. The way representation takes shape, through social construction of groupings and representation itself, will have important implications for inclusiveness. Importantly, CSOs' forms of representation that we will find will be at least partly shaped by the inequalities in society itself – raising the question how this figures in the way inequalities are countered through representative roles. Secondly, often CSOs are domestically embedded in multiple relations, collaborations and contexts. This has important implications for the way CSOs give shape to their role, complementing those of others, defining themselves in relations with others, and seeing themselves defined by others, including e.g. partners, opposing forces and the state. This embedding also has implications for autonomy and ownership, and thereby for the nature of representation. Thirdly, within the complexity of multiple relations and embeddedness in context, the role of collaboration with donors and Northern CSOs will be relative in nature.

By our research, we seek to deepen insights regarding collaboration focusing on Southern CSOs' navigation of possibilities while shaping their representative roles, doing justice to the organizational

and contextual realities in which CSOs find themselves. This perspective relates directly to current debate in international development. Increasingly, development actors seek ways to help make sure that development is owned by people and organisations 'on the ground'. This also goes for the representative role of CSOs. A long term goal we find emerging in the field is to create conditions where responsibilities and leadership increasingly lie with Southern CSOs (Banks et al., 2015; Miller-Dawkins, 2017; Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2018; Goodman, 2016; Forsch, 2018).

This implies that development actors like donors and Northern CSOs seeking to support the representative roles of CSOs in the Global South, will, more than before, need to take the perspectives and context of Southern CSOs as leading in the development of collaboration efforts. However, we believe that as yet, it is unclear what that would mean in practice, when it comes to fundamental questions: whom to work with, how to collaborate, and what this implies for roles of donors and Northern CSOs.

If Southern CSOs are to be more leading, their contexts, understandings and ambitions move more to the centre of programmes and collaborations. Here is where our research seeks to contribute. We take the perspectives that CSOs will be navigating the possibilities of their representative roles as agents, from their own perspectives, strategies and choices in engaging with opportunities and constraints. Different collaborations may or may not strengthen their roles, from their perspectives, and the nature and added value of donors and Northern CSOs' involvement cannot be taken as given. We focus on the ways that representative roles come to take shape in the complex realities of collaboration, in context, and with what implications for CSOs' roles advancing inclusive and sustainable development. We do this because, with agendas and roles less predefined by Northern donors and CSOs, questions of who gets represented, and how, come to the fore as open-ended yet crucial.

Our objective is to contribute to a guiding framework for donors and CSOs seeking to contribute to the representative role of CSOs in the global South in order to advance inclusive and sustainable development while 'starting from the South'. In order to help make 'starting from the South' possible, we focus on deepening understandings that can help make that move possible: understandings of the nature of different representative roles; of contextually relevant diversities; of the relative role of different collaborations and relations, and context. We focus on the way organisations in the South navigate the possibilities of their representative roles and the way collaboration shapes these roles, in order to inform the way donors and Northern CSOs can in turn better navigate the possibilities of collaboration from their side.

We focus on India as an example where the issues raised above arise and need to be addressed for collaborations to be meaningful contributions to CS representative roles that can contribute to inclusive and sustainable development. This by no means implies that we see India as representative for Southern civil society. We approach India as one Southern context that can offer insights into the ways in which contextual understandings of civil society can help develop perspectives on civil society's roles, and the role that donors, Northern CSOs, and other Southern CSOs can potentially contribute to that role. India has a very rich and diverse civil society. Relations between Indian civil society organizations, state and society are complex, shaped by the diversity of Indian society, as well as the relations, dependencies and

inequalities in Indian society, and the conditions the state sets. These conditions imply that CSOs' representative roles may or may not contribute to inclusive and sustainable development, and may also reinforce inequalities.

Three themes

From these starting points, we identify three key themes that require attention for coming to a policy that puts Southern CSOs more in the lead. While the themes were identified and will be discussed below with the Indian context of our case in mind, these themes will be relevant in other contexts as well.

Engagement with contextually relevant civil society diversities

First, at the most general level, we believe that a move to put Southern CSOs more in the lead would mean that collaboration between Northern CSOs and donors and CSOs in the Global South cannot start out from conceptualizations, programmes and partnerships that donors or Northern CSOs already have in place. Collaboration requires giving more space to Southern CSOs' ideas and approaches as starting points. While finding alignment will continue to be important, search for alignment will have to be more responsive to Southern CSOs' understandings and agendas, in order not to dominate and overrule these, as may happen when established donor and Northern CSO agendas dominate collaboration (see e.g. Bownas, 2017).

This also means that new questions may emerge for selection of CSOs to support. With many present forms of collaboration, alignment with donor and Northern CSO agendas forms a basic starting point for collaboration. More openness to Southern agendas would mean that new criteria for partner selection may need to be taken as starting point, looking more to the ways in which CSOs, in their contexts, from their own understandings and priorities, make relevant contributions to inclusive and sustainable development, and how agendas and understandings may complement each other. This implies that donors and Northern CSOs seek to support and collaborate from an awareness of the nature and composition of civil society in a setting (like a country). We also consider here the thought expressed in the Dialogue and Dissent Theory of Change that it is important to open up to the diversity of CSOs active in certain contexts.

As the Dialogue and Dissent theory of Change rightly asserts, civil society is more than formally organized and independent CSOs that self-evidently contribute to inclusiveness. There are many types of groupings, formal and informal, embedded in local societies in many ways, with diverging implications for inclusiveness. Whom to support, and how that may contribute to inclusiveness, is not self-evident.

In particular, unpacking the way in which different types of CSOs conceive of, and shape, representation is crucial. Many CSOs in the global South as much as the North, take it upon themselves to represent others, speaking on behalf of, or for, societal groupings, perspectives and causes. In many cases, groups do not directly represent themselves, and that is also, or particularly, the case in highly unequal contexts

like India. Representation takes shape in many different ways, with highly diverging linkages with the represented sections of society, and from highly diverging organisational and ideological backgrounds. We expect that this has implications for who gets to be represented, in what form, with again highly diverging implications for inclusive development (Lama-Rewal, 2016). Seeking out collaborations with Southern CSOs, donors and Northern CSOs would therefore need to look closely into the way organizations construct representation, from what basis, and how this may or may not contribute to inclusive and sustainable development. In particular, achieving more understanding of representation of 'marginal' and 'vulnerable' sections of society, central to many CSOs' constructions of their representative role, is pertinent.

Complementary roles in collaboration

Secondly, the Dialogue and Dissent Theory of Change takes the starting point that different types of CSOs can have complementary roles. This starting point is important when it comes to the shaping of collaborations in Dialogue and Dissent programmes. We commonly find constellations of grassroots, domestic and international CSOs brought together in the understanding that each form has its own role to play in a particular programme. We also commonly find organizations with different types of capacities, knowledges and identities coming together (e.g. humanitarian, knowledge-based, faith-based, environmental etc.). Such collaborations may make sense, as different CSOs can bring different voices, knowledges and capacities to the table, and connections between organisations at different levels make exchange and usage of different forms of information and influencing at different levels possible. However, so far we hardly see complementarity in collaborations studied from perspectives of Southern CSOs. If we take the starting point that Southern CSOs should be in the lead when it comes to shaping their representative roles, we need to learn more about how they see complementarities between their organisation and others, in their domestic contexts and beyond – from their understandings of their role and their agendas. Here we take the starting point that it is important to establish the nature and role of relevant diversities as they emerge for CSOs in their particular context. We do this from the understanding that in many contexts, there is a wide array of CSOs present, diverse in locally relevant ways. In many situations, a collaboration like Dialogue and Dissent will be one of many real or possible collaborations for CSOs, in a context where often multiple CSOs initiatives are also present, as (potential) allies, partners, competitors or opponent. To put it simply: apart from a programme like Dialogue and Dissent, a lot else will also be going on that will shape the relative contribution of individual initiatives; something hardly addressed in Dialogue and Dissent so far. CSOs will be navigating the possibilities of collaborations from their interpretations of the diversity of their CSO context. We want to learn: what different types of CSOs matter in what way, for CSOs faced with choices and dilemmas regarding collaboration? What are relevant distinctions that CSOs make when it comes to complementarity between CSOs? How can collaborations with different types of CSOs enable CSOs to do, be, and achieve things, from their perspective? In other words: who matters, for what? What is the relative role of South-South and international collaborations?

Taking the perspectives of Southern CSOs as a starting point may well put the roles of different types of domestic (Southern) and Northern CSOs in a new light. This may help redevelop these roles as contributing to advancing Southern CSOs' agendas in complementary roles. It may also help reshape the

process of developing shared agendas (as Northern CSOs can less easily take the relevance of international dimensions and institutions as self-evident starting points in the development of programmes).

This takes into consideration that it is well possible that complementarity as Southern CSOs conceive of it may look very different from the way programmes conceived by Northern donors or CSOs conceive of it. For example, Southern CSOs' perspectives on relevant diversities in the composition of civil society (domestically and internationally), will shape their understandings of the ways collaboration with different CSOs in that wider environment enables them. Our research of CSOs' locally shaped understandings of what is possible or desirable as advocacy goals, domestically and internationally, and their manoeuvring of their possibilities of collaboration within their wider CSO context, may lead to new insights on how to conceptualize collaboration and the relative role of different forms of CSOs, including Northern CSOs.

Embedding in relations and context

Collaborations themselves partly structure the representative role of CSOs, embedding them in programmes and the language, objectives and agendas that then are to be engaged with in some form. Importantly, questions of autonomy and ownership may emerge that further shape and constrict possibilities for representative roles. In addition, CSOs are often linked up with many other organizations and institutions in a society, including, religious and political organizations, as well as various state actors, which also provides the context for operating. Simple and straightforward assumptions of autonomy and ownership do not hold in such realities. Implications of this are important for understanding in what way and to what extent CSOs' representative roles may or may not contribute to inclusive and sustainable development.

Representation of 'vulnerable' and 'marginal' sections of Indian society

The three themes discussed above provide elements for our framework for analyzing the representative role of CSOs in India. Importantly, we will do so from an interpretive perspective. For us, 'Starting from the South' means taking the perspectives, practices and contexts of Southern CSOs as starting points for understanding their representative roles. We will study how Indian CSOs shape their representative role navigating the possibilities (opportunities and constraints) they see and engage with, zooming in on the above three themes, which we see as interrelating. In this, we focus on a key dimension of CSOs' representative role in the context of development: the representation of the so-called 'marginal' and 'vulnerable', as key categories employed by CSOs in international development. This representation is done by highly diverse organisations, often rooted in highly different realities from those of the 'marginal' and 'vulnerable', so designated. We will do so through two complementary case studies. One, on disaster risk reduction, studies representation of 'vulnerable' communities, an important ambition of Dialogue and Dissent partner *Partners for Resilience* and numerous other CSOs working on disaster risk reduction in India. The second case study focuses on representation of 'marginalized' women, an

important ambition of *CountMeIn!* (in particular *CountMeIn!* partner CREA, responsible for the alliance's work in India) and numerous other CSOs working on women's rights in India.

In short, we will analyze the way representation of vulnerable and marginal sections of society by Indian CSOs takes shape, as they navigate their possibilities as they see them and are offered to them, embedded as they are in collaborations, relations and the state context in which they operate. Hereby, taking the three themes discussed above, we seek to identify:

1. The relevant diversities of Indian civil society and how these differentiate Indian CSOs' representation of 'marginal' and 'vulnerable' sections of Indian society, and their implications for inclusiveness.
2. The relevant complementarities between CSOs as they are envisaged, and become apparent, in the collaborations they engage in shaping representation of 'marginal' and 'vulnerable' sections of Indian society to contribute to inclusive and sustainable development.
3. The ways in which relations and context implicate roles for Indian CSOs, with what implications for representation of 'marginal' and 'vulnerable' sections of Indian society.

What can we be, with whom, here?

While this may seem ambitious because of the apparent broadness of the issues we cover, the logic is simple. We seek to learn how different types of Indian CSOs answer two questions, in their understandings and practices: what can we be, with whom, here? From what understandings of the reality in which we find ourselves? This will make it possible to articulate and understand the possibilities and constraints that these realities and navigations imply for CSOs' roles and their contributions to inclusive and sustainable development. To do this, we pull together three literatures: on collaboration, autonomy and ownership, and representation. In doing this, we are innovative: while we draw on important literatures on collaboration, autonomy and ownership, and representation, we are the first to study how CSO representation takes its shape embedded in the relations and collaborations we see so often addressed in existing literatures. The organizational perspective, analyzing how CSOs navigate the possibilities of shaping their representative role while embedded in collaborations and relations, will keep us focused while doing justice to complexities.

For the largest part, the research focuses on Indian CSOs. For another part, we study state interpretations and engagements with CSOs, to understand how relevant diversities, complementarities and relations shape state engagements with CSOs. We will do this, to see how and to what extent CSOs' roles as they seek to shape them are reflected, or not, in state interpretations and engagements with CSOs – and what this implies for the capacity of Indian CSOs to contribute to inclusive and sustainable development via their efforts to represent vulnerable and marginal sections of Indian society. This is from our conviction that the representative role of CSOs cannot be understood without extensive engagement with the context and actors they seek to influence.

Research questions

Our overarching research question is:

How does representation of ‘marginal’ and ‘vulnerable’ people by diverse CSOs take shape through collaborations in the Indian context? What are implications for CSOs’ contributions to inclusive and sustainable development?

Subquestions all go into specific dimensions coming in with the shaping of representation discussed above:

1. How is representation of ‘marginal’ and ‘vulnerable’ sections of society conceived and operationalized by diverse CSOs in the Indian context? What are the relevant diversities in this? With what implications for inclusiveness?
2. How do Indian CSOs navigate the possibilities of collaboration with other CSOs in their representation of ‘marginal’ and ‘vulnerable’ sections of society? With what implications for complementarity between CSOs (domestically and internationally)?
3. How do questions around ownership and autonomy emerge for diverse CSOs involved in collaboration with other CSOs, and how do dynamics around these shape their representation of ‘marginal’ and ‘vulnerable’ sections of society?
4. How do the ways CSOs navigate their relations with the state and constituencies shape their representation of ‘marginal’ and ‘vulnerable’ sections of Indian society?
5. How do CSOs’ diversities, complementarities and collaborations contribute to the extent and ways in which state actors in India engage with civil society?

Structure of this literature review

In chapter 2, 3 and 4 we offer the theoretical foundations of our project. In chapter 2, we review the existing research on CSO collaboration, showing current knowledge on how collaboration enables and constrains CSOs, while pointing out important knowledge gaps concerning the way CSOs in the Global South interpret and navigate the possibilities of collaboration. In chapter 3, we review literature on autonomy and ownership, considering the relative nature of autonomy and ownership in CSO representation since we find that CSOs operate embedded in different types of relations rather than individually. We also show how this raises important questions regarding autonomy and ownership in collaboration, moving beyond existing research on collaboration that emphasizes mainly how donor relations constrain autonomy and ownership. Chapter 4 zooms in on representation by CSOs, offering the conceptual and theoretical framework for our study of representation as plural, constructed, and to be understood contextually. This chapter therefore of necessity situates our study of representation in

the Indian context and zooms in on the constructs of marginality and vulnerability that are central to our study of representation in this project. It also identifies an knowledge gap important to our project: existing literature on representation by CSOs does not acknowledge that CSOs' representative roles take their shape within the collaborative structures and relations in which they are embedded, and identifies key questions to raise on that.

Chapters 5 and 6 directly focuses on the context in which our study is situated, making clear how our study of CSOs' representative roles needs to be taken up considering this context. Chapter 5 offers an overview of historical development of the role of civil society in India, contemporary conditions shaping the role of civil society, and concrete engagements between CSOs and the Indian state. Chapter 6 further deepens insight into the role of civil society in India charting the diversity of civil society manifestations in India.

All chapters 2-6 conclude with a reflection on how insights drawn from them will inform our research.

Chapter 7 integrates insights and perspectives we developed through the literature review, and discusses the innovativeness and policy relevance of the research.

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Part 1

Theoretical foundations

Chapter 2. Civil society collaborations

Introduction

The Dialogue and Dissent Theory of Change takes the starting point that CSOs, performing representative roles, can contribute to inclusive and sustainable development in the global South. It states that through articulating and communicating the voice of the people, inequalities in the societies can be addressed. The Dialogue and Dissent Theory of Change and many CSOs also emphasize the relevance of collaboration between grassroots, national and international-level CSOs, connecting agendas, voices and capacities, and building complementary capacities and synergies that can make change happen (Kamstra, 2017; Van Wessel et al. 2017).

Collaboration between CSOs in the context of advocacy, as we understand it here, can be of a wide variety, including formal and informal arrangements as well as long-standing and more fluid and temporary engagements. Collaboration can take place at different levels, ranging from occasional information exchange and regular coordinated strategizing to long-term joint programming. Collaboration can be engaged in to advance the goals of individual organisations as well as shared goals. Such goals can be set out in advance or develop over the course of collaboration, as relations develop and opportunities are developed or encountered.

Collaboration between CSOs has been a widely studied phenomenon, zooming in on the nature and operations of networks, partnerships, aid chains and alliances. Of particular interest for us is identifying different meanings that CSOs may attach to these varied forms of collaboration for CSOs, considering our interest in the way Southern CSOs navigate the possibilities of collaboration in shaping their representative roles. In this chapter, we survey the existing literature on CSO collaboration to make an inventory of the different considerations that might come in for CSOs considering engaging in collaboration with other CSOs. This existing research can be fruitfully structured along two dimensions: the way collaboration constrains and enables the advocacy role of Southern CSOs. Notably, while CSOs' advocacy roles are, representative in nature, representation is not explicitly conceptualized in most of this literature. Development studies and political science appear to be disconnected. In our research, a main ambition will be to connect these fruitfully. However, because the literature reviewed in this chapter keeps representation implicit, we will employ the broad term of 'advocacy' to discuss the enabling and constraining factors we identified. For our approach to representation, we refer to chapter 4.

How collaboration constrains Southern CSOs' advocacy roles

Many studies have shown that relations between donor agencies and Southern NGOs tend to be characterized by resource dependence, weak partnerships and the tendency of state machinery to turn

against CSOs that seek collaboration in any form from the international agencies. Many of these aspects are intertwined and overlapping in nature, having constraining effects on CSOs.

Resource Dependence

One of the major constraints that CSOs face is in securing continuous flow of funds from the international donor agencies with which they collaborate. While international collaboration does indeed bring about funding to many Southern CSOs, these CSOs experience fluctuations in funding due to the shifting priorities of their Northern international donors (Parks, 2008). Political, strategic and economic factors often influence the funding decisions of the bilateral donors, which in turn leads to instability in funding levels for countries, program areas and beneficiary organizations (Elbers and Arts, 2011; Park, 2008). It has been demonstrated that while foreign-funded financial-assistance has transformed developing countries it has also been demonstrated that this development comes at a cost. For example, conflict movements are often shifted into consensus movements that follow an institutional, resource-dependent, non-conflictual strategy with no deep roots in the community. Donor agencies impose funding conditions on Southern CSOs that leads many CSOs to bureaucratise. This has been referred as NGOisation or institutional mono-cropping (Alvarez, 1999; Evans, 2004). Additionally, annulment of participatory approaches, reduced cultural sensitivity, weakened ties with the grassroots level and an enfeeblement of core value all also seem to be costs associated with this development (Hailey, 2000; Jalali, 2013; Wallace et al., 2006). In many transnational advocacy networks, CSOs and professional advocacy-brokers also act as intermediaries in these networks with organizational interests of their own (Heins, 2008). The inflow of donor-funded organizations, staffed by professionals, can lead to the prioritization of the donor's subject matter interests. This often results in providing legitimacy to those professional organizations that are able 'speak the same language' of the donor agencies and are consequently unable to engage in a dialogical interaction that would characterize a true grass root social movement (Bownas, 2017).

It is no surprise then that INGOs' level of confrontation or conciliation in their advocacy work largely depends on the organization's national origin (Stroup and Murdie, 2012) which might tend to influence the advocacy practices of the Southern partnering CSOs which are further dependent on them for resources and funds. CSOs have been 'caught up in relations with funding sources, governments, and neoliberal processes that create a double-bind for CSOs, situated between the powerful forces dominating them and the disenfranchised communities they intend to serve' (Bernal and Grewal, 2014, p. 4). In international collaborations, where the main donor agency is from the Northern hemisphere, there is also sizeable control and influence over the Southern CSOs on their project design, implementation, monitoring, reporting and evaluation too (see Ashman, 2001; Bornstein, 2003; Ebrahim, 2003; Elbers and Arts, 2011; Elbers and Schulpen, 2011; Lister, 2000; Michael, 2004). At times, in the name of capacity development for the Southern CSOs, the energy is concentrated upon improving the competences related to conforming to donors' requirement rather than capabilities enhancing performance (Wetterberg et al., 2015). There has been a debate regarding the effectiveness of capacity development interventions and the underlying complexities and the lack of agreement on the approaches to building capacity (Ibid; Brinkerhoff and Morgan, 2010).

Furthermore, in CSOs-funder relations of Southern CSO with Northern INGOs, it is also seen that in some cases domestic CSOs divert from their actual official mission, organizational structure and processes due

to excessive conditionalities and onerous reporting requirements expected from them (see AbouAssi, 2013; Ebrahim, 2003; Edwards and Hulme, 1996; Guo and Acar, 2005; Khieng and Dahles, 2015; O'Brien and Evans, 2016; Parks, 2008). Therefore, in order to secure and maintain continuous flow of funding, many domestic CSOs adopt strategies that would serve the interest of those who control those resources, such as changing the agenda of their advocacy. As a consequence of being in a resource-dependent relationship, Southern CSOs often lose autonomy and legitimacy and find themselves in asymmetrical power relationships (Elbers and Arts, 2011; den Hond et al., 2015; Jalali, 2013; Johnson and Prakash, 2007).

Weak partnerships

The concept of partnership is often used to describe all forms of collaborative arrangement in which actors from two or more spheres of society (state, market and/or civil society) are involved in a non-hierarchical process and aim at promoting sustainable development (Van Huijstee et al. 2007; Glasbergen, 2007). Partnership is a broad collaboration category that includes cooperation between Northern and Southern CSOs, alliance between individual companies and CSOs, and rapport between donor and recipient governments and tri-sector initiatives combining the business and civil society sector with the government (Bäckstrand, 2006; Brinkerhoff, 2002; Fowler, 1998; Glasbergen, 2007; Glasbergen and Miranda, 2003). Furthermore, partnerships are championed for being associated with shared goals, responsibilities and governance. They often are characterized by long-term commitments for working together, open dialogue, mutual accountability and respect, trust, balance of power, and reflecting the idea of a mutually dependent relationship based on equality (Abrahamsen, 2004; Fowler, 2000; Glasbergen, 2007; Johnson and Wilson, 2006; Lister, 2000; Unwin, 2005). Therefore, partnerships between various CSOs have been hailed as success.

However, partnerships also have a flip side to them as well. In many cases, it has been noted that Northern agencies solely set the rules that govern partnerships, based on their own norms, values and beliefs (Elbers and Schulpen, 2011), as they often control resources, leading to power imbalances (Gulati and Sytch, 2007; O'Brien and Evans, 2016; Ulrich and Barney, 1984). Thus, partnerships are not always on an equal platform, as inequalities often exist between the identities of partners within development projects, with the donor portrayed as superior, active and reliable, while the recipient 'partner' is portrayed as inferior, passive and unreliable (Baaz, 2005). The point to note here is that, 'a partnership agreement will not automatically change the nature of relationships, therefore inequalities stemming from unequal power relations, multiple political and economic interests, or diverging norms and values continue to exist' (Zingerli, 2010, p. 222). All this contributes to a weak partnership.

When development organizations are responding to crises, it requires relevant parties to cooperate to achieve a successful partnership. Partnerships can become problematic because of large number and range of actors involved, who have substantial differences in their values, goals and activities (Schaaf, 2015). The reasons for not cooperating in partnerships include vested interests in the outcomes, disputes about what works, and perceived weaknesses of multilateral agencies to effectively disburse and monitor aid (Wood, 2011). The majority of Indian CSOs rely on resources, which they do not control; hence survival and success are subject to their ability to engage in inter-organizational relationships, which allow acquiring those resources (Drees and Heugens, 2013; Ellstrand et al., 2002). CSOs working in the global

South are prone to the external control because of their resource reliance on Northern CSOs (Hudock, 1995; Lister, 2000).

In the transnational advocacy network, agendas, targets and strategies can vary in different political arenas, and the exchange of information or services may be dense and unbalanced in the NGO network. The quality of ties between different members of a network are hardly ever constant, and the rules in a campaign are far from common (Jordan and Van Tuijl, 2000: 2062).

Thus the mismatch of power creates perceived or real imbalances. It leads to (perceived) domination by one of the partners, too much intrusion in partner's affairs, micromanagement, ownership and exclusivity issues (Berger et al., 2004). Partnerships with traditional donors are hindered by historical inequalities in power, limiting opportunities for key partnership principles of respect, trust, reciprocity and mutual learning (Schaaf, 2015).

Curbing of Civic Space

Certain regimes, even in liberal democratic systems, may fear civil society as hostile to the power centre (Kumar, 2012; Sahoo, 2013). This is a cause of worry worldwide, and part of the trend of shrinking civic space (Kamstra 2017). At times, international collaborations can put a constraint on the domestic roles of the CSOs, when they collaborate or have partnerships with INGOs (Sahoo, 2017). Therefore, when domestic CSOs partner with transnational civil society alliances and end up questioning the policies of governments and inter-governmental organizations, this leads to friction in certain cases. States often respond by curbing the activities of the CSOs, for example by monitoring their work and putting a check on their funding from the international arena (Sahoo, 2017).

For example, India is a case of a strong state that increasingly constrains civic space (Bornstein and Sharma, 2016), e.g. by powerful instruments like the Foreign Contributions Regulatory Act (FCRA) and the Income Tax Act and other such procedural instruments with which it controls the CSOs.

Navigating constraints

While constraints have been widely studied, less research focuses on the ways Southern CSOs might handle these. Some literature that focuses on the ways Southern CSOs engage with constraints imposed by the state or international donor partners does provide relevant insights. For example, due to the pressure from donors to become more professional and CSOs own coping survival strategy, CSOs may 'NGOise' as a way to engage with constraints (Lang, 2012; Kamstra and Schulpen, 2015). Southern CSOs have also been described as employing a whole range of strategic responses by which they navigate donor conditions. Organizations may try to avoid interaction with stakeholders, preventing exposure of the organization to adverse institutional pressures; Organizations may try to influence the content of institutional pressures; organizations may try to buffer themselves against unavoidable institutional pressures, taking compensatory measures to minimize the negative effects of institutional pressures; Organizations may try to portray themselves in a positive light in front of stakeholders, manipulating the perceptions of their donors (Elbers and Arts, 2011). For Vietnam, Pallas and Nguyen (2018) show that the rules meant to put a check on the CSOs by the state, may increase local CSOs' professionalism, credibility and financial independence, enhancing their ability to engage in advocacy and effectively influence international actors and donors (ibid). While literature on these forms of navigation appears limited in its scope, these research results do indicate that we should see CSOs as navigating the

possibilities of their representative roles as agents, from their own perspectives, strategies and choices in engaging with constraints.

How collaboration enables Southern CSOs' advocacy roles

In order to achieve their goals, Southern CSOs have been quite active in forming/using alliances and partnerships (Austin, 2007). While funding has been widely noted as a key motivator for Southern CSOs to engage in collaborations with international NGOs, there are many other ways by which collaboration may help CSOs to perform their representative roles. A wide range of literature points to the enabling dimensions of CSO collaboration, be it that in many cases Southern perspectives are not particularly highlighted.

Capacity Development

The international development community has identified capacity development as important and many actors, including CSOs, have contributed to the capacity of Southern CSOs through interventions such as resource transfer, trainings and organizational strengthening (Wetterberg et al., 2015). Alliances have enabled easy exchange of information and further contributed to personal contacts among the key players/actors (Brown et al., 2000; Hall, 1992; Treacle, 1998). There has also been a growing recognition by the INGOs, multilateral institutions and donor states regarding the necessity of local and country ownership in sustainable development, where the focus of development has shifted to build capacity 'on the ground'.

Relatedly, many international CSOs have their origin in the global North and have branch organizations, local partners and alliances in the developing countries. In recent years, it is increasingly suggested that with the rise of civil society organizations in developing countries, and Northern CSOs' rethinking of their roles, it is good to shift roles and operations and give a more leading role to Southern CSOs, making international collaborations more locally rooted and capacitating locally owned development (Banks et al., 2015; Forsch, 2018; Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2018).

Thus, in many states, INGOs are presently seeking to build up the capacity of their Southern countries collaborating partners, by having a 'country up' focus on policy influencing (Goodman, 2016; Walker and Christie, 2015). According to Walker and Christie (2015), with the recent and current partial change in INGOs' approach from 'top down' to 'country up', in collaborations with the Global South, the Southern CSO benefit when the INGOs have flexible frameworks that allow for greater in-country leadership. This further amplifies the role of influencing networks, where the aim is to empower local actors and help in building upon country-driven initiatives across themes with cross-country technical expertise through communication platforms, knowledge hubs etc. (Goodman, 2016).

Exchange of information/knowledge

Collaboration with INGOs enables producing, sharing and disseminating information. By collaboration, Southern CSOs have access to the data and information which allows diverse CSOs to work and speak as a collective voice (O'Brien and Evans, 2016). Furthermore, collaboration enables exchange of experiences,

best practices and transfer of knowledge of knowledge (Maurer et al. 2011; O'Brien and Evans, 2016). International collaborations help the domestic CSO in working together on the rise of problems which are international in nature but have impacts on the domestic front, such as the rise of transnational environmental problems like climate change (Young, 1997). Through globalization, international and collaborations of CSOs have emerged in response to problems such as delivering services and responding to disasters, analyzing and advocating policy alternatives, advocating policy changes, and with the increased flow of information have made collaboration a lot easier and effective (Boli and Thomas, 1999; Fox and Brown, 1998; Keck and Sikkink, 1998).

Spreading values and norms

Collaboration enables inter-organizational learning and problem solving. The exchange of information, engagements and capacity building enable civil society actors to identify the causes of problems, assess solutions, and implementation plans across geopolitical and cultural boundaries (Brown et al., 2000). International collaborations advance comprehending, expressing and integrating agendas on issues across value differences and help to mobilize publics on international problems (Boli and Thomas, 1999; Fox and Brown, 1998; Keck and Sikkink, 1998). Furthermore, global informational networks also help in identifying international problems, which otherwise would not be raised, due to lack of funds (Brown et al. 2000), and advance the development of shared values and norms. Shared international values and norms can help in articulating and interpreting new problems and in this, alliances between INGOs and Southern CSOs prove to be helpful in guiding future policies and practices at international and national levels (Boli and Thomas, 1999).

Campaign Alliances

International campaigns can have a far-reaching impact in that they can advance, communicate and help enforce global public policies to respond to problems that affect the Global South. Campaign alliances on one issue can become a medium for collaboration for future campaigns on other similar issues (Fox and Brown, 1998; Khagram, 2004). The collaborations also can reform agendas and operations of international institutions, creating and sharing social innovations across networks by highlighting agendas and the role of CSOs on international and national platforms, engaging in multi-level or parallel advocacy with the work at different levels feeding into each other. Thus alliances do have the power to influence many international and national negotiations and decisions in both the developed and developing world (Brinkerhoff, 1999; Gray, 1989; Susskind, 1999).

Promoting transnational networks

Transnational advocacy networks promote convergence of social and cultural norms, which support the processes of regional and international integration (Keck and Sikkink, 1998; 1999). In this way international collaboration facilitates the transnational advocacy network around global campaigns; which are often named after the dominant concern or after the targeted object (Jordan and Van Tuijl, 2000; Keck and Sikkink, 1998). For example, the Land Mine Campaign is commonly understood to describe a global campaign against the use of land mines. Thus, increasing the role of non-state actors, and the role of internet and other forms of communication technologies which has changed the nature of mobilization; for example as seen especially after the advent of the Arab Spring in 2011 (Khondker, 2011). The actors

that work in the transnational networks on a particular issue, share and are bound by a common discourse, exchange of information, services; and also the actors bring with them new sets of ideas, norms and discourses into the policy debates and serve as sources of information and testimony (Ibid). Transnational networks have promoted and encouraged, issue based campaigns; as networks breed, allowing networking becomes an inventory of action that is dispersed transnationally. Thus over time, in these issue areas, participation in transnational networks has become an essential component of the collective identities of the activists involved (Ibid: 93).

Furthermore, through collaboration the CSOs also get help in building collective action and political participation, where the aim is to build citizen capacity building (Walker and Christie, 2015). In this process, transnational advocacy networks link activists in developed countries with others from less developed countries; and they can serve a extremely helpful role when the state disengages from domestic actors. Domestic CSOs may directly seek international allies to try to bring pressure on their states from outside, via the well-known 'boomerang effect' (Keck and Sikkink, 1998; 1999).

Spreading democratic and egalitarian values

The alliances of INGOs, networks, coalitions and social movement organizations, as vital political actors have been energized by the demand to create collective vibrant democratic ideals. The wave of democratic transitions in the late 1980s and early 1990s brought a surge in funding for democratisation and governance programmes of various CSOs. These included group that were established for all kinds of causes, including environmental conservation, rights of minorities and indigenous people, improving governance, anti-corruption, women's empowerment, and micro-enterprise development etc. (Carothers, 2000; Parks, 2008). INGOs have played also an instrumental role in addressing conditions of inequality, lack of political participation and disempowerment in the Global South. In order to take this forward effectively, recently there has been an increasing emphasis on promoting advocacy at the local, national and transnational levels and making Southern CSOs leaders of their own development with the support from the INGOs (Foresti and Ludi, 2007; Goodman, 2016).

Other enabling factors

Beyond these prominently researched enabling factors, there are some indications that certain other enabling factors may also be relevant, such as the capacity of certain CSOs to confer legitimacy or credibility to their CSO partners, and the capacity of certain international CSOs to play a role in the protection of local activists, such as human rights defenders (Elbers et al., 2018; Nababan, 2008). However, theory evidence regarding these factors is much more limited than for the other factors.

Implications for our research: navigating possibilities of collaboration

As we see above, existing scholarship on advocacy collaboration among CSOs gives relatively much importance to high-profile transnational campaigns and emphasizes transnational dimensions of collaboration, with relatively high prominence to the INGOs that have often been in the lead in these collaborations. In this literature, a wide range of enabling and constraining factors is identified. While often taking roles of INGOs as central, existing literature also problematizes how the perspectives and

setting of the agendas for collaborations have often been found to be primarily shaped by Northern INGOs. To the extent there is attention for Southern perspectives, most of the research has focused on the ways in which the functioning of Southern CSOs is constrained and enabled when CSOs collaborate internationally and the consequences this has for the representative role of CSOs.

However, little is known about the ways Southern CSOs see the nature and role of different forms of collaboration with different types of CSOs in their work. While research may shed light on different constraining and enabling factors, it hardly ever sheds light on the relative importance of certain factors for CSOs (but see O'Brien and Evans 2016 for an exception, pointing out the relative importance of funding and knowledge exchange in his selected case). We also do not learn to what extent and how different factors will in fact be acknowledged and engaged with by Southern CSOs, or how we should understand the engagement with different factors contextually. Finally, and relatedly, literature so far does not engage with the diversity of CSOs that NGOs typically are exposed to in their domestic environment as well as internationally, and how this diversity is engaged with. How different NGOs are perhaps to be seen as able to perform different and complementary roles, remains out of sight.

Existing literature does suggest that Southern CSOs seek various resources and confront dependency with international partners. Financial dependency impacts the autonomy of Southern CSOs. But by having partnerships they do get access not only to financial resources, but also to less tangible resources like information, credibility, identity, access to political arenas and organizational legitimacy – while at least in some cases seeking to navigate imbalances, as the limited literature we have on this indicates. This suggests that Southern CSOs are neither snubbing power imbalances nor accepting them but are proactively engaging with imbalances shaping collective action (Carmin, 2003; Choi et al., 2005; Edwards and McCarthy, 2004; Lister, 2000; O'Brien and Evans, 2016). Some available literature shows these dynamics as intricate processes of relating and meaning-making, situated in organizational fields where CSOs participate and create interdependencies and roles (Antlöv et. Al, 2010; Bownas, 2017; Deo and McDuie, 2011; Sokphea, 2017). We wish to take this particular line of research further.

To be able to understand the role of collaborations for Southern CSOs, we need to pay closer attention to the ways that the possibilities of collaboration shape domestic CSOs' roles as they interact, exchange resources, and navigate opportunities, dependencies and constraints in their collaborations at international and domestic levels. In this project, we approach Southern CSOs as agents who engage in collaboration from their own perspectives, based on their understandings of their realities and the possibilities of that reality, devising strategy while engaging with both. It is important to realize here that CSOs commonly are exposed to a wide range of collaboration possibilities, with CSOs engaging in some opportunities, while foregoing others, with relative and different roles assigned to different collaborations. Importantly, collaboration often takes place at different levels, of which the international one may or may not be given the prime importance that we often find it accorded in the literature on CSO collaboration in the field of development studies. Furthermore, depending on context, domain and type of organization, different possibilities and constraints may emerge as relevant. For example, we may consider here the increasingly problematic status of some forms of international collaboration for CSOs in India and elsewhere, due to constricting civic space. Our research focuses on the way Southern CSOs consider, and make choices, with regard to collaboration, zooming in on their understandings of the

possibilities and constraints that they see in the wide range of collaborations possibilities in their context (at domestic and international levels), from their organizational perspective. We plan to draw on this chapter to help inform our research of:

1. What constraining and enabling factors CSOs identify as important when it comes to collaboration with other CSOs.
2. What relevant diversities among CSOs come in as relevant in considerations regarding collaboration.
3. What relevant complementarities and relative roles do CSOs identify between CSOs, when it comes to collaboration.
4. How perceived conditions of collaboration as perceived (under 1-3 above) figure in CSOs' strategic decision making on collaboration, in light of their own identities, convictions, ways of working and objectives.
5. Implications of the above for the involved CSOs' representation of vulnerable groupings in the context of the policy influencing.

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Chapter 3. Autonomy and ownership

Introduction

Autonomy and ownership are essential for civil society organizations' (CSOs) functioning, as both are fundamental to what CSOs stand for - 'articulating the needs, interests, rights and grievances of the people' (Sangita, 2008: 3). In other words, autonomy and ownership of CSOs are central to their representative roles. Literature on CSOs indeed commonly defines the civil society space as 'autonomous or independent' from the state and private sector, operating as a 'third sector,' and shaping 'social capital' (Brinkerhoff, 1999; Foley and Edwards, 1996; Putnam, 1995). However, some argue that this is an accurate assessment of CSOs 'in theory, but in practice the boundaries between the three sectors—state, market and civil society—are blurred' (Appe, 2013; Foley and Edwards, 1996; Putnam, 1995; Salamon, 1994). There are multiple levels and varied contexts of CSOs' functioning, and their structures and patterns of operation have undergone substantial change.

CSOs now operate in a webbed environment with the emergence of transnational-, national-, local-, and grassroots-level advocacy and collaboration (Anheier and Themudo, 2002). Therefore, autonomy and ownership need to be addressed more deeply given the complex networks and new situations. Several types of questions and multiple challenges resurface regarding autonomy and ownership when financial, situational, and strategic collaborations/relationships are established. In this context, the central puzzle in this piece is: How do collaborations influence CSOs' autonomy and ownership?

This literature review aims to do the following: 1) explore the concepts of autonomy and ownership and relate them to CSOs and collaborations; 2) highlight the importance of autonomy and ownership for CSOs (in relation to both the state and the market); 3) present the discussions and debates on autonomy and ownership in CSOs in the context of India and examine their relation to similar debates at the global level; and 4) Brings out the ways in which the empirical research draws from this literature and the knowledge gaps that it aims to address within the existing literature. This review is structured in the following way: addressing autonomy, exploring its relevance for civil society collaborations, the state, and the market. This section moves back and forth between international discourse and the Indian context. The second part deals with ownership, defining the concept and establishing its relevance for civil society and its implications for CSO collaborations. The third part relates the first two to discussions about inclusive development and the role of CSOs. This chapter concludes by identifying the implications of this chapter for our research.

All of the above aims of the literature review become relevant from the standpoint of this project. 1) In raising relevant questions on autonomy and ownership this review relates to the representative roles of CSOs. 2) The review situates these issues from the perspective of South by bringing in the context of India. 3) It tries to advance the concerns raised on the two concepts in the Dialogue and Dissent document. The Dialogue and Dissent Theory of Change situates autonomy and ownership of CSOs as primary goals within the development narrative (Kamstra, 2017). However, in the Theory of Change these concepts do not get unpacked and problematized, or the complexities linked to them identified. The review brings forward the debates on autonomy and ownership within civil society collaborations to take stock of current knowledge that can guide our research on ownership and autonomy to advance engagements with these concepts in ways that does justice to the complexities involved.

Autonomy

Autonomy can be defined both as an attribute of the individual or a collective. In the case of CSOs, unless the focus is on the autonomy of individuals working there, in most instances, it is contextualized as an attribute of a collective. Whether that collective concerns social movements, voluntary groups, non-governmental organizations (NGO), or various other entities occupying the civil society space. For instance, in the context of social movements, autonomy is talked about as the 'collective autonomy' of the movement, not the autonomy of individual participants in the movement (Katsiaficas, 2006). This definition of autonomy as 'collective' refers to autonomy as 'self-legislation or creating a group's own

custom and law' (Chatterton, 2005: 546). Autonomy also entails 'mutual aid' and 'a demand to be heard and recognized' (Foran 2003, cited in Chatterton, 2005: 545). Beyond this, the concept generates intense debate not only about whose autonomy is being considered but also from whom it is being sought. The literature seems to be primarily divided into concerns with autonomy from the state, from capital (the market), and from hegemonic relations that result in 'colonial domination and development dependency' (Bohm and Spicer, 2010: 8). In an attempt to address the question of autonomy from whom or from what, the next sections bring into focus some of the arguments and discussions on autonomy of civil society vis-à-vis the state, the market, and other civil society entities.

How autonomy is viewed is also dependent on the relation to what it is being defined. For instance, Saeki (2011: 385) problematized the autonomy of CSOs in relation to political organizations, stating that the 'boundaries between civil and political organizations remain fluid, permeable and contentious.' Saeki (2011) also points out that, in democracies, individuals join both political parties and CSOs—It is not one or the other; on many occasions, it is both. Under such circumstances, individuals with ideological affiliations mold civil society to fit a restrictive space and problematize autonomy, even without external interference (from, e.g., the state or the market).

It is important to situate CSO autonomy not only in relation to the state and to political affiliations, but also as embedded within numerous collaborations. There are issues of boundaries not only between civil and political organizations, but also, for example, among CSOs, between NGOs and social movements, and between self-help groups and NGOs. Autonomy becomes complex when we situate it within CSOs—a hybrid and diverse set of organizations functioning as 'private, not for profit, both formal and even informal organizations' (Brandsen, Trommel and Verschuere, 2017). For example, many service delivery organizations in health care and education have moved in the direction of state. Given that the boundaries between CSOs are blurred, it is pertinent to examine how autonomy is construed in collaborations.

CSOs' autonomy is affected when they collaborate and act as, for example, intermediaries, allies, receivers or donors. in defining and realizing these concepts. CSOs collaborate for specific goals, expectations and strategic reasons. Autonomy thus needs to be defined through an analysis of these reasons. For example, whether an organization is able to make choices in 'allocating internal resources' and has the 'freedom to invest its resources in activities that are unrelated to satisfying the obligations or expectations of an organization with which it develops a relation' (Oliver, 1991: 945).

Oliver (1991: 945) defined 'organizational autonomy' as 'an organization's freedom to make its own decisions about the use and allocation of its internal resources without reference or regard to the demands of the linkage partners.' Others have focused on 'operational autonomy,' which refers to 'an organization's freedom to formulate and pursue a self-determined agenda without undue external pressures' (Wang, 2006: 4). Organizations, in general, 'avoid being controlled' and decide on collaborations based on the level of autonomy they can exercise (Oliver, 1991). Autonomy becomes a significant question in collaborations because it influences internal decision making related to the 'commitment of time, personal, capital or other types of resources' (Oliver, 1991: 94). Whether autonomy becomes compromised is dependent on the types of relationships on which collaborations

are based—a written agreement, a commitment to some amount of resource sharing, a verbal agreement, or an exchange of ideas. All of these ideas can be situated rationally within the dominant understandings in the literature on CSO autonomy and collaborations.

CSOs, collaborations, and autonomy

Earlier contributions to the literature dealing with CSOs suggested that the non-profit sector relied on ‘charitable contributions’ in a substantial manner and they often compromised on their autonomy in exchange for resources (Pfeffer and Salancik, 1978). However, recent literature departs from this analysis in two ways. First, CSOs are now viewed beyond the non-profit sector, with varied organizations involved and with far more complex relationships among them (Deo, 2011; Sahoo, 2013). Second, there is increasing recognition that CSOs are subject to complex power dynamics and challenges (Evans and O’Brien, 2016; Gray and Wood, 1991).

However, most of the existing literature primarily analyzes the NGO sector, narrowly defining both civil society and NGOs as contributors to the development agenda within civil society (Banks et al., 2015; Sahoo, 2013). Recent literature on civil society collaborations questions the limited understanding of CSOs as secular organizations promoting democratic goals (Banks et al. 2015; Deo, 2016; Sahoo, 2013). There are groups and associations within the civil society space organized around caste, class, religion, gender, and several other identities. These pose different challenges to the autonomy of CSOs while they collaborate.

Civil society’s autonomy from the state

Most of the dominant literature on CSOs and autonomy has analyzed the concept in relation to the state or to market/foreign aid politics.¹ However, CSOs at different stages and levels communicate, interact, and build networks with the state and its agencies. Any discussion of civil society’s autonomy therefore needs to be analyzed in view of the state. The definition of civil society as a space of ‘voluntary association and activity that exists in relative separation from the state and the market’ needs further investigation through a review of the literature on this theme (Smith, in Edwards, 2011).

Two key categories of relationships have been a constant source of investigation in existing research on civil society. The first of these is the relationship between CSOs (primarily civil society movements and non-voluntary organizations) and market forces. The literature on this relationship primarily deals with civil society shaping market forces and vice-versa and explores how autonomy emerged as a vantage point for understanding these processes (Edwards, 2010; Gray, 2000; Sen, 2000; Zadek, 2011). The

¹ See, for instance, Fowler (2011) who brings out in detail the entire politics around the developmental NGOs from the 1970s to the 2000s, the North–South gap within the aid channel, and the issues related to autonomy that emerge from market-driven foreign aid.

second relationship concerns the autonomy of civil society in relation to the state and its apparatus.² Analyzing this relationship is significant in terms of 1) understanding how can autonomy be defined in the context of civil society; 2) determining autonomy *from whom* and *from what*; and 3) relating to key elements of the autonomy of civil society and moving the research towards issues relevant in contemporary analysis.

The autonomy of civil society checks the functioning of the state, makes it more accountable and responsive to the needs of a pluralistic society, works against the concentration of economic and social power, and provides space for popular resistance (James and Caliguire, 1996). Citizens as members of civil society groups and associations have the opportunity to associate themselves with activities outside the realm of the state. This helps them to build a life of voluntarism and hold their own ground away from government scrutiny and interference (Rosenblum and Lesch in Edwards, 2011). It is through the role of civil society groups in empowering the powerless that autonomy becomes a vital force. This role the civil society performs by operating within a political space rather than a non-political one (Bayat, 1997; Kaldor, 2003). Associations provide a space for political participation and vociferously engage in political advocacy (Rosenblum and Lesch, in Edwards, 2011). Though operating in a political space, civil society associations, groups, and organizations desire to be autonomous of the state, as sites of advocacy, participation, resistance, and spaces for the personal development of individuals and groups. They are expected to be autonomous to enable them to demand more transparency and accountability from institutions of the state. Over the years, these organizations have acted as pressure groups to make the state become aware of, acknowledge, and act on the demands of the people.

Although the above discussion does reflect the desire for more civil society autonomy from the state, yet, it seemingly becomes impossible because the legal framework within which civil society operates is governed by the state. A powerful collaboration is initiated between the state and civil society within the legal framework, and is extended when the 'government becomes a material patron, purchaser, funder and partner' of the several activities initiated by civil society (Rosenblum and Lesch in Edwards, 2011: 291). An emergent question therefore is how far civil society, in its several forms (e.g. voluntary groups, associations, and advocacy organizations), can seek to be autonomous when it clearly has a relationship with the state, from which it cannot disentangle itself. In the Indian context, as Chandhoke (2012: 40) points out, it is virtually impossible to 'conceptualize the civil society in abstraction from the state as it is the state that determined the boundaries of civil society activism.' Thus, the literature would suggest that autonomy from the state cannot be a given for civil society. Several questions are asked in determining civil society's degree of autonomy from the state: How far the autonomy of civil society is diminished when it comes in contact with the state? Does this impact the plural democratic character of CSOs? Are there implications for CSOs' everyday functioning, capacity to deliver, and decision-making?

The answers to these questions have largely been context specific. Every region and country is unique when it comes to the evolution of the civil society space, with different states and forms of government.

² A large number of studies in Latin American countries have dealt with the relationship between the civil society networks and the state in these countries. Also in the context of China, the relationship of civil society with the state has been closely investigated. See Howell (2011) and Dagnino (2011).

Although it is appealing to believe that democratic systems mean more autonomy for civil society, compared to authoritarian systems, this is not necessarily the case. There are multiple, context-specific layers to the relationships involved. In many countries, including India, some CSOs are linked with the state through political parties or funding relations, complicating any notion of civil society's autonomy. The state enters into a partnership with CSOs with the intention and desire for its citizens to 'participate and self-organize,' but, in reality, there is a threat that the state will 'take over such initiatives, leading to a manufactured civil society that has little to do with spontaneous citizen initiatives' (Brandson, Trommel and Verschuere, 2017: 676). Another complication is that authoritarian systems have witnessed a more complex web of civil society–state relationships than might be assumed. For instance, China's example suggests that, despite having a communist government with strict state control, non-profit boards have held their ground at the network level, if not so much at the individual level (Heemskerk and Takes, 2016; Ma and DeDeo, 2017). There is also evidence of flourishing civil society initiatives in multiple cities in China. Analysts view this development as the Chinese NGO sector reaching a stage where the 'state management of Chinese NGOs through various regulations may actually provide an opportunity for NGOs to be part of the policy making process' (Hsu and Hasmath, 2017: 23).

In line with the above observations, we see it as essential to bring forward the complexities involved in civil society–state relationships in our research project. However, it is necessary to relate to the widespread challenge to civil society space from the state seen worldwide. In numerous countries, there are instances where the government has practically stifled certain civil society movements or organizations that raise uncomfortable questions or go against government policies. More generally, in many countries, we witness a trend of CSOs functioning within a restricted space, irrespective of the type of government. From 2004 to 2010, 'more than fifty countries considered or enacted measures restricting civil society and several with authoritarian tendencies worked on notions of 'managed civil society'' (Rutzen, 2015: 30). These measures have been taken by individual countries for various reasons – 1) responding to a growing need for strong 'national security' measures, 2) protecting sovereignty in the wake of large amounts of incoming foreign funding for CSOs, 3) promoting a culture of transparency and accountability in the civil society sector, and 4) enhancing aid effectiveness and coordination (Rutzen, 2015). Such restrictions have raised questions regarding CSOs' autonomous character and their ability to emerge as agents of positive transformative change in society. Increasingly, democratic regimes around the world have 'resorted to practices that hinder the work of CSOs and networks, particularly those promoting democracy, human rights, transparency and civic participation' (Report to the Working Group on Enabling and Protecting Civil Society, 2017: 11). In light of these observations, an important question to be asked is to what extent and in what ways the autonomy of CSOs is compromised through the links and under the restrictions discussed above.

Civil society and the state in India

At this point, it is useful to explore the emerging relationship between CSOs and the state in India and its implications for CSOs' autonomy. The following set of arguments emerge from the available literature on civil society–state relationships in India:

1) Civil society is a vibrant and plural space in India, with a range of institutions, organizations, and associations falling under it (Chandhoke, 2011: 180). The plural character of civil society in India is suggestive of the positive nature of the relationship between civil society and the state.

2) Within this plural and vibrant space are restrictions in relation to NGOs and social movements (Kilby, 2011: 18). There is an existing discourse that suggests that the state keeps a tight grip on CSOs and prefers them to be at a distance from politics, regulating international funding to NGOs and bringing in new laws to monitor their functioning. Over the years, successive governments in India have tightened the noose around the NGO sector by implementing regulatory laws. Changes in the FCRA act regulating the international financial flows which the other sets of literature review also mention in this document, make it more difficult for NGOs to function autonomously. In this context, CSOs are seen as unlikely to be in a position of 'gaining autonomy from the state in the near future' (Kilby, 2011: 194).

3) There is also the argument that civil society in India is restricted to a small section of citizens, primarily the middle classes who speak the 'language of rights,' whereas it is the poor who have the greatest need for voicing their daily struggles within the political society (Chandhoke 2011: 179; Chatterjee, 2007: 57). For Chatterjee, the 'political society' is the space where marginalized groups negotiate with the state. Making a distinction between corporate and non-corporate capital, Chatterjee views civil society as the space where corporate capital is hegemonic and political society as the space of management of the non-corporate (Chatterjee 2007; see also Sahoo 2013).

4) There are several organizations that represent particular communities and challenge the rights of other communities. Their resorting to undemocratic methods raises uncomfortable questions regarding India's plurality and threatens core values of citizenship and equality (Chandhoke, 2011). The close and proximate relationship between the state and some of these organizations has taken the autonomy debate to a completely different platform. This has questioned the existence of civil society as an agent of transformative change, and instead as an instrument of the state to implement undemocratic practices.

Although these arguments have been proposed, they are generally not backed by extensive empirical research exploring their deeper significance for future CSO collaborations, funding and support. Most of the discussions deal with the restricted character of CSO autonomy. There is not much to suggest how civil society operates within the restrictive space available to it. Also, the question of how the level of autonomy changes vis-à-vis the state when CSOs operate not as individual agents but as collaborations (e.g. networks) has not been addressed adequately. Additionally, studies have been conducted that address autonomy at the level of CSOs, but they are largely restricted to NGOs, which constitute only a part of the civil society landscape (Kilby, 2011).

To build on the existing literature on civil society's autonomy vis-à-vis the state, we see the following issues as particularly relevant:

1) The civil society space in India is diverse (see also chapter 6), making it important to move beyond the restrictive space of NGOs and examine other organizations that are part of civil society. There is

currently limited literature exploring autonomy and the state from the perspectives of different types of CSOs.

2) The question of the autonomy of CSOs vis-à-vis the state has most often been studied as a one-on-one relationship between certain types of organizations and the state. It is therefore important to investigate the autonomous character of CSOs working as networks and to locate autonomy within the network of relationships that exist among CSOs.

Marketization of civil society: Impact on autonomy

The requirements and needs of both the private sector (open market) and CSOs have shaped the relations between them. Two developments have affected civil society's autonomy in view of its relation with the private sector. First, the emergence of corporate social responsibility (CSR), and second, New Public Management. It has given rise to a results and outcome based understanding of the social causes and forces that civil society seeks to influence.

CSR and the autonomy of civil society

Through CSR, the private sector has made its presence felt in areas such as health, the environment, and education. The corporate sector has opened its own non-profit ventures and collaborated with existing non-profit organizations to deliver certain services or to enable the local population to gain the skills necessary to access basic resources. An example of this is the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and the programs they have initiated in Africa and Asia to support causes close to their vision. In this way, the private sector has entered a space that was formerly viewed as belonging to civil society. The non-profit sector has also relied on the corporate and private sectors for funding and resources to provide services and function in a competitive environment, where there are many organizations operating simultaneously (Eikenberry and Kluver 2004).

Over the years, private businesses have begun to feel pressure to 'engage in practices that go beyond profit maximization and pursue broader social benefits for external constituencies' (Arenas, Sanchez and Murphy, 2013: 723). In India, collaboration between the corporate world and civil society has become even more entrenched, as the Companies Bill now 'mandates [...] CSR spending. There is a legal motive as companies must ensure that they spend 2 per cent of their net profits towards CSR initiatives' (Sabat, 2015: 71). Private-sector organizations therefore form alliances with a CSO (or, more often, an NGO) to implement some of its goals to meet the requirements for CSR. Although pressure is exerted by CSOs because they are now better able to organize and strategize, this does not necessarily mean a relationship of conflict between CSOs and the private sector. Private companies devise ways to collaborate with CSOs with the aim of moving away from confrontation. A situation of conflict means that private companies have to allocate resources to overcoming these conflicts, and they would prefer to utilize these resources elsewhere. These are alliances situated within the category of 'strategic partnerships,' which are expected to benefit both businesses and CSOs (Ashman, 2001; Waddell, 2000).

Literature suggests that civil society is at greater risk and that in reality these partnerships are not mutually beneficial (Ashman, 2001). A number of studies related to CSO-business partnerships in South

Africa, Brazil, and India have found that the CSOs felt that the benefits to corporations' image outweigh or even whitewash destructive practices carried out by the private companies. (Hamann and Acutt, 2010; Carron, Thomsen, Chan, Muro and Bhushan, 2006) The partnership has implications for the autonomy of CSOs, as they may not call attention to such practices of private companies with which they are in partnership. It becomes difficult for CSOs to hold the private sector accountable to terms of social responsibility in the way they would have done without the collaboration. Additionally, collaboration may lead to CSOs giving up particular styles of functioning to ensure that they are able to receive funding from the private sector. These potential outcomes are directly linked to CSO autonomy.³

Collaborations in South Africa, Latin America, and, in some cases, even India, suggest a complex set of issues emerging when private firms collaborate with CSOs. The CSO–corporate relationship still seems to be an 'uneasy and uncertain one' (Goswami and Tandon, 2013: 660). There is evidence to suggest that both CSOs and businesses add new physical and structural capacity through collaborations. Situations of joint ownership emerge, creating new opportunities for both sides (Waddell, 2000: 11). However, although relationships between CSOs and the private sector may be mutually beneficial and strategically forged, these relationships cannot be viewed as equal. Private firms have control over the financial resources in joint collaborative initiatives, complicating the independent functioning of CSOs. Further, various stakeholders develop new perceptions of CSOs in their role as players in the CSR movement (Arenas, Lozano and Albareda, 2009: 176).

New Public Management and civil society

The close proximity of the market and CSOs is related to changes that occurred worldwide in the early 1990s as a result of the economic crisis and liberalization. The slowing down of the economy and the need to change the functioning mechanism of the government to be more efficient and performance-based resulted in changes in CSOs as well. CSOs were increasingly 'expected to prove performance—efficiency, effectiveness and quality' (Brandsen, Trommel and Verschuere, 2017: 679). The state seemed to decline, with the market emerging as the new force to be reckoned with, and, consequently, civil society became the space for social reconstruction (Ghosh, 2009). This phenomenon appeared in most parts of the world, but it took a forceful shape in developing countries whose economies were undergoing changes of great magnitude. It contributed to the 'NGOization' and 'professionalization' of civil society, which matched with 'the neoliberal agenda of government roll back and decentralization' (Ghosh, 2009: 229).

These developments influence the modalities of functioning of CSOs. The field of development and civil society has come to be 'dominated by professionalized NGOs, often sponsored and funded by donor agencies in the West' (Chandhoke, 2012: 43). The professionalization has implications for the functioning of CSOs, as they are expected to work in a project-based manner, with fixed targets and deliverables in mind. All of this is indicative of a corporate way of functioning, which impacts the autonomy of CSOs and the people working within them. Although functioning in a target-based manner gives CSOs a professional image, it detaches the people working in them from the 'cause' they work for,

³ See Ashman's work on 'Civil Society Collaboration with Business: Bringing Empowerment Back In' (2001). . She brings into focus civil society–business collaborations in three countries: Brazil, South Africa, and India. She points out that a Brazilian CSO (the Brazil Vocational Institute), while partnering with a business firm, closed one of its social programs that was not financially sound.

with an aim toward profit rather than building social capital (Eikenberry and Kluver, 2004). Thus, the sense of autonomy seems to be diminished when CSOs operate as businesses organizations with market ideals. To date, the market–civil society relationship in India largely remains unexplored.

The autonomy of CSOs cannot be discussed in isolation and is connected to the concept of ownership. These two concepts complement each other in more than one ways. Whereas autonomy is situated in the idea of freedom and choice, ownership is rooted in a sense of responsibility. The two concepts are connected as rights or freedom is to obligation. The boundaries between the two concepts are often blurred and a sense of ownership might be difficult to flourish without autonomy. Therefore the next section explores the idea of ownership that emerges in relation to civil society and tries to bring forward the complexities related to it.

Ownership

Defining ownership

Ownership in development discourse pertains to responsibility and norms within partnerships. It can be defined as the idea ‘that societies as well as persons assume the responsibility for their own development’ (Muller, 2009: 6), so they also take on the authority and responsibility to make final decisions regarding the owned object or process (Cramer, Stein and Weeks, 2006: 421). Ownership creates certain favorable conditions for partnerships where two or more parties share similar rights and recognition. Ambiguities arise when ownership is translated from theory to practice, as a wide range of meanings become attached to the term, ranging from the ‘relationship between stakeholders, to a sense of attachment to a programme, to actual control’ (Chesterman, 2007: 3). Therefore, the operationalization of ownership takes several forms, based on the context and interpretation (Carner, Stein and Weeks, 2006).

Exploring ownership: Moving from ‘country ownership’ to ‘democratic ownership’

Ownership has been a key concept in development discourse for over 20 years (De Jong, Megens and Waal, 2011; Meyer and Schulz, 2008). The concept was discussed as a central component of multilateral development aid in a policy document entitled ‘Development Partnerships in the New Global Context,’ adopted by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development’s Development and Assistance Committee in 1995 (Chesterman, 2007). This policy document suggested that, for development to succeed, the people in the countries where assistance was given should be the ‘owners’ of their development policies and programs (Chesterman, 2007). Countries were expected to be in the ‘driver’s seat’ in terms of determining and achieving their own development goals (Wolfensohn, 1999). The Paris Declaration of 2005 reshaped the delivering of aid and the relationship between donors and recipients (Meyer and Schulz, 2008). One of the aims of this document was to change the vocabulary of the donor–recipient relationship, viewed in terms of ‘partnerships’ (Meyer and Schulz, 2008). The ownership principle in aid effectiveness lies at the heart of the Paris Declaration (Zimmermann, 2007). The document defined ownership in the context of developing countries exercising ‘effective leadership

over their development policies and strategies' (Zimmermann, 2007: 3). To unpack this idea further, 'The idea of ownership is to grant more control over aid flows and development policy to recipient country governments. If aid money is channeled through country systems, rather than through parallel governance structures, developing country governments will have more power to determine how those resources are spent and how they fit with other spending' (De Jong, Megens and Waal, 2011).

There has been an intense debate on two aspects of ownership in development aid: country-based ownership and democratic/inclusive ownership. At the center of this debate, is the control that a government has over the aid coming from donors for developmental change and the question of whether country-based ownership is effective in development initiatives. The Paris Declaration spoke of a consensus on development policies to be nurtured and formulated. The consensus was to emerge among the donors, partnering governments, civil society partners, and other stakeholders. The Declaration called for greater participation of the citizens in voicing their concerns and implementing the aid program. However, the Declaration also recognized the need for a strong government able to deliver results. This became the context for a critical perspective on the Paris Declaration and the understanding of 'country ownership.'

Overall, the discussion on ownership in the Paris Declaration (2005) and the Accra Declaration (2008) suggests that the international discourse links ownership to the state and envisions development to be state-driven, with the stakes of the program in the hands of the government (Tomlinson, 2011). When aid reaches the ground, however, several forms of ownership not envisioned by the Paris Declaration, or even the later Accra Declaration, are reinforced.⁴ The ownership of aid programs implemented in each country is based on several factors, including the relationship between the donors, partnering governments, CSOs, citizens, and other stakeholders. The idea of ownership is intrinsically political and ambiguous. There are those who maintain that ownership has to be considered with recognition for the rights of the grassroots, local groups and of the people, which are compromised in the wake of 'power imbalances within the transnational civil sphere' (Pieck and Moog, 2009, p. 416). In some cases, ownership is articulated in the context of inclusive ownership, described as 'real ownership leading to genuine development effectiveness' (Gloeckl, 2011).

Ownership: Challenges and opportunities for CSOs

In the post-Paris Declaration analysis of ownership, two issues strongly emerge. One is a narrow vision of country ownership that the Declaration seemed to legitimize. Here, ownership was largely viewed as 'ownership by government officials in dialogue with donor officials' (Tomlinson, 2011: 12). The Declaration has been critiqued for its failure to be inclusive or to address important issues such as 'human rights, gender equality, decent work and accountability for sustainable outcomes for poor and vulnerable people' (Tomlinson, 2011: 12). The critique centers on the definition of ownership, which some in the Southern countries felt was donor-driven and lacked an assessment of the factors important in defining the concept from their perspective. The most significant critique that emerged was about how country ownership was understood as a 'property of the conditionality attached with it' (Buiter,

⁴ See Meyer and Schulz (2008), who analyze the concept of ownership emerging from the Paris Declaration through a case study analysis of cases of 'subversive ownership' in Mali, 'counterproductive ownership' in Nicaragua, 'alignment in ownership' in Peru, and 'strong ownership' in Vietnam.

2007: 647). Country ownership did not recognize the heterogeneity of populations. Rather, it assumed their homogeneity when speaking of representation from governments, certain organizations, and lobby groups.

The second issue concerns attaching ownership to development aid effectiveness. Although there is an emphasis on shared ownership, it becomes a precondition for development effectiveness, based on an assumption that ownership will contribute to effectiveness (Arensman, Van Wessel and Hilhorst, 2017). A related aspect is the power imbalance created because of different forms of conditionality affecting ownership in 'partner' countries. Donor policies have made governments receiving aid accountable to these donors and have discouraged them from engaging with their citizens in formulating policies for development. This has brought about significant problems related to the level of ownership a government or recipient organization can claim over a development program. A significant connection between ownership and autonomy emerges from this discussion: Aid is attached to conditionality through ownership, which affects the autonomy of partner organizations.

The discussions about ownership and the related partnerships tend to focus on results-based ownership, which connects the concept to effectiveness. There also appears to be a connection between aid effectiveness, ownership, and New Public Management, which stresses efficiency and professionalization. Although the idea of ownership tends to make development goals more inclusive, there is also a fear that it serves the interests of hegemonic economic systems, given the silence on 'unequal market power, consolidating corporate power and local political realities' (Cornwall and Block, 2005: 1053).

The implications of ownership for CSOs need to be interpreted in light of the above discussion. Development goals achieved through collaborative efforts will have an impact on ownership (Beier, 2009: 26), whenever any form of collaboration occurs, at whatever level. Given that 'there is no ownership neutral external cooperation' (Beier, 2009: 26), there has been an emphasis on collaborations that are ownership-sensitive. This calls for an inclusive understanding of ownership, both in letter and in spirit. At the international level, there is a consensus on 'locally owned' development strategies emerging from an 'open and collaborative dialogue by local authorities with civil society and external partners about the shared objectives and their respective contributions to the common enterprise' (Chesterman, 2007: 7). However, there seems to be a problem in arriving at consensus on implementing these policies.

Civil society has certainly carved a role for itself within these partially understood questions on what ownership means, how it can be achieved, and the ways to make it more democratic and inclusive. The role of the civil society in development can no longer be brushed aside, and, therefore, the ownership debate is more vibrant in the context of civil society. In most of the declarations on aid effectiveness within development discourse, there is recognition of the role that CSOs ought to play in collaborations for development goals. However, there seems to be an ambiguity in locating the CSOs' ownership within development policies.

Two associated issues impact ownership when donor agencies enter into collaboration with CSOs. One is the issue of representation that CSOs often face. This arises when CSOs are questioned about their representation in non-electoral forms that do not have any formal authority. These questions are raised because of the complexities involved with representation itself (see also chapter 4). In an endeavor to represent, hegemony and hierarchy are often created. In such instances, CSOs and their sense of ownership of development policies become problematic. The second issue relates to the inclusive character of civil society. Although development discourse emphasizes local ownership and inclusivity in development policies, these processes do not seem to happen automatically. For instance, there are always groups that tend to be excluded from development initiatives and forced to own programs and policies that they did not make. Therefore, it is useful to ask whether ownership can be shared and inclusive when collaborations suggest power imbalances, how ownership questions emerge and are navigated under such imbalances, and how CSOs navigate power imbalances.

Inclusive development and the role of CSOs

Inclusive development is the working out of development goals with the consideration of the needs of the poor and marginalized (excluded) (Chibba, 2008). More specifically, it is defined as ‘development that includes marginalized people, sectors and countries in social, political and economic processes for increased human well-being, social and environmental sustainability, and empowerment’ (Gupta et al., 2015: 546). It is important to elaborate further on what inclusiveness means in our perspective. A development process is viewed as inclusive when it includes the knowledge and aspirations of local communities and enhances their participation in decision-making (Borel-Saladin and Turok, 2013; Narayan and Prichett, 2009). Furthermore, inclusiveness stresses the overcoming of the exclusions commonly faced by focuses on the poorest (in terms of income), most vulnerable and most marginalized in society (see also chapter 4 in this review).

However, we need to highlight that, at international, national, and local levels, there is a politics to inclusive development (Teichman, 2016). This politics relates to hegemonic formation of the concept of inclusive development when it is defined in purely economic terms. Such an understanding relates to inclusive development only in the context of pure economic change, such as creating employment opportunities with ‘universally’ accepted ideas of social inclusion based on interventionist policies (Teichman, 2016). It is therefore important to move away from ‘simplistic readings of inclusion and instead insist that sustainable and inclusive forms of development involve progressive changes to the power relations that underpin poverty and exclusion’ (Hickey, Sen and Bukenya, 2015: 6). Simplistic readings of inclusive development can contribute to the disempowerment of weaker groups, including women and minority ethnic communities (Hickey, Sen and Bukenya, 2015).

The above ideas about inclusive development are directly relevant for CSOs’ work. CSOs, as was mentioned earlier, collaborate to reach certain long- and short-term objective goals of social justice and transformation. In doing so, they engage directly in the business of inclusive development and thus the politics surrounding it. For instance, NGOs, which are an important aspect of civil society, receive a

‘larger slice of foreign aid and other forms of development finance than ever before’ to achieve some of their development goals (Banks et al., 2015: 707). However, for these goals to be translated into the empowerment of marginalized people, ‘genuine interactive governance’ is required (Gupta et al., 2015).

Inclusive development requires participatory approaches and non-discriminatory and equal opportunities for participation in society (Gupta et al., 2015). It requires the participation of multiple agencies and cannot be achieved by the state, the private sector, or civil society alone. There is a need for collaborative approaches to achieve inclusive development, and, as discussed above, these collaborations at various levels bring in unique challenges to CSOs’ autonomy and ownership. Among several things required for inclusive development, there is a need to build consensus on the policies and programs initiated at various levels. The building of consensus is possible through dialogue with civil society, making its role crucial for inclusive development. The literature reviewed in the sections above relates to different ways in which autonomy and ownership are challenged when CSOs collaborate with each other, the state, and the market. In India, there are collaborations at multiple levels among CSOs, and it is important to understand whether these collaborations are translated into inclusive development.

Implications for our research

The autonomy and ownership debate brings into focus important complexities involved. Reviewing the literature on civil society’s autonomy and ownership reinforces that these concepts need to be contextualized and explored further considering the unresolved puzzles related to them. The empirical research on autonomy and ownership draws from this literature review in the following ways. Firstly, it will build on the argument that autonomy and ownership are not absolute and a given but are relative. Secondly, we take the starting point that autonomy and ownership are complex, as CSOs are often embedded in multiple (possible) relations and collaborations, with autonomy and ownership likely being shaped, challenged and navigated from and engagement with these contexts in complex ways.

The complex ways in which autonomy gets defined vis-à-vis the state, market and civil society gives a foundation for this research to be able to relate to them while studying CSO collaborations during the empirical research. The same can be suggested for the literature on ownership that moves from international debates on the subject to the need for more contextual and inclusive understanding of the concept. These arguments would be significant to build on the knowledge that already exists through an empirical investigation within a context.

There is a lot that the literature speaks on important issues pertaining to the two concepts. Yet, there are significant knowledge gaps that can become starting points for our research. 1) The autonomy and ownership question has been explored in linear and hierarchical power relations with funding relations between donor and receiver taking center stage. There is little attention to the other ways in which autonomy and ownership questions may emerge, considering the multiple relations and collaborations many CSOs engage in. 2) There is a lot of literature that concentrates on the factors constraining

autonomy and ownership within the donor dependencies just mentioned (see also chapter 2). There is much less attention to the ways CSOS may navigate these constraints. Even when constraints exist, CSOs engage in collaborations and navigate different possibilities to achieve certain goals. For example, CSOs may weigh the benefits of harnessing the power of CSOs they partner with, and the price they may pay in terms of ownership. Or they may give up a measure of autonomy in their approach of issues to gain access to state arenas. And in some cases, CSOs may also actively seek to avoid constraining other CSOs that they work with and develop strategies to do so.

To what extent autonomy and ownership are considerations for CSOs, and whether and how they may be addressed by them, is poorly understood. When we take autonomy and ownership seriously as fundamental traits of a functioning civil society, we need to do justice to the complexity we find in reality. This chapter will inform our research of:

1. The extent and way in which questions of autonomy and ownership emerge for CSOs in the shaping of their representative roles.
2. The relative role and connections between autonomy and ownership in CSO in the shaping of their representative roles.
3. The way CSOs confront and navigate autonomy and ownership in their representative roles.

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Chapter 4. Representation

Introduction

In a developing country like India, civil society organizations play a significant role in bringing out the voices of marginalized groups and ensuring their visibility in the development discourse, political debate and policy processes. Different types of CSOs encourage the mobilization, participation, and inclusion of marginalized groups and their representation by navigating multiple challenges and making spaces for an inclusive society. Through advocacy and policy reform, civil society organizations also protect the rights of marginal groups, enhancing their bargaining power and helping them to overcome their lack of voice and injecting these voices into mainstream discourse of decision-making.

The Dialogue and Dissent Theory of Change assumes CSOs can address the needs of the marginal and vulnerable group and can represent their voices (Kamstra, 2017), through representative roles articulating and amplifying people's voices and address inequalities. However, when CSOs represent a section of society, they represent a broad spectrum of diverse groups and their concerns, translating these into constructions of constituencies and their views and interests. Therefore, understanding CSOs representation requires understanding of the ways in which representations take shape in diverse settings.

When it comes to India, with its multi-layered social-political structure, it is particularly important to deepen our insights into the ways in which representation is imagined and takes shape, and the implications of locally relevant civil society diversities for inclusiveness. Understanding that representation is constructed by CSOs embedded in relations and context, in our project we zoom in on 'the intrinsic plurality of the meanings and forms of political representation' (Lama-Rewal, 2016), as it takes shape through diverse CSOs representing marginal and vulnerable sections of Indian society.

This chapter is divided into four sections. The first section highlights theoretical aspects of representation, presenting a brief discussion on the notion of representation, different types of representations, and representative claims with an emphasis on non- electoral representation. The second section extends the understanding of representation by placing it in the Indian context. The third section dwells upon the key concepts of inclusion and exclusion in the Indian context, discussing locally relevant civil society diversities. The fourth section zooms in on construction and representation of marginal and vulnerable sections of society, and their implications. The final section articulates the ways in which we draw on the above literature and add to the knowledge with our research.

Representation theory

One of the most cited and influential representation scholars, Hanna Pitkin (1967) provides a simple

definition of representation, saying that to represent is simply to 'make present again'. Political representation is a process of making citizens' concerns, voices, opinions, and perspectives 'present' in public policy-making processes. Developing her conceptualization, Pitkin describes the concept of representation in two ways: 'acting for' (a person) and 'standing for' (a person or object). Pitkin (1967) writes that representation means 'acting in the interest of the represented, in a manner responsive to them' (p.209). She further identifies four different kinds of representation, each one with a particular understanding to approach representation. These are formalistic representation, descriptive representation, symbolic representation, and substantive representation. Formalistic representation is about institutional arrangements and the institutional position of representative needed to represent citizens. Descriptive and symbolic representation can be put together as a mode of 'standing for' for the people that it represents. Such forms of representation introduce the perspectives and experiences of marginal and vulnerable groups into representative institutions (Mansbridge 2003, Young 2000). In substantive representation, representatives serves the best interests of their constituents by 'acting for', in the interests of the people they represent.

In Pitkin's writing, there is an emphasis focusing upon the representative and what makes them representative. Saward (2006) problematizes Pitkin's emphasis on representativeness. According to Saward, this is a unidirectional approach that underplays the subtle processes of constructing the represented or that which needs to be represented (p.10). For Saward, representation is a communicative process centred on the construction of representative claims made by actors seeking to represent, and the back-and-forth on this with the groupings those actors claim to represent through these claims. According to Saward, the representative claim helps us to '...grasp the importance of performance to representation; take non-electoral representation seriously; and to underline the contingency and contestability of all forms of representation' (Saward, 2006, p.297). Saward (2010) further argues that 'the representative claims encompass and implicate many different groups and individuals; they show that representation is dynamic, shifting, and elusive... (p.1)'.

In contemporary times, due to the increasing role of non-governmental actors at international, national and local levels, Saward's notion of representative claims emerges as a significant step that can help scholars and practitioners seeking to examine and advance representation as a potential contributor to inclusive development. Saward's (2010) notes that representation can be invoked by a mix of non-elected actors, who offer 'a construction of constituency to an audience' (p. 49). Going back to Pitkin's formulation of representative, the role of non-state actors and civil society organizations can be classified as non- electoral representatives who can 'speak for', 'act for' and 'stand for' on behalf of individuals or marginal groups - or simply put, who have 'the capacity to act' and '(re)present their voices'.

Seeing the increasing presence of CSOs and changing political realities, the role of non- electoral representation is increasingly being acknowledged. Writing about the significance of non- electoral representation, Rubenstein (2014) states that the advocacy work done by CSOs has not gone unnoticed, and has been considered as a 'paradigmatic example of 'non-electoral representation' (206). In her article '*Rethinking representation*', Mansbridge (2003) suggests a need to revisit our conceptual understanding of political representation. According to Mansbridge's empirical work, there may be

more than one way of representation, and she states that, 'the criteria are plural rather than singular' (515). In line with this, Mansbridge argues for 'including both elected and non-elected representatives, inside and outside the legislature' in our understanding of representation (2011: 621).

One of the scholars who have since then picked up this discussion, combining constructed and non-electoral representation in her analysis of representation, Maia (2012) states that non-electoral political representatives have a fundamental role in democratic politics as they claim to *represent* interests and aspirations and *act in the name* of women, ethnic groups, disabled groups, gays and lesbians, the poor, animals or 'the environment' (p.429, emphasis in original). For Maia, this can be the case 'although [these representatives] are not elected or formally nominated, and may not even participate in deliberative forums directly with those concerned themselves' (ibid). According to Maia (2012), social movement networks and NGOs can be best understood as 'discursive representatives', engaged in dynamics of making, contesting, supporting a claim of representation (p.430). So far, this scholarly line of debate and research has hardly been picked up in development studies. However, in the Indian context, considering the prevailing plurality of the society, the idea of making representative claims on behalf of marginal and vulnerable groups becomes even more complex and, considering the persistent inequalities of Indian society, potentially of important value for inclusive development.

Representation in India

As a representative democracy with multi-party system, The Indian political landscape is one where various political actors claim to represent the views and interests of the society. Jayal (2016) writes: 'the popular narrative of Indian democracy presents it as a series of feel-good clichés: a vibrant political arena, populated by a multiplicity and diversity of political parties, offering a smorgasbord of political choices'(174). And indeed, in recent years, many political parties and social movements have emerged speaking on behalf of citizens to (re)present them; especially in the case of backward castes and marginalized sections of Indian society. However, the dynamics involved are complex and not evidently moving towards inclusiveness. Over time different contradictory dynamics come in. For example, the Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) has embraced the cause of representing the Dalits, which can be considered as an example of descriptive representation, advancing a marginalized section of society. In line with such developments, Yadav (2000) coined the phrase 'the second democratic upsurge', asserted that Indian democracy experienced a deepening by becoming more representative of social diversity. The core understanding behind this was that the 'socially underprivileged' had become the most active participants in elections during this phase. However, widening social, economic and political gaps and changing dynamics among other caste groups also have had the adverse effects on the politics of representation. The 2009 general elections marked a reversal of the trend of increasing representation of the underprivileged, indicating an increased participation of the upper middle and middle classes and a fall in the share of marginalized groups. The recent 2014 general elections confirmed this reversal, where electoral participation of socio-economically marginalized went further down, and the participation of the upper middle and middle classes went up from 26 percent to 47 percent (Lama-

Rewal 2016; Jaffrelot and Verniers, 2015). In line with this, we see an increase of upper caste representation, and a decrease of lower caste and Muslim representation.

Different studies illustrate the plurality of representation in India. Michelutti's (2004) study of the Yadavs, as the members of one of the largest caste communities in the Indian state of Uttar Pradesh, assert their linkages with democracy through political participation, including activism. In such cases representative claims emerge out of institutional and collective conditions. Blom Hansen (2004) reflects upon what he calls the 'politics of presence' of regional political party Shiv Sena. He argues that 'a politics of the spectacle' is central to political representation here, and that Shiv Sena employs 'politics of presence' as an essential feature of representative claims-making – 'from the local street corner to mass meeting to the staging of policies through the state government' (p.21). Both studies highlight that the practices of representation construct communities and localities through the very act of representation, embedded in specific contexts.

The contemporary Indian political landscape demonstrates a mix of different forms of electoral representation. In addition, with the rise of new political actors and social movements, representation has come to include populist politics as used by Aam Aadmi Party (AAP). Non-electoral representation is evident and clearly also performing representative roles. Partly this can be gathered from chapter 6 the composition of Indian civil society. Here we want to emphasize the diversity of forms of representation that such civil society organizing can entail. Looking beyond civil society advocacy, emphasizing the plurality of representation, we can point here to many different types of initiatives. One is the newly founded Dalit-rights organization Bhim Army in Western Uttar Pradesh, which is working with an aim 'to be a voice for the voiceless' by establishing schools to educate children from the most marginalized sections of the society (Rajvanshi 2018).

Another example is that of successful campaigning by a group of CSOs, along with some regional and indigenous groups and local political leadership against the Coca-Cola-Company. These protests resulted in the closure of its bottling factory after accusations of water depletion and pollution (Berglund, 2017).

Another example illustrating diversity is the formation and role of the Justice Verma Committee that was constituted after the Nirbhaya rape case⁵ as a direct consequence of the rape and subsequent outrage and public protest throughout India. The outcomes of the committee formed the basis of the Criminal Law (Amendment) Act of 2013 (Shakil, 2013). Such dynamics between state institutions, non-state actors, and CSOs highlight that Indian democracy is incredibly fluid, situational and dynamic (Hansen, 2004), with evident roles to play for civil society representation, in multiple forms. It is against the backdrop of such various forms of representation, in a dynamic political context, that we approach our study of the way civil society's representative roles take shape.

⁵ In 2012, a 23-year-old girl was gang-raped and later brutally killed in Delhi. This incident triggered massive protests in India. See thequint.com (n.d.).

Inclusion and exclusion

The Dialogue and Dissent Theory of Change states that ‘the added value of CSOs...also lies in addressing the root-causes of poverty by challenging the underlying mechanisms of social, economic and political exclusion’ (p.5). The Dialogue and Dissent Theory of Change also takes the starting point that CSOs can contribute to inclusive and sustainable development by articulating voices of the people. These assumptions encourage us to observe how CSOs represent the ‘voices and visibility’ and challenge the exclusion of marginal groups to ensure their participation in inclusive processes.

By incorporating and promoting the voices of Dalits, women and other subaltern groups, CSOs ensure the participation of marginalized groups and challenge a system based on the exclusion. It is also proven that in the efforts of representing marginal voices, CSOs provide a support system and do in face sometimes facilitate negotiations with the state or other socio-political institutions. Such efforts lead to their participation in democratic processes by staking claims in inclusive processes and challenging the exclusionary practices. For example, many NGOs have argued to adopt human rights framework upholding rights of Dalits and protecting them from caste-based violence. Another example could be advocacy on behalf of a particular community that is excluded from certain processes based on the religion or ethnicity. Similarly, there are many NGOs which are involved in implementing the policy like Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme ensuring that the people from most marginalized communities and poorest of poor get equal opportunities in such welfare schemes.

There are many ways in which CSOs can constitute their representative role in addressing existing inequalities by demanding inclusion of marginal and vulnerable sections of society, with widely diverging implications for inclusiveness. For example, Ray (1999) shows how in the cities of Calcutta and Bombay, representation of women’s rights by party-affiliated and autonomous women’s groupings differ in important ways, depending the different organizational space for articulating women’s rights, and on the different local political contexts. ‘Feminism’ obtains highly diverging legitimacy and prominence here.

However, Chandhoke (1995), a prominent scholar of Indian civil society, offers a more critical perspective. She writes that social movements such as *Narmada Bachao Andolan*⁶ and *Chhattisgarh Mukti Morcha*⁷ were the creative movement of India’s civil society, but the civil space in actually existing democracies like India offers only limited possibilities for those without capacities or entitlements or those who are outside the organized sectors. According to Chandhoke (2003), civil society functions as both inclusive and exclusionary as it privileges the politically and economically organized groups of society. Relatedly, Chatterjee (2008) argues that in India, particular sections of society do not have the

⁶ *Narmada Bachao Andolan* are a social movement consisting of *adivasis*, farmers, environmentalists and human rights activists. The movement opposes construction of large dams being built across the Narmada River and demands a proper resettlement and rehabilitation plan to accommodate the displaced people. For further details may see <http://www.narmada.org/>

⁷ Shankar Guha Niyogi founded the Chhattisgarh Mukti Morcha in 1982. CMM was established as a political party, a union of agricultural laborers, organized industrial mine workers, and Adivasis in the Indian state of Chhattisgarh. Source: <http://sanhati.com/shankar-guha-niyogi-archives/>

same agency as others. While higher classes can be included in civil society, having an ordered and regulated access to the state, 'Those in political society make their claims on government, and in turn are governed, not within the framework of stable constitutionally defined rights and laws, but rather through temporary, contextual and unstable arrangements arrived at through direct political negotiations...the bulk of the population in India lives outside the orderly zones of proper civil society. (p.57)'. Shah, however (2014) critiques Chatterjee's position and argues that Chatterjee fails to 'to see the massive mobilization of marginalized sections, Dalits, Adivasis, women and the poor, which has happened very much within the framework of stable constitutionally defined rights and laws' (37).

In the light of above discussion, we conclude that, while representation of marginal and vulnerable sections of society may contribute to inclusive development, it is essential to examine practices of representation and the ways these may challenge exclusions and advance inclusion. This is particularly important in light of the diverse ideological, organizational and social relations we find between representatives (in our case CSOs) and those they claim to represent. Here we draw on, and seek to advance, research on the constructed nature of representation, and its implications for inclusiveness. In *Inclusion and Democracy*, Iris Marion Young (2000) stresses that attempts to include more voices in the political arena can suppress other voices. Young's understanding of representation encourages us to recognize the plurality or existing diversities of those being represented and draws our attention to that what is represented by representatives. It is also necessary to understand that people always have multiple identifications and affiliations, and they occupy different positions based on difference and ascribed roles which may also overlap with each other. Urbinati (2000) suggests that in such cases representation also constitutes 'comprehensive filtering' that refines the plurality of aspirations and opinions of a given group (p.760). However, what is needed for the comprehensive filtering is a context, shared awareness of belonging and mutual interests, perspectives of people shaped by their positions, and an ability to translate their experiences of differences into a collective form. An understanding of such 'comprehensive filtering', and underlying meanings and discourses of representation may help us to examine 'politics of inclusion' or 'practices of exclusion' through a bottom-up and context specific approaches. In *The Problem of Speaking for Others*, Alcoff (1991) problematizes the nuances, problems, and difficulties of speaking on behalf of others. She writes about speakers' epistemological locations and the ability to transcend her location when speaking for others. More recently, Maia (2012) shows the crucial role of non-electoral representatives in translating issues, constructing constituencies and their organization, and creating causes resources and a structure of opportunities that raise public awareness and exert influence. Such apprehensions beg the questions like: how do the diverse ways in which this happens be understood, and how can implications for inclusiveness be assessed and addressed? What can be done to we ensure the plurality of voices and the inclusion of interests and perspectives from the margins? In our project, we zoom in on the nature, diversity and implications of the way marginal and vulnerable sections of society get represented by CSOs (zooming in on a set of women's rights CSOs and a set of CSOs active in disaster risk reduction). Both sets work extensively with these two concepts. Below, we address how these concepts emerge and are approached in our project.

Marginality

Marginality is a commonly used concept among CSOs involved in advocacy, in India as elsewhere, with

advocacy commonly seeking to articulate and overcome marginality. As a consequence of embedded social position, weak political linkages and absence of representation, marginalized groups face denial of several services, lack of access to various spaces (e.g. the public sphere), and deprivation of opportunities to exercise their skills and potential. Such limitations confine their growth, curtail their participation in democratic processes and exclude them from practices of inclusive development mainly because they are underrepresented or their visibility in public discourse is low or trivial. Therefore, marginalized groups face multiple impediments in their lives due to their socio-cultural identity and absence of representation at both the levels of the electoral and non-electoral representation. It is in this direction that CSOs seek to empower communities to carve their spaces in mainstream politics or social development by mobilizing marginalized groups at the grassroots level.

Such mobilization has been common in India, as several leading scholars have argued in the past. Omvedt (1994), writing about peasants, Dalits, and women's groups asserts that by mobilizing new political identities, these groups have challenged the state on the local, regional and national level. Taking the starting point that grassroots organizing can contribute to political power, she argues that NGOs working with Dalit groups could negotiate with the state because of their strong grassroots networks. Other scholars of India have made related claims, e.g. state that civil society incorporates a 'network of voluntary, self-governing institutions in all walks of life' and that collectively, these organisations provide the 'grassroots model of mass politics... in which people are more important than the state' (Kothari, 1988 cited in Mahajan 1999, p. 1193).

In the current project, however, we seek to advance our understanding of the nature and implications of representation, rather than taking objectified conceptualizations of represented categories as given. This is important, firstly considering the wide diversity of representations of marginality and marginalization that we find. Secondly, it is important considering that while civil society organizations have been playing a vital role in the process of the 'nation-building', marginal and vulnerable sections of society are still struggling to be a part of mainstream development in India. Moreover, marginal groups still appear to have very little participation in presenting representative claims on their own or in registering their voices and concerns in public domain. And thirdly, categories like 'marginal' and 'marginalized', common in development discourse and practice, as also in the representative practices of CSOs in India, are themselves social constructions. When it comes to India, marginalization can be diversely defined on the basis of caste, class, ethnicity, religion, gender, etc. Similarly, marginalized groups may consist of women, people with disabilities, ethnic minorities, linguistic minorities, caste, tribes, etc. However, to define or to categorize 'marginal' or 'marginalized' in definitive terms is problematic. It is a multidimensional, dynamic and context-specific phenomenon. Further, categorizations are made by organizationally, socially, politically, culturally and economically diversely positioned actors (cf. Weldon 2011).

Vulnerability

Many CSOs engaged in development advocacy base and legitimize their role in their representation of vulnerable groupings. Just like representation of marginality, representation of vulnerability is complex.

This is because vulnerability is multidimensional, dynamic and context-specific phenomenon, and its nature is not a given.

CSOs carry out the role of representing the vulnerable in domains as diverse as climate change adaptation, health, and disaster risk reduction, with the final one being taken as our project case.

In general terms, Adger (2006) defines vulnerability as the state of susceptibility to harm from exposure to stresses associated with environmental and social change and from the absence of capacity to adapt. Therefore, McLaughlin (2011) suggests that vulnerability needs to be looked at from the evolutionary 'theory of change'. The change can be continuous, unpredictable, and abrupt (Folke et al., 2005; Green, 2016). For the vulnerable, the risk is not only from one type of stress but from exposure to multiple stresses experienced or anticipated, such as climate change, disasters, and political, social and economic reforms (Brooks, 2003; Downing et al., 2005; McLaughlin, 2011). As different sections of the society are exposed to different levels of risk and also have a difference in their response, there has been an expansion from a dominant emphasis on hazards towards a wider social and environmental context (Miller et al., 2010; IPCC, 2014; Kelman et al., 2015). Therefore, unpacking vulnerability requires understanding the political, socio-cultural, and economic underpinnings.

In the context of our project, the political ecology perspective is particularly important. Vulnerability is political in nature in two analytically different ways. First, political processes contribute to the material production and distribution of vulnerability. Lack of development contributes to vulnerability, while certain developmental activities could inadvertently create new risks (O'Brien et al., 2006). Integration of measures 'to reduce risk to the most vulnerable' in development programmes, is viewed by many, as a very important dimension of inclusive and sustainable development. This is because development can be elusive, as in the process of achieving it there could be an increase in inequalities (income and asset) and harm to the environment. Further, much of the 'development' has been shown to increase people's exposure to risk and add to the vulnerability of the poor (Cannon and Müller-Mahn, 2010). Secondly, classifying certain groups of people as vulnerable is itself a political act (Sen, 1999; Bankoff, et al., 2004; Eakin and Luers 2006; Miller et al., 2010; McLaughlin, 2011), based on understandings of societal inequalities, priorities, rights and needs. Poverty, resource depletion, inequality, and marginalization are *drivers of vulnerability* (Adger and Brooks, 2003; McLaughlin, 2011). Poor people tend to be the most vulnerable. Secondly, resource depletion leads to vulnerability because nature's capacity to sustain lives and livelihoods is eroded (Folke et al., 2002). Thirdly, social inequality is formed through the complex interplay of class, gender, and ethnicity contributes to the marginalization of certain groups (McLaughlin, 2011). Poverty, resource depletion social inequality and marginalization reduce the capacity of individuals, and communities to buffer expected and surprising change, learn and develop in a complex world of rapid transformations. This capacity to bounce back or recover from shocks and stresses is called resilience (Cannon, 1994; Twiggs, 2004, Folke et al., 2002; Folke, 2016; Keating et al., 2017). Building resilience offsets the risk and therefore reduces vulnerability (O'Brien et al., 2006).

The social and cultural processes that trigger vulnerability are embedded in larger processes that are expressions of international and national political and economic considerations. Vulnerability is not only constructed at one governance scale but simultaneously on multiple scales. Reducing vulnerability is a

human rights concern, and protection of vulnerable groups is grounded in various international human rights laws and standards (Sarewitz, et al., 2003; Downing et al., 2005; Bizzarri, 2012).

Finally, institutions, such as informal and formal connections between individuals, organizations, and agencies, are important for building the resilience of vulnerable groups. Here, we are particularly interested in the role of CSOs in representation of vulnerable groups to facilitate their inclusion. Through advocacy, CSOs potentially play an important role in influencing policies and practices on inclusive and sustainable development. A significant contribution of CSOs in the governance system is through the representation of vulnerable groups in 'local development planning'. This not only enables reorienting resource and information flows to encourage learning, diversity, and flexibility in responding to the changes, but also seeks to tackle conflicting policies, uncoordinated field actions, and poor implementation of development plans (Bankoff et al., 2004; Nelson and Finan, 2009; Gaillard, 2010).

As argued above, constructions of vulnerability are political and context-specific in nature, and are made by organizationally, socially, politically, culturally and economically diversely positioned actors. It is significant to mention here that even though the Global South - Latin America, Africa, and Asia – is at high risk, vulnerability in these regions has largely been understood through technocratic perspectives which originated in the Global North (Bankoff et al., 2004). Recent initiatives and efforts by national and local CSOs in Asia reflect that Southern CSOs can pursue both hearing the voices, and addressing the needs and concerns of vulnerable groupings to a relatively higher levels (Shaw and Izumi, 2014). This suggests the presence of important differences in, and dynamics in the representative role of CSOs.

Implications for our research: the construction of representation

From our review we conclude that non-electoral representation is now a widely accepted and relevant dimension of democracy and inclusive development, and of great importance for the study of the representative role of CSOs. We also conclude that this study of non-electoral representation is in an early stage, with little empirical work to draw on, with hardly any publications zooming in on CSOs working in international development, and the organizational perspectives from which they work. This means we see an important knowledge gap. In particular, we find that there is no attention for the role of collaboration and embeddedness in relations in the shaping of representative roles. At the same time, we find that there is relevant theoretical work available that we can draw on to structure our study of representation, in particular work zooming in on representation as plural, and as socially and discursively constructed.

We also found that our approach of representation as socially and discursively constructed, is highly valid for the study of representation of marginal and vulnerable groupings in particular, as both categorizations are contingent on many factors, including the contextual and organizational dimensions that we set out in our introductory chapter. Important here is also the potential political nature and significance of CSOs' employment of both concepts, as charted above. We plan to draw on this review of representation to help inform our research of:

1. The way diverse CSOs construct the ‘marginal’ or ‘vulnerable’ constituencies they seek to represent, and the representation of these (constructed) constituencies, differently.
2. The way the diversity of these representations can be understood considering CSOs’ organizational contexts and their embeddedness in relations and collaborations (with constituents, the state and other CSOs), as understood and given shape to by these CSOs.
3. The implications of diverse representations for the nature and form of CSOs’ representative roles advancing inclusive and sustainable development.

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Part 2

The Indian context

Chapter 5. The State and Civil Society in India

Introduction

Since the 1970s, civil society has played a vital role in global democratization. Many formerly communist and authoritarian regimes have been forced to democratize in response to citizen mobilization. According to a recent Freedom House report, since 1974 the number of democratic political systems has more than tripled – from 39 to 123 by 2017 (Freedom House, 2018). Owing to its role in democratic transition in different parts of the world, civil society has come to be considered an indispensable instrument for democratic governance. The argument has been that a robust, strong, and vibrant civil society strengthens liberal democracy. As Dettke (1998: x) notes, ‘it is possible to have a market economy without democracy, but it is inconceivable to have a democracy without the institutions of civil society’.

Although this assertion is largely true, there are complications to this picture. Most importantly, the nature of civil society in a particular society is often dependent on the state; the state directly helps shape what kind of civil society may emerge. As Chandhoke (2001: 8) notes, the state provides the politico-legal framework and institutionalizes the normative prerequisites of rights, freedom and the rule of law, implying that the state has immense power to define which kinds of civil society organizations are permissible under law. Thus, in order to understand the nature and functioning of civil society, it is important to understand the relationship between civil society and the state in socio-historical context. In addition, it is important to note that in the Indian context civil society is not a monolithic entity; it is essentially pluralistic. Its role has undergone significant transformation not only over time but also with the changing nature of state power across different periods. It is therefore important to understand the changing nature and relationship of civil society and the state in India in a historical perspective.

The relationship between civil society and economic development is ambiguous as well. Analyzing the roles of civil society and specifically the role it can play in advancing inclusive and sustainable development, we offer some background on the relationship between the state and civil society, with attention to the way we should see this relation as embedded in market structures and market thinking. We also zoom in a set of contemporary conditions important for understanding civil society in India. Finally, we chart the patterns of concrete engagement between the Indian state and civil society that existing literature allows us to identify. This chapter provides a means to understand both the roles of civil society in India as they take shape, and are constrained by, their relations with the state.

The colonial state and civil society

The British faced difficulties in governing India in the absence of a 'linking language' (Kaviraj, 2001). In order to govern, the colonial state thus brought educational reforms primarily to create an intermediary English educated middle class 'loyal' to the British rule (Sahoo, 2013, 40). In this regard, Christian missionaries played a vital role. Although the colonial state initially did not support missionary activity fearing that it may disturb local religious sensibilities and consequently hinder its economic interest in India, it allowed missionaries after 1813 following pressures from the Church of England and the passage of the Charters Act. With this, Christian missionary organisations played a major role in social reform, welfare and development in the domain of civil society. As Sen (1993, 4) notes, 'the first voluntary efforts in social development were initiated by Christian missionaries' in the early 1810s and 1820s when they started building schools, colleges, dispensaries, and orphanages.

Influenced by Christian missionary activities and European modernity and often in reaction against them, the English educated Indian elites also began similar social reforms and development activities in their communities in mid-1820s. The spirit of voluntarism began spreading in different parts of the country, resulting in the formation of many associations such as the *Brahmo Samaj* (1828), the *Prarthana Samaj* (1864), and the *Arya Samaj* (1875) (see Sahoo, 2013, 40). Raja Ram Mohan Roy and the *Brahmo Samaj* worked to reform child marriage and the sati-system; Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar propagated widow remarriage and education of girls; and Swami Dayanand Saraswati and the *Arya Samaj* opposed child marriage, idol worship, and caste discrimination (Sheth and Sethi, 1991: 51). The efforts to bring formal education to women led to the creation of a cadre of female social reformers who in turn established girls' schools and women's organizations (Deo, 2016).

Besides socio-religious reforms, Indian elites also mobilised civil society against British rule. Progressive and politically conscious Indians became aware of their civil rights and wrote about their experiences of discrimination in various newspapers, such as *Amrit Bazaar Patrika*, *the Hindu*, *Indian Mirror* etc. (Sahoo, 2013: 41). Indian elites also established various voluntary associations to represent their ideas and interests. As Sen (1993: 4) notes, 'the most important organizational offshoot of the nineteenth century reform movement and subsequent national consciousness was the establishment of the Indian National Congress [INC] in 1885'. Although the INC was created with the objective to mobilize masses against the colonial rule, it remained elitist until the 1920s when Gandhi transformed it to an open and inclusive mass-based party (Sahoo, 2013: 42).

After his arrival from South Africa in 1915, Gandhi restructured the INC and mobilised the masses through his 'constructive work' programs, which emphasised self-support, self-governance and self-reliance. Gandhi created a network of organisations in diverse fields such as *khadi* and village industries, education, health, agriculture and dairies and animal husbandry to involve the rural poor in the process of development as well as the nationalist movement for Independence (Sheth and Sethi, 1991: 51). In sum, civil society in colonial India was a combined product of missionary activities, social reforms and anti-colonial nationalist movement.

Although civil society remained elitist for a long period of colonialism, the Gandhian movement played a major role in making civil society *inclusive*, which not only empowered ordinary people through constructive work, but also fought *against* the colonial state for India's Independence. Gandhi emphasized the reorganization of economic activity in response to the British empire's mercantilist, resource extractive policies. Independence in India was simultaneously about achieving political self-determination and economic self-reliance under his guidance. Unfair trade relations, exploitative tax regimes, and the deindustrialization of India were policies enacted by the British that cemented the impoverishment of most Indians. Their legacy continues to shape development efforts today.

Dr Ambedkar, India's most prominent Dalit leader, was a major critic of Gandhi as he saw him as representing caste Hindus alone. Ambedkar and Jinnah- the father of Pakistan- both argued that Gandhi and the INC claimed to be far more inclusive than they actually were. Dalits, Muslims, and other marginalized groups had to organize their own civil society organizations and use them to mobilize politically. At the same time, orthodox Hindus like those of the Hindu Mahasabha, saw the INC and Gandhi as being too accommodating of secularism and equality. They were quiescent in the face of British colonialism. Even in the colonial period, Indian civil society was diverse and fractious. Some groups worked quite amicably with the British state while others opposed it through civil resistance and some fought it with violent revolutionary tactics.

The state, civil society and development in postcolonial India

With the end of the colonial rule a *strong, democratic* state was established in India. Leaders like Nehru believed that 'a strong state was the only way a mass society, which was largely illiterate and poor, which held strong ethnic and caste loyalties and was hence 'incapable' of thinking for the country, could be adequately governed' (Kamat, 2002: 8). The Nehruvian state thus acted as the 'protector' as well as the 'modernizer and liberator', and was committed to the task of poverty reduction and human development (Nandy, 2002). It invited Gandhian organisations to play a leading role in national reconstruction and development of 'village-level civil societies' (Schneider, 2007). Through its Five Year Plans, the state funded many civil society organisations that worked in community and rural development through agricultural and livestock programs, health and education, and *khadi* and village industries.⁸ Thus, during Nehru's period, Gandhian NGOs played a major role in providing '*welfare and relief*' (Kudva, 2005: 240) and shared a strong and co-operative relationship with the state. The continuing emphasis was on using civil society to organize economic growth and development.

Soon after Nehru, his daughter Indira Gandhi came to power. Her terms led to the criminalization of politics, state ineffectiveness in enforcing the rule of law, rising corruption scandals and increasing deinstitutionalization (Kohli, 2000). Most importantly, Mrs Gandhi imposed Emergency rule in 1975 and

⁸ In the First Five Year Plan, the state allocated INR 70 million for 2,128 organizations, but increased the funding significantly to INR 233 million to support 6,000 organizations in the Second Plan (Kudva, 2005: 241).

suspended the rule of law and democratic process. Several grassroots social movements had emerged in response to the failures of the developmental states. Indira Gandhi saw these as threats to her rule. Gandhian activists like Jaya Prakash Narayan (known as JP) strongly opposed Mrs Indira Gandhi's rule and mobilised Gandhian workers, NGOs, students and trade union leaders to become actively involved in what he referred to as *Sampurna Kranti* or 'total revolution' to bring political change. Realizing the role that civil society organisations and peoples' movements had been playing in subverting her government, Mrs Gandhi increased control over NGOs and regulated foreign funding. She believed that foreign funding was involved in fuelling anti-state activities in India. She enacted the Foreign Contributions Regulation Act in 1976, aimed at maintaining surveillance of foreign funding of NGOs.

The international system of Cold War rivalries and regular Western interference in the domestic politics of states like Iran, Chile, Zaire etc. shaped Mrs Gandhi's fears. Decolonization had given way to new forms of neo-colonialism in which former imperial powers in the West replaced empire with unfair trade practices. Conditionalities of the international financial institutions contributed to maintaining their dominance (Easterly 2007). India's position as a non-aligned state with great sympathy with the socialist states made it reasonable to imagine that the CIA would be happy to see Mrs Gandhi fall if she could be replaced by a more capitalist friendly government. Of course, the forces that opposed her rule were actually mostly to the Left of Mrs Gandhi and unlikely to win much American support.

Following the ending of Emergency rule in 1977, the Janata government came to power. Considering the resistance role that civil society organisations had played during the Emergency rule, the government increased funding for NGOs (allocated INR 500 million) and provided bureaucratic support. This, however, did not last long because Mrs Gandhi returned to power in 1980 and increased control over civil society organisations. She amended the FCRA in 1984 making it obligatory for all NGOs receiving foreign funds to register themselves with the Home Ministry. She also appointed the Kudal Commission in 1981 in retaliation against the Gandhian NGOs that had supported JP during the Emergency rule. Thus, during Mrs Gandhi's rule, civil society was heavily regulated and shared an antagonistic relationship with the state. The Janata government included socialists, Gandhian activists, and right-wing Hindu nationalists. It was the refusal of the latter to dissociate themselves from their own civic organizations that eventually led to the fall of the Janata government. The section on Uncivil Society discusses them below.

Following Mrs Gandhi's assassination in 1984, her son Rajiv Gandhi came to power. He understood the problems associated with state-led development approaches and thus encouraged civil society organisations to partner with the state in development process. The Rajiv Gandhi government increased the funds available to NGOs in the social sector to 2.5 billion rupees, which is five times larger than the assistance provided by the Janata government. This increased funding led to the mushrooming of NGOs in India. As recent data shows, there are more than 3 million NGOs working in India (Anand, 2015), making it 'the unofficial NGO capital of the world (Parekh, 2001: 703). After Rajiv Gandhi successive governments have also encouraged civil society organisations. However, by following the neo-liberal conditionalities, these governments have taken active steps that *depoliticise* civil society (Sahoo 2013a), as will be further discussed below.

Contemporary conditions

Civil Society and the state under neoliberalism

In the early 1990s, the international financial institutions worked with the Indian state to make significant reforms to the economy. In the past three decades, following liberalization policies, Indian economic growth has vastly expanded. GDP was at Rs 5862120 million in 1991. About 25 years later, it went up to Rs 135760860 million, with a growth rate that hovered around 8% per year in that period. This contrasted with the growth rate of about 5% in the three previous decades (Rao and Kadam 2016). However, the gains from growth have been very unevenly distributed, with income inequalities in India vastly rising, while fundamental development issues like poverty and malnutrition remain endemic. The World Bank and other aid donors have frequently turned to civil society to help mitigate these inequalities. They have argued that NGOs promote transparency, efficiency, innovation, and equality (World Bank 1999). Civil society is seen not just as a means of supporting democracy, but also of creating sustainable and inclusive growth. However, relying on civil society organizations to work with national polities to achieve sustainable and inclusive growth can obscure structural economic relations that sustain inequalities internationally and domestically, such as international trade barriers, the operations of globally operating financial institutions and enterprises, and domestic politics.

Since the 1990s, various governments have actively promoted neo-liberal market-oriented policies for economic development. They believe that such policies will help promote rapid economic growth, remove poverty and bring *inclusive development*. However, it is observed that the cost of such policies has been very high; inequality (both at individual and regional level) has increased, ordinary people are displaced from their land and livelihood, and their fundamental citizenship rights are violated. Profit over people has become the state's preferred model of growth and development. Given this, any organisation that opposes neo-liberal developmental policies is considered anti-national by the state. The current BJP government considers the 'oppositional civil society' an obstacle to the process of development and nation building. In a recent report, India's Intelligence Bureau accused NGOs of 'reducing India's GDP by a staggering 2 to 3 per cent per annum, by campaigning against projects that the Indian government argued to be integral to economic growth' (Doane, 2016). Considering this, the government has increased scrutiny of foreign funding to NGOs and it cancelled licences of around 20,000 of 33,000 NGOs after they were found to be violating various provisions of the FCRA (*The Times of India*, 2016). Since then, the state has continued to use reporting requirements under the FCRA to curtail the activities of many NGOs. A recent Civicus report found that India's civic space is obstructed. The '...obstructed category indicates that power holders contest civic space, undermine CSOs and constrain the fundamental civil society rights of association, peaceful assembly and expression' (2017). All of this means that in the current moment, civil society organizations and other critics of the state are facing threats to their very existence.

Uncivil society

One of the peculiarities of civil society in India is the long existence of voluntary, cultural and welfare providing civic groups that are also closely aligned with violent, state power seeking organizations. Collectively, the group of organizations united by its adherence to *Hindutva* ideology is known as the

Sangh Parivar. The ideology is one that asserts Hindu supremacy within India, a particular version of Hindu-ness as defined by upper caste, patriarchal interests. The political wing of the Sangh is the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), which is the ruling party at the federal level. It includes dozens of groups that engage in education, health care provision, cultural programming, youth groups, women's self-help organizing etc. In addition to this welfarist orientation, there are groups that engage in the production of religious provocations, vigilante justice, ritualized riots, and the general intimidation of minorities. Together the service providers and violent mobilizers work to support the political wing (Deo 2016).

On the left, there are also armed Naxalite groups that are aligned with Communist parties that also use a combination of welfare and violence to advance their aims. The influence and power of the right-wing *Sangh Parivar* is magnitudes greater than the Naxalites who are actually struggling on behalf of some of India's most marginalised indigenous peoples (Roy, 2009).

Blurred boundaries between state and civil society

In India, many civil society organizations are closely linked to political parties, operating as their front organizations (Ray, 1999). Presently, the existence of uncivil society and its close ties to the political establishment, and therefore to the state, blurs the lines between civil society and the state. It also makes facile generalizations about civil society as a source for democratization or inclusion ring hollow. The clandestine nature of most election spending in India compromises political parties and makes them vulnerable to capture by corporate interests. But the boundaries between state and civil society are also blurred in other ways. CSOs may accommodate senior level bureaucrats in their organizational structures in order to leverage the state (Kumar, 2012). And some research also indicates that CSO relations with the state may highly depend on personal relations with political leaders. As these are often available to elite groupings and more disadvantaged ones, this may have important implications for inclusiveness (Harrison, 2017). Meanwhile, the government since 2013 requires corporations to donate part of their profits to social welfare further blurring the lines between civil society, the market, and the state.

Concrete engagements between state and civil society

Over the years, civil society in India has fulfilled various roles. For a part, the state has opened up to increased involvement and voice of groups in society⁹, to help establish a more participatory democracy. Most of the civil society's efforts in the development sector have been in the wake of the state being viewed as inefficient and corrupt (Berglund, 2009), and the failure of government and market combined (Shah, 2014). As argued above, civil society actors have taken it upon themselves the responsibility to carry out development work such as setting up and running schools and hospitals, and running livelihood and capacity building programs. Shah (2014) calls this phenomenon a *chhoti sarkar* (mini-government) since a lot of the service delivery work meant to be fulfilled by the government gets carried

⁹ Examples of this can be the 73rd and 74th Constitutional Amendment Act for decentralised rural and urban government structures established in 1992.

out by the CSO actors. Meanwhile, the Government of India has been acknowledging civil society's role, accepting that the extent of problems in development sector is too large for a single delivery system and hence has acknowledged the partnership of the civil society (Gol, 2007:9).

It is in this context that we may suggest that the state is not actually incapable but perhaps strategic, in allowing other agencies to carry out its work, without taking full responsibility of the citizens, or civil society agencies. Randeria (2003, 2007, 2009) describes this concept as 'cunning state' where 'the state capitalizes on its perceived weakness in order to render themselves unaccountable both to the citizens and to the international (or other) institutions' (Randeria, 2007). She also elaborates on this concept taking various examples of the Indian state and its interaction with international agencies such as the International Monetary Fund and the United Nations and argues that a cunning state will actually strategise its 'presumed (in)capacities' (Randeria, 2009) to get out of situations that it does not want to directly tackle. Hence, when the state is perceived to be weak by the citizens, civil society actors or the international community, the state itself may view this as an opportunity to 'let go' of some of its responsibilities.

However, there are other observations to be considered here: first, the NGOs and other civil society actors are seen as committed and efficient, which seems to be more of an ideological view rather than an accurate description of the reality since this encompasses a wide range of actors and organizations working on diverse issues (Mercer, 2002); second, that the state is perceived as incapable/or lacking the capacity to carry out its work, which again may not be a depiction of reality (Randeria, 2009); and third, increased role of CSOs may lead to an increased dependence of the citizens on the organisations who are not as accountable as an elected government is (Shah, 2014).

Between the two extremes of inefficiency of the state, which opens up space for the working of civil society, on one hand, to the overpowering state, which controls the civil society activities and funds through strict laws, there are a range of partnerships which the state and civil society enter into with each other. Examples of government-civil society partnership can be seen in areas of knowledge-sharing and knowledge-transfer, in policy implementation, and even on economic grounds which involve funding of services, partnership in building infrastructure etc.

The Planning Commission of Government of India, in 2007, brought out a *National Policy on the Voluntary Sector* which outlines the types of partnerships which the government recognizes in relation to the CSOs: i) consultation- which could be a formal process of interaction at the Centre, State and District level, ii) strategic collaboration- so that sustained social mobilisation can be carried out over a long period of time, and iii) funding- of project through standard schemes. The government ensures that these partnerships will be given space in the annual Plans prepared by ministers and different state agencies (Planning Commission, 2007). The government also showed its openness to collaborate by bringing in the expertise of the voluntary sector in advisory panels, task forces and committees, on important issues. An example of this can be the Anti-Corruption Movement led by Anna Hazare which subsequently led to the formation of a statutory committee for the *Jan Lokpal Bill* in 2012.

Another example of state collaboration with the CSOs and other Civil Society actors such as academicians in India was through the erstwhile Planning Commission, for ground-level evaluation of an existing five-year plan and setting the priorities for subsequent ones. The state would encourage research findings from case studies, and also have consultations with civil society organizations working in the area. By inviting state and department level officials to be a part of these workshops and conferences (instead of just submitting a report of the findings) the civil society and state brokered space for each other in their respective domains. Evidence of state-civil society partnership also supports that certain political regimes and certain individuals working in the state or local level institutions would look to civil society favourably (Goswami and Tandon, 2013). Moreover, at the local levels of governance, the space for civil society intervention can also be supported by political party workers, which form easy access points for civil society to make their voices heard (Harris, 2007).

However, this opening up of the state has been conditional and partial. Ganguly (2015) states that the state's 'invited spaces' have often been tokenistic in the space for civil society influence they have provided, whereas 'invented spaces' where CSOs claim space for their voice have been more influential. Kumar (2012) and Ganguly (2015) argue that state actors have been more open to CSOs able to draw on their past experience and legitimacy connected with working at the grassroots level and speaking with knowledge of ground realities, in support or opposition to a policy. For example, in the state of Karnataka in India, MYRADA's (Mysore Resettlement and Development Agency) work on Self-Help Groups led to the government's up-scaling of it to the state and national level (Kumar, 2012). Relatedly, Ganguly (2015) claims that movements, having a clear social basis, representing marginal groupings in particular, can more easily than (professional) NGOs obtain legitimacy in the eyes of the state, which in turn can contribute to influence.

Over the years, certain civil society organizations and actors have also been able to make their voices heard by the state through protests and organized movements involving worker unions, citizens etc. The Mazdoor Kisaan Shakti Sangathan (MKSS) whose protests and continuous campaigns led to the draft and acceptance of Right to Information Act 2005 and eventually the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act in the same year, is one such example. Citizen and CSOs alike protested against the rape and eventual death of Jyoti Singh in December 2012 (Nirbhaya Case) which led to stricter laws being framed by the courts and ordinances passed by the Union Cabinet against rapists. At the same time, the Indian state imposes limits on the space and role for such protest activity. Civil society may be subject to a lot of scrutiny before being accepted by the state. Though it looks like the civil society encompasses a large area of our everyday lives, in reality, there are only certain policy spaces open for intervention by civil society. As we have seen above, certain regimes may be more open than others for civil society intervention. Within that space, there may be certain issues where civil society may intervene (such as microfinance for women or watershed management) while certain others are out of bounds, such as defence, law and order and national security (Kumar, 2012). Further, there are particular departments and individuals who may be more willing to collaborate with civil society actors and this also is an area of state-civil society negotiations. We also need to stress here that the state is not a singular institution, but a collection of different (types of) organizations, working in highly diverging contexts and at different levels.

As we attempt to draw this picture of the Indian state's engagement with civil society, we need to add here that empirical studies on the Indian state's engagement with CSOs have been scattered and few, with limited empirical basis to cover massive ground. The picture we obtain from this review is fragmented, leaving questions as to how to understand the complexity we find.

Implications for our research: a complex picture

This chapter shows that the state and civil society relationship in India has undergone tremendous transformation. While at some times civil society has become partners of the state in development, at other times it is perceived by the state as a hindrance to economic development and nation-building process. Presently, the picture of the Indian state's engagement with civil society is complex. State's relationship with civil society is diverse. Partly, boundaries between state and civil society are blurred. When it comes to CSOs operating in relative autonomy from the state, the state's openness can depend on topic but also on other criteria such as expertise and the capacity to contribute to development objectives shared by state and civil society. In recent years, surveillance and curtailing of civil society activity has increased, with special attention to the role of foreign funding. At the same time, state sensitivity to public protest, widely and commonly undertaken, with regard to different policy domains, can also be identified.

In India the state shows complex engagement with, and disengagement from, a diverse civil society. Faced with a limited set of empirical works to draw on, we lack understanding of the patterning of the ways state agents conceive of the representative role of civil society and the different types of CSOs that are part of this. When we ask basic questions like: 'which CSOs matter to the state, and why?' or 'what can the role of CSOs be for the state, and how 'political can this role be?' or 'how does CSO collaboration matter?' we do not know if we will find shared understandings across state actors, or if these are so diverse that they are contingent in unforeseeable ways. With the mixed information from the literature, we also do not know what implications there are of such conceptions for the inclusiveness of the state's engagement with civil society. Comparatively considering the policy domains of women's rights and disaster risk reduction, we plan to draw on this chapter to inform our research of:

1. The patterns in the ways state actors conceive of the representative role of civil society as such.
2. To what extent and in what ways state actors distinguish between CSOs/CSO collaborations when it comes to their representative roles, and what relevant diversities come in.
3. What considerations come in for state actors when it comes to decisions to engage or not with specific CSOs/CSO collaborations that seek a representative role.
4. What informs state actors' understandings and engagement with CSOs/CSO collaborations.
5. The way considerations of the state's perceptions of civil society and CSOs come in in the way CSOs give shape to their representative roles.

6. How the above implicates the inclusiveness of the Indian state's engagement with CSOs.

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Chapter 6. Composition of civil society in India

Introduction

Civil society is considered crucial for the survival and sustenance of democracy in any society. However, it should be noted that civil society is not a monolithic category, and its contributions to inclusive and sustainable development and democratization are contingent upon its nature and composition. The Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) supports civil society “based on the principle that a diverse and pluralist civil society is both goal in itself and a means to an end as it is crucial for sustainable and inclusive development”(Kamstra, 2017: 1). Therefore, charting out the relevant diversities of civil society and their representative roles through this research in the Indian context would provide crucial information for shaping policies regarding civil society’s engagement in sustainable and inclusive development.

Kamstra (2017: 11) argues that ‘not all CSOs are forces for good, that civil society should not be equated with professional NGOs, and that a more diverse set of CSOs should be included which is better connected to local constituencies and local concerns. Taking a cue from this, this chapter takes stock of present research identifying relevant diversities of Indian civil society. The review also brings out some indications regarding forms of CSOs that contribute to inclusiveness of vulnerable and marginalized sections of society, and forms that work against it, as identified in existing research on Indian civil society.

Acknowledging the relevance of examining the essentially dynamic and pluralistic nature of civil society space, this research seeks to explore the various typologies of CSOs through which diversity and plurality of civil space is understood in the Indian context. The various typologies of CSOs and their contributions to inclusive and sustainable development is explored below. Subsequently, we present an analysis of the typologies, and discuss how we will draw on this review in our research.

Specificity of civil society diversity

In international development, the importance of differentiating between different types of CSO has been emphasized, because of their different contributions to advancing empowerment, social justice, and inclusive developmental change. For example, in Banks et al. (2015), the need for differentiating between NGOs and member-based organizations (MBOs), is suggested because they are influenced to a variable extent by the politics of development. MBOs, such as social movements, political or religious institutions, trade unions, cooperatives, small SHGs, and campaigning groups, are viewed as political (Chen et al. 2007). MBOs aim to negotiate improved terms of recognition, and advance interests of the groups they are representing. In this process of negotiation, they often challenge the state and other vested interests and therefore are viewed as ‘political’. In contrast, institutionalized NGOs face

regulatory challenges – the state tries to either coopt them or make them depoliticized so that they are unable to pose any challenge to state power. In particular, state actively monitors and scrutinizes externally financed NGOs, their political motives, and activities, for they might undermine state's development strategy (Sen, 1999; Jalali, 2013). However, going beyond such typologies, we survey the specificity of civil society diversity as it emerges in the Indian context, and examine the relevance of this context-specific diversity for inclusive development by supporting the representative role of civil society, such as Dialogue and Dissent.

Civil society is broad and diverse in India, and has expanded significantly over past decades. There were 1.2 million voluntary organizations working on development issues in 2004, increasing to 3.1 million according to recent data (Srivastava and Tandon 2005; Sahoo, 2017; Tandon, 2017). The majority of them (58.7%) are engaged in development in rural areas. Many of them (49.6%) are not registered under any act (Government of India, 2012).¹⁰ Social services (41%); environment, law, advocacy, and other issues (19%); culture and recreation (12%); education and research (9%); unions (7%); development and housing (5%); religion (5%); and health (2%) emerged as the important issues on which the registered organizations work on (Government of India, 2012; Sahoo, 2017). To gain deeper insight into its diversity, we can explore the composition of civil society in India through different typologies that scholars of Indian civil society have developed.

Typologies

Civil society scholars have developed different typologies to describe the nature and composition of civil society in India. While some have developed dichotomous typologies, others perceive a dichotomous typology as too simplistic to capture the diversity, and hence have developed more detailed classifications. To illustrate, typologies presented in VANI (2017) and Sahoo (2013) are on constraining or enabling economic development, and democratic development, respectively. Tandon's (2001) classification differentiates between different kinds of associations. Shah's (2014) classification is based on their motivations, strategies, inclinations and differential contributions to social transformation. Some have classified one kind of CSOs into further sub-types, for example, Rajasekhar's (2003) classification of NGOs, Mitra's (2017) classification of social movements, and Sahoo (2017) classification of counter- (social) movements based on intent.

VANI, an Apex body of voluntary organizations in India, broadly classifies CSOs into – (1) rights-based or mobilization organizations, and (2) development organizations (VANI: 2017). As they show, rights-based or mobilization organizations have been scrutinized by the Indian state because the state perceives them as creating obstacles to economic development. In contrast, the state considers that development organizations contribute significantly to economic development by influencing policies (idem).

¹⁰ CSOs in India are registered under the following acts:

1. Societies Registration Act (1860);
2. The Indian Trusts Act (1882);
3. The Public Trust Act (1950);
4. The Charitable and Religious Trust Act (1920);
5. The Wakf Act (1995); and
6. The Indian Companies Act (1956), revised in The Indian Companies Act (2012)

Sahoo (2013) argues that the dominant perception in the civil society literature is that there are two kinds of civil society groups - (1) traditional organizations related to religion, culture, and identity, and (2) secular ones working on issues related to development, empowerment, and rights. This distinction is made by civil society scholars primarily to argue that the former undermines democratic development and the latter deepens it. Sahoo questions this assumption and argues that this may not always be correct. Considering this, he advocates for a contingency theory of civil society and democratic development.

Tandon (2001), and Tandon and Mohanty (2002) have classified civil society into five kinds of associations, which has been adopted by Government of India (2012) in its policy documents. While we find that in some respects the categorizations can be questioned in terms of conceptual clarity and justification, we include this categorization here because of its uptake by the Indian state and other actors. The associations are of the following types:

(1) **Traditional associations** based on identity and social unit such as tribe, ethnicity, or caste. They have characteristics of voluntary associations, because their membership is not purely ascriptive. This is because birth into the caste is necessary but not a sufficient condition for membership. To be a part of the association, one has to join as a member (Rudolph and Rudolph, 1960, 1967, 2008). In the context of India, Beteille (2012, 2013) suggests that caste has played an essential part in the advancement of democracy because not only does the democracy change the social order; to some extent, it is also influenced by the social order.

(2) **Religious associations** of different sects. They carry out social welfare activities to improve public goods like education, healthcare and water supply.

(3) **Social movements**, which engage in non-institutionalized collective political action to bring about social and/or political change. Their focus is on the interests and aspirations of particular under-represented groups, such as the Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, or women in India. They aim at achieving better governance, an anti-corruption society, or overturning the anti-people policies. They are considered to act as a major political force of lasting influence (Sengupta, 2014). For example, the ongoing anti-corruption movement at the national level initiated by Anna Hazare in 2011 (Goswami and Tandon, 2013; Lakhani, 2018; Sengupta, 2014; Shiva and Bandyopadhyay, 1986).

(4) **Membership associations** are further classified into representational, professional, social-cultural, or SHGs.

- a) **Representational** associations are established to represent the perspectives and interests of a particular group, such as unions of rural laborers, farm workers, or women workers, or consumer associations.
- b) **Professional** associations are set up for a particular profession (e.g. associations of lawyers, teachers, engineers, managers, or journalists).
- c) **Social-cultural** associations are established for social or cultural activities, such as *Nehru Yuvak Kendras* (youth associations), clubs for sports, and *Natak Mandalis* (theatre groups).

d) **SHGs** are registered groups of micro-entrepreneurs and are a growing category in India as a result of the emphasis on financial inclusion of the most vulnerable and marginalized in policies of government, banks and international agencies. Women's SHGs in particular have made a significant contribution in poverty alleviation and women empowerment.

(5) **Intermediary associations** are known as advocacy associations and networks and they form a link between individuals (micro level) and state institutions (macro level). Development NGOs and advocacy networks such as the Right to Food Campaign are classified as intermediate associations. Some of them support social movements like the anti-POSCO movement in Odisha. This movement is an example of local resistance to land acquisition for a South Korean company POSCO to invest in the mining industry, and set up a steel plant, power plant and a port. The land use change would have affected self-sustaining, local economy and a way of life of around 50,000 people. Further, the government has set up intermediate associations to implement their projects, for example, the National AIDS Control Organization was established by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.

Besides these five kinds of associations, Goswami and Tandon (2013) have also added two more groups. They are:

(6) **Corporate-established foundations** are a new kind of civil society organizations that were established under the revised Indian Companies Act (2012). The Act mandates allocation of 2% of companies' net profits to corporate social responsibility (CSR). The corporations formed these foundations to implement CSR activities.

(7) **Community-Based Organizations (CBOs)** are an important part of civil society in the context of inclusive development, representing local interests. They are voluntary and self-financed organizations. Recently, CBOs have come into prominence for carrying out citizen's protests in urban centers. One of the most influential protests was Delhi gang-rape case in December 2012, which shaped the Nirbhaya¹¹ Act for women's safety in 2013.

Shah (2014), in his typology of civil society, has concentrated on the segments of civil society that claim to be acting in the larger public interest and seek to bring about social transformation. The rationale for focusing on these segments is that these have remained relatively unacknowledged in public, as they operate in spaces among the subalterns and away from the media publicity. Shah has classified these segments of civil society based on their motivations, strategies, inclinations and differential contributions to social transformation. The types he identifies in these terms are:

Type A: Compassion and charity is the oldest form of civil society. It aims to reach out to the distressed to provide immediate relief, hence is engaged in short-term and remedial measures rather than aimed at addressing the root causes of suffering.

Type B: Development NGOs have stepped in to address the gap in governance and efforts by the government to provide public goods such as drinking water, food security, health, and education, and

¹¹ *Nirbhaya* means fearless.

protect the environment. They act as substitutes or in parallel to the state. Development NGOs face the same issues and inefficiencies as the government in expansion of the scale. Further, there is a concern of creating dependencies on development NGOs similar to the government.

Type C: Rights-based activism takes a critical perspective on the mainstream practices of the government and the market. It is aimed at empowering vulnerable and marginalized groups through generating awareness about their rights. Rights-based activism is inspired by Amartya Sen's pioneering work on agency, rights, and capabilities (e.g. Dreze and Sen, 2002). Rights-based activism is considered "counter-hegemonic," following Gramsci, and has similarities with radical Marxism in India. The risk for these groups is that they might remain as marginal voices in the periphery and not have an influence on mainstream functions.

Type D: Engaging the state and leveraging the market is the most recently developed form. Shah (2014:40) considers it to be the "most creative and effective type of civil society action in India." These groups acknowledge that the state is the potential protector of and provider for vulnerable and marginalized people. They consider engaging with the state as instrumental to enhance accountability and transparency of the state by influencing its policies and functioning in favor of inclusion of the vulnerable and marginalized. They rely on the findings of rights-based activism groups to improve people's access to the government resources intended for them in a time-bound manner.¹² Further, they give relatively more attention to the issue of "representation" of the rights of the vulnerable and marginalized people than the rights-based activism (Type C). These groups have also initiated engagement with the market to enable collective action among poor, individual, small and marginal female farmers so that they can compete in the market. An example is The Federation of Women's SHGs.

Unlike development NGOs (Type B), Type D organizations consider the implementation of programs as the responsibility of local governing bodies such as the *gram panchayats*, and capacity building as the role of civil society. To illustrate, the National Consortium of Civil Society Organizations engages in building the state's capacities for effective implementation of the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA).

Interestingly, according to this typology CSOs can transition from one type to another. For instance, Mazdoor Kisan Shakti Sangathan (MKSS) has transitioned from carrying out rights-based activism (Type C) since the 1990s to engaging the state and leveraging the market (Type D) from 2004 onwards. Long-term engagement of MKSS with marginalized people in rural Rajasthan on the right to information, and of rural workers to basic entitlements built their legitimacy to engage with the state. This has involved contributions to formulation of pro-poor interventions and legislation, and inclusion in the Directorate of Social Audit by the government of Andhra Pradesh.

¹² For instance, the government of India allocated INR 700.000 crore (7.000.000.000.000) in the 11th Five Year Plan (2007–2012) and INR 200.000 crore (2.000.000.000.000) in the 12th Five Year Plan (2012–2017) for social and economic inclusion.

The next typology is of NGOs based on their function proposed by Rajasekhar (2003). There are further distinctions within the types, depending on the organization's primary activity.

- (1) **Operational or grassroots NGOs** are local organizations operating in a single or multiple locations. They specialize in directly engaging with the marginalized. The sub-types are :
 - a) **Charity and welfare NGOs** primarily carry out *charitable activities* (distribution of food, clothes, and medicines); *welfare activities* (creating education, healthcare and drinking water facilities); *relief activities* (in case of disasters like droughts, floods, and earthquakes, and displaced people); and *rehabilitation activities* (in areas where the hazard occurred). This category includes church-based NGOs functioning in North-eastern and Southern India.
 - b) **Development NGOs** are engaged in basic provisions for enhancing socio-economic development of vulnerable and marginalized people by sustaining their livelihoods.
 - c) **Social action groups** are oriented toward mobilizing marginalized and oppressed groups on issues of inequality and the concentration of power and resources in the hands of few. They adopt different strategies to raise awareness, participatory approach to identify priorities. Young India Project is a social action group in Andhra Pradesh, which has been mobilizing agricultural laborers since 1981 (through protest marches and *dharnas*¹³), demanded effective implementation of land reforms and MGNREGA.
 - d) **Empowerment NGOs** combine development activities with issue-based struggles. They carry out the role of service provider to bring about the social, economic, political, and cultural empowerment of the poor. For instance, Mysore Resettlement and Development Agency (Myrada) uses credit management groups and watershed programs for social and political empowerment. Grama uses savings and credit activity as the entry point into the community. Grama then educates people and enables them to access the government resources intended for them, participate in *gram panchayats*, and identify priority issues.

The charity and welfare NGOs and the development NGOs primarily carry out the role of service delivery. These types of NGOs are considered apolitical in contrast to the social action groups and the empowerment NGOs. This is because social action groups and empowerment NGOs aim to raise social and political consciousness among the disadvantaged groups. The key difference between social action group and empowerment NGOs lies in their objective and whether they engage in development activities. While social action groups target the root cause of poverty rather than carrying out development activities, empowerment NGOs integrate empowerment as a key aspect in their developmental activities.

- (2) **Support NGOs** primarily strengthen the capacities of grassroots NGOs, *panchayat raj* institutions, and cooperatives to enhance effectiveness of their functions through training programs. SOSVA and SEARCH are examples of support NGOs.

¹³ *Dharnas* are a way of showing disagreement with something by refusing to leave a place.

- (3) **Umbrella or network NGOs** are either formal associations or informal groups of grassroots and/or support NGOs that meet regularly on addressing common concerns. They act as a forum for sharing experiences and carrying out joint development activities, and engage in lobbying and advocacy as a network.
- (4) **Funding NGOs** are supported by foreign sources and self-generated funds raised within India to finance grassroots, and support NGOs. Dorabji Tata Trust, the Aga Khan Foundation, and CRY generate funds within India, while the Netherlands International Development Cooperation, ActionAid, and Oxfam are foreign funding agencies which carry out pro-poor rural development activities in India.

Mitra (2017) has developed a typology of civil society activism. The typology is presented as a matrix of core values and the spatial scale (Table 1).

Table 1: Typology of civil society activism

Level	Core Values	
	Material/Secular	Identity/Religion
Local/Regional	Type 1	Type 3
	Telangana Statehood Movement	Khalistan Movement
National	Type 2	Type 4
	Anna Hazare Movement	Hindu Nationalists

For Mitra (2017), the consequences of civil society activism for democratization hinges on - 1) intensity, referring to the importance that core activists attach to their shared goal; 2) scale, or the geographical spread of the supporting community to the activists; and 3) the response of the state. Mitra argues that civil society has opened up alternative routes to channelize criticism of development pathways, informing policies in a constructive way. If these alternative routes had not opened up, then the criticism might have resulted in extreme steps and violence. Mitra (2017) argues that this is why the Indian state has supported this form of civil society activism through laws like the Right to Information Act (2005).

Sahoo (2017) has classified the counter-(social) movements that emerged in different parts of India. Following Polanyi, Sahoo argues that these movements are a response to the adverse effects of neo-liberal capitalism, such as social dislocations created by economic changes. The movements cannot always be considered as anti-state or anti-market, and they are mainly important reflections of the heterogeneous interests of the vulnerable and marginalized (Kothari, 1984; Levien, 2007; Sahoo, 2017). Different methods have been adopted for different types of counter-movements, ranging from non-

violent Gandhian *Satyagraha*¹⁴ to violent armed Naxalite struggles to protect and advance the interests of the poor.

- (1) **Reactionary** counter-movements emerged to resist exploitative and exclusivist neo-liberal policies and the eventual dispossession of the indigenous people. With the enactment of the Special Economic Zone Act in 2005, several state governments have been pursuing neo-liberal policies and facilitating land acquisition for private capital. In response, farmers have stirred up reactionary counter-movements in the form of anti-dispossession protests in Odisha (Kalinga Nagar, Tata; Niyamgiri, Vedanta; and Jagatsinghpur, POSCO), West Bengal (Singur and Nandigram), Uttar Pradesh (Bhatta Parsaul), Gujarat (Save Narmada), and Rajasthan (Mahindra World City). These counter-movements have transcended class boundaries and have created a “pluralistic coalition.”
- (2) **Reformist** counter-movements are influenced by the rights-based approach and work on issues of equitable and distributive justice for the poor, who are adversely affected by the globalizing economy. These movements are non-violent political mobilization of “counter-hegemonic” forces and are not only intended to engage with the state regarding unequal power relations, but also to enhance the accountability of the state in terms of the interests of the vulnerable and marginalized. These movements are advanced by various advocacy groups (e.g. NGOs, and social movements) to contribute to inclusive development. The right to food, the right to information, the right to education, and the right to employment for marginalized groups are reformist counter-movements. They were initiated by poor peasants, tribes, and labourers, and supported by middle-class activists and progressive officials from within the government and bureaucracy.
- (3) **Welfarist/developmental** counter-movements are based on the perception that the state is “minimalist” in nature and must be complemented. Therefore, the welfarists collaborate with the state and act as “public service contractors”. NGOs and development organizations are involved in these movements. In contrast to the reformists, welfarists adopt a depoliticized and technocratic approach.
- (4) **Political** counter-movements are intended to enhance participation of the vulnerable and marginalized groups in formal politics. Civil society scholars argue that the incentives provided by the political parties to mobilize the poor for higher political participation do little to solve the problems of poor people. Therefore, the poor actively use civil society space to solve their problems instead of political parties. Harriss’ (2005) findings suggest that poor people participate relatively actively in the political process.

The above discussion shows that the nature and composition of civil society in India is very diverse; it is not a monolithic category. It includes organizations ranging from relief and welfare, and traditional

¹⁴ *Satyagraha* means “insistence on truth” and refers to a particular form of non-violent resistance or civil resistance initiated by Mahatma Gandhi.

ethno-religious kinds to secular, developmental and rights-based ones. While some of them are highly politicized and engage with the state actively, others prefer to remain apolitical or/and are coopted by the state. Given this inherent diversity and pluralism of civil society in India, it difficult to make any generalizations regarding civil society's contribution towards inclusive and sustainable development. Considering this, we argue that while some CSOs may positively influence developmental policy, others may not. In order thus to provide a better explanation, we argue, it is important to understand the local "contextual diversity" of civil society organizations and examine their implications differently.

Implications for our research: relevant diversities

We undertook this review based on the starting point that deepening our understanding of the representative role of civil society and the ways collaboration can support this, requires an understanding of locally relevant diversities of civil society. The pluralistic nature of civil society is evident from the spectrum of civil society ranging from caste and professional membership associations to self-help groups and from social action groups seeking to empower marginalized communities to reactionary counter-movements. Contemporary civil society in India clearly complex and heterogeneous, with its potentially relevant diversities going much beyond the distinctions discussed in the Dialogue and Dissent Theory of Change (2017:38). Our review of the existing typologies of Indian civil society insights leads us to conclude that the importance of this diversity presents itself in multiple ways.

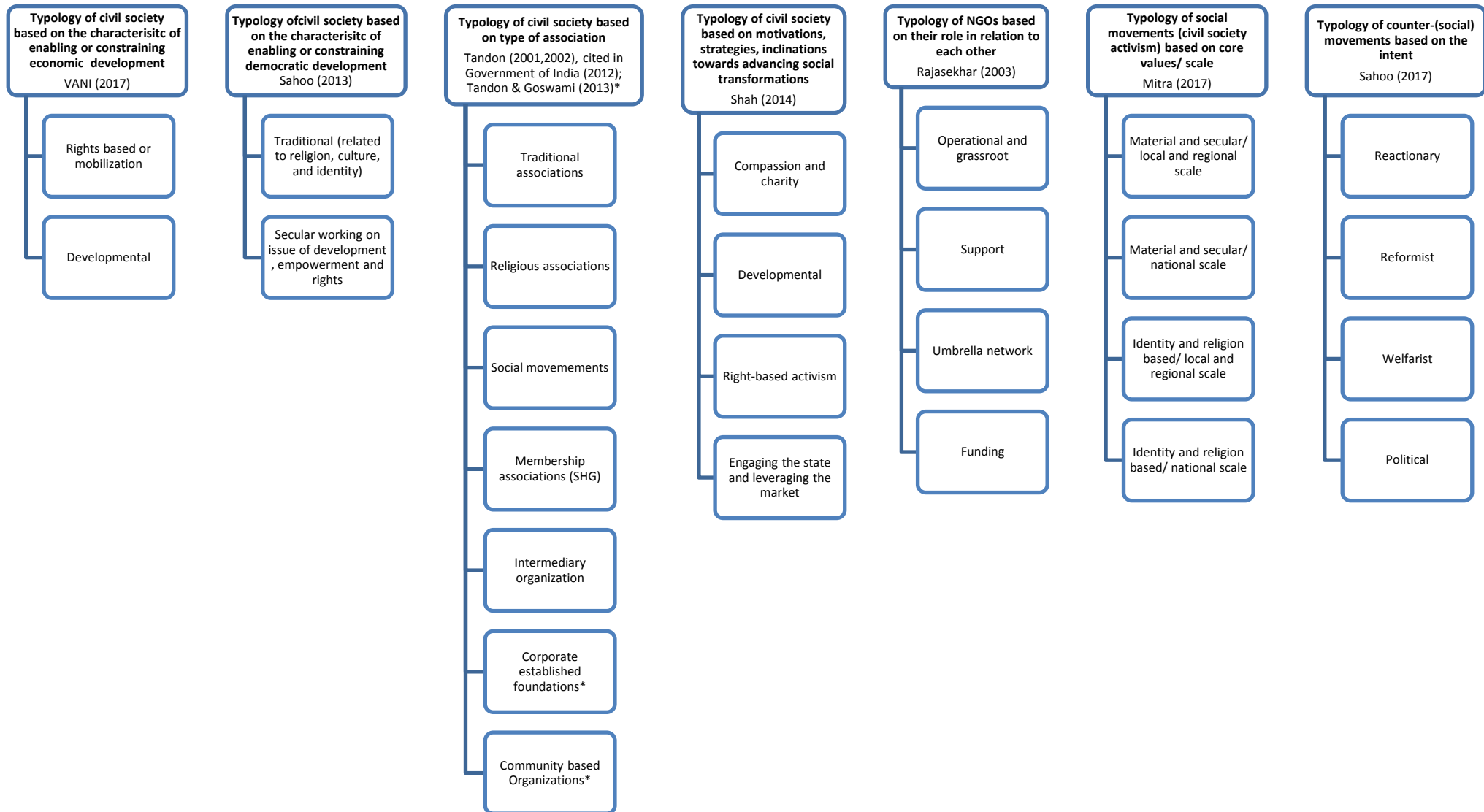
First of all, we see that in the Indian context, many different typologies of civil society can be seen as relevant to understanding and researching inclusive development, depending on the theoretical perspective taken, or the dimensions that are emphasized – see also the chart at the end of this chapter. Different typologies overlap, while some present mutually exclusive understandings. There is no single 'best' typology by which our study of the way relevant diversities of civil society shape representative roles, can be approached.

Secondly, it is clear that a wide range of types can have significant implications for inclusive development. In different ways, diversities as presented in different typologies implicate inclusiveness in important ways – by the standing and role accorded to different types, by the motivations, cultural and ideological basis of different types, and by the political processes in which they are involved. Also relevant here is that types show differentiated relating to local constituencies and concerns, as well as marginalized and vulnerable sections of Indian society. Particularly relevant in this regard seem to be membership associations (Tandon 2001, 2002; Government of India, 2012); rights-based organizations, and organizations that engage the state and leverage the market (Shah, 2014); grassroots CSOs, developmental NGOs, social action groups (Rajasekhar, 2003); and reformist and political counter-(social) movements (Sahoo, 2017). This implies that in the Indian context, different types of civil society organization can have highly diverging representative roles, with important implications for development efforts.

Thirdly, we see that typologies, while often based in broad and abstract distinctions, are often also at least partly rooted in context-specific cultural, social and political conditions and histories. This implies that knowledge and analysis of such contextual dimensions, rather than (only) abstract notions of CSOs and their roles should inform collaborations and support policies such as Dialogue and Dissent. Our project will be informed by this realization, and will consider how insights on this matter can realistically inform future policy.

In our project, we take the starting point that we need to explore the ways in which CSOs situated in the South shape their representative role in relation to their environment, embedded in relations and collaborations. This review sheds light on the potential roles of relevant diversities in the Indian context that likely matter in the shaping of representative roles. We plan to draw on this review of typologies to help inform our research of:

1. The way different types of CSOs in India construct their representative roles, and whether and how this diversity implicates this role in ways that are important for advancing inclusive development.
2. The way different types of CSOs in India make distinctions between different types of CSO in the domain in which they work, and how this informs collaboration with other CSOs. What differences matter, and why? For what collaborative purposes?
3. The way Indian state actors that are targeted by CSOs in the context of development make distinctions between different types of CSO in the domain in which they work, and how this informs collaboration with CSOs. What differences matter, and why? How does this shape state engagement with civil society?
4. The way these diversities implicate inclusiveness – how do distinctions that civil society and state actors work with shape the inclusiveness of civil society's roles in development ?



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Chapter 7. Conclusion: innovation and policy relevance

Innovation

Collaboration between CSOs has been widely studied. Our review brought out many ways in which collaboration between CSOs can enable and constrain them. However, our review also taught us that the study of enabling and constraining factors has rarely been done from the perspectives of Southern CSOs, and does not identify the ways in which these CSOs see, understand and navigate the possibilities of collaboration that they see. In particular, the relative role and potential contribution of different collaborations (international and domestic) to their role, as Southern CSOs understand these, has not been researched.

Autonomy and ownership are commonly taken as fundamental to CSOs' roles. In our review, we unpacked these concepts. We learnt that autonomy and ownership are likely best understood as relative in nature, as CSOs are commonly embedded in multiple relations and collaborations. We also learnt that we know little of the ways in which questions of autonomy and ownership actually emerge for Southern CSOs, and how they navigate issues that may emerge for them.

In recent years, representation is being rethought, and this rethinking has shed light on the important role of non-electoral representation in many political and governance contexts, doing justice to the role of non-state actors representing interests, perspectives and causes. This literature offers important guidelines for understanding representation by CSOs. Notably, our team is among the first to take the study of non-electoral representation into the field of international development.

We do this situating our study in the Indian context, and our literature of this context brought out the complexity of this context, as well as the wide diversity of Indian civil society, and the importance of both for the study of civil society's representative roles.

Considering the three theoretical debates we looked into, we see a remarkable research opportunity. There is a wide literature on the enabling and constraining role of collaborations between CSOs. There is also a wide recognition of CSO autonomy and ownership and the way collaborations can affect these. In development studies both themes have been addressed widely, and partly also connected. In political science and governance studies there is a wide acceptance of CSOs as non-electoral representatives. However, these three debates and lines of research have never been connected. None of the representation literature addresses the way representation takes shape for CSOs embedded in multiple relations and collaborations that affect their autonomy and ownership. Little of the collaboration literature engages with representation, and certainly not the state of the art knowledge on non-electoral representation and how it is constructed. This is important considering the way we may expect collaboration, and autonomy and ownership issues may implicate the representation that is fundamental to CSOs' roles.

Our ambition is to bring out the dynamics between collaboration and representation, with a keen eye for implications for autonomy and ownership, as they unfold for CSOs that navigate their possibilities for shaping their representative roles in Indian settings. Importantly, we do so seeking to do justice to the diversity of CSOs. We also explore both CSOs and the state actors that these CSOs

target with their advocacy - CSOs' shaping of their representative roles from their understandings, agendas and organizational backgrounds, and state actors' understandings and engagement with these representations. We do this for the following reason: while the nature and diversity of CSO representation may greatly matter for the expression of people's voices, it is in interaction with key targets like the state that we get to see how particular forms of representation may make a relevant difference for those who are addressed, find a hearing, and matter for development.

Our ambition is to make the shaping of CSOs' representative roles understandable; not just for the Indian context, but also beyond - to provide a realistic sense for how these roles develop for Southern CSOs, as agents.

Policy relevance

Through our research, we will contribute to policy relevant knowledge on the following fronts:

1. Understanding the role of collaborations in CSOs' representative roles from the perspective of CSOs in the Global South. This can help shape policy that takes Southern CSOs perspectives (on needs; on how collaboration can enable and strengthen) as a starting point.
2. Understanding different representative roles, of diverse types of CSOs. This can help shape policy that takes into account the diversity of civil society organisations and the different forms of representation they engage in.
3. Doing justice to the embeddedness of CSOs in collaborations and relations help develop more understanding of the ways questions of autonomy and ownership can emerge and shape representative roles.
4. Understanding the way representative roles take shape in a context (complex civil society contexts; enabling and constricting political and administrative contexts) can help make policy do justice to this context, relating to what is 'already going on', and to what is possible.

Furthermore, through our research, we plan to develop an analytical framework for donors and CSOs seeking to support the representative role of CSOs in the Global South from the ambition to strengthen the leading role of these Southern CSOs. Primarily, this framework will consist of a set of guiding questions that actors are to address, while shaping their collaborations with Southern CSOs, engaging with two key issues:

1. What organisations to work with, from a recognition of locally relevant civil society diversities and their implications for organisations' roles in advancing inclusive and sustainable development. This involves focused analysis of civil society in selected countries or regions, regarding civil society composition, forms of representation and organisations' embeddedness in relations and context. Guiding ambition here is: selection of partners from

a properly informed analysis of how certain partners can contribute to inclusive and sustainable development in a certain setting.

2. The form and relative role of different collaborations, considering locally relevant civil society diversities and complementarities, and the need to have Southern CSOs take a leading role in navigating their possibilities for collaboration. This involves participatory engagement with Southern CSOs and their perspectives on their roles and how diverse collaborations may contribute to their role in advancing inclusive and sustainable development. Guiding ambition here is: identification of forms of collaboration that give more space to the understandings and agendas of Southern partners.

With this, we hope to provide helpful input for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs regarding the following policy questions: What type(s) of CSOs should be supported to change power relations for achieving inclusive sustainable development and (gender) equality? How, and with whom, should CSOs collaborate? What kind of support do these organisations need from whom to fulfil their specific representative roles?

While this framework can guide Northern CSOs in the rethinking and reshaping of their roles and collaborations to facilitate more Southern leadership, for donors like the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs, this framework can guide the shaping of policy frameworks that can facilitate more Southern Leadership. For example, this framework can help shape:

1. Guidelines for context analysis that does justice to the complexity of actually existing civil societies and their domestic settings.
2. Space for the agendas of Southern CSOs.

And drawing on 1 and 2:

3. Theories of Change that make clear how certain forms of support of, and collaboration with certain types of Southern CSOs (by Northern CSOs and the donor itself), can contribute to inclusive and sustainable development.