



OPHI Working Paper Series

Agency & Empowerment:
**A proposal for internationally comparable
indicators**

Solava Ibrahim
University of Cambridge

Sabina Alkire
University of Oxford

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Please send comments or suggestions to sssmi2@cam.ac.uk and sabina.alkire@qeh.ox.ac.uk

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Abstract

This article proposes a short list of internationally-comparable indicators of individual agency and empowerment (and the corresponding survey questions). Data from these indicators would enable researchers to explore research and policy issues such as the interconnections between empowerment and economic or human development. The paper surveys definitions of agency and empowerment and adopts the definition from Amartya Sen, supplemented by Rowlands' typology. The proposed 'short list' of indicators includes: control over personal decisions; domain-specific autonomy; household decision-making; and the ability to change aspects in one's life at the individual and communal levels. The strengths and weaknesses of each indicator are discussed, as is the need to supplement this shortlist with other variables. To ensure the feasibility of the proposal, we rely on previously-fielded questions wherever possible.

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1. Introduction

In a village in Venganoor, Kerala, impoverished women earn a livelihood by breaking rocks into smaller rocks which can then be used for construction purposes. Their village lies near the tourist beach of Kovalam, but the lives they lead are very distant from those of reclining tourists. When women's savings and loan organisations began to work in the area, these village women deeply valued a new-found set of skills and confidence that might be called a kind of empowerment. Describing their situation in 2006 they said, *'we have greater real 'swathanthreyam' (freedom). When we used to go to any bank or office, we were afraid. We did not know what to say or how to behave...but now we do. We can talk to anyone in malayalam and can say yes or no in English.'*²

One might suspect that these women are not alone in valuing their enhanced freedom to take action in one or more spheres of life. Amartya Sen observes that poor people regularly value 'unrestrained participation in political and social activities'³ and lament its absence. Concern for people's agency plays a central role in Sen's human development and capability approach: 'Greater freedom enhances the ability of people to help themselves, and also to influence the world, and these matters are central to the process of development'.⁴

Sources that draw on poor people's own perceptions of their situation often report that a lack of agency is central to their description of ill-being. For example, a participant in the *Voices of the Poor* from El Mataria, Egypt explained the importance of helping one another – as so many people do across the globe: *'Whenever there is a crisis, the fishermen help each other by*

² Notes, 12/05.

³ Sen (1999b): 152

⁴ Ibid.: 18-19

collecting money for the person needing help.’⁵ In Ghana, a poor person said: ‘you know good but you cannot do good’.⁶ A woman from the community of Borborema Brazil argued ‘the rich one is someone who says, I am going to do it’ and does it’.⁷ Leticia from Ecuador explained how her ability to participate in household decision-making rendered her empowered: ‘my opportunity is that I have free space, to decide for myself, no longer dependent on others. For me, this is a source of pride, my husband asking me [my advice]... now there isn’t this machismo...there is mutual respect...together we decide’.⁸

What is also evident from the examples above is that agency or empowerment can be experienced with respect to different tasks – the ability to have a conversation in the bank; the ability to help others, the ability to make decisions in one’s family, or a general ability to plan effectively. In the terms that we will be using, agency and empowerment can be described and measured with respect to different *domains* of life. For this reason we will argue that measures of agency and empowerment should likewise be *domain-specific*.⁹ Different kinds of empowerment may be, however, interconnected with, and instrumental to, a number of other positive changes, and a research agenda that explores these might be of considerable value.

This article proposes a small set of indicators of agency, and the corresponding questions that could be added to individual or household surveys to generate internationally-comparable data. In order to select conceptually and technically valid indicators, Section 2 considers, briefly, the different *definitions of agency and empowerment* in the literature and the

⁵ Narayan et al (2000b)

⁶ Ibid.: 32

⁷ Narayan et al Ibid.: 28

⁸ Ibid.: 132

⁹ Alkire (2005), Alkire (2007 (forthcoming))

different kinds of measures that the definitions would generate. Section 3 proposes a very small number of *survey questions* for regular inclusion in household surveys. Most of the questions are not new; they have been fielded previously, strengthening the case that the proposal is feasible and realistic, given the time and training constraints under which such data are collected. Section 4 investigates various possible research hypotheses regarding the instrumental value of empowerment, namely how ‘empowering people’ might be an effective investment in health, education, governance, pro-poor growth and psychological/subjective wellbeing. Section 5 concludes.

2. Empowerment: Concept and Definitions

The concept of empowerment is related to terms such as agency, autonomy, self-direction, self-determination, liberation, participation, mobilization, and self-confidence.¹⁰ It is also a debated term, which has been ascribed a wide variety of definitions and meanings in various socio-economic contexts.¹¹ This section will review some of the common definitions of empowerment and identify their commonalities as well as areas of divergence. Box I provides a list of 33 of the many definitions of empowerment in current use.

¹⁰ Narayan (2005): 3

¹¹ Malhotra et al (2002): 17

Box I: Concepts of Empowerment

Study	Definition or Concept of Empowerment
Albertyn (2001)	Effective empowerment must occur at each of 3 levels: micro (attitude, feelings and skills), interface (participation and action immediately around the individual) and macro (beliefs, action and effects)
Alkire 2005	Empowerment is an increase in certain kinds of agency that are deemed particularly instrumental to the situation at hand. Thus I am choosing to assume that empowerment is a subset of agency, and that increases in empowerment would be reflected in increased agency (but not necessarily vice versa) ¹²
Alsop 2006	Empowerment is defined as a group's or individual's capacity to make effective choices, that is, to make choices and then to transform those choices into desired actions and outcomes ¹³ .
Appleyard 2002	Empowering people to make their own decisions, rather than be passive objects of choices made on their behalf. It focuses on empowering all people to claim their right to opportunities and services made available through pro-poor development (Bartlett, 2004, 54)
Bartle, Phil (2003).	Having the capacity to do things that community members want to do and going beyond political or legal permission to participate in the national political system
Bennet 2002	<i>Empowerment</i> is used to characterize approaches based on <i>social mobilization</i> . A key element in most social mobilization approaches is helping poor and socially excluded individuals realize the power they gain from collective action. Often social mobilization approaches work "from below" to create voice and demand for change among diverse groups of poor and socially excluded citizens (Bartlett, 2004, 54)
Brown (2003)	Providing empowerment opportunities as Necessary prerequisites to altering a person's potential reality and giving people the means to better themselves
Chambers (1993)	Empowerment means that people, especially poorer people, are enabled to take more control over their lives, and secure a better livelihood with ownership and control of productive assets as one key element. Decentralization and empowerment enable local people to exploit the diverse complexities of their own conditions, and to adapt to rapid change. (Bartlett, 2004, 55)
Craig and Mayo 1995	Empowerment is about collective community, and ultimately class conscientization, to critically understand reality in order to use the power which even the powerless do possess, so as to challenge the powerful and ultimately to transform the reality through conscious political struggles (cited Oakley 2001, 4)
Friedmann 1992	An alternative development involves a process of social and political empowerment whose long term objective is to rebalance the structure of power within society by make state action more accountable, strengthening the powers of civil society in the management of their own affairs and making corporate business more socially responsible (cited in Oakley 2001, 3)
Gootaert 2005	Empowerment falls in three categories: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - making state institutions more responsive to poor people - removing social barriers - building social institutions and social capital¹⁴
Grootaert (2003)	Expanding assets and capabilities of poor people to participate in, negotiate with, influence, control, and hold accountable institutions that affect their lives
Jackson 1994	The process by which people, organizations or groups who are powerless (a) becomes aware of the power dynamics at work in their life context, (b) develop the skills and capacity for gaining some reasonable control over their lives, (c) exercise their control without infringing upon the right of others and (d) support the empowerment of others in the community (cited in Rowlands, 1997, 15)
Kabeer (2001)	Empowerment ... refers to the expansion in people's ability to make strategic life choices in a context where this ability was previously denied to them. (Bartlett, 2004, 57)
Lokshin and Ravallion (2003)	Taking actions that selectively empower those with little power to redress power inequality
Malena (2003)	Enabling or giving power to (whom) to do (what)
Malhotra (2002)	Enhancing assets and capabilities of diverse individuals and groups to engage, influence, and hold accountable the institutions that affect them
Mayoux 2000; DFID	Women's empowerment is defined as 'individuals acquiring the power to think and act freely, exercise choice, and to fulfill their potential has fallen equally to members of society' ¹⁵
McMillan, et al. (1995)	Gaining influence over events and outcomes of importance
Moser (2003)	Expanding assets and capabilities of poor people to participate in, negotiate with, influence, control, and hold accountable institutions that affect their lives

¹² Alkire (2005): 4¹³ Alsop et al (2006): 10¹⁴ Grootaert (2005): 310¹⁵ Mayoux (2000a): 4

Moser 1991	While the empowerment approach acknowledges the importance for women of increasing their power, it seeks to identify power less in terms of domination over others and more in terms of the capacity of women to increase their self-reliance and internal strength. This is identified as the right to determine choices in life and to influence the direction of change, though ability to gain control over crucial material and non-material sources. It places less emphasis than the equity approach on increasing women's status relative to men, but seeks to empower women through the redistribution of power within, as well as between, societies (cited in Oakley, 2001, 4)
Narayan 2005	The expansion of assets and capabilities of poor people to participate in, negotiate with, influence, control, and hold accountable institutions that affect their lives ¹⁶ .
Oppenheim Mason and Smith (2003)	Extent to which some categories of people are able to control their own destinies even when their interests are opposed by others with whom they interact
Oxaal and Baden 1997	Empowerment cannot be defined in terms of specific activities or end results because it involves a process whereby women can freely analyse, develop and voice their needs and interests, without them being pre-defined, or imposed from above, by planners or other social actors ¹⁷
Oxfam 1995	Empowerment involves challenging the forms of oppression which compel millions of people to play a part in their society on terms which are inequitable, or in ways which deny their human rights (Oxfam, 1995) in (Oxaal and Baden 1997, 2).
Rowlands 1997	'Empowerment is more than participation in decision-making; it must also include the processes that lead people to perceive themselves as able and entitled to make decisions.' ¹⁸
Spreitzer (1995)	Intrapersonal empowerment as the component of psychological empowerment that deals with cognitive elements. Other components are interactional (thinking about and relating to the environment) and behavioral (taking action and engaging issues)
Strandburg	Empowerment can overall be defined as all those processes where women take control and ownership of their lives. Control and ownership requires an array of opportunities to choose among and this understanding of empowerment overlaps with the concept of human development when defined as "a process of enlarging people's choices". Both concepts describe processes, but where human development entails enlarging choices, empowerment is the process of acquiring the ability to choose among these enlarged choices... (Bartlett, 2004, 59)
Van Eyken 1991	Empowerment is an intentional and ongoing dynamic process centered on the local community, involving mutual dignity, critical reflection, caring and group participation, through which people lacking a valid share of resources gain greater access to and control over those resources, though the exercise of an increased leverage of power (cited in Oakley 2001, 16)
WDR 2000/2001	Empowerment as the process of 'enhancing the capacity of poor people to influence the state institutions that affect their lives, by strengthening their participation in political processes and local decision-making. And it means removing the barriers- political, legal and social- that work against particular groups and building the assets of poor people to enable them to engage effectively in markets' ¹⁹ .

Alsop and others classify definitions of empowerment into two types.²⁰ First, empowerment might be thought of as an expansion of *agency* – the ability to act on behalf of what you value and have reason to value.²¹ Second, empowerment is often defined, more widely, so as to include the institutional environment which offers people the opportunity to exert agency fruitfully. The focus is on the *opportunity structure* that provides what might be considered preconditions for agency. Of course these are not mutually exclusive; the shift is one of

¹⁶ Narayan (2002): vi ; Narayan (2005): 5

¹⁷ Oxaal and Baden (1997): 6

¹⁸ Rowlands (1997): 14

¹⁹ World Bank (2001): 39

²⁰ Alsop et al (2006), Narayan (2005)

²¹ Malhotra (2003): 3

emphasis. Clearly a process of empowerment is incomplete unless it attends to people's abilities to act, the institutional structure, and the various non-institutional changes that are instrumental to increased agency. While acknowledging the distinct importance of institutional structures, this paper seeks measures related to the first definition, i.e. empowerment as expansion of 'agency'. The next sections present each kind of empowerment more fully.

Empowerment: An expansion of agency.

Sen defines agency as 'what a person is free to do and achieve in pursuit of whatever goals or values he or she regards as important'.²² In his account, which we adopt, agency is intrinsically valued: "Acting freely and being able to choose are, in this view, directly conducive to well-being..."²³ Agency, a kind of process freedom, is concerned with *processes*: "For example, it may be thought, reasonably enough, that the procedure of free decision by the person himself (no matter how successful the person is in getting what he would like to achieve) is an important requirement of freedom."²⁴ Put simply, an agent is 'someone who acts and brings about change.'²⁵ A further, and occasionally explicit assumption in Sen's account is that agency will be socially beneficial, that agents advance goals people value and have reason to value. For example Drèze and Sen's *Hunger and Public Action* concludes as follows: "It is, as we have tried to argue and illustrate, essential to see the public not merely

²² Sen (1985b) p. 206. For other descriptions of agency see: Drèze and Sen (1989), Drèze and Sen (2002), Sen (1982), Sen (1985a), Sen (1987), Sen (1988a), Sen (1988b), Sen (1989), Sen (1992), Sen (1993a), Sen (1994), Sen (1999a), Sen (1999c), Sen (2002), Sen (2005)

²³ Sen (1992) p 51.

²⁴ Sen (2002) p 585

²⁵ Sen (1999b): 19

as ‘the patient’ whose well-being commands attention, but also as ‘the agent’ whose actions can transform society.”²⁶

A number of other authors articulate similar concepts, although terms vary. Maholtra explains that ‘among the various concepts and terms we encountered in the literature on empowerment, ‘agency’ probably comes closest to capturing what the majority of writers are referring to’.²⁷ Kabeer describes agency as related to the ability of an individual to set his own goals and act upon them. The process involves bargaining and negotiation as well as resistance and manipulation.²⁸ Increasing agency in one domain may have positive ‘spillover’ effects on agency in other domains, and perhaps also on other aspects of well-being²⁹ – but it also may not.

A number of authors frame empowerment as an increase in power, understood as control or a real ability to effect change.³⁰ Empowerment is about ‘the extent to which some categories of people are able to control their own destinies, even when their interests are opposed by those of the other people with whom they interact’.³¹ Uphoff (2005) distinguishes ‘power resources’, i.e. the accumulated, invested and exchanged assets from the ‘power results’, i.e. the activities that are achieved by using these resources.³² An empowerment process, he argues, needs to provide access to these ‘resources’, and also to allow people to effectively use them to gain more ‘power’. Oakley differentiates two ‘types’ of power: power to cause

²⁶ Drèze and Sen (1989)

²⁷ Malhotra (2003)

²⁸ Kabeer (1999): 438 cited in Mosedale (2003): 16

²⁹ Alkire (2005): 226

³⁰ Oakley (2001): 13; Bartlett (2004): 8; see Uphoff (2005) for a detailed discussion of the concept of power and its relation to empowerment. See also Oakley (2001): 59ff for an extensive review of previous attempts to define

³¹ Mason and Smith (2003): 1

³² Uphoff (2003): 6; Uphoff (2005): 224-225

radical change, and power – in a Freirian sense – as the ability to do and to gain control. He argues that power can be either ‘variable-sum’ or ‘zero-sum’. The former refers to a process through which the ‘powerless can be empowered without altering the nature and the levels of power already held by existing powerful groups’; the latter argues that ‘any gain in power by one group inevitably results in a reduction of the power exercised by others’.³³ Rowlands introduces four categorizations of power: power *over* (ability to resist manipulation), power *to* (creating new possibilities), power *with* (acting in a group) and power *from within* (enhancing self-respect and self-acceptance).³⁴ We draw on Rowlands’ categorizations below. A conceptual concern with the pure ‘power’ definitions is that these tend not to make explicit assumptions such as that the power will be used in socially beneficial rather than socially harmful ways, or that empowered individuals will need to cooperate to achieve joint aims, and that even empowered people may be unable to attain certain goals.³⁵

Preconditions to exert agency.

Other definitions of empowerment focus not only upon the person’s freedom to act, but also upon the concrete material, social, and institutional preconditions required to exert agency. In Adam Smith’s time, the ability to go about without shame was precluded if one lacked a linen shirt and leather shoes – these formed the material preconditions for self-respect. Whereas the definitions above would undergird efforts to try to measure agency directly; these second definitions would catalyse a search for indicators that measure particular material or social attributes, akin to linen and leather, that differentiate agency-rich from agency-poor persons. As is evident, these will vary greatly across contexts.

³³ Oakley (2001): 15

³⁴ Rowlands (1997): 13

³⁵ Of course having the assumption is only conceptually sufficient, in that it signals an issue to be addressed; further discussion is required in order to consider operational implications of this. For a criticism of Sen’s treatment see Stewart (2005).

A widely cited definition of empowerment of this kind is that of the *World Development Report* 2000/2001, which views empowerment as the process of ‘enhancing the capacity of poor people to influence the state institutions that affect their lives, by strengthening their participation in political processes and local decision-making. And it means removing the barriers – political, legal and social – that work against particular groups and building the assets of poor people to enable them to engage effectively in markets’.³⁶ Narayan (2002) defines empowerment as ‘the expansion of assets and capabilities of poor people to participate in, negotiate with, influence, control, and hold accountable institutions that affect their lives’.³⁷ Narayan stresses four main elements of empowerment: access to information, inclusion and participation, accountability and local organizational capacity.³⁸ Agency is influenced by people’s individual (material, human, social and psychological) and collective (voice, organization, representation and identity) assets and capabilities.³⁹ Alsop focuses on the importance of choice and defines empowerment as a ‘group’s or individual’s capacity to make effective choices, that is, to make choices and then to transform those choices into desired actions and outcomes’.⁴⁰ She explains that people’s agency can be constrained by the ‘opportunity structure’, i.e. the institutional climate (information, inclusion/participation, accountability, local organizational capacity) and the social and political structures (openness, competition and conflict) in which people live.⁴¹ The opportunity structure is affected by three main influences: the permeability of the state; the extent of elite fragmentation and the state’s implementation capacity.⁴² An effective exercise of agency entails the overcoming of significant institutional and informal obstacles, including those mentioned above, as well as

³⁶ World Bank (2001): 39

³⁷ Narayan (2002): vi; Narayan (2005): 5

³⁸ Narayan (2002): vi-vii

³⁹ Narayan (2005): 5-6

⁴⁰ Alsop et al (2006): 10

⁴¹ Narayan (2005): 5-6.

⁴² Petesch et al (2005): 45-49

the domination of existing elite groups or of unresponsive public programmes.⁴³ The exercise of human agency therefore requires a ‘change in the rules of the game’, i.e. the formal and informal institutions that condition the effectiveness of human agency.⁴⁴

Other authors draw attention to additional intervening variables, such as information, mobilization, ownership, or moral collective action. Khwaja (2005) argues that any ‘workable’ definition of empowerment needs to include two main aspects: influence and information, which allow people to express their preferences and have an effective impact on particular decisions.⁴⁵ Empowerment is also based on social mobilization that gives people voice and allows them to demand change.⁴⁶ Viewing empowerment from the bottom up, Chambers (1993) describes it as a process that gives the poor control over their lives as well as ownership of productive assets to secure a better livelihood.⁴⁷ Friedmann (1992) defines empowerment as a bottom-up process that originates from moral relations, territory-based social formations, and the involvement of individuals in socially and politically relevant actions.⁴⁸ Other definitions focus on moral aspects of empowerment, such as fulfillment, human rights, the removal of oppression and injustice.⁴⁹ Many argue that empowerment requires essential economic resources that improve people’s opportunities to gain a better income. Accordingly, a number of studies focus on the role of micro-credit in empowering marginalized social groups, especially women.⁵⁰

⁴³ Smulovitz and Walton (2003): 2

⁴⁴ Alsop et al (2006): 11

⁴⁵ Khwaja (2005): 273-274

⁴⁶ Bennett (2002) cited in Bartlett (2004): 54

⁴⁷ Chambers 2003 cited in Bartlett (2004): 54

⁴⁸ Friedmann (1992): 33

⁴⁹ Mayoux (2000b); Mayoux (2000a): 2; Oxfam (1995) cited in Oxaal and Baden (1997): 2; Mosedale (2003): 3

⁵⁰ Malhotra et al (2002); Mayoux (2000a); Oxaal and Baden (1997)

Authors also emphasize different intervening processes that generate an increase in empowerment, such as *democratization* and *participation*. The UNDP's *Human Development Report* (1995) argues that to be empowered people need to fully participate in decisions and processes that shape their lives. Empowerment in the political domain is often related to democratization and political participation, as well as the strengthening of grassroots and civil society organizations and the participation of marginalized social groups in national and local politics.⁵¹

Having reviewed various definitions of empowerment and suggested its potential value, Section 3 discusses the methodological challenges that confront measurement of empowerment, and the indicators and questions that were selected in the effort to measure this complex topic.

3. Selecting Indicators

Methodological Challenges

Methodological issues involved in selecting indicators of empowerment include whether to measure aspects that are intrinsic or instrumental; context-specific or universal; individual or collective; whether to include psychological determinants; the appropriate unit of analysis; issues of causality and whether to collect quantitative or qualitative data. After articulating these issues, this section goes on to propose the indicators and questions included in our short list. The proposed list is not meant to be conclusive but rather to spark further discussion and debate.

⁵¹ Oakley (2001): 43; Oxaal and Baden (1997): 14

Intrinsic or Instrumental: A first issue is the following: should we measure the empowerment people *value* or the powers they *have* even if they do not value these? For example, a woman may have the power to make household decisions regarding major purchases, but this is because her husband is chronically depressed, and she may rather wish that the decisions were made jointly by an engaged and responsible partner. In Sen's definition, then agency is the ability to act on behalf of what you value *and* have reason to value. However it is only possible to measure one of these at a time – either an indicator can access the subjective or positionally objective views of the agent regarding her agency, or an indicator can measure whether she enjoys agency of certain kinds that are presumed to be valuable. The proposed survey questions measure both. The questions on personal and household decision-making relate to the power the *respondent has* while the questions on motivation from Ryan and Deci capture the agency the respondent *values*.⁵²

Universal or Context specific: The second issue we tackled concerned the comparability of indicators and the extent to which they should be universal or context specific. Although both kinds of data are needed; this study seeks to identify indicators that can be compared across contexts and across time – which entails an awareness of how reliable indicators of empowerment in one context or point in time may be irrelevant in another.⁵³ A prior question, of course, is whether it is *possible* to find meaningful universal indicators of empowerment at all. For our purposes this is a research question that the collection of such potentially-comparable data alone can illuminate. However it is also clear that internationally comparable indicators will be insufficient for many purposes, because they do not provide

⁵² One could refer to the measures of what the respondent values as *subjective*; however we believe that the term '*positionally objective*' better conveys the intelligibility of the responses Sen (1993b).

⁵³ Malhotra et al (2002): 19-20. They mention the example of 'the use of contraceptives' that can be an empowering indicator, however, once it has been widely used, it becomes obsolete.

information on the socio-cultural environment including culture and embedded social relationships.⁵⁴ Kabeer (2001) argues that Bourdieu's concept of 'doxa', i.e. 'the aspects of tradition and culture which are so taken-for-granted that they have become internalized' is important. Internalizing subordinate social status, for example, affects human agency and the ability to make choices.⁵⁵ The contextual nature of empowerment and problems of adaptive preferences pose a major challenge to agency measurement⁵⁶ and context-dependent measures of empowerment, may be useful in many case to complement internationally comparable measures.⁵⁷

Level of Application: Should indicators of empowerment be measured at the individual household, group, community, local government, national government, or global level?⁵⁸ This study focuses on the individual level and may be supplemented with data from other units of analysis.

Individual or Collective: Can we measure group agency using individual-level data? The proposed module emphasizes the individual aspects of empowerment but includes one question to measure the extent to which individuals feel that 'people like themselves' are able to change aspects of community life. Group agency would require a separate survey instrument.

⁵⁴ Ibid.: 17; Bartlett (2004): 12; Oxaal and Baden (1997): 23

⁵⁵ Malhotra et al (2002): 10

⁵⁶ Ibid.: 18; Khwaja (2005)

⁵⁷ Khwaja (2003): 5, Malhotra (2003): 3; Oxaal and Baden (1997): 6

⁵⁸ Malhotra et al (2002):12 suggest household and community, regional, national and global as levels of analysis ; Bartlett (2004: 21) propose the assessment of empowerment at the village, sub-district and national levels ; Holland and Book (2004: 2) argue that empowerment can be measured: at the national, intermediary and local levels; Narayan (2005:18) suggests individual, household, group, community, local, national and global levels

Dynamics: This survey focuses on the level of empowerment, not on perceptions of whether or not it has increased, or the process by which it has come about. To measure empowerment dynamics properly would require panel data, as well as indicators that might capture the dynamic processes of change⁵⁹. Smulovitz and Walton (2003) argue that three types of information need to be gathered to capture the empowerment process: (1) factors affecting the capacities of individuals to act as agents, (2) the actual exercise of agency; and (3) influences on the institutional context⁶⁰. This study focuses on the second of these alone.

Establishing Causality: A further question relates to what indicators would be adequate for testing causality, which will be essential in testing whether empowerment is instrumental to development outcomes.⁶¹ Our research questions explore causal connections between empowerment and other domains of poverty, and articulate the need to control for endogeneity.⁶²

Who measures: Self or others: Empowerment not only has multiple definitions, but also objective and subjective dimensions.⁶³ This raises the questions of whether to use data that draws on the perceptions of the poor, and if so, how to use this data so that it strengthens rather than discredits rigorous analysis? The proposed survey uses both objective and subjective questions. The subjective data will need to be analysed differently, and its interpretation will require an understanding of influences such as adaptive preferences. However we argue that

⁵⁹ Ibid.: 19

⁶⁰ Smulovitz and Walton (2003): 37; These three types of information are similar to the three levels of choice that Alsop et al (2006) also identified.

⁶¹ Khwaja (2005): 279

⁶² Ibid.: 279, Smulovitz and Walton (2003)

⁶³ Holland and Brook (2004): 1

when these potential biases are examined and if necessary, corrected, it is suitable for analysis.

Quantitative or Qualitative data: This survey proposes quantitative data, but we recognize of course that qualitative and participatory data are necessary to triangulate, guide, and deepen the analysis in many contexts.⁶⁴

Having clarified the limited characteristics of our focal measures, the section below proposes a short list of indicators and questions, and justifies their selection.

Criteria for Selecting Indicators

This section proposes a small, robust, internationally comparable list of empowerment indicators that can address key research questions. The following criteria were used to choose suitable indicators for the inclusion in individual or household surveys. First, given the context of our study, the chosen indicators should be relevant to the lives of the poor and the areas in which they suffer from a ‘power deficit’. Second, the indicators need to be *internationally comparable*. This is particularly important as there is a gap in the literature on comparative empowerment studies.⁶⁵ Third, the indicators need to assess not only the instrumental but also the *intrinsic* aspects of empowerment. Fourth, as empowerment is a process, it is essential to select indicators that would be able to identify *changes in agency and empowerment* over time. Fifth, the choice of the indicators’ short-list draws on *experience with particular indicators*. That is, these indicators have previously tested and found to be ‘adequate’ measures of empowerment for research purposes, and their shortcomings have been

⁶⁴ Mayoux (2000a): 11; Malena (2003): 4

⁶⁵ Malhotra et al (2002)

identified. It goes without saying that the indicators need to be scrutinized on standard conditions of accuracy, validity, and reliability. Appendices 1-15 summarize a number of domains and indicators that were proposed by studies that measured empowerment in different socio-cultural contexts, which were reviewed when undertaking this study.

Based on these criteria, and drawing on Rowlands' typology, we propose indicators for four possible exercises of agency whose increase could lead to empowerment: choice, control, change and communal belonging.

1. empowerment as control (power over): *Control over Personal Decisions*
2. empowerment as choice (power to): *Domain-Specific Autonomy and Household Decision-making*
3. empowerment in community (power with) *Changing Aspects in one's Life [Individual Level]*
4. empowerment as change (power from within) : *Changing Aspects in one's life [Communal Level]*

The set of indicators that we propose focus on empowerment as expansion of 'agency'. For many analyses, this shortlist will need to be complemented by specific institutional indicators related to the domains and issues outlined above as preconditions of empowerment.

Indicator 1- 'Power Over/Control': *Control over Personal Decisions*

The first indicator reflects control over personal decisions. These indicators seek to assess to what extent the agency of individuals and social groups is constrained by local power relations and patriarchal social hierarchies.⁶⁶ The question on 'control over personal

⁶⁶ Alsop et al (2006): 21

decisions’, which measures the extent to which the individual has control over everyday activities, has been adopted from the ‘Moving out of Poverty’ survey that has been conducted and tested by the World Bank in about 10-15 countries (Box 1).

BOX I – Indicator of control over personal decisions

Q1.- How much control do you feel you have in making personal decisions that affect your everyday activities?

Control over all decisions [5]

Control over most decisions [4]

Control over some decisions [3]

Control over very few decisions [2]

No control at all [1]

Source: World Bank *Moving out of Poverty* survey.

The next two indicators focus on household decision making and domain-specific autonomy; they are both concerned with the perceived ability of respondents to make decisions in their household and the factors underlying the decision making process – i.e., the extent to which decision making is truly autonomous.

Indicator 2A- ‘Power To/Choice’: Household Decision-making

The household is regularly, although not invariably, a core social institution. ‘The household is often a fundamental building block of society, and the place where individuals confront basic livelihood concerns, norms, values, power and privilege’.⁶⁷ Decision-making with respect to different aspects of life is an important indicator of power relations, particularly as reflected through the division of gender roles within the household. This indicator seeks to measure intrahousehold decision making for several reasons. First, although evidence is

⁶⁷ Narayan et al (2000b): 219

mixed, some studies have identified this indicator as useful (Table I). Second, the indicator has been also previously used by various researchers in a number of countries (Table II), suggesting its international comparability – although naturally some problems have been identified. Third, participatory studies of the experience of poverty in different contexts – particularly of women – report that their participation in decision-making within the household is crucial for their well-being.

Table I – Studies proposing Indicator: ‘Decision-making within Household’

Study	Recommendation of the Proposed Indicator
(Malhotra & Schuler, 2005)	Identified ‘domestic decision-making’ as indicator at the household level within the social and cultural dimension of empowerment
(Malhotra, Schuler, & Boender, 2002)	Participation in domestic decision-making identified as an indicator in the familial and interpersonal domain
(Parveen & Leonhäuser, 2004)	Participation within the household in the familial domain
(Roy & Niranjana, 2004)	Involvement in decision-making in the decision-making domain
(S. Schuler & Hashemi, 1994)	‘status and decision-making power within the household’ has been identified as a domain
(CIDA, 1997)	‘control over fertility decisions (e.g. number of children and number of abortions) identified as indicator within the social domain
(Jejeebhoy, 1995)	‘decision-making economy’ as one dimension of women’s empowerment
(Kishor, 2000)	‘sharing roles and decision-making’
(Holland & Brook, 2004); (R. Alsop & Heinsohn, 2005); (R. Alsop, Bertelsen, & Holland, 2006)	‘score for distribution of household decision-making power’ as indicator within society domain at the local level (Q. 4.46 in their survey)
(Mayoux, 2000)	‘changes in underlying resource and power constraints at household level’ and ‘control over parameters of household consumption and other valued areas of household decision-making including fertility decisions’ (21) within the ‘power over’ dimension of empowerment
(Sen, 1999)	‘household work and decision-making’
(Bartlett, 2004)	‘the household’ identified as one domain among three domains of decision-making

Table II – Studies using Indicator: ‘Decision-making within Household’

Study	Location
(Frankenberg & Thomas, 2001)	Indonesia
(Grasmuck & Espinal, 2000)	Dominican Republic
(Hashemi, Schuler, & Riley, 1996)	Bangladesh
(Jejeebhoy, 2000)	India
(Kabeer, 1997)	Bangladesh
(Malhotra & Mather, 1997)	Sri Lanka
(Mason, 1998)	Pakistan, India, Malaysia, Thailand, the Philippines
(Kishor, 2000)	Egypt
(Mason & Smith, 2000)	Pakistan, India, Malaysia, Thailand and the Philippines
(S. Schuler & Hashemi, 1994) and (S. R. Schuler, Hashemi, & Riley, 1997): 25	Bangladesh
(Malhotra et al., 2002)	Participation in domestic decision-making identified as an indicator in the familial and interpersonal domain
(Hindin, 2000)	Zimbabwe

The chosen indicator clarifies who usually makes household decisions, and if the respondent could influence these if she or he wished. It therefore addresses the first and second empowerment levels, i.e. the existence of choice in the household and the actual use of this choice. Data on this indicator have often been gathered simply by determining who makes decisions. However this standard question ignores the possibility that the individual might decide to delegate this decision-making either because s/he is busy or not interested to make such a decision. For clarity we have, drawing on Alsop et al (2006) added also a second question that aims to distinguish between disempowerment and an empowered division of labour in which the party could influence the decision if they wished. The questions are as follows (Box II).

BOX II – Indicators of household decision-making

Q1.- When decisions are made regarding the following aspects of household life, who is it that normally takes the decision?

a) Minor Household Expenditures	
b) What to do if you have a serious health problem	
c) How to protect yourself from violence	
d) Whether and how to express religious faith	
e) What kind of work you will do	

Use following Codes: Respondent [1] Spouse [2] respondent and spouse jointly [3] someone else [4] Jointly with someone else [5] other [6]

Q2.- If answer in any of Q1 is different than respondent1 => (Using this same table) To what extent do you feel you can make your own personal decisions regarding these issues if you want to?

a) Minor Household Expenditures	
b) What to do if you have a serious health problem	
c) How to protect yourself from violence	
d) Whether and how to express religious faith	
e) What kind of work you will do	

Codes: To a high extent [4] medium extent [3] small extent [2] Not at all [1]

Source: For Question 1, See Table 1. For question 2, (R. Alsop et al., 2006)

The ‘domains’ of this question were selected as follows. First, we considered the full set of domains in which survey questions have been fielded and/or studies have been accomplished. Second, we drew upon the elements of empowerment that seem to be regularly identified by poor people in participatory studies. Third, we focus on a subset of domains that could be altered if it is found that a significant area is missing, or if a country wishes to emphasise a particular domain further. In this domain, the ‘control over income’ question is the single most widely used existing indicator of empowerment, and is included in Demographic and Health Surveys (DHS) and Surveys of the Status of Women and Fertility (SWAF). Nevertheless, we were reluctant to propose only this single question for the following reasons. First, many respondents might not earn income and hence their responses will be ‘missing’. Second, in single-headed households, the individuals might have

‘full control over income’; however s/he might be oppressed or disempowered in other areas and asking about several domains will provide a better assessment. Third, this standard question asks only who decides, whereas given divisions of labour and interest within a household, a more ‘comprehensive’ household decision-making question would ascertain the ability of the individual to make these choices if s/he wanted to.⁶⁸ Appendix 15 presents additional indicators previously used to measure empowerment in the social domain.

Indicator 2B- ‘Power To/Choice’: Domain-specific Autonomy

This section proposes an indicator of positionally-objective autonomy. There are several reasons for this proposal, that relate to the shortcomings of the household decision-making question and similar questions. First, in some cases the constraints to agency arise from sources outside the household, and the commonly-used question would overlook this. Second, the household decision-making question does not access the respondent’s own values regarding the situation – it establishes only if the respondent has choice. Third, the commonly-used indicator has a limited sensitivity to changes over time. For this reason, we introduced a further 3-question indicator of autonomy which would be aggregated into a weighted index.

This indicator enquires the extent to which a person feels their action in each domain is motivated by a fear of punishment or hope for reward. It then asks the extent to which the same action was motivated by a desire to avoid shame or gain praise. Finally, it asks the extent to which it was motivated by its consonance with the respondent’s interests and values. All of these may be true to varying extents, and they give rise to a weighted measure

⁶⁸ For further indicators on empowerment in the social domain see Alsop and Heinsohn (2005) and Alsop et al (2006).

of the degree to which the person regards themselves as the authentic ‘author’ of their action in this domain, and to what extent they are coerced or swayed by others.⁶⁹

Unlike the previous proposed indicators, this indicator arose not from development-related social sciences, but from psychology. Definitionally, it has clear affinities with Sen’s approach; the authors describe autonomy as follows⁷⁰:

a person is autonomous when his or her behavior is experienced as willingly enacted and when he or she fully endorses the actions in which he or she is engaged and/or the values expressed by them. People are therefore most autonomous when they act in accord with their authentic interests or integrated values and desires (Deci and Ryan (1985), Ryan and Deci (2000); Ryan et al (1995)).⁷¹

Because the ability to measure autonomy accurately across cultures is also deeply contested within psychology, this indicator has been challenged and subsequently tested and used extensively internationally, including in developing countries, and has been shown to be robust across individualist and collectivist, and vertical and horizontal, cultures (Chirkov et al (2003, Chirkov et al (2005)). Table III below lists some of the cross-cultural studies that either explore or use the indicator.

⁶⁹ The weights for the combined index can be set arbitrarily; alternatively they can be set using statistical procedures such as multidimensional scaling. We have tried to explore these issues in Chiappero-Martinetti and Alkire, *mimeo*. A promising technique is to use multidimensional scaling techniques to explore the weights in different contexts (thus verifying comparability or proposing changes in the weights), but not to set the weights statistically for different datasets as comparability would be compromised.

⁷⁰ Alkire (2005), Alkire (2007 (forthcoming))

⁷¹ Chirkov et al (2003): 98

Table III – Studies using and/or exploring Ryan-Deci's Indicator of Autonomy

Study	Location
(Alkire, Chirkov, & Silva Leander, Mimeo)	India, El Salvador, Egypt, Turkey
(V. I. Chirkov & Ryan, 2001)	Russia and the US
(Valery Chirkov, Ryan, Kim, & Kaplan, 2003)	South Korea, Russia, Turkey, USA
(V. Chirkov, Ryan, & Willness, 2005)	Canada and Brazil
(Ryan & Deci, 2001)	Bulgaria
(Downie, Koestner, Elgeledi, & Cree, 2004)	Tricultural individuals in Canada of over 35 ethnicities
(Grouzet et al., 2005) <i>Note this paper tests goals including autonomy.</i>	Australia, Bulgaria, China, China, Hong Kong, Colombia, Dominican republic, Egypt, France, Germany, India, Romania, South Korea, Spain, US
(Rijavec, Brdar, & Miljkovic, 2006)	Croatia
(Schmuck, Kasser, & Ryan, 2000)	Germany and the US
(Sheldon, Elliot, Kim, & Kasser, 2001)	US, South Korea
(Sheldon et al., 2004)	US, China, South Korea, Taiwan
(Vansteenkiste, Zhou, Lens, & Soenens, 2005)	China

The question is domain-specific, thus the three motivations are explored for each domain – using the same domains as the household decision-making question.

BOX III – Indicator of domain-specific autonomy

Now I am going to describe three reasons why you do these activities, and ask you to tell me how true each one is.

Q1.-How true would it be to say that your actions with respect to _____ [*the domain from the left hand column*] are motivated by a desire to avoid punishment or to gain reward?

Q2.- How true would it be to say that your actions with respect to _____ [*the domain from the left hand column*] are motivated by a desire to avoid blame, or so that other people speak well of you?

Q3.- How true would it be to say that your actions with respect to _____ [*the domain from the left hand column*] are motivated by and reflect your own values and/or interests?

Domain	Q1	Q2	Q3
a) Minor Household Expenditures			
b) Serious health problems for yourself			
c) Avoiding violence to yourself			
d) Religious expression			
e) Your work			

Codes: Completely True [4] Somewhat true [3] not very true [2] Not at all true [1]

Source: Ryan and Deci (various).

The most serious potential difficulty with this indicator is also the greatest strength: the fact that the indicator captures the ‘positionally objective’ perception of the respondent – a view that is coming ‘from’ a delineated place such as a set of beliefs about what an empowered woman, or man, or ethnic person, does.⁷² Such beliefs influence people’s actions, and also have practical relevance for development activities. Understanding ‘how a person sees’ a particular situation – in this case empowerment – is quite important.

Adaptive preferences are in some ways distorted, affecting the interpretation of subjective data. For instance, using the present indicator, in Kerala, more educated women reported a ‘lower’ level of autonomy than might be expected (Alkire et al mimeo). Assuming this

⁷² Sen (1993b)

finding arises from habituation effects, the data should be in some sense ‘cleansed’ of this effect prior to its use in hypothesis testing.

While we support the direct use of positionally objective information for policy purposes, it may nonetheless be valuable to obtain information on people’s views, and interpret them carefully to inform the analysis. First, it will directly answer the question of whether, at this time, the respondent *values* each domain of autonomy or empowerment (which, implicitly, he or she might have reason to value). A second reason is that it may guide policymakers in local government to increase women’s autonomy, either by investing in their conscientization, or by direct interventions to assist in change, such as providing training for advocacy for child care facilities and maternity leave on jobs. However choosing between these options requires an understanding of the women’s own ‘positionally objective’ views.

Thus the Ryan-Deci Autonomy indicator is proposed with considerable energy, as it has been vigorously tested across countries in psychology, but not yet used in development. Its inclusion could introduce some interesting and potentially useful insights.

**Indicator 3 -‘Power From Within/Change’: Changing Aspects in one’s Life
[Individual Level]**

In addition to having control and choice, empowerment also involves the ability to change. The third indicator addresses this aspect of empowerment, i.e. the power from within, or the ability to induce change in one’s life, thus enhancing one’s own self-acceptance. The proposed questions have not been widely tested, however, they have been adopted from a

study conducted in Pakistan and El Salvador to measure human agency.⁷³ The first question assesses the *willingness* of the individual to change different aspects in his/her life. The second question identifies the different aspects which the individual wishes to change according to the values that s/he values and has reason to value. This question thus examines the ‘*domains*’ in which the individual wishes to act as an agent. The third question assesses the individual’s *ability* to contribute to this change, i.e. his/her actual ability to be an agent. The questions are as follows:

BOX IV – Indicator of changing aspects in one’s life

Q1.- Would you like to change anything in your life?	Yes [1] No [0]
Q2.- What three thing(s) would you most like to change?	
A:	
B:	
C:	
Q3.- Who do you think will contribute most to any change in your own life? [Enumerator: list up to 2 reasons]	
Myself [1] My family [2] Our Group [3] Our Community [4]	
The local government [5] The state government [6] Other (specify) _____	

Source: (R. Alsop et al., 2006)

Indicator 4- ‘Power With/Community’: Changing Aspects in Communal Life
[Communal Level]

Some scholars argue that the poor are usually empowered in group settings, although others are reluctant to view communal belonging as a means of empowerment, arguing that unequal power relations within groups can in fact be disempowering. To surmount this objection, we suggest including a question about the ability of people to change things collectively in their community *if they want to*. The main unit of analysis remains the individual or the household, however, we ask the respondents to assess the general level of empowerment that perceive

⁷³ Alkire <http://www.fas.harvard.edu/~acgei/PDFs/Capabilities/Intro%20to%20the%20study.pdf>

in their communities, i.e. the *power* gained *with* other community members. The proposed question is also adopted from the study on human agency conducted in Pakistan and El Salvador.⁷⁴ The question is as follows:

BOX V – Indicator of changing aspects in communal life

Q1.- Do you feel that people like yourself can generally change things in your community if they want to?

Yes, very easily [5]

Yes, fairly easily [4]

Yes, but with a little difficulty [3]

Yes, but with a great deal of difficulty [2]

No, not at all. [1]

Source: (R. Alsop et al., 2006)

Finally, having proposed a series of indicators and questions to measure several key aspects of empowerment, mostly at the individual level but with some effort to capture community dimensions, we now put forth several concrete hypotheses that the resulting data could help us to address.

4. Claims, Hypotheses, and Research Questions

Empowerment is often argued to be instrumentally important for achieving positive development outcomes, such as improved incomes and assets for the poor, better local and national governance, more inclusive social services, more equitable access to markets, better access to justice and legal aid as well as stronger civil society and strengthened poor people's organizations.⁷⁵ Often these claims have been put forward without the benefit of a large and well-established body of empirical research. The data that would be generated by the survey questions would improve our understanding of interconnections between variables (e.g., empowerment and income, governance, health and nutrition outcomes) in different

⁷⁴ Alkire <http://www.fas.harvard.edu/~acgei/PDFs/Capabilities/Intro%20to%20the%20study.pdf>

⁷⁵ Narayan (2005): 7

contexts, and on their durability across time. In order to clarify the research questions that empowerment data could engage, this section will briefly put forth some hypotheses that authors have proposed regarding the instrumental efficacy of empowerment.

Empowerment and Human Development: A virtuous circle

Sen makes a strong claim for increasing the agency of deprived people to render them able and motivated to be effective agents of their own human development Sen (1999b). Various authors continue to explore these alleged interconnections. For example, women's income in Brazil is spent more on human capital investments and is associated with greater nutrient intake and better child health [Thomas (1997), Thomas (1990) cited in Malhotra et al (2002): 48]. Similarly, investment priorities of politically empowered women differ from those of men: in India, "women are more likely to participate if the leader of the council is a woman and invest more in infrastructure that is directly relevant to rural women's needs (water, fuel, health, roads, etc.); men invest more in education" [Chattopadhyay and Duflo (2001) cited in Malhotra et al (2002): 49]. Information on the intervening variable of 'empowerment' thus may help explain different observed patterns of household decision making.

Empowerment and Project Effectiveness

The second hypothesis to probe empirically is that individual empowerment may promote project effectiveness at the local level. Local participation in development projects is argued to exert a strong impact on development outcomes. *Empowerment in Practice* contains five case studies of development projects that sought to empower local communities, e.g. through

participatory budgeting in Brazil,⁷⁶ women's development initiatives in Ethiopia⁷⁷, community-based education in Honduras⁷⁸ and conflict management in Indonesia⁷⁹. These projects allowed the poor to challenge the clientalistic power relations in their communities, enhanced women's empowerment, provided voice to excluded social groups and allowed them to participate in local decision-making processes. In each study, authors argue that empowerment contributed to better development outcomes.

Empowerment and Governance

A third claim the empowerment data could test is that individual empowerment and good governance are mutually reinforcing. Effective justice systems, the secure rule of law, open channels of participation and the protection of civil liberties may both empower citizens and work better if empowered citizens hold them to account. Through open information flow, increased transparency, active civil society and improved spending on social services, good governance lays the ground for effective public action and empowerment, especially of marginalized communities. Once empowered, these communities may promote good governance and reduce state capture through their effective civic cooperation, voice and inclusion⁸⁰. Further work is needed on the direction of causality and on what facets of empowerment appear to matter for good governance at the community and higher territorial levels.

⁷⁶ Alsop et al (2006): 121

⁷⁷ Ibid.: 144-150

⁷⁸ Ibid.: 165-170

⁷⁹ Ibid.: 186-191

⁸⁰ Narayan (2002): 1-3

Disempowerment, the inability to take action

The *Voices of the Poor* study argued that hopelessness and powerlessness of the poor is reflected in various areas of their lives such as exploitation in the market, limited bargaining power, the inability to stand up to corrupt government officials, a lack of political accountability towards their elected representatives limited access to basic social services, and poverty traps such as the vicious circle of indebtedness.⁸¹ One implication is that impoverishment affects people's confidence to make choices. They may not be able to identify any valuable course of action, or they may be risk averse, as they 'feel defenseless against damaging loss'.⁸² Some evidence suggests that correspondingly, empowerment may transform perceptions of wellbeing. Alsop (2006) reports that about 70 percent of the (female) participants of an empowerment program in Ethiopia reported increased involvement in household decision-making – and that a majority reported feeling less lonely and isolated, and happier. The fourth hypothesis we could address concerns links between empowerment and subjective/psychological wellbeing; we might expect empowerment to exert a positive effect on psychological states and perceived wellbeing.

Empowerment and Pro-poor Growth

A number of studies emphasize the need for macro and meso-level studies on empowerment, as the focus has mainly been on local and small scale projects (Oxaal and Baden (1997): 24). “Macro-level studies are especially weak on measuring agency and often do not employ a relevant conceptual framework ... The lack of empirical research at ‘meso’ levels presents an important gap, as does the relative lack of rigorous research on policy and programmatic efforts” (Malhotra et al (2002): 35).

⁸¹ Narayan et al (2000b): 32-35

⁸² Narayan et al Ibid.: 36

Preliminary work suggests that empowerment may be instrumentally important for pro-poor growth and to increase the sustainability of collective activities and the cost effectiveness of various development interventions⁸³. Knack and Keefer (1997) emphasize the close link between empowerment and growth. Encouraging poor communities to participate in poverty reduction not only increases the sustainability of these poverty reduction efforts, they argue, but also promotes pro-poor growth and a more equitable income distribution. Empowerment has a positive impact on income distribution through the provision of access to basic services, the broadening of human capabilities and the improved distribution of assets. These capabilities and assets are essential for poor people to seize new economic opportunities thus rendering growth more participatory, inclusive and bottom-up. This pro-poor growth in turn further empowers the poor by promoting their social inclusion, encouraging their collective action and enhancing the government accountability towards them.⁸⁴

This section has provided some examples of potential instrumental connections between empowerment and other facets of wellbeing that could be further investigated using the indicators proposed here, often in conjunction with qualitative data and with data collected at different administrative/territorial levels. It shows that such data would make a valuable contribution to the further understanding of empowerment and its contribution to poverty reduction and human development.

⁸³ World Bank (2001) and Narayan et. al, (2002).

⁸⁴ Narayan (2002): 4-6

5. Conclusion

This paper has attempted to articulate the reasoning behind the proposed shortlist and draw attention to the potential research questions that the resulting data could begin to address, and the expected strengths and weaknesses of the ensuing data. It should be restated that the purpose of this article is to improve and deepen internationally comparable measures of agency and empowerment. Further debate of the concepts, indicators and questions is welcomed.

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Appendix 1: Dimensions for Measuring Empowerment

Study	Purpose of the Study	Dimensions	Indicators	Data Sources	Conclusions
Bartlett (2004)	Developing a model for evaluating empowerment to use in CARE projects	Three domains of decision-making: Household, community and social domain; 5 types of capital: human, social, natural, physical and financial capital	CARE Bangladesh behavioral indicators: - organizational behavior - planning behavior - entitlement behavior - economic behavior - learning behavior - experimental behavior	Key Reviewing global efforts to evaluate empowerment	- need to capture the process and ends of empowerment - key empowerment indicators should be part of any monitoring and evaluation of CARE projects
Malhotra, Schuler and Boender (2002)	Identifying Dimensions for measuring women's empowerment	Economic, socio-cultural, familial/interpersonal, legal, political and psychological ⁸⁵	A number of indicators in each domain at the household, community and broader arenas. See Table 1 on the commonly used indicators for women's empowerment	Reviewing 45 studies on women's empowerment	- need to measure the empowerment process - need for macro-level studies on empowerment - need for meso-level studies on empowerment - any dimension can be operationalized at any level of aggregation
Oakley (2001)	Developing a methodology for evaluating empowerment and social development	Psychological; Social; organizational; cultural; economic; political ⁸⁶	Work division in the household; attitude towards girls, access to household property; control over resources; participation; organization and collective action; self-confidence; social status; work pattern and productivity ⁸⁷	Organizing regional workshops on the evaluation of empowerment in Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Middle East and synthesizing their findings	- empowerment can be promoted through participation, capacity-building, democratization and economic improvement

⁸⁵ For a detailed analysis of each of the reviewed studies, their sample and design, their variables and their indicators, see Malhotra et al (2002): Appendix B: p. 38- 49.

⁸⁶ Psychological (self-image, identity, creating space, acquiring knowledge); Social (leadership in community action, action for rights, social inclusion, literacy); organizational (collective identity, establishing representative organization, organizational leadership); cultural (redefining gender rules and norms, recreating cultural practices); economic (attaining income security, ownership of productive assets; entrepreneurial skills); political (participation in local institutions, negotiating political power, accessing political power) Oakley (2001): 15

⁸⁷ Ibid.: 175

Parveen and Leonhauser (2004)	Examining how rural women were empowered through micro-credit in Bangladesh	Socio-economic; familial; psychological	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - contribution to household income - access to resources - ownership of assets - participation in household decision-making - perception on gender awareness - coping capacity to household shocks 	A study conducted in three villages in Bangladesh using household surveys and qualitative methods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the level of women's empowerment at the household level is not satisfactory - education, exposure to information; medial and spatial mobility are the most influential factors for women's empowerment
Roy and Niranjana (2004)	Developing indicators to measure women's empowerment in India	Decision-making Mobility Access to economic resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - indirect indicators of empowerment: education, occupation, age difference and education difference between spouses and their influence on women's access to and control over resources - direct indicators of empowerment: involvement in decision-making, freedom of movement and access to money⁸⁸ 	Analyzing the data of the NFHS survey conducted in 1998-1999 in two Indian states: Uttar Pradesh and Tamil Nadu	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - there is a regional divide in the women's empowerment levels - women with education have greater self-esteem
Schuler and Hashemi (1994)	Examining how women's status affects fertility	Mobility and visibility; economic security; status and decision-making power within the household; ability to interact effectively in the public sphere; participation in non-family groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - mobility - economic security - making small and large purchases - subjection to domination and violence - political and legal awareness - protest and campaigning 	Conducting a survey over 18 months with 1305 respondents in addition to ethnographic findings from six villages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participation in micro-credit programs empower women by enhancing their economic roles Empowerment is positively associated with contraceptive use

⁸⁸ Roy and Niranjana (2004): 26

Appendix 2: Empowerment Dimensions used by CIDA

CIDA (1997)	Examining why and how gender-sensitive indicators can be integrated in development projects	Legal; political; economic; social	<p>Legal empowerment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enforcement of legislation related to the protection of human rights. • Number of cases related to women's rights heard in local courts, and their results. • Number of cases related to the legal rights of divorced and widowed women heard in local courts, and the results. • The effect of the enforcement of legislation in terms of treatment of offenders. • Increase/decrease in violence against women. • Rate at which the number of local justices/ prosecutors/ lawyers who are women/men is increasing/decreasing. • Rate at which the number of women/men in the local police force, by rank, is increasing or decreasing. <p>Political empowerment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % of seats held by women in local councils/decision-making bodies. • % of women in decision-making positions in local government. • % of women in the local civil service. • % of women/men registered as voters/% of eligible women/men who vote. • % of women in senior/junior decision making positions within unions. • % of union members who are women/men. • Number of women who participate in public protests and political campaigning, as compared to the number of men. <p>Economic empowerment (changes should be noted over time)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changes in employment/unemployment rates of women and men. • Changes in time-use in selected activities, particularly greater sharing by household members of unpaid housework and child-care. • Salary/wage differentials between women and men. • Changes in % of property owned and controlled by women and men (land, houses, livestock), across socio-economic and ethnic groups. • Average household expenditure of female/male headed households on education/health. • Ability to make small or large purchases independently. • % of available credit, financial and technical support services going to women/men from government/non-government sources. <p>Social empowerment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Numbers of women in local institutions (e.g. women's associations, consciousness raising or income generating groups, local churches, ethnic and kinship associations) relative to project area population, and numbers of women in positions of power in local institutions. • Extent of training or networking among local women, as compared to men. • Control of women over fertility decisions (e.g. number of children, number of abortions). • Mobility of women within and outside their residential locality, as compared to men.
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Appendix 3: Proposed Dimensions to Measure Women's Empowerment

Stromquist (1995)	Cognitive; Psychological; Economic; Political
Sen (1999)	Absence of gender inequality in: Mortality rates Natality rates Access to basic facilities such as schooling Access to professional training and higher education Employment Property ownership Household work and decision-making
Jojobhoy 1995	Knowledge economy, decision-making economy, physical economy, emotional autonomy, economic and social autonomy and self-reliance
Kishor 2000a cited in Malhotra, Schuler and Boender (2002)	Financial autonomy, participation in the modern sector, lifetime exposure to employment, sharing of roles and decision-making, family structure amenable to empowerment, equality in marriage, (lack of) Devaluation of women, women's emancipation, marital advantage, traditional marriage

Appendix 4: Table 1 – Direct Indicators of Empowerment: State Domain

DOMAIN		INDICATOR OF FORMS OF EMPOWERMENT		
State	Subdomain	National	Intermediary	Local
	Justice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No. of court cases and the time between submission and conclusion of cases % of positions in justice system per social/ ethnic/ religious group No. of national newspapers/ media organisations independent of government influence or control 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No. of local court cases and the time between submission and conclusion of cases % of positions in local justice system per social/ ethnic/ religious group 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> % awareness of listed (formal/informal) justice systems (4.1) No. times justice systems used (4.2-4.3) Score of effectiveness of justice systems (4.4) Score of fairness of justice systems (4.5-4.6) Score of gender equity in treatment by justice systems (4.7) Score of equity by other stated social variable in treatment by justice systems (4.8) Score of accessibility of justice systems (4.9) Score of ability to complain about justice systems' performance (4.10-4.11) Score of level of independence of police force (4.12) Score of confidence in corrupt people facing justice (4.13)
	Political	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> HH survey questions 4.14-4.32 also apply at the national level % of elected representatives in national government per social/ ethnic/ religious group No. people actively voting in national elections compared to those entitled to vote No. of representative and democratic national political parties 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> HH survey questions 4.14-4.32 also apply at the regional level 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> % awareness of local electoral process (4.14) % interest in local electoral process (4.15) % entitled to vote in local elections (4.16) % voting in last local elections (4.17) % wanting to vote in last local elections (4.18) % control over their voting choice (4.19) Frequency of, and impact of, discussion about local election candidates (4.20-4.23) Score of involvement in the local political process (4.24) Score of aspiration to be more or less involved in the local political process (4.25)
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Diversity of representative and democratic national political parties No. of national newspapers/ media organisations independent of government influence or control Diversity of newspaper/ media ownership 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Score of number of representatives of national political parties in the local area (4.26) Score of degree of influence of elected representative at local level (4.27) Score of fairness of local electoral process (4.28) Frequency of dissatisfaction with local elected representative (4.29) Availability of accountability mechanisms (4.30) Frequency of use of accountability mechanisms (4.31) Score of effectiveness of accountability mechanisms (4.32)
	Service delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Score of satisfaction with national executive administration (key line ministries) Score of effectiveness of regional executive administration (key line ministries) compared with other social groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Score of satisfaction with regional executive administration Score of effectiveness of regional executive administration compared with other social groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No. of publicly provided services available locally (4.33) % able to access public services (4.34; 4.37) No. public services used (4.35) Score of quality of public services used (4.36) % individuals that have complained about public service delivery (4.38) % of households that have complained about public service delivery (4.39) Frequency of complaints (4.40) Score of satisfaction with outcome of complaint (4.41) Score of equitability in addressing needs and concerns (4.42) Score of influence of social characteristics on the authorities treatment of people (4.43)

Source: Holland and Brook. (2004). *Measuring Empowerment: Country Indicators*.

[http://lnweb18.worldbank.org/ESSD/sdvext.nsf/68ByDocName/MeasuringEmpowermentCountryIndicators/\\$FILE/Drift+Background+Paper+Country+Indicators.pdf](http://lnweb18.worldbank.org/ESSD/sdvext.nsf/68ByDocName/MeasuringEmpowermentCountryIndicators/$FILE/Drift+Background+Paper+Country+Indicators.pdf) accessed April 22nd, 2007: 14- 15

Appendix 5: Table 2 – Direct Indicators of Empowerment: Market Domain

DOMAIN		INDICATOR OF EMPOWERMENT		
	Subdomain	National	Intermediary	Local
Market	Credit			
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Score of civil society advocacy activity for pro-poor credit provision % of credit provision by formal institutions according to social/ethnic/religious group Diversity of national credit providing institutions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Score of consultation levels by credit providing agencies with clients No. of partnerships in credit system design and delivery Diversity of local formal credit sources Diversity of local informal credit sources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> % needing to borrow money or goods in past year (4.44) % borrowing money or goods in past year (4.45) Score of awareness of formal/ informal credit services (4.46) Score of accessibility to formal credit-providing institutions (4.47-4.50) Score of control over loans and savings (4.51-4.52)
	Labour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Diversity of national labour organisations % changes in labour market composition per year Score of civil society advocacy activity for labour protection legislation % presence in capital intensive/ high skill positions per social/ ethnic/ religious group % difference in salary levels by ethnic/ social/ religious group No. of industrial disputes resolved equitably per year 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Score of effectiveness of local labour organisations Diversity of local labour organisations No. of collective bargaining mechanisms/processes over wage rates/ employment conditions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Score of control over employment/occupation choices (4.53-4.55, 3.41-3.42) % involved in household work (4.56) Score of time used for unpaid household work and childcare (4.57-4.58) Score of division of labour and roles within household (4.59)
	Goods			
	(production/ consumption, including basic needs)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Score of civil society advocacy activity for redistribution of productive assets Score of civil society advocacy activity for basic needs provision % awareness of national market prices and conditions Score of civil society and state advocacy activity for equitable access to markets % change in national asset ownership per social/ ethnic/ religious group per year % change in control over national assets per social/ ethnic/ religious group per year 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Score of civil society advocacy activity for (decentralised) basic needs provision No. of local buyers of products No. of local suppliers of products No. of producer cooperatives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Score of perceived risk/threat of eviction (4.60) Score of protection from eviction (4.61) Score of influence of social characteristics on asset ownership/access (4.62-4.63) Score of gender influence on inheritance rights (4.64-4.66)

Source: Holland and Brook. (2004). *Measuring Empowerment: Country Indicators*.

[http://lnweb18.worldbank.org/ESSD/sdvext.nsf/68ByDocName/MeasuringEmpowermentCountryIndicators/\\$FILE/Draft+Background+Paper+Country+Indicators.pdf](http://lnweb18.worldbank.org/ESSD/sdvext.nsf/68ByDocName/MeasuringEmpowermentCountryIndicators/$FILE/Draft+Background+Paper+Country+Indicators.pdf) accessed April 22nd, 2007: 16-17

Appendix 6: Table 3 – Direct Indicators of Empowerment: Social Domain

DOMAIN		INDICATOR OF EMPOWERMENT		
	Subdomain	National	Intermediary	Local
Society	Household	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Score of civil society advocacy activity for legislation addressing informal patriarchal rules 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Score of community advocacy activity addressing informal patriarchal rules Score of civil society monitoring activity of unequal household relations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Score for distribution of HH decision making power (4.67) Score of individual's decision making autonomy (4.68) Score of control over one's body (4.69) Score of individual mobility (4.70) Score of individual access to basic services (4.71-4.72) Score of comparative household expenditure on healthcare per individual HH member (4.73-4.74)
	Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No. of national networks/alliances of community organisations Diversity of community based organisations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Score of inter-community networking activity Score of authority over local policy process Score of authority over local budgets % of local government budget allocated per social/ ethnic/ religious group Score of mobility of social/ ethnic/ religious groups outside their immediate locality 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> % awareness of main local public service decision-makers (4.75) Score of involvement in community decision making processes (4.76) Score of aspiration to be more or less involved in community decision making processes (4.77) Score of influence in community decision making processes (4.78)

Source: Holland and Brook. (2004). *Measuring Empowerment: Country Indicators*. [http://lnweb18.worldbank.org/ESSD/sdvext.nsf/68ByDocName/MeasuringEmpowermentCountryIndicators/\\$FILE/Draft+Background+Paper+Country+Indicators.pdf](http://lnweb18.worldbank.org/ESSD/sdvext.nsf/68ByDocName/MeasuringEmpowermentCountryIndicators/$FILE/Draft+Background+Paper+Country+Indicators.pdf) accessed April 22nd, 2007: 17-18

Appendix 7: Table 4 – Intermediate Indicators of Empowerment: Agency (from existing survey instruments)⁸⁹

Asset base	Indicator	Existing sources/ instruments
Psychological assets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-perceived exclusion from community activities • Level of interaction/sociability with people from different social groups • Capacity to envisage change, to aspire 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IQMSC – section 5 • IQMSC – section 5 • IQMSC – section 6
Informational assets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Journey time to nearest working post office • Journey time to nearest working telephone • Frequency of radio listening • Frequency of television watching • Frequency of newspaper reading • Passable road access to house (by periods of time) • Perceived changes in access to information • Completed education level 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IQMSC – section 4 • IQMSC – section 4 • IQMSC – section 4 • IQMSC – section 4 • IQMSC – section 4 • IQMSC – section 4 • IQMSC – section 4 • SCAT Household Questionnaire – section 2
Organisational assets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Membership of organisations • Effectiveness of group leadership • Influence in selection of group leaders • Level of diversity of group membership 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IQMSC – section 1 • IQMSC – section 1 • IQMSC – section 1 • IQMSC – section 1
Material assets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Land ownership • Tool ownership • Ownership of durable goods • Type of housing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LSMS – economic activities module • LSMS – economic activities module • LSMS – economic activities module • SCAT Household Questionnaire – section 2
Financial assets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employment history • Level of indebtedness • Sources of credit • Household expenses • Food expenditure • Occupation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LSMS – economic activities module • LSMS – economic activities module • LSMS – economic activities module • LSMS – housing module • LSMS – food expenditures module • SCAT Household Questionnaire – section 2
Human assets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Literacy levels • Numeracy levels • Health status 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LSMS – education module • LSMS – education module • LSMS – health module

IQMSC – Integrated Questionnaire for the Measurement of Social Capital; LSMS – Living Standards Measurement Survey; SCAT – Social Capital Assessment Tool

Source: Holland and Brook. (2004). *Measuring Empowerment: Country Indicators*.

[http://lnweb18.worldbank.org/ESSD/sdvext.nsf/68ByDocName/MeasuringEmpowermentCountryIndicators/\\$FILE/Draft+Background+Paper+Country+Indicators.pdf](http://lnweb18.worldbank.org/ESSD/sdvext.nsf/68ByDocName/MeasuringEmpowermentCountryIndicators/$FILE/Draft+Background+Paper+Country+Indicators.pdf) accessed April 22nd, 2007: 4.

⁸⁹ For a full list of indicators of opportunity structure and their sources see Holland and Brook p. 6- 13. and for a full list of direct indicators of empowerment see

Appendix 8: Table 5 – Commonly Used Dimensions and Indicators of Women’s Empowerment

Dimension	Household	Community	Broader Arenas
Economic	Women’s control over income; relative contribution to family support; access to and control of family resources	Women’s access to employment; ownership of assets and land; access to credit; involvement and/or representation in local trade associations; access to markets	Women’s representation in high paying jobs; women CEO’s; representation of women’s economic interests in macro-economic policies, state and federal budgets
Socio-Cultural	Women’s freedom of movement; lack of discrimination against daughters; commitment to educating daughters	Women’s visibility in and access to social spaces; access to modern transportation; participation in extra-familial groups and social networks; shift in patriarchal norms (such as son preference); symbolic representation of the female in myth and ritual	Women’s literacy and access to a broad range of educational options; Positive media images of women, their roles and contributions
Familial/ Interpersonal	Participation in domestic decision-making; control over sexual relations; ability to make childbearing decisions, use contraception, access abortion; control over spouse selection and marriage timing; freedom from domestic violence	Shifts in marriage and kinship systems indicating greater value and autonomy for women (e.g. later marriages, self selection of spouses, reduction in the practice of dowry; acceptability of divorce); local campaigns against domestic violence	Regional/national trends in timing of marriage, options for divorce; political, legal, religious support for (or lack of active opposition to) such shifts; systems providing easy access to contraception, safe abortion, reproductive health services
Legal	Knowledge of legal rights; domestic support for exercising rights	Community mobilization for rights; campaigns for rights awareness; effective local enforcement of legal rights	Laws supporting women’s rights, access to resources and options; Advocacy for rights and legislation; use of judicial system to redress rights violations
Political	Knowledge of political system and means of access to it; domestic support for political engagement; exercising the right to vote	Women’s involvement or mobilization in the local political system/campaigns; support for specific candidates or legislation; representation in local bodies of government	Women’s representation in regional and national bodies of government; strength as a voting bloc; representation of women’s interests in effective lobbies and interest groups
Psychological	Self-esteem; self-efficacy; psychological well-being	Collective awareness of injustice, potential of mobilization	Women’s sense of inclusion and entitlement; systemic acceptance of women’s entitlement and inclusion

Source: Malhotra, Schuler and Boender. (2002). Measuring Women’s Empowerment as a Variable in International Development. <http://www.aed.org/LeadershipandDemocracy/upload/MeasuringWomen.pdf> accessed April 22nd, 2007: 13.

Appendix 9: Table 6 – Commonly used Indicators of Women’s Empowerment at the Individual and Household levels

<p><i>Most Frequently Used Indicators</i></p> <p>Domestic Decision-Making Finances, resource allocation, spending, expenditures Social and domestic matters (e.g. cooking) Child related issues (e.g. well-being, schooling, health)</p> <p>Access to or control over resources Access to, control of cash, household income, assets, unearned income, welfare receipts, household budget, participation in paid employment</p> <p>Mobility/freedom of movement</p> <p><i>Less Frequently Used Indicators</i></p> <p>Economic contribution to household Time use/division of domestic labor</p> <p>Freedom from violence</p> <p>Management/knowledge Farm management Accounting knowledge Managerial control of loan</p> <p>Public space Political participation (e.g. public protests, political campaigning) Confidence in community actions Development of social and economic collective</p> <p>Marriage/kin/social support Traditional support networks Social status of family of origin Assets brought to marriage Control over choosing a spouse</p> <p>Couple interaction Couple communication Negotiation and discussion of sex</p> <p>Appreciation in household Sense of self worth</p>

Source: Malhotra, Schuler and Boender. (2002). Measuring Women’s Empowerment as a Variable in International Development. <http://www.aed.org/LeadershipandDemocracy/upload/MeasuringWomen.pdf> accessed April 22nd, 2007: 26.

Appendix 10: Table 7 – Commonly used Indicators of Women’s Empowerment at the Aggregate Level

<p>Labor market</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Female labor force participation (or female share, or female/male ratios) Occupational sex segregation Gender wage differentials Child care options Labor laws Percent of wives/women in modern work Ratio of female/male administrators and managers Ratio of female/male professional and technical workers Women’s share of earned income
<p>Education</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Female literacy (or female share, female/male ratio) Female enrollment in secondary school Maternal education
<p>Marriage/kinship system</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Singulate mean age at marriage Mean spousal age difference Proportion unmarried females aged 15-19 Area of rice cultivation Relative rates of female to male migration Geographic region
<p>Social norms and practices</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wives’/women’s physical mobility
<p>Health/Survival</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relative child survival/Sex ratios of mortality
<p>Political and Legal</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ratio of seats in parliament held by women Women’s legal rights Questions, complains, requests from women at village council

Source: Malhotra, Schuler and Boender. (2002). Measuring Women’s Empowerment as a Variable in International Development. <http://www.aed.org/LeadershipandDemocracy/upload/MeasuringWomen.pdf> accessed April 22nd, 2007: 30.

Appendix 11: Table 8 – Framework for Assessing Women’s Empowerment

TYPE OF POWER RELATION	ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT	WELL-BEING BENEFITS	CULTURAL\LEGAL AND POLITICAL EMPOWERMENT
POWER WITHIN: - increased awareness and desire for change for individual woman	- women's positive evaluation of their economic contribution - desire for equal economic opportunities - desire for equal rights to resources in the household and community	- women's confidence and happiness - women's desire for equal well-being - desire to take decisions about self and others - desire to take control of own fertility	- assertiveness and sense of autonomy - recognition of need to challenge gender subordination including cultural tradition, legal discrimination and political exclusion - desire to engage in cultural, legal and political processes
POWER TO: - increased individual capacity for change - increased opportunities for access	- access to micro-finance services - access to income - access to productive assets and household property - access to markets - reduction in burden of unpaid domestic work including childcare	- skills including literacy - health and nutrition status - awareness of and access to reproductive health services - availability of public welfare services	- mobility and access to the world outside the home - knowledge of cultural, legal and political processes - removal of formal barriers to access to cultural, legal and political processes
POWER OVER: - changes in underlying resource and power constraints at household, community level and macro-level - individual power/action to challenge these constraints	- control over loans and savings use and income therefrom - control over income from other household productive activities - control over productive assets and household property - control over household labour allocation - individual action to challenge discrimination in access to resources and markets	- control over parameters of household consumption and other valued areas of household decision-making including fertility decisions - individual action to defend self against violence in the household and community	- individual action to challenge and change cultural perceptions of women's capacities and rights at household and community levels - individual engagement with and taking positions of authority within cultural, legal and political processes
POWER WITH or increased solidarity/joint action with other women to challenge underlying resource and power constraints at household, community level and macro-level	- acting as role model for other women, particularly in lucrative and non-traditional occupations - provision of wage employment for other women at good wages - joint action to challenge discrimination in women's access to resources (including land rights), markets and gender discrimination in macro-economic context.	- higher valuation of and increased expenditure on girl children and other female family members - joint action for increased public welfare provision for women	- increase in networks for support in times of crisis - joint action to defend other women against abuse in the household and community - participation in movements to challenge cultural, political and legal gender subordination at the community and macro-level

Source: Mayoux, L. (2000). *From Access to Empowerment: Gender Issues in Micro-Finance*. CSD NGO Women's Caucus Position Paper for CSD-8. <http://www.earthsummit2002.org/wcaucus/Caucus%20Position%20Papers/micro-finance.pdf> accessed April 22nd, 2007: 21.

Appendix 12: Table 9 – Indicators of Internal and External Group Empowerment

Indicators of INTERNAL Empowerment	
Objective	Indicators
<i>Self-Management</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Membership growth and trends • Clear procedures and rules • Regular attendance at meetings • Maintaining proper financial records
<i>Problem Solving</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Problem identification • Ability to analyse
<i>Democratisation</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Free and fair selection of leaders • Role for weaker members in decision-making • Transparency in information flow
<i>Sustainability and self-reliance</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conflict resolution • Actions initiated by group • Legal status • Intra-group support system
Indicators of EXTERNAL Empowerment	
Building Links	Indicators
<i>With Project implementing agency</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Influence at different stages of project • Representation on project administration • Degree of financial autonomy
<i>With State agencies</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Influence on state development funds • Influence on other state development initiatives in the area
<i>With Local and social political bodies</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Representation on these bodies • Lobbying with mainstream parties • Influence in local schools and health centers
<i>With other groups and social movements</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • formation of federations • Networking
<i>With local elites and other non-group members</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • level of dependence on local elites • Degree of conflict • Ability to increase power

Source: Oakley, P. (2001). *Evaluating Empowerment: Reviewing the Concept and Practice*. Oxford: INTRAC: 52-53.

Appendix 13: Indicators Measuring Empowerment in the State Domain

Women	Justice	Participation in Politics	Social Services Delivery/ Access
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Ratio of women to men serving in village and district councils⁹⁰ -Women's representation in community groups⁹¹ Equal treatment (of women) in judicial system⁹² - Women's awareness of their rights⁹³ - Women's representation in government⁹⁴ - Number of people women can rely on for support⁹⁵ - Women's ability to speak in public⁹⁶ - Women's ability to break traditional rules of conduct⁹⁷ - Women's ability to affect political decisions⁹⁸ - Women's representation in civil service⁹⁹ - Women's representation in parliament¹⁰⁰ - Women's representation in elected regional councils¹⁰¹ - Women's access to services - Women's awareness of their rights to and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Perceptions of fairness of courts¹⁰³ - Ability of citizens to approach the police¹⁰⁴ - Ability of the police and courts to apply the laws correctly and solve their conflicts¹⁰⁵ - Functioning and accountability of local authorities¹⁰⁶ - Egalitarian formal rules vs. unfair informal rules¹⁰⁷ - What rights do people have¹⁰⁸ - What are the source of these rights¹⁰⁹ - Crime rate in a country¹¹⁰ - Role of/existence of Local informal and dispute resolution systems¹¹¹ - State reform including government effectiveness, corruption perceptions index, incidence of illicit payments¹¹² - Reform of legal system: rule of law, quality of regulations, pro-poor decentralization¹¹³ State/Justice¹¹⁴ - existence of systems of justice - use of systems of justice - frequency of using and accessing justice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Citizen participation in local decision-making¹¹⁵ - People's protection from political oppression¹¹⁶ - participation of Excluded social groups (social exclusion)¹¹⁷ - Ability of different social groups to participate in the political process¹¹⁸ - In case of crisis, the type of institutions that people can go to¹¹⁹ - Municipal budgeting¹²⁰ - Participation in ongoing peace processes (but context-specific!)¹²¹ - Democracy: civil liberties and political freedoms, voice and accountability, strength of civil society¹²² - Removal of social barriers to citizen participation: share of women in political offices, income inequality, building social capital¹²³ State/Political¹²⁴: - frequency of elections at different levels - interest in elections at different levels - having voting rights in elections at different levels - exercise of voting rights at different levels - willingness to exercise voting in elections - decision-making of voting decision 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Social transfer systems: their availability, especially to vulnerable people¹²⁵ State/Service Delivery¹²⁶ - availability of public services - access to public services - actual use of public services - quality of services - denied access to public services - individual complaint about public services - communal complaint about public services - frequency of complaints about public services - equal effectiveness in addressing people's needs - impact of ethnicity and religion on people's treatment

⁹⁰ Alsop et al (2006): 51

⁹¹ Ibid.: 51

⁹² Ibid.: 51

⁹³ Ibid.: 51

⁹⁴ Ibid.: 130

⁹⁵ Ibid.: 130

⁹⁶ Ibid.: 130 and 143

⁹⁷ Ibid.: 130

⁹⁸ Ibid.: 133

⁹⁹ Ibid.: 133

¹⁰⁰ Ibid.: 133

¹⁰¹ Ibid.: 133

practicing these rights ¹⁰²	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - satisfaction with justice system - fair treatment (perception of past treatment) - fair treatment (perception of future treatment) - equal treatment in justice system (individual) - equal treatment of other social groups by the justice system - access to justice system - activity in complaining about the justice system - effectiveness of complaints - independence of police force - punishment of corrupt activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - impact of local leaders on voting decisions - ability of local leaders to affect people's voting decisions - actual involvement in the political process - willingness to be involved in the political process - awareness of political parties and movements - influence of local representatives on the political process - perceived fairness of the electoral process - satisfaction with elected representatives - ability to hold local representatives accountable - actually using local accountability systems - effectiveness of accountability systems 	
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¹⁰² Ibid.: 133

¹⁰³ Ibid.: 133

¹⁰⁴ Ibid.: 265

¹⁰⁵ Ibid.: 54

¹⁰⁶ Ibid.: 54

¹⁰⁷ Ibid.: 133

¹⁰⁸ Ibid.: 85

¹⁰⁹ Ibid.: 85

¹¹⁰ Ibid.: 85

¹¹¹ Ibid.: 85

¹¹² Grootaert (2005) cited in Alsop et al (2006): 222

¹¹³ Grootaert (2005) cited in Alsop et al (2006): 222

¹¹⁴ Indicators in this section have been adopted from the questionnaire in Alsop et al (2006): 314- 318.

¹¹⁵ Ibid.: 54

¹¹⁶ Ibid.: 85

¹¹⁷ Ibid.: 85

¹¹⁸ Ibid.: 85

¹¹⁹ Ibid.: 85

¹²⁰ Ibid.: 50

¹²¹ Moser (2005) cited in Alsop et al (2006): 229

¹²² Grootaert (2005) cited in Alsop et al (2006): 222

¹²³ Grootaert (2005) cited in Alsop et al (2006): 222

¹²⁴ Indicators in this section have been adopted from the questionnaire in Alsop et al (2006): 318- 325.

¹²⁵ Ibid.: 290

¹²⁶ Indicators in this section have been adopted from the questionnaire in Ibid.: 325-329

Appendix 14: Indicators Measuring Empowerment in the Market Domain

Women	Credit Provision and Services	Labour Market and Employment	Asset Entitlement and Consumption
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Women's education and income levels¹²⁷ - Women's possession of job specific skills¹²⁸ - Women's access to different sources of information¹²⁹ - Cultural restrictions on the nature of women's professions¹³⁰ - Amount of time women dedicate to household chores¹³¹ - Gendered rules governing access to productive assets and markets¹³² - Women's participation in the labour force¹³³ - Women's ability to choose their type of employment¹³⁴ - Entrepreneurial and business skills of women¹³⁵ - Type of activities undertaken by women: tradable activities, sheep and husbandry¹³⁶ - Women's economic participation and decision-making: administrative and managerial positions, professional and technical positions¹³⁷ - Gender-disparity in earned income Economic independence of women¹³⁸ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Access to finance/credit and demand for/receipt of loans and the size of these loans¹³⁹ - Access to credit: accessibility, effectiveness, transparency, accountability, freedom from corruption¹⁴⁰ - Control over credit in the household¹⁴¹ <p>Market/Credit¹⁴²</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - need to access credit - actual access to credit/borrowing - number of credit sources (formal and informal) - mostly used credit sources - reasons for preferential use of credit sources - credit sources denied access to specific social groups/individuals - reasons for lack of accessibility of certain credit sources - availability of savings - decision-making on the use of savings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Legal labour standards and people's awareness of them¹⁴³ - Employer's compliance to labour standards¹⁴⁴ - Government's insurance of Employer's compliance to labour regulations¹⁴⁵ - Understanding people's perceptions of power¹⁴⁶ <p>Market/Labour¹⁴⁷</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ability to choose own occupation - ability to change occupation (if want to) - reasons for (in) ability to change occupation - doing household work - kind of household work done - frequency of doing household work - household work that is never done 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - transparent rules of transaction¹⁴⁸ - differences in gaining control over resources and information¹⁴⁹ - lack of contract enforcement¹⁵⁰ - Capacity to negotiate in markets, especially negotiating prices¹⁵¹ - Asset endowments¹⁵² - Change in specific markets: labour, land, water, housing¹⁵³ - Differential access to market by different social groups¹⁵⁴ - Transparency and accountability of market transactions - Access and control over productive assets, especially for different social groups¹⁵⁵ - Inheritance of assets - Government policies in relation to land redistribution¹⁵⁶ - Access and control over consumption goods and services¹⁵⁷ <p>Market/Goods¹⁵⁸</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - threat to be evicted from land (land security) - protection from authorities/enactment of property rights - restrictions on rent/ownership rights/property rights - reasons for restrictions on property rights - individual inheritance - family inheritance - traditional rules of inheritance

¹²⁷ Ibid.: 51

¹²⁸ Ibid.: 51

¹²⁹ Ibid.: 51

Appendix 15: Indicators Measuring Empowerment in the Social Domain

Household and kinship group entitlements	Roles and Responsibilities	Community organizations and relationships
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Customs that influence whether women are allowed to disagree with their husbands or not¹⁵⁹ - Sending girls to school/ girls' schooling¹⁶⁰ - Existence of traditional harmful practices (THP)¹⁶¹ - Women's mobility: ability to go out alone/ freedom of movement¹⁶² - Women's ability to ride a cart¹⁶³ - Women's ability to wear trousers¹⁶⁴ - Women's engagement in savings and credit activities¹⁶⁵ - Women's subjection to genital mutilation¹⁶⁶ 	<p style="text-align: center;">Decision-making with the household about the number and spacing of children, use of contraceptives (in relation to women's education, income, self-confidence, awareness of reproductive health, participation in women's groups)¹⁷¹</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Whether women are expected to play a subservient role regarding sexual conduct¹⁷²</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Women's willingness to make independent decisions¹⁷³</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Who does the</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Associational and social interaction among people of different identities¹⁷⁹ - Caste systems¹⁸⁰ - Local implementation of formal institutions¹⁸¹ - Existence of membership organizations¹⁸² - Rules governing membership in communal organizations¹⁸³ - Existence of conflict between the degree to which the community has changed with regards to: altruism, common values, communal services, communication within the community, confidence, political and administrative context, information intervention, leadership,

¹³⁰ Ibid.: 51¹³¹ Ibid.: 51¹³² Ibid.: 51¹³³ Ibid.: 130¹³⁴ Ibid.: 267¹³⁵ Ibid.: 66¹³⁶ Ibid.: 137¹³⁷ United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) (1995) cited in Alsop, Bertelsen and Holland 2006 p. 228¹³⁸ Ibid. cited in Alsop et al (2006): 228¹³⁹ Alsop et al (2006): 130¹⁴⁰ Ibid.: 85¹⁴¹ Ibid.: 85¹⁴² Indicators in this section have been adopted from the questionnaire in Ibid.: 333-335¹⁴³ Ibid.: 290¹⁴⁴ Ibid.: 290¹⁴⁵ Ibid.: 290¹⁴⁶ Lokshin (2005) cited in Alsop et al (2006): 224¹⁴⁷ Indicators in this section have been adopted from the questionnaire in Alsop et al (2006): 329- 332¹⁴⁸ Ibid.: 20¹⁴⁹ Ibid.: 20¹⁵⁰ Ibid.: 20¹⁵¹ Ibid.: 130¹⁵² Ibid.: 146¹⁵³ Ibid.: 290¹⁵⁴ Alsop and Heinsohn (2005): 85¹⁵⁵ Alsop et al (2006): 290¹⁵⁶ Ibid.: 290¹⁵⁷ Ibid.: 290¹⁵⁸ Indicators in this section have been adopted from the questionnaire in Ibid.: 332- 333¹⁵⁹ Ibid.: 141¹⁶⁰ Ibid.: 278¹⁶¹ Ibid.: 130¹⁶² Ibid.: 141¹⁶³ Ibid.: 141¹⁶⁴ Ibid.: 141¹⁶⁵ Ibid.: 66¹⁶⁶ Ibid.: 137

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Forced and early marriages¹⁶⁷ - Ability of women to choose their husbands¹⁶⁸ - Women's subjection to rape¹⁶⁹ - Women's subjection to domestic violence¹⁷⁰ 	<p>housework</p> <p>Institutionalized gender inequalities¹⁷⁴</p> <p>women's say in household economic decisions¹⁷⁵</p> <p>women's participation in family size decisions¹⁷⁶</p> <p>women's exposure to coercive controls by their husbands¹⁷⁷</p> <p>having control over decisions pertaining personal welfare, health and body¹⁷⁸</p>	<p>networking, organization, political power, skills, trust, unity, wealth¹⁸⁴</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - sense of meanings and beliefs, competence, self-determination and impact or efficacy¹⁸⁵ - activity and effectiveness of civil society in informing, educating, building capacity for collective action, empowering poor people and women, building social capital¹⁸⁶ - community-level gender attitude¹⁸⁷ - psychological empowerment: perceived knowledge, skills development, perceived participation, compliance, expected future individuals contributions, perceived group accomplishments, future expected accomplishments¹⁸⁸ - micro: attitude, feelings, skills/ interface: participation and action immediately around the individual/ macro: beliefs, action and effects¹⁸⁹ - access to health services¹⁹⁰ - access to education and training services¹⁹¹ - estimated spending on personal health¹⁹²
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¹⁶⁷ Ibid.: 137

¹⁶⁸ Ibid.: 141

¹⁶⁹ Ibid.: 141

¹⁷⁰ Alsop and Heinsohn (2005): 85

¹⁷¹ Alsop et al (2006): 52

¹⁷² Ibid.: 52

¹⁷³ Ibid.: 130

¹⁷⁴ Ibid.: 125

¹⁷⁵ Mason and Smith (2003) cited in Alsop and Heinsohn (2005): 37

¹⁷⁶ Mason and Smith (2003) cited in Alsop and Heinsohn (2005): 37

¹⁷⁷ Mason and Smith (2003) cited in Alsop and Heinsohn (2005): 37

¹⁷⁸ Alsop et al (2006): 337

¹⁷⁹ Ibid.: 54

¹⁸⁰ Ibid.: 55

¹⁸¹ Ibid.: 20

¹⁸² Ibid.: 291

¹⁸³ Ibid.: 291

¹⁸⁴ Ibid.: 220

¹⁸⁵ Spreitzer (1995) cited in Alsop et al (2006): 228

¹⁸⁶ Malena (2003) in Alsop and Heinsohn (2005): 35-36

¹⁸⁷ Oppenheim, Mason and Smith 2003 cited in Alsop and Heinsohn (2005): 37

¹⁸⁸ McMillan et al (1995) cited in Alsop et al (2006): 224

¹⁸⁹ Albertyn (2001) cited in Alsop et al (2006): 220

¹⁹⁰ Alsop et al (2006): 337

¹⁹¹ Ibid.: 337

¹⁹² Ibid.: 338

¹⁹³ Ibid.: 338

¹⁹⁴ Ibid.: 339

¹⁹⁵ Ibid.: 339

¹⁹⁶ Ibid.: 339

		<ul style="list-style-type: none">- decision-making on public services in the community¹⁹³- actual involvement in communal decision-making¹⁹⁴- willingness to be involved in communal decision-making¹⁹⁵- individual influence on communal decision-making processes¹⁹⁶
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