**LOCAL COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN DECENTRALISATION PROCESS: OPTIONS, OPPORTUNITIES AND RISK**

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There are two important roles that participation can have; by this I mean: local communities’ participation. I’m not talking about voting, I’m not talking about people going to vote, I’m talking about the local communities participating in local institutions such as participatory budgeting institutions, health councils, and neighbour councils, etc. So in that capacity I think that participation can fulfil two roles: first it has a social control role, it’s a watchdog, it make sure that local elites spend the money as they are supposed to spend them, that the doctor is in the hospital, that the teacher is coming to the school. So the first role is that they check the local government that they recourse at the level of accountability in the delivery of social services. In this regard they exercise some social control functions. But I think it is also very important, and this was told me by participants, by civil society participants that they are also part of the dialogue about the design of the public policies that the role it is not only to be a watchdog but to help design public policies. And I think those are very meaningful, important and debate for the state because that allows the state to implement public policies that are closer to the taste and preferences of their constituencies. So now we can think perhaps of two types of participation: there is one type of participation where, that I have called as democratizing effects, as said sorry democratizing effect, which is where the local communities is working together with the local government and the local communities perform social control functions but also is part of the debate about design of public policies. And I think in this context, if these things happened, local communities’ participations can socialize citizens into democracy to learning what a more meaningful citizenship might be and this has very positive effect for democracy as a political regime. However if communities participation isn’t instead done in the spite of local governments, so it is done in such a way that the central government delegates a mandate to a local community bypassing the local government where local government it is supposed perhaps to the local communities or local communities is very atomize, then is less lightly that that type of participation would have a democratizing effect, what we are more likely to see is that that type of community participation will end up producing distrustful citizen or citizen that are disenchanted with the political system because very soon they encounter the limit of the very atomize, very local and without much support type of participation.