



**Making Citizenship and Rights Matter for the Poor**  
**Newsletter #1 September 2003**

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Welcome to the first issue of Making Citizenship and Rights matter for the Poor quarterly electronic newsletter from the Development Research Centre on Citizenship, Participation and Accountability (Citizenship DRC). This newsletter provides an update of the Citizenship DRC's recent activities, findings and publications.

**1. What is the Citizenship DRC?**

The Development Research Centre on Citizenship, Participation and Accountability, or Citizenship DRC, is an international research partnership exploring new forms of citizenship that will help make rights real for poor people. It involves a network of researchers and practitioners working with research institutions and civil society organisations located in 7 different countries - Bangladesh, Brazil, India, Mexico, Nigeria, South Africa and the UK.

The long-term aim of the Citizenship DRC is to identify ways of ensuring that development policy and practice provide more effective support for poor people's own efforts to transform their rights into realities. The research programme explores poor people's perceptions and experiences of citizenship, participation and accountability relationships and strategies. By linking research to action, and by grounding theoretical work in empirical understanding of strategies that work for poor people, the Citizenship DRC aims to contribute to policy and practice that can make a difference to the lives of people living with poverty and social exclusion. Visit [www.drc-citizenship.org](http://www.drc-citizenship.org) to learn more about us.

**2. New Research Programmes launched**

Citizenship DRC partners met this June in Cape Town to define 3 research programmes that will guide the partnership's next 2 years of research.

-- *Citizens and Science in a Global Context* will focus on how citizens mobilise to claim rights around knowledge and expertise in the Citizen Science arena, including comparative research on HIV/AIDS activism in Brazil and South Africa, and a study of vaccination campaigns in Western Africa;

-- *Inclusion, Representation, and Voice in Public Policy: a comparative study of intermediary institutions* will examine the dynamics of intermediary institutional spaces, asking who participates in them, who speaks for whom, on what basis and with what outcomes. Among other studies, this programme will look at how marginalised people participate in the design of health policies in Bangladesh, Brazil and Mexico;

-- *Claiming Rights and Realising Accountabilities* will explore what strategies of accountability work under what conditions and for whom, ranging from studies of labour struggles in Bangladesh to indigenous peoples' struggles for land and resource rights in India, Mexico and Nigeria.

These programmes are guided by common questions but made up of a series of projects carried out by DRC researchers located in diverse DRC partner countries. An examination of the challenges researchers face in their study of citizenship issues will cross-cut all research programmes.

For more information on upcoming research visit [www.drc-citizenship.org](http://www.drc-citizenship.org).

**3. Meanings and Expressions of Rights and Citizenship Research Findings**

Citizenship DRC researchers met in Stellenbosch, South Africa to discuss and revise their findings on how rights and citizenship are understood and expressed in a variety of contexts. For instance, participatory research by DRC researchers in Nigeria documents the role of identity and indigeneity in defining citizenship and exclusion:

*"Nigeria is no more than geography! The real belonging is to one's ethnic group in the first instance. In the second instance people looked to religious affiliations for existential meaning. The State is third and tenuous. Nigeria has still not coalesced; indeed it is breaking apart...Citizenship in Nigeria therefore emerges as a bounded experience determined by ethnicity at birth."*

Editor, Dr. Naila Kabeer will be compiling these findings in *Meanings and Expressions of Rights and Citizenship* the first of a 5 volume series, published by Zed books. It is expected to be published by early 2004. For more information on this meeting and the Citizenship DRC Zed book series, visit [www2.ids.ac.uk/drcitizen/highlights/authors.htm](http://www2.ids.ac.uk/drcitizen/highlights/authors.htm).

**4. Upcoming Events: Rights and Power Workshop at IDS**



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In following the Citizenship DRC's objective of turning peoples' rights into reality and in response to requests from development practitioners, the Citizenship DRC is holding a workshop on Rights and Power. The workshop will be held at IDS, November 17-20 2003. The closing date for application is 30 September 2003. For more information on the workshop, and how to apply, visit <http://www.ids.ac.uk/ids/teach/workshops/rightsconf.html>

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**4. New and Upcoming DRC Publications**  
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Recent Citizenship DRC publications from DRC South Africa Partners at the Centre for Sothern African Studies (CSAS), University of the Western Cape: [www.uwc.ac.za/ems/sog/CSAS](http://www.uwc.ac.za/ems/sog/CSAS)

--*Not about knowledge, but numbers? An examination of the notion of stakeholder participation and the governance of water as a 'scarce resource' in global and national policy discourses on development and security*, by Lisa Thompson

--*Rights and participation of communities in the South in global environmental discourses: some initial conceptual and theoretical issues*, by Lisa Thompson

--*Community participation: constructing the post-apartheid city*, by John Williams

--*Governance from below: Rights, global citizens and local spaces of participation*, by Steve Robins and Bettina von Lieres

Upcoming Citizenship DRC publications from the Institute of Development Studies <http://www.ids.ac.uk/ids/bookshop/index.html> in the UK:

--*Making rights work for the poor: Nijera Kori and the construction of collective capabilities in rural Bangladesh*, by Naila Kabeer

--*Who participates? Civil society and the new democratic politics in São Paulo, Brazil*, by Peter Houtzager, Adrian Gurza Lavalle, and Arnab Acharya (co-produced with the Future State DRC)

--*Sectoral constructions of participation in policy: A comparative view of education, health and environment*, by Andrea Cornwall, Melissa Leach, Ian Scoones, Alex Shankland and Ramya Subrahmanian

--*Citizens and science in a global context*, by Melissa Leach and Ian Scoones

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**5. To Subscribe or to Stop Receiving this Newsletter**  
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