

# Empowerment in Practice: Analysis and Implementation

*A World Bank Learning Module*

May 2007



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1818 H Street, N.W.

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**Empowerment in Practice: Analysis and Implementation**

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## Foreword

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People in all walks of life continually make choices. For some, however, the range of options is more restricted than for others. The poor in particular have inadequate employment opportunities, have little voice in decision making, often lack basic services, have limited recourse to state-sponsored systems of justice, and can rarely hold government representatives accountable. They suffer from inequality because they generally lack the power to change their lives and move out of poverty. Moreover, certain groups, such as women and specific ethnic or social categories, are more disempowered than others.

This learning module provides a tool for understanding the concept of empowerment and for using it in development practice. The module offers a framework for conceptualizing empowerment and takes participants through case-based exercises that apply the framework to the analysis, design, implementation, and monitoring of development policies and operations.

The World Bank, along with its development partners in donor agencies, governments, and civil society, recognizes that poverty reduction must address the often complex processes that limit people's capacity to make life-changing choices. It is necessary but insufficient for poverty-reduction programs to deliver services, to develop infrastructure, and to promote overall growth. Effective and sustainable development means policies and interventions that build the assets of poor people, as well as the "rules of the game" that allow the poor to transform those assets into poverty-reducing benefits.

The model presented in this module takes a long-standing academic discourse on structure and agency and puts it into an actionable framework that can help change power relations and, in turn, reduce poverty. Using the concepts of asset-based agency and institution-based opportunity structure, the empowerment framework can be selectively applied to both action and analysis. As an operational instrument, the framework can help policy makers and practitioners design more effective policies and operations to empower people. As an analytic tool, the framework can track levels of empowerment, assess progress toward that goal, and offer guidance on how to embed empowerment analysis into broader poverty-monitoring systems.

This version of the Empowerment Learning Module is intended as a base module that can be adapted to the skill level, interest, context, and time constraints of various learning participants. The module consists of a set of trainer's notes, a PowerPoint presentation to which the notes refer, a briefing paper, and a set of case-based exercises. Those elements are organized in the sequence required for a daylong learning session. A reference list of additional documents and a set of Web links are also provided.

This module is one of the outputs of the World Bank's Poverty Group, which is part of the Poverty Reduction and Economic Management Network. It is complemented by a book, *Empowerment in Practice: From Analysis to Implementation*, and a survey module. The book is available from the World Bank bookshop in hard copy. It can also be downloaded in electronic form, together with the survey module, from [www.worldbank.org/empowerment](http://www.worldbank.org/empowerment).

Louise Cord  
Sector Manager  
Poverty Reduction Group  
Poverty Reduction and  
Economic Management Network

Konrad von Ritter  
Sector Manager  
Sustainable Development  
Division  
World Bank Institute

## Abstract

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This learning module presents an analytic framework of empowerment that is rooted in both conceptual discourse and measurement practice. The framework suggests a conceptualization of empowerment that can focus development interventions and can guide the measurement and monitoring of empowerment processes and outcomes. The module provides a valuable learning opportunity for development practitioners who are engaged in empowerment analysis at the intervention, project, and country level or as a part of a poverty- or governance-monitoring process.

The learning module consists of a briefing paper, which provides a short introduction to the empowerment framework, and four learning sessions, which feature appropriate slides, trainer's notes, and handouts.

**Session 1** lays out the **empowerment basics**, presenting a definition of empowerment and the main concepts of the analytic framework. After this session, participants should be able to provide a working definition of empowerment and to describe the central concepts of agency, opportunity structure, and degrees of empowerment, as well as to apply those concepts to their own work.

**Session 2**, which complements the first session, expands the presentation of the analytic framework **as it** introduces the **concepts of domains and levels of empowerment**. First, participants work in groups to apply the concepts of assets, institutions, and degrees of empowerment to different cases from the same Indian village. They are then introduced to domains and levels of empowerment. Last, participants should be able to apply those concepts and to provide examples of domains and levels at which empowerment takes place.

**Session 3** focuses on **empowerment interventions**, moving from understanding the central concepts of empowerment to learning how those concepts can be used in practice. It presents examples to illustrate how empowerment issues can be embedded in project formulation and in policy design and analysis. By the end of this session, participants should be able to better understand the linkages between the different concepts and to use the analytic framework to improve the design of **project and policy interventions**.

**Session 4** focuses on **empowerment indicators**, explaining how to use the framework to develop concrete indicators that capture issues of empowerment in both project interventions and national policies. The presentation discusses indirect and direct indicators of empowerment. Given the length of the module, this session is optional. The trainer will be able to assess whether to include it or not, depending on the time available and the interests of the participants. By the end of this session, participants should be able to identify effective indicators for measuring and analyzing empowerment at the policy and project levels. The final session is aimed at people who work specifically with the development of indicators.

Please note that, despite the distinction made between project and policy indicators, learning module participants will eventually develop context- and application-specific indicators that are for their own development projects and that do not necessarily fall neatly into those categories. It is the experience of the Empowerment Team at the World Bank that the analytic framework can be used for different aspects of empowerment from individual intervention to national policy.

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# **Briefing Paper**

Empowerment in Practice: Analysis and Implementation

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## Introduction

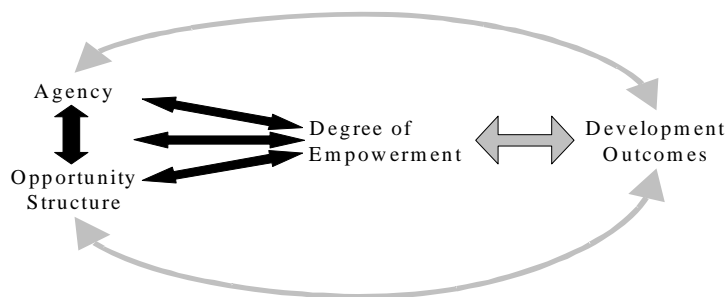
Empowerment means to **enhance the capacity of an individual or group to make purposive choices and to transform those choices into desired actions and outcomes**. It was first given prominence by the World Bank in its *World Development Report, 2000–2001*. It has since figured among the objectives of more than 100 Bank lending projects. Despite increased investment in empowerment, however, the concept has remained loosely defined in project activities, and there are few instruments or indicators for monitoring empowerment processes and outcomes. The aim of this Empowerment Learning Module is to address that gap.

The analytic framework presented in this learning module should help focus development interventions, as well as provide guidance for monitoring empowerment processes and outcomes. It is intended for development practitioners who are engaged in analyzing or monitoring projects, or as part of a poverty- or governance-monitoring process. This briefing paper and later the module will elaborate on how empowerment can be defined and then will discuss the different components related to empowerment. The discussion and a presentation of the analytic framework are followed by an illustration of a practical application of the empowerment framework.

## Framework for Understanding and Measuring Empowerment

If individuals or groups are empowered, they possess the capacity to make *effective* choices, that is, to translate their choices into desired actions and outcomes. As figure 1 illustrates, that capacity is influenced primarily by two interrelated factors: agency and opportunity structure. Agency refers to an actor's ability to make meaningful choices, that is, to consider and purposively choose among options. Opportunity structure refers to contextual factors that affect the extent to which an actor can actually transform those choices into effective action. The actual degree of empowerment depends on the extent of the actor's agency and the nature of the opportunity structure.

**Figure 1. Relationship between Outcomes and Correlates of Empowerment**



### Agency

How can we capture the concept of agency? For purposes of measurement, the closest way to predict the agency of people or groups is to identify their *endowment of assets*, that is, the resources that allow people to use social, political, and economic opportunities; to be productive; and to protect themselves against shocks. Assets include the array of psychological, informational, organizational, material, social, financial, and human resources that people call on in their daily lives. Some of those assets are easier to measure than others. Thus, it is easier to quantify human assets, such as skills or literacy, than psychological assets, such as self-confidence or the capacity to envision alternatives.

Often, assets interact or go together. For example, education (a human asset) often gives an actor greater access to information (another asset) and greater capacity to envision alternative options (a psychological asset). This interaction makes analysis quite challenging, and it affects data collection and analysis. To test for the effects of one asset on another, as well as their association with empowerment outcomes, the



analyst has to look at all the different assets instead of trying to capture only one particular asset that is isolated from others.

### ***Opportunity Structure***

Even when actors choose among options, whether they can actually put the choice into action depends on the context of *formal* and *informal institutions*—the opportunity structure. Those institutions include the formal and informal laws, regulatory frameworks, values, and norms that govern people’s behavior. The presence and operation of those institutions affect, first, whether individuals and groups have access to assets and, second, the extent to which they can actually deploy those assets to achieve desired outcomes. As with assets, interaction among different types of institutions is likely. Formal laws or policies may, for example, be ineffective in practice because they contradict social norms and behavior. When one measures opportunity structures, it is thus absolutely critical to analyze not only formal institutions but also informal institutions.

### ***Interaction between Structure and Agency: Degrees of Empowerment***

People’s assets and the opportunity structures surrounding those assets will, in part, determine the level of empowerment they experience. The empowerment framework identifies three degrees of empowerment for individuals and groups: existence, use, and achievement of choices. Thus, the measurement of assets and opportunity structures can provide indirect indicators of empowerment. It can also be useful to measure degrees of empowerment more directly by assessing the three aspects of choice:

- Whether an opportunity to make a choice actually exists (existence of choice)
- Whether a person or group actually uses the opportunity to choose (use of choice)
- Whether the choice results in the desired outcome (achievement of choice)

### ***Where Empowerment Takes Place: Domains and Levels***

Using agency and opportunity structure to analyze empowerment is helpful, but one must also consider how the capacity of actors to make effective choices varies according to the context in which they operate.

***Domains.*** The empowerment framework identifies three domains, each with its own “subdomains”:

- ***State***, in which a person or group is a civic actor. The state includes the following subdomains:
  - *justice*
  - *politics*
  - *public services*
- ***Market***, in which a person or group is an economic actor. The market includes the following subdomains:
  - *labor*
  - *goods*
  - *private services*
- ***Society***, in which a person or group is a social actor. Society includes the following subdomains:
  - *intra-household relationships*
  - *intra-community relationships*

**Levels.** Within the domains of state, market, and society, people operate and experience empowerment differently depending on the scope and reach (or “levels”) of their activities:

- The *local level* refers to a person’s neighborhood or community.
- The *intermediary level* refers to the larger community that is familiar but with which a person is not engaged on a daily basis. It tends to fall between the residential and national levels.
- The *macro level* refers to the largest context within which a person operates, which is generally the national level.

For example, in India, the local level might correspond to the village, the intermediary level to the district, and macro level to the state. In this case, the federal or national level could be said to constitute a fourth supra-macro level.

### The Framework in Practice

The framework (summarized in table 1) provides an analytic structure that should be useful for practitioners, researchers, and policy makers who are tracking progress in empowerment:

- *Project design teams* can use the framework to focus on areas of *ex ante* information collection, to set priorities for areas of action, and to develop effective strategies for implementation.
- *Monitoring and evaluation practitioners* can use the framework to assess whether empowerment objectives are being reached and to identify the specific factors that correlate with related outcomes. At the national level, the framework can be used to identify key indicators for each domain to analyze empowerment at different levels. Given the complexity of empowerment, specifying domains and levels allows more nuanced comparisons across countries. Such information, particularly on trends, can encourage governments to improve their respective performance and to help international policy makers and donors set strategy and financing priorities.
- *Researchers* can use the framework to structure analysis of whether, how, and to what extent people are or can be empowered. To develop policy and practice recommendations, such research would ideally focus on all subdomains and levels identified by the analytic framework. Often, however, it will not be possible to use all elements of the framework for every application. Rather, an analysis will focus on a few subdomains and on one or two levels and will rarely be able to fill out every single space in the matrix summarizing the framework (see table 1).

**Table 1. Empowerment Matrix: Summary of Analytic Framework**

		<i>Determinants and outcomes</i>								
<i>Domain</i>	<i>Subdomain</i>	<i>Local level</i>			<i>Intermediary level</i>			<i>Macro level</i>		
		<i>A</i>	<i>OS</i>	<i>DOE</i>	<i>AA</i>	<i>OS</i>	<i>DOE</i>	<i>A</i>	<i>OS</i>	<i>DOE</i>
<i>State</i>	Justice									
	Politics									
	Public services									
<i>Market</i>	Labor									

	Goods									
	Private services									
Society	Intra-household									
	Intra-community									

Note: A = agency. OS = opportunity structure. DOE = degree of empowerment. Agency is measured by the endowment of financial, human, informational, material, organizational, and psychological assets. Opportunity structure is measured by the presence and operation of informal and formal rules. The degree of empowerment is measured by the existence, use (direct or indirect), and effectiveness of choice.

The framework is flexible in that it identifies what is important to measure, but it does not prescribe the depth of data collection or analysis required for any particular use. It enables the selection of relevant indicators (see next section) and the determination of causality to be country and context specific. Thus, the framework identifies clear areas of inquiry and allows practitioners and researchers to adapt the elements to specific situations.

### Indicators and Measurement

The framework enables the application of preexisting indicators. For instance, the Living Standards Measurement Study and social capital tools already capture indicators of agency.<sup>1</sup> The framework can thus incorporate existing data in countries where surveys have already been undertaken. Alternatively, other national-level surveys can be enhanced by integrating parts of the empowerment survey module<sup>2</sup>.

Selecting indicators of opportunity structure, however, is complicated by the gap between formal rules and the way in which rules are applied in practice. Therefore, measuring the influence of institutions benefits from a mixed-methods approach that includes national-level tracking of legislation, regulations, and procedures, as well as in-depth probing of how informal institutions actually operate.

Information on “degrees of empowerment” is not currently provided by any other survey instrument and, therefore, must be collected as primary data.

This framework is complex and has to be adapted to each context. Likewise, the selection of indicators depends on the purpose to which the information will be applied. For example, a Honduras case study (see box 1) examined whether the devolution of educational authority to community education councils led to the empowerment of parents as demonstrated by their role in school-related decision making, vis-à-vis the school staff. The selected indicators were thus clustered under “public service delivery” at the local level. By contrast, a women’s empowerment project in Ethiopia used indicators relevant to the subdomains of community, goods, household, and justice, which were all at the local level.

### Summary

To conclude, empowerment can be assessed in different *domains* (state, market, and society) and *subdomains* of a person’s life and at different *levels* (local, intermediary, and macro). At the intersection of domains and levels, people experience different *degrees of empowerment*. The degree of empowerment

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<sup>1</sup> See Alsop and Heinsohn (2005) and Alsop, Bertelsen, and Holland (2006) for examples of specific empowerment indicators.

<sup>2</sup> The empowerment survey module can be found in Alsop, Bertelsen, and Holland (2006) or on the following webpage: [www.worldbank.org/empowerment](http://www.worldbank.org/empowerment).

**Box 1. Examples of Empowerment Indicators Used in Different Case Studies****Community-based Education Project, Honduras**

The proposed framework makes it possible to identify three sets of indicators: those that relate to a person's assets, their opportunity structure, and their degree of empowerment (DOE). In this project, asset indicators included parents' awareness of the rights and responsibilities associated with joining the community school councils (informational) and their prior participation in community matters (organizational). Indicators of opportunity structure included the existence and operation of rules that determined whether members of disadvantaged groups—including women, ethnic minorities, and the poor—could participate in the education councils. Indicators of parents' DOE included attendance at school council meetings and success in terms of holding teachers accountable for their performance.

**Women's Development Initiative Project, Ethiopia**

This project used the ratio of girls who are enrolled in or completed primary and secondary education as an asset indicator (human). The existence and operation of rules and laws that discriminate against women were used as indicators of the opportunity structure. Finally, DOE indicators included women's ability to participate in or influence community meetings (community subdomain), to make intra-household consumption or investment decisions (household subdomain), and to access the courts (justice subdomain).

is a function of how an actor's *agency* interacts with the *opportunity structure* (that is, formal and informal institutions) within which the actor operates. Analyzing agency and opportunity structure can help explain how, why, and how greatly an actor is empowered.

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*Session 1:*  
*Empowerment Basics*

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Users of this module should keep in mind that the module is a first cut at helping practitioners understand the concept of empowerment so that it can be effectively built into development interventions. It is expected that the module will be expanded and refined as more experience accrues from applying it in different country and sector contexts. We welcome reactions to the module, ideas for making it more useful, and suggestions for better tailoring it to different kinds of audiences.

The trainer should become familiar with the empowerment framework described in *Empowerment in Practice: From Analysis to Implementation* (Alsop, Bertelsen, and Holland 2006). Trainees are expected to have some operational development experience. Before the workshop, participants should receive and be asked to read Handout 1: Case Study Background. Ideally, participants will be seated around tables in groups of six to facilitate discussion. Trainers should note the many current concrete examples, which they should weave into presentations and ensuing discussions, as needed.

### **Audience**

Development practitioners working on projects, policies, or programs intended to empower people—whether empowerment is the principal objective or a means of reaching other objectives. The module is suitable for World Bank staff members and client country actors, such as government officials and civil society representatives.

### **Purpose**

To define empowerment, the empowerment analytical framework, and its core concepts.

### **Objectives**

By the end of session 1, participants will be able to do the following:

- Provide a working definition of empowerment.
- Describe the following empowerment framework concepts: agency, opportunity structure, and degrees of empowerment.
- Apply the empowerment framework and the concepts to their own work.

### **Materials**

PowerPoint slides 1–13

Handout 1: Case Study Background. (This handout provides the background for the three case studies used in session 2.)

Flip chart and markers

### **Time**

1 hour 30 minutes

### **Process**

1. Keep title slide showing while making opening comments. Consider beginning with an ice-breaker exercise to actively involve participants in the discussion.
2. Slide 1 explains the purpose and objectives of the module.

Explain that an empowerment approach treats poverty as a matter of deprivation in the exercise of choice, thus helping to explain why some people are more likely to be impoverished than others. In that sense, empowerment expands poverty analysis from a purely monetary issue (through the measurement of income, consumption, or expenditure) to a relational approach. This understanding of poverty requires analysis of people's relative capacity to achieve a desired outcome, given their asset base and institutional environment.

3. Ask one or two volunteers to explain if and why they think empowerment is important for their development work.

**Title  
Slide**



*Empowerment Learning Module*

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*Empowerment in Practice:  
Analysis and Implementation*

*A World Bank Learning Module*

**Slide  
1**



*Module Objectives*

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By the end of this module, you will be able to do the following:

- Define empowerment, its core concepts, and the empowerment analytic framework.
- Apply the empowerment framework to the design of operations.
- Apply the framework to monitoring and analysis of empowerment processes and outcomes.

4. Slide 2 provides both the *intrinsic value* (empowerment is of value in itself) and the *instrumental value* (empowerment contributes to other development outcomes) for investing in empowerment.
- a. **Intrinsic value.** Arguments for the intrinsic value of empowerment are found in the philosophical underpinnings of the literature on democratization and decentralization (Dollar and Kraay 2002; Kaufmann, Kraay, and Mastruzzi 2004; Moore and Putzel 1999), nonmonetary aspects of poverty reduction (Bourguignon, Ferreira, and Menendez 2003; Sen 1999a), and human rights approaches to development (Alsop 2005, chapter by Alsop and Norton 2004; DFID 2000; Eyben 2003; Moser and Norton 2001). Those sources argue that the capacity to act as an equal and effective agent, whether as an individual or group, is a basic human right and a principle of development.
  - b. **Instrumental value.** The instrumental arguments are simple: empowerment correlates with achievements in other development outcomes, including growth, poverty alleviation, and the realization of human rights (Alsop, Bertelsen, and Holland 2006, chapter by Heller et al.; Lokshin and Ravallion 2005; Varshney 2005; Stern, Dethier, and Rogers 2005; Sen 1997). Provide examples from among the following:
    - *Example 1.* At the project level, an ongoing impact evaluation of the Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Project in Nepal (Bennett and Gajurel 2005) found that communities that were most successful in bringing drinking water to their people were those in which low-caste women had the greatest degree of empowerment. In such communities, the women's groups were also inclusive and effective. In contrast, the communities that were least successful in achieving project objectives of better water supply and sanitation were the ones that were most dominated by a single, powerful group. Here, low-caste women had a lower degree of empowerment, and women's groups were weak and inefficient.
    - *Example 2.* A recent study examining the empowerment and development effects of participatory budgeting in Brazil (Alsop, Bertelsen, and Holland 2006, chapter by Heller et al.) found that empowerment can have direct, tangible benefits: increased participation in budget processes in many municipalities translated into better overall governance. The authors attributed that outcome to informational returns associated with participation and to increased accountability. Econometric analysis revealed that participatory budgeting as a mechanism of empowerment also correlated strongly and positively with reductions in extreme poverty. This finding supports the importance of participatory budgeting as a tool for achieving accountable governance (Vergara 2002). Vergara found that participatory budgeting generated greater tax revenues and a more responsible expenditure policy that directed increased tax revenue to pro-poor spending.
    - To further elaborate, refer to a cross-country study on social accountability and government effectiveness (Kaufmann, Kraay, and Mastruzzi 2004), which proved a strong empirical relationship between higher levels of client empowerment and the effectiveness of public service delivery.



Slide  
2



## *The Value of Empowerment*

### **Question: Why bother with empowerment?**

#### **Intrinsic value**

- The capacity to make effective choices is a basic human right and a principle of development.

#### **Instrumental value**

- Empowerment correlates positively with growth and poverty alleviation.

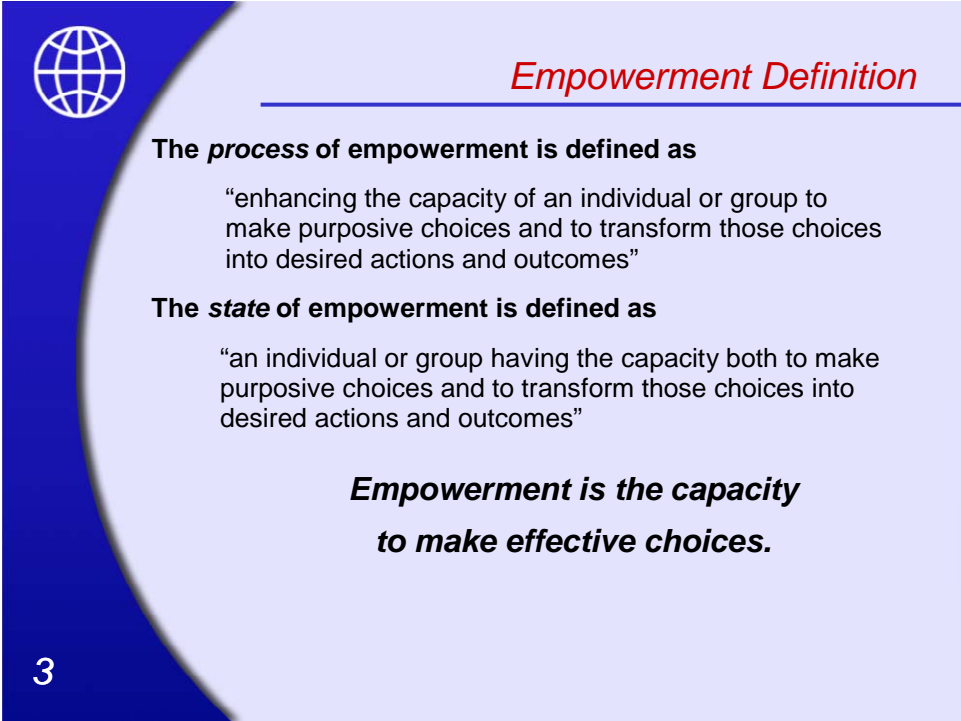
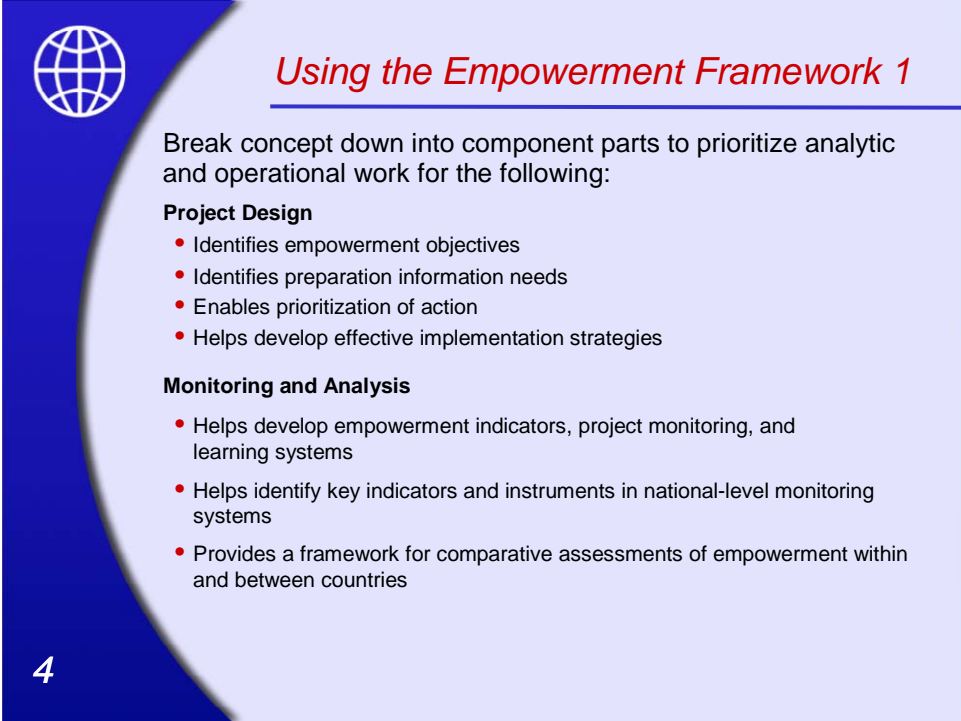
#### **Examples**

- Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Project in Nepal  
*empowerment of low-caste women = greater success in reaching project objectives*
- Participatory Budgeting in Brazil  
*increased budget participation = better overall governance*

2

Trainer

5. Before moving on to slide 3, ask participants to think about what “empowerment” means to them.
  - What images or scenarios come to mind when they hear this term? Record the group’s ideas on a flip chart.
  - Build the definition of empowerment using those ideas.
6. Review the definition of *empowerment* on Slide 3.
7. Note that empowerment is a very abstract concept and thus is difficult to measure and understand.
8. Ask participants when they have needed to apply the concept. List those occurrences on a flip chart.

<p><b>Slide</b> <b>3</b></p>	 <p><b>The process of empowerment is defined as</b></p> <p>“enhancing the capacity of an individual or group to make purposive choices and to transform those choices into desired actions and outcomes”</p> <p><b>The state of empowerment is defined as</b></p> <p>“an individual or group having the capacity both to make purposive choices and to transform those choices into desired actions and outcomes”</p> <p><b><i>Empowerment is the capacity to make effective choices.</i></b></p>
<p><b>Trainer</b></p>	<p>9. The empowerment framework used in this learning module breaks the concept into component parts, which help focus analytic and operational work. Read slides 4 and 5.</p>
<p><b>Slide</b> <b>4</b></p>	 <p><b><i>Using the Empowerment Framework 1</i></b></p> <p>Break concept down into component parts to prioritize analytic and operational work for the following:</p> <p><b>Project Design</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identifies empowerment objectives</li> <li>• Identifies preparation information needs</li> <li>• Enables prioritization of action</li> <li>• Helps develop effective implementation strategies</li> </ul> <p><b>Monitoring and Analysis</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Helps develop empowerment indicators, project monitoring, and learning systems</li> <li>• Helps identify key indicators and instruments in national-level monitoring systems</li> <li>• Provides a framework for comparative assessments of empowerment within and between countries</li> </ul>

<p>Slide 5</p>	 <p><i>Using the Empowerment Framework 2</i></p> <p>Break concept down into component parts to prioritize analytic and operational work for the following:</p> <p><b>Research</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Structures data collection, choice of research instruments, and analysis</li> </ul> <p><b>Policy Advice</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Frames analysis and presentation of policy documents (for example, poverty reduction strategies, poverty assessments, country assistance strategies)</li> </ul> <p>5</p>
<p>Trainer</p>	<p>10. The primary concepts of the empowerment analytic framework are agency, opportunity structure, and degrees of empowerment. The concepts are further explored in slides 6–9.</p> <p>11. Read slide 6.</p>
<p>Slide 6</p>	 <p><i>Agency + Opportunity Structure = Degrees of Empowerment</i></p> <p>The capacity to make effective choices is shaped by the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Agency:</b> an actor's ability to consider and purposively choose options</li> <li>• <b>Opportunity structure:</b> the institutional context that influences an actor's ability to transform agency into action</li> </ul> <p>Together, agency and opportunity structure influence an actor's <b>degree of empowerment.</b></p> <p>6</p>

12. Read slide 7. The agency of a person or group is determined largely by its asset endowment. Review the examples of assets provided:
- **Financial:** sources of income and savings
  - **Human:** education, skills, and health
  - **Informational:** access to informal and formal sources of information
  - **Material** (individual and collective): land, equipment, housing, and infrastructure
  - **Organizational:** membership of (local) organizations
  - **Psychological:** sociability, self-confidence, and capacity to envision change
  - **Social:** social capital, networks, and relationships
13. **Assets interact.** Explain that the endowment of one asset, such as land or home ownership, can affect a person's ability to access another asset, such as credit (financial). Likewise, the endowment of education often gives an actor greater access to information and may also increase a person's capacity to envision alternative options (three assets in all). Because assets often overlap, it may, at times, be difficult to isolate one from the other. Review the Institute for Adult Education (INEA) example below.
- *Example.* The INEA in Mexico provides literacy training and basic education to disadvantaged young adults who have not attended or have dropped out of the formal school system. Student testimony indicates that enrollment in INEA programs did more than increase their level of education. They report that reading and writing have enhanced their self-confidence; thus, they are less hesitant to voice their opinions and speak in public.
- INEA courses also give students access to information. Women learn, for example, that domestic violence is a violation of their legal rights and that they are entitled to seek help or redress. Coupled with increased self-confidence, such information might lead an INEA student to take action to stop abuse. INEA schools also provide an arena for interaction that helps build individual and community social capital. Studying together, students learn to trust each other and to develop friendships and networks of support.



### *Agency Predicted by Asset Endowment*

The **agency** of a person or group can be predicted largely by its **asset endowment**.

#### **Examples of assets:**

- **Informational**—access to radio, newspaper, and TV
- **Organizational**—local organization membership
- **Material**—individual or collective land ownership
- **Psychological**—self-perceived exclusion and happiness
- **Social**—relationships and networks
- **Financial**—employment, debt, and savings
- **Human**—literacy, numeracy, and health status

**Assets can interact**—Institute of Adult Education in Mexico

Trainer

14. Read slide 8. An actor may be able to choose options, but whether he or she actually realizes his or her choice ultimately depends on the opportunity structure. The opportunity structure is defined by institutions—the “rules of the game” that shape and constrain human interaction and individual choices.

Ask participants to share an example.

15. Institutions can be formal or informal.

- **Formal** institutions include laws and regulatory frameworks that govern people’s behavior.
- **Informal** institutions include cultural values and social norms or the norms and customs that shape the actual (as opposed to official) functioning of an organization.

Slide  
8


### *Opportunity Structure = Formal and Informal Institutions*


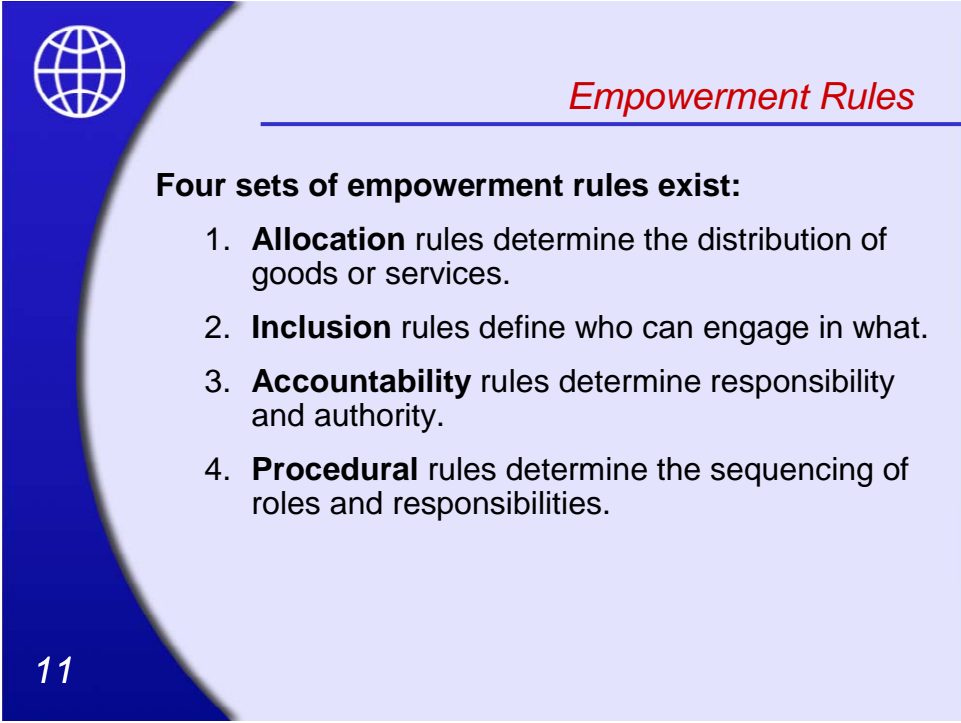
Effective realization of choice is contingent on **formal and informal institutions**.

Those institutions, or “**rules of the game**,” shape the opportunity structure of an individual or group.

- **Formal institutions** include laws and regulatory frameworks that govern people’s behavior.
- **Informal institutions** include “unofficial” rules that govern bureaucracies, informal cultural practices, and value systems, as well as norms of behavior that operate in households or among groups.

8

<b>Trainer</b>	<p>16. Read slide 9. The Empowerment Framework calls for information on the existence and operation of both formal and informal institutions. Which institutions exist, and how do they operate in practice?</p> <p>17. Informal institutions can either mediate or distort the intended outcome of the formal institutions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Example 1.</i> Most rural people in Ethiopia continue to apply customary laws to their economic and social relationships. Article 34(7) of the Ethiopian Constitution reserves the option of citizens to adjudicate personal disputes in accordance with religious or customary laws, rather than the civil code, if the parties to the dispute agree to do so. In practice, personal disputes, particularly between men and women, are frequently directed to a traditional adjudication mechanism by the choice of men and with the consent of women.</li> </ul> <p>In Muslim areas, if a husband first goes to the Sharia (religious law) court to institute divorce proceedings, the wife often does not have recourse to a civil court. Typically, traditional courts are the first recourse in such disputes, and they often favor men.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Example 2.</i> In India, constitutional amendments in 1992 reserved seats for women representatives, but in many areas that practice has been less than optimal because the social norms that govern women’s public behavior undermine their capacity to operate as political leaders. (Without the force of the Indian Constitution, however, women would have endured a longer struggle to enter—and operate effectively in—the political arena.) Changes in legislation, such as constitutional amendments and subsequent state acts, often predate changes in practice so that efforts to monitor outcomes must track changes in practice.</li> </ul>
<b>Slide 9</b>	<div style="background-color: #d1e7ff; padding: 10px; border-radius: 10px;">  <p style="text-align: right; color: #c00000;"><i>Formal vs. Informal Institutions</i></p> <hr style="width: 40%; margin: 0 auto;"/> <p><b>Informal institutions</b> can mediate or distort the intended outcomes of <b>formal institutions</b></p> <p><b>Examples:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Ethiopia:</b> civil courts are promoted in constitution versus traditional (that is, Sharia) “courts” operating in everyday life.</li> <li>• <b>India:</b> constitutional amendments promote women’s local participation, but social norms prevent their effective participation in politics.</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: left; margin-top: 20px;">9</p> </div>
<b>Trainer</b>	<p>18. Read slide 10, and explain the difference between institutions and organizations.</p>

<p><b>Slide 10</b></p>	 <p><i>Institutions and Organizations</i></p> <p><b>It is important to differentiate between institutions and organizations.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Institutions:</b> rules of the game</li> <li>• <b>Organizations:</b> groups of individuals bound by a common purpose, subject to a defined set of authority relations, and dedicated to achieving objectives within particular rules of the game</li> </ul> <p>10</p>
<p><b>Trainer</b></p>	<p>19. Read slide 11. Review the four kinds of rules that are useful for conducting empowerment analysis, designing or implementing an empowerment project, or monitoring empowerment outcomes.</p>
<p><b>Slide 11</b></p>	 <p><i>Empowerment Rules</i></p> <p><b>Four sets of empowerment rules exist:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Allocation</b> rules determine the distribution of goods or services.</li> <li>2. <b>Inclusion</b> rules define who can engage in what.</li> <li>3. <b>Accountability</b> rules determine responsibility and authority.</li> <li>4. <b>Procedural</b> rules determine the sequencing of roles and responsibilities.</li> </ol> <p>11</p>


20. Read slide 12. Explain the three degrees of empowerment using the following example from Nepal:

- **Existence of choice.** Depending on an actor’s geographic, social, or economic position, an actor may lack the opportunity to make a desired choice. Thus, a rural woman in Nepal who wants to send her daughter to primary school may simply not have that option if there is no school within walking distance. It may not matter that the formal opportunity structure—in this case, a policy of education for all—exists. In the absence of a local school, the woman does not have the realistic opportunity to make a choice.
- **Use of choice.** A person or group may or may not use an existing opportunity to choose. If a school is within walking distance, does the Nepalese woman choose to send her daughter there? She may not choose to send her daughter to school because she cannot afford school supplies or pay the bribe levied by the teacher. Or she may fail to use the opportunity because her mother-in-law feels that girls don’t need an education. This scenario illustrates the interplay between informal institutions (the dominant role of the mother-in-law) and economic assets. Or the woman may not send her daughter to school because her husband objects and would beat her if she does—another informal rule about intra-household decision making that comes into play.
- **Achievement of choice.** It is a measure of how far a person or group can realize a desired outcome. In this case, if a local school exists, the husband supports schooling, and the mother chooses to send her daughter to school, does her daughter actually attend? If she does not attend, the analytic framework calls for examining the opportunity structure. Perhaps the girl comes from a low-caste family, and she is sent home her first day because the school accepts only high-caste children. Or failure to achieve the choice may result from inadequate assets of the girl and her family. She may lack the requisite skills to attend a class at her age level, or she may drop out because her household cannot afford a required school uniform.

Note: It is complicated to clearly distinguish between different “degrees of empowerment.” In the example, does the “achievement of choice” (the third degree of empowerment) simply mean that the girl attends school or that she attends school *and* acquires a good education? If she attends school but receives a poor education, does it make sense to consider her “empowered?” If one is to answer that question, it is important to keep in mind the immediate objective. In the example, the immediate objective was to ensure the girl’s attendance at school in an environment where girls have poor access to the educational system. This is the objective against which her empowerment must be measured. The quality of the education, however, may be influenced by exogenous factors, such as the quality of the teachers, learning materials, and facilities, concerns that are beyond the scope of the project and over which the girl and her mother have little control.



Slide 12



### *Three Degrees of Empowerment*

**The analytic framework operates with three degrees of empowerment**  
(example from Nepal):


- **Existence** of choice  
(schooling available to Nepalese girl)
- **Use** of choice  
(mother chooses to send daughter to school)
- **Achievement** of choice  
(daughter attends school)

12

Trainer

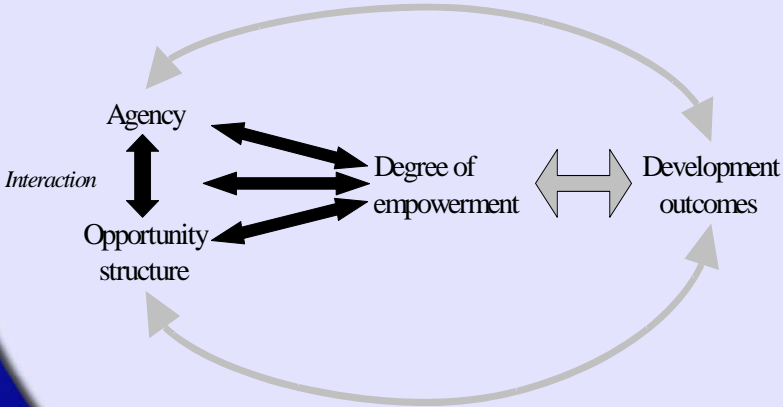
21. Slide 13 visualizes the framework and the relationship between correlates and outcomes of empowerment by illustrating how agency and opportunity give rise to different degrees of empowerment and are assumed to have mutually reinforcing effects on development outcomes.

Slide 13



### *Agency, Opportunity Structure, and Degrees of Empowerment*

Working together, agency and opportunity give rise to different degrees of empowerment.



13

**Trainer**

22. Discussion. Ask participants to form small groups and then to share with each other examples of project, research, or policy scenarios from their own experiences where *degrees of empowerment* have been important issues. What are some commonalities and differences among those experiences? What information or analytical tools would help improve similar development interventions? It is not necessary to make the groups present in plenary, just to get people to relate the concepts to their own work.
23. Before the break, ask participants to read Handout 1: Case Study Background. Explain that the handout provides the background for the three case studies that will be used in session 2. After the participants have read the handout (5 minutes), they may take a coffee or tea break and return ready to discuss it.

Handout 1:

## Case Study Background

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The village of Khedakuri is located in western India. The 180-house village has bad roads, no piped water, and electricity to only one house. There is no market in the village. The closest market, which is open on Fridays, is located approximately 5 miles away. The village has one bank sub-branch, one “fair-priced shop,” a government shop that sells food staples at controlled prices, a tea shop, and several kiosks.

Elections were held in the village 2 years ago, and the village *sarpanch* (chairperson) is currently a Rajput (high-caste) woman. Her husband was the previous sarpanch. Government district offices are 36 miles away, and the block headquarters are 6 miles from the village. A bus service runs from the village to the block and the district headquarters twice a week. Return service to the village is available only on the following day.

Agriculture is the predominant economic activity in the village. Wheat, chilies, and ginger are the main cash crops. Vegetables and some fruit are grown for household consumption. There are some small businesses, such as trading, pottery, leatherwork, and blacksmithing. The villagers raise cows for milk, goats for food, and bulls as draft animals. Chickens are also kept, but no pigs are allowed in the village.

Although the social composition of the village is mixed, there is very limited interaction between different groups. The village contains three major social groups: Hindus, Muslims, and the indigenous Adivasi. The *Hindus* are the largest social group in the village. The Rajputs, highest of the five local castes and the richest people in the village, are the major landowners. The Chamars are the poorest; their economic activity consists of providing cleaning services, skinning dead animals, and dealing with the dead. They are not allowed to enter the compounds of higher-caste people. In all castes, men tend to dominate in the household, but that dominance decreases with caste.

*Muslim* households are more socially and economically homogeneous. The men tend to do masonry work, wood carving, and agricultural labor. They do not own land. Women in Muslim households look after goats and chickens and prepare sweets that their husbands sell during festivals. Women do not go out in public.

The indigenous *Adivasi* households are also economically homogeneous. There are few social distinctions between families because they are all among the poorest in the village. The smallest ethnic group in the village and perceived as “outsiders,” the Adivasi arrived there after being evicted from their forest habitat by the Indian Forestry Service. Despite legislation mandating compensatory land for people evicted from state forests, they do not own land. Rather, they provide agricultural labor and raise chickens. Relative equity exists between men and women in Adivasi households, and women tend to look after household finances. However, many Adivasi men have problems with alcoholism, and women are often subject to physical abuse.

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*Session 2:*  
*Empowerment Framework Applications*

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**Purpose**

Session 2 complements session 1 by completing the presentation of concepts that are central to the empowerment framework. The session introduces domains and levels, which offer an additional means to understanding empowerment. Case study learning is used to reinforce participant understanding of empowerment concepts.

**Objectives**

By the end of the session, participants will be able to do the following:

- Begin to apply the concepts of assets, institutions, and degrees of empowerment.
- Identify different domains and levels of empowerment.
- Provide examples of domains and levels in the empowerment framework.

**Materials**

PowerPoint slides 14–19

Handout 2: Case Studies A, B, and C. (**Note:** It is optional whether (a) to give all groups the same case study and to focus only on that case to keep things simple or (b) to assign a different case study to each group (A, B, and C))

Flip chart and markers

**Time**

2 hours

**Process**

1. This session will teach participants how to apply the framework to concrete development situations. Participants will divide into groups, with each group being assigned a case study. The module includes three case studies, each of which illustrates different kinds of situations and actors. The trainer may prefer, however, to assign a single case study to all three groups to save time and to keep the plenary discussion focused. The trainer should select the case study most suited to the interests and experiences of participants. The groups will then identify the assets, institutions, and levels of empowerment of the principal actors in their case study. Each group can then share its findings with the other groups in a plenary discussion.
2. Following the discussion, the trainer will lead a presentation on the domains and levels of empowerment. The groups will then complete an empowerment matrix, using data from their respective case studies. Concrete project and policy interventions are used throughout the session as illustrations.

Slide  
14



*Case Studies*

**Learning Objective**

Increase participant understanding of key concepts of agency, opportunity structure, and degrees of empowerment.

**Directions**

- Work in groups at tables.
- Read assigned case study (Handout 2).
- Identify the concepts in the study, ask questions, and discuss
- Designate one group member to present group findings in the plenary discussion.

**Time**

Approximately 30 minutes for discussion, 3-minute presentation per group in the plenary discussion.

14

3. Work in groups of 5–8 people around a table.
4. Assign each group a mini-case study. Handout 2 features three cases so that—depending on the objectives of the workshop, the interests of the participants, and the time allotted—the trainer can choose which study or how many studies to use. For an introductory-level course, it is recommended that all participants read and discuss the same case, which the trainer should select ahead of time.
5. Have the groups read through the instructions and the case study and then discuss it for 30 minutes at their individual tables.
6. Directions for group work are as follows:
  - Read the assigned case study.
  - Select one person per group to record the group’s findings and to present them in the plenary discussion.
  - *First degree of empowerment.* Does a choice exist for Ram (case study A) or Ayşe (case study B) to take out a loan? Does choice exist for the Adivasi group to challenge the local government’s plan (case study C)?
  - *Second degree of empowerment.* Do you think Ram, Ayşe, and the Adivasi group will use the opportunity to take out a loan or challenge the plan?
    - Which assets will the actors need to make a choice?
    - Which institutions (that is, rules of the game, not organizations) need to be in place and function if the actors are to attempt to make a choice?
  - *Third degree of empowerment.* Do you think the actors will eventually achieve their goal (accessing the loan or designating the land in question as communal land)?
    - Which assets will affect the achievement of those goals?
    - Which institutions will enable or hinder the actors to effectively achieve their goals?
7. Each group presents findings from the case study(ies) in the plenary discussion (3 minutes each).

— — — — *Case Studies Follow* — — — —

**Handout 2:****Case Study A—Bank Loans to Irrigate a Poor Man’s Land***INSTRUCTIONS*

1. Individually read Case Study A—Bank Loans to Irrigate a Poor Man’s Land.
2. Select one person in your group to record group findings and then to present them in the plenary discussion.
3. *First degree of empowerment.* Does the choice exist for Ram to take out a loan?
4. *Second degree of empowerment.* Do you think Ram will use the opportunity to take out a loan?
  - What assets does he need to take out a loan?
  - Which institutions must be in place and functioning if he is to attempt to take out a loan?
5. *Third degree of empowerment.* If Ram uses the opportunity to take out a loan,
  - Which assets will affect the achievement of his securing the loan?
  - Which institutions (rules of the game, not organizations) will affect his ability to effectively secure the loan?
6. Present the group’s key findings in the plenary discussion. Ask the group representative to briefly outline the group’s particular case study, because the other groups have worked with different cases.

*Time:* Approximately 30 minutes for reading the case and group discussion. Three minutes for each group to present its findings in the plenary discussion.

Ram is an illiterate landowner seeking to secure a small bank loan to irrigate his half-hectare plot of agricultural land. He is Hindu, belongs to the Meghwal caste group, is married, and has two small children—a boy and a girl. He has no formal debts. Ram aims to take advantage of a new government development program that is overseen by the district collector (the most senior government official at this level). The program allows poor people to use one-half the value of their land as collateral to secure a small loan for lift irrigation.

To secure his loan from the bank, Ram must assemble a number of documents, permissions, and certificates. Among those requirements are the following:

- Legal clearance of title. A lawyer must verify that the farmer’s ownership is absolute and not subject to dispute. After the lawyer has studied the history of the land’s ownership since the year of “revenue settlement” (1954 in most cases), the lawyer will issue a clearance certificate if the title is not subject to dispute.
- Land map from the Land Record Office
- Water lifting permission from the Minor Irrigation Department
- Feasibility of electrification permission from the State Electricity Board
- Design of the irrigation scheme from a civil engineer

From the *thasildar* (local administrative official in charge of land records):

- Genealogical tree certificate
- Landholding certificate
- No tenancy certificate
- No dues certificate
- Caste certificate
- Land valuation certificate
- Certificate of change in land ownership since 1952
- *Khasara* land title from 1952
- Bank certifications (up to 20)

Obtaining a loan to install lift irrigation requires the cooperation of a range of local government officials, bank staff members, engineers, and agencies that are involved in the sale and installation of the irrigation system. The process is a long one. Ram has learned to discard his turban, which marks his caste. “*I put my turban in my bag when I visited government officials, so that they would listen to me.*”



## Handout 2: Case Study B—Microfinance Development for Muslim Women (Optional)

### INSTRUCTIONS

1. Individually read Case Study B—Microfinance Development for Muslim Women.
2. Select one person in your group to record group findings and then to present them in the plenary discussion.
3. *First degree of empowerment.* Does the choice exist for Ayşe to obtain credit?
4. *Second degree of empowerment.* Do you think Ayşe will use the opportunity to obtain credit?
  - What assets does she need to get credit?
  - Which institutions need to be in place and functioning if she is to attempt to get credit?
5. *Third degree of empowerment.* If Ayşe uses the opportunity to obtain credit,
  - Which assets will affect whether she achieves her goal?
  - Which institutions will affect her chances of effectively securing credit?
6. Present the group's key findings in the plenary discussion. Ask the group representative to first briefly outline the group's particular case study because the other groups have worked with different cases.

*Time:* Approximately 30 minutes to read the case and for group discussion. Three minutes for each group to present its findings in the plenary discussion.

Since 2004, the nongovernmental organization titled Shantishakti has run a development program in this Indian village. The program seeks to help the landless poor develop economically by establishing savings and credit groups of up to 20 women. Each group shares a joint bank account. Once the groups meet certain criteria, a local bank provides them credit (the credit is financed by the National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development). Members of the groups meet weekly; save; take and repay loans; and explore opportunities for educational, health-related, social, and political advancement.

Shantishakti provides financial services to members *before* they prove their eligibility for bank loans. It accepts savings deposits on which it pays a rate of interest equal to that obtained at the local bank branch, and it offers loans at bank interest rates without a collateral requirement. The program has experienced a good rate of repayment. It issued nearly 100 microloans from 2004 through early 2006. The Shantishakti development model does not offer direct financial or material support for educational or health-related services. Instead, it relies on the economic development brought about by its banking services. Shantishakti has had great success in providing microloans to Hindu women, and now it wants to provide similar services to Muslim women in the same village.

Ayşe, a Muslim woman, is 35 years old and owns no land. She is a widow and the mother of four children. Ayşe lives with her husband's family in a *kutchra* hut made of bamboo and mud. Her financial condition is dire, and she is always anxious about providing enough food for her growing children. She heard about the Shantishakti from her Hindu neighbors, and she wants to form a savings and credit group. Ayşe is skilled at sewing and hopes to purchase a sewing machine to start a garment microenterprise with her microloan.

**Handout 2:****Case Study C—Tribal People and Their Access to Natural Resources (Optional)***INSTRUCTIONS*

1. Individually read Case Study C—Tribal People and Their Access to Natural Resources.
2. Select one person in the group to record group findings and then to present them in the plenary discussion.
3. *First degree of empowerment.* To what extent do the Adivasi have a choice to challenge the government plan through official channels?
4. *Second degree of empowerment.* Do you think the Adivasi will eventually use this opportunity to challenge the plan?
  - What assets do they need to challenge the plan?
  - Which institutions need to be in place and functioning if they are to attempt to challenge the plan?
5. *Third degree of empowerment.* If the Adivasi use the opportunity to challenge the plan,
  - Which assets will affect the possibility of designating the land in question as communal land?
  - Which institutions will enable or hinder an effective challenge of the government plan and keep communal access to the land?
6. Present the group's key findings in the plenary discussion. Ask the group representative to first briefly outline the group's particular case study because the other groups have worked with different cases.

*Time:* Approximately 30 minutes to read the case and for group discussion. Three minutes for each group to present its findings in the plenary discussion.

Historically, tribal people, such as the Adivasi, were required to cultivate the lands of the *Thikanedar* (an estate allotted by the ruler to an administrator) in return for one-third of the harvest. After the abolition of those estates, some of the lands were allotted to certain tribes. The tribal people struggled unsuccessfully to maintain control of both the lands and the forests where they had traditionally harvested wood and produced marginal forest products. The forestlands were taken over by the government during the 1950s.

After India's independence, government policy recognized tribal rights over land and the forest and acknowledged the importance of letting the tribal communities develop according to their own beliefs and traditions. In practice, tribal communities have been progressively alienated from their traditional rights over natural resources. Thus, despite constitutional provisions and positive discrimination (for example, reserved educational, employment, and political slots), tribal communities are now characterized by some of the lowest human development indicators of all social groups in India.

The indigenous Adivasi make a living by selling products gathered from nearby common lands and the forest, as well as by working as casual agricultural laborers. On Fridays, the women travel to the market in the adjacent village to sell flowers, herbs, and plates. Middlemen at the market purchase their wares. The Adivasi are not landowners and are illiterate. The local *sarpanch* (the elected leader of the village *panchayat*, or local government body) recently decided that the common land currently used by the Adivasi would be more efficiently used by a large landowner for farming. The Adivasi decided to challenge the plan. Their objective is to resolve the problem through official government channels that involve government staff members at the block and district levels.

8. When the groups summarize the key points of the case studies, ask participants to note the following:
  - Many different assets influence the empowerment of the actor (check for all assets, including psychological).
  - Both formal and informal institutions appear to be important—and they interact.
  - Some assets and institutions are more critical than others.
9. Ask members of each group to identify which assets and institutions are most critical. Then have members assign those items first-order, second-order, and third-order priority, as if the group was designing an intervention or a monitoring system.
  - Go through the assets on a flip chart, numbering them 1, 2, 3, etc.
  - Go through the institutions on a flip chart, numbering them 1, 2, 3, etc.
10. Ask the following questions (case study A is used here for illustration purposes): Would Ram experience the same degree of empowerment when he makes a decision in his household? Would the same assets and rules of the game come into play? Would he experience the same degree of empowerment if he were trying to sell the chilies he had grown? Would the assets and opportunity structures that come into play differ if the case study were about making decisions in his own household?
11. Lead a discussion about degrees of empowerment to show participants how empowerment differs according to what a person or group does and where they do it. Note that empowerment also differs depending on the different domains and subdomains where empowerment occurs, as well as the different levels of those domains and subdomains. Ask participants to share their own examples of empowerment in various domains. This discussion will prepare participants for slide 15 (10 minutes).
12. Summarize the main points of the discussion on a flip chart. Ask the other participants if they have anything else to add. Repeat for each group. Keep the discussion moving quickly.
13. Review slide 15 and the concepts of domains and subdomains.
  - *State.* Citizens may experience very different degrees of empowerment when accessing justice and social services or when participating in the political process. For example, a well-educated, high-caste man in India with good social connections would experience a higher degree of empowerment in all three subdomains than would a low-caste, illiterate counterpart.
  - *Market.* Citizens also experience varying degrees of empowerment in the market. A person or group may be able to access credit, for example, yet may have no employment opportunities or purchasing power.
  - *Society.* In a traditional Indian household, a high-caste wife might experience less empowerment than her equivalent in a low-caste household. However, the situation would likely be reversed in the community: the high-caste wife would experience a higher degree of empowerment than would a low-caste wife.
14. Point out that that an overlap exists between domains, but the assumption cannot be made that the degree of empowerment in one domain or subdomain correlates to the degree of empowerment in another. Although a person is disempowered in one domain, it does not necessarily mean that he or she is disempowered in another.

Slide  
15

### Where Empowerment Occurs: Domains and Subdomains

Empowerment occurs within three domains, each of which has its own subdomains:

- **State:** the individual or group is a civic actor.
- **Market:** the individual or group is an economic actor.
- **Society:** the individual or group is a social actor.

STATE	MARKET	SOCIETY
Justice	Labor	Intra-household
Politics	Goods	Intra-community
Public services	Private services	

15

## Trainer

15. Read slide 16. Generally, it is appropriate to consider three levels—local, intermediary, and macro—for each domain and subdomain of an actor's life.
16. It is useful to define the levels by the categories commonly used for analysis or data collection in any given country. Those levels often correspond to administrative boundaries. Discuss the following examples while reviewing slide 16:
  - *Example 1.* An Indian woman may experience one degree of empowerment when she is trying to exercise a choice over domestic resources in the household and a different form of empowerment when she is in a bank trying to obtain a loan. The examples are about empowerment in different domains of her life. However, her experiences will also differ according to whether she is trying to operate in her village, at a market, or in an office located at a distance from her village or in a capital city.
  - *Example 2.* A local politician in Uganda experiences a high degree of empowerment at the local level, but his power (that is, his capacity to make an effective choice) is likely to be less at the intermediary level and considerably reduced at the macro level.
17. Now review the examples of different levels in slide 17.

Slide  
16

### *Levels of Empowerment*

Each domain and subdomain has **different levels**:

- **Local level:** the immediate vicinity of a person's life. This level is likely the area contiguous with an individual's residence.
- **Intermediary level:** a vicinity that is familiar but not entered every day. This level is likely the area between the residential and national levels.
- **Macro level:** the vicinity furthest away from the individual. This level is most likely the national level.

16

Slide  
17

### *Levels of Empowerment*

#### **Examples of context-specific levels**


- **Ethiopia**  
Local → *kebele* (village)  
Intermediary → *woreda* (district level)  
Macro → federal government
- **Nepal**  
Local → village development community  
Intermediary → district  
Macro → national government
- **India**  
Local → village  
Intermediary → district  
Macro → Indian state  
*Supermacro* → *federal government*

17

Trainer

Slides 18 and 19 summarize the empowerment framework.

Slide 18



### Session 2: Summary

- Empowerment can be assessed in different **domains** (state, market, and society) and **subdomains** of a person’s life, as well as at different **levels** (local, intermediary, and macro).
- At the intersection of domains and levels, people experience different **degrees of empowerment**.
- The degree of empowerment is contingent on two clusters of interdependent factors: **assets** and **institutions** (the opportunity structure).


18

Trainer

Slide 19 shows the complete framework in one table. *Neither the entire matrix nor all the cells must be considered at all times.* In fact, the next sessions will focus on using the framework for analysis (including monitoring and research) and for designing an intervention.

Walk through all the components of the matrix with the group. Explain that the next two sessions will further clarify how to fill in and read the matrix.

Slide 19



### Empowerment Matrix

		DETERMINANTS AND OUTCOMES									
		Local level			Intermediary level			Macro level			
		A	OS	DOE	A	OS	DOE	A	OS	DOE	
STATE	Justice										
	Politics										
	Public services										
MARKET	Labor										
	Goods										
	Private services										
SOCIETY	Intra-household										
	Intra-community										

*Note:* A = agency. OS = opportunity structure. DOE = degree of empowerment. Agency is measured by the endowment of psychological, informational, organizational, material, financial, and human assets. Opportunity structure is measured by the presence and operation of informal and formal rules. The degree of empowerment is measured by the existence, use (direct or indirect), and effectiveness of choice.

19

**Trainer**

18. In the plenary discussion, ask participants from each table to share one or two “Aha!” moments from their discussion and the matrix exercise. (An “Aha!” moment is something that surprised them or made a light come on for someone personally.) Or ask them to refer questions and conundrums back to the larger group for further discussion. Track comments on a flip chart. If there is not enough time or if the groups prefer to continue their discussion, hand out Post-its<sup>®</sup> or small cards and tape to each table. Then ask participants to write down one “Aha!” or question and to stick each to a wall space for discussion after lunch.

**LUNCH BREAK**

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*Session 3:*  
*Empowerment Interventions*

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**Purpose**

To reinforce understanding of the analytic framework and—through case studies—to show how to apply it in practice.

**Objectives**

By the end of the session, participants will be able to do the following:

- Use the empowerment framework to improve the design of project and policy interventions.

**Materials**

PowerPoint slides 20–27


Flip chart and markers

**Time**

1 hour 30 minutes

**Process**

1. This session will demonstrate how to apply the analytic framework systematically to the design, implementation, and monitoring of development policies, programs, and projects. Concrete project and policy interventions are used as illustrations.
2. Review slides 20 and 21 about the design of projects, programs, and policies. Follow this presentation with a short exercise.
3. Unless you are conducting in-depth research, it will not be operationally useful or cost-effective to use all elements of the empowerment framework for every application. Rather, by taking into account the considerations addressed in slide 20, you can help determine which elements of the framework are relevant for a given policy, program, or project.
4. Slide 20 addresses the question of whether empowerment is a primary or secondary objective of an intervention or program. A team designing a sector-lending project, grant activity, or programming strategy has to make decisions about the relative importance of empowerment as a project objective. Will empowerment be one of the objectives of the project or rather a means to achieving other project objectives?

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Slide 20</b></p>	<div style="text-align: right; color: red;"> <b>Empowerment Interventions: Design Issues 1</b> </div> <hr style="border: 1px solid blue;"/>  <p><b>Considerations to guide design and implementation</b></p> <p><b>Consider the empowerment objective.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is the objective that will be pursued, tracked, or both?</li> <li>• What domains and levels are involved in the pursuit of this objective? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>Empowerment can be an objective of an intervention or program (an end in itself).</i></li> <li>- <i>Empowerment can be an instrument for achieving an objective (a means to an end).</i></li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p style="text-align: left; margin-top: 20px;">20</p>
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Slide  
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## Empowerment Interventions: Design Issues 2

### Clarify assumptions about predicted effects of an intervention.

- How is it expected that the selected intervention will achieve its empowerment objectives? Will it change agency, structure, or both?
- How can this process of change be broken down into monitorable parts?
- Where are the changes to take place—local level, national level, etc.? In which domains of people's lives are the changes to take place—political, economic, etc.?

### Interventions can empower by doing the following:

- Enhancing assets
- Challenging institutional inequality
- Creating opportunities for people to have choice, to use choice, and to effectively achieve choice

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## Trainer

- Briefly illustrate the point by reviewing two examples of how the empowerment framework can be applied in projects that identify empowerment as either a project objective or a means to reach that objective.
- Slide 22 shows that for the Community Support Project in Guinea, empowering marginalized village groups by investing in assets and opportunity structures, was the primary project objective.
- Slide 23 shows how empowerment was seen as a means to achieve the primary objective of improving productive potential in the Watershed Development Project in India.
- Lead a discussion using the following questions or have participants discuss in small groups (10 minutes):
  - How does one decide whether empowerment is a means or an end in itself in the project?
  - Evaluate how the framework contributed to the overall design. Which elements of the empowerment framework are applied in each case? List the elements on a flip chart.

Slide  
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### *Empowerment as an **End** in Guinea*

The Guinea Village Communities Support Program

**Objective**

Promoting the social and economic empowerment of the rural population, including women, youth, and other marginalized groups presently excluded from the social and market domains

**Asset investments consisted of the following:**

- Establishing new structures (organizational asset)
- Increasing information (informational asset)
- Increasing available services (organizational asset)
- Enhance local resource mobilization (financial asset)

**Investments in institutions included the following:**

- Establishing new, demand-driven decision-making processes (that is, presence and operation of organizational rules and institutions)
- Establishing the capacity to sustain resource mobilization (presence and operation of institutions)

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Slide  
23

### *Empowerment as a **Means** in India*

The Integrated Watershed Development Project

**Objective**

Improve the productive potential of the project area by using evolving watershed treatment technologies and community participatory approaches. Empowerment of the communities was regarded as a **means** of ensuring technical effectiveness and sustainability.

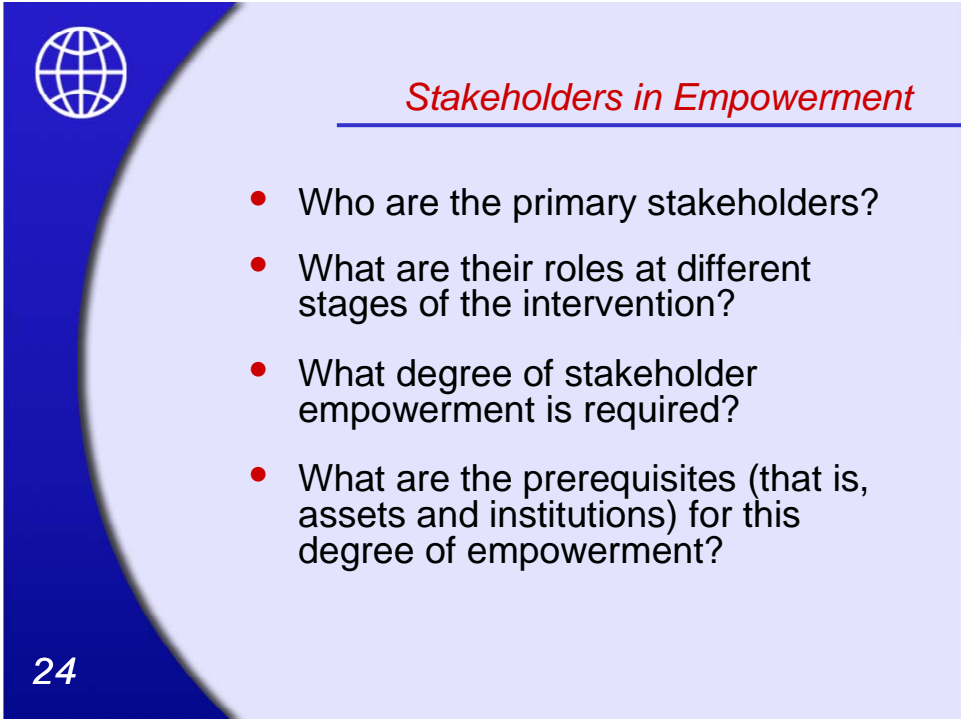
**Asset investments consisted of the following:**

- Providing watershed treatment, developing fodder and livestock
- Creating or rehabilitating rural infrastructure
- Establishing organizational capacity
- Building financial assets of village accounts

**Investments in institutions included the following:**

- Establishing rules on access to and use of natural resources, as well as their financial governance
- Establishing rules of operation for coordination committees and district-level project implementation units

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<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);"><b>Trainer</b></p>	<p>13. Read slide 24. Analyzing empowerment involves considering the roles of the involved stakeholders.</p> <p>14. When you design an intervention—whether project, program, or policy—these four questions can provide useful guidance for a stakeholder analysis:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Who are the <i>primary stakeholders</i> on the demand (client) and supply (provider) sides?</li> <li>• What <b>roles</b> do stakeholders have at different stages of the intervention? Which groups or individuals are most important for shaping project design or for participating directly in implementation or monitoring, analysis, and management?</li> <li>• What <i>degree of stakeholder empowerment</i> is expected? Using citizen engagement in local service delivery as an example, should stakeholders be (a) simply <i>provided the opportunity to engage</i> (existence of choice), (b) <i>actively encouraged to engage</i> (use of choice), or (c) able to demonstrate that their engagement was effective (effectiveness of choice)?</li> <li>• What are the <i>prerequisites</i> for the selected degree of empowerment sought? What should this project design include to ensure that stakeholders on the supply <i>and</i> demand sides have an adequate degree of agency and opportunity structure? Which assets are needed for those different levels of engagement? Which institutions must exist and function to enable stakeholders to put their choices into action and to achieve those goals?</li> </ul>
<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);"><b>Slide 24</b></p>	
<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);"><b>Trainer</b></p>	<p>15. The module now moves from the project to <i>policy</i> level to look at how the empowerment framework can be used in <i>policy</i> formulation and implementation. Read slide 25. Note the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The term <i>empowerment</i> is increasingly found in the policy frameworks and papers of development institutions. By 2005, for example, 22 Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs) cited empowerment either as an objective or a means to achieve other objectives.</li> <li>• Despite explicit commitments, task managers and government officials often struggle to operationalize and monitor empowerment. How can the analytic framework help them?</li> </ul>

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## *Empowerment Framework Applied to Policy*

**The framework can embed issues of empowerment in policy analysis and design by doing the following:**

- **Identifying areas for inquiry** and information or data needed to inform policy formulation
- Making **transparent** the assumptions about the **predicted empowerment effects** of a policy intervention or sequence of interventions
- Prioritizing, sequencing, and **structuring empowerment interventions** to maximize poverty reduction

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Trainer

16. Slide 26 shows how the empowerment framework was applied to the Ethiopia Poverty Assessment (PA) to analyze nonmonetary dimensions of poverty.<sup>1</sup> Discuss the following points:

- The Ethiopia PA deals with some issues in greater depth than others because of their prominence in current policy debates in Ethiopia (World Bank 2004b). Empowerment is one such priority issue.
- To complement and extend the Ethiopian government's "Poverty Profile of Ethiopia" (2002), the PA used analysis from several World Bank documents.<sup>2</sup> Drawing on dialogue between different line ministries and between the government and the donor community on the Ethiopia PRSP, the PA provided an ideal opening for discussing how empowerment relates to poverty outcomes.
- Understanding poverty in terms of empowerment added a useful dimension to the discussion of income poverty. If poverty is related to the inability to exercise choice, development interventions must be based on the assessment of people's relative capacity to achieve desired outcomes, given their respective asset base and institutional environment.

1. The empowerment framework was also used to structure analysis of empowerment in the recent participatory poverty analysis in Ethiopia. More broadly, the framework has influenced tracking and empowerment analysis as part of the PRSP monitoring system.

2. World Bank documents included the Country Economic Memorandum and Country Status Reports on education and health.

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Slide 26</b></p>	<div style="text-align: center;">  <p><i>Example of Empowerment Applied to Policy</i></p> <hr/> <p><b>Sustainable Development and Poverty Reduction Program in Ethiopia</b></p> <p>Used framework to analyze nonmonetary dimensions of poverty</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Empowerment framework shaped World Bank Poverty Assessment (PA).</li> <li>• Country Assistance Strategy (CAS) consequently focused on empowerment.</li> <li>• Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) provided macropolicy setting for PA and CAS.</li> <li>• Empowerment became a specific PRSP objective:           <p style="margin-left: 20px;">“[to facilitate] improvements in governance to move forward in the transformation of society, <i>improve empowerment of the poor</i> [and set a] framework/ provide an enabling environment for private sector growth and development”</p> </li> </ul> </div> <p style="text-align: left; margin-left: 20px;">26</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Trainer</b></p>	<p>20. <b>Optional:</b> If time allows, show slide 27, the matrix on data availability in Ethiopia, and quickly walk through it. (Refer students to Handout 5: Poverty Reduction and Policy in Ethiopia while discussing the slide. The handout will be used in session 4.) The matrix will give participants insight into how the empowerment framework can be used to examine the relationship between different indicators of empowerment and to determine data needs and availability.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>BREAK</b></p>



## Empowerment Data Matrix: Ethiopian Program

### Data Availability of Empowerment Framework Elements

Domain	Subdomain	Level								
		Macro (federal)			Intermediary (region/woreda)			Local (kebele)		
		A	OS	DOE	A	OS	DOE	A	OS	DOE
State	Justice	Y	X	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
	Politics	X	X	X	X	X/Y	Y	X	Y	Y
	Public service delivery	X	Y	Y	X/Y	Y	Y			Y
Market	Labor	X	Y	Y				Y	Y	Y
	Goods		Y					Y	Y	Y
	Private services		Y	Y				Y	Y	Y
Society	Intra-household	Y	Y			Y		Y	Y	Y
	Intra-community	Y	Y			Y		Y	Y	Y

Note: A = agency. OS = opportunity structure. DOE = degree of empowerment.

X = representative empirical data or robust statistical analysis and documentation (for example, legal frameworks) available.

Y = partial data available (for example, case study, small sample-size studies, and narrative information; does not include monitoring activity).

Shaded cells indicate primary areas of action or intervention. No shading indicates the area is not considered a priority means of achieving empowerment.

Source: Adapted from Kurey 2005.

Slide  
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*Session 4:*  
*Empowerment Indicators*  
*(Optional)*

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**Purpose**

To help participants understand how to use the analytic framework to develop concrete indicators of empowerment for projects and policies. Given the length of this module, it is suggested that the fourth session be **optional**. The trainer can decide whether to include it by using his or her assessment of the needs of each audience.

**Objectives**

By the end of the session, participants will be able to identify the types of indicators needed to measure and analyze empowerment at policy and project levels.

**Materials**

PowerPoint slides 28–34. Also, have the following slides ready for a review at the end of the session: 1, 3–8, 13, 15, and 16.

Handout 3: Examples of Indicators of Empowerment

Handout 4: Rural Women’s Development and Empowerment Project in Madhya Pradesh

Handout 5: Poverty Reduction and Policy in Ethiopia

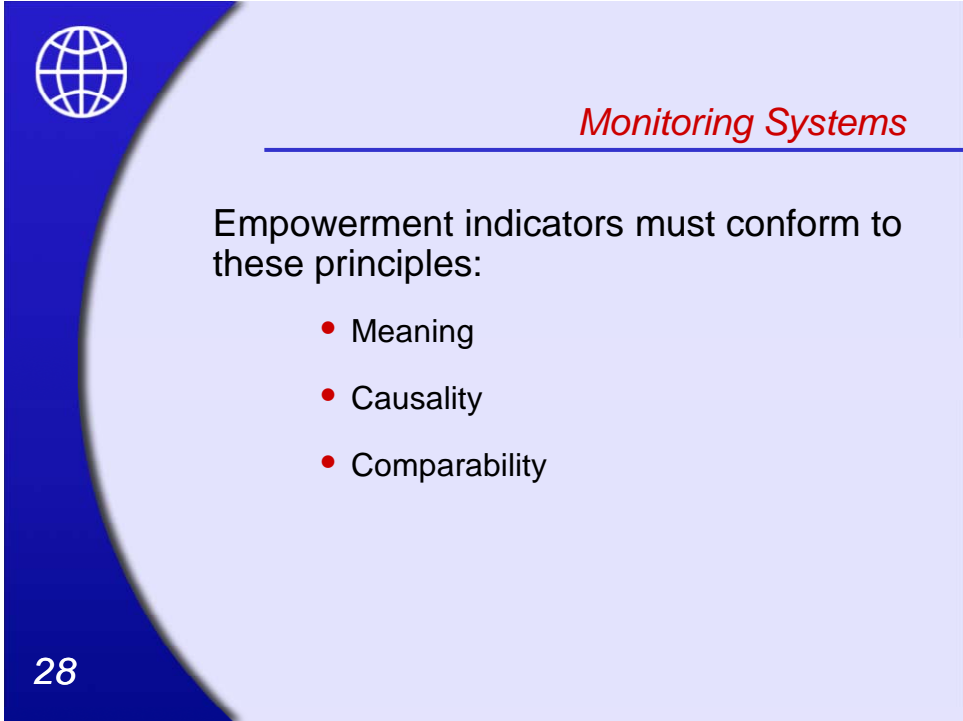
Flip chart and markers

**Time**

1 hours 45 minutes (If time runs out, the trainer can deliver the presentation without group work.)

**Process**

1. The final session focuses on indicators of empowerment, thus separating policy and project monitoring because individual projects and national-level policies demand different resources, instruments, timing, analyses, and presentations.
2. The complexity of empowerment has discouraged many development theorists and practitioners from attempting to measure and monitor it. There are, of course, significant methodological issues to consider in selecting indicators.
3. However, although there are pitfalls, the challenges to selecting effective empowerment indicators are not insurmountable. For example, data can be generated through a combination of indicators that count the specific, concrete choices that people have made and that score people’s perceptions of the quality of choices open to them. Effectively sequencing representative surveys with qualitative research on local power relations is one way of developing empowerment indicators that are useful for measuring trends in empowerment across different policy and project contexts.
4. Because of time constraints, this Learning Module does not address mixed methods or integrated approaches to data collection, recording, analysis, and presentation. Rather, it focuses on the empowerment indicators for which information must be collected.
5. Read slide 28. It is useful to consider the following three principles when selecting indicators to measure empowerment, especially because each addresses a specific methodological challenge to measuring empowerment :
  - Meaning
  - Causality
  - Comparability

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Slide 28</b></p>	 <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Monitoring Systems</i></p> <p>Empowerment indicators must conform to these principles:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meaning</li> <li>• Causality</li> <li>• Comparability</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: left;">28</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Trainer</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>6. Read slide 29. To identify useful indicators, one has to identify the most <i>meaningful</i> aspects of poverty for the given intervention. For example, to measure success in achieving the Millennium Development Goals of eradicating hunger and achieving universal primary education, the rates of child malnutrition and primary school net enrollment rates are useful indicators. In addition, the indicator must allow someone to track changes in direction and magnitude.</li> <li>7. Lack of conceptual rigor in differentiating among various types of choices has hampered attempts to measure empowerment. Part of the problem lies in the multidimensionality of empowerment. Different dimensions require different metrics, thereby making high-quality statistical analysis difficult. As a result, some analysts consider sophisticated statistical analysis of empowerment to be inappropriate, and they believe that simple descriptive statistics and narrative reporting should be used instead. However, others argue that a more nuanced picture is presented by using mixed methods approaches as stand-alone exercises or by enhancing large-sample survey work. The empowerment framework can help to design those methods.</li> <li>8. The framework offered here enables the analyst to decide which measures of empowerment yield the most concrete indicators. In some cases, using assets as proxies for agency and institutions as proxies for opportunity structure can yield the most concrete, meaningful indicators. In other contexts, use of the three degrees of empowerment allows for greater specificity and reduces ambiguities about the meaning of empowerment.</li> </ol>

Slide  
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## Monitoring Systems

### Meaning

Indicators must be able to do the following:

- Identify *meaningful measurements* a specific dimension of poverty.
- Permit observation of meaningful changes in both the *direction* and *magnitude* of that dimension.

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Trainer

9. Read slide 30. The second major challenge of empowerment indicators is the need to attribute *causality* (that is, to demonstrate whether the development intervention is responsible for the outcomes). Attributing cause and effect can be relatively straightforward when the causal chain is short and when other variables can be held constant. For example, tracking the effect of an immunization campaign on the incidence of disease in a target population is relatively straightforward.


Changes in power relations, by contrast, are not single-event outcomes. They are dynamic, are process based, and are linked to bargaining, cooperation, conflict, co-option, and complicated transactions. In short, empowerment is messy.

10. The cross-cutting nature of empowerment at different domains and levels further complicates the choice of indicators. Individuals and groups may have different experiences of empowerment in society, market, and state and at the local, district, and national levels.

Changes, moreover, do not necessarily occur simultaneously at all levels. Changes in power relations among individuals and groups may occur rapidly at the local level, for example, but may be blocked by institutional resistance or inertia at the intermediary and macro levels.

- *Example 1.* Women who are increasingly able to exercise their sexual and reproductive rights in the household and who are increasingly mobile and active in community decision making may still be denied political choice or access to justice at the macro level, or they may face very limited jobs choices in the labor market.
- *Example 2.* Civil servants who control project benefits may be in a strong position to solicit bribes from intended beneficiaries. Similarly, providers of marketing services, such as middlemen for agricultural products, are likely to pay producers well below market rates in isolated regions where producers have little direct market access.

In addition, choice is often implicit and thus difficult to observe and measure. Indeed, empowerment often allows people to choose not to take action. Even when people do choose to take action, it can be difficult to determine whether their action was strategic or determined by informal norms “forcing” them to make the choice.

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Slide 30</b></p>	<div style="background-color: #e6e6fa; padding: 10px;">  <p style="text-align: right; color: #c00000;"><i>Monitoring Systems</i></p> <hr style="border: 0.5px solid #000080; margin: 10px 0;"/> <p><b>Causality</b></p> <p>Indicators must demonstrate the <i>link between a development intervention and anticipated outcomes and effects.</i></p> <p>It is often difficult, however, to isolate the causal effect because power relations are dynamic, are process based, and are linked to bargaining, cooperation, conflict, and more.</p> <p style="text-align: left; margin-top: 20px;">30</p> </div>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Trainer</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>11. Read slide 31. The third challenge of empowerment indicators is demonstrating <i>comparability</i> across populations. <i>Aggregation</i> describes whether data collected from different types of populations can be put together to make conclusions about effect and change in larger groups. Yet empowerment often involves relative changes rather than absolute changes. Observable movement among some people or groups toward a greater degree of empowerment does not necessarily apply to other individuals or groups.</li> <li>12. That caveat applies to aggregation both within and across countries and has direct implications for sampling and analysis. For example, within a country, data can be gathered on an individual's attributes and analysis can be undertaken on the empowerment of groups that share the same attributes (for example, gender or economic position in the household). However, care must be taken to ensure that the sampling technique allows for pooling of data at the final level of analysis.</li> <li>13. The challenge of comparability has to be considered both within and across countries. For example, the economic empowerment of a low-caste, poor male villager in India is likely to differ qualitatively and quantitatively from the economic empowerment of a well-educated, urban male in India. Similarly, the social empowerment of women in Western Europe or North America differs markedly from the social empowerment of women in an African village.</li> <li>14. It is because of such contextual differences that the empowerment framework rests on the concepts of domains and levels, which makes it easier to capture context-specific change and to compare across different contexts or countries. The significance of context can, however, vary with time and geography. This variation creates problems for tracking empowerment over time, particularly when change is rapid.</li> </ol> <p>As an example, data from the early 1990s on contraceptive use in rural Bangladesh suggested that empowered women were more likely than others to use contraception. Today, however, contraceptive use is the norm and thus no longer reflects the degree of women's empowerment. (Malhotra, Schuler, and Boender 2002).</p>

Slide  
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## Monitoring Systems

### Comparability

It is important to consider the extent to which indicators are comparable across populations within and among countries.

Identifying the different domains, levels, and degrees of empowerment helps determine whether the data generated can be aggregated across populations or whether they are too context-specific.

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15. When one measures empowerment, it makes sense to distinguish between *indirect* and *direct* indicators. Measuring assets and institutions provides *indirect indicators* of empowerment, whereas capturing the different degrees of empowerment provides *direct indicators* of empowerment. Read slide 32.
16. As the Briefing Paper made clear, some *assets* are easier to measure than others. For example, using a survey to collect data on human assets (for example, skills or literacy) is easier than using a survey to gather information on social assets (for example, social capital). Most participants will likely develop meaningful, comparable, and explanatory indicators for financial assets, such as household savings, or human assets, such as level of education. However, they might have more trouble with indicators for psychological assets, such as self-confidence or the capacity to envision a different way of life.
17. Although complicated and often ignored, psychological assets are particularly crucial for empowerment interventions and measurement. Actors need to be conscious about their possibilities to parlay their assets into the capacity to make choices or to become “agents.” Women’s consciousness, in particular, is often shaped by cultural frameworks and social norms where female disempowerment is acceptable and even desirable.

18. The following examples illustrate certain groups' acceptance of low levels of empowerment in different cultures. Similar patterns can be found in most societies. Survey findings reveal that passive concurrence with coercive forms of power is deeply engrained in the psyche of many individuals and groups. This reality underlines the importance of addressing the psychological assets in development interventions.
- *Example 1.* In a recent survey of women in Ethiopia, a large percentage agreed that husbands are justified in beating their wives for burning food (65 percent), neglecting the children (65 percent), arguing with him (61 percent), leaving the house without telling him (56 percent), and refusing sexual relations (51 percent) (see Central Statistical Authority 2001). For those women to choose to live differently, a change in their psychological assets—the capacity to aspire to a different kind of relationship between husband and wife—is a prerequisite to changing the social institutions that govern the right of men to beat their wives.
  - *Example 2.* Members of a group of low-caste “toddy tappers” in Bihar, India, accept that the richest man in the village will periodically incite the police to beat them.
19. With respect to *opportunity structure*, indicators must take into account the frequent gulf that exists between the presence and operation of institutions. In Ethiopia, for example, the government has sought to address the opportunity structure of women by committing to gender equality in a National Policy on Women (1993) and by enacting a new constitution (1995) that repeals discriminatory laws. Yet those laws (that is, formal institutions) are poorly enforced. No provision exists in the penal code for their adjudication, and Ethiopian judges tend to adjudicate consistent with informal social institutions that ignore women's rights.
20. Indicators capturing the *degree of empowerment*—presence, use, and effectiveness of choice—are direct indicators of empowerment. Indicators must be very specific about the choice that is being made, as well as the domain or subdomain and level at which the choice occurs.



### Direct and Indirect Indicators

To measure empowerment, *indirect* and *direct* indicators are needed:

- **Indirect indicators can capture agency.** Select indicators from among the following assets:
  - Informational
  - Organizational
  - Material
  - Social
  - Financial
  - Human
  - Psychological (*important, but often ignored*)
- **Indirect indicators can also capture institutions.** Remember, there is often a gulf between the formal mandate and actual operation of institutions.
- **Direct indicators capture the degrees of empowerment**—*existence* of choice, *use* of choice, and *achievement* of choice.

Trainer

21. At the *project level*, using empowerment indicators can encourage better project design by ensuring that the project is based on an informed understanding of local power relations. Empowerment indicators also link project design to an ongoing measurement of empowerment effects. At this level, monitoring focuses on attribution of causality (that is, attributing outcomes and effects to specific project inputs). If monitoring reveals that project activities are not achieving desired results, this finding should prompt revision in the next activity cycle. The widely used log-frame approach to project management often provides an instrument for managing information flows in the monitoring process. Read slide 33.
22. If time allows, ask participants to briefly apply the log frame in slide 33 to one of their own projects for empowerment monitoring.

Slide  
33

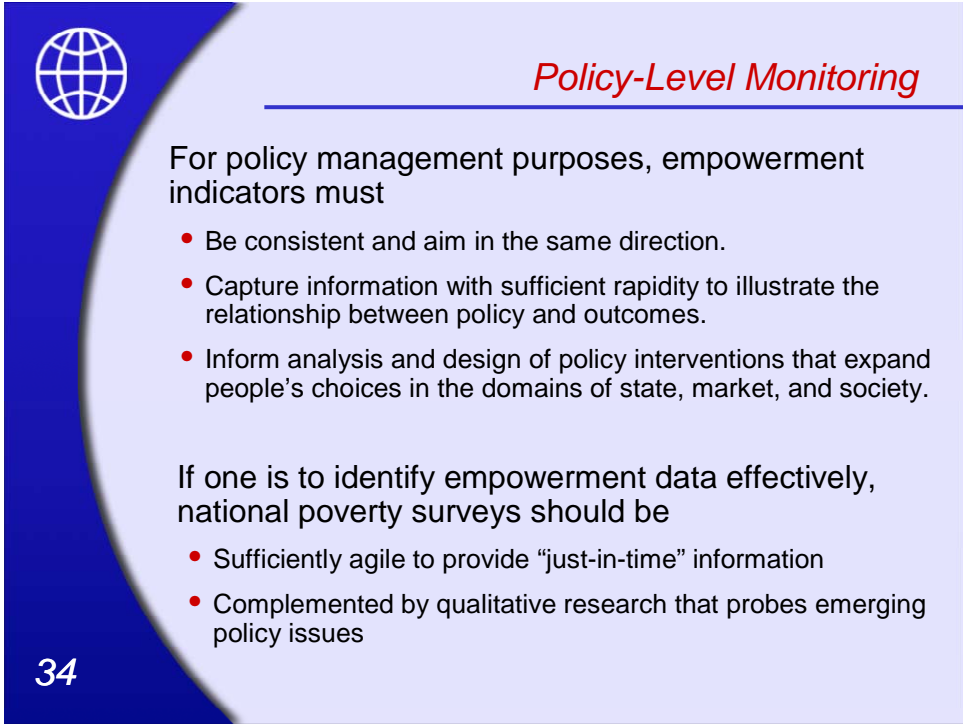
### *Project-Level Monitoring*

The log-frame approach to project management tracks several information flows:

- **Project inputs and outputs** track resource accountability.
- **Project outcomes** enable project participants, implementers, and managers to do the following:
  - Understand the effects of an intervention.
  - Link those effects to inputs and processes.
  - Compare effects across project locations.
- **Project processes** permit analysis of how and why things are happening and prompt corrective action on the basis of new knowledge.
- **Project effects** reveal what the project investment and activities have achieved.

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<b>Trainer</b>	<p>23. At the <i>policy level</i>, empowerment monitoring should contribute to an evidence-based policy process. For example, empowerment data and analysis can be used to improve the design and implementation of policies that build assets and that institutionalize equality of opportunity. At present, a gap often exists between the supply of and demand for empowerment data. This gap is commonly seen in PRSP monitoring systems, which are unable to collect the right kind of information in a timely way.</p> <p>24. In comparison with project-level monitoring, policy-level monitoring cannot pay the same degree of attention to causal attribution of empowerment effects and outcomes. Upstream policy instruments are guided by multidimensional empowerment goals and require a complex mix of budget allocations according to both price and institutional policy decisions. Attributing causality within this complex environment would be expensive and difficult to accomplish. At this level, empowerment monitoring functions as an information system that gives greater weight to the effect and to outcome monitoring and then explains emerging trends and patterns using qualitative methods.</p> <p>25. Read slide 34. National-level empowerment indicators need to be consistent, to aim in the same direction, and to capture information rapidly enough to provide timely information on the relationship between policy and outcomes. National indicators should also inform the analysis and design of policy interventions, including budget allocations and institutional reforms, that expand people’s choices in the domains of state, market, and society. National poverty surveys should then be sufficiently agile to provide “just-in-time” information and to be complemented by qualitative research that probes emerging policy issues.</p>
<b>Slide 34</b>	 <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Policy-Level Monitoring</i></p> <p>For policy management purposes, empowerment indicators must</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be consistent and aim in the same direction.</li> <li>• Capture information with sufficient rapidity to illustrate the relationship between policy and outcomes.</li> <li>• Inform analysis and design of policy interventions that expand people’s choices in the domains of state, market, and society.</li> </ul> <p>If one is to identify empowerment data effectively, national poverty surveys should be</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sufficiently agile to provide “just-in-time” information</li> <li>• Complemented by qualitative research that probes emerging policy issues</li> </ul> <p>34</p>
<b>Trainer</b>	<p>26. Distribute Handout 3: Examples of Indicators of Empowerment to all participants. According to the handout, lead participations in a discussion of how to select indicators for project and policy monitoring. Note that the first step in the process is to ascertain whether the needed information already exists, where and in what form it exists, and whether it can be linked to new data generated by other projects or policy indicators.</p>

### Handout 3: Examples of Indicators of Empowerment

**Table 1. Examples of Indirect Indicators: Asset Endowment**

<i>Asset endowment</i>	<i>Indicator (sex-disaggregated)</i>	<i>Existing sources or instruments</i>
Psychological	Capacity to envisage change	IQMSC
Informational	Frequency of radio listening or access to different media sources	IQMSC
Organizational	Membership in organizations	IQMSC
Material	Ownership of productive assets, such as land	LSMS
Financial	Value of household savings in last year (cash and other forms)	Household Budget Survey
Human	Literacy level	LSMS education module

*Note:* IQMSC = Integrated Questionnaire for the Measurement of Social Capital. LSMS = Living Standards Measurement Study.

**Table 2. Examples of Indirect Indicators: Opportunity Structure**

<i>Domain</i>	<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Existing sources or instruments</i>
State (justice)	Index of civil liberties	Freedom House
State (political)	Index of political rights	Freedom House
State (public services)	Percentage of budget allocation devoted to PRSP	PRSP policy matrix
	Percentage of population unable to access at least one basic service in the previous year because of (a) cost, (b) physical distance, or (c) social distance	World Bank Country Policy and Institutional Assessment
Market (labor)	Percentage of employers complying with state regulations on core labor standards	N/A
Market (goods)	Access to and use of productive assets by income quintile	LSMS-type survey
Market (private services)	Percentage of women or ethnic and religious minorities accessing specified financial services in previous year	N/A
	Number of formal, operational mechanisms to ensure transparency and accountability of financial service providers	N/A
Society (intra-household)	Number of formal justice cases filed regarding violations of women's rights (domestic abuse) per year	World Bank Country Policy and Institutional Assessment
Society (intra-community)	Exclusion from community association life based on social identity	N/A

*Note:* PRSP = Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper. LSMS = Living Standards Measurement Study.

N/A = Not available.

**Table 3. Examples of Direct Indicators of Empowerment**

<i>Domain</i>	<i>Concept/theme</i>	<i>Indicator (disaggregated by social and economic group)</i>
State (justice)	<p>Accessible justice</p> <p>Frequency of use of justice system</p> <p>Fairness of justice system</p> <p>Ability to complain about justice system</p> <p>Safety and security of citizens</p>	<p>Recall data on types of justice systems and frequency of use</p> <p>Perceptual scoring of fairness of treatment and outcomes, plus social difference in treatment, accountability, ease of use</p>
State (politics)	<p>Participatory democracy</p> <p>Critical and independent voting choice</p> <p>Use of accountability mechanisms</p>	<p>Recall data on frequency of elections at different levels, voting entitlements, and voting behavior (including independence of decision making)</p> <p>Perceptual scoring of interest in elections, knowledge of parties, involvement in political processes (including aspirations), fairness of electoral process, and accountability of elected officials</p>
State (public services)	<p>Citizen voice and social accountability</p> <p>Accessible, quality, and relevant services</p>	<p>Perceptual and recall data on service availability, accessibility, and making complaints</p> <p>Recall data on services used</p> <p>Perceptual scoring of quality, accessibility, and effectiveness of complaints (distinguishing by social group)</p>
Market (labor)	<p>Freedom to enter labor market (skill-based)</p> <p>Freedom to withdraw and withhold labor</p> <p>Ability to command market price for labor</p>	<p>Perceptual scoring of ease of entry and movement in labor market</p> <p>Perceptual data on constraints to labor market entry</p> <p>Recall data on union membership</p> <p>Perceptual data on labor rights</p>
Market (goods)	<p>Ability to access productive inputs</p> <p>Ability to access consumption goods</p>	<p>Perceptual data on access to productive inputs</p> <p>Recall data on consumer behavior</p>
Market (private services)	<p>Access to and use of formal or informal credit</p> <p>Access to infrastructure</p> <p>Access to information</p>	<p>Recall data on credit access and use</p> <p>Recall data on use of transport and telecommunications</p> <p>Recall data on use of different media and information sources</p>
Society (intra-household)	<p>Influence and control over strategic choices</p> <p>Women's control over body and reproductive choices</p>	<p>Perceptual data on household decision making</p> <p>Perceptual scoring of women's control over body</p>
Society (intra-community)	<p>Freedom of association</p> <p>Freedom of mobility</p> <p>Participation in community decision making</p>	<p>Perceptual data on constraints to association</p> <p>Perceptual data on mobility</p> <p>Recall data on decision making in community</p>
<i>Source: Alsop, Bertelsen, and Holland (2006)</i>		

**Trainer**

32. During the remainder of the session, the empowerment analytic framework will be applied to two cases. Divide the participants into two groups. Give one group Handout 4: Rural Women's Development and Empowerment Project in Madhya Pradesh, and ask members to develop empowerment indicators for the project. Give the second group Handout 5: Poverty Reduction and Policy in Ethiopia, and ask members to develop indicators for a national empowerment policy. Have both groups refer to Handout 3: Examples of Indicators of Empowerment as needed.

----- *Case Studies Follow* -----

**Handout 4:****Rural Women's Development and Empowerment Project in Madhya Pradesh***INSTRUCTIONS*

1. Individually read Handout 4: Rural Women's Development and Empowerment Project in Madhya Pradesh. Use Handout 3: Examples of Indicators of Empowerment, as needed.
2. Select one person in your group to record the group's findings and to present them in the plenary discussion.
3. Then use this handout as a guide to develop indicators for the project. Choose dimensions of poverty that can be meaningfully measured. All indicators must capture changes in direction and magnitude that are of a specific dimension of poverty and are related to empowerment.
4. Determine the level of causality that the indicators must be able to trace.
5. Present the group's key findings in the plenary discussion. Ask the group representative to first briefly outline the project basics, because the other group worked on a national policy case study.

*Time:* Approximately 25 minutes for group discussion. Five minutes for each group to present findings in the plenary discussion.

The Rural Women's Development and Empowerment Project (RWDEP) in Madhya Pradesh in India sought to begin a "long-term process to improve women's economic and social status." The project design assumed that the results of many centuries of institutionalized gender inequality could not be changed in the (original) 5-year intervention.<sup>1</sup> The objectives of the intervention were thus realistic. The project was designed to (a) establish self-help groups (SHGs) of women that would engage in savings and credit activities to satisfy their short-term needs for small loans and to access larger loans from banks, (b) build the capacity of organizations working on women's issues to support the SHGs, (c) develop women's entrepreneurial and business skills, and (d) increase women's access to government services and development funds.

The project design gave priority to improving women's status in two subdomains of their economic lives: financial and public services. The project also recognized several second-order areas of intervention that were required to achieve success in the economic subdomains. The primary empowerment level of project engagement was that local SHGs would be established in villages to enhance women's social, psychological, financial, organizational, and productive assets. Although it recognized that those groups would have links to other domains and levels, the project design clearly designated primary locations and subjects of intervention. It did not—at least by design—overextend implementers with too wide a range of activities.

So the project could address the social rules that govern women's behavior in the home and community (social domain), SHGs were used to provide (a) peer solidarity in challenging particularly oppressive gender norms and (b) a forum for sharing information about behaviors and possibilities that are different from the ones traditionally known. Apart from those two functions of the SHGs, no direct action was taken to change social rules at the local village level. At intermediary levels of empowerment (that is, the block and district administrative regions), the project focused on changing the behavior of bank staff members toward village women clients and on building the capacity of intermediary nongovernmental organizations to work with the SHGs. At the macro level (that is, the state of Madhya Pradesh and the federal government of India), the project focused on building the capacity of Women's Development Corporations, which are mandated to support women's interests over the long term.

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1. The project has since been extended beyond the original time frame and geographic coverage. It should be noted that the initial clarity of project objectives was diffused during operations.

## Handout 5: Poverty Reduction and Policy in Ethiopia

### INSTRUCTIONS

1. Individually read Handout 5: Poverty Reduction and Policy in Ethiopia. Refer to slides 26 and 27 as you read the case (used at the end of session 3). Use Handout 3: Examples of Indicators of Empowerment, as needed.
2. Select one person in your group to record the group's findings and to present them in the plenary discussion.
3. Use handout 3 as a guide to develop indicators for the national empowerment policy. Choose dimensions of poverty that can be meaningfully measured. All indicators must capture changes in direction and magnitude of a specific dimension of poverty and must be related to empowerment.
4. As shown in slide 27, little empirical data exist at the country level. Refer to the survey module for guidance on how to obtain the needed data.
5. Determine the level of causality that the indicators must trace.
6. Present the group's key findings in the plenary discussion. Ask the group representative to first briefly outline the case, because the other group worked on a different project case study.

*Time:* Approximately 25 minutes for group discussion. Five minutes for each group to present its findings in the plenary discussion.

A screening of existing documentation and data found that in Ethiopia, as in many other countries, little representative empirical information exists at the country level on either empowerment or its causal factors (see slide 27). Narrative analyses of power relations were found, but those generally focused on assets and institutions without testing their association with the capacity of individuals and groups to make effective choices. Analysis of empowerment for the Ethiopia Poverty Assessment, therefore, marshaled evidence from this fragmented base, using the empowerment framework to examine relations between different groups of indicators.

The framework was first used to structure the inquiry: it identified key areas for which information was needed in each domain and subdomain, as well as at each level. Available information was then screened to assess which assets and institutions influenced the degree of empowerment found at the interface of domains and levels.

Although more statistical analysis could have been done with the available data, the Ethiopia Poverty Assessment nevertheless proved a valuable exercise because it was one of the World Bank's first attempts to seriously address the empowerment dimension of poverty reduction. Greater attention to integrated analysis of the monetary and nonmonetary dimensions of poverty reduction is needed in future poverty assessments.

The following were the empowerment findings of the Ethiopia Poverty Assessment:

- The vast majority of Ethiopians suffer from low-asset bases and limited opportunities to act on their own choices when interacting with society, the market, and the state. Women and pastoralists in particular have limited assets and opportunity structures.
- Citizen trust and interest in formal market and state institutions remain low, both overall and in comparison with traditional and nonstate institutions.
- Informal institutions, including the social norms, traditions, and cultural values of Ethiopia, inhibit citizens' overall empowerment by perpetuating social divisions and discouraging participation in the market and the government decision-making processes.

On the basis of those findings, the following actions were recommended to implement the government's empowerment policy objectives (see Kurey 2005). As of 2005, those actions were under discussion with the government and other donors in Ethiopia.

**First, increase trust in formal institutions.**

- At the local government level—the level closest and most visible to citizens—focus on improving *kebele* (village) governance to demonstrate the value and relevance of government to citizens. Extend public-sector reform programs to enhance the capacities of *kebele* councils and bureaus so they engage meaningfully with citizens regarding *kebele* plans, information dissemination, monitoring, and—where appropriate—implementation of the *kebele* plans.

Complementary initiatives could include making small quantities of discretionary funds available for capital spending at the *kebele* level. Discretionary funds could also be devoted to improving both the responsiveness of *woreda* (district-level council) and public service providers and their accountability to *kebele* representatives.

- Promote mutual understanding of the respective value and limitations of state and nonstate organizations among local and national government officials and local nongovernmental organization staff members.
- Continue the government's commitment to improving the business environment through taxation, land use restrictions, competition, use of state and party enterprises, and enforcement of stable market laws and regulations.

**Second, address the norms, values and beliefs that inhibit choice.**

- Disseminate information on the negative consequences of certain cultural traditions through print and broadcast media and through capacity-building programs for government officials and citizens. Finance nonstate organizations to work with traditional leaders.
- Retool teacher training, teaching methodologies, and school learning materials to emphasize creativity and to inspire students to express themselves more freely.
- Improve enforcement of laws relating to violence against women and children. Link this work to local government training programs so that officials can recognize and work with communities to reduce violence.

**Third, support development of a more robust national empowerment analysis.**

- Investigate the potential of individuals as empowered economic actors as well as the barriers faced by them. Examine how formal and informal institutional structures influence citizens' ability to make economic choices.
- Include indicators for empowerment in national-level monitoring systems.

33. After the groups have devoted approximately 25 minutes to discussing the two cases, give each group five minutes to present its findings in the plenary discussion.
34. Summarize the main points of each presentation on a flip chart. Ask the other participants whether they have anything else to add.

**Learning Module Review**

35. Review the core concepts present in sessions 1 and 2 and slides 3, 6–8, 13, 15, and 16.
36. Review the application of the framework to project and policy interventions (sessions 3 and 4) using slides 4 and 5.
37. Review the overall goals of this Learning Module (slide 1) and check to make sure that participants feel confident that they have met those goals.

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