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Participatory Budgeting: Core principles and Key Impacts

Brian Wampler
Boise State University, bwampler@boisestate.edu

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Abstract

This essay is a reflection piece. I identify key principles at the core of how PB functions and to discuss the scope of change we might expect to see generated by these institutions. I move beyond the idea that there is a specific model or set of "best practices" that define PB. Rather, it is most fruitful to conceptualize PB as a set of principles that can generate social change. The weaker the adherence to these principles, the less social change generated. The second purpose of the essay is to reflect on the impacts generated by PB. How do these institutions matter? My assumption is that ordinary citizens are more likely to be supportive of new democratic processes if they are able to clearly identify positive changes created by their participation in the new democratic institutions. Ordinary citizens are unlikely to continue to participate in new political institutions unless they perceive that these institutions produce tangible, positive changes in their lives. In this short reflection piece, I analyze how PB may affect democratic legitimacy, social well-being, and civil society.

Keywords

Participation, Impacts

Participatory Budgeting: Core principles and Key Impacts

Participatory Budgeting (PB) is an excellent Rorschach test to gauge observers' understanding of how citizen participation generates social change. PB, for some, represents a significant break from exclusionary governance practices, thereby enhancing democracy, improving social well-being, and promoting public transparency. In this vein, it represents an opportunity to produce significant social and political renewal, thus helping states and democratic regimes begin the process of addressing basic legitimacy problems. For others, PB is a limited participatory exercise that allows local governments to co-opt civil society activists. In this vein, PB is much ado about nothing as government officials allow participants to deliberate and make decisions on issues that correspond to the government's agenda.

Participatory Budgeting, by 2012, has become one of the world's most well-known and widely adopted participatory programs. Between 1995 and 2012, I was fortunate to have lived in Brazil five different times for a total of four years, thus providing me with the opportunity to accompany the development and diffusion of PB, first across Brazil and increasing across the globe. After two decades of research and writing on PB programs, I want to argue that it is the interaction of four core principles—voice, vote, social justice and oversight—that should be central to our analysis of the growing number of PB programs. The local context provides political and policy incentives for government officials and citizens to craft a balance among the four core principles.

PB programs are often adopted in a window of opportunity in which a coalition of elected officials and civil society activists seek to produce social change. There is a specific effort to alter traditional politics, which may include clientelism, expert-based decision-making, or domination by political parties. Importantly, the principles and rules behind Porto Alegre's PB programs were crafted in a moment of political renewal, which allowed government officials and their allies to redesign how citizens can be incorporated into state policymaking venues. Governments and civil society organizations often use PB as a means to reinvent, recreate, and redevelop their political and policy landscape. Of course, as several of the articles in this special issue demonstrate, there are many cases of PB that are not associated with political renewal at the local level, but fulfill other political agendas. The focus on social change enables us to distinguish among PB programs designed to produce social change and those PB programs designed by governments and their CSO allies to make marginal improvements to the status quo as a means to strengthen their hold on political power.

This essay is a reflection piece. I want to take advantage of this special issue of the *Journal of Public Deliberation* to identify key principles that are at the core of how PB functions and to discuss the scope of change we might expect to see generated by these institutions. First, I move beyond the idea that there is a specific

model or set of "best practices" that define PB. Rather, it is most fruitful to conceptualize PB as a set of principles that can generate social change. The weaker the adherence to these principles, the less social change generated. The stronger the adherence to these principles, the greater the likelihood of generating social change.

The second purpose of the essay is to reflect on the impacts generated by PB. How do these institutions matter? My assumption is that ordinary citizens are more likely to be supportive of new democratic processes if they are able to clearly identify positive changes created by their participation in the new democratic institutions. Ordinary citizens are unlikely to continue to participate in new political institutions unless they perceive that these institutions produce tangible, positive changes in their lives. In this sense, support for improving democratic legitimacy is not an abstract ideological position, but is linked to increasing individuals' empowerment and improvements in social well-being. In this short reflection piece, I analyze how PB may affect democratic legitimacy, social well-being, and civil society.

Founding Principles: Voice, Vote, Oversight, Social Justice

The ideas associated with Participatory Budgeting percolated across Brazil during the 1980s as political reformers sought to move beyond the political exclusion, stagnation, and corruption associated with Brazil's military dictatorship (1964-1985). PB rules crystallized in Porto Alegre, when a small opposition party (Workers' Party) won the 1988 mayoral election (Abers 2000; Avritzer 2002; Baiocchi 2005). The newly elected government worked with civil society allies to broaden their base of support, to move beyond the confines of representative democracy, and to change how and where public resources were spent. The program was not initially etched into stone. Rather, the Workers' Party government and their civil society allies adopted two significant changes in their second mayoral administration. First, they adopted a "Quality of Life Index" from Belo Horizonte's PB program, which provided a formula for distributing resources to low-income communities (regions with higher poverty rates, lower infrastructure and more participation would receive more funds). Second, they adopted a policy-oriented (Thematic) track because many social movements in Porto Alegre organized themselves around policy issues as opposed to strictly territorial definitions (e.g., community organizations). In Porto Alegre, there was no set model, but there was an effort to adapt the program rules to promote social and political change.

The lesson that I draw from this is that governments and civil society organizations interested in PB would do well to employ a staged learning and implementation process. The first stage would consist of a broader discussion of the principles, with an effort to understand which principles most strongly align with their commons goals. The second stage would involve adapting existing rules to meet local challenges, needs, and goals.

Active Citizen Participation (Voice)

Both emerging and consolidated democracies face a similar conundrum: How can we mobilize citizens without overwhelming the state's capacity to respond to their demands? PB programs offer a model of active participation and deliberation that permits citizens to deliberate amongst themselves and with government officials over the allocation of public resources and the use of state authority. PB deliberative processes reinforce efforts to generate political renewal because public meetings introduce new voices into political and policy arenas. Importantly, the new deliberative processes provide access to citizens who have not traditionally had access to political power. Traditionally excluded individuals, using an open deliberative format, develop new ideas and issues that are then placed on the policy and political agenda.

Active citizen participation extends the possibility of political renewal because it induces citizens to debate with each other and with government officials over public priorities. Citizens and government officials are brought together in a series of deliberative meetings, whereby the participants have the opportunity to listen to the issues and demands of other actors. In my experience, the vast majority of the speakers and participants come from poor communities, thus permitting the sharing of information about the pressing problems faced by their communities. Citizens are then placed in a position of needing to make decisions that do not only affect their lives, but also affect the lives of others. In the context of many PB programs in Brazil, participants learn to employ a "social justice" discourse, thus expanding the public debate regarding public spending. My own empirical research, as well as others, demonstrates that citizens working with PB programs are often willing to delay their short-term needs to support the interests of other communities that have more pressing needs (Wampler 2007; Baiocchi 2005; Marquetti et al 2008).

Given the broad nature of this core principle (VOICE), there is significant flexibility at the local level for government officials to develop new rules to achieve the goal of active citizen participation. There is no set model but the core idea is that new ideas and actors are drawn into the political system to address basic problems faced by the community. It is important to note that the successful incorporation of voice into PB will create "waves" of influences in other policy arenas. By this, I mean that participants carry new information and newly learned deliberative skills into other policymaking venues. When PB has functioned well for a number of years, there is a learning process whereby some leaders are able to deploy their new skills in different environments. Thus formal deliberative processes within PB become one moment among many as citizen-participants and government officials are engaged in a longer deliberative conversation. This ongoing process then helps to build a public sphere, moving public debate beyond political parties, lobbies, and local media outputs.

Increased Citizen Authority (Vote)

Vote is the second important principle associated with PB: citizens make specific decisions regarding public policies. This moves them beyond consultative deliberation and into the realm of state-sanctioned decision-makers. By changing when, how and by whom decisions can be made, it becomes possible to generate social change. Having real decision-making authority acts a powerful "school of democracy" because citizens are forced to make difficult choices regarding where resources were allocated. By having citizens make policy decisions, government spending can be allocated in new ways because their direct participation legitimizes spending in new areas.

The extension of vote is a key tool towards maintaining political renewal because it places authority in the hands of citizens rather than professional politicians. Citizens are empowered to make specific decisions regarding public resources and state authority. This extension of authority is at the core, I believe, of why PB programs have attracted the attention of so many ordinary citizens because citizens became able to exercise authority. Empowerment thus not only involved a change in individuals' attitudes and behaviors, but it involved directing state authority and allocating public resources. The key democratic breakthrough was that citizens vote on projects that are then implemented by the local state. This differs from traditional participatory programs in which there is feedback provided by citizens: government officials consult, which is a process of receiving inputs from citizens with no real commitment by the government to implement the projects selected by citizens.

It is worthwhile noting that Porto Alegre's PB program became, over time, a routinized political process that was no longer able to maintain the vitality associated with the initial moment of political renewal. The flexibility of the program gave way to a set of rules that became very difficult to change for a couple of different reasons. First, the PT government and its allies held power for 16 years; winning 4 consecutive elections decreased the government's appetite for political renewal. Second, Porto Alegre's PB program became an international sensation, especially among the Left. A consequence of the attention was that the rules became frozen in place. Other municipalities, such as Belo Horizonte and Recife, were not on the international map and they continued to adapt their PB programs to meet problems. Finally, the political opposition won the 2004 municipal elections. PB was sufficiently well institutionalized that the new government needed to maintain it, but the new government slowly drained the program of the energy and creativity necessary to promote political renewal. Deliberative processes were less vital and fewer resources were dedicated to the program. PB stagnated during the post-2004 period because the new government had few political incentives encouraging them to strengthen the program. By 2008, PB was an empty shell of the once-vital

participatory processes. Government officials had little interest in supporting the deliberative decision-making processes within the institution and citizen-activists increasingly turned their attention to other venues.

I should note that a similar process took place in the Brazilian city of Belo Horizonte as government officials used similar strategies to decrease the impact of PB programs. PB depends on the joint activities of government officials and citizens during the voice and vote process, which means that the withdraw of support will weaken the program (Wampler 2007) . Thus, in both Porto Alegre and Belo Horizonte, the government maintained the formal rules but that they downplayed the degree of authority extended to citizens (vote), which then had a negative effect on the quality and inclusiveness of public debates (voice). Establishing voice is an important step forward, but the evidence demonstrates that deliberative processes by themselves are insufficient to promote social change. It is the combination of voice and vote that promotes changes.

With regard to efforts by local governments in China to initiate PB programs, my reading of He's research is that there is an effort to expand citizens' voice but there is no real effort to expand vote (HE 2011). These are largely consultative processes. Although it is possible that positive effects can be generated (e.g., better signaling between elites and masses, targeted spending on specific needs), we should expect there to be little short-term empowerment effects because government officials are not transferring authority to citizens.

After nearly twenty years of analyzing PB and other participatory institutions, I have come to believe that the key difference among participatory institutions is the degree of delegation of authority to citizens, which can be analyzed based on the extent to which citizens have vote. When citizens are able to make binding decisions that affect public resources and state authority, there is heightened interest in the program. The authority granted to citizens must be within legal and budgetary parameters already established by government officials, just as it would be with other government bodies (e.g., national legislature, regional water districts). Conversely, when citizens participate but don't directly contribute to policy outcomes, there is a lower level of empowerment generated.

Reallocation of Resources (Social Justice)

PB programs were initially designed to promote social justice, as they were geared toward using public resources and state authority in new ways, in new places and on new policies. By expanding voice and vote to traditionally excluded sectors of the population, PB has a redistributive component. Many PB programs in Brazil use a "Quality of Life Index," initially devised by the government in the city of Belo Horizonte. This index marries modern data collection (location of schools and banks, per capita) with an emphasis on context-specific social justice concerns. For many PB programs, social justice involves harnessing the resources, expertise, and

authority of the local state to provide public works in poor areas. There is no set model or system of incorporating the social justice component.

In Brazil, the social justice component complements the expansion of voice and vote. In order to encourage more poor citizens to participate, PB resources are allocated based on sub-municipal districts level of infrastructure and poverty. The more limited the infrastructure and the higher the poverty, the greater the per capita resources allocated to the district. The establishment of specific incentives to mobilize poor or politically marginalized communities has two notable effects. The Quality of Life Index helps poor citizens to overcome basic collective problems—it induces them to engage in political arenas that are normally closed to them. Thus, PB rules can be modified at the local level to overcome so-called "wicked" participation problems: local organizers need to identify the "so-what" participation problem and then devise rules to induce targeted citizens to participate. The Quality of Life Index may not be appropriate in all places, but the key insight is that a standardized formula allows poor citizens to understand that their willingness to participate will result in public goods and resources for their communities. This, of course, has the effect of inducing more individuals to mobilize.

When people do mobilize for PB meetings, there is an increase in the legitimacy of policy changes, thus closing a virtuous circle. Government officials, due to the participation of ordinary citizens, are provided with the necessary political cover to implement new policies. Simply, a window of opportunity creates a new political coalition that crafts a change in the rules that induces new types of political actors to be involved. An increase in participation then allows the government the necessary political support to allocate resources and state authority in new ways.

In sum, the Quality of Life Index is an excellent example of a specific rule generated by the ideal of social justice. This is a key feature that also distinguishes PB from other participatory programs as well as the quality of PB programs. The expansion of voice and vote to traditionally excluded sectors of the population allows PB to promote social justice because the participants are steering public resources to issues most important to them. When PB programs lack a strong social justice component (often PB programs promoted by the World Bank, see Goldfrank this special issue), then we must assert that these PB programs lack a central component that generate social change. These programs will more likely be focused on marginal improvements to governance structures rather than an attempt to overhaul how public resources should be spent.

However, it is important to note that the diffusion of PB has not necessarily been accompanied by this social justice principle. There are two basic reasons for this. First, the intense inequality among Brazilian citizens made social justice a central theme for political reformers. Thus, we would expect that countries with similar social characteristics will have a similar emphasis on social justice. The second reason why social justice was strongly promoted in the initial case is that Brazil's Workers' Party was the main advocate behind PB's diffusion. The Workers' Party made PB a central plank in their local governing agenda, which meant that as

the Workers' Party grew, so did the emphasis on social justice. By 2012, the World Bank was the principal organization promoting PB across the globe and, as Goldfrank shows in this special edition, there was a much weaker emphasis on social justice concerns.

Improved Transparency (Oversight)

PB programs seek to reform how the state functions by increasing citizen oversight. Local governments often alter internal processes so that the voice and vote of citizens become tangible, real public policies. These policy changes may include new or expanded social services, or they might also be new projects (e.g., improving drainage).

Local administrative processes need to be altered in two ways. First, the government needs to adapt how the local state is geared toward receiving inputs. The bureaucracy needs to be transformed to enable bureaucrats and policy experts to more directly engage citizens. There is often a steep learning curve because citizens bureaucrats and policy experts (especially policy experts) are often purposefully isolated from direct contact with citizens. However, due to the inclusion of new forms of voice, vote and social justice, it is often necessary for bureaucrats and policy experts to learn how to directly engage citizens in ways that constructively promote new policies.

Second, bureaucrats and policy experts need to transform how they administer and implement the new policies. Gone are the days of implementation without direct citizen feedback. There is now an ongoing conversation among state officials and citizens regarding project implementation. This involves direct oversight by citizens over the allocation of public resources.

In sum, the rules that govern how PB programs are going to work are not set in stone. Four principles—Voice, Vote, Social Justice and Oversight—form the core of PB. Local governments and their civil society allies would do well to start with this set of principles, and then work toward the establishment of rules that meet local needs. The focus on four principles also allows researchers and citizens to assess the extent to which PB programs generate a new form of politics.

Of course, the rules associated with PB can be used to maintain the status quo, because they provide government officials with a better understanding of citizens' demands. When thinking about the expansion of PB in China, for example, we should recognize that government officials can use these programs to solidify their rule rather than to expand citizens' power or influence. (He 2011). However, as Ben Goldfrank argues in his article in this special issue, it is quite possible that adoption of PB will produce a series of unintended consequences. When local governments use the "best practices" and rules associated with PB to maintain the status quo, rather than promoting voice, vote and social justice, it is important to classify these experiences as pseudo-PB cases. By this, I mean that PB can be used

by authoritarian, corrupt and clientelistic governments to gather new information about policy demands, civil society mobilization, and the emergence of new leaders. In addition, governments in democratic setting may adopt PB to burnish their "good government" credentials but they may delegate little authority to citizens. In both of these cases, the PB program would have the dual effect of limiting social change while simultaneously allowing governments to claim that they are engaging in democratic innovations and change. Thus, it is incumbent on researchers to be attentive to how local governments may modify rules to meet particular needs as well as how PB programs impact their local environment.

Impacts and Outcomes

The spread of democracy across the globe rests, in part, on the assumption that democratic institutions will improve citizens' quality of life. These improvements may be in the form of the protection of civil liberties, the establishment of social welfare protections, or increased public security. There is, of course, a major disjuncture between the hopes associated with democracy and the actual, lived experience of tens of millions who lived in cities with these programs. PB was developed as one strategy to move beyond the confines of representative democracy so that poor citizens would directly reap the benefits that many middle and upper class groups typically secure in representative democracy. Given that PB was conceived as a way to improve the quality of people's lives, it is necessary to examine how these programs may transform people's lives. At the core of the assertion is basic common sense: People will continue participate when it improves the quality of their lives. When individuals perceive few tangible benefits in collective action organizations, then there are few common sense reasons for them to provide their ongoing support. However, the potential range of resources allocated will continue to be low because PB is generally implemented by cities. In the Brazilian cities of Belo Horizonte and Porto Alegre, we can identify hundreds of millions of US dollars spent on public works selected by PB participants. This level of resources is, on one hand, a lot of money. However, it is generally less than 10% of total spending in each municipality.

PB programs have a range of impacts. Given space constraints, I will touch on three arenas: democratic legitimacy, civil society and social justice. This taps into state, society and individual well-being.

Democratic Legitimacy

At the broadest level, PB advocates hope that these programs will enhance the quality of democracy. Representative democracy faces a myriad of problems (e.g., citizen apathy, limited public deliberation, weak representation) that PB advocates hope can be partially solved by using the four basic principles described above as the basis of a new democratic pact. PB programs, its advocates believe,

enhances democratic legitimacy due to the expansion of the public debate, through the delegation of authority to citizens to make decisions, by using public resources to promote social justice or address "wicked" policy problems, and to improve basic state performance. PB is the starting point for citizens and government officials to learn to work together in new ways.

The degree to which PB programs can enhance democratic legitimacy varies greatly, as the articles by Sintomer, Herzberg and Röecke, and Baiocchi and Ganuza demonstrate. My research over a number of years indicates that PB's impact on democratic legitimacy is directly correlated with the degree to which each specific PB program adheres to the four principles. If the government and citizens commit to all four principles, a virtuous cycle is initiated in which the benefits of voice, vote, social justice, and oversight are mutually reinforcing. This ideal case is the most difficult to achieve because it requires significant support from government officials and citizens. It is more likely that their commitment to the four principles will vary, which will obviously have a significant effect on efforts to use PB to expand democratic legitimacy. For example, if governments allow voice and oversight, this may expand public sphere and clean up the government, but the lack of binding vote and social justice concerns limits the degree of change because citizens are not directly exercising their political rights.

Given space constraints, I cannot tap into every element, but I want to tap into how voice and deliberation affect democratic legitimacy.

Over the past two decades, I have attended dozens and dozens of PB meetings, ranging from small discussion groups to large campaign-like events. I have come to believe that the best way to think about the impact of deliberation is to begin our analysis by conceptualizing PB deliberative processes as part of a broader ongoing conversation among citizens and government officials. What occurs in a specific meeting is important, but what is more important is what happens in subsequent meetings as well as in parallel meetings. Deliberation is not a "single shot" event, but it is a continuum of interactions. This allows citizens to gain information, to understand how authority to exercised, and to understand the difficult tradeoffs that government officials are often forced to make. Given the social justice component of many PB programs, this deliberation is now expanded to include individuals who never had access to political power.

When we asses the impact of PB deliberations, it needs to be done from the vantage point of how the deliberations alter the broader public sphere as well as new participatory space. PB incorporates new actors into previously closed policy-making spaces, which allows for the presentation of new ideas, issues, and interests. PB deliberative processes generates a "bond of solidarity" among citizens who may otherwise never had come into contact (Alexander 2006). These bonds are renewed prior to, during, and following formal meetings. The connections are especially important for civil society activists, who are often pulled in multiple directions. The structure of PB allows for civil society activists to maintain relationships with other activists as well as government officials.

PB deliberations also have the ability to send signals to members of the political establishments, thus altering the more formal political sphere (parties, elected officials, experts). Government officials can use PB as a new institutional sphere to move beyond political parties and informal networks in order to gather better information regarding citizens' political and policy preferences. Governments can use this information in ways that reinforce the possibility of social change, but government can also use this information to consolidate their control over the status quo. Thus, when we analyze the deliberative conversation, it is necessary to pay close attention to how government officials are using the information they gather in these new spaces.

Thus, deliberation is not measured only by the content of what occurs within specific formal meetings, but the impact must be measured through broader societal effects. Content analysis may be useful to capture the exchange of ideas within meetings, but the key impact is the expansion of the public sphere. Citizens from traditionally excluded groups are often able to use PB programs as a way to introduce new ideas and themes into the public sphere as well as into more formal political arenas.

Social Justice:

The political renewal associated within PB creates the opportunity to allocate resources to new types of projects or to expand existing projects/social services into new communities. A key reason for promoting and supporting PB is that citizen-participants provide ongoing feedback and support to government officials. These officials, in turn, have increased political support that allows them to reallocate monies in new ways. Representative democracy has long been recognized as having a middle- and upper-class bias associated with access to political power as well as to how public goods are distributed.

It is this social justice component that differentiates PB from other participatory programs. PB programs can then be modified over time to attend to social justice claims that the current program is unable to address.

There are two basic ways to measure impact. First, does the geographical distribution of capital investments change as a result of PB? Simply, does the government begin to invest in neighborhoods that they previously ignored? This approach suggests that the state expands its existing capacity into places where previous governments didn't tread. Second, do new types of programs and capital investments correspond to the needs of underserved communities and poor constituencies? It is crucial to know whether government officials are willing to alter what the state does in order to address the needs of poor and underserved communities.

The evidence coming out of Brazil's municipal-level PB programs indicates a positive association between the existence of PB and social justice-inspired change.

First, research from the cities of Porto Alegre (1989-2004) and Belo Horizonte (1993-2008)—Marquetti, in the case of Porto Alegre, and Wampler, in the case of Belo Horizonte—demonstrates that a greater percentage of PB resources were spent in low-income neighborhoods (2003; 2012). These programs thus reached their goals of allocating additional resources to poor communities. Thus, in two cases that are commonly cited as being the most successful, it is the promotion of all four principles that helped to extend social justice.

In another analysis, Touchton and Wampler use a unique dataset to demonstrate that Brazilian municipalities adopting PB spend more on education and health care, two public goods used by the poor in Brazil. Even more importantly, there is a reduction in infant mortality in municipalities with PB and the effect gets stronger over time. (n.d.). Thus, the evidence demonstrates that PB programs in Brazil are allocating greater resources to traditionally underserviced neighborhoods and that municipalities that adopt PB are better able than "non-adopters" to provide public resources to poor families and communities. It is the commitment of governments to the four core principles that are producing positive outcomes.

Civil Society

Participatory institutions help citizens, especially those from poor communities, to overcome basic collective action problems. As has been well established by political scientists and sociologists, weak networks, low information, and the need to mobilize many people often make it difficult for individuals to organize themselves in pursuit of common interests.

It is the combination of voice, vote, and social justice that encourages poor citizens to mobilize. Alexander's (2006) phrase, the "bonds of solidarity," is particularly apt because it captures the new connections that can be forged through the annual meeting cycle. PB depends on the crafting of these alliances because the success of these programs depends on having a robust number of citizens who are willing to participate each year. Over time, participants will carry a larger and larger share of the reasonability for organizing debates and educating newer participants.

What makes PB programs different from a program like Deliberative Polling is that it maintains people in their local contexts. It is not an artificial environment, divorcing people from the local nexus of their authority. Rather, citizens work in the local context to grapple with tough resource allocation decisions. They need to decide how to spend scarce public resources.

The bonds of solidarity are extended through two internal processes. First, the annual or bi-annual cycle of budgetary meetings allows citizen and leaders to meet on multiple occasions, thereby helping them to establish and then maintain connections to a wider-range of actors. Leaders from poor communities are thus able to build the necessary bonds and alliances that allow them to work in multiple venues. Second, the process of voting on specific projects gives community leaders a glimpse into the problems faced by similarly situated communities. This helps

activists to see beyond their narrower interests, thus allowing them to understand the bigger picture.

Concluding remarks:

Participatory budgeting programs have proliferated across the globe. Four core principles—voice, vote, social justice, and oversight—link a diverse range of programs. However, what differentiates these programs is the extent to which governments and citizens seek to make each principle central part of each specific PB programs. We should expect that PB programs will vary extensively in how governments adopt and then adapt these key values. We should also expect that governments and civil society organizations will move beyond the original principles and rules. After all, the principles and rules were created to deal with very specific problems in Brazil.

Evaluating the impact of PB programs is at the heart of our current research agenda because we continue to have a very limited understanding of how these programs function. We expect the principles and rules to be adapted to meet local needs. But, as the adaptations expand, it is probable that many of the new programs will share little in common with what we know as "participatory budgeting." While we should welcome the transformation of rules, activists and researchers will also need to be attentive to how the underlying rules will produce very different outcomes.

With regard to outcomes, we would expect that the impacts will vary widely. I identified three broad areas—democratic legitimacy, social justice, and civil society—where we might expect changes in outcomes to occur. These broad conceptual areas offer, I believe, an excellent vantage point from which we can measure the impact of current and future participatory budgeting programs. When PB programs are designed based on the four core principles, we would expect greater social change as measured through changes in democratic legitimacy, social justice, and civil society.

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