

APPENDIX 1: Who Provides Services?¹

Governments are the main providers of services. At the same time it is becoming more common for services to be contracted out to the private sector.

Providers of services

- Central government
- State/ provincial government
- Local government
- Private sector
- NGOs

A community may get different services from different providers. A town may receive education, drinking water and electricity services from the state government, sanitation services from a private company, and health care from the central government.

In some instances, citizens share a portion of the responsibility for service provision. For example, with regards to education, parents may be involved in the allocation of school funds or the hiring of teachers.

Questions to Consider:

- Who provides services in your area?
- Have any services been contracted out to the private sector?
- Are private citizens or citizen groups involved in service provision?

Key Relationships in Service Provision

There are three key actors in service delivery: service providers, citizens and policymakers. The relationships among these actors are important to consider when working to improve services.

Citizens and Service Providers. Although citizens directly interact with service providers, they often feel helpless in influencing changes in service provision. The lack of a competitive market in service provision makes it difficult for citizens to hold service providers accountable.

Citizens and Policymakers. In theory, citizens could communicate with policymakers, who then in turn could change policies or apply pressure on providers. However, the means of communication between users of services and policymakers are often few or ineffective. In addition, policymakers may not be interested or equipped to influence service providers.

Policymakers and Service Providers. Even when policymakers are interested in bringing about improvements in services, they may not have the ability to do so. Well-intentioned and knowledgeable policymakers may be able to make policy-level changes, but still lack the resources or leverage to bring about on-the-ground implementation of policies.

The CRC can provide citizens, policymakers and service providers with a user-based diagnosis of service provision and a starting point to collectively improve services.

¹ "Overview" in **World Development Report 2004** (World Bank: Washington D.C.).