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Accountability arrangements to combat corruption: Literature review

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Accountability Arrangements to Combat Corruption

LITERATURE REVIEW

S. Cavill and M.Sohail

Partnering to
COMBAT CORRUPTION

Series Editor: M. Sohail

Accountability Arrangements to Combat Corruption

— Literature Review —

Accountability Arrangements to Combat Corruption

Literature Review

S. Cavill and M.Sohail

Loughborough, UK

2007



Water, Engineering and Development Centre
Loughborough University
Leicestershire
LE11 3TU UK

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Introduction

'Services are failing because they are falling short of their potential to improve outcomes. They are often inaccessible or prohibitively expensive. But even when accessible, they are often dysfunctional, extremely low in technical quality and unresponsive to the needs of a diverse clientele' (World Bank, 2004; 19).

Development depends largely on providing public goods such as infrastructure. Yet, as the above quote illustrates, and despite considerable investment, infrastructure services are widely perceived to be unsatisfactory. Internationally it is recognized that corruption (including bribery, embezzlement, kickbacks and fraud) in construction projects undermines the sustainability of infrastructure services (defined here as water supply, sanitation, drainage, access roads and paving, transport, solid waste management, street lighting and community buildings). Furthermore, corruption poses significant risks to construction and engineering companies themselves. In recent years researchers have focused on the link between corruption and delivery of public services: corruption can be harmful for the standard of living and the distribution of income among citizens, reducing income per capita and literacy, and increasing infant mortality. Corruption not only deters the private investment required to set up these services, but also biases public spending in undesirable directions.

More specifically, corruption constitutes an important constraint to the sustainability of public service provision. For example, corruption raises the cost and lowers the quality of infrastructure, resulting in sub-standard infrastructure and poor infrastructure management. Corruption often steers money away from community-based service delivery towards large capital-intensive infrastructure projects. This affects the poor adversely by increasing the price of and restricting access to public services. Corruption can also cost lives, for example where inspectors have been bribed to ignore building and planning regulations. In short, corruption can undermine the sustainability of infrastructure services. It is the purpose of this review to argue that with improved accountability and reduced corruption it is possible to construct, operate and maintain adequate quality and quantity of infrastructure on a sustainable basis.

Corruption is a highly topical issue: recently, new international legislation has been passed, new international institutions and organizations formed, and a broad range of national anti-corruption initiatives funded through international resources, particularly through the good governance initiatives of the international financial institutions. Corruption is perceived as a particular problem in 'developing' countries. The Africa Commission, for example, recently identified corruption as the single most important explanatory factor for the lack of economic development in Africa (Commission for Africa, 2005). The African Parliamentary Network Against Corruption (APNAC) has had some success, however, in supporting anti-corruption initiatives by parliamentarians in ten African countries.

A renewed emphasis on the outputs of infrastructure services has put the issue of accountability on the agenda. Enthusiasts in donor agencies and academia see improved outputs, greater responsiveness to the needs of service users and sustainability as likely consequences of greater accountability. Accordingly, attention has been given to ways of making the public sector more accountable as well as increasing opportunities for service users to express their demands through voice and consumer style behaviour. Greater accountability for infrastructure services requires fundamental changes to the delivery of services, and in many cases, front line service providers' roles have also been

redesigned to support these changes. What progress has been made, therefore, in reducing the risk of corruption to construction projects?

This literature review is based on the initial findings of a DFID-funded Knowledge Action Research project entitled 'Accountability Arrangements to Combat Corruption', conducted by the Water, Engineering and Development Centre (WEDC) at Loughborough University. The research is intended to:

- Demonstrate how accountability initiatives in construction projects, in developed and developing countries, can be of benefit internationally to the public and private sector as well as to non-governmental organizations in their efforts to improve the sustainability of infrastructure services.
- Provide evidence of how anti-corruption initiatives in infrastructure delivery can contribute to pro-poor outcomes.

This review documents the growing interest in accountability in the delivery of infrastructure projects. Other objectives are to:

- Consider how corruption affects construction projects.
- Discuss how accountability can be operationalized.
- Assess the potential of accountability to improve both provision and performance of services.

This review provides a broad introduction to the three key concerns of this research, which are infrastructure services, corruption and accountability. The first section defines infrastructure services, identifies the stakeholders in infrastructure services and the outputs of these services. The second section explores a number of general themes around the issue of corruption, before moving on to give greater consideration to corruption in the delivery of infrastructure services. The final section of the review provides a theoretical discussion of accountability and the rationale for applying accountability to the delivery of infrastructure services. It also provides examples of how accountability can be applied to the delivery of infrastructure services. It is concluded that accountability for infrastructure services is an important research area and yet has not been fully explored in existing studies.

1. Infrastructure services

1.1 What are infrastructure services?

The term 'infrastructure services' covers a wide variety of activities but is defined here as those services derived from physical infrastructure networks or installations. These services are normally the responsibility of a local government, but may be provided by the private sector and non-governmental organizations (NGOs). The term includes services that operate at a household level, such as sanitation facilities, rubbish disposal systems and water supplies, as well as community-wide services like street lighting, access roads and paving, community halls and storm water drains.

1.2 Stakeholders in infrastructure service delivery

The key stakeholders in infrastructure service delivery are identified in Table 1.

Table 1. **Stakeholder responsibilities for infrastructure services**
(after Cotton and Taylor, 2000)

Stakeholder	Typical role and responsibility
Central government	Statutory responsibilities include policymaking, planning, providing subsidies, setting regulations, setting and monitoring standards, conservation and provision of resources.
Local government	Statutory responsibilities relate to waste collection, drain clearing and street sweeping, often managed by councillors. Other responsibilities include acting on demands and to promote interests of constituents, issuing planning permission and making by-laws.
Specialist line agencies	These typically have responsibilities for water supply and power supply; jurisdiction varies over parts of the networks.
NGO/CBOs	These are often engaged in self-help activities, campaigning for better services or may even procure and supply services. NGOs and CBOs have a role in supporting community-managed O&M.
Private sector	These may be small entrepreneurs operating in the informal economy or formal sector companies providing services.
Service users	Whether commercial, industrial, public institutions or domestic, users have responsibility for on-the-plot services, payment and to conserve resources.
Donors	Donors and international financing institutions have a role in influencing government policy on infrastructure services.

This research is focused at the tertiary level of service delivery, so the stakeholders of key concern here are infrastructure service users and 'front line' service providers:

- Urban infrastructure service users can be distinguished from their rural counterparts by the size and density of the settlements they live in and by their relative dependence on established formal provision of services in the public and private sector to meet needs, usually in the context of a cash economy (Gilbert et al., 1996; 5).
- 'Front line' service providers are typically employed by a public sector engineering department and work at the consumer (tertiary) end of service delivery, possibly interacting with the public on a daily basis. The term 'front line provider' suggests a

potentially combative relationship with service users. Front line service providers may be field engineers, skilled workers (such as meter readers or plumbers) or labour teams, and the term may also include administrative and revenue functions.

Another key set of stakeholders in the delivery of infrastructure services of concern to this research is the poor. The 'Voices of the Poor' study (Narayan et al., 2000) demonstrated that poor people are dissatisfied with the services they receive, perceive public institutions as unaccountable and are concerned with corruption and the responsiveness of services. Infrastructure services are central to the UN's Millennium Development Goal of eradicating extreme poverty in two respects, as the motor of local economic growth and supporting sustainable livelihoods through equitable access to services, leading to increased employment, improved environments, better living standards, healthier people and lower infant mortality and promoting good governance.

1.3 Outputs of service delivery

The provision of infrastructure services is intended to achieve a number of goals, such as:

- Human development goals: including public health, well-being, welfare, security, comfort, convenience, income redistribution, poverty reduction and enhancing human capital.
- Economic development goals: these relate to economic growth, efficiency of economic activities, facilitating trade and creating employment.
- Environmental sustainability goals: including improvements to the environment and conservation of natural resources.
- Governance goals: for example the promotion of civil harmony and social integration.
- Financial goals: improving the household's ability to generate income and savings, for example, by enabling a more productive use of women's time, or enhancing the scope of household based businesses.

The specific benefits of infrastructure services at the household and community level are summarized in Table 2.

Table 2. The benefits of infrastructure services for communities

Water supply	The literature published during the International Drinking Water Decade has extensively documented the health, time and labour benefits of improved reliability, availability, quantity and quality of water.
Sanitation	The benefits of sanitary latrines include improved health, increased productivity, reduced public and private health spending, improved environment, convenience, privacy, prestige and comfort.
Storm water drainage	The benefits include reduced frequency and duration of flooding, waterlogging and erosion. Poor drainage results in flooding of shelter and damage to property, the creation of damp and unhealthy living conditions, pollution of water sources and damage to latrines in low lying areas. Puddles of water or open drains can act as breeding sites for Culex mosquitoes (transmitters of Bancroftian filariasis and Rift Valley fever), Anopheles mosquitoes (transmitters of malaria), or schistosomiasis (Hardoy et al., 1990).

Access and paving	Improved pedestrian access and roads may increase the mobility of residents, increase access to livelihood opportunities, enable the provision of affordable public transport and make travel safer and more comfortable for pedestrians (in terms of air pollution and traffic safety).
Solid waste management	Refuse storage facilities and collection prevents the breeding of vectors of disease such as flies and rodents and also prevents rubbish blocking drains or sewers.
Street lighting	Increased level of street lighting can reduce crime in neighbourhoods and improve security, particularly in terms of violence against women and prevention of accidents resulting from traffic risks and poor paving.
Community hall	A community hall gives a focal point for meeting and action in a community. It can also be used as an address for visitors and mail and for storing community resources and documents. Community buildings may be a source of income for the community through private hire; for example, for parties.

How far infrastructure services achieve human development, economic, environmental, governance and financial goals depends to a great extent on whether certain outputs are delivered. The literature conceptualizes the outputs of infrastructure services in two specific ways. For example, Zeithaml (1988) distinguishes between the technical aspects of service delivery and the consumer's experience of service delivery. The technical quality of infrastructure services basically refers to whether the service does what it is supposed to. Technical quality is an objective concept, and can be measured by conformance with engineering based specifications, which makes it difficult for non-experts to judge (Deming, 1986; Crosby, 1986).

In an increasing number of countries attention is focused on the quality of public services as measured by customers' satisfaction (Myers and Lacey, 1996; 331). User satisfaction can be defined as the difference between one's expectations of service performance¹ and an evaluation with the actual outcomes of service delivery (Cronin and Taylor, 1994). In this model if technical performance is higher than expectations then the customer is satisfied. If performance is less than expectations then the consumer is dissatisfied. Brudney and England (1982; 129-130) argue that satisfaction with the 'impacts' of services (such as the quality, responsiveness, equity and distribution of services) is significant in itself but also provides important descriptive information to policymakers in the absence of the market mechanisms of private ownership and competition. However, it is possible for one person to see a service as being of high quality and another to see it as of poor quality, with both citing precisely the same criteria in support of their argument (Walsh, 1995; 248-9). Ultimately, it is suggested that reported satisfaction with infrastructure services may be influenced by a multitude of contextual factors, only some of which will be related to the characteristics of the service itself (Deichmann and Lall, 2003).

1 Based on perception and experience (Maister, 1985).

2. Corruption

A general definition of corruption is the misuse of public office for personal gain, either at one's own instigation (for example, extortion) or in response to inducements (for example, bribes). Nye's definition (1967; 419) of corruption refers to 'behaviour which deviates from the formal duties of a public role because of private interests regarding (personal, close family, private clique) pecuniary or status gains, or violates rules against the exercise of certain type of private regarding influence'. According to Klitgaard (1988; 24), corruption occurs when an agent betrays the principal's² interest in pursuit of one's own. Leys (1965) refers to corruption as behaviour that breaks some rule, written or unwritten, about the proper purpose to which a public office/institution has been put. However, Williams (1987) states that corruption resists simple labelling; how corruption is defined depends on the context in which it is located, the perspectives of the definers and their purpose in defining it.

Specific forms of corruption include:

Bribe – payments made in order to gain an advantage or to avoid a disadvantage, for example, 'speed money' to overcome delay in the administrative process to obtain a service or to subvert proper decision-making.

Fraud – theft through misrepresentation.

Embezzlement – misappropriation of corporate or public funds.

Kickbacks – sweeteners or rewards for favourable decisions.

Corruption can differ in its scale: it can be 'grand' (involving large amounts of money) or more commonly 'petty', involving small amounts of money and which citizens may experience in their encounters with junior public officials such as policemen and other 'street level bureaucrats' (Lipsky, 1980). According to Davis (2004), corruption can be 'collusive' (the willing and planned co-operation of the giver and taker), 'extortionary' (forced extraction of bribes or other favours from vulnerable people by those in authority), or 'anticipatory' (paying a bribe in anticipation of favourable actions or decisions from an authority).

Werner (1983; 147) suggests three further types of definition:

- (a) Public-office-centred definitions which involve a deviation from legal and public duty norms for private benefit, whether in the form of pecuniary, status or influence gains.
- (b) Market-centred definitions viewing corruption as a maximizing activity in which officials manipulate pecuniary gains according to the supply and demand in the market place of their official domains.
- (c) Public-interest-centred definitions stressing the betrayal of public interest by preferring particular to common interests.

Famously, Klitgaard (1988) defines corruption as Monopoly power (M) plus discretion by officials (D) minus accountability $C=M+D-A$. If someone has monopoly power over a

² In economics, the principal-agent problem refers to the issue of how to get the employee or contractor (agent) to act in the best interests of the principal (the employer) when the employee or contractor has an informational advantage over the principal and has different interests from the principal.

good or service and has the discretion to decide whether someone gets the good or service or how much a person receives, and there is no accountability whereby others can see what that person is deciding, then we will tend to find corruption.

Rose-Ackerman (1999) describes corruption as an economic, cultural and political problem that limits investment and growth and leads to ineffective government. Corruption can be both a personal moral failing and an institutional flaw in infrastructure services. Corruption has been identified as a constraint to development or modernization (Robinson, 1998; Ward, 1989). Corruption is a challenge to political stability, hampers sustainable growth (Mauro, 1997), distorts prices, wastes resources, discourages foreign direct investment, inflates government spending, reduces domestic investment (Tanzi, 1997a & b; Ades and di Tella, 1995; Wei, 1999), undermines legal and judicial systems (Klitgaard, 1988; Della Porta and Mény, 1997) and reduces the effectiveness of social spending by preventing public services reaching those in need (Gupta et al., 1998). A concern with corruption has arisen in the context of contemporary trends such as privatization, deregulation, liberalization, state–civil society engagement, decentralized local government and calls for effective and efficient service provision.

The literature describes the main causes of corruption as greed, the low salaries of public officials, peer pressure, institutional cultures of corruption, the lack of accountability of public officials, a lack of morals, poor law enforcement or lack of punishment of corrupt officials, lack of information and transparency in bureaucratic systems with complex processes and regulations. Tanzi and Zee (1995), Ruud (1998), Olivier de Sardan (1999) and Price (1999) argue that corruption typically involves social networks, moral and social codes and cultural practices such as gift giving and helping family and friends. For example, the corrupt official may have been educated at the expense of the extended family, who then expect favours in return for their investment. Or corrupt civil servants may give their allegiance to high-ranking politicians and, in return, enjoy their protection from prosecution.

Corruption has a number of consequences: for examples see Table 3.

Table 3. Consequences of corruption

Bottleneck for development	Robinson (1998); Ward (1989); Broadman & Recanatini (2002); May et al. (2002); Alam (1991); Anderson et al. (2003); Bardhan (1997, 2000); Gould (1980); Gray & Kaufmann (1998); Heymans & Lipietz (1999); Kaufmann (1996); Leftwich (1993); Lewis (1996); Loveri & McKechnie (2000); Moody-Stewart (1994); Newell (2002); Ouma (1991); Qizilbash (2001); Rose-Ackerman (1997); Theobald (1990); Wade (1985); Scott (1969); Kempe & Chikulo (2000)
Distorted commercial and industrial enterprise development, creation of unnecessary barriers to entry, reduces competition and innovation and growth of the unofficial economy	Johnson et al. (1998); Djankov & Murrell (2002); Friedman (2000); Hellman et al. (2000); Johnson et al. (2000); Svensson (2003a); Batra et al. (2003); Rose-Ackerman & Stone (1996); Djankov & Murrell (2002); Djankov et al. (2002)
Undermines political stability and leads to ineffective government	Mauro (1997 a & b); Rose-Ackerman (1999); Anechiarico & Jacobs (1996); Banfield (1975); Doig (1984, 1995, 1997); Dollar et al. (1999); Goel & Nelson (1998); James (1996); Lodge (1998); Meier & Holbrook (1992); Morris (1991); Park (1995); Reno (1995); Riley (1983); Rosenthal (1977); Seligman (2002); Szeftel (1998); Weiner (1962); Weyland (1998); Williams (2000 a & b); Williams (1987); Wei (1999)

Undermines legal and judicial systems and people's confidence in the state and the legal system	Klitgaard (1988); Della Porta & Mény (1997); Johnson et al. (1997); Becker & Stigler (1974); Lee (1986); Rahman (1986); Feld & Voigt (2003); Rowat et al. (1995); Polinsky et al. (2001); Rose-Ackerman 2004; Mookherjee & Png (1995)
Sparking civil unrest	[Iran, Nicaragua, Sierra Leone and former Zaïre]
Lower quality of public infrastructure and effective provision of public goods and services	Tanzi & Davoodi (1997); Isham et al. (1995); DfID (2002); Esfahani & Ramirez (2003); Fox (1994); Henisz (2002); Ostrom et al. (1993); Bo Dal & Rossi (2004)
Reduces the effectiveness of social spending by preventing public services reaching those in need	Gupta et al. (1998); Hellman et al. (2000); Tanzi & Davoodi (1997); Ouma (1991); Perlman (1989); Anderson et al. (2003); Andvig (1991); Deininger (2003); Del Monte & Papagni (2001); Ye & Canagarajah (2002); Weiner (1962); van de Walle (1994)
Reduction of per capita GDP	Husted (1999); Kaufmann et al. (1999 a & b); Tanzi (1997); Ades & di Tella (1997); Wei (1999); Kaufman & Wei (1999 a & b); Narayan et al. (2000); Gupta et al. (1998)
Decrease in foreign direct investment	Wei (1997); Mauro (1995); Keefer & Knack (1995); Smarzynska & Wei (2001); Tanzi & Davoodi (1997); Wei (1999); Alesina & Weder (2002); Bengoa & Sanchez-Robles (2003); Smarzynska & Wei (2001); Campos, Lien & Pradhan (1999)
Infringement of civil and political rights	Persson et al. (2003)
Prosecution, fines, blacklisting and reputational risk, imprisonment, loss of professional, status/employment	Stansbury (2005)

2.1 Corruption in developing countries

Gould and Amaro-Reyes (1983) argue that conditions in less developed countries are particularly conducive to corruption. The 2004 Corruption Perceptions Index of Transparency International, a Berlin-based NGO, covers 85 countries. Transparency International found that developing countries such as Haiti, Bangladesh, Nigeria, Myanmar, Chad, Paraguay, Azerbaijan, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan and Indonesia scored less than 5 out of a clean score of 10 in the Corruption Perceptions Index in 2004. Countries that have secured a score of higher than 9 and evidence very low levels of perceived corruption are predominantly rich countries such as Finland, Denmark, New Zealand, Iceland, Singapore and Sweden. Moreover, Médard (1986) sees corruption as a defining characteristic of many sub-Saharan African nations (particularly in those nations with extractive industries such as oil, natural gas and precious gems). A report by the African Union, presented before a meeting in Addis Ababa in September 2002, estimated that corruption costs African economies in excess of 148bn dollars a year. This figure includes both direct and indirect costs of corruption, i.e. resources diverted by corrupt acts and resources withheld or deterred due to the existence of corruption. This is thought to represent 25 per cent of Africa's GDP and to increase the cost of goods by as much as 20 per cent, deterring investment and holding back development. Most of the cost, the report says, falls on the poor (BBC, 2002). The Kenya Urban Bribery Index has been created to estimate the magnitude, incidence and direct financial cost of bribery.

Multinational companies that operate in developing countries exploit lower standards and thus reduce their cost base to deliver higher profits to their stakeholders. However, research has shown that companies that pay bribes in developing countries actually spend more management time with bureaucrats and negotiating regulations and face higher costs of capital. In fact, the bribe takers learn to focus their demands on

companies, the harassment for bribes increases with the rate at which they are paid, creating what is in effect an additional tax on the enterprise. Moreover, operating to lower standards presents a higher risk to reputation, which carries a far greater cost to the business.

The literature suggested that corruption would disappear with economic liberalization, political democratization and social modernization (Kaufmann, 1997). However, Girling (1997) demonstrates that corruption does not disappear in highly industrialized, democratic societies, but rather corruption changes as countries develop. Robinson (1998) suggests that corruption is a complex, multi-faceted phenomenon that pervades all societies to varying degrees, which is not amenable to quick-fix solutions. Williams (1999) states that corruption resists simple labelling; how corruption is defined depends on the context in which it is located, the perspectives of the definers and their purpose in defining it. Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index points to high levels of corruption in many rich countries as well as poor ones. Furthermore, the TI Bribe Payers Index, which addresses the propensity of companies from top exporting countries to bribe in emerging markets, reveals high levels of bribery paid by firms from Russia, China, Taiwan and South Korea, Italy, Hong Kong, Malaysia, Japan, USA and France. Lewis (1996) notes that corruption is typically viewed ethnocentrically: western corruption is often interpreted as individualized, deviant, pathological behaviour, while Third World corruption is typically seen as structurally generated and generic.

Gole (1999) found that corruption in countries in Central and Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union has become a block to a market economy, decentralized, democratic and responsive government and improvements in living standards. Others thought that privatization, which was effectively forced upon the transition economies after the break-up of the Soviet Union, has instead increased the incidence of corruption (Kaufmann and Siegelbaum, 1995). For example, White (1996) has analysed the economic liberalization in China and found that the transition to a market economy has been accompanied by increasingly pervasive and large-scale corruption. Kong (1996) demonstrates how the South Korean economy has grown steadily despite fairly significant levels of political corruption; donations to political parties in exchange for business favours remains a major form of corruption in South Korea. Rose-Ackerman (1996) acknowledges that democracy and free markets are not invariably a cure for corruption, while Leiken (1997) argues that the end of the Cold War has merely led to higher disclosures of malfeasance.

Olivier de Sardan (1999) argues that corruption typically involves cultural aspects such as practices of gift giving and solidarity. Similarly, Price (1999) argues that some kinds of corruption in India are the function of belief and the socio-political contexts, which has a major role in influencing peoples attitudes to corruption. Ruud (2000) found that in West Bengal corruption is an established strategy of coping with the bureaucracy, with emphasis on the social networks blurring the distinction between private and public. Tanzi (1995) reports the moral and social codes require civil servants to help family and friends. Tanzi argues that special measures must be taken for situations where existing moral and social codes require that one help family and friends such as a forced, periodic reassignment of civil servants to prevent favouritism to family members and friends.

Corruption is typically seen as serious legal and financial offence. However, Johnson (1997) argues that corruption does not necessarily lead to social problems or economic collapse. Leys (1965) has also suggested that it is wrong to assume that the results of corruption are always bad or important. Klitgaard (1988; 31) suggests that corruption can

benefit private actors by putting 'goods and services in the hands of people who value them the most, who use them the most'. It has also been reported that corruption may benefit the poor by cutting red tape, making decision-making predictable, motivating underpaid workers and enables some to obtain political power, for example, selling a vote for services.

Rose-Ackerman (1978) presents the idea that corruption cannot be entirely eliminated, since the cost of doing so would be excessively high (reducing efficiency and perhaps effectiveness), for example, decision-making delay, over-centralization, inadequate authority, defensive management, trained incapacity, goal displacement and poor morale (Crozier, 1964). Klitgaard (1988) agrees that where the costs of eliminating corruption are too high, an optimal level of control is possible.

2.2 Trends in combating corruption

Corruption is a serious impediment to development and effective governments. When governments do tackle corruption and improve their rule of law, they can raise their national incomes by as much as four times (Wolfowitz, 2006).

The causes of corruption have typically been analysed in terms of:

- The over-centralization of public service provision. Public Choice Theory demonstrates that public officials will systematically benefit economically powerful interest groups over others in society through the distribution of public expenditure, goods, services and regulations in their attempts to stay in power (Estache, 1994; Gelb et al., 1991; 1186; Grindle and Thomas, 1991; 25).
- Low civil service salaries, lack of meritocratic recruitment and promotion, lack of pressures and incentives to perform, low morale of employees (Evans and Rausch, 1995; Wade 1982, 1984) may lead employees to solicit bribes or embezzle funds.
- A lack of transparency and accountability in government operations creates opportunities for corruption.
- Lack of sanctions against corrupt personnel, ineffective legal frameworks and weak enforcement of laws impede attempts to investigate, prosecute and corrupt officials.
- Public tolerance of corruption may be common.
- Discretionary power over a good or service increases opportunities for corruption and of diminished accountability (Mookherjee and Png, 1995).
- No formally prescribed rules and regulations, such as appraisals of performance/ codes of conduct/guidelines.

Goulet (1989) recognizes how incentives to do a good job may come from a variety of sources such as money, goods or prizes, as well as moral incentives such as ideological commitment to the public sector. The values and motivation of service providers can be improved through professional education, professional associations and technical standards or accreditation by which to monitor providers by and improve quality. The literature outlines the need for civil service reform, proper compensation and incentives, meritocratic recruitment and promotion, replacement of corrupt personnel, appropriate training; and enforcement of laws. Although the literature suggests that civil service wages are an important determinant of corruption, the evidence is at best unclear as to whether increasing public sector wages can reduce corruption. Tullock (1996) suggests

that where civil servants do not receive adequate salaries and therefore offer a fee-for-service arrangement, an economically efficient outcome may in fact result.

New Institutional Economic (NIE) theorists assert that getting the 'institutions, incentives and sanctions right' will ensure that service providers use resources well, deliver the required service and level of performance and provide for those in need. Schleifer and Vishny (1992) suggest that in centrally planned economies bureaucrats have an incentive to produce less of a service, cause shortages and demand bribes for the under-produced goods. The literature suggests that corruption would disappear with economic liberalization, political democratization and social modernization (Kaufmann, 1997).

There are a variety of anti-corruption conventions and treaties, for example the Paris Declaration (2003) against international financial corruption; the UN Convention Against Corruption (2003), the African Union Convention on Preventing and Combating Corruption (2003), the OECD Anti-Bribery Convention Against Bribery of Foreign Public Officials in International Business Transactions (1997), the Inter-American Convention Against Corruption (1997) and the UN International Code of Conduct for Public Officials (1996).

Many donors have incorporated anti-corruption activities into their programmes to promote transparency. For example USAID's Millennium Challenge Account assistance programme proposes to reward good governance and to use a measure of corruption as a key indicator of a country's eligibility for assistance. Klitgaard (1998) suggests that international organizations may decrease the incidence of corruption in developing economies by assisting individual countries to combat corruption by helping them draft changes in laws, share information and operational knowledge and implement tactics to facilitate change. Economists tend to focus on efficiency, growth, institutions and incentives for corruption (Bardhan, 1997) and promote market inspired solutions such as competition, liberalization, deregulation and privatization. Political scientists have dealt with the relationship between corruption, democracy, institutions and good governance. Other commentators address the ethical standards of individuals in the public services, the relationships between officials and the public and suggestion transforming an individual's values and attitudes.

Programmes have been developed to address corruption both directly and indirectly by working to create an environment that is not conducive to corruption. Anti-corruption programmes tend to focus on supporting civil society, encouraging legal, judicial and regulatory reform, privatizing government functions, enhancing government accountability, supporting elections, establishing anti-corruption agencies and providing law enforcement assistance. The literature suggests a number of pre-conditions for the success of anti-corruption reforms. For example:

- Political will and commitment from a country's leadership (Tanzi, 1998).
- Widespread public support.
- Programmes should be tailored to each country context.
- Anti-corruption reforms should take a multi-focused approach, emphasizing prevention and education.
- Transparency and public access to information.
- Above all, anti-corruption efforts require long-term commitment (Pope, 1997)

However, Anechiarico and Jacobs (1996) argue that the proliferating regulations and oversight mechanisms designed to prevent or root out corruption can seriously undermine governance. These authors suggest that such mechanisms may constrain decision-makers' discretion, shape their priorities and cause delays. Thus, corruption control undermines efficiency and thereby contributes to crisis in public administration. Szeftel (1998) also argues that democratization and 'good governance' strategies in Africa have failed in curtailing corruption because the reforms introduced through liberalization (downscaling of the state, deregulation and privatization) have reduced the state's capacity to implement policy and created new conditions in which corruption can flourish.

Table 4. Trends in controlling corruption (adapted from Klein Haarhuis, 2000)

Economic measures	Evidence
Liberalization of markets	Ades & di Tella (1997 a & b); Treisman (2000); Krueger (1974); Tanzi (1994); Van de Walle (1994); Kaufmann (1998 a & b); OECD (1999); World Bank (1997 a & b)
Privatizations/de-monopolization of public services	Manzetti & Blake (1996); Ades & di Tella (1995); Johnson (1997); Kaufmann (1998); Rose-Ackerman (1978); Handelman (1995); Wade (1982, 1985); Bengoa & Sanchez-Robles (2003)
Tax reform	Kaufmann (1998); Johnson (1997); Tirole (1996)
Supervisory institutions	Shihata (1997)
Stringent aid conditionality	Kaufmann & Kraay (2002); Knack (2001); Lanyi (2004); Azfar & Gurgur (2004); Alesina & Weder (2002); Burnside & Dollar (2000); Meagher (2004)
Better financial management	Francis (2003); World Bank (2003); Reinikka & Svensson (2004); Bardham (1997); Feld & Voigt (2003); Mauro (1995); Mo (2001); Rivera-Batiz (2002); Tanzi & Davoodi (1997); Fisman & Gatti (2002); Ruzindana (1995)
Information Technology	
Automation	Hafkin (2000); Heeks (1998, 2001)
e-government	Bellamy & Taylor (1998); Raab (1998); Heeks (2001)
Investigation and monitoring	Anechiarico & Jacobs (1996); Reinikka & Svensson (2004b); Korac-Kakabadse et al. (2000); Laudon & Laudon (1998)
Administrative reform	
Civil service reform	Rose-Ackerman (1978, 1997); Colazingari & Rose-Ackerman (1998); Klitgaard (1988)
Clear rules, laws and processes	Becker & Stigler (1974); Pope (2000); Ruud (1998); Ruzindana et al. (1998)
Reducing public sector size	Tanzi & Davoodi (1998); Elliot (1997)
Transparent administrative procedures	Avgerou & Walsham (2000); Heeks (1998); Wallace (2000)
Reducing discretionary powers	Schleifer & Vishny (1993); Rose-Ackerman (1978, 1997); Kaufmann (1998); Kaufmann et al. (2000)
Abolish unnecessary procedures/licences	Rose-Ackerman (1978)
Competition into civil service	Walsh (1995); Becker (1983); Bliss & di Tella (1997); Clarke & Lixin (2002); Lien (1990 a & b); Rose-Ackerman (1996)

Public sector wages	Treisman (2000); World Bank (1997); Haque & Sahay (1996); Tullock (1996); Evans & Rausch (1995); Wade (1982, 1985); Nye (1967); Holbrook & Meier (1993); Lindauer & Nunberg (1994); Van Rijckeghem & Weder (1997, 2001); di Tella & Schargrodsky (2000); Akerlof & Yellen (1990); Besley & Maclaren (1993)
Meritocratic recruitment and promotion	Swart (1989); Lindauer & Nunberg (1994); Perlman (1989); Das (1998); Evans & Rausch (1995); Cariño (1988)
Legislation, oversight & auditing on public procurement	Kang (2000); Kelman (1990); Kelman (2002)
Oversight bodies and offices i.e. Ombudsman	Klitgaard (1988); Anechiarico & Jacobs (1996); Shihata (1997); Bowles (2000)
Anti-corruption agencies (for example, Hong Kong and Singapore)	Quah (1989, 1993, 1994, 1999, 2000, 2001); World Bank (1998); Klitgaard (1988); Weder & Brunetti (2000); Wescott (2003); Bueno de Mesquita, Newman & Rabushka (1985); Cheung (1997); Clark (1985); de Speville (1997); Manion (1996)
Incentives to perform	Muir & Saba (1995); Ostrom et al. (1993); Goulet (1989)
Political reforms	
Decentralization	Huther & Shah (2001); Tiebout (1956); Ostrom et al. (1993); Dean (1999); Fisman & Gatti (1999); UNCHS (2001); Azfar et al. (1999); Batley (1996)
Supporting elections	Rose-Ackerman (1978); Persson et al. (2003)
Privatizing government functions	Leiken (1996/7); Kaufmann & Siegelbaum (1995)
Centralize political authority	Holbrook & Meier (1993)
Increase auditing capacity by higher levels of government	Wilson (1961); Walsh (1995); Klitgaard (1988)
Political will	Dilulio, Garvey & Kettl (1993)
New public management	Hood (1991); Johnson (1997); Evans & Rausch (1995); Gould (1980); Jabbara (1976); Lee (1986); Leff (1964); Makumbe (1994) Rausch & Evans (2000); Theobald (1994); Thinapan (1977); Taub (1969); Tanzi & Zee (1995); Rose-Ackerman (1994, 1996, 1999); Raphaeli et al. (1984); OECD (1999); Banfield (1975); Goel & Nelson (1998); Gorta & Forell (1994); Gould & Amaro-Reyes (1983); Jabbara & Dwivedi (1989)
Institution building	Bardhan (1997); Nugent & Robinson (2002); Tanzi (1998)
Good governance	Esfahani & Ramirex (2003); Leftwich (1993); Fisman & Gatti (2002)
Reduce monopoly in the provision of public services	Estache (1994); Gelb et al. (1991); Grindle & Thomas (1991); Mookherjee & Png (1995); Harriss-White (1996); Harriss-White & White (1996); Acemoglu & Verdier (2000); Ades (1999); Bliss & di Tella (1997); Broadman & Recanatini (2000); Clarke & Lixin (2002); Nellis & Kikeri (1989); Coolidge & Rose-Ackerman (1997)
Direct democracy methods	
Participatory budgets and spending reviews	Abers (1998); Devas et al. (2001); Goetz & Jenkins (2001b)
Co-production of service delivery	World Bank (2004); Sen (1992); Castells, (1977, 1983); Lam (1996); Mackintosh (1997); Putnam (1993); Ostrom (1996); Tandler (1997)
Direct democracy and citizen participation	Schilderman (2002); Avgerou & Walsham (2000); Benjamin (1998); Bhatia & Dreze (1998); Dutton (1996); Hafkin (2000); Pope (1997)
Taking measures to increase public debate and transparency, especially in the media	Schilderman (2002); Avgerou & Walsham (2000); Benjamin (1998); Bhatia & Dreze (1998); Dutton (1996); Hafkin (2000)

Empirical backing for increased accountability	Ebrahim (2003); Feld & Voigt (2003); Eigen (2002); Batra et al. (2003)
Legal and judiciary measures	
National anti-corruption action plans	Pope (1997); Ruzindana et al. (1998); Stapenhurst & Kpundeh (1999); World Bank (1998)
Law enforcement capacity strengthened	Shihata (1997); Becker (1983); Becker & Stigler (1974); Rose-Ackerman (1978)
Criminalization of <i>payment</i> of bribes	Johnson et al. (2000); Svensson (2003); Heimann (1995)
Streamlining laws	Shihata (1997); Rose-Ackerman (1999)
Judicial independence	Rose-Ackerman (1978); Ades & di Tella (1997); Gole (1999); Shihata (1997)
Behaviour	
Strengthen ethical codes	OECD (1999); Aminuzzaman (1996); Barlow (1993); Olowu (1988); Rasheed & Olowu (1993); Olivier de Sardan (1999); Paldam (2001); Miller et al. (2001, 2002); La Porta et al. (1999); Lambsdorff (2002); Halpern (2001)
Strict sanctions on corrupt behaviour	Holbrook & Meier (1993); Quah (1999); Rose-Ackerman (1978); Becker (1968)
Increase risk of being caught	Kaufmann et al. (2000); Rose-Ackerman (1978); Klitgaard (1988)
Change culture of public tolerance of corruption	Wilson (1966); Paldam (2001); Cartier-Bresson (1997); Getz & Volkema (2001); Gibbons (1988); Heilman et al. (2000); Tanzi (1998); Halpern (2001)
Public's awareness of rights to services and knowledge on how to report corruption	Paul (1991, 1992, 1995); Alam (1995)

2.3 Corruption in infrastructure services

Infrastructure service provision is a sector known for its association with corruption (DfID, 2002). Corruption can reduce the efficiency, effectiveness and equity of infrastructure services in a number of respects (also see Table 5):

- Where corruption means public services are corruptly managed (for example, service providers extort bribes from service users), favouritism exists in hiring and managing staff rather than using performance based indicators, or complex administrative processes and regulations create opportunities for corruption (for example, services can only be accessed through middlemen who take a cut), this reduces performance and efficiency and increases costs.
- In countries with high levels of corruption, public spending is biased toward new large investment infrastructure projects rather than operation and maintenance of old ones or rehabilitation of systems. This also has repercussions for the extension of service provision and thus undermines public confidence in the service provider.
- It skews policymaking or budget allocation toward sectors where social returns (as contrasted to the potential for obtaining private kickbacks) are relatively low (Ades and di Tella, 1997). This generally favours elites, reducing the governments' ability to reduce poverty and finance infrastructure services to the poor.

The existing theoretical literature and the vast empirical research suggest that the price and the level of public services provided are affected by the presence of corruption (Shleifer and Vishny, 1993): more widespread corruption translates into higher prices and reduced offering of public services. At the same time, corruption can reduce government revenues, in turn eroding the quality of the services provided (Bearse et al., 2000). Furthermore, corruption within the public sector can lead to lower investment in human capital (Ehrlich and Lui, 1999). This in turn may lead to a 'vicious circle' (Alesina et al., 1999), in which users choose not to use publicly provided services, further reducing a country's tax base and its ability to improve the quality of the services. Empirical research has shown that bad governance and corruption reduce the quality of publicly provided services and investment in the public sector (Gupta et al., 1998; Davis, 2004). Overall, service delivery is weakened by bad governance, since the latter reduces the ability and incentives of policymakers and users to monitor providers (World Bank, 2004).

The European Union's anti-fraud watchdog, OLAF, has uncovered serious abuse of international aid money. Two water-related projects are among the 26 fraud and corruption cases described in the annual report presented by the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF, 2004). In the Lesotho Highlands Water Project (LHWP) a Lesotho official had been sentenced to 15 years' imprisonment for siphoning off US\$3 million (EUR 2.3 million) in bribes to Swiss bank accounts. In a second case, 90 per cent of EU money for a water project in Paraguay ended up in a bank account belonging to a foundation that had nothing to do with the project. In addition, the declared sub-contractors for one part of the project turned out not to exist and the work was carried out by a company controlled by one of the directors of the project. It also appeared that the expenditure was significantly inflated.

A study of corruption in South Asia's water and sanitation sector found widespread corruption on the part of utility staff, customers and contractors. Davis (2004) describes problems with competitive contracting and kickbacks in relations between authorities and local contractors. Despite the use of competitive bidding, cartels were operating, subverting the competitive process by deciding among themselves who would win the bid and organizing the bids accordingly.

'Contractors work together or with politicians to win projects with their local W&S service providers on favourable terms. They also cooperate with technical staff to increase their profit margin once a contract is secured. Through complex arrangements funds budgeted for construction are 'skimmed' and shared by a number of different actors. Contractors often pay either a percentage of the contract value or a lump sum amount to one or more actors within the agency. The payments are almost always made in cash, in the W&S offices or in the field,' (Davis, 2004; 58-59).

Kaufmann et al. (2004) consider the performance of infrastructure services (water, sewerage, electricity and telephones) in 412 cities in 134 countries. The authors find that corruption has significant and substantial effects on both access to services and on the quantity and quality of service delivery. A study by Bo and Rossi (2004) of 80 electricity utilities in 13 Latin American countries investigated the effects of corruption on the recurrent costs of infrastructure services. The authors suggest that significant reductions in corruption would have a substantial effect on efficiency (the number of workers employed would be reduced, electricity would certainly be cheaper – and hence labour productivity – and total operational and maintenance costs would fall). In their study of water utility companies in Africa, Estache and Kouassi (2002) compare productivity among 21 companies and find that nearly two-thirds of their operating costs were due to

corruption. They claim that a 10 per cent reduction in corruption would exceed the total gain achieved from privatization. Shadrach and Ekeanyanwu (2003) reviewed the incidence of corruption in the Nigerian National Electric Power Authority and the Nigerian Telecommunications PLC and found corruption in areas such as the subscription process, billing systems, payment enforcement, fault redress and response to complaints.

Stansbury (2005) found the following features of construction projects make them particularly prone to corruption:

1. **Size of infrastructure projects** It is easier to hide large bribes and inflated claims in large projects than it is in small projects.
2. **Uniqueness of projects** Many major construction projects are one-off making costs difficult to compare, which in turn makes it easier to inflate costs or hide bribes.
3. **Government involvement** Insufficient controls on how government officials behave, combined with the complexity of projects, makes it relatively easy for officials to extract bribes.
4. **The number of contractual links** provides an opportunity for someone to pay a bribe in exchange for the award of a contract.
5. **The number of phases** each involving different management teams and requiring handovers of the completed phase to the contractors undertaking the next phase makes project oversight difficult.
6. **The complexity of projects** Bribes and inflated claims can easily be hidden or blamed on other factors, for example, poor design or mismanagement.
7. **Lack of frequency of projects** Major projects come at irregular intervals. Winning these projects may be critical to the survival or profitability of contractors, which provides an incentive to contractors to bribe.
8. **No single organization governs the industry** Each profession or trade may have a different professional association, with different codes of conduct and levels of enforcement of these codes.

Table 5. Examples of corruption in the different stages of infrastructure delivery

Stage of service delivery	Examples
Planning stages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification of projects not done with a cost-benefit analysis. Projects used as vote winners/opportunities for personal gain, not as basis of national or regional priority and availability of financial resources, leading to projects that are unnecessary • Planning in favour of high value infrastructure and against the interest of the poor • Over-investment in capital goods (white elephant projects) at the expense of GDP growth
Inspection stages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Insufficient prior inspections • Bribing inspectors
Design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corrupt selection of consultants and contractors for feasibility studies, preparation of specifications and bid documents • Costs underestimated/bills of quantity not properly calculated

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Over-designed and overpriced projects • Bribe for favourable environmental impact assessment • Bribe for planning proposal • Bribing politicians for approval • Bribes while design changes are in process • Bribe consulting engineers for approval • Complexity of the projects – makes it relatively easy for officials to extract bribes.
Bid and contract signing stage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cartels • Kickbacks for construction and supply contracts • Paying bribes to secure contracts • Lack of competitive bidding in selection of local contractors/inequitable contract practices • 'Entertainment' • Corrupt civil servants selling recommendations for contracts • Politicians influence choice of contractors or nature of contract • Offering aid/arms deals to governments
Construction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changing subcontract party after receiving bribes • Misuse of vehicles and funds • Cutting corners, ignoring rules, bypassing procedures • General misconduct by supervisors, contractors, technical staff and employees • The supply of defective equipment, materials or services • Payment for equipment, materials or services which were not supplied • Variations to contract provides opportunities for bribes • Concealing substandard work • Bribe the relevant official to certify that the work was done according to specification • Non-implementation
Service delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creating the need for private work • Absent workers • Ghost workers and employees • Siphoning off supplies to market • Favouritism in hiring/promotions • Use of contacts/money to get better/ faster service • Elite capture of infrastructure services • Service providers making demands for favours or bribes for services that people are entitled to for free, or for a known cost
Maintenance and management stages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inability to account for money means it is difficult to see if funds have been spent on maintenance • Payment for goods that have not been delivered • Corruption in procurement of equipment and spare parts • Withholding needed approval/signatures of gifts or favours • Inflated costs mean lack of resources for O&M • Bribes to win O&M contracts/favouritism in personnel appointments • Over-specification of projects increases costs i.e. component O&M is expensive • Lower standard of construction creates need for expensive repair and maintenance

Subscription process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Red tape in the subscription process creates opportunities for corruption • Consumers pay money to officials in order to speed up the process • Extra-legal payments for new connections • Pay officials to turn a blind eye to unauthorized connections
Billing system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opaque system of billing • Irregularities in ledger of paid bills • Wrong billing
Disconnection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disconnecting customers in good standing for the non-payment of others • Extorting money to reconnect even in cases of wrong disconnection • Extorting money to prevent disconnection • Disconnection without notice
Fault redress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extorting money for repairs that are meant to be free • Gift giving in return for favours in fault redress • Discrimination against minorities, bad behaviour, rude treatment, lack of interest in finding in fixing problems and so forth

DFID (2002; 12) recognizes that the lack of transparency in procurement systems and independent oversight of the process often facilitate corrupt practices. Strombom (1998) argues that corruption in procurement generates immense opportunities for payoffs with comparatively low risk of detection and punishment. According to Pope (2000) opportunities for corruption in public sector procurement are created by complicated procedures and the large amounts of money involved create incentives for corrupt behaviour. Tanzi and Davoodi (1998) argue that corruption in procurement seems to reduce the productivity of public investment, reduce the quality of existing infrastructure, reduce the capital spending productivity and as a consequence lower the growth rate of the country. Furthermore, there is rarely an effective appeal process in case of suspected corruption.

2.4 Corruption and poverty

The impact of corruption on the poor and on poverty reduction processes has now been widely discussed. The effect of corruption on the poor can be gauged through both its direct impact (through, for example, increasing the cost of public services, lowering their quality and often all together restricting poor people's access to such essential services as water, health and education) and the indirect impact (through, for example, diverting public resources away from social sectors and the poor, and through limiting development, growth and poverty reduction). The poor are more vulnerable in terms of being subjected to extortion, bribery, double-standards and intimidation as well as being hit by the negative and harsh consequences of corruption on country's overall development processes.

As is often the case with petty corruption, it is not only those who can afford it who are asked to pay, but those who are thought to have no other options. Bribery may penalize poorer users twice over, both directly through higher price and indirectly through lower quality or quantity of service available, first by acting as a regressive tax (i.e. low-income users pay a larger share of their income for certain basic services than wealthier ones) and then as a discriminating mechanism for access to basic services by limiting the quantity of service available or reducing its quality. Dimensions of governance at the household level can also contribute to discouraging users from seeking a public service:

the perceived honesty/dishonesty of public institutions, the degree of trust in government institutions and the citizen's knowledge of mechanisms to report a corrupt act (Kaufmann et al., 2005).

Corruption in urban service delivery is of importance for poverty reduction strategies for two main reasons: firstly because it diverts resources from poverty-focused infrastructure projects and secondly because the poor lack the necessary resources to benefit from corruption – finance, information, literacy, ability to access the legal system and connections to those with power, and 'voice' (Narayan et al., 2000). The poor are often adversely affected by petty corruption, for example they often pay a disproportionately higher percentage of their incomes on bribes than wealthier citizens (Paul, 1993; Gopakumar, 2002; Rakodi et al., 2000; Moore and Putzel, 1999; Beall, 1997; Benjamin, 2000) or else are forced to go without a service. Aminuzzaman (1996) finds that the higher the level of bureaucracy the less the frequency but higher the amount of bribe paid: the lower the level of bureaucracy the higher the frequency but the less the amount of bribe. The poor are more likely to experience unfair treatment in service delivery since they lack the information on where and to whom to turn in order to complain. All of this reinforces their powerlessness, uncertainty and dependence (in countries where corruption is endemic, the poor are often reliant on the goodwill of gatekeepers who control access to infrastructure services).

Whilst the majority of commentators view these instances of corruption as criminal and morally bad behaviour, there are those who argue that in situations of poor governance and infrequent service the benefit of corruption might be that it is a way of solving problems with access to infrastructure services: for example, a bribe to speed up the installation of a water connection, saving the bribe-payers time and hassle. Low-income residents and neighbourhoods may also be the worst affected by anti-corruption clampdowns, for example attempts to prevent or close down illegal connections may mean even less access to water. Ordinary services presuppose small gifts (coffee, candies, drink and similar items), but value goes up as the value of the requested services increases.

Corruption emerges as a core poverty issue in the participatory poverty assessments carried out for the World Bank's Voices of the Poor initiative that reports the experiences of over 60,000 poor men and women around the world. Poor people engaged in the study reported hundreds of incidents of corruption as they attempt to seek health care, educate their children, claim social assistance, get paid, access justice or police protection and seek to enter the marketplace. The 'Voices of the Poor' study (Narayan et al., 2000) found that the poor in practice often suffer pervasive low-level corruption and lack of justice in service delivery. Various forms of petty corruption include making payments to reduce bills through false meter readings, making payments to expedite repair work, making a payment to expedite a new connection, or use of informal contacts to obtain goods and services. The effect of dysfunctional state institutions on poor people through humiliation, exclusion and corruption has been recognized (Mohiddin, 2002; Narayan et al., 2000). Profound frustration with corruption and maltreatment is compounded by a sense of being voiceless and powerless to complain, since complaining may result in losing services altogether. Report card surveys in Bangalore revealed that approximately a third of the city's poor had to pay a bribe to get a service or solve a service related problem (Paul, 1993).

Series of surveys were conducted in Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka among urban and rural households to measure the incidence of corruption in public services deemed to be of particular importance to the poor: healthcare, education, power, land administration, taxation, police and the judiciary. The surveys found that petty corruption was endemic in all sectors in all countries. Gopakumar (2002) found that bribes were a heavy financial burden on households, due to both the high frequency of bribes and the large sums paid. For example, in Pakistan, 92 per cent of households using public education services reported the payment of bribes averaging 4,811 rupees (US\$86) – compared to a gross national per capita income of only US\$410 per annum (Transparency International, South Asia survey press release, 2002). When asked about the source of corruption most respondents said that bribes were extorted by public servants: middle and lower level civil servants were the key facilitators of corruption. The Kenya Urban Bribery Index results indicate that those with low income are more vulnerable to corruption than those with higher income levels. The findings indicate that those likely to be poor (i.e. unemployed, those with low education, etc.) are more vulnerable to corruption than the better off socio-economic groups.

Shadrach and Ekeanyanwu (2003) review the incidence of corruption in the Nigerian National Electric Power Authority and the Nigerian Telecommunications PLC and report corruption in areas such as the subscription process, billing systems, payment enforcement, fault redress and response to complaints. Aminuzzaman (1996) finds that the higher the level of bureaucracy the less the frequency but higher the amount of bribe paid: the lower the level of bureaucracy the higher the frequency but the less the amount of bribe. However, low-income residents and neighbourhoods may also be the worst affected by anti-corruption clampdowns; for example, attempts to prevent or close down illegal connections may mean even less access to water. The consequences of the failure of infrastructure services are of particular importance to poorer, marginalized and discriminated-against people, who identify access and quality of services as a key dimension of poverty (Narayan et al., 2000; 270).

Corruption affects basic livelihoods. For example in Rajasthan, minimum wages, which were part of a drought relief programme organized by the state, were hardly ever paid due to mismanagement, corruption and the deliberate obstruction of access to information held by local officials responsible for the programme's administration. As a result, workers demanding payment of their minimum wages were repeatedly told that no evidence of their work existed and that as a consequence they would not be eligible for payment. The money went instead into the pockets of bureaucrats who had been copying names from electoral rolls, including those of dead people, or receiving payment for material never supplied (Roy and Dey, 2001).

Survey evidence indicates the lives of poor people to be most affected by corruption. Based on the results of the 2003 Global Corruption Barometer, corruption hits the poor hardest. Two out of five respondents on a low income believe that corruption has a very significant effect on their personal and family life. The same answer came from only one in four respondents on a high income. So, 41 per cent of respondents on low income felt their lives were 'very significantly' affected by corruption, as opposed to 27.5 per cent of those on medium income and 25.4 per cent of those on high income.

Rakodi et al. (2000) found that political struggles in Mombasa underlie inadequate urban services (such as water, sanitation and garbage collection) and that overlapping responsibilities and rivalries between central and local government and ethnic/tribal loyalties facilitate corruption. Bigsten and Ove Moene (1997) have also suggested that

corruption in Kenya is closely linked to the government's lack of legitimacy. The government uses its resources to purchase support while increasing repression of its opponents. It is said when politicians respond to short term political gains such patronage in service delivery it weakens service users' voice in service delivery; for example, when the poor sell a vote in return for short term tangible needs (Moore and Putzel, 1999; 10). Beall's (1997; 946) study of waste management in Faisalabad further demonstrates the extent of patron–client relations when communities traded their votes for basic services and land tenure. According to McChesney (1997) payments to politicians in the USA are made not only to gain political favours, but also to avoid political disfavours, that is, as part of a system of political extortion or 'rent extraction': money paid in exchange for politicians' inaction. In Bangalore it was reported that ward councillors use their connections with lower level bureaucrats to favour poor groups in return for electoral support. Whilst this process reinforces dependency and clientism, the poor have been able to use these mechanisms to obtain essential services (Benjamin, 2000). In many countries where the justice system is affected by bribery, the poor are unable to obtain the protection of the law and in some cases are threatened by those who should protect them.

Overall, whilst people in developing countries are often exposed to corruption on a daily basis, their knowledge of how to confront corruption and deal with inadequate service provision is limited, and their satisfaction with quality of public services is low. Despite a relatively high prevalence of corruption, few incidents are actually reported. The most important reason for not reporting corruption is a lack of knowledge of the procedures or a feeling that it is not worth the trouble. A number of factors can affect users' decision to seek accountability for a public service; these might include age, gender, nationality, education (awareness of her/his rights is likely to be higher for more educated people) and income (poorer users may be less aware of their rights than wealthier ones and may not know where to go to file a complaint or to obtain a better service). Knowledge of how to report corruption differs among social groups. Business people and richer people are likely to be more aware of procedures, more satisfied with service delivery and less likely to have paid a bribe. Women-headed and poorer households are less aware, and may be more vulnerable to corrupt practices.

Davis (2004) identified two elements common to all of the successful anti-corruption strategies encountered: changes that increased accountability and changes that increased the cost of misconduct (or the moral benefits of good conduct). DfID (2002) emphasizes that 'accountability is a very important ingredient to ensure that the mistakes of the past investments in infrastructure are avoided'. The cost of publicly provided services may differ across users because of bribery. Poor accountability systems and limited transparency can allow public officials to set different prices for the same public service.

Accountability is thought to be enhanced by the introduction of competition in service delivery, for example through a clear split of responsibility for policy definition, service provision and monitoring. Above all, a market-based approach is intended to overcome producer dominance in service delivery (Walsh, 1995; 13). Nevertheless, corruption exists in private as well as public infrastructure service operators. Private operators are thought to have a much stronger incentive to curb corruption because they are losing revenue. Some would argue that in the water and sanitation sector, increasing the role of the private sector can increase the scope for corruption, for example the multi-billion dollar Lesotho Highlands Water Project. There is a concern that privatization and sub-

contracting might lead to accountability gaps, whereby services users have less protection from government if they encounter problems with private providers (Newell, 2002; 92; Van de Walle, 1989; 610).

2.5 Corruption and sustainability

According to Peter Eigen, Chairman of Transparency International, 'Corruption in large scale public projects is a daunting obstacle to sustainable development.'

The literature finds that infrastructure services are sustainable if the outputs continue over the long term. For example, with reference to drinking water supply, Davis and Brikke (1995; 6) state that sustainability depends on whether:

- The water consumed is not over-exploited but naturally replenished.
- Facilities are maintained in a condition that ensures a reliable and adequate potable water supply.
- The benefits of the supply continue to be realized over a prolonged period of time.

Also with reference to water supply, Abrams (1998) claims that:

'if the water flows, then all of the many elements which are required for sustainability must have been in place. There must have been money for recurring expenses and for the occasional repair, there must have been acceptance from the consumers of the service, the source supplying the service must have been adequate, the design must have been properly done, there must have been sound construction.' Carter et al. (1999) present a similarly pragmatic definition of sustainability. In their view, the test of sustainability is whether or not water supply systems, and excreta or wastewater disposal systems, continue to work over time and be used as planned. Likewise, Parkin (2000 a and b) defines the sustainability of infrastructure as the 'capacity for continuance'. Sustainability is therefore 'a general measure of successfulness' (Hardoy et al., 1992; 178).

It has become commonplace to hear the term 'social sustainability' with reference to infrastructure services. Social sustainability refers to the importance of people and social relationships to the sustainability of an infrastructure service. For example, the sustainable operation and maintenance of infrastructure services is thought to depend on social relations of accountability, co-operation, trust and civic engagement (Putnam, 1993).

Sustainability in the water and sanitation sector is also a strategic concern for the development sector, as evidenced by various international commitments, for example those of the United Nations Millennium Declaration (2000), the Declaration on Cities and Other Human Settlements in the New Millennium (2001) and the World Summit on Sustainable Development (2002). NGOs, donors and government are all keen to ensure long term operation and maintenance for new water and sanitation supply systems in recognition both of the failure of many developmental infrastructure projects and of the environmental problems that reduce quality of life such as inadequate water and sanitation, or solid waste disposal: the so-called 'brown' agenda' (McGranahan et al., 2001; 9). In 2000, over a billion people lacked access to safe water and 2.4 billion lacked access to adequate sanitation facilities. If the Millennium Development Goals for water and sanitation are to be achieved, innovative approaches are required to combat corruption in infrastructure delivery.

3. Accountability

Accountability has attracted a great deal of interest from scholars of various academic disciplines. Accordingly, the term means different things to different people, depending on the context and the purpose for which accountability is sought. Sinclair (1995; 231) highlights the 'multiple and fragmented' nature of accountability, and accountability has become the 'ultimate moving target' (Kearns, 1994; 187). Thus effective analysis of accountability must be interdisciplinary to capture economic, social and political factors as well as both macro and micro scales.

Accountability is a relationship between people, between service providers and those affected by their actions. By way of general definition, Schedler, Diamond and Plattner (in Schedler, 1999; 17) state 'A is accountable to B when A is obliged to inform B about A's (past or future) actions and decisions, to justify them and to suffer punishment in the case of eventual misconduct'. Accountability has two elements: answerability (making power holders explain their actions) and enforceability (punishing poor performance).

Definitions of accountability are frequently made by way of contrast with the term responsibility. For example, 'public sector actors have a duty to be responsive to the member of the public with whom they interact, but to account for their actions to their seniors, who account to the legislature and the executive, to financial auditors and to higher court judges' (Goetz and Jenkins, 2002; 8). Oliver and Drewry (1996; 13) claim that the distinction between accountability and responsibility is blame. They state that responsibility is having a job to do and taking the blame when things go wrong, whereas accountability is having the duty to explain and making amends without accepting blame.

Jabbara and Dwivedi (1989) present a number of themes in the study of accountability, which denote the contexts in which people might be held accountable. These are:

- Organizational or administrative accountability: hierarchical relationships of reporting between bureaucracy and politicians, and internal reporting.
- Legal accountability: legislative and judicial checks on politicians and officials.
- Professional accountability: professional codes of conduct.
- Political accountability: enforced by legislature, competitive political parties and elections.
- Moral accountability: moral and ethical principles in accordance with prevailing societal norms and behaviour.

O'Donnel (in Schedler et al., 1999; 2-3) makes the further distinction between forms of accountability which operate in a horizontal or vertical direction. For example, horizontal accountability includes legal accountability or administrative accountability, and is characterized by 'the capacity of state institutions to check abuses by other public agencies and branches of government', whereas vertical accountability can be achieved through fair elections, civil society activity, the media, public meetings and formal grievances procedures. Grant and Devas (2000a, 2000b) distinguish between the vertical downward accountability of elected councillors to citizens and vertical upward accountability of local councillors to central government. However, Schacter (2000; 2) maintains that horizontal accountability must be buttressed by strong vertical accountability, since effective vertical accountability causes governments to take horizontal accountability seriously.

The literature presents mixed evidence on the effectiveness of vertical forms of accountability. Until the 1980s, there was a consensus that citizens should seek accountability for infrastructure services by holding policymakers accountable by voting in a parliamentary democracy. This strategy is based on the premise that citizens have delegated to elected representatives the responsibility to ensure that infrastructure services meet citizens' expectations. However, in the context of a democratic deficit, traditional vertical accountability mechanisms are said to be insufficient to make government deliver effective services. Instead, other approaches are needed to strengthen the citizens' voice, and participation to guarantee results in service delivery. More recently, a participatory style of democracy has been recommended to make local government more accountable and more responsive to citizens, but also more effective in service delivery. Participatory democracy relies on people representing themselves in decision-making and engaging in the state's internal oversight functions (Rakodi, 2001). Citizens have also been involved directly in the workings of horizontal accountability institutions; for example, in participatory auditing, participatory evaluation of public spending such as Women's Budgets, or citizens' juries on public policy, parallel service and alternative approaches to service delivery: Goetz and Jenkins (2001) call this diagonal or 'hybrid accountability'.

Blair (2000) provides a comparative study of various horizontal and vertical accountability mechanisms in six countries; these include elections, political parties, civil society mechanisms, media, public meetings, formal grievance procedures and opinion surveys. He found that elections, parties, civil society mechanisms and the media are the most useful mechanisms for securing accountability, but suggests that no single mechanism is effective in producing accountability. However, other commentators argue that too much accountability 'can clog up the works, diverting resources and opening organisations to perverse pressures' (Considine, 2002; 21). According to Edwards and Hulme (1995; 9), multiple accountabilities will cause the problems of having to 'over account' (because of multiple demands), or being able to under account due to confused roles which will result in an accountability vacuum.

3.1 Accountability for infrastructure services

Like the term 'community participation' before it, accountability has become a means to an end. The potential of accountability to improve the outputs of infrastructure service has been identified (Hirschman, 1970; Paul, 2002; Goetz and Gaventa, 2001; Deichmann and Lall, 2003; Rakodi, 2003; Grindle, 2003; Casely, 2003; Balkrishnan, 2002; World Bank, 2004). The main reasons advanced for applying accountability to the delivery of infrastructure services can be summarised as:

- **Improved service delivery** in terms of: the physical condition of assets, asset performance and reliability, asset utilization and capacity, optimizing O&M activities, long-term life cycle approach taken, financial resources are properly allocated and managed to optimize investment in infrastructure.
- **Reduce discretion** Front line service providers have had too much discretion in decision-making at the point of delivery. This has had the effect of introducing bias into service delivery; for example, front line provider's personal inclination, survival needs and attitudes towards service users may result in denying full service provision to certain people, or the selective provision of information. Increasing accountability for decisions and actions can reduce this discretion.

- **Improve information flows** The nature of infrastructure services and professional competencies involved in service delivery mean there are inevitably asymmetries of information and expertise between provider and user. Greater accountability can make information on the performance of services more widely available and ensure better quality and standards of service, and more effective use of resources.
- **Compensate for weak political accountability** Traditionally, the electorate holds the public sector accountable through their elected representative. However, clientelistic³ politics and patronage in service delivery have weakened the voice of voters in service delivery. Currently, attempts are being made to rework the relationships involved in service delivery so that service providers are more directly accountable to service users. The dependency of the poor on patron–client relations to ensure the provision of infrastructure services reflects an inability to enforce their legitimate rights.
- **Create demand for better services** It has been observed that when citizen voice is weak, service providers do not deliver the outputs people want, even though services might be accessible and available. This in turn leads to a low demand for better services. Accountability arrangements can work to change levels of tolerance for poor service, leading citizens to reveal their demand for better quality and more accountable infrastructure services at the community level. Introducing a more demand-responsive approach to service delivery will enable service providers to operate on a more commercial basis and foster greater efficiency in service delivery.
- **Induce greater monitoring by service users** Providers often dominate decision-making in infrastructure service provision, a consequence of greater skills, expertise and power. Service providers are typically accountable to the policymaker rather than to local demands. Greater accountability to service users is thought to lead to better monitoring of quality and standards of service, and more effective use of resources. When citizens exert their influence over service providers it ensures that service providers (and policymakers) have incentives to respond to their preferences.
- **Protect the socially and economically disadvantaged** As well as extending access to infrastructure services greater accountability of service providers and policymakers can be used to protect the quality of supply available to marginal and excluded groups in society.
- **Improve public sector provision** Growing antipathy towards provision of infrastructure services by a large, hierarchical, public sector has led to attempts to reduce and reorganize the public sector and improve the accountability of its activities.
- **Address fragmentation** In some countries the for-profit private sector, non-governmental organizations and community-based organizations are key service providers. Despite the fact that such participation has resulted in some improvements in infrastructure service provision, these service providers are perceived as having fallen short of achieving expected public acceptance, outputs and sustainability. Attention is being paid to the allocation of accountability in the context of fragmented service delivery.
- **Improve cost recovery** Greater accountability in the delivery of infrastructure services may have the consequence of improving cost recovery, since service users

3 Personal relationships that link patrons and clients together in a system in which jobs, favors, and protection are exchanged for labor, support, and loyalty

are more willing to pay for the services they receive. This means that service providers may have the resources to fund capital investments and meet operational costs, thereby further improving service delivery.

3.2 The need for accountability for infrastructure services

Invariably, accountability is needed in the context of low trust. The institutions traditionally responsible for service delivery have been accused of abusing the trust of citizens, for example, in their use of public money as well as their capacity for impartial and predictable provision of infrastructure services. Proponents of more accountability claim that front line service providers have too much discretion in their activities (which makes them pursue their own interest over service users, conceal information about their activities, display bad behaviour such as absenteeism, poor motivation, laziness, corruption and untrustworthiness) and have too few sanctions. This has allowed service providers to become unaccountable and unproductive.

In the main, infrastructure services are 'credence goods', meaning it is difficult for service users to judge the quality of performance. The complex nature of the services provided and professional competencies involved means there are inevitably asymmetries of information and expertise between service provider and user, making trust of particular importance (Walsh, 1995; 50). Trust in the delivery of public services 'requires everyday working evidence that public officials really do care, really do respond, really do improve things and that it is the public's will that prevails, not the will of professional politicians, career public servants and expert consultants' (Caiden in Jabbra and Dwivedi, 1989; 25).

Fukuyama (1995; 26) defines trust as 'the expectation that arises within a community of regular, honest and co-operative behaviour, based on commonly shared norms, on the part of other members of that community'. Putnam (1993; 171) presents a more calculated definition: 'you do not trust a person (or an agency) to do something merely because he says he will do it. You trust him only because, knowing what you know of his disposition, his available options and their consequences, his ability and so forth, you expect that he will choose to do it.' Therefore, trust is an expectation based on a number of factors, such as past exchanges with service providers, formal trust-producing mechanisms in service delivery and personal characteristics.

The literature finds that the principal reason for distrust in the provision of infrastructure service is the relative autonomy and discretion of front line service providers. Discretion enables front line service providers to impose their own subjectivity on service delivery in terms of exercising personal choices, opinions and behaviour. For example, discretion may be a question of selecting what or whose demands to respond to. To eliminate discretion front line providers would, ideally, operate on the basis of a set of 'decision rules' regarding service allocations and delivery; these are rational criteria that make service delivery routine, achieve efficiency in use of resources and simplify decision-making⁴ (Weber, 1948). Yet Lipsky (1980) suggests that regular decision rules with predictable actions would reduce the quality of service provision and increase the costs. Lipsky argues that front line workers require systematic discretion at the operational level to tailor services to service users' needs and respond to contingencies in service

4 Although Weber found these rules may be applied selectively depending on service providers' strategic interests for self-preservation.

delivery. Thus, Lipsky poses a dilemma for accountability, since the discretion necessary for service quality entails that front line workers are less controllable by the agencies for which they work. Lipsky suggests that the norms and values of front line service providers, as well as the broader social and political context, must be consistent with promoting high quality service outcomes. Mookherjee and Png (1995) build on the premise that any delegation of authority creates opportunities for corruption and explore the relationship between enforcement of regulations, sanction and opportunity.

Improvements in infrastructure services are linked to issues such as clarified employee responsibility, recognition of individual effort, pay, employment practices, working methods, performance and attitude of staff, training and development. It is often concluded that only large increases in penalties will effectively diminish corruption. Becker (1968) has analysed the relationship between punishment and an individual's willingness to engage in an illegal act. The optimal level of punishment is largely a function of the cost of enforcement, investigation and punishment. He concludes that the optimal levels of sanction depends upon the overall cost of enforcement.

If service users and other stakeholders do not trust front line service providers to use discretion appropriately, systems of accountability are needed. Day and Klein (1987; 24) indicate that formal systems of accountability are required if there is no longer the kind of trust that results from more informal, face-to-face opportunities to keep in touch with what is going on (indicating that accountability and trust might be particular problems in urban society). Wade (1988; 489) has explored trust with reference to the management of canal irrigation systems. He concludes that stopping farmers from stealing water, or using bribery to obtain more water than they are entitled to, depends on a system of monitoring, inspection and direct accountability to consumers in case of service failure. These mechanisms reduce the need for trust, but, paradoxically, increase the likelihood that trust will be forthcoming. Thus, the more accountable infrastructure services are, the more they can be trusted. However, by presupposing a culture of mistrust in service delivery, accountability arrangements can also contribute to, produce and intensify this mistrust (Dean, 1999; 169).

3.3 How does accountability improve infrastructure services?

Accountability improves infrastructure services principally in two ways: firstly by making service providers explain and justify their actions against commonly agreed standards of effectiveness (reflecting aspects of information and institutions) and secondly by exercising the right to have sanctions imposed on public authorities found to have behaved immorally or performed ineffectively.

As noted above, infrastructure services can be described as 'credence' or 'experience' goods, which means that imperfectly informed consumers cannot easily determine the performance or assess the quality of services they are using (for example, whether the water they are drinking is contaminated, or whether the road they use is adequately tarred). Asymmetries of information create transaction costs for service users⁵ and policymakers in monitoring service performance and means that service providers have

⁵ In small, rural, face-to-face communities the transaction costs involved in monitoring service delivery would be less than in large scale urban societies, which rely on a more impersonal exchange process and uncertainty in social interactions.

an incentive to undercut the quality of service they provide or engage in corrupt activities. With respect to these information asymmetries, the literature typically uses the 'principal agent' theory to analyse the problem of accountability for service provision. This theory describes a relationship in which a principal (service user in this case), attempts to secure services from an agent (service provider). Agents are expected to be prone to moral hazard⁶ and hide the information that principals require to monitor their performance. This creates considerable scope for all kinds of opportunistic behaviour (cheating, shirking, moral hazards) and the transaction costs of monitoring are high. Contracts, market- based incentives and sanctions are needed to induce agents to act in ways that deliver the desired type and level of performance to meet users needs, as well as reduce the costs of monitoring service delivery and discipline service providers at the point of delivery. Accountability arrangements place an obligation on service providers to inform service users, thus lowering transaction costs for service users and, together with existence of sanctions, enforces trust (Schedler in Schedler et al., 1999; 16). It is intended that these changes to accountability result in increased competence in the preparation of designs, construction of works, operation and maintenance of installations and personnel management; more appropriate service design, better maintenance and more user-friendly procedures.

The World Development Report (World Bank, 1994) reached the broad conclusion that it is the institutions traditionally responsible for public service provision that are the cause of most unsatisfactory service. It made three recommendations for the reform of these institutions: namely, the use of competition, application of commercial principles to service providers and increased involvement of users in planning, operating, regulating and financing services. Ten years on, the World Development Report (World Bank, 2004) returns to the theme of getting the institutions involved in infrastructure provision right. Improving the sustainability of infrastructure services requires changes in institutional design and supervisory mechanisms (Israel, 1992). Institutions are 'humanly devised constraints' (North, 1990) in the form of 'complexes of norms and behaviours' (Uphoff, 1986; 8-9). Bardhan (1989) says that institutions are the social rules, conventions and other elements of the structural framework of social interaction. Institutions serve collectively valued purposes, reducing uncertainty by making information available, and making behaviour or one's actions predictable. In institutional terms accountability formalizes expectations of action or behaviour, creating sanctions for failure, enabling trust and providing the motivation and incentives to use resources efficiently and effectively. The theory of New Institutional Economics has been used to analyse and evaluate those institutions concerned with the provision of infrastructure services (Ostrom et al., 1993). It is argued that public services have got the incentives wrong in the design, finance, construction, operation, maintenance and the use of facilities. Service providers lack the incentives to prioritize the use of resources, to provide services for those in need, and users lack incentives to use services optimally (Reddy in Mwambu, 1995). Ostrom et al. (1993) conclude that market-based incentives⁷ - for example, those associated with private property – generate better use of resources and more effective and efficient service delivery, as well as ensuring greater sustainability than those provided by the state.

⁶ When agents pursue principal's interests only if they coincide with agent's own interests

⁷ Another example is Hardin's Tragedy of the Commons (1968), where a resource is overused because the resource is non excludable.

The impact of residential mobility on the quality of public goods has been a central assumption in the theoretical literature. Tiebout (1956) hypothesized that when people choose where to live they base their decision on the tax rate and thus the level of public goods they wish to be supplied; individuals were said to 'vote with their feet' for urban services. This mobility creates competition between local governments for residents (just like firms for customers), since loss of residents means loss of taxes, and this competition is thought to impose accountability (Ostrom et al., 1993). Tiebout's model assumes perfect information (individuals are fully informed regarding service levels in both source and destination areas) and no transaction costs (for example, costs of searching for neighbourhoods with appropriate service levels). The theory is based on methodological individualism, whereby the 'general welfare' of society depends on enabling individuals and small groups to pursue their own interests (Dean, 1999; 158).

The flaw in Tiebout's model comes from the failure to recognize residents' 'unequal consciousness of needs and interests, unequal ability to articulate demands and unequal ability to influence the process which transforms demands into decisions' (Shah, 1997; 109). The model also ignores the lack of consumer choice in much public service delivery because of the nature of the service, low incomes, or emotional ties to a locality. The danger inherent in Tiebout's model is that it creates a two-tier system of service, with high quality services for those who can pay, and a declining standard of service and lack of choice for the poor (Burns et al., 1994; 23).

Hirschman (1970) adapted Tiebout's model to describe the relations between the firm and the customer. He hypothesized that if a firm's products decline in quality, customers have three alternative responses. Hirschman characterized this as the Exit-Voice-Loyalty trilogy:

1. Exit: some customers stop buying the firm's products, revenues drop and management is impelled to correct whatever faults have led to exit.
2. Voice: customers express their dissatisfaction, management searches for the causes and possible cures of dissatisfaction.
3. Loyalty: the attachments people have to organizations that affect their willingness to exit or use voice.

Exit is associated with the market and so depends on choice in service provision. However, as Zadek et al. (1997; 14) note, exit is unlikely to be helpful in understanding why the service has failed to meet expectations. Voice, on the other hand, is associated with politics, and so is 'more messy' (Hirschman, 1970; 15). Voice can be expressed directly to service providers through complaints or customer consultation, to local representatives, through legal recourse, or by protest. The advantage of voice is as a mechanism for providing information on service performance, thereby providing the opportunity to improve organizational planning and decision-making (Shah, 1997). Beresford and Croft (1986) introduced the concept of 'self advocacy' to describe having a voice in service delivery, but which also refers to how service users are treated and regarded by service providers and the potential of service users to have greater control over the whole of their lives.

Hirschman (1970; 52) asserts that those most able to use voice, the most articulate, are those who seek high quality products. These customers are therefore most likely to leave an organization when products decline in quality, which has the potential to lead to further deterioration in the quality of the services (Shah, 1997; 107). It might be

suggested that the most articulate customers should be prevented from exiting from service delivery; however, 'the inability to exit then, weakens one's voice' (Rothstein, 1998; 196). Hirschman (1970; 24) makes the observation that exit and voice operate most effectively as strategies when they are combined. For exit to work as a mechanism to improve service delivery when performance fails, it is necessary to have a mixture of alert and loyal customers; the alert customers provide feedback while the inert customers provide the firm with the time and money needed to improve performance.

Gremler and Brown (1999; 273) define customer loyalty as the 'degree to which a customer exhibits repeat purchasing behaviour from a service provider; possess a positive attitudinal disposition towards the provider; and considers only using this provider when the need for the service arises'. Similarly, Andreassen and Lindestad (1998) state that people might be loyal to a company for three reasons: high switching barriers, lack of alternatives or customer satisfaction. In Hirschman's model loyalty is ambiguous. However, Lowery (et al. 1992; 76) presents loyalty as both constructive (satisfaction with services or trusting that service providers will sort any problems out) and negative (service users may be apathetic, not caring), to reflect the possible neglect of services by communities.

Paul (1991, 1992) has reviewed the scope for using Hirschman's framework in the context of public services. Paul promotes the use of exit and voice by service users to influence service providers 'from below', instead of top-down mechanisms like legal or democratic accountability. In particular, Paul has demonstrated how organized public feedback in the form of report cards can be used to challenge service providers to be more efficient and responsive to consumers. Paul proposes that if the service is a private good, then property rights and exit may be more effective at improving urban services. If the service has public good characteristics, then voice of service users is of greater benefit in securing adequate services. Signals from the exit or voice of service users should be picked up through 'hierarchical control' within the agency (for example, monitoring and incentives), which should then take corrective action in delivery. However, if hierarchical control is inadequate, service providers 'may continue their 'quiet life', despite the exit or voice actions of the public' (Paul, 1992; 1048).

The World Development Report (World Bank, 2004) has developed Paul's market-based approach to accountability as a way to promote pro-poor service delivery. It conceives service delivery as a relationship between providers, clients and policymakers. Accountability can be differentiated into the short route (a contract between citizen and provider) and long route (from citizen, to policymakers, to provider). WDR 2004 states a preference for the short route and proposes a number of ways to give the urban poor a greater voice in service delivery⁸. To be effective, these mechanisms must reduce the cost and increase the rewards of voice. It is stated that if the poor had a say in service delivery they would be more likely to get access to affordable and appropriate services – either directly or via government.

⁸ Increasing clients' choice in services through private sector delivery and voice in policymaking and service delivery processes

3.4 To whom are service providers accountable?

Front line service providers are typically accountable to a number of different stakeholders. Front line service providers are, first and foremost, accountable through line management structures within the organizations for which they work. Service providers account through formal reporting systems to superiors such as managers or elected councillors, in the context of bureaucratic hierarchies. The local government is answerable in turn to central government departments and ministers.

Secondly, and increasingly more importantly, services providers are accountable to service users for providing and maintaining infrastructure services that are effective and efficient. Traditionally, service providers were made accountable to service users through legal accountability (judicial proceedings) or political accountability (electoral systems). However, there are now increased opportunities for citizens to call providers directly to account, for example through choice of service providers, market accountability (operationalized through price, competition and freedom of information) and user accountability (the ability of users of services to make demands on services) (Stewart and Collet, 1998). The literature suggests that accountability to service users in urban areas is a more complex issue than in more homogenous rural districts, as service providers face diverse and multiple kinds of service user (Day and Klein, 1987).

Thirdly, service providers are accountable to their peers and fellow professionals, in terms of meeting shared values and standards. Stewart and Collet (1998) term this 'service provider interest accountability', which is demonstrated through the technical, professional, managerial and administrative processes of service planning and delivery and the legal and financial environments within which service delivery is undertaken. Furthermore, service providers are ethically and morally accountable to themselves and society for working in accordance with personal and societal norms and expectations.

Ultimately, services providers are accountable to taxpayers. Without taxpayers' money the system for the delivery of public services, such as refuse collection, street lighting, storm water drainage and community halls would collapse. Particular attention has been given to ensuring that public funds deliver value for money as well as demonstrating cost effectiveness to local taxpayers, for example through the publication of performance tables that rate the results of service delivery.

3.5 Who is accountable?

Pinpointing who in particular is accountable to these various stakeholders is a complex issue. Day and Klein (1987) recognize the difficulties in assigning accountability for the performance of a service because of the variety of actors involved in service delivery (policymakers, service provider organizations, front line service providers and citizens). Bovens (1998) describes this as the 'problem of many hands'. In his analysis accountability might lie with:

- Service provider organizations (which might be government or private sector); this is corporate accountability and is similar to the accountability of autonomous citizens.
- The person at the top of the organizational hierarchy, the managing director of the company or the government minister; this is personal accountability.
- Every member of the service provider organization is equally liable for the conduct of the organization; this is collective accountability.

- Individuals are accountable, to the extent that their action have contributed to the service provider organizations conduct; this is individual accountability.

Bovens notes how a policy of collective accountability means no one in particular is accountable, which can easily lead to collective unaccountability. Moreover, Bovens questions whether corporate entities can be held accountable for individual actions. He advocates a strengthening of individual accountability, based on each individual taking responsibility for his or her actions. Pyper (1996) describes this as 'role responsibility' whereby individuals are required to give an account of the actions they undertake in their professional capacity.

Day and Klein (1987; 1) indicate that the growth of professional expertise in service delivery has led to the 'privatization of accountability', in so far as professionals and experts claim that only their peers can judge their conduct and performance. This has had two major impacts: to diminish the notion of 'accountability as good stewardship' of common resources (Gray and Jenkins, 1993) and a weakening of the traditional line of political accountability by establishing a direct relationship between the service provider and the user (Pyper, 1996; 217-8).

Engineers, especially in a development context, have been criticized for normal professionalism demonstrated by 'we know best' values, attitudes and behaviour, which marginalizes the knowledge and skills of the community (Chambers, 1993). 'Normal professionalism' means engineers tend to assess problems with infrastructure services as purely technical issues amenable to professionally determined, technological solutions. For example, Edwards (1989; 118) states, 'The natural consequence of a concern for technical interpretation of reality is that knowledge, and the power to control it, becomes concentrated in the hands of those with the technical skills necessary to understand the language and methods being used.' According to Chambers, accountability is ultimately a voluntary individual choice, requiring an agenda of personal transformation in attitudes, values and expectations, and greater self-control over their actions, attitudes and behaviours. Other commentators critique this view, in which questions of power and authority are treated as subordinate to individual values and attitudes (Brown, 1998; Pinch, 1985).

Rather than seeking an individualized approach to service delivery Rhodes (1997; 10-11) concludes that, in light of fragmented service delivery, accountability should no longer be made to fit an institution but must instead lie with the policy and its network. Considine (2002; 30) also proposes a 'networked' accountability, which is non-hierarchical and might 'be defined as a willingness to regard other actors as sharing in a wider agency right or responsibility for a particular service or group of services'. Networked accountability offers the possibility of providing a culture of responsibility for infrastructure services without sacrificing the role of external scrutiny. Grindle and Hilderbrand (1995; 441) have found that effective individual performance is more affected by opportunities for meaningful work, shared professional norms, teamwork and promotion based on performance.

3.6 What are service providers accountable for?

Having established who is accountable, there is a need to specify what front line service providers are accountable for. This has changed. Current understandings of accountability go beyond conventional concerns with legal and financial uses of the term.

Accountability arrangements are increasingly expected to respond to people's ideas of a 'moral economy' and social justice (Goetz and Jenkins, 2004).

It is possible to distinguish between two trends in the literature on accountability in the delivery of infrastructure services:

- Accountability for technical process of service delivery.
- Accountability for outcomes of service delivery.

Accountability for the way services are run is relatively easy to secure, as it is based on the technical competence of service providers' decisions and actions. Table 6 illustrates how the providers of infrastructure services are accountable for the process. Accountability for outcomes of service delivery, such as healthy people, on the other hand, is often more difficult to discern, difficult to isolate from the wider environment, and service evaluations are often subjective and political (Day and Klein, 1987).

Table 6. The forms and functions of accountability for infrastructure services

Form of accountability	Function
Professional	Professional competence in the preparation of designs, construction of works, operation and maintenance of installations, personnel management and organizational planning.
Financial	Financial accountability refers to the use of public resources and formal systems of financial reporting and auditing. Ensure value for money, cost recovery, equitable user charges, financial administration and accounting, efficient invoicing and fee collection, regulated private sector participation, consumption measurement, consumer registration and marketing.
Political	Ensuring that service providers act in the public interest, are effectively controlled by ministers, parties, councillors and parliament.
Moral	Doing a good job in an honest way, demonstrating integrity, fairness and ethics, meeting societal norms and expectations. Potter (1988) stresses that providers should also be accountable for ensuring equality in service delivery. For example, citizens should have equal access, shares, treatment and outcomes of service provision.
Administrative	Administrative accountability refers to the obligation on bureaucrats to answer to elected officials and to follow rules that define their reporting relationships with superiors and subordinates. Administration covers inventory of assets, stock for maintenance, procurement, storage and distribution of material like tools, spares, chemical, administration of vehicles used by agency, bureaucratic procedures, planning and regulation
Legal	Legal accountability refers to the obligation on state agents to meet their legal obligations to citizens. Service providers are made accountable through legislation, regulation and accountable for statutory duties and conforming to policy, legislature on infrastructure and employment, human rights, constitutional requirements, legal entitlement, rules and decisions.

3.7 How are service providers accountable?

Large amounts of international resources have been spent on the formulation of national anti-corruption programmes in developing countries as part of good governance programmes. For example, The World Bank's anti corruption campaign has led to the suspension of multi-million dollar loans and contracts to countries such as Chad, Argentina, Congo, Kenya Ethiopia and Bangladesh because of corruption concerns.

However, critics state that an excessively narrow focus on fighting corruption threatens to undermine the Bank's primary purpose of eliminating global poverty.

In Africa numerous institutions have been set up to expose corruption. These include the Health Commission in South Africa, the Kenyan National Anti-Corruption Authority, the Ombudsman in Uganda, the Anti-Corruption Bureau in Malawi, the Presidential Commission on Corruption in Tanzania and the Anti-Corruption Commission of Zambia. Other international examples include:

- Hong Kong's anti-corruption strategy is commonly seen as best practice by anti-corruption practitioners worldwide. Its three-pronged approach focusing on prevention, punishment and education has proven to be very effective. Hong Kong has a well-established Independent Commission against Corruption (ICAC) which is the main body responsible for implementation of the anti-corruption strategy and activities.
- Pakistan's National Anti-Corruption Strategy (NACS) was launched in 2002. While commitment to implementation of the strategy is still to be seen, the strategy is a comprehensive document and was drafted using a combination of local (the National Accountability Bureau) and international expertise.
- The strategy of the Estonian government, entitled the 'Honest State', proposes a number of specific steps aimed at reducing the risks of corruption in Estonia. It looks at both prevention and prosecution in an equally systematic manner. A timeframe of 2004–2007 with specific actions and target delivery dates accompanies the strategy.
- The development of Ghana's National Anti-corruption Strategy was informed by individual studies related to Ghana's poverty reduction strategy; the public expenditure review (carried out in 2002), the Country Financial Accountability Assessment and the Country Procurement Assessment Reviews, as well as an intensive public awareness campaign in Ghana.
- As part of anti-corruption measures initiated in 2000–2001, the government of Cameroon established a National Anti-Corruption Observatory as well as observatories in the Finance, Education and Transport Ministries to monitor its anti-corruption programme (through awareness raising, investigating actual corruption, knowledge-sharing and networking, but with no power to sanction or punish culprits of corruption).
- Since 1999 South Korea has been engaged in a concerted anti-corruption effort, which has produced many examples of what could be referred to as good practice. For example the creation of the Korea Independent Commission Against Corruption (KICAC), the adoption of a Code of Conduct and the adoption of On-line Procedures Enhancement for civil applications (OPEN) at the municipal level.
- Some of the recent reform proposals and developments in Malaysia include: setting up of a National Institute of Public Ethics, maintaining public sector ethics through a combination of research, education and monitoring, appointment of a Royal Commission to look into corruption in police services and setting up an Anti-Corruption Academy for anti-corruption capacity building, promoting best practice in investigations, monitoring and enforcement, and in newer areas, such as forensic accounting and engineering.
- Most local government authorities in the UK have put in place anti-fraud and anti-corruption strategies.

Nevertheless, legalistic ex-post enforcement measures have limitations, especially in developing countries in which law institutions themselves are often part of the corruption problem (Kaufmann et al., 2000: 147). Improving infrastructure services has thus been linked to certain forms of political change by international, bi-lateral and northern-based organizations. Current macro-trends in the water sector (decentralization, privatization, community management, demand approaches) are intended to improve performance (in terms of greater efficiency, effectiveness, economies of scale, management and maintenance), improve governance, reduce corruption, increase responsiveness, facilitate monitoring by residents, promote accountability, increase local ownership and improve cost recovery (UNCHS, 2001; Azfar et al., 1999; 2). However, political liberalization may simply decentralize corruption (for example, Thailand and the Philippines).

In recent decades, internationally, there have been changes in the way infrastructure delivery is organized (i.e. modes of delivery, provider structures, definitions for measuring quality and performance, performance pay systems, methods of monitoring and evaluation, rewarding service provision, design of contract arrangements for service provision, as well as policy and legal developments over equality, transparency, human rights and sustainability). These changes have been informed by a variety of ideas and doctrines, some of which have been drawn from private sector practice and are intended primarily to promote generally well-managed, well-financed and well-maintained systems; however, they are also seen as a way of increasing accountability in service delivery.

Accountability is thought to be enhanced by the introduction of competition in service delivery, for example through a clear split of responsibility for policy definition, service provision and monitoring. Above all, a market-based approach is intended to overcome producer dominance in service delivery (Walsh, 1995; 13). Private operators are thought to have a much stronger incentive to curb corruption because they are losing revenue. Nevertheless, corruption exists in private as well as public infrastructure service operators. There is a concern that privatization and sub-contracting might lead to accountability gaps, whereby services users have less protection from government if they encounter problems with private providers (Newell, 2002; 92; Van de Walle 1989; 610).

3.8 New anti-corruption initiatives

In the literature the main kinds of anti-corruption initiatives include public awareness, public anti-corruption strategies, government reorganization, law enforcement and the creation of institutions to prevent corruption.

Davis (2004) highlights a number of successful mechanisms used to alter accountability in water and sanitation service delivery in southern Asia. She identified two elements common to all of the successful anti-corruption strategies encountered: changes that increased accountability and changes that increase the moral cost of misconduct (or the benefits of good conduct). Examples of how corruption can be addressed include: increased transparency through the use of information technology in public water and sanitation agencies to monitor staff activities by supervisors; involving NGOs in monitoring contractors; relying more on community labour while restricting the use of private contractors to more complex work; and encouraging constructive political involvement at the organizational level with the help of social marketing and information technology. She describes initiatives to use information technology to decrease discretion and decentralizing service delivery to increase community vigilance. In particular, she

highlights the need to bring engineers face to face with the daily hardships of customers in order to increase the moral cost of misconduct and to develop a sense of duty.

Many international institutions have incorporated anti-corruption activities into their programmes to promote transparency. For example, the Asian Development Bank (ADB) has provisions for suspending or cancelling loans where there is 'credible evidence of corruption'. The World Bank used an innovative approach to control corruption in Campo Elias (Venezuela): greater disclosure of public information with reference to public works (particularly over the internet) together with citizen involvement in municipal budgets. As a result corruption has fallen and services are delivered more efficiently (de Asis, 2000). However, there is also the fear that the internet might in fact facilitate new corruption opportunities and IT also raises the issue of a new form of exclusion developing in society, wherein the poor and the marginalized are excluded by the new technology (Heeks, 1998).

Transparency is thought key to better public service provision. The focus on transparency to date has been on audits: accounting, the design and operation of subsidy, the direct face-to-face accountability of service providers and on the way that institutions and organizations report their activities. However, less attention has been paid to the link between transparency and public service quality and performance. In the case of education, Reinikka (2001) found that greater transparency can make a significant contribution to reducing corruption and embezzlement. In this case, the practice of publicizing the amounts of school capitation grant that were released has greatly increased parents' and others' ability to monitor local officials handling of the funds and led to massive improvements in the share of the funds reaching the schools.

In India Citizen Charters are used for tackling low-level corruption by providing citizens with access to information about services. Citizen Charters are documents that summarize details of the services provided by government agencies. Charters change service provision by defining service standards, ensuring that users are consulted about their needs and setting targets for responses times, waiting times, charges and fees. Charters increase accountability through the publication of information about and requirements for government services.

Transparency International Argentina (Poder Ciudadano) found most problems in public procurement come from the large discretion in designing and awarding public contracts and lack of public access to information (Steets, 2001). Remedies for corruption in procurement include increased transparency in the public bidding process, independent monitoring of the procurement process, increased awareness and accountability among professionals for technical quality and financial management, increased confidence in and credibility of public servants, ethical and legal principles in service delivery, market-based mechanisms (price-based comparisons) as well as community monitoring of public procurement.

TI have launched a document entitled 'Minimum Standards for Public Contracting' aimed at preventing corruption in construction projects. The TI Standards call on public contracting authorities to ensure that contracts are subject to open, competitive bidding. Other measures include maintaining a blacklist of companies caught bribing; providing public disclosure of the entire process; and ensuring monitoring by independent oversight agencies and civil society. The TI Standards also advocate the use of a TI Integrity Pact, which commits the authority and bidding companies to refrain from bribery. The Integrity Pact is a tool that has already been successful in reducing corruption and cutting the

costs of dozens of procurement procedures around the world. An Integrity Pact in the Karachi Greater Water Supply Scheme is anticipated to save \$3.1million and has led to transparency in public procurement procedures to be implemented in the workings of KWSB. Engineering consulting firms and water-related multinationals are among 62 companies at the World Economic Forum 2005 who signed up to a zero tolerance campaign against bribery and corruption – Partnering Against Corruption Principles for Countering Bribery (<http://www.weforum.org.paci>).

3.9 Customer-driven systems

Other contemporary innovations in accountability rely on the voice and participation of service users in policymaking, planning, operating, regulating and financing infrastructure services, in order to increase the responsiveness of public services to customer demands. Citizens have been directly involved in fighting corruption by monitoring their infrastructure delivery. For example, community-based audits of public works have been organized by an NGO called Parivartan in Delhi. In Bangalore, the Children's Movement for Civic Awareness have surveyed the quality of the city's roads. The children were given checklists in order to monitor the presence of side drains, evenness of surface of the footpath, obstructions to pedestrians, number of potholes, number of cracked areas, presence of signs or painted lines to indicate a road hump, and unfilled or un-compacted diggings for electrical or telephone cables. The children presented the findings on quality of roads to the Bangalore municipal commissioner at a public hearing and the findings were reported to newspapers. Such surveys have helped to make public officials more accountable and to improve the quality of infrastructure. Paul (1992, 1991) has demonstrated how organized public feedback in the form of report cards can be used to challenge service providers to be more efficient and responsive to consumers. Exposing public administrations to pressures and demands from citizens has a major impact on improving service delivery and public administration effectiveness. In the Philippines, NGOs have sent monitors with cameras and photocopies of contracts to uncover corruption by comparing infrastructure plans on paper to what was actually built.

Service users may be represented on the boards of specialist agencies, such as the public utility regulatory body in Ghana, or involved in nationwide consumer watchdog groups like those in Zambia. In Indonesia, an NGO called Yayasan Lembaga Konsumen collects consumer complaints via newspaper adverts, brochures and radio adverts, and organizes meetings between complainants, regulators, service providers and the media so that they can be resolved (Lazzarini, 2004).

Dissatisfaction with the record of representatives in holding bureaucracies to account and in incorporating user views into decision-making has led to mechanisms to enable citizens to hold bureaucrats to account directly (Goetz and Gaventa, 2001). Service users have been encouraged to become 'the active makers and shapers of services, exercising their preferences as consumers and their rights as citizens' (Cornwall et al., 2000; 2). Service users are considered best placed to monitor the services on which they depend, due to greater incentives and information, as well as face-to-face interaction with front line providers. The involvement of private citizens in promoting accountability compensates for weak government institutions and regulation by exposing professionals to the choice of consumers in a direct way. Citizens can participate in three key areas of service delivery: operational practices, expenditure decisions and policymaking (Burns et al., 1994). Participation can be a means by which individuals protect their rights, express

opinions, or shape their own life chances (Boaden et al., 1982; 168). If the users, and particularly the poor, can monitor and discipline poorly performing service providers, this will result in better services.

Contemporary literature reveals that there have been changes to the way service providers are made accountable. Indeed, Goetz and Jenkins (2004) argue that a new accountability agenda has emerged, with four basic elements: (1) a more direct role for ordinary people and their associations in demanding accountability, (2) a more diverse set of jurisdictions, using (3) an expanded repertoire of methods, and on the basis of (4) a more exacting standard of social justice. This model in effect breaks up hierarchical accountability of traditional Weberian bureaucracy, i.e. reporting up the line to the senior officers and politicians, replacing it with direct accountability to communities. Osbourne and Gaebler (1993) claim that customer-driven systems are more innovative, give people choice between different kinds of services, waste less, depoliticizes the decision of choosing among competing providers, force the provider to match supply to demand, empower users to make choices – making them more committed customers, and force service providers to be accountable to customers.

Citizens have been directly involved in accountability through empirical experiences of participatory budget formulation and spending reviews in experiments such as those in Porto Alegre and Belo Horizonte, Brazil (Abers, 1998), and in Recife (Devas et al., 2001); public expenditure tracking in Uganda; budget analysis in South Africa; rights to information movements in India; citizen-managed public audits of local government spending (Goetz & Jenkins (2001b)), People's Voice Programme in Ukraine or systematic Report Cards of user satisfaction carried out by NGOs in Bangalore, with which citizens can monitor public services such as transport and waste service quality. An innovative approach was used to control corruption in Campo Elias, Venezuela, involving greater disclosure of information with reference to public works (particularly over the internet) together with a participatory budget hearing programme to foster citizen involvement in municipal budgets. As a result corruption has fallen and services are delivered more efficiently (de Asis, 2000). The internet has also been widely used in developed countries for making complaints procedures more efficient, to reduce opportunities for corruption, cut red tape, increases access to public information, enhance transparency, and save time/money. However, the internet might also facilitate new corruption opportunities and create a new form of exclusion, wherein the poor and the marginalized in society are excluded by the new technology.

The Australian Institution of Engineers and the American Society of Civil Engineers have both published Report Cards on the nation's infrastructure that rate the asset condition, asset availability and reliability, asset management and sustainability (including economic, environmental and social issues). It is hoped that when a service provider can compare its performance with others, this information will trigger internal reforms in terms of policymaking and monitoring, better resource planning, better accounting, auditing and procurement, and better performance. It is also intended to enable service users and NGOs to compare of the performance of different operators in different regions, to use voice in an informed way and create a competitive pressure for service providers to improve.

3.10 Accountability in a wider context

Democratization has led to a contemporary interest in strengthening the accountability of institutions of liberal democracy such as courts, multi-party democracy, division of power, human rights and rule of law, increased checks on behaviour, popular participation, promotion of a free press and transparency in government and public administration⁹. Elections, both central and local, provide answerability (information and explanation for actions) of elected representatives, and enforceability (sanctions imposed if information or explanations are deemed inappropriate). By incorporating rights to infrastructure services into national laws and policies, national governments are accountable to electorates for progressively realizing access to these services. The governments of South Africa, Philippines, Peru and Ecuador have recognized the right to a healthy environment in their national constitutions and refer to infrastructure services in their poverty reduction strategies (UN, 2003). Citizens can then lobby governments to deliver these services and enforce their rights to infrastructure services through courts, for example through Public Interest Legislation. Yet in industrialized countries there has been concern with democratic deficit in representative government in terms of low voter turn out, unrepresentative councillors, political apathy and low levels of popular participation (Barnes, 1999). The effectiveness of voting at elections as a mechanism to secure accountability over infrastructure services has been debated, since 'traditional politics is too blunt an instrument for sensitive assessments' (Lewis and Birkinshaw, 1993; 85).

Improving infrastructure services has been linked to certain forms of political change. Reforms such as decentralization, good governance and urban management are intended to improve performance (in terms of greater efficiency, effectiveness, economies of scale, management and maintenance) of infrastructure services, as well as to generate the resources locally to pay for them (UNCHS, 2001), increase responsiveness, facilitate monitoring by residents, promote accountability, increase local ownership, reduce corruption and improve cost recovery (Azfar et al., 1999; 2). This is because these reforms induce government to respond to the local population by exposing them to the choice of the consumer in a direct way (Batley in Davey et al., 1996; 25). Gaventa (2001) suggest that decentralization can improve the responsiveness of public service providers to the needs of service users, particularly the poorest. In Colombo, the Community Development Council associated with the government's Million Houses Programmes (1980s–1990s) enabled residents and communities to work with government officials to identify local problems, set priorities and develop solutions (Russel and Vidler, 2000). However, Crook and Manor's (1998) investigation of democratic decentralization in Ghana, Cote D'Ivoire, Bangladesh and India found that enhanced participation and consultation is not directly related to performance outcomes. Moreover, Moore and Putzel (1999) state that there is no reason to expect decentralization to be pro-poor. Plummer (2000; 85) suggests that decentralization alone is not enough to facilitate community participation in municipal planning without internal organizational reforms; the municipal status quo may remain anti-poor, detached and inaccessible, and will block the development of participatory initiatives.

⁹ The ideological significance of these trends is that development requires certain types of institutional change (liberal capitalist institutions, parliamentary democracy, property rights, human rights, free markets and good governance).

Improving governance is critical to reducing corruption. The governance of infrastructure services typically depends on many actors; these include municipalities, politicians, public agencies, service users, NGOs/CBOs, the private sector, ministries (such as water, health, environment) and agencies of restraint (i.e. watchdogs and regulators). Core characteristics of good governance are participation, rule of law, transparency, responsiveness, consensus orientation, equity, effectiveness and efficiency, accountability and strategic vision. Tools and methodologies have been developed to facilitate an evaluation of governance. For example the UN Habitat Global Campaign for Good Urban Governance developed the Urban Governance Index and the Good Governance Report Card developed by The Urban Governance Initiative (TUGI). Good governance reforms advocate efficient public service, allocation and management of resources, independent judicial system and legal framework to enforce contracts, accountable administration of public funds, independent public auditor, respect for law and human rights, pluralistic institutional structure, promoting checks and balances from civil society and a free press (Leftwich, 1993; 606-610).

Robert Chambers has coined the term 'the self-deceiving state' and illustrates how bureaucrats and development professionals tend to work towards a mass delivery of standard goods and services which are not responsive to peoples' particular needs. Officials are protected (within their bureaucratic systems) from the poor results of their programmes by diseconomies of knowledge and methods of avoiding the unwelcome news of failure. These diseconomies include selective perceptions, misleading questionnaires, diplomatic prudence by those carrying bad news and plain mis-reporting (Chambers, 1993). Montiero (1966) writing on India concludes that ambiguity is a key characteristic which helps to facilitate corrupt behaviour. He points out that corruption can sometimes thrive precisely because people do not know what it is. Without clear and agreed knowledge of 'the rules' for transactions, it is not possible to enforce generally agreed moralities. On the other hand, a good knowledge of rules by those in power can facilitate a knowledge of how to 'bend' them. As Wood (1992) has pointed out, there may be 'parallel rationalities', including different sets of rules, which govern behaviour in different spheres and at different levels.

If the poor have a say in service delivery it is thought this would be more likely to get access to affordable and appropriate services – either directly or via government, as demonstrated by the application of co production and social capital to the various forms of public service provision. Ostrom (1996; 1073) introduced the idea of co-production of infrastructure services as 'a process through which inputs from individuals who are not 'in' the same organization are transformed into goods and services', which can improve service delivery. Ostrom found that co-production involves the contribution of local knowledge and experience to service delivery, which strengthens the signal system about performance to service providers. Thereby co-production gives service providers an incentive to respond to service users demands. Lam (1996) highlights the 'social embeddedness' of irrigation officials in the local community and the importance of daily informal social interaction between farmers and officials. Social embeddedness creates a social pressure to do a good job, so that any wrongdoing on their part that causes harm to the local community could lead to social ostracism. Other kinds of co-production arrangements have been found in health care. Wade (1992) compares local irrigation systems in Korea, where public servants are networked into their local communities, with those in India, where care is taken to ensure they are not, and notes that this may be a factor contributing to the far greater efficiency of irrigation systems in the Korean case. The Korean officials take more responsibility for carrying out their duties properly within

the wider community, while their Indian counterparts are presented with a low risk strategy for personal gain. Wade's (1982) work in South India showed how local government canal irrigation systems regularly involved personal accumulation by managers, who were then transferred to another area just before the resulting complaints and conflicts became disruptive. This way the system remained largely immune to remedial interventions. In her study of Ceara, Brazil, Tendler (1997) examines how health workers were made accountable and self-regulating outside their agency through monitoring by the communities. Mackintosh (1997) posits that such a pattern of informal regulation has also occurred in health care in Kerala, where a mix of local public pressure, expectation, competition, information and publicity ensure accountability is shared between users and service producers. Davis (2004) highlights a number of successful mechanisms used to alter accountability in water and sanitation service delivery in south Asia. She describes initiatives to use information technology to decrease discretion and decentralize service delivery to increase community vigilance. In particular, Davis (2004) highlights the need to bring engineers face to face with the daily hardships of customers in order to increase the moral cost of misconduct and to develop a sense of duty.

Ostrom (1996, 1073–75) contends that: 'Good agency performance results not from strengthening public sector agencies, but from increasing their responsiveness to customers. This fosters an active, vocal constituency that puts in motion the accountability mechanisms needed for good agency performance.' The adoption of customer responsiveness in the delivery of infrastructure services, particularly in public service organizations, reflects the growth of consumerism in democratic societies and more flexible forms of production that are more relevant to customer need: post fordism (Barnes, 1999; 82; Gabriel and Lang, 1995; 176). The word consumer describes the relationship of a person to a product or service, which provides greater incentives for better performance (Burns et al., 1994; 51). Greater consumer responsiveness aims to change the underlying incentives for service delivery and is an attempt to avoid producer interests dominating service delivery and aims to make the hierarchical accountability of traditional Weberian bureaucracy (reporting up the line to the senior officers), and the management of front line providers more efficient. Goetz and Gaventa (2001a) noted most state bureaucracies tend to be 'responsive' but not on an equitable basis, favouring elites rather than socially excluded groups. For example 'poor people report rudeness, arrogance, insensitivity and lack of respect from those in authority' (Narayan et al., 2000; 287). As well as being more likely to complain, Mlandenka (1989; 577) found residents of high-ownership areas or homeowners are more likely to meet a favourable response from sympathetic municipal bureaucrats because, as a profession, bureaucrats identify more with the better off than the poor. Middle and upper income service users are typically 'concerned with how the cake is cut than trying to make it bigger' (Walsh, 1995; 20).

Putnam (1993) argues, 'Engaged citizens are a source of discipline and information for public agencies'. By implication then, good services are associated with a civil society characterized by social capital, reciprocity, altruism, trust and co-operation. Crook and Manor (1998) suggest that civil organizations can help to foster fairer, more honest, transparent, democratic and accountable governance. Sen (in Wuyts et al., 1992) proposes the co-production of appropriate public services whereby, 'we can think of people participating along with governments in defining needs, in making choices appropriate to those needs, and in enforcing accountability.' Sen has described the success of public services in Kerala as due to the 'willingness of people to join together

to demand accountability from the systems and their employees' (in Wuyts et al., 1992; 275). Castells (1977, 1983) maintains a crisis in infrastructure services has the potential to mobilize and unify producers of infrastructure services and consumers to defend service provision. This mobilization may take two forms; he distinguishes between urban protest movements which are solely concerned with improving the service, and urban social movements whereby a failing urban services can potentially lead to a challenge to formal political processes and social relations; the difference between these movements is political consciousness.

Although public involvement in local service provision has increased in recent years, little has been achieved by way of a fundamental shift in power (Boaden, et al. 1982; 179). Hart, Jones and Bains (in Hoggett, 1997; 197) and Skelcher (1993; 16) take objection to the increasing demands that citizens use their voice to improve services when providers fail to relinquish power in any meaningful way. For example, by ignoring consumer demands, making closed decisions, not providing alternative choices, breaking promises, withholding information and not providing adequate support. All of which leads to resentment and criticism by local residents, who, in turn, become less active and more passive in their involvement with service delivery. Skelcher (1993) and Bachrach and Baratz (1970) have reviewed the ways in which service users might fail to get their needs represented on service provider's agendas; for example, this might be because of the failure of service users to press their demands, a failure of those in powerful position to respond to demand or the mobilization of bias, which involves the manipulation by the powerful of the values, beliefs and opinions of the general public. Moreover, Beresford and Croft (1986) suggest that public participation in the UK has typically led to an over representation of white, middle aged, middle class, able bodied men, which ignores and reinforces the inequalities to be found in society.

It should not be automatically assumed that increasing the participation of the poor would increase the accountability of service providers. From an economic perspective, accountability for infrastructure services might present a Prisoner Dilemma wherein people act in short term self-interest but would not co-operate for collective benefits. Attempts to secure accountability for infrastructure services might suffer collection action problems due to the joint nature of certain infrastructure services, and the public good characteristics of accountability. These characteristics mean it is impossible to exclude those who don't take part in collective action from receiving better-managed or maintained services. Olson (1965) claimed the 'Logic of Collective Action' means that individuals will not participate in matters of public interest unless they are coerced to overcome the temptation to free ride, or incentives for action outweigh the costs of doing so. Other studies have shown that community enforcement mechanisms and co-operation are weaker in more heterogonous communities, for example Alesina et al. (1999) found that in the USA ethnic diversity is associated with a lower level of public goods provision of sewerage and refuse collection, education, welfare, fire protection and roads. With reference to irrigation, Dayton-Johnson (1999) and Lam (1996) have also shown that the supply of public goods is negatively correlated with ethic heterogeneity in the population. However, Ostrom (1994) has described instances of successful common property management by communities. She found that reducing the costs and uncertainties of taking part in collective action would decrease the incentive for free riding, cheating, shirking and rent seeking.

Conclusion

The sustainability of the livelihoods of the urban poor is compromised by corruption in the delivery of infrastructure services (water supply, sanitation, drainage, access and paving, solid waste management, street lighting and community buildings). This paper has reported on a literature review carried out on the issue of accountability for infrastructure services. This paper has defined the infrastructure services of interest to this research and described the purpose of infrastructure service delivery. The outputs of infrastructure services, technical quality and user satisfaction, were discussed and sustainability was defined with reference to the continued production of these outputs over the long term. The types of corruption found in the delivery of infrastructure services were noted and the ways in which accountability can improve the outputs of infrastructure services were described. The literature outlined a number of ways to reduce corruption in the delivery of public services, including public sector reform, information disclosure, oversight institutions, societal reforms and so on. This review has provided a descriptive review of accountability as a concept and outlined the rationale for applying accountability to the delivery of infrastructure services. This paper has identified service providers who have instituted reforms, which aim both to tackle the issue of corruption directly through increasing accountability and to protect the livelihoods of the poor. This evidence demonstrates that it is practically possible to combat corruption in infrastructure service delivery in an attempt to increase sustainability.

Remedies for corruption in infrastructure delivery discussed include:

1. Macro-economic reforms: for example, the liberalization of markets, de-monopolization of services and opening of the economy to foreign trade, deregulation and elimination of unnecessary controls.
2. Administrative reforms, among others the restructuring of the civil service and decentralization of government.
3. Decentralize services – involve citizens in monitoring.
4. Widely disseminate information and standards of service.
5. Create sustained public pressure.
6. Judicial reforms, as it is argued that the risk for public officials to be caught for corruption should increase (Rose-Ackerman, 1978).
7. Increase the risk of getting caught for corruption (Kaufmann et al, 2000, Rose-Ackerman, 1978, 1998, Klitgaard, 1988).

Accountability for infrastructure services is an important research area, and yet has not been fully explored in existing studies. Greater accountability can help to improve economic efficiency and reduce abuse of power by public officials. Empirical evidence is needed on the effectiveness of accountability arrangements intended to reduce corruption in service delivery. There is a need to identify and study those service providers who have instituted reforms, which aim to tackle the issue of corruption directly through increasing accountability and aim to protect the livelihoods of the poor. Evidence based research is needed to demonstrate that it is practically possible to combat corruption in infrastructure service delivery.

Table 7. How greater accountability can improve the sustainability of infrastructure services in detail

Planning	Accurate mapping and design. Resource sustainability is included in planning.
Inspection stages	Third party control of quality of construction
Design	Bills of quantity properly calculated, costs accurately calculated, appropriate technologies, no political interference, technically good design, clear and agreed plans for O&M and stakeholder participation in design.
Bid and contract signing stage	Accurate, honest bidding. No kickbacks. Competitive tendering. Independent assessor who monitors the prequalification, tender and execution of a project. Safe channels for whistleblowers. Asset management plans that show plans to extend services to poorer areas. Strict procurement guidelines during both tender and project execution phases with enforceable sanctions and arbitration mechanisms
Construction	Assured quality of materials and equipment. Good standard of construction. Payments on time, following regulations. No-Corruption Clause in all purchase requests and contracts. Establishing mechanisms to immediately stopping work if there is any corruption or misconduct and compensation rights in the event of corruption.
Service delivery	Operation of services sustained. Improve quality of public services. Services are reliable. Monitoring information is acted on. Involve communities, citizens and the private sector in the management of infrastructure. Public reporting and communication on performance training and capacity building for the organization. Publishing prices. Civil society collaborations, networks and partnerships promote transparency.
Maintenance and management stages	Quick action on complaints about service problems. Repairs/replacements are made correctly and rapidly. No kickbacks for standard repairs or for performing normal work.
Subscription process	Clear and transparent subscription process for household connections, fewer unauthorized connections. Good access to services, especially for the poor.
Billing system	Transparent and accurate system of billing and revenue collection. Operating cost of infrastructure services is covered.
Disconnections	Transparent system for disconnecting customers
Fault redress	Fast and efficient system for fault redress. Better knowledge on how to report misbehaviour and low delivery standards.

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The sustainability of the livelihoods of the poor in low- and middle-income countries is compromised by corruption in the delivery of infrastructure services. Such services include water supply, sanitation, drainage, the provision of access roads and paving, transport, solid waste management, street lighting and community buildings. For this reason, The Water, Engineering Development Centre, (WEDC) at Loughborough University in the UK is conducting research into anti-corruption initiatives in this area of infrastructure services delivery.

This series of reports has been produced as part of a project entitled *Accountability Arrangements to Combat Corruption*, which was initially funded by the Department for International Development (DFID) of the British Government. The purpose of the work is to improve governance through the use of accountability arrangements to combat corruption in the delivery of infrastructure services. These findings, reviews, country case studies, case surveys and practical tools provide evidence of how anti-corruption initiatives in infrastructure delivery can contribute to the improvement of the lives of the urban poor.

The main objective of the research is the analysis of corruption in infrastructure delivery. This includes a review of accountability initiatives in infrastructure delivery and the nature of the impact of greater accountability.

For more information, please visit WEDC's web page:
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