

SOCIAL EXCLUSION, RIGHTS AND CHRONIC POVERTY IN BOLIVIA

1. Introduction

This paper presents some of the key findings of the project “Towards an Inclusive Elections Process”, from March through August 2002 in Bolivia, implemented by the “Pro Citizens’ Participation” Consortium¹. The project’s purpose was to “lay the foundations in terms of knowledge and co-ordinated institutional capabilities, so that those currently most excluded from the decision-making process in Bolivia may achieve greater enjoyment of their economic, social, cultural and civil rights, through the realisation of their political rights”.

Our main hypothesis in this paper is that *social exclusion ratifies poverty and encourages dynamics of chronic poverty*. This paper explores the connections between social exclusion and poverty, and how this relationship is linked to dynamics that tend to make poverty chronic. We highlight the problem of lack of personal documentation, as both a symptom and a cause of social exclusion and chronic poverty, explaining the causes of undocumented and the extent of the problem uncovered during our work.

We also highlight the importance of institutional capital in analysing social exclusion, and present a typology of social exclusion in terms of different forms and options of relations to the state. The specifics of social exclusion and the electoral process of 2002 are outlined, before exploring the costs of social exclusion on governability and chronic poverty.

2. Methodology

The 18 Consortium members operated in a total of 25 voters’ districts (in a total of 43 municipalities), and within these in 618 communities, including 8 peri-urban neighbourhoods. We directly surveyed 10% of the overall population in target communities; out of a total population of 237,654, we directly interviewed 28,767 men, women and children (with 26,418 valid entries, following data entry). 119 focus group discussions with excluded people were also conducted. Other project activities included direct community training events and focus groups (which reached 22,500 people), and radio airings, forums and fairs (reaching 95,000 people).

Each Consortium member could design its own data collection format, provided that a minimum set of data were included, i.e.:

- Complete name of each family member, and community;
- Age and sex;
- Inscription status in Civil Registers (i.e., possession of Birth Certificate, or involvement in an administrative or judicial process);
- Possession of identification card and its status (i.e., valid, expired, in process, RUN², voter card)

¹ Hereafter referred to as the Consortium. The project was supported by DFID and SIDA, through grant agreements with the administrative body, made up of CARE (an international NGO) and CLAVE (a local consultancy company). The Consortium is made up of 15 local NGOs, with national, regional or local coverage, and three grassroots organisations and associations thereof (CONAMAQ, OMAK and CPESC). Particularly close collaboration was established with the National Electoral Court and the National Identification Division of the National Police. The views expressed in this paper are those of the authors, and should not be considered to reflect those of the donors or collaborating institutions.

² The RUN (Registro Unico Nacional – Unique National Register) was created in the early 1990s as a parallel body to Civil Registers and the National Police’s Identification division, with the aim to provide large numbers of Bolivian citizens with a simplified process leading to an alternative identification document. The RUN was successful in providing identification documents to thousands of people and has been praised for being quick, flexible, and giving clients the benefit of the doubt. The RUN’s downside has reportedly been political parties’ patronage over RUN employees, which resulted in persons possessing two or more identification cards with different names. Evidence of duplicated RUN cards and chaos in the registers generated accusations against the RUN, which led to its deactivation in 1996. Current possessors of RUN cards now have no valid identification since, like ID cards issued by the National Police, these need to be renewed every 6 years and the final batch of RUN cards issued in 1996 expired during 2002.

Various Consortium members obtained additional information, e.g. concerning land tenure or economic status, via family income or expenditure data. However, the research was not specifically designed to measure statistically the link between poverty, or chronic poverty, and documentation or social exclusion.

In addition to this project fieldwork, our findings are the result of three reflection and systematisation workshops, attended by the 18 technical coordinators of each Consortium member, the members of the Consortium's management committee and the executive directors of all Consortium members, respectively. The methodological strategy used throughout the project also considered four transversal themes: gender, generation, intercultural issues, and communication.

Although not a representative sample in statistical terms vis-à-vis Bolivia's total population, the 618 communities do capture many of the contrasts that makes Bolivia a heterogeneous nation: rural and peri-urban contexts, highland and lowland, colonisers and indigenous, people living in nuclear villages as well as disperse dwellings. There is one dimension in which the target areas are not a reflection of Bolivia as a whole: the communities and municipalities covered by Consortium members tend to be ranked among the poorest on Bolivia's poverty map. Of the 43 municipalities where we worked, 44% fell into an area with an 85-100% poverty index and 56% were within the 64-84% poverty index.

3. How social exclusion confirms poverty

The subject of social exclusion has received insufficient attention in Bolivia, both in terms of analysis and the collection of empirical data. Nevertheless, it is estimated that the excluded make up at least as great a percentage as the poor, if not higher. According to the National Census of 2001, 58.6% of Bolivia's population is poor: 24.83% are on the poverty threshold, 34.22% are moderately poor, 21.69% are extremely poor (indigent) and only 16.58% have their basic needs met. Those below the poverty line live mainly in rural and peri-urban areas, where the Consortium members work.

A report from the Bolivian Government's Unit for Analysis of Economic Policy (UDAPE) states that the "last four years have seen an intense economic crisis in all of Latin America, with an average GDP growth rate of 1.6 per cent, compared with a population growth rate of 2.3 per cent; in other words, a negative per capital growth rate during this period" (UDAPE, 2002). This economic and social failure has seen more than 380,000 people fall below the poverty line in the last three years (1999 to 2001). At least five of the eight million Bolivians are considered poor, with over half of these extremely so, and the percentage of the population surviving on less than one dollar a day has increased, now reaching more than 25% of the population (UDAPE, in *Econoticiasbolivia*, 2003).

A recent International Cooperation report points out that while the Bolivian Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRSP)³ has achieved substantial gains, such as the distribution of financial resources from the HIPC initiative, the National Productive and Social Investment Fund, Bonosol⁴ and the Temporary National Emergency Plan, these have neither been sufficient to reduce inequality in terms of income distribution, nor to overcome the social and economic exclusion of broad sectors of society (Bilateral Cooperation: 6, 2002), and so have not managed to fulfil the expectations of the population or the international aid community. Adjustments to the PRSP are required, it states, to promote pro poor and distributional policies, the prioritisation of policies focusing on increasing productivity, a progressive and more equitable tax collection system, as well as different strategies and macro level proposals to face up to social exclusion in its diverse manifestations (Bilateral Cooperation, 2002)

As part of monitoring PRSP implementation, various efforts have been undertaken to conceptualise and analyse social exclusion, by the Consortium and CIDES-UMSA⁵, promoted by Central Government and international donors (DFID). CIDES's analysis suggests that social exclusion is the result of existing inequalities, in the distribution of productive and reproductive resources, as well as of unequal access to the channels of and space for political participation and decision-making which influence such distribution (Consultative Group, 2002).

³ The Bolivian PRSP, implemented from 2001 onwards following the National Dialogue, aims to reduce high levels of poverty in Bolivia.

⁴ A fixed payment to all those over age 65, set up through a reform of the Pension Law in 1996.

⁵ Development Science programme of the University of San Andrés

Under this conceptualisation, they identify the excluded as women, youth, indigenous people and informal producers, actors all of whom have historically suffered from discrimination.

The Pro-Citizens' Participation Consortium understood social exclusion as *the condition and situation of societal relations of those subjects who are unable to fully exercise their rights*. Social exclusion is part of a process that makes invisible those social actors who are discriminated against, actors whose livelihood strategies are developed in conditions of inequality in those processes whereby the national community is formed and in the socio-economic and political development of society.

There are, without doubt, many different manifestations of exclusion, but exploring its relation to poverty shows the relational dimension of both and emphasises the specific conditions of people's social participation. It is therefore important to note that the concept of poverty in this analysis is understood as *a structural situation facing different subjects, mediated through power relations, and as a life condition characterised through absence or insufficient consumption of collective and individual goods and services (health, education, work, etc.), but above all of institutional consumption, understood as the exercise of rights and institutional transactions of the State*. This situation and life condition, based on power relations and social norms, produces and is confirmed by situations of exclusion, in which inequality, inequity and discrimination show clearly the dynamics of poverty, and the conditions and situations under which poverty becomes chronic.

In our analysis of social exclusion, a very important concept is that of a particular social actor's ***institutional consumption***. This focuses attention on people's condition as citizens in terms of the realisation of their rights and responsibilities, and their participation in the construction of society and State. In particular, the pilot project implemented by the Consortium sought to make social exclusion visible through the participation of different groups, from isolated and marginalised areas, in the electoral process of June 2002.

This "institutional consumption" starts from the recognition of the right to identity, as a basic prerequisite to begin legally one's participation in the established social order, as well as a conscious and transparent participation in the electoral process⁶.

The relation between poverty and social exclusion cannot be seen as a one-sided process; while poverty produces exclusion, the social exclusion faced by people who live in a situation of informality or illegality, through their lack of documentation and clear relations with the State and the political class, tends to lead to impoverishment. In many cases, such exclusion also forms a barrier to overcoming one's state of poverty, making this chronic.

As an example, consider the case of an indigenous Quechua from Northern Potosí, who does not have legalised documentation because the Civil Registry Office has lost the civil register in which he was inscribed. Without an identity document, he cannot show that he is the owner of the plot of land that he works, and this legal insecurity means he cannot access agricultural micro credit programmes, including those aimed at supporting the poorest small farmers. As a result, he is not able to buy the seeds to make up for the loss of seeds and inputs from the previous season's drought, or the low levels of productivity and fertility of his land, and so is unable to meet the survival needs of his large family of seven children. He is thus forced to migrate to the peri-urban area of Cochabamba, to sell his labour. Without documentation and marginalized as an "indian"⁷, his possibilities of getting stable work are reduced. He now faces a situation of over-exploitation in the informal sector, as a porter waiting for a housewife who requires his services. In addition, his precarious situation forces his children to beg on public transport and his wife to beg in the street.

Or consider an indigenous woman, illiterate, a migrant and a single mother; or a young migrant, monolingual⁸ and with clear indigenous features; or an older person without professional training, without a job, and without formally legal ownership of their land or housing; or an indigenous person without access to natural resources (land,

⁶ The development of an indicator to measure such institutional consumption remains a challenge, but this is an important area on which focus future thinking, as a complement to more traditional but limited indicators of human development, such as HDI.

⁷ "Indio" is a term of abuse or disrespect for those who are (or even often those who appear to be) of indigenous origin

⁸ i.e. she does not speak Spanish

water, forest resources) and without legalised territory; a mestizo⁹ without social relations with the elite; or a relocated miner, with many children, without property (housing, land) and suffering from illness caused by his work in the mine; or a homosexual, without a job or education.

These examples above reflect different dimensions of exclusion within the social network, with a common key factor in their condition and situation of excluded citizenship, which displaces these subjects to the informal sectors, and in some cases, to illegal occupations.

4. Exclusion and the Lack of Documentation

Those without documentation (referred to hereafter as the undocumented) face a situation of illegality for which they are not responsible. There are a series of obstacles in the administrative system that do not allow them to access state services and so inhibits the full realisation of their rights. This lack of documentation facing many poor people leads to further impoverishment, as their exclusion from identification services means they cannot exercise other rights. Examples of such impediments in exercising rights from lack of documentation are mentioned here below, from experiences among the excluded that were collected during the project:

- They cannot register their children, thus continuing the chain of lack of documentation.
- If their parents lack documentation, children cannot get a birth certificate, and so face difficulties in inscription to primary or secondary schools.
- They cannot travel freely within the country. At any police or army control point, they risk being detained or arrested during routine controls. This happens most frequently to the undocumented who live in zones of drug-related militarised control, such as the tropical area of Cochabamba.
- They cannot travel freely with their younger children, as the police may take them away from them until they can prove their paternity (this is even more likely if the child has a slightly lighter skin than their darker parents).
- It is difficult, if not impossible, for an undocumented community leader to get a formal community leadership position, particularly if they are illiterate, as their lack of documentation would make it impossible to negotiate official proceedings or projects for their community.
- They cannot legalise the status of their property (land, housing) in public registries.
- They are not able to produce a certificate for the sale of cattle, which is required if the buyer wishes to take the animals out of the community.
- The search for formal work faces huge obstacles. Paradoxically, even the Temporary Work Plan organised by the Government (PLANE), with its explicit target population of the extreme poor, requires a valid identity card as a prerequisite for inscription into the programme.
- They are not able to access a loan in a micro-finance scheme, even from those programmes designated for the extreme poor.
- They are unable to initiate legal proceedings, nor take on their own legal defence when sued.
- Paradoxically, they cannot access social benefits aimed at the “poorest”, such as Bonosol, the old age pension. An example might be an indigenous Yuqui born in a remote area (and he is unaware of which political unit this belongs to), who furthermore does not know the date and year of his birth, because he is unaware of western delimitations of time. He will therefore find it impossible to get an identity card, let alone benefits for older people.
- The undocumented do not have legal access to natural resources, for example titling of collective lands: a prerequisite for Titling of TCOs¹⁰ is the presentation of the demand by the indigenous people with the names and identity numbers of all the beneficiaries, something which is much more difficult when more than 50% of the population lacks documentation.
- They face difficulties when receiving mail packages or remittances sent in their name.

⁹ Those of mixed descent from indigenous and Spanish

¹⁰ “Tierras Comunitarias de Origen” i.e. Communal Land of Origin, a legal designation of the 1996 “Ley INRA”, which provides for the communal titling of legally recognized TCOs to indigenous groups through their representative organisations.

- They cannot participate in the democratic process, not as voters and even less as candidates.

These effects of lacking documentation are aggravated when diverse factors and conditions of exclusion come together, perpetuating the situation. For example, the condition of a small farmer household living in poverty is worsened by limited access to public services, difficult access to information, discrimination and low levels of education, among other factors, making it all the more difficult to get out of this situation of exclusion – clearly linking lack of documentation to chronic poverty.

Factors Aggravating and/or Perpetuating Exclusion

Factors	Conditions
Poverty	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exclusion ratifies extreme poverty, and confirms vicious circles from which the extremely poor cannot escape • More than 56% of the population of Bolivia is considered poor (76% of whom are from rural areas) • 91% of the population surveyed by the project do not have proper identification documents and hence cannot enjoy their citizens' rights
Limited access to public services, which are theoretically accessible to everyone	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poor populations do not have access to institutional spaces nor public services: health and education infrastructures are deficient or non-existent; access to public services is made difficult due to long distances; and the demand for services is underdeveloped due to lack of information
Information problems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mass media do not reach excluded populations • Government information is not adapted to cultural and regional particularities • The public is not informed of their citizens' rights
Patronage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Powerful intermediaries manipulate needs and local demands, and condition enjoyment of citizens' rights
Cultural diversity and social complexity of poor populations are legally recognised, but none of these concepts have been operationalised.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The pluri-ethnic and multicultural nature of Bolivia's society is acknowledged in the first article of Bolivia's constitution. However, the excluded perceive a wide gap between rhetoric and practice • It is difficult for these different groups to meet the prerequisites to acquire an identification document, a crucial step towards recognition as a citizen
Discrimination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On ethnic, racial, gender, cultural, regional and generational grounds. There are also forms of inter-ethnic discrimination
Public spaces for the exercise of rights	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Particularly youth and older people face a total absence of spaces for free discussion
Absence of spaces for deliberation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Absence of continuous spaces to deliberate with elected politicians, authorities and public representatives
Limited capacity for negotiation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A deep-rooted and well-accepted culture of patronage weakens institutional capacities to negotiate in favour of excluded populations
Lack of citizens' education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Insufficient development and adaptation of contents and tools for citizens' education
Bureaucracy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tensions among various government entities concerning their respective institutional competencies
Corruption	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Viewed as a two-way process that equally engages public officers who receive and citizens who offer bribes. Corruption is profoundly embedded in the country's "culture" and commonly seen as a normal phenomenon
Deficient training and information among governmental bodies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public officials are not prepared to deal with cultural complexity, e.g. civil registers have arbitrarily assigned family names to individuals from ethnic groups who have no tradition in patrilineal succession. As a result of this, persons who are not at all relatives bear the same family names imposed on them for the sake of acquiring an identification card
Institutional weaknesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited equipment and facilities of government agencies whose mandate is to promote rights • Dissatisfaction and low motivation among public officials • Public office is not widely considered a true career

Source: Final Report of Consortium Project "Towards an inclusive elections process", 2002

4.1 Causes of Undocumentation

The dramatic findings of the problems faced by the undocumented, both in terms of their severity and their magnitude, require a review of the structural barriers that cause this situation of legal insecurity or lack of recognition of the right to be a legally recognised citizen. These include:

- The Spanish system of personal identification leads to discrepancies with diverse ethnic groups in Bolivia, which undermine the Constitution of the State, which declares Bolivia as a pluricultural and multi-ethnic nation¹¹. The tradition of the ethnic groups from the inhabited areas of the north and east of the lowlands in Bolivia did not include surnames until 1930, and some ethnic groups do not recognise surnames to this day. For example, many groups, such as the Ayoreos and Sirionos, have a matrilineal form of accession, which is incompatible with the logical sequence of surnames from fathers to sons in the Spanish model. As couples frequently separate, the children of a mother are more related with the current couple than with their biological father. In other cases, such as those of the Chimanos and Yuracares from Beni Department, a change of name occurs at three events in one's life: at birth, after traditional marriage and after the birth of one's first child, which is incompatible with the Spanish identification system. Moreover, many ethnic groups have complained that Civil Registry officials have forced them to adopt Spanish names and surnames, instead of their own names, which in some cases are difficult to spell or write down. The result is that people are officially registered with the same surname as other people from their village, without there being any relationship between them.
- None of the prerequisites for registering people (certificate of live birth from the Ministry of Health, vaccination card, certificate of baptism, marriage certificate of the parents) are viable for the population (indigenous or originarios¹²) who come from remote and disperse regions. Due to insufficient coverage of health posts and health promoters, Ministry of Health staff are not able to register newly born babies or those they vaccinate. Baptism certificates are not widespread because not all ethnic groups are catholic and due to the distances between rural communities and the nearest church. Cultural practices to mark couples coming together are often not based on marriage contracts, but rather on forms of cohabitation.
- Given the incompatibility between the formal system of identification and cultural practices, parents have not been able to overcome their situation of lack of documentation, which tends then to be multiplied to their children and grandchildren, perpetuating a form of inter-generational lack of documentation.
- The long distances between rural communities and Civil Registry offices make it difficult to fulfil the requirement of the Civil Registry Law (of 1898) that newborns should be inscribed within eight days of birth (compare this with the 42 days that are allowed in England). After this deadline, inscription in civil registers and obtaining a birth certificate can only be carried out through a legal process.
- Another source of problems are the minor discrepancies of information in the Civil Registry books. For example, the date of birth, place of birth, difference of one letter in the surname, minor differences in names, erasures or hand-written corrections (that are forbidden by law) in either given name, family name, date or place of birth, etc. This is closely related to the capacities of Civil Registry officials (who often have low levels of education) and their own relations with the State; despite being named by the National Electoral Court, they are not considered public officials, and so the Court cannot sanction them when - beyond such errors of detail - they have recourse to extortion, raising further the costs of their services or putting obstacles in the way of the documentation process.

The causes mentioned above show the normative complexity of the process, which is not able to capture the socio-economic, cultural and regional diversity of Bolivian society. This is combined with the lack of articulation of competencies and jurisdictions of the different bodies of the State apparatus, and the excessive bureaucratisation and complexity that accompanies the steps required to start exercising one's basic citizen's rights, such as the

¹¹ Article N° 1 of the Constitution, refers to Bolivia as "sovereign, pluricultural and multiethnic"

¹² According to UNICEF, the indigenous peoples of Bolivia are composed of originarios and indigenous peoples. The indigenous peoples live in the Lowlands in the Amazon region and the Eastern Chaqueño region, while the originarios live in the Highlands, in the Altiplano region and in the Valleys. Together they represent a population of 4.1 million and 37 different peoples.

right to a name and identity. All of these elements generate – and highlight clearly – the deficient institutional relationship between people and the State.

The table on the following two pages shows the steps that have to be followed to acquire full legal recognition, and clearly demonstrates the complexity of the whole process, and the costs involved.

SUMMARY OF THE PERSONAL DOCUMENTATION SITUATIONS^{13/}

Status of the individual	Implications in terms of citizens' rights	Steps & Procedures to undertake	Complications	Costs ¹⁴
All documents in order, i.e.: a. Inscription in Civil Register, with all data correct; AND b. possesses a Birth Certificate (paper copy); AND c. <i>ID card</i> (Identification Card) obtained for the first time; AND d. <i>ID card</i> renewed every 6 years (hence, not expired) AND e. inscription in Electoral Register	Full enjoyment of citizens' rights, however, only applicable to 9% of persons in the Consortium 's database			
One or more problems, i.e.				
1. No inscription in Civil Register within the maximum period established by the Civil Register ^{15/}	Lives as an undocumented, prevented from realising their citizens' rights	1.a. Apply under the government's special, for-free programme ^{16/} , the coverage of which is limited to 88 local offices of the Civil Register 1.b. Comply with Prerequisites ^{18/} below, then follow 1.c.: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Proven documentation of both parents + certificate of civil marriage, issued by Civil Register; AND o Ministry of Health certificate of live birth; OR o Certificate of baptism; OR o (in some Civil Register offices only) vaccination card 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The special programme only applies to children born in 2002, in areas covered by 88 Civil Register offices, i.e., 19 in departmental capitals and 69 rural offices^{17/} • The child's biological father is not willing to formally recognise his parenthood. • Parents don't have their documents in order. • Parents have no certificate of civil marriage • Child born out of the legal marriage. • The specific record cannot be located in the Ministry's registers • Child was never baptised due to long distance or non-existence of parish • Vaccination card lost or never issued 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Travel to Civil register office: US\$ 10 – 40

¹³ The cases listed in this table, taken from the Final Report of "Towards an inclusive elections process" project, 2002 assume that the undocumented have decided to acquire their ID card. Problems related to cultural barriers and incompatibility are mentioned in the narrative but not in this table

¹⁴ For reference, the exchange rate for Bolivian Pesos (Bs.) in September 2002 was US\$ 1.00 = Bs. 7.35

¹⁵ The Civil Register Law (dated 1898) establishes that newborns have to be inscribed within 8 days after birth; in practice, administrative instructions to local Register offices have provided some flexibility in this, up to one month.

¹⁶ The National Electoral Court, UNICEF and the National Direction of Identification (of the National Police) have taken the lead on this experimental programme; in a first trial phase, the Bolivian government has assigned approximately US\$280,000 to pay salaries of the programme's employees.

¹⁷ In order to expand this programme to a national level, and extend its coverage to children under age 18 (instead of those born in 2002 as is the case of the current trial programme), the Bolivian government will have to invest approx. US\$ 1.5 million.

¹⁸ Bolivia's Parliament is currently discussing new legislation that would modify the Civil Register Law to the benefit of the excluded. The proposed modification declares that inscription in Civil Register and issuance of birth certificates will be for free, and creates flexibility in case of missing identification documents of the child's parents; in the latter case, two relatives or neighbours, or a municipal authority can testify the existence of a child, in lieu of submitting the parents' documents. The endeavour to modify the Civil Register Law is headed by the National Electoral Court, UNICEF and the National Direction of Personal Identification of the National Police. The Consortium has contributed to surfacing the issue of the undocumented in Bolivia as a priority theme and its field data have supported these institutions to make a stronger case before parliament.

Status of the individual		Implications in terms of citizens' rights	Steps & Procedures to undertake	Complications	Costs ¹⁴
			1.c. Judicial lawsuit to request inscription in Civil Register, then follow 3. ^{19/}	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Travel to departmental capital to initiate lawsuit; lawyer services often required due to complicated procedure. Average time: 3 months; Presence of the incumbent required on 2-3 occasions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Procedure cost: US\$60-80 Lawyer services US\$20-50 At least two journeys to departmental capital: US\$ 80-200
Civil Register (residing under Electoral Court) in charge	2. Inscription in Civil Register (hand-written or typed text in books) contains erasures or minor spelling errors	Lives as an undocumented, prevented from realising their citizens' rights	2. Administrative lawsuit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Travel to departmental capital to initiate and follow lawsuit; lawyer services often required due to complicated procedure. Average time: 1-2 months 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Procedure cost: US\$ 5 -10 At least two journeys to departmental capital: US\$ 80-200
	3. Inscription in Civil Register is correct, but incumbent does not possess a paper copy of the Birth Certificate		3. Request a copy of Birth Certificate in the Civil Register office of corresponding departmental capital (1-2 days), then follow 4. or 5.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Travel to departmental capital 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Procedure cost: US\$ 10-15 (includes telegram to the Register office where the child had been inscribed)
4. Inscription in Civil Register is correct, incumbent possesses a Birth Certificate, but no ID card.	Collect original Birth Certificate; THEN, go to the departmental direction of the National Police and request <i>ID card</i> (1-2 days, cost Bs. 17) OR: wait for a rural brigade of the National Police's identification division to visit his/her community		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Travel to and lodging in departmental capital The rural police brigade may take several years to attend a particular community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Travel and lodging: US\$20-200 Travel and lodging: US\$20-200 	
National Police (Direction of Personal Identification) in charge	5. Possesses an expired ID card		Renew <i>ID card</i> with the National Police	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Travel to and lodging in departmental capital 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Travel and lodging: US\$20-200 Procedure cost: US\$ 3 –12
	6. Possesses a RUN	All RUNs expired Dec 2002 and cannot be renewed	Start process at stage 1., 2., 3., 4. or 5., dependent on status of birth certificate, parents' documents, etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dependent on which stage of the process is the starting point (1. – 5.), all aforementioned complications apply 	
	7. Possesses a forged ID card	In practice, full enjoyment, but considerable risk of being discovered and captured	Obtain a legal <i>ID card</i> , starting the process at stage 1., 2., 3., 4. or 5., dependent on status of birth certificate, parents' documents, etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dependent on which stage of the process is the starting point (1. – 5.), all aforementioned complications apply 	
	8. Possesses a military identification card only	Partially entitled: entitled to cast a vote in elections; in practice, can receive mail packages, but not cash a bank cheque	Obtain a legal <i>ID card</i> , starting the process at stage 1., 2., 3., 4. or 5., dependent on status of birth certificate, parents' documents, etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dependent on which stage of the process is the starting point (1. – 5.), all aforementioned complications apply 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">

¹⁹ The proposed new legislation, mentioned in the previous footnote, also simplifies the judicial procedure and eliminates the need for lawyers to intervene on behalf of third persons

If we add to this complexity the processes of discrimination of those who are socially, racially or economically different, it is easy to understand why Bolivian society is fragmented, informalised and exclusive.

4.2 The extent of the problem of undocumented

After the last Census, there have been various estimates of the proportion of people without documents, by different state bodies and NGOs, including that drawn up by the Consortium. The National Census of 2001 shows that between 7.33% and 9.58% of the national population is not registered in the Civil Registries, and so is undocumented. If we consider other documents required for full documentation, such as the identity card, then this percentage would be significantly higher. For example, reports from the National Direction of Personal Identification consider that the figure for undocumented (people without an identity card, which would be required to make them fully documented) could be as high as 20% or 25%, a figure which would increase if we take into account the population with in 1996 were registered with the RUN (see footnote 2 above), or roughly 1 million inhabitants: as this document lost validity in 2002, these people are now in an uncertain situation with regards to their documentation.

Overall, these estimates reflect a range of between 750,000 and 2 million Bolivian citizens throughout the country (8–20% of the country's population) who face incomplete registers or do not possess a valid identification card. The unknown number of citizens who carry an expired identity card makes the number of “functionally” undocumented even larger.

The information gathered by the Consortium showed that of a total of 26,418 inhabitants of 618 rural and peri-urban communities, from the highlands and lowlands of Bolivia, **just 9% had their personal documentation in order, while 91% were facing documentation problems**, ranging from not having any personal documents to not having their situation regularised or with errors that make it invalid. One of the consequences is that these citizens were not able to vote in the national elections of June 2002. But the practical impediments to living without a valid identity card extend much further than this, as explained above.

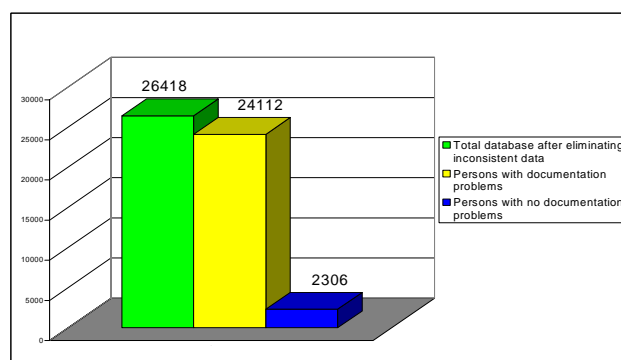


Figure #1: Consortium 's database: persons with and without documentation problems

The database further reveals that 55% of interviewees did not have a Birth Certificate, hence were not enrolled in civil registers and, formally, do not exist. If these people want to acquire a valid identification card in order to enjoy their citizen's rights, they have to start at the very first step of the tedious and expensive chain of judicial processes which, due to lack of knowledge, makes them subjects of extortion or bribes.

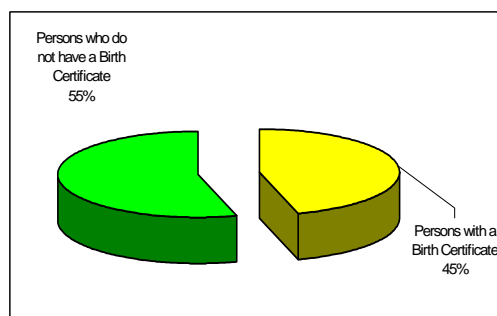


Figure #2: Persons with and without Birth Certificate

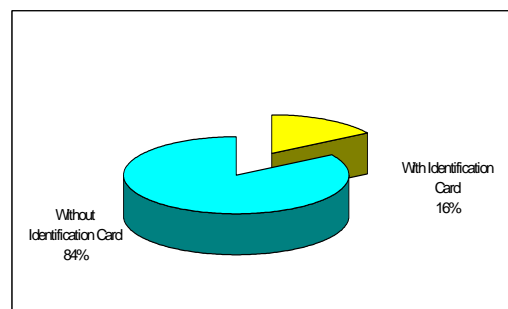


Figure #3: Persons with/without ID card

These figures together depict the following stratification within the database of 26,418 people:

- 9% of people surveyed have all documents in order, i.e. they are inscribed in the Civil Register with all data correct, possess a Birth Certificate and a valid identification card and are inscribed in the Electoral Registers.
- 55% of surveyed persons have no birth certificate; this group is composed of three categories:
 1. Those who are not inscribed in any Civil Registers and thus do not exist as citizens.
 2. Those whose data are correctly inscribed in the Civil Registers but have no paper copy of their certificate (which is relatively easy to resolve); and
 3. Those whose inscription in Civil Registers contains erasures or minor spelling errors, which the incumbents will usually not discover until their Civil Register data are checked by the National Police.
- Those who possess a birth certificate, but no valid identity card and face some type of problem or irregularity:
 1. The person has a birth certificate that is backed by Civil Register data containing erasures or spelling errors;
 2. The person has a birth certificate, backed by correct data, but no identification card;
 3. The person possesses an expired identity card;
 4. The person possesses a RUN card;
 5. The person possesses a forged identity card; or
 6. The person possesses only a military carnet.
 - Since 16% of surveyed persons responded that they have an identification card, but only 9% considers that their documents are in order, the subtotal of people with expired identity cards, RUN cards and forged identity cards amounts to 7% of the survey sample.

Of this 16% that possess an identity ID card, significantly more were men than women (59% compared with 41%). Regarding possession of birth certificates, gender differences are minor, and the proportion of men and women who do not have a certificate or identification card is almost equal, see figure xxx. However, one gender-discriminating mechanism that frequently goes unnoticed is the military carnet that most boys obtain after completing military service. Although not as powerful as an identity card, a military carnet does entitle the bearer to enrol in the voters' register, and is generally accepted as valid for working in informal enterprises, receiving packages from bus companies, etc.

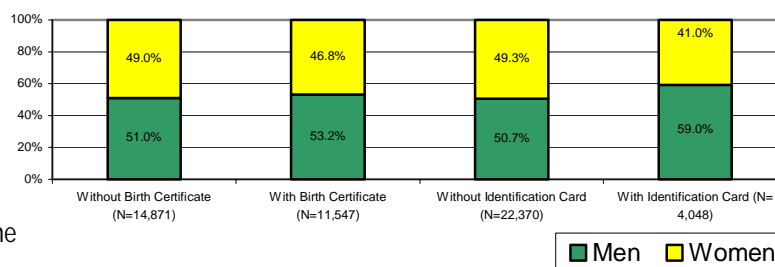


Figure #4: Possession of Birth Certificates and Identification Cards, disaggregated by gender

In terms of location, rural populations (mostly indigenous and small farmer households) are most disadvantaged: 60% of people living in rural lowlands do not possess a birth certificate and 83% have no identification card. Even more dramatic levels can be seen in specific indigenous groups, such as the Chimanes of Beni department, 90% of whom have no personal documentation at all, or

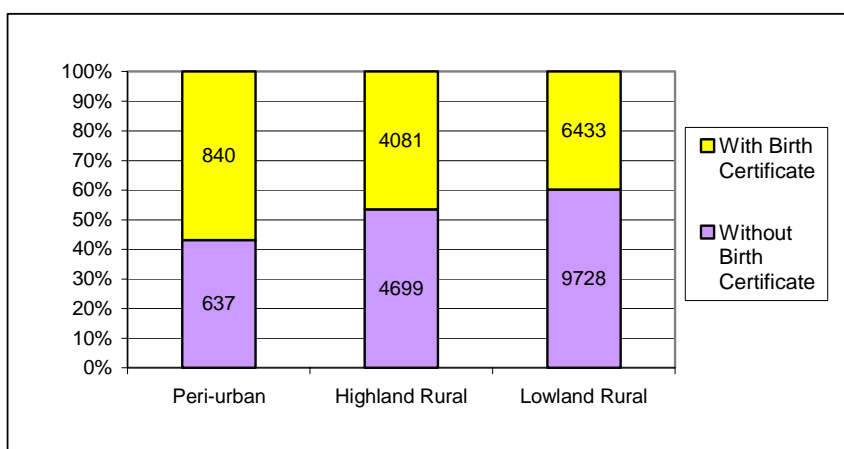


Figure #5: Proportion of persons with and without Birth Certificates, disaggregated by geographic region

the Yuqui in Cochabamba, where such figures reach 98%. In the rural highlands, 52% have no birth certificate and 88% have no identification card, while 43% of those in peri-urban areas have no birth certificate and, surprisingly, only 15% lives without an identification card.

Some lowland ethnic groups face additional cultural barriers forcing them to adapt to laws that contradict their traditional beliefs. For instance, the Guaraníes resist having fingerprints taken because they believe that their soul will escape from the body and stay with the fingerprint. Or the Yuquis, who only have a name but no surname, have been forced to adopt western surnames, a clear lack of recognition only of their cultural form of identification.

5. Social exclusion and institutional capital

Social exclusion is conditioned by economic and social variables, as well as political and cultural variables that are generally not considered when analysing the interactions between social capital, financial capital and human capital. We therefore think it crucial to highlight the role of **institutional capital**²⁰, which each citizen can access and/or of which they are part.

Institutional capital is formed by the quality of transactions, agreements and consensus reached by individuals as part of their social and economic investment, both between themselves and with the State, to formalise, legalise and legitimise a social order. This social order, which should through its structure regulate, oversee, control and strengthen the State, manifests itself through the transactions between civil society and the State, generating mutual recognition as part of a social contract and the formation of a political community. Institutional capital is also formed by the set of norms, rules and laws that are in use (Ostrom, 1992), and which manifest themselves in the forms and conditions under which people undertake their economic, social, cultural and political activities vis-à-vis the State. Other forms of non-legal institutional capital include those that groups of people develop within political communities that are not recognised by the State, or within other social groups, that may be legitimate but are not legal.

The Consortium found different situations where we can see a crossover between categories that determine the location of social actors within the social network of poverty. These categories are related above all to people's institutional consumption, which, as indicated above, starts with legal recognition of an individual's legal status to acquire the category of citizen, through the identity card.

In order for an individual in Bolivia to be fully documented, they need to have an identity card, and for this, they need a Birth Certificate, a document that legalises their existence (and the military carnet, in the case of men). But access to a birth certificate requires other documents that demonstrate their origin or relationship, such as: the certificate of live birth, which is difficult when there is no health post near a community; the baptism certificate, which is only available to Catholics, who can get easily to a church; the marriage certificate of the parents, which those who only live together informally cannot obtain.

The limitations on acquiring such legal status for those living in poverty deepen the multiple dimensions of discrimination or inequality faced by people who are already excluded, in terms of their access to the institutions and policies of the state. In such a situation, it is difficult to establish institutional relations to exit from poverty without recourse to corruption or informal/illegal livelihood options. In this sense, lack of documentation is clearly related to chronic poverty, as defined either in its temporal or inter-generational sense²¹. If their condition of citizenship is not manifested through a recognised and documented legal existence, such excluded groups are made progressively more and more vulnerable, and this weakens both democracy and the legitimacy of government and its policies.

Consider, for example, the case of a relocated miner who has given up mining, who has no access to social security and has many children. He received a minimum amount of compensation for various years of work, but has no property (house or plot of land) and is suffering from a terminal illness acquired during his years working in inadequate conditions. He also faces problems with his personal documentation (loss of Civil Registry books), and has little if any possibilities of getting back into work. All this means that his situation and that of his children have been steadily made more vulnerable. To get shelter and illegal housing, he chooses, together with group of miners in similar conditions, to invade a piece of land that is in the process of being claimed by a small farmer community. This generates conflicts with the farmers who are waiting for the legal status of their lands to be cleaned up. The miner receives an offer from two political parties to give him his documents if he commits to vote for them in the national elections.

²⁰ This could be considered a combination of social and political capital (which some writers have proposed as the missing element of DFID's livelihoods asset pentagon – see for example, Pari Baumann in 'Sustainable livelihoods and political capital: Arguments and evidence from decentralisation and natural resource management in India'. ODI Working Paper 136)

²¹ See, for example, Hulme and Shepherd (2001) Conceptualizing Chronic poverty

This situation of the excluded, with their deficit of institutional capital, not only provokes a distorted relation with the State, but also leads to them forming part of irregular and illegal processes, with very high social and cultural costs for all of society, in terms of economic growth and sustainable democratic development. On the other hand, the situation of lack of documentation turns the excluded into second-class citizens, and links them to processes of collective action and mobilisation of excluded groups who adopt a conflictive relation with the State. This leads us to conclude that the greater the lack of social participation and discussion in the make up of institutions, the faster are the processes of exclusion, confirming a political culture of lack of transparency that does not permit a transactional exercise of confidence within the political community. Further, this deficit of institutional capital and social participation of the excluded makes the latter, and their representative organisations, recourse to diverse, and in some cases contradictory, strategies to obtain space for participation, to enable them to change their situation of exclusion.

For example, different indigenous organisations such as CONAMAQ (the Council of Ayllus and Marcas of Qollasuyo) and CIDOB (the Coordinator of Indigenous Peoples of Bolivia) undertook a large-scale march during the national electoral process of 2002, demanding the modification of the Constitution and the incorporation of a Constituent Assembly, as mechanisms for direct participation in decision-making. In doing so, they were questioning the actual political system, which has not been able to include their demands as excluded groups. Parallel to this demand, which was considered as destabilising to democracy and as a risk to the whole electoral process, indigenous and originarios joined together and formed part of programmes and projects that sought to provide basic documents to those at the grassroots level that lacked documentation²², as well as to strengthen the political tools they had to participate within the very political system they were questioning.

Undocumentation makes exclusion a condition that inhibits the proactive articulation of each individual's capitals (or livelihood assets). The interaction of human capital, financial capital and social capital is distorted, creating very high social and cultural costs in terms of their social reproduction.

The capacities of the excluded to mobilise institutional resources are generally bound to their appeal to social capital, understood in this case as the social networks that substitute for a direct exercise of rights, through clientalist practices or exchange of favours, which have (largely unseen) costs. The lack of visibility of such strategies means that the capacities and possibilities of the excluded to influence, modify, renew, assume or question the institutionality of current hegemonic relations are not fully understood. This lack of understanding also sets limits to overcoming exclusion only from the side of the State and neglects the potential human capacities of the excluded themselves to overcome such limitations. It converts poverty reduction strategies into palliative and paternalistic measures, underestimating the cost of maintaining a social capital that is tending to self-exhaustion, the longer an individual's situation of illegality continues.

In such conditions of lack of recognition of the capacities and possibilities of the excluded, they themselves adapt or modify their internal norms to access and participate in State policies, as can be seen in the case of the Yuracares and policies for forest resource management and land titling of territories. To follow the normative arrangements of the state, they have been forced to adapt their own norms of access, their traditional forms of use and exploitation of resources, not to mention how they conceive of time. Their own human capital and knowledge have been undermined through their dependence on external actors to intervene on their behalf (because they lack documentation themselves and have low levels of financial capital). In turn, this has reduced their capacity to establish institutional arrangements with the State, to be able to capture the benefits of state policies and improve their situation of poverty. Seeing no improvement in their poverty, many of the Yuracare have chosen to return to a form of illegal exploitation, putting at risk the exercise of the rights to exploitation of their resources that they have acquired, and converting them into dependent clients of informal mediators, with their own particular interests.

6. Types of the excluded and how they relate to the state

Analysing the experiences of the project led the Consortium to categorise the excluded into three broad groups:

²² As well as revealing the extent of the problem of undocumentation, the project also helped 4,470 people access documentation.

1. The people that are most excluded tended to be monolingual, illiterate, women, older people and those who have low levels of relationships with the local institutional set up. This means they do not participate in the definition of systems of local representation, they do not participate in collective decisions, even when they belong to a local territorial organisation, and they manage their relationships through limited economic transactions in the market, through individual actions that serve to establish minimal or almost non-existent relations with the state norms (i.e. structures, processes and institutions). This is the category within which most of the undocumented fall.
2. A second category is composed of moderately poor, who do actively participate in the institutional fabric and local representation. In comparison with the previous category, they have greater access to material resources, which allows them to maintain multiple contacts and interactions with local authorities. This forces them to incur larger institutional costs for the amount of corrections and clientele transactions that they must perform with different actors.

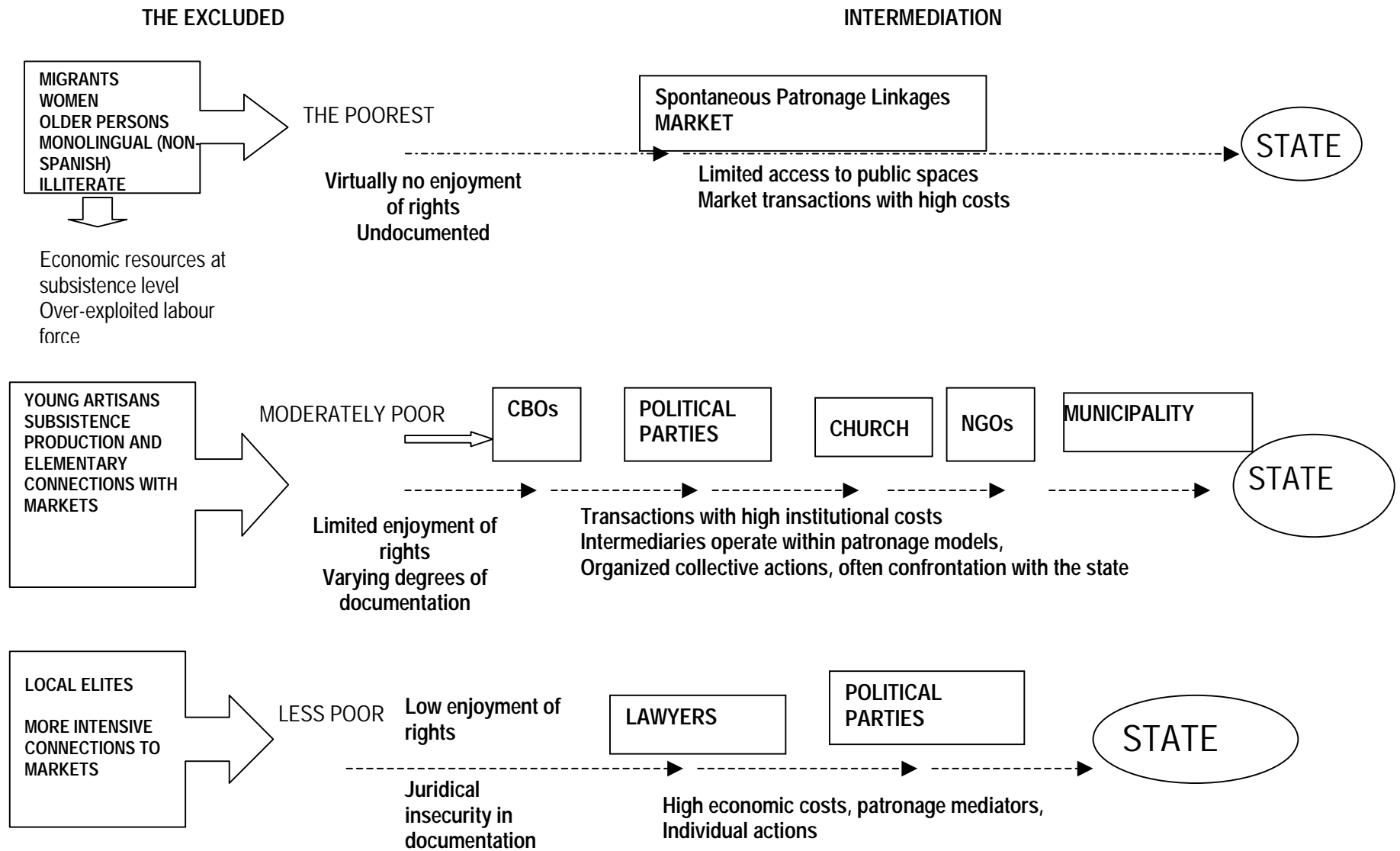
Moreover, this quantity of institutional transactions weakens their capacity for collective negotiation by removing roles and functions from their representatives. At an internal level, it also allows for the reproduction of local norms and values, both cultural and political, that sustain the maintenance of the diversity of socio-political systems at a national level and which are articulated, deficiently, in the construction of a political community, through legitimate (but not legal) strategies and with incipient levels of realisation of human rights. This category is made up of those who, by collective strategies, have achieved some level of documentation.

3. The third category among the excluded is composed of individuals who hold the best options for participation in markets. They are less poor than the previously described, could be considered as the elites among the poor and have limited participation in organisations. Their coping strategies are primarily based on individual access to certain services and articulation with the state. Typically, they relate socially to lawyers and politicians in order to improve their standard of living, generally through individual, not collective action. They may still suffer from discrimination against them, and face different levels of juridical insecurity.

The relations of different groups to the state are outlined in the figure on the following page.

Different Strata within the Excluded, and their Options to Relate to the State

Figure # 6



The disjuncture between social capital and institutional capital, understood as more participatory relations with the state order, produces forms of exclusion that confirm poverty, in that there is a tension between normative ethnic systems that are culturally different to those imposed by the State. It also weakens the process of institutional democratic development, in that the mediations that articulate or separate the undocumented excluded to/from the state tend to create an arena of social relations that still further reduce the capacity of the State to play its regulatory role.

Consider for example the case of an indigenous person whose tradition or whose normative practice does not include the use of surnames from both maternal and paternal sides (or for whom the notion of surname does not exist in his or her community). When the law of the state asks for his or her identification, giving two surnames and demonstrating the identity of his or her parents, the indigenous person has the option of either inventing a name or not obtaining their documentation, given the financial costs of the procedures involved or the cultural costs that such a decision implies. In inventing a name, he or she is weakening their system of local inheritance and their system of belonging and possession of material and immaterial goods. This local level problem influences the national political system, since the fragility of the individual's identity reduces their possibilities of realising their human and political rights – and should they exercise them, they are doing so from an irregular basis.

To quote from a recent paper prepared for the Development Research Centre on Citizenship, Participation and Accountability (Kabeer, 2002): *“How people define themselves and how they are defined by others is thus critical to their ability to act as agents, including their ability to participate in political action to press for, and claim, their rights. One key question that research for the construction of inclusive forms of citizenship might address is that of the processes by which marginalised groups defined themselves, and are defined by others, and the extent to which these definitions are significant in their subordinate status.”*²³

The need to articulate different institutional capitals or understand the forms in which people articulate them, through their livelihoods strategies, to avoid chronic poverty or - in extreme cases – even ethnocide, are subject matters that need further study, but we would argue that they start in a process of identification which at first sight seems almost routine and simple. These reflections and experiences from the field work of the Consortium allow us to suggest the need to incorporate the variable of institutional consumption in the treatment of poverty reduction, in terms of institutional capital and its relations with financial, social and human capitals, in the cracks between which is produced social exclusion and the bottle-necks to poverty reduction. This needs to start from a broadening of citizens' participation from different perspectives, including those of culture, region and gender.

While the process of personal identification is only a first step in institutional consumption and participation, in cases where people are excluded on the grounds of skin colour, gender, differences of culture, region, language, customs, knowledge or physical isolation, undocumented represents not only the absence of such groups from the make up of society, and their stigmatisation, but it also reproduces and perpetuates poverty, and makes it chronic.

7. Social exclusion and the electoral process of 2002.

We can see clearly the relation between exclusion and governability through an analysis of the electoral processes in Bolivia. Within the democratic process, while rates of absenteeism and absentionism have been reduced in elections in recent years, there is clear evidence that the high levels of undocumented are acting as a significant shackle to the exercise of true democracy.

According to data from INE (the National Institute of Statistics) there were 4,689,172 people over 18 in 2002, while the National Electoral Court states on its web site²⁴ that its electoral rolls include a total of 4,155,055 Bolivian

²³ IDS Working Paper 171. Interestingly, there is no mention in this paper of the problem of people lacking documentation, nor indeed have we been able to come across any published analysis of the relation of undocumented to social exclusion and/or poverty, except in cases of countries emerging from conflict (e.g. Guatemala, where civil registries were burnt down during the armed conflict) or for internally displaced peoples and returning refugees (e.g. Colombia). This is clearly an area where much further research is required.

²⁴ <http://www.cne.org.bo>

citizens who are able to vote. This would mean a total of 11.39% of the population above 18 (534,117 citizens) was not registered to vote and so could not participate in the national election. This does not include the rate of absenteeism, of 27.44%²⁵.

From a proportional estimate, combining the figures of absenteeism reported by the National Electoral Court of 11.22% and the data from the National Census of 2001, which considered that that 7% of the population eligible to vote was not inscribed in the civil registers (in other words, undocumented – as mentioned in section 4.2 above), we can infer that for over 60% of the population that is not inscribed in the electoral rolls, this is due to their lack of personal documentation. However, these figures are likely to increase if we take into account the fact that the electoral registers have not been cleaned up for many years and are likely to have the names of people who are dead or people whose personal details appear twice.

The Consortium's surveys of 26,418 people found a staggering 91% (24,110 persons) who were categorised as undocumented for not having their full documentation, or not having any documentation. If we just consider those aged over 18 years of age, 87% of those who gave their age and were over 18 years of age were not eligible to vote in the 2002 Elections for documentation reasons (12,061 of 13,864).

If such a high percentage of people is not able to participate in the electoral process, we can assume that rates of absenteeism are larger than those reported in official figures. The way that documentation problems tend to pass down to future generations, given the difficulties of registering a child if the parents lack documentation, such problems will continue to exacerbate the significantly negative effect on the democratic process in future elections.

Given such weakness in governability and the capacity of the State to impact on social exclusion and its causes, further analysis is needed on aspects of social exclusion not related to the State, through institutional transactions that enable the excluded to exercise their rights and form part of the social contract - themselves necessary to achieve real reduction of chronic poverty - and on pro-poor policy changes that make a difference.

8. The costs of social exclusion for governability and chronic poverty

The costs of exclusion are expressed in the delegitimisation of governability, which is in turn necessary for the development of democracy and development with equity. The phenomenon of exclusion leads to a political culture of lack of participation and hegemonic leadership. Various authors have described the clientalist, patrimonial and rent seeking system that characterises politics in Bolivia. The political culture or style, and the means used to undertake politics in Bolivia, strongly influence the country's poverty reduction strategy. Furthermore, through being linked to forms of exclusion, this political culture itself plays a role in reproducing poverty, and so deepening it and making it a more chronic phenomenon.

We can see this, for example, in Rosalind Eyben's reflections on the Bolivian PRSP and the National Dialogue process undertaken in 2000. While this dialogue considered local government and more dynamic civil society groups, it was much harder to effectively include the poor, particularly women and indigenous groups, and the process itself did not take advantage of the extensive experience in participatory methodologies existing in Bolivia (Eyben in *Econoticiasbolivia*, 2002). All this is reflective of the low pro-poor focus of the PRSP.

Despite important advances in the system of political representation, which opened up doors to political participation of groups that were historically excluded, such as indigenous peoples, their influence as minority groups in parliamentary decision-making remains weak. Political mediation remains largely conducted through the cultivation of clientalist relations, rent seeking behaviour and patrimonial linkages, with different elite groups managing to hold onto power for more than a century. Patrimonial practices exclude subjects who are not considered possible clients, such as the undocumented, or are used (in some cases) to promote strategies for obtaining documentation that are at the margins of the law. Such political practices are unsustainable when

²⁵ Of the 4,155,055 registered in the electoral rolls, 2,994,065 people voted in the elections of 2002, including 130,685 blank votes (4.36% of total votes) and 84,572 nullified votes (2.82%).

parties gain control of the state apparatus, as the opportunities to satisfy clientalist expectations from government are insufficient to meet expectations. How these opportunities are managed tends in turn to lead to dissatisfaction among clients, progressively delegitimising the political regime. Such delegitimation is also fuelled by the silence – and so acquiescence – of those who do not qualify as clients.

In the project's fieldwork in the period prior to the June 2002 elections, a series of meetings were promoted between the political class, from different parties, with the communities where we worked. The first reaction from the political class was one of fear that greater awareness of their rights would enable people to transform the political map. On the other side, some people questioned whether they had the right to have these rights, such as formal questioning, dialogue, the right to information and to choose their candidates. Many people had never participated in any electoral event, let alone had met politicians face to face. In many cases, their political participation had been negotiated by intermediaries, who would in effect manage the votes of the semi-documented, exploiting the lack of knowledge on electoral procedures and systems, and thus discrediting the whole electoral process.

As a Guaraní leader from the Department of Tarija said following such an event: "this opens a new path for us; now that we understand our rights, they can't get away with anything". People also talked of their fear and rejection of fulfilling certain responsibilities towards the State, because they were unaware or simply because they were not exercising their rights.

But despite such small advances, a large segment of the population will not be able to vote in the next elections, partly because they still lack documentation, but above all because exclusive political systems and practices remain; those few indigenous representatives who were elected as a parliamentary minority will find it exceptionally hard to overcome the daily manoeuvres of the skilled political operators of the major parties. The promotion of equity within diversity remains a huge challenge.

After the violent conflicts between State and civil society in the first two months of 2003, leaving 45 dead in its wake, parliamentarians of the main opposition party (made up of representatives of peasants and indigenous peoples) requested the National Congress to summon the Ministries of the ruling Government for questioning, for their responsibility in these deaths. They were however defeated, given the official party's dominance in the Congress. While getting discussion of the need to question Ministers onto the Congressional agenda, after various sessions of debate, was a significant achievement for excluded groups who have had little voice up to now, there remains the huge challenge of how to overcome exclusive political practices, such as the use of the Government coalition's majority to "steamroller²⁶" proposals through Congress, which inhibit real debate of issues or the participation of minority groups, thus reducing their possibilities of achieving political changes that would reduce their levels of exclusion.

Social exclusion of the undocumented, and of those who have low levels of participation in the development of the institutionality and the formation of political communities, impacts on the crisis of governability (García Linera, 2002, Lazarte, 2003²⁷) that has characterised Bolivian governments in recent years. This is caused by the relation of exchange of political services and goods between the political class and the poor, which sets up a relation of demand and favour, and not a relation of realised rights and recognised rights. In other words, clientalist and rent seeking political practice substitutes for a legitimate realisation of their rights by the poor, through irregular and non-transparent transactions that convert rights into the favours of those in power and the elites. This relation reinforces an attitude of dependence from the poor, demanding favours while at the same time ratifying the power of political elites.

To the degree that their demands cannot be fully met, levels of conflict grow and government is delegitimised, through the loss of confidence among those making demands, thus weakening the authority of the State. At the same time, complex and costly normative processes facing those who try to take their demands to the legal system lead people to lose their confidence in justice.

²⁶ The term used in Bolivia is the "parliamentary roller" (rodillo parlamentario).

²⁷ Jorge Lazarte, Political Analyst and former member of the National Electoral Court, referred in a television interview to the crisis of governability due to the incapacity of government to listen to and involve excluded sectors.

Low levels of awareness of rights and their legitimate exercise, at the level of both the political class and the poor, mean that many of the demands of the poor are considered illegitimate or subversive. These conditions lead to a weakening of the democratic regime, undermining the capacity of governments to build common goods based on an effective recognition of people's rights, and on clear and effective policies that reinforce this political will. The proposal of the Consortium's current work is to start from the transformation of patrimonial favours and dependents of favours, towards a relation of recognition of rights and the fulfilment of rights and responsibilities.

9. Preliminary Conclusions

- There is a clear need for further awareness-raising on the role of discriminatory and exclusive policies and attitudes in confirming poverty and creating structural barriers to the ability of the poorest groups to develop livelihood strategies enable them to make real improvements to their situation. These structural barriers, linked to mechanisms of social exclusion, generate conditions that make poverty chronic in Bolivia.
- Our reflection on our work as the Consortium has shone a light on an important aspect of the nature of Bolivian society, in which social networks understood as part of people's social capital are converted, in many cases, into systems of intermediation which raise the transactional costs with State institutions, making the realisation of civil and political rights as favours to be granted (or not) to the poorest groups. This completely disincentivises the exercise of full citizenship as fulfilment of one's responsibilities towards the State.

Furthermore, the consideration of rights as favours reduces the likelihood of creating a sense of belonging to the political community, weakening policies that are trying to build a common good.

- The enormous complexity of the normative and bureaucratic system means that the State offers the poorest groups few alternatives that would enable them to undertake transactions based on clear interests, and it inhibits and makes less likely for there to be real citizens' participation of whole sectors of poor people living in situations of informality and illegality.

The processes of citizens' exclusion, based on the absence of poor people's institutional consumption, start from the difficulty they face in realising their most primary right: that to an identity, through documentation.

It is vital the true extent and nature of this problem in Bolivia is widely understood, as undocumentedness unleashes a chain of discrimination and systems of informal or illegal nature that weaken democracy by undermining the political system, its representativity and the levels of engagement in it of different communities.

- The articulation of social and economic policies with the political process becomes critical, seeing as how democracy without governability is based on exclusion and poverty. The crisis of governability in Bolivia is generating a loss of authority among the political class and the State, as reflected in the recent mass mobilisations, and the social and political conflicts in the country, as well as the increase in levels of structural violence. All this shows clearly how important it is to take into account the subject of social exclusion and citizenship within poverty reduction strategies, not only to ensure coherent responses to the subject of chronic poverty, but also to strengthen the capacities of the State.
- It is very important that support is given from civil society to initiatives such as that begun by the National Electoral Court, in drawing up a proposal for modifying the Civil Registry Law, strengthening capacities for poor people's access to institutions and identifying bottle-necks to a true reflection of the country's cultural, regional and socio-economic diversity.
- The Consortium proposes to provide the information we have gathered and the wealth of our work experience to the Electoral Court and other bodies, so that the regulatory changes proposed are based on a detailed analysis of the mechanisms of social exclusion and – above all – that people from all groups can truly participate in such processes.

- Exclusion needs to be mainstreamed into poverty reduction strategies, with an indicator of institutional consumption developed as an indicator of exclusion, and some of the members of the Consortium are currently working together with various State bodies to this end.

However, work is also required from the academic sector, to develop concepts and methods adapted to this subject matter of social exclusion and institutional consumption/production, within a framework of diversity and social complexity.

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