

Gulrajani, Nilima

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**Making Global Accountability Street-Smart:
Re-conceptualising Dilemmas and Examining Dynamics**

Nilima Gulrajani

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Nilima Gulrajani¹

Dr Nilima Gulrajani is a lecturer in the Department of Government and Development Studies Institute (DESTIN) at the LSE. Nilima obtained a PhD in Management Studies from Trinity College, Cambridge. Her research examined the impacts of new management practices for the legitimacy and effectiveness of multilateral development organizations.

Before joining the LSE, Nilima completed degrees in Economics and Political Science at McGill University and was a Bill Gates Scholar at the University of Cambridge. She has worked at the Canadian Ministry of Finance, the Global Economic Governance Programme at the University of Oxford and the World Bank.

Ensuring the responsiveness and answerability of trans-national actors in the absence of democratic structures and global political participation is a major pre-occupation for scholars of international relations. While international relations (IR) theory highlights the presence of a global democratic deficit, its prescriptions often assume that the problem of global accountability can be reduced to a series of nested principal-agent relations where agent behavior is motivated by self-interest. These assumptions derive from the rational choice perspective anchored in positivist economics and realist analysis. Yet, these prescriptions are rarely investigated from perspectives that explore the nature of micro-level behavior embedded within the global organisation, or to borrow a turn of phrase from the classic work of public administration scholar Michael Lipsky, the way accountability happens on “the streets” of global bureaucracy.

It is in this sense that this paper aims to underline the importance of making global accountability studies more street-smart. In doing so, it advocates examining questions of global governance from the perspective of public administration, an increasingly important node of cross-disciplinary engagement with international relations.² This statement should not in any way be taken as undermining the value of international relations scholarship to public administration. Nevertheless, for this paper cross-fertilisation of knowledge is accomplished in the reverse direction in two main ways. First, at the level of theory, the standard neo-realist theorisation of the problem of global organisational accountability is re-conceptualised to take into account theories drawn from public administration. In particular, this re-conceptualisation recognises the role of human agency and moral action, variance in reform dynamics and the normative nature of accountability rules. And secondly, cross-disciplinary engagement is undertaken at the level of empirics, where a comparative study of street-level bureaucrats within the World Bank is conducted using hermeneutic approaches to the study of global organisational phenomena. This alternative methodology, and the findings it throws up, lends further support to the theoretical re-conceptualisation advocated in a street-level approach.

There are two main contributions that arise from bringing together international relations scholarship with public administration in order to understand how global governance systems operate at street-level. First, it uncovers alternative kinds of relations, behaviors and dynamics within the international organisation. The reality on the ground appears to be different from what either scholars of accountability in the global realm or scholars of the World Bank as a global institution would predict. This complexity of “street-level” processes in a multi-level organisation operating within a multi-layered global governance system impinges on any and all efforts to improve global accountability. Secondly, street-level dynamics and dilemmas point to remedies distinct from those conventionally prescribed by global governance scholars to improve the World Bank’s accountability. Thus, cross-disciplinary engagement both challenges traditional disciplinary boundaries at the same time as it potentially yields more productive solutions for global accountability.

Theoretical approaches to accountability

The accountability of supra-national institutions is a subject increasingly at the forefront of literatures in international relations.³ While the imprecise character of accountability in this literature is recognised, Ebrahim and Weisband (2007) highlight

a relatively common economic, rationalist and reductionist approach taken to its definition in international relations. Accountability is about principals that “have the right to hold other actors to a set of standards, to judge whether they have fulfilled their responsibilities in light of these standards, and to impose sanctions if they determine that these responsibilities have not been met.”⁴ Accountability is thus a relation that allows states with just power to govern over global actors with obligations towards them. Global organisational behavior beneath the state is a series of nested principal-agent relations characterised by asymmetrical information, bounded rationality and a predisposition on the part of the global actor as agent to maximise individual rewards.⁵ The agency exercised is thus individual, rational and motivated by self-interest.

In this principal-agent conception, the normative dimension of global accountability and global behavior is largely missed. Accountability remains an objective standard of behavior that is adhered to by agents as a result of nested cost-benefit calculations rather than institutional pressures deriving from norms, myths and ideologies operating at the level of the organisational field.⁶ Global pressures to adopt accountability structures, reforms and symbols that mimic domestic state structures are left un-discussed, as are the ways related concerns like legitimacy, survival and cognitive construction can reinforce assimilation and convergent change. While norms may contour social action however, they do not necessarily pre-determine global behavior. Normative pluralism ensures that global action is both embedded at the same time as it is autonomous.⁷ Straddling both the “under-socialised” perspective of action from rational choice economics and “over-socialised” notions from sociology is a conception of global accountability as a pluralistic normative social structure that holds multiple meanings to many actors. Though the search for global accountability aligned with democratic norms may be universal, the possibilities of embedded agency suggest that implementation dynamics may vary greatly, with both unusual and uncertain effects.

Another feature of contemporary global accountability studies is that they tend to concentrate on macro-levels of organisational behavior. Global units subject to empirical analysis are most likely inter-governmental and multilateral organisations at field or board-levels, states, trans-national networks, multinational corporations and international non-governmental organisations.⁸ Kratochwil and Ruggie (1986) trace four analytical epochs that have all sustained this macro-level interest within a rational choice framework.⁹ Studies of micro-level operations, role-sets and behaviors have fallen in and out of favor in tandem with the fortunes of international public administration scholarship itself inside international relations.¹⁰ Even scholars with constructivist leanings who accept the values of studies of process, identity and interest-creation have apologised for scanty attention to individual levels of analysis in accountability scholarship even as they acknowledge the fact that staff within global organisations are important global actors in their own right.¹¹

A realist rational choice approach to the study of international organisations has consequences for the solutions prescribed to resolve the global accountability challenge. Administrative reforms relating to tightening enforcement rules, the imposition of sanctions, greater complaint and response mechanisms and enhancements to transparency are all vehicles that can restrain opportunism by coercing explicit compliance predominantly at the macro-organisational level.¹²

These remedies, whether associated with democratic or non-democratic normative structures¹³, are nonetheless consistent with the materialist, individualist and macro-theories of neorealism. Assumed selfish behavior within nested principal-agent relations results in neutral technical remedies that reduce incentives to shirk by increasing the costs of violation without altering fundamental motivations.¹⁴ The supposition is that actor motivations are exogenous to such policy solutions rather than actively inculcated and cultivated by the reform process itself.¹⁵ And yet, the solutions offered to improve accountability can themselves be important endogenous determinants of actor motivations.¹⁶ Meanwhile, accountability remedies are justified as pragmatic vehicles for efficiently achieving desired outcomes rather than as adaptations to international norms that define what constitutes legitimate organisational design.¹⁷ For sociological institutionalists working in traditions of social constructivism, this misses an understanding of the ways the desire for legitimacy, as opposed to task-efficiency, may shape inter-subjective meanings and drive convergent, if ineffectual, administrative reforms.¹⁸

In summary, the solutions prescribed in international relations to resolve the problem of global accountability seem to derive from: 1) rational choice assumptions about the global actor; 2) the relatively unexplored normative basis for administrative reform; and 3) a macro-level perspective. As the next section demonstrates however, loosening these assumptions and giving depth to empirical analysis may offer an alternative and more appropriate set of global accountability solutions.

Alternatives for global accountability studies

While public administration and organisational studies are vast subjects and their status as distinct disciplines a matter of controversy,¹⁹ both are united by a common interest in the organisation as a unit of analysis. It is in this sense that these “organisational” disciplines may have theories and empirical perspectives that might advance the study of global accountability. Nevertheless, the inter-connections and inter-relations between studies of public organisations in the fields of international relations, organisational studies and comparative public administration have largely remained un-exploited.²⁰ This has had two possible consequences. First, the lack of inter-linkage has propagated a perspective on global accountability anchored in rational choice theory, particularly as a principal-agent relation characterised by methodological individualism, bounded rationality, objectively stable and transitive preferences and utility-maximising behavior. Secondly, the lack of cross-disciplinary engagement may also have resulted in an outdated Weberian understanding of administration as governance by functional and neutral rules, hierarchical structures and meritocratic systems where authority derives exclusively from legal systems. Command-and-control strategies associated with this archetype Weberian bureaucracy assume that top levels scientifically design reforms that are linearly implemented and coerce appropriate behavior lower down.²¹ Implicit in this view is that administration is a singular tool that can separate and isolate itself from political dynamics, drivers and norms, a position long discredited in public administrative scholarship.²² Nevertheless, a presumed ability to separate technical administrative reform from the political contexts and processes within which they are embedded continues to remain popular among those advocating technical managerial reforms to solve the problem of global accountability.

One important strand of research situated in the contemporary study of public organisation that is a focus here is associated with Michael Lipsky's classic work, *Street-level Bureaucracy: Dilemmas of the Individual in Public Services* (1980). In this book, the dilemmas and dynamics of frontline workers who "interact with and have wide discretion over the dispensation of benefits or the allocation of public sanctions" are given pride of place in organisational analysis.²³ Lipsky called these workers "street-level bureaucrats" and this level of analysis "street-level bureaucracy." It is a central premise of this paper that street-level analysis is an important perspective situated within these "organisational disciplines" that can offer alternative theoretical and empirical lenses with which to examine and evaluate global accountability dynamics. The rest of this paper attempts to make this case both theoretically and empirically, and in doing so to highlight the value of cross-disciplinary engagement for global accountability studies.

At its most basic, street-level analysis offers an understanding of actors and dynamics at the lowest level of the global organisation. While Lipsky's book focused on frontline public service employees as street-level bureaucrats, the logic of the argument has been extended to a wide variety of frontline functionaries mediating between state and citizen.²⁴ Street-level analysis provides a window on the work of the "international civil servant" situated at the lowest level of the global organisation who occupies all of these roles, actors who as mentioned are left under-studied in contemporary international relations but are of increasing interest in ethnographies of global centers of power.²⁵ Examining actions on the "streets" of multilateral organisations draws attention to accountability as a social phenomenon, where both reform processes and impacts are affected by people, including their understandings, motivations, relationships and interactions.²⁶ It can also underline the importance of backward mapping policy implementation from bottom levels upwards, particularly for a multi-layered global organisation situated at the crossroads of conflicting normative obligations and governance relations.²⁷ The combined effect of these two ideas is an ability to assess the solutions advanced for ensuring effective global governance.

Street-level analysis is more than simply an under-studied level of analysis within the global organisation, however. It also suggests that street-level civil servants do not simply implement policy, they actively determine it through their autonomy and discretion. Moreover, their basis for decision-making is not solely through assessments of costs and benefits or selfishly motivated as rational choice theories may suggest. Instead, decisions are made with reference to normative structures, identities and moral commitments. Thus, street-level bureaucrats strive to achieve "a correct balance between compassion and flexibility on the one hand, and impartiality and rigid rule-application on the other hand, [that] presents a dialectic of public service reform."²⁸ Discretion derives from access to different varieties of knowledge possessed at street-level, the complexity of the situations faced, and the fact that bureaucrats must often respond to situations involving humans where the exercise of judgment is required. No norm, rule, top-down directive or structure can eliminate this embedded discretion that derives from the contexts street-level bureaucrats find themselves in. A proliferation of norms and rules can enhance rather than circumscribes this freedom to decide, create and affect.²⁹ In contrast, autonomy refers to the agency possessed by all organisational members, irrespective of their authority or access to resources. Autonomy acknowledges a space for divergent interests that

can generate gaps between an order and its implementation or active non-compliance. The presence of embedded agency deriving from street-level discretion and autonomy “requires analysis that starts from an understanding of the working conditions and priorities of those who deliver policy and the limits on circumscribing those jobs by recombining conventional sanctions and incentives.”³⁰ Nevertheless, decidedly rare are explorations of street-level discretion and autonomy and their effect on the global accountability challenge.

The compassionate and flexible exercise of discretion and autonomy is linked to an important distinction between active and passive forms of accountability that has gained salience in public administration scholarship. Cultivating active accountability to subjectively held norms is the counterpart to neorealist focus on objective accountability to rules that generates passive adherence by reducing opportunities for malfeasance that might contravene expected standards of behavior.³¹ In the case of subjective accountability, it is the individual who must consider personal obligations as per their moral conscience and codes.³² For example, at the Nuremburg trials following the Second World War, low-ranking Nazi officials were held subjectively accountable for crimes against humanity even if they could not be held objectively accountable given disobedience of superior orders would have led to their death. Eliciting desired behaviors will rely on both objective and subjective accountability of those who populate global bureaucracies. At the same time, objective accountability can be inconsistent with the need for morally subjective commitments over the ends of accountability itself. It is this tension between moral commitments and bureaucratic rules that is the basis of a paradox of accountability. The lack of discussion about subjective forms of accountability within global governance is possibly related to a more general tendency to marginalise individual moral sensibilities within the modern bureaucratic form.³³

In a multi-level governance world where multiple accountabilities intersect, the actual dynamics of street-level bureaucracy become even more important to analyse. A multi-level governance world refers to cross cutting networks of power and relations that intersect and interact due to the diffuse nature of organisational systems. To some degree this has been theorised in global governance literatures as intersecting delegated and participatory accountability relations to a varied constellation of actors.³⁴ While this acknowledges a certain level of complexity of accountability relations that afflict the macro-level global actor, it also identifies commonalities across similar types of actors. For example, without any empirical analysis Grant and Keohane (2005) make the claim that all multilateral organisations are subject to specific kinds of delegated accountabilities (hierarchical, supervisory and fiscal obligations) to those giving them power and participatory accountabilities (reputational obligations) to those affected by their power wielding. More controversially, they also assert that the simple presence of both delegated and participatory accountability mechanisms makes multilateral organisations more accountable than NGOs, firms, trans-governmental networks and nondemocratic states. Yet, neither of these claims acknowledges a role for public officials arbitrating pluralistic accountability relations in ways that ultimately generate variance in implementation dynamics both among and within agencies.³⁵

In complex environments, global accountability can be robustly understood as a process of street-level bureaucrats practically mediating crosscutting and unique

delegated and participatory responsibilities, with contextual features determining the form that embedded mediation takes.³⁶ Examination and exploration of street-level contexts can generate a spectrum of possible accountability regimes ranging from those focused on task achievement, indicator compliance or impact.³⁷ Each of these regimes is characterised by specific modes of governance (enforcement, performance or co-production respectively), implicit or explicit compliance mechanisms (rules, targets and standards) and relationship types (rule-bound relations, contractual agreements and trust-based relations). Unlike the universalist claim that all multilateral organisations are subject to the same accountability mechanisms at all times and in all places, the choice of accountability regime will be a reflection of street-level characteristics and dynamics. While the heterogeneity and cross-cutting nature of accountability regimes on the “global streets” remains largely under-explored and its insights for solving the global accountability challenge un-exploited, it also provides a tremendous opportunity for cross-disciplinary research.

Research design and methods

The research question motivating this study involves understanding how public organisational scholarship can complement international relations approaches to global accountability by offering it alternative analytical frameworks and empirical lenses. While the previous section delved into the analytical perspective offered in such an approach, this section focuses on the implications for programs of empirical research. Empirically, public administration has a rich qualitative tradition that places the organisation and its staff as central units of analysis for study. Nevertheless, methods that examine the global organisation as organisation and its staff as critical mediators of accountability have largely been sidelined in global governance literatures even as international civil servants are acknowledged as global actors of their own right.³⁸ What appears to be needed is a more robust method to investigate dynamics at more micro-levels of analysis in the global realm.

Here public administration, and its related discipline of organisational studies may offer a way forward. While these disciplines increasingly use a variety of methods spanning the qualitative-quantitative spectrum and interpretive-positivist epistemologies, Lipsky’s street-level bureaucrat approach is anchored in grounded observations and represents an earlier qualitative-interpretive single case study approach to the study of organisation.³⁹ With this paper’s interest in tracing accountability as a social phenomenon, where frontline workers affect the likelihood and outcomes of reform by virtue of their perceptions, relationships and practical impacts, an approach that mimics these classic works may be viewed also appropriate. Interpretive case studies that recognise the triple hermeneutic (as the observed, researcher and reader all interpret situations recursively) can respect the highest evaluative standards of methodological excellence in the social sciences.⁴⁰ Modern constructivists will thus seek out methods that access inter-subjective meaning construction in situations of embedded pluralism.⁴¹ These include the analysis of politics and process by triangulating across methods like structured focused comparison, interviews and participant-observation. At the same time, a comparative approach through the use of small-N qualitative studies, albeit with a single case study framework, can enhance the reliability and validity of claims being made.

In this paper, a constructivist methodological approach is used to examine a global organisation often subject to criticism over its accountability deficit, namely the World Bank.⁴² This empirical approach uncovers the dilemmas and practical challenges of improving participatory accountability against a backdrop of existing delegated accountabilities under a 1999-2002 reform identified closely with the Comprehensive Development Framework (CDF). The CDF was a document drafted by the then President of the World Bank that sought to justify and introduce new norms in the working practices of both the World Bank and the wider official development community.⁴³ A spatial comparison of the CDF's implementation across two World Bank country offices in Bolivia and Vietnam is thus the focus for the empirical portion of this study. The country office can be viewed as the organisational frontline or "global street" of this international financial institution. This is because it is at this level that internal and external demands interact and are bureaucratically mediated. The choice of Bolivia and Vietnam is made because both are unusual outlying cases that World Bank management viewed as examples of reasonably successful CDF pilots. Case selection on the dependent variable (i.e. perceived success in achieving improved participatory accountability) allows for a comparative analysis of the true nature of this success, as well as potential key contributing factors towards it, without sacrificing the ability to investigate local-level processes, reactions and motivations.

Data collection and analysis

This study began during a work experience term in 2001 inside the CDF Secretariat located in the World Bank's Washington, D.C. headquarters and continued as an independent research project over the subsequent three years. Access for the research project was largely the result of the researcher's previous employment history with the organisation. As a result of credibility established with senior World Bank staff during this employment period, the researcher possessed internal champions who could open doors to the institution at both headquarters and field level. This access included the right to interview any willing staff member and cite their recorded responses as long as identities were protected, the right to consult (but not quote) internal documentation sources and the opportunity to observe staff in meetings, training sessions as well as informal afterhours activities. In all three field visits (Bolivia, Vietnam and Washington, DC) the researcher was given an office and an institutional pass to facilitate organisational embeddedness. The researcher was presented as an independent academic investigator of the CDF undertaking a comparative study of Bolivia and Vietnam. Evidentiary sources thus consisted of semi-structured interviews with staff, official and grey organisational literature and extensive observation. This allowed for triangulation of multiple evidentiary sources and created the possibility of achieving "thick" descriptions of efforts to enhance the World Bank's participatory accountability and the "lived" experience of this at street-level in Bolivia and Vietnam.⁴⁴

Over the course of the study, six weeks were spent within the World Bank in each of the three field sites (Washington, DC., La Paz, Bolivia and Hanoi, Vietnam). In all cases, the researcher embedded herself into the routines and rhythms of a regular Bank employee, spending working days (9am-6pm, Monday to Friday) at the Bank, lunch hours and many weekends and evenings with colleagues. Account checking by those subject to observation and analysis occurred at the end of each field-visit in the

form of focus groups where tentative findings were discussed. This permitted mutual sense making of findings from one field site as well as validating their trustworthiness.

Overall, 49 recorded semi-structured interviews with World Bank staff occurred over the 2002-2003 period. Interviews occurred with two kinds of employees: operations-based staff with technical knowledge and key responsibilities for Bank projects and managerial staff with more generalised skills in charge of setting strategic policy and liaising with internal and external stakeholders. It should be noted that a key source of controversy within the World Bank revolves around who is entitled to the label “technical specialist” with engineers, economists and political scientists, among others, claiming the designation. This paper uses the organisational location of staff in one of six sector groupings⁴⁵ at the time of fieldwork and the nature of the interviewee’s specific project-related responsibilities as the basis for the designation of sector or technical specialist. In contrast, Country Directors and Country Representatives⁴⁶, their staff sitting in front offices or policy divisions, and sector-based staff with more consultative, administrative and policy functions, are referred to as management staff. Of the 49 interviews conducted, 29 occurred with street-level bureaucrats located in Bolivia and Vietnam. The remaining 20 took place in Washington DC and provided the contextual background for understanding the CDF and street-level dynamics. A snowball sampling technique was used in order to select interviewees, although almost all street-level bureaucrats in Bolivia and Vietnam were talked to in order to supersede street-level relational networks. Saturation occurred when interviewees recommended future interviews with respondents who had already been contacted.

Case studies were drafted using narrative process analysis.⁴⁷ Interviews elicited discussions on perceptions of the reform process underway as part of the CDF as both events and experienced realities. Interviews linked narrated situated experience with contextual information that facilitated the presentation of meaning in a general, comparative form.⁴⁸ Interviews were taped, transcribed and inputted into qualitative data software package Atlas.ti. Analysis proceeded by thematically coding narrative interview data according to major events or consequences of the CDF process in each office. Each coded text segment was reviewed in an iterative manner and instances of “tension” deriving from conflicting relations and accountabilities noted. Quotes in all of these categories were reviewed iteratively in order to draw up two narrative case studies of the underlying street-level experience of the CDF. Overall, the goal was to become “intimately familiar with each case as a stand-alone entity.”⁴⁹ This provided a basis for drafting a narrative of the CDF that employees themselves could recognise in focus group discussions conducted at the end of fieldwork in each office.

Findings

This section offers an overview of the two street-level cases of the World Bank analysed and drafted as per the above-mentioned methods. The cases of Bolivia and Vietnam are presented comparatively in order to highlight commonalities and divergences with regards to the ways the Comprehensive Development Framework (CDF) affected cross-cutting delegated and participatory accountabilities, structured bureaucratic discretion and autonomy and the nature of accountability regimes in

existence at street-level. Five particularly relevant findings are set out and discussed below.

1. *The CDF delegated responsibility for enhancing participatory accountability to the street-level.*

The CDF marked an attempt by the World Bank's senior leadership to align the organisation with the inclusive democratic norms of development that had become the standard of legitimate global behavior by the donor community at the turn of the millennium.⁵⁰ At the same time, the CDF also contributed to defining the participatory norms of global development, littering the international aid landscape with terms associated with more democratic global governance (e.g. country ownership, transparency, voices of the poor), efficiency (e.g. harmonisation, strategic vision) as well as enhanced organisational impact (e.g. development results).⁵¹ To achieve this, greater participatory accountability by the Bank to three stakeholders was deemed important in the CDF, including: 1) the aggregate of interests constituting the developing country clients serviced; 2) the donor community to which the Bank belongs; 3) and a general global public that includes but is not limited to clients and donors as well. To use the terminology of Grant and Keohane (2005), one might describe this as the CDF pushing participatory accountability in the direction of market, peer and reputational formats.

The CDF concurrently strengthened the powers of country offices that were seen as key sites for mediating relations with all three of these constituencies. Senior Bank leadership in Washington, D.C. delegated responsibility for implementing the CDF to twelve "streets" meant to pilot the experiment in participatory accountability, including the Bolivia and Vietnam offices.⁵² Participatory accountability thus became a delegated task across the headquarters-country office hierarchy. No enforcement mechanisms or didactic prescriptions accompanied this devolved task, with the possible exception of bi-annual reports tracking progress on indicators associated with the CDF principles.⁵³ At the same time, there were no sanctions for indicator under-performance and the manner in which the global streets of the World Bank complied with the CDF standard to achieve better development results was left to the discretion of street-level bureaucrats. In essence, the CDF was framed as the introduction of an impact oriented regime at street-level.

2. *Street-level bureaucrats exercised discretion in defining the standard of behavior associated with the inclusive norms of the CDF. This secured varying degrees of subjective accountability towards the CDF in Bolivia and Vietnam.*

In both Bolivia and Vietnam, street-level bureaucrats actively defined what constituted the standard of behavior associated with the CDF that had been delegated to them to put into practice. The Country Directors in both cases exploited the CDF to strengthen street-levels of the Bank. This included turning themselves into street-level actors as they moved themselves, along with key sector specialists out of Washington, D.C and into offices in Hanoi and La Paz. Moving people to the street-level became symbolically associated with the inclusive norms of the CDF. Despite this commonality, in other ways there was also uniqueness across these two offices in standards adopted. This variance came to have implications for the subjective accountabilities engendered by the CDF at street-level.

In Bolivia, the Country Director advocated and achieved the power to draft contracts, appoint consultants without headquarters approval and override centralised procurement rules. In the name of the CDF, street-level bureaucrats were re-organised into three divisions that replicated the thematic “pillars” of the Bolivian Government’s national development plan, even if this new structure diverged from the Bank’s standard “sector” divisions. A Civil Society Coordinator was hired to enhance relations with local stakeholder groups. A greater sense of internal organisational democracy was also fostered as the principle of equality between pillar leaders was accepted and staff alternated as the Bank’s Resident Representative. The overall effect of these highly visible and dramatic changes was that Bolivian street-level bureaucrats of all stripes, both managers and operational sector specialists, felt subjectively committed and accountable to the impact-oriented accountability regime represented by the CDF. The fact that the CDF had granted the street-level additional discretion also helped cultivate this active commitment to the inclusive normative standards it represented.

And then when the CDF came, it was great. [It] provides a sort of institutional backing in which you can do anything. [...] The people working in Bolivia said, “Great, the CDF provides the institutional cover to do things in the name of the CDF, things that you wanted to do in the Bolivian pilot which you wouldn’t have had the cover to do. [...] This is a wagon to hitch to. (WBB P1: 0487-0514)”⁵⁴

Meanwhile, in Vietnam, the CDF moved six Sector Coordinators to the local office and dramatically increased the number of local hires. Partnership groups were created to improve information sharing and coordination and increase government “ownership.”⁵⁵ Street-level bureaucrats, both management and sector staff, were expected to stay engaged with government line ministries, the donor community and local civil society. The Bank hired a “Partnership Specialist” who, among other responsibilities, oversaw the production of bi-annual Partnership Reports documenting these collaborative activities of the World Bank in various sectors. This attempt to foster trust among the wider development community secured reputational accountability among external actors but created tensions among operational specialists who felt this had occurred to the detriment of project supervision and implementation. Sector specialists came to view the CDF as a vehicle for enhancing the Bank’s image and legitimacy that was decoupled from the Bank’s core task of project management against which their own individual performance was measured. The result was less collective subjective accountability to the CDF among sector specialists in Vietnam.

My number one priority is to ensure that all the projects that I am responsible for are prepared on time and are implemented properly. And anything else for me is less important. Now, as we said right at the beginning, I am not sure that Senior Management would have seen it that way. They probably wouldn’t have disagreed but certainly during [the CDF] that would have been seen as a sore point. It would have been more important to go to the Partnership Meeting than to supervise the project. (WBV P10: 0370-0392)

Ultimately, street-level bureaucrats exercised discretion to define the standard of behavior associated with the participatory norms of the CDF. Street-level bureaucrats in Bolivia felt collectively empowered by the CDF and subjectively committed to it,

unlike in Vietnam where sector specialists believed the CDF had led to the neglect of important objective accountabilities for project performance.

3. *The CDF's participatory model of accountability conflicted with delegated accountabilities to headquarters. Street-level bureaucrats mediated this tension in different ways.*

As the CDF pilot continued into the 2000-2001 period, the participatory accountabilities initiated by street-level bureaucrats towards clients, donors and the public faced an important challenge. This derived from their delegated accountabilities—hierarchical obligations to Washington managers, fiscal commitments to G8 states and supervisory responsibilities to the Executive Board—for portfolio performance targets. Bank portfolio targets are internal measures of project implementation and success as assessed by: 1) the size and value of loans committed; 2) the rate of funding disbursement (disbursement ratios); 3) the quality of lending; 4) the costs of project preparation and supervision. While street-level responsibility for portfolio performance is not a task strictly enforced by formal rules, in both Bolivia and Vietnam country teams are informally contracted with monitoring and maintaining portfolio performance. Delegated accountability for the portfolio is ultimately an indicator-oriented accountability regime to evaluate the intensity and quality of street-level work, albeit one with perverse consequences.⁵⁶ This is because the loans committed and disbursement rate figures specifically reward accelerated expenditures for the sake of achieving the targets, creating incentives to minimise project screening and monitoring, approve lending for quick-disbursing projects as opposed to those requiring greater effort to conceive and manage even if they can yield more sustainable outcomes, as well as to ignore evidence of corruption when a project is running in case it threatens target achievement.⁵⁷ Sector specialists in particular are concerned with portfolio indicator achievement given their oversight responsibilities for Bank projects.

The conflict resulting from crosscutting delegated accountabilities for portfolio targets and the participatory accountabilities to market, peer and reputational stakeholders in the CDF was experienced and mediated differently in Bolivia and Vietnam. With subjective accountability to the CDF running high in Bolivia, street-level bureaucrats felt empowered to suspend their delegated accountabilities towards the portfolio. The CDF encouraged the Bolivian office to “think so far out of normal World Bank boxes that they wound up in la-la land.”⁵⁸ La-la land included an annual suspension of disbursements on account of evidence of corruption in projects, a decision that was considered highly political for the Bank at the time. Formal suspension was accompanied by explicit efforts by both operational and management street-level bureaucrats to resist disbursement pressures by seeking more “socially” relevant practices with lengthier time scales.⁵⁹ The overall outcome included a tense relational dynamic that pitted Bolivian street-level bureaucrats championing the CDF's participatory accountabilities against their supervisors at the Executive Board, government shareholders monitoring fiscal health of the Bank and their Washington-based managers up the internal hierarchy. Even though CDF implementation had been tasked to the country office, it was now a resource for street-level autonomy against an important delegated accountability for portfolio performance. Notwithstanding, there existed a high-level of consensus among all Bolivian street-

level bureaucrats on the moral virtue of suspending disbursements during the CDF, even in the face of opposition from Washington, D.C.

In Vietnam, the CDF also coincided with slower disbursement albeit with less internal cohesion on the moral merits of this strategy among operational and management street-level bureaucrats. In Vietnam, one of the major impediments for achieving portfolio targets is bureaucratic inefficiency within the government apparatus, including corrupt practices, that slows down the approval and monitoring processes.⁶⁰ Lacking the desire to explicitly antagonise the Vietnamese government, street-level management did not suspend lending as in Bolivia, nor did they explicitly push for faster disbursement. To the dismay of operational staff, the country office took a diplomatic approach as they tried to cajole their government partners to remove administrative hurdles that prevented the Bank from disbursing funds by fostering greater trust and informal networking between all parties involved. The ineffectiveness of this strategy thus became an indirect challenge to their delegated accountability for portfolio targets, albeit one tinged with less antagonism and explicit resistance against their fiscal, supervisory and hierarchical responsibilities to Washington, D.C.

In both offices then, delegated accountability for portfolio indicators conflicted with the participatory accountabilities associated with the CDF. In Bolivia, street-level bureaucrats considered themselves subjectively accountable for the CDF's model of participatory accountability. They deliberately exercised autonomy by using the CDF to privilege participatory accountability to poor citizens for development results rather than their government interlocutors who were siphoning off development monies. Market accountability was thus to clients defined as the poor rather than their political masters who are signatories to World Bank contracts. Complying with portfolio indicators would have ultimately undermined their subjective commitment to the impact-oriented regime represented by the CDF. In contrast, in Vietnam subjective accountability towards the CDF had never been as cohesive among street-level managers and sector specialists, the latter antagonised by management's lack of concern for portfolio targets. Street-level management tactfully sought to meet their delegated responsibilities for the portfolio targets at the same time as they sought to maintain their participatory relation with the Vietnamese government.

4. *Resistance to delegated accountabilities for the portfolio lasted longer in Vietnam where reputational and market accountability compensated for poor indicator performance.*

In Bolivia, government corruption generated significant consensus in the local office on the need to suspend disbursements. The participatory model of the CDF generated a new desire to champion the poor and disenfranchised in Bolivia as important clients of the Bank. This left both World Bank headquarters and the Bolivian government upset that lending had stalled, albeit for different reasons. For the former, concern derived from the fact that street-level bureaucrats were not meeting delegated responsibilities for portfolio targets and moreover, that a challenge had been mounted against their delegated authorities. For the latter, it was street-level bureaucrats' involvement in a taboo subject that represented incursion into the territory of sovereign politics that was a matter of controversy.⁶¹ Thus, a strange, if uneasy, alliance emerged between Washington managers and the Government against

disbursement suspension. Despite protestations by street-level bureaucrats, this combined pressure contributed to the quick reversal of the disbursement suspension at year-end and by 2003, Bolivia had recovered their pre -2000 disbursement ratios.

[The Bolivian] Government and the Bank did an evaluation [of the CDF] in Washington and they all hugged each other and told each other how good they were, and fantastic, and brilliant, and geniuses and everything. It was really, believe me, it was an incredible piece of stupidity. It was a waste of money and a waste of time. I was managing this one project...the objective of which was to put money in the poorest communities in Bolivia. And the money was being stolen! This was in the midst of the CDF. [...] So the Bank and [the Government] are speaking about how great they are and how they are doing and the results orientation and the poor and all that. And down here, they are stealing the money in an incredibly systematic and organised way. This was not like random corruption. This was organised stealing! (laugh) [...] So for us, it was like what the hell are we doing here? It was incredibly schizophrenic. (WBB P9: 0402-0421)

In Vietnam, street-level managers autonomously decided to under-emphasise portfolio targets despite protestations from street-level sector specialists. To be fair, sector specialists may have been appropriately concerned given that low disbursement rates seemed linked to inefficient procedures (as compared to endemic corruption in Bolivia) that prevented the execution of well-designed projects. Yet, the Vietnamese office obtained internal acclaim for their successful relations built with government and others through the CDF that pushing for disbursement was deemed impossible. This kudos included high-profile articles of the CDF experience on the Bank's intranet, a visit by Wolfensohn himself in 2000 on account of the CDF pilot and the Vietnam office's receipt of a Presidential Award for Excellence. These reputational benefits took the wind out of any resistance that may have existed from delegated stakeholders against the deteriorating portfolio, even if some pressure to confront government on disbursement may have been appropriate. The overall effect was a longer-lasting fall in portfolio performance in Vietnam, although pressures to disburse did eventually resurface even here.⁶²

[Y]ou would get people definitely who would be frustrated with [the Country Director] because he was spending all his time on this partnership stuff and people were saying, "Our portfolio is going down the spout." Which it was, true to say, because he was spending all his time on donor relations and relations with government and being on TV, and all the rest of it. But people recognise that it has raised our profile enormously and on the whole went along with it. Vietnam has been the biggest feather in [Senior Management's] cap because of everything on the CDF, and piloting everything. Because Wolfensohn came here and absolutely loved it, and still talks about it three years later. And because of everything else we do. That more than compensates for the difficulties in the lending program. And, because other countries also have difficulties. We are not a worst case scenario by any means. (WBV P1 0747-0754, 0838-0854)

Ultimately, street-level bureaucrats in Vietnam secured the support of a key reputational stakeholder, namely the Vietnamese government, which mitigated any internal dissent either at headquarters or at street-level, over the office's neglect of the portfolio. The same could not be said about Bolivia, where the reputational gains for defending anti-corruption measures through the vehicle of the portfolio could not compensate for the decision to abrogate on its delegated accountability for the portfolio. This derived from the decision to champion the poor rather than the government as both a market and reputational stakeholder of the Bank. The discretion

to define the CDF as a participatory model of accountability, while originally a delegated task to both offices but also an important manifestation of an impact-focused regime, ultimately had no redeeming factors in Bolivia that would allow it to trump the more important delegated accountability for maintaining healthy portfolio indicators.

5. Heightened subjective accountability engendered by the CDF in Bolivia translated into a continuous desire to improve the Bank's participatory accountability, even at the termination of the CDF.

The experience of institutionalising the CDF inside the World Bank generated similar outcomes on two global streets, namely a short-lived move from an indicator to an impact oriented accountability regime. While this may appear to represent the triumph of objective delegated accountabilities towards the portfolio within the World Bank, there may also be a more optimistic reading of the data. Subjective accountability towards participatory norms in Bolivia still ran high after the end of the disbursement suspension and the cessation of the CDF pilot process. This contributed to an active search at street-level for new ways to advance the norms of participatory accountability.

Before we were working for CDF. In the name of the CDF. Now I don't think it has any power. Now the new name of the game is harmonisation. Now, before everybody was scrambling internally, institutionally to show progress on the CDF. Now they don't give a damn. [...] Now the buzzword is harmonisation. The task is to say well, if this works, I'll use it.

Q. So the CDF isn't over?

Change of names, emphasis and actors. That's all. (WBV P1: 0487-0514)

Subjective accountabilities engendered through the CDF in Bolivia generated a palpable sense of street-level bureaucrats' ability to exercise transformative leverage within the global organisation. This heightened awareness of street-level transformative powers outlived the formal death of the CDF pilot process. In contrast, in Vietnam, a more divided moral commitment to participatory norms among street-level bureaucrats meant that the post-CDF period appeared like a return to "normal business" where portfolio concerns remained primary. Rhetorically, this return to normalcy was presented as an attempt to substantiate the reputational legitimacy that had been built through the CDF by removing administrative obstacles slowing disbursement. This shift was marked in the appointment of a new Country Director to Vietnam in 2002 hired with a mandate from headquarters to address portfolio problems.

And that is what I have told people constantly. It's all very fine, we have the [CDF] framework now but you can't keep a healthy forest if you don't focus on the trees. You can't also keep that reputation...this program has a very good reputation. But once people realise that, "Wait a minute they take double the time than other country units to complete their projects, their disbursement ratio...they will suddenly be seeing corruption in projects. What is going on?" Then you lose your reputation. So we really need to move into this. And that in turn is a message I think that sits very well with the sector units. (WBV P12: 0337-0362)

Explaining why tolerance for portfolio underperformance was greater by street-level bureaucrats in Bolivia may come down to the fact that expectations for project performance were lower here than in Vietnam. Government corruption, lack of developmental commitment, and a poor economic and political climate were all reasons to doubt Bolivia's ability to achieve portfolio performance indicators even if street-level bureaucrats championed their cause. Lower expectations in Bolivia about the possibility for enhancing development outcomes by focusing on the portfolio in the first place may explain why sector specialists there were willing to sacrifice portfolio concerns on the altar of the CDF. Meanwhile, in Vietnam the potential for disbursement to actually effectuate positive change was greater, which may explain the lower level of subjective accountability to tasks associated with the CDF that neglected the portfolio.

If the CDF can be described as a disappointing and failed experiment to enhance participatory accountability in both cases, it nevertheless left a long-lasting legacy for subjective commitment to participatory norms in Bolivia at least. By inculcating a more affective commitment among street-level bureaucrats in Bolivia, the internal struggle for greater participatory accountability could be assured well into the future.

Discussion

In tracing the micro-level impacts of enhancing participatory accountability within the World Bank, it makes sense to remind ourselves that we are intertwining a theoretical and empirical argument in favor of cross-disciplinary engagement across international relations and public administration. Integrating a street-level perspective into the study of global governance offers a set of alternative assumptions about the nature of agency, morals and ethics as motivation, and the normative nature of accountability standards, and a bottom-up perspective on the policy process inside global organisation. Empirically, each of these dimensions can be illustrated by evidence from our comparative examination of two global streets within the World Bank. This discussion brings this theoretical and empirical argument together and in doing so, highlights the advantages of cross-disciplinary engagement for enhancing our understanding of global accountability dilemmas and dynamics.

Embedded autonomy and discretion

This comparative case study of the World Bank draws attention to the role of street-level bureaucrats as policy-formers as opposed to policy implementers. Initially discretion was given to street-level bureaucrats by senior leaders of the World Bank, albeit structured by the inclusive norms associated with the CDF. Nevertheless, in granting this discretion, it became apparent that street-level bureaucrats could also exploit discretion for the sake of autonomy, or the ability to non-comply with delegated orders. In Bolivia, agency empowered street-level bureaucrats to challenge disbursement targets, antagonise both their government partners and Washington-based masters and define the poor as important market stakeholders within the rubric of the democratic norms and impact-oriented regime of the CDF. In Vietnam, street-level bureaucrats antagonised Washington less as they built social capital with their government partners and others, unintentionally creating a longer lasting challenge to the portfolio that may have actually been less appropriate than in Bolivia. Ultimately, the challenges and dilemmas of global accountability can never exclusively be

resolved with a technical administrative solution like complaint and response mechanisms, transparency and independent evaluation, as these will always be subject to the politics of street-level discretion and autonomy.⁶³ Institutionalising global accountability mechanisms will always be affected by the unintended consequences, surprises, system discontinuities and non-linearities that stem from street-level freedoms.⁶⁴ Expecting the unexpected in any global accountability reform due to the political nature of street-level dynamics must therefore become the custom both in theory as well as in practical policy decisions.

Subjective accountability: a moral possibility

Street-level accountability involves more than a simple rational calculus of costs and benefits that do not weight the possibility for ethical selfless action. The discovery of a moral calculus in decision-making inside the World Bank supports the view that all accountability relations have a subjective/active analytical nature in addition to an objective/passive one.⁶⁵ This comparative case study demonstrates that street-level bureaucrats inside the World Bank have a moral compass they are prepared to act on even in the face of paradoxical tensions with objective rule-based forms of accountabilities. The excessive attention paid to the “pathological tendencies” and “organised hypocrisies” of global organisations has distracted scholars from seeing altruism as an important personal source of motivation that can explain internal organisational dynamics.⁶⁶ Policies that can motivate street-level action by engendering subjective accountability arguably have at their disposal a more powerful form of incentivising actions than the enforcement/sanctions model of objective accountability. The important question for the global accountability challenge in the context of multi-layered organisations in multi-level governance systems becomes how to raise awareness of competing accountabilities to different stakeholders and cultivate appropriate subjective prioritisation among them.

Accountability as norm

Accountability relations in multi-layered global organisations embedded in multi-leveled governance systems are multiple, by which is meant there are many stakeholders to whom accountability is deemed appropriate. Table 1 highlights all of the accountability mechanisms in world politics that appear to impinge on the World Bank based on our comparative street-level analysis. It would appear that Grant and Keohane’s (2005) claim that all multilateral organisations exhibit the same kinds of accountability mechanisms—supervisory, fiscal, reputational and hierarchical—is too narrow given the prevalence of peer and market accountabilities. The question remains, why does a discrepancy exist between the mechanisms Grant and Keohane (2005) predict are salient in multilateral actors and these results? Is this a case of counter-evidence undermining their theoretical claims?

Table 1. Accountability mechanisms in world politics: a summary of street-level accountabilities in the World Bank

Model of Accountability	Mechanism	Accountability holder in relation to street-level
Delegated Accountability	Hierarchical	Washington-based managers
	Supervisory	World Bank President and Executive Board
	Fiscal	Shareholders, especially G8 members
Participatory Accountability	Market	Clients, either host states or poor beneficiaries
	Peer	Fellow staff, other donors to a lesser degree
	Reputational	Host states, internal, diffuse publics

The answer may lie in the different understanding of what constitutes accountability. For Grant and Keohane, accountability is a set of impartial standards that links principals to agents, allowing the former to inflict sanctions on the latter where these standards are not met. In the set of organisations included in the category of multilateral actors, these standards are thought to be identical and thus shared. For street-level bureaucrats however, accountability is a social relation embedded in expectations of appropriate behavior unique to their circumstances, moral commitments and powers of agency. As a result, the “principal” to whom accountability is owed is a creature of a cultivated normative obligation, for example in Bolivia to the poor, or in Vietnam to the state. These obligations crosscut however, generating normative conflicts that heighten possibilities for street-level discretion and autonomy. For example in our study, street-level bureaucrats rejected the indicator-oriented delegated accountability regime delegated to them in favor of the participatory impact-oriented regime associated with the CDF. Nevertheless, each office took a different approach on how to manage the normative conflict with very different outcomes, both in the short and longer term. Accountability as norm implies that assuming responsibility is not necessarily a search for efficient or democratic organisation as much as it may be a search for legitimacy among stakeholders who matter. Conforming to dominant norms can engender the support of key supporters that can build organisational credibility and ensure continuity at the same time as it can disguise strategic acts of agency occurring under the mantle of global accountability.⁶⁷

The bottom-up view

The CDF was defined by the exercise of street-level agency and its success or failure cannot be understood by a simple reading of its grand policy narrative, as has often been done by critics of the World Bank.⁶⁸ By looking within, for example, we vividly see the ways in which internal metrics of portfolio performance can undermine project effectiveness to the extent that they undermine efforts to engage with a slowly disbursing activity or address corruption. The fact that there is no data publicly available that traces the ebbs and flows of portfolio targets by country in any of the numerous Bank publications suggests this feature of organisational life can easily be missed in the absence of an examination of street-level dynamics. While some have commented in general terms on the perverse consequences of a disbursement culture within the Bank,⁶⁹ the particular effects on accountability relations have been less frequently analysed. This paper suggests that indicator-oriented delegated accountability regimes can both conflict with and undermine participatory impact-oriented accountability regimes. It also highlights the prevalence of a managerial accounting model of hierarchical accountability, where de-centralisation and de-

concentration are accompanied by indicators that represent the center's desire to maintain organisational control at the lowest levels.⁷⁰ Accountability solutions advocated within international relations that demand macro-level structural changes of the International Financial Institutions, including greater independence, transparency and representation, have failed to capture the ways portfolio performance standards manifest themselves in the complex accountabilities operating on the global street. Given this, it would seem misplaced to describe the World Bank as a more accountable global actor than either international NGOs or multinational corporations simply because it is subject to both delegated and participatory forms of accountability.⁷¹ Ultimately, this argument that "more is better" rests on an intrinsic belief in the benefits of accountability, irrespective of what happens in practice.⁷² This empirical study suggests that accountability mechanisms must be more than just multiple and legitimate to substantiate a claim of stronger global accountability. It behooves us to conduct more research on many more streets, examining the view at the bottom and "around" the bottom, before hazarding a guess on where the multilateral organisation ranks on any global accountability league table.

In summary, public administration as exemplified through this street-level analysis of the World Bank offers a more nuanced view of working life within the multi-layered global organisation embedded in multiple networks of relationships. The result is more generous, embedded, politicised and disaggregated view of global organisations and the international civil servants operating within them than is commonly offered by literatures situated in international relations. These theoretical assumptions and perspective can drive scholars of public organisation towards a different set of accountability solutions for the global organisation. Table 2 summarises these differences across global governance studies of accountability and the street-level perspective of public administration. If traditional approaches to the study of global accountability are driven by assumptions about individualised actor malfeasance within nested principal-agent relations and a relatively macro-level view of the global organisation that maintains explicit objective standards of behavior in the global realm do exist, public administration offers a more generous view of embedded agency as shaped by moral motivations, pluralistic normative structures and micro-level dynamics and contexts. From these assumptions, different kinds of accountability solutions flow, including policies that can engender ethical commitments, for example by developing affective sentiments through socialisation; remedies that secure legitimacy by building reputation so that normative obligations can be met, reforms that view compliance in implicit as well as explicit measurable terms, perspectives anchored in an understanding of the policy process as beginning rather than predictably ending at street-level, and solutions that directly address the need for prioritisation among the multitude of accountability relations that impinge on the international bureaucrat at street-level.

Table 2. From assumption to accountability solution: comparing global governance and street-level analysis

	Global governance analysis	Street-level analysis
Theoretical approaches		
Agency	Atomistic	Embedded
Motivation	Malfeasance	Moral possibility
Nature of accountability	Objective standard	Normative relation
Level of analysis	Macro-level	Micro-level
Characteristics of accountability		
Mode of governance	Enforcement	Moral commitment
Mechanism	Sanctions-based	Legitimacy-based
Nature of compliance	Explicit compliance	Implicit compliance
Level of analysis	Top-down	Bottom-up/around

Conclusion

The problem of achieving accountability at the global level looms large in international relations, which rightly sees itself as the natural home for studies of international organisation. Yet, international organisation is as much defined by its multilateral character as it is by the fact that it is also an organisation. This can provide an important entry point for cross-disciplinary engagement between international relations and public administration where the latter is centered around the study of public organisation. By way of a small step in the direction of cross-disciplinary engagement, this study has advocated consideration of a street-level perspective that borrows from Michael Lipsky’s classic book on public sector workers in public administration. This cross-fertilisation advances the study of global accountability in international relations without denying there are also contributions to be made by international relations within public administration.

Street-level analysis of the World Bank has theoretically demonstrated the salience of key concepts in public administration for scholars of international relations with interests in global accountability. Detailed comparative analysis also highlights the practical value of assessing crosscutting accountabilities, the ways bureaucratic autonomy and discretion contour reforms, the kinds of accountability regimes that operate at the organisation’s frontlines and the role that legitimacy has in cultivating accountabilities of certain kinds to certain actors. Finally, fine-grained analysis on the global streets can also provide empirical detail that may be used to evaluate and validate key claims in international relations about the nature of multilateral accountability in multi-level governance settings. Conducting global accountability studies on the frontlines of the global organisation is an important way for cross-disciplinary engagement to flourish for the benefit of scholarly insight into the global accountability challenge as well in the search for practical and effective solutions. Making global accountability “street-smart” by re-conceptualising dilemmas and examining dynamics is ultimately a smart thing to do.

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² Koppell 2008; Yi-Chong and Weller 2008

³ Grant and Keohane 2005; Held and Koenig-Archibugi 2005a; Woods 2000

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- ⁴ Weisband and Ebrahim 2007: 29
- ⁵ Gutner 2005; Nielson and Tierney 2003; 2005
- ⁶ DiMaggio and Powell 1983; Finnemore 1996; Meyer and Rowan 1977
- ⁷ Friedland and Alford 1991; Granovetter 1985
- ⁸ Held and Koenig-Archibugi 2005a
- ⁹ In the early history of international relations scholarship, to the extent that the actual operations of global actors were explored, it was at the level of their formal rules and processes. This gradually gave way to institutionalist approaches interested in macro-level patterns shaping global organisational outcomes. Scholarship evolved to examine the actual and potential role for international organisations in international governance processes. Finally, emphasis on international regimes sought to systematically define the meaning and nature of international governance itself. See Kratochwil and Ruggie 1986
- ¹⁰ Ascher 1983; Heady 1998
- ¹¹ Held and Koenig-Archibugi 2005b; Weisband and Ebrahim 2007: 17; Yi-Chong and Weller 2008
- ¹² Kahler 2005; Woods 2000
- ¹³ It is claimed that non-democratic mechanisms are of potentially greater instrumental benefit for obstructing agents' malfeasance. See Grant and Keohane 2005
- ¹⁴ Weisband and Ebrahim 2007: 15-16
- ¹⁵ Le Grand 2003; Lipsky 1980
- ¹⁶ Le Grand 2003
- ¹⁷ Drori, Meyer, and Hwang 2006
- ¹⁸ DiMaggio and Powell 1983; 1991; Finnemore 1996; Finnemore and Sikkink 2001; Koppell 2008; Meyer and Rowan 1977; Powell 1991; Suchman 1995
- ¹⁹ Hood 2005; Kelman 2005
- ²⁰ Heady 1998; Morel 2004
- ²¹ Wilson 1941
- ²² Frederickson and Smith 2003; Svava 2001; 2006; Waldo 1948
- ²³ Lipsky 1980: ix
- ²⁴ Durose 2008; Hupe and Hill 2007; Riccucci 2005
- ²⁵ Bebbington, Guggenheim, Olson, and Woolcock 2004; Lewis, Bebbington, Batterbury, Shah, Olson, Siddiqi, and Duvall 2003; Mosse 2005a; 2005b
- ²⁶ Hupe and Hill 2007: 286; Weisband and Ebrahim 2007: 16
- ²⁷ Elmore 1979; Hupe and Hill 2007
- ²⁸ Lipsky 1980: 15-16
- ²⁹ Hupe and Hill 2007: 280
- ³⁰ Lipsky 1980: 25
- ³¹ The principal-agent relation is considered a classic objective form of accountability that generates a liability when norms (either implicit or explicit) are transgressed. See Bovens 1998: 27-30; Gregory 2003. It involves calling agents to account after an event has taken place where the accused actor is held responsible only if a casual connection between conduct and damage can be established.
- ³² Bovens 2005; Gregory 2003
- ³³ Gregory 2003
- ³⁴ For example, in the contemporary period the World Bank must remain accountable to shareholding governments that have delegated powers to it at the same time as it must ensure their participatory accountability to poor people. See Grant and Keohane 2005
- ³⁵ Romzek 2000: 28-29
- ³⁶ Hupe and Hill 2007
- ³⁷ Hupe and Hill 2007
- ³⁸ Held and Koenig-Archibugi 2005a; Weisband and Ebrahim 2007; Yi-Chong and Weller 2008
- ³⁹ Selznick 1949; Whyte 1943
- ⁴⁰ Schwartz-Shea and Yanow forthcoming 2009
- ⁴¹ Finnemore 1996; Finnemore and Sikkink 2001
- ⁴² This is not the first time such a methodological approach is applied to examining this organizational actor. See Finnemore 1997; Weaver 2008, forthcoming
- ⁴³ Wolfensohn 1999
- ⁴⁴ Geertz 1977
- ⁴⁵ At the time of this research in 2003, the Bank was divided into the following thematic sectors: Environment and Socially Sustainable Development (ESSD), Human Development, Poverty Reduction and Economic Management (PREM), Private Sector Development and Infrastructure, Financial Sector

and Operations Policy and Country Services (OPCS). Since then, the latter two sectors have been merged into Financial and Private Sector Development.

⁴⁶ Country Directors are responsible for all World Bank activities pertaining to a country or group of countries. In the latter case, a Resident Representative in each country will be accountable to a Country Director.

⁴⁷ Langley 1999; Pentland 1998

⁴⁸ Flick 2000; 2002

⁴⁹ Eisenhardt 1989: 540

⁵⁰ Cooke 2003; Craig and Porter 2003; Eyben 2003; Fine 2002; Hanna and Agarwala 2000; Porter and Craig 2004; Rist 2002

⁵¹ The term Comprehensive Development Framework, including its associated vocabulary, emerged in a series of speeches given by the then relatively new President of the World Bank, James Wolfensohn, and his Chief Economist, Joseph Stiglitz. See Stiglitz 1998; Wolfensohn 1997; 1998. A lot has been made of the vacuous nature of its concepts and principles, albeit with limited empirical study of its impact on World Bank internal processes. See Cooke 2003; Cornwall and Brock 2005; Crawford 2003

⁵² The other pilot countries were: Cote d'Ivoire, the Dominican Republic, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Ghana, Jordan, Kyrgyz Republic, Morocco, Romania and Uganda.

⁵³ Progress reports measured compliance with the four CDF principles on a sliding scale ranging from "little or no action" to "substantially in place." See CDF Secretariat 2001. These ratings were based on data supplied by street-level bureaucrats, although the CDF Secretariat in Washington, DC determined relative ratings and rankings of the twelve pilots.

⁵⁴ The codes included after quotations refer to the country office (e.g. WBV for the Bank's Vietnam office and WBB for the Bolivian office), the primary document (a coded reference to the informant in question), and the actual lines of the transcribed text.

⁵⁵ World Bank 2000

⁵⁶ Cremer 2008b; Easterly 2002; Miller-Adams 1999; Payer 1982

⁵⁷ Cremer 2008a

⁵⁸ Mallaby 2005: 244

⁵⁹ For example, an experimental project to enhance innovation and entrepreneurship among indigenous communities experienced problems in disbursing set-aside funds due to the difficulty of achieving consensus in participatory processes.

⁶⁰ For example, the prime minister's signature is required for approval of very small, routine contracts.

⁶¹ Cremer 2008b

⁶² It was only with a change in the Country Director in 2002 that an apparent shift towards more portfolio-related concerns became noticeable.

⁶³ Weisband and Ebrahim 2007

⁶⁴ Hood and Peters 2004

⁶⁵ Bovens 2005; Gregory 2003

⁶⁶ Barnett and Finnemore 1999; Weaver and Leiteritz 2005; Weaver 2008, forthcoming

⁶⁷ DiMaggio 1988; Emirbayer and Mische 1998; Oliver 1991; Suchman 1995; Zilber 2002

⁶⁸ Cooke 2003; Crawford 2003

⁶⁹ Cremer 2008b; Easterly 2002; Miller-Adams 1999; Payer 1982

⁷⁰ Hood 2007; Hood 1991; Hupe and Hill 2007; Power 1997; Weisband and Ebrahim 2007

⁷¹ Grant and Keohane 2005: 40

⁷² Grant and Keohane draw a distinction between the number of mechanisms of accountability and their appropriateness and efficacy, arguing that an organization may be "more accountable" by virtue of the number of mechanisms even if these may achieve little in practice.

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The Global Economic Governance Programme
University College, Oxford OX1 4BH

Tel. +44 (0) 1865 276 639 or 279 630

Fax. +44 (0) 1865 276 659

Email: geg@univ.ox.ac.uk

www.globaleconomicgovernance.org