

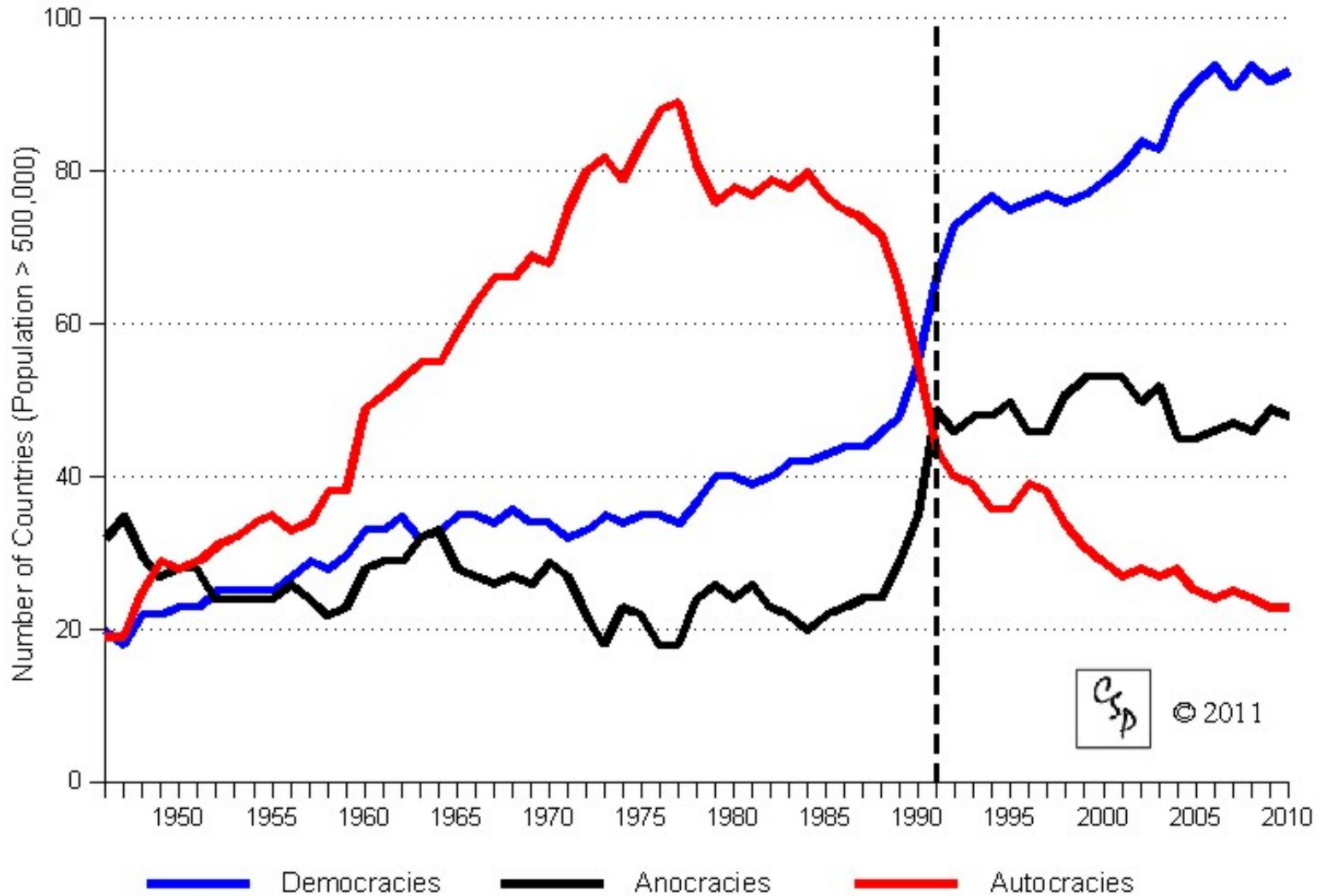


DfID SDG16 Event | 9 December 2015

Democratic Institutions, Participation, and Service Provision

- SDG 16 calls for states to “**ensure responsive, inclusive, and participatory decision making at all levels**”
- We take this to mean that the **intrinsic & instrumental** value of participation need to be strengthened
- Participation should make a difference
- Electoral fraud, vote buying or elite capture should not get in the way

Global Trends in Governance, 1946-2010



Source: Polity IV Country Reports 2010

Democratic Institutions, Participation, and Service Provision

Key questions:

1. How to strengthen participation in elections?
2. How to improve citizen-politician linkages?
3. How to improve citizens' input into the policy-making processes?
4. How to improve service provision via social accountability?

How to strengthen participation in elections?

- Non-partisan information campaigns
- SMS-based information and GOTV
- Non-partisan information on candidates qualification and performance
- Informational campaign against vote-buying and in favor of voting in good conscience
- International and national observers in selected voting sites monitoring registration and Election Day

How to improve citizen-politician linkages ?

- Improving citizen's communication to politicians via communication technologies
- Promoting the leadership of non-elite members in democratic deliberations

How to improve service provision via social accountability ?

- Community Development Reconstruction programs
- Representative-based meetings and direct election-based plebiscites in the planning of development projects
- Information campaigns, report cards, and community training

Evidence so far optimistic on the intrinsic value, less on the instrumental

- Increasing participation in democratic processes can produce a **legitimacy bonus**
- There is **less evidence** linking interventions to service provision or **quality** of governance
- Interventions **are less effective than anticipated**
- **Little evidence** that CDR and related programs are effective at altering local **norms**

Possible areas for future research:

- Can local **checks and balances** counteract local political elites?
- Can we **create linkages** across the political system, for example by communicating the results of community deliberations and service providers' response to other branches of government, other offices in the bureaucracy, or political parties?
- Can an in-depth curriculum for civic education, and community organizing be transformative?
- Do interventions have **long lasting** effects?