

# Constituency Engagement

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This short guide serves to support interested applicants in thinking about the ways and importance of engaging citizens throughout their work.

Centering citizen engagement and building ties to constituents is an important part of any initiative and work aiming at progressive social change. In order for citizens to become active agents of change, civil society initiatives need to embed systemic practices of inclusion, engagement and accountability that goes beyond the role of citizens as passive end beneficiaries of interventions.

While supported initiatives by EJA Kosovo will have access to mentoring and capacity building to develop core competencies in constituent engagement, applicants need to demonstrate their approach taken so far and how they intend to reach out and reflect the needs of citizens in their work.

When developing an intervention and defining the target group, important aspects that need to be taken into account when conducting the analysis are power dynamics within society. Who is left out and why? Who benefits from the way things are being done? When designing the intervention through which lens is the problem being defined? (i.e. if the proposed intervention is aiming at the improvement of the conditions of the Roma community were any Roma involved in the design or was it just members of the majority Albanian community?)

Applicants should present a clear analysis of their target group, why their engagement and participation is relevant for the work of the organization and the different ways that they intend to engage them.

Similarly, in the analysis of their target group, applicants are expected to be cognizant of the differences of their target groups (such as gender, age, ethnicity, religion, education, location, socio-economic circumstances, interests and needs) and adapt their proposals and intervention accordingly.

Applicants are also expected to analyse the potential of target groups for engagement and elaborate a realistic approach for gradual but systematic increase of their involvement in the work of the organization.

**Defining and engaging target groups** - What are the target groups of the program, and will there be any change in their lives in case of EJA support? Does your organization engage the target group in strategic development and priority setting and how? Does your organization have enough resources at its disposal for engaging citizens? In what way will they benefit from being part of the consultation process? How do you plan to involve target groups in your organization's programs and activities?

Who should be involved and how will you include those citizens who you aim to reach? How do you intend to involve citizens in the work of your organization? What is your practice to date in involving citizens in your work? Describe any method used or planning to use in including citizens to address their concerns? What are the best ways to engage citizens in your interventions?

**Approach to program/project development** – How are you ensuring that your organization represents the priorities of the target group? What are the different ways that your organization can engage citizens at different stages of program implementation? Do you conduct evaluations of the projects? Do beneficiaries get to participate in giving feedback on the implementation of the program as well as ex-post? Do you plan any advancement of the practice in the future?

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