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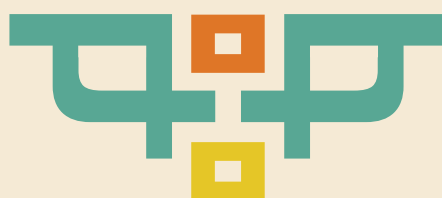
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Guide for Trainers

CSOs and Citizens' Participation



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Introduction

INTRODUCTION

This Guide for Trainers is an online resource to accompany TACSO's Manual on 'CSOs and Citizens' Participation'. The aim of the Guide is to demonstrate a range of methodologies and tools that can be used in many different types of learning activities for CSO managers and staff, local trainers and consultants, interested in building capacity for strengthening Citizens' Participation. The Guide also builds on the references made in the Manual by providing access to guidelines and templates.

The Guide is not a comprehensive manual for trainers, but is rather a starting point for those interested in designing and delivering training on this topic. The Guide is organised in chapters which reflect the first five chapters in the TACSO 'CSOs and Citizens' Participation' Manual, which highlight the most significant technical areas to be addressed by CSOs.

Under each chapter there are four distinct sections:

- Training preparation – a short introduction to each section to give some ideas about how to prepare training activities on the topic, along with a standardised 'training session plan' template:

Learning Objectives	What do we want participants to learn?
Methodology	How are we going to achieve the learning objectives?
Timing	How long will the training activities take?
Tools	What training tools are we going to use?
Other Resources	What other resources (such as equipment) will we need to deliver the training?
References	What are the 'further reading' references?

- Tools: Presentations – here you can find sample text and illustrations for PowerPoint slides and recommendations for the use of flip charts and other presentation tools.
- Tools: Handouts – a few samples of short handouts (usually one or two A4 pages) which can be copied and given to training participants in support of presentations.
- Tools: Exercises and templates – these are instructions on how to run practical training exercises, including any 'case study' notes or templates that participants might need to complete the exercise.

How to use the Guide for Trainers

The Guide for Trainers is designed to be used in conjunction with the Manual by a range of people, including trainers, CSO staff and consultants. The instructions are not comprehensive, but rather are provided as a guide for readers who are expected to have had some prior experience as a trainer or facilitator. It should also be noted that the suggested tools and methodologies are best used as the foundation to a training course and need to be supplemented with additional training activities and materials in order to meet the expectations of any given group of learners. Thus, in addition to what is provided in the Guide, prior to organising any training activity on the subject of Citizens' Participation, users of the Guide should consider the following assessment issues and the context of the training.

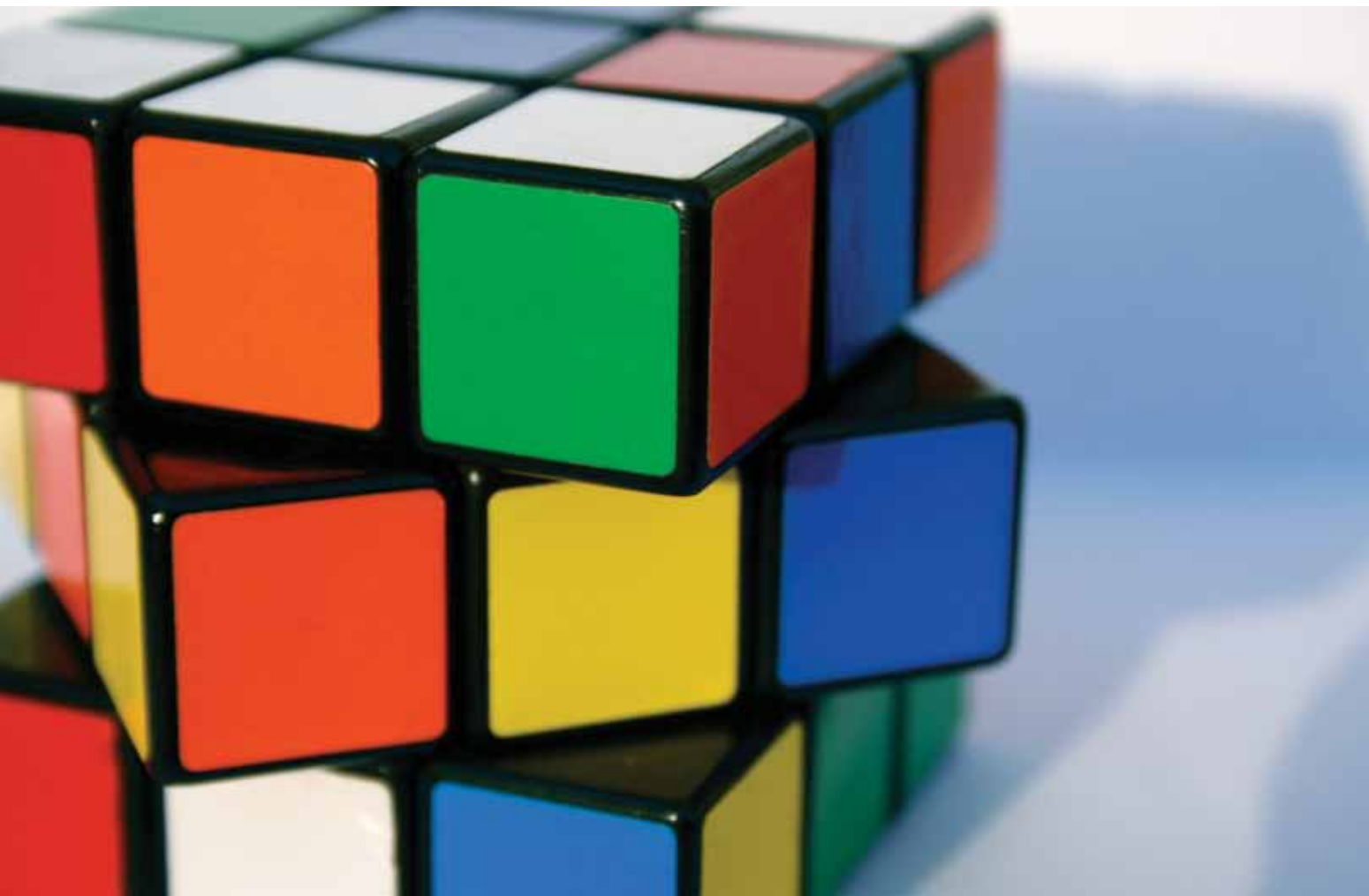
Assessing training needs

- Any training activity should be clearly designed against a set of agreed learning objectives and such objectives can only be set if the needs of the target learners have been assessed;
- when considering the support and direct actions associated with Citizens' Participation, identify the capacity needs of potential learners in terms of their existing knowledge, skills and attitude;
- if the target group for the training has no knowledge or experience generally of 'participation', you will need to think about firstly running an introductory course, which will explain the concepts and opportunities, then designing and delivering a follow-up course focusing on issues and needs identified in the introductory sessions;
- if the target group is experienced in supporting Citizens' Participation the training will probably need to be tailored to specific types of participation and be focused on issues and skills highlighted in Chapters 4 and 5 of the Manual;
- the content of the Guide can be used to design and deliver training activities of varying lengths – from individual sessions of just 60-90 minutes to a full training course of up to five days. Thus, once the training needs have been assessed, it is advisable to draft a clear training strategy which considers all available resources in order to identify exactly when and for how long any training might be given.

Consideration of training context

- Be clear on how many people are going to be trained and in what context (on-the-job, workshop, formal training seminar etc). This will influence the choice of tools (e.g. PowerPoint presentation or flip chart?) and the use of exercises;
- make sure you have reviewed and have access to any relevant local training materials on this topic. For example, in addition to the case studies and samples used in the Toolkit section of the Manual it is good to generate and use real, local materials on Citizens' Participation;

- given that much of the material available for trainees in the region is in English you will need to assess the trainees' level of English and consider how much material needs to be translated into local language, and so on;
- if the training is in support of a specific planned action (for example, to mobilise CSOs to participate in a coalition for a specific campaign or to assist in identifying responses to an EU Call for Proposals for grant funds), make sure that all the reference points in the training and all the exercises directly relate to the requirements of the campaign or Call.





Democracy and Citizens Participation

TRAINING PREPARATION

Many staff and volunteers of CSOs and individual activists often do not have the time to reflect upon and consider the concepts and 'big picture' related to Citizens' Participation. Thus it is useful in any training on this topic to spend some time exploring the concepts and developing a common understanding of the terms, purposes and approaches to participation. There is not too much to be prepared for such session(s), rather the need is for the trainer to input enough material to feed discussion. This material will be in the form of a few slides and/or handouts on the definitions, some case studies, and questions to be discussed in small groups and plenary.

Learning Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Participants are familiar with the terminology associated with the subject of Citizens' Participation; ▪ have a strengthened understanding of the key concepts and the implications for their application; ▪ have the ability to analyse the potential costs and benefits of Citizens' Participation.
Methodology	<p>The key concepts and terms can be introduced through a warm-up exercise, whereby small groups consider and then present in plenary a number of key concepts/terms (written on to key word cards'). The trainer will then wrap-up the exercise by sharing his/her own definitions through a short presentation. This summary of the terms will be followed by a presentation of the 'levels' or 'ladder' of participation.</p> <p>The notion of measuring the impact of 'participation' is introduced through a plenary presentation, as are the practical steps that need to be taken in order for a CSO to measure the potential costs and benefits of any intervention promoting participation. If there is time, the participants can be divided into small groups and given a case study scenario for which they must perform a 'fast and dirty' cost-benefit analysis using the provided matrix. Group findings can then be presented, compared and discussed in plenary.</p>
Timing	<p>The basic presentations, exercises and discussion can be facilitated in 60 minutes. However, ideally there should be at least 120 minutes each to cover the main presentations/discussions (60 mins) and to run the longer small group activity of practising a cost-benefit exercise (60 mins).</p>
Tools	<p>PPT slides on concepts/terms; Handouts: 'Ladder of participation'; 'Cost-benefit indicators'; 'Advantages/disadvantages of participation'</p>
Other Resources	<p>Projector, flip chart, paper, pens, key word cards; a brief case study of maximum 300 words (which can be adapted from any of the case studies presented in Chapters 6 and 7 of the Manual on 'CSOs and Citizens' Participation') to be used for the cost-benefit exercise.</p>
References	<p>Arnstein S. R., 1969, 'A ladder of citizen participation', Journal of American Institute of Planners.</p> <p>Holdar and Zakharchenko, 2002, 'Citizen Participation Handbook', Peoples Voice Project Ukraine.</p> <p>www.pgexchange.org—the Participation Exchange web portal of Civicus.</p>

TOOLS: PRESENTATIONS

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Guide for Trainers

Understanding the key concepts and terms




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GOVERNMENT OF THE PEOPLE, BY THE PEOPLE AND FOR THE PEOPLE.

– Abraham Lincoln –




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CSOs and Citizens' Participation

From the TACS^o Manual on 'CSOs & Citizens' Participation':

'... a participatory approach towards public policy can indeed foster a shift from 'government' to 'governance', whereby 'governance' implies a whole array of actors that are involved in the making and implementation of the public policy...

Multi-actor decision-making helps to embrace the cornerstone characteristics of governance. These are characteristics which are best summed up by a capacity for articulating a common set of priorities for society, maintaining coherence, offering 'steerage', and accountability.



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CSOs and Citizens' Participation

Obrad Ivanovic of the Serbian Democratic Forum comments that:

'Citizens' Participation means crossing the residents of local communities from 'passive political' observers into active participants in community development. Furthermore, the participation of citizens in the decision-making process means that citizens, in an organised way, recognise problems of local communities and have the ability to propose solutions.'




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CSOs and Citizens' Participation

Political Scientist Robert Dahl notes that:

'... democracies must provide equal and adequate opportunities for citizens to participate. These opportunities should see citizens:

- a) putting issues on the agenda;
- b) expressing their views on those issues;
- c) exercising some form of authority (through voting or otherwise).




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CSOs and Citizens' Participation

ODI comments on the terms 'policy' and 'policy processes', and the context in which citizens can participate in 'decision-making':

The term 'policy' is used to denote 'a purposive course of action followed by an actor or set of actors'.

This goes beyond documents or legislation as, perhaps most pertinently for many CSOs, it includes activities on the ground. It can also include changes in the behaviours of the key policy actors, and can be on a local, national, or international basis.



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'Levels' of participation

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Council of Europe's Conference of INGOs referred to four levels of participation:

- Information
- Consultation
- Dialogue
- Partnership

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CSOs and Citizens' Participation

These different perspectives on how citizen participation (or non-participation) can manifest itself, are important for CSOs in terms of:

- setting short- and long-term objectives;
- and the corresponding types of activities that they intend to implement in support of Citizens' Participation

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Measuring the costs, benefits, and impact of participation

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CSOs need to be aware that Citizens' Participation can be seen to have:

- ***two tiers of benefits: process and outcomes***
- ***two different types of beneficiaries: the citizens themselves and the decision-makers (those appointed or elected to public office)***

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Conditions likely to favour participation	Conditions likely to obstruct participation
Low-cost indicators	High-cost indicators
High-benefit indicators	Low-benefit indicators

TACSO

TOOLS: HANDOUTS

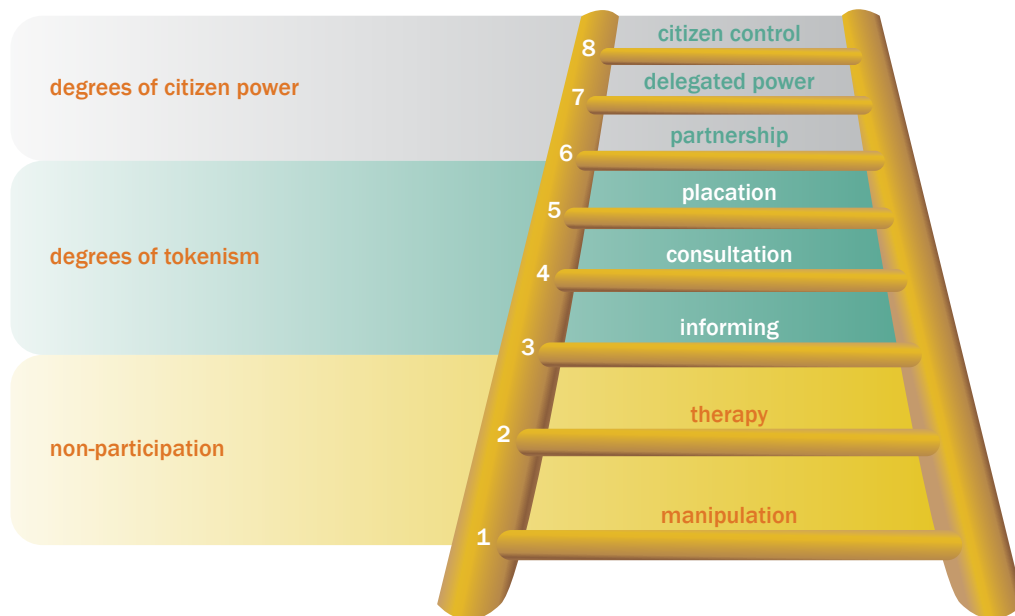
Advantages/disadvantages of Citizens' Participation

Advantages of Citizens' Participation in Decision Making Processes		
	<i>Advantages to Citizen Participants</i>	<i>Advantages to Government</i>
<i>Decision Process</i>	Education (learn from and inform government representatives) Persuade and enlighten government Gain skills in active citizenship	Education (learn from and inform citizens) Persuade citizens; Build trust and allay any fears or anxieties in the community Build strategic alliances Gain legitimacy of decisions
<i>Participation Outcomes</i>	Break possible gridlocks - achieve outcomes Gain some control over policy process Better policy and implementation decisions	Break possible gridlocks - achieve outcomes Avoid possible litigation costs Better policy and implementation decisions
Disadvantages of Citizens Participation in Decision Making Processes		
	<i>Disadvantages to Citizen Participants</i>	<i>Disadvantages to Government</i>
<i>Decision Process</i>	Time consuming (and even de-motivational) Waste of effort if input ignored	Time consuming Costly May backfire, creating more hostility to government
<i>Participation Outcomes</i>	Worse policy decision is heavily influenced by opposing interest groups	Loss of decision-making control Possibility of bad decision which is politically impossible to ignore Less resources available for the actual implementation of policy

Different levels or types of participation

During the past 30-40 years social scientists have written large amounts on the concept of 'participation' and have tried to explain why practitioners have been mistaken in thinking that participation comes in one simple form. The findings from their research and the conclusions that they offer can greatly contribute to the debates that CSOs may have in determining how they, as organisations, should approach participation.

As early as 1969 Arnstein introduced a number of important issues to the conceptual debate. In an effort to describe the way communities interacted with government in development projects, she established the idea of a ladder of participation which functioned as a continuum ranging from the most exploited and disempowered to the most controlling and empowered. These ideas enabled analysts to describe various types of participation in terms of increasing degrees of decision making. Arnstein's ladder proposed eight 'levels' of participation, starting at the bottom with levels which she described as being 'non-participatory':



Since Arnstein, others have presented more simplistic interpretations of the various types of Citizens' Participation, many from a functional or institutional viewpoint. For example, according to the OECD (2001), government-citizen relations cover an array of interactions at each stage of the policy cycle, from policy design to implementation and evaluation. For the OECD, public participation is composed of:

- information or a one-way relation in which governmental officials produce and only deliver information for use by citizens; this type of interaction provides passive access to information upon demand by citizens and active measures by government to disseminate information to citizens;
- consultation or a two-way relation in which the citizens' role consists in providing feedback to government;
- active participation or the relation based on partnership with government, in which citizens play an active role and engage in the policy-making process. This last tier admits the important role of the citizens in proposing policy alternatives and in shaping the policy dialogue. Nonetheless the responsibility for the final decision or policy formulation rests with the public administration entity.

For CSOs, the Council of Europe, through its 2008 conference for INGOs, describes the ladder of participation in a more pragmatic way, demonstrating that the involvement of CSOs in the different steps of the political decision- making process varies based on four gradual levels, where the first offers the least participation of CSOs and the last offers the most:

- Information
- Consultation
- Dialogue
- Partnership



Cost-benefit indicators for Citizens' Participation

Irvin and Stansbury suggest that conditions that may facilitate or obstruct Citizens' Participation can be analysed using indicators which help to measure the potential costs and benefits of participation. For CSOs planning to support participation and interventions in any policy area it may be useful to check the conditions for participation against the indicators in the matrix below:

Conditions Likely to Favour Participation	Conditions Likely to Obstruct Participation
<p>LOW COST INDICATORS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Community has a history of providing willing volunteers for projects ▪ Key stakeholders not geographically too dispersed and therefore can meet easily ▪ Community has levels of income that can support the donation of time to attend meetings etc ▪ Community is homogenous and therefore likely to come to an agreed decision quickly ▪ Issue does not involve too many technicalities and is easily understood and researched 	<p>HIGH COST INDICATORS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Acquiescent community reluctant to get involved in what they see as a Government job ▪ Large region with dispersed population ▪ Many competing interest groups ▪ Low income community which has other economic priorities ▪ Topic is very complex and requires considerable technical expertise ▪ Issue not considered problematic by the community
<p>HIGH BENEFIT INDICATORS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Issue is gridlocked and progress cannot be made without a mandate from citizens ▪ Hostility to Government entities is high and therefore public institutions need validation from community in order for policy to be implemented ▪ Community members willing and competent to serve formally as representatives ▪ Group facilitators with credible positions 	<p>LOW BENEFIT INDICATORS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Community not hostile to government entities ▪ Previous policy implemented successfully and credibly ▪ Population very large and difficult to influence ▪ Community representatives not seen as competent ▪ Citizens' decisions likely to be the same as government's

TOOLS: EXERCISES AND TEMPLATES

1A) Small group discussions on key concepts

This is a warmA-up exercise to help participants feel comfortable with each other and the concepts:

- on Key Word Cards write the words: Representative Democracy; Governance; Citizens' Participation; Decision-Making; Public Policy; Policy Process; Evidence; Transparency; Accountability (and others, if you wish);
- form small groups (three-four participants each) and give each group three or four cards and ask them to discuss and then formulate definitions for the words. The definitions should be written clearly on a flip chart (15-20 minutes);
- each group shares their definitions in plenary (10-15 minutes).

1B) Small group case study on advantages/disadvantages

This exercise requires that participants are given a brief case study to give them the scenario for a possible (or actual) participatory process. The case study can be adapted from any in Chapters 6 or 7 of the Manual, or drafted from the trainer's own experience. The case study should not be more than 300 words.

- in small groups the participants read and then discuss the scenario of the case study. The facilitator should circulate amongst the groups to ensure there is understanding of the case study (10 minutes);
- the groups then use the 'cost-benefit' template (from the Handouts) to carry out their analysis of the situation. The group should record what they agree are the indicators of low/high costs and low/high benefits of the participation in the case study. A flip chart and pens should be provided (20 minutes);
- groups briefly present their findings and discuss in plenary;
- the trainer should wrap-up by summarising the learning from the exercise.





Understanding Decision-Making Processes

TRAINING PREPARATION

CSOs need to appreciate that, whether they are acting at national or local level, decision-making processes tend to have a cyclical nature and therefore they need to know at what stage is the decision-making and when and where do they plan to have their intervention. Thus, sessions on 'Decision-making process' can be fairly didactic, with a presentation and discussion of the 'cycle', followed by a case study-led exercise and/or an analysis of a real piece of policy that the participants will work on. The trainer needs to ensure that explanations are illustrated with examples from either the national or local context (or both) depending on the needs and levels of the participants.

Learning Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Common understanding of the different stages of the public policy cycle and the processes associated with each (at both national and local level); ▪ skills strengthened for conducting assessments of specific policy; ▪ participants able to identify the stages at which CSOs can most effectively influence policy.
Methodology	<p>On a flip chart the trainer draws a large circle with six empty text boxes around the circle. The concept of the Public Policy Cycle is then introduced and the key six stages of the cycle elicited in plenary from the participants.</p> <p>The opening exercise is followed by a PowerPoint presentation of the details of the cycle, with appropriate examples.</p> <p>If there is time, the participants can carry out a 'policy assessment', either as a case study exercise or in relation to a specific piece(s) of policy that the participants are engaged with.</p>
Timing	<p>The basic exercise and presentation, and discussion, can be facilitated in 60 minutes. However, ideally there should be at least 120 minutes to cover the main presentations/discussions and to run the longer small group exercise to practise policy assessment.</p>
Tools	<p>Flip chart with 'empty' cycle; PPT slides on 'Public Policy Cycle'; Handouts: 'Minnesota Waters' example of cycle; policy assessment checklist.</p>
Other Resources	<p>Projector, flip chart, paper, pens; a brief case study of maximum 300 words (which can be adapted from any of the case studies presented in Chapters 6 and 7 of the Manual on 'CSOs and Citizens' Participation').</p>
References	<p>Conference of INGOs of the Council of Europe, Code of Good Practice on Civil Participation, 2008;</p> <p>Minnesota Waters at www.minnesotawaters.org;</p> <p>Holdar and Zakharchenko, 2002, 'Citizen Participation Handbook', Peoples Voice Project, Ukraine;</p> <p>Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development www.oecd.org/puma</p> <p>As a separate link through the OECD, the Public Management Program (PUMA) offers a range of themes relating to its public management services. Special attention should be paid to the section on government-citizen relations, with online articles, an excellent documentation section (with questionnaires) and general information on engaging citizens in policy-making and providing services to citizens.</p>

TOOLS: PRESENTATIONS

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Public policy cycle

An introduction



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Steps in political decision-making processes

- Agenda setting
- Drafting
- Decision
- Implementation
- Monitoring
- Reformulation

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Agenda setting

NGOs	Public authorities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advocating • Information and awareness building • Expertise and advice • Innovation • Service provision 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information sharing • Procedures • Resource provision • Responsiveness

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Tools and mechanisms

Information level:	Dialogue:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to information • Research • Campaign and lobbying • Website 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hearings and public forum • Citizens' forums and future councils • Key government contact
Consultation level:	Partnership:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Petitioning • Consultation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work group or committee

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Drafting

NGOs	Public authorities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advocating • Information and awareness building • Expertise and advice • Innovation • Service provision • Watchdog function 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information sharing • Procedures • Resource provision • Responsiveness

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Tools and mechanisms

Information level:	Consultation and dialogue level:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open and free access to policy documents • Research • Campaign and lobbying • Website • Webcasts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hearings and Q&A panels • Expert seminars and meetings • Petitioning • Consultation • Multi-stakeholders committees • Advisory bodies
	Partnership:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Co-drafting

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Decision

NGOs	Public authorities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advocating • Information and awareness building • Expertise and advice • Watchdog function 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information sharing • Procedures • Resource provision • Responsiveness

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CSOs and Citizens' Participation

Tools and mechanisms

Information level:

- Campaign and lobbying

Consultation and dialogue level:

- Open plenary or committee session

Partnership:

- Joint decision making
- Co-decision making

for

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Implementation

NGOs

- Information and awareness building
- Service provision
- Watchdog function

Public authorities

- Information sharing
- Procedures
- Resource provision
- Responsiveness

for

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CSOs and Citizens' Participation

Tools and mechanisms

Information level:

- Open and free access to policy documents
- E-mail alerts
- FAQs
- Website
- Publicly advertised tender procedures

Dialogue level:

- Capacity building seminars
- Training seminars

Partnership:

- Strategic partnership

Consultation:

- Events, conferences, forums, seminars

for

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CSOs and Citizens' Participation

Monitoring

NGOs

- Advocating
- Expertise and advice
- Service provision
- Watchdog function

Public authorities

- Information sharing
- Responsiveness

for

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CSOs and Citizens' Participation

Tools and mechanisms

Information level:

- Open and free access to information
- Evidence gathering
- Evaluation
- Independent research studies

Dialogue level:

- Work group or committee

Partnership:

- Work group or committee

Consultation:

- Feedback mechanisms

for

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CSOs and Citizens' Participation

Reformulation

NGOs

- Advocating
- Expertise and advice
- Innovation
- Service provision

Public authorities

- Information sharing
- Procedures
- Resource provision
- Responsiveness

for

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CSOs and Citizens' Participation

Tools and mechanisms

Information level:

- Open and free access to information

Dialogue level:

- Seminars and deliberative forums

Consultation:

- Conference or meeting
- Online consultations

Partnership:

- Work group or committee

for

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CSOs and Citizens' Participation

Cross cutting tools and mechanisms

- Civic education
- Capacity building for participation
- Access to public information
- Structures for cooperation between NGOs and public authorities
- Framework documents on cooperation between NGOs and public authorities

for

TOOLS: HANDOUTS

The 'policy cycle' as described by the environmental NGO Minnesota Waters

Public Policy Decision-Making Process - A Local Level Model

'Minnesota Waters' is an environmental NGO which has a mission "to promote responsible stewardship of our water resources by engaging citizens, local and state policymakers, and other partners in the protection and restoration of Minnesota's lakes and rivers". The organisation has developed its own model for understanding the decision making process and how citizen engagement relates to it:

Stage 1 ⇨ Awareness

Citizens with an interest or stake in an issue (stakeholders) increase their awareness of the issue. Awareness emerges through informal discussions, sporadic complaints, or in extreme circumstances, litigation forcing action on an issue. In the awareness stage, the process offers the public an initial opportunity to exchange viewpoints about a concern(s). This exchange helps citizens clarify concerns by legitimizing their complaints, hearing about how others are affected by the same issue, and separating rumour from fact.

Stage 2 ⇨ Involvement

Other stakeholders are identified who are affected by the issue but are not yet involved in discussions. Citizens may also identify information specialists to provide facts about the issue and who might help identify other stakeholders.

Stage 3 ⇨ Issue Clarification

Clarifying the concern and framing it formally as a public issue is the goal in the third stage of the issue evolution cycle. Stakeholders may exchange individual perceptions of the problem through focus group interviews, panel discussions, public forums (whole group input), and/or study groups. Knowledge-based experts on the issue may be invited to conduct or coordinate scientific research and share research results with the public.

Stage 4 ⇨ Alternative Identification:

As the issue is clarified through the educational process, stakeholders identify and/or create alternatives to resolve the issue. In addition to scientific or technical information provided by subject matter specialists, stakeholders may conduct their own research to identify alternatives. Citizen research may include: reviews of journal articles, books, videos; citizen surveys, and case studies of areas with similar issues. Ideally, the alternatives generated are based on factual, objective information combined with an effective exchange of individual views, ideas, and values.

Stage 5 ⇨ Consequence Analysis

Citizens examine carefully the consequences of the alternatives created in stage 4. This involves looking at the measurable costs and benefits of alternatives in terms of, for example, time, cost, technical feasibility, and human and physical resources required. In addition to economic

consequences, social consequences must be considered as well. Potential losses to public welfare are difficult to measure, but provide important information to consider when weighing consequences of public action.

Stage 6 ⇨ Choice

After careful consideration of alternatives and consequences of a particular action, stakeholders can provide informed input as how to address the issue. In making a choice, stakeholders learn or improve their understanding of how public choice is shaped into public policy. This may involve learning how to influence elected officials as well as individuals who influence decisions behind the scenes.

Ideally, stakeholders are in agreement that the choice represents the best possible way of addressing the issue. They must be open, however, to working through conflicts that might arise among disagreeing interests. Hard-line advocates of a particular choice must learn that there are advantages in negotiating and collaborating with their opponents. If they refuse to negotiate, the issue may end up unresolved. Therefore, striving for a solution that satisfies all interests is of interest to all stakeholders.

Stage 7 ⇨ Implementation

In this stage, the choice is implemented in the form of a policy or formal agreement of understanding. Stakeholders need to understand how the agreement or new policy will be implemented. They need to look for changes in public opinion that might occur during its implementation. Individual concerns may arise during implementation that includes, for example, possible third party injuries. This possibility emphasizes the importance of including a broad and diverse array of stakeholders in the awareness and involvement stages of the issue evolution cycle. It also underlines the importance of examining carefully the consequences of given alternatives.

Stage 8 ⇨ Evaluation:

This final stage of the cycle evaluates the effectiveness of the choice or implemented policy. At this stage stakeholders may ask:

- Is the policy or action taking care of the problem?
- Does the public agree that the policy is effective? Why?
- Is it perceived generally as ineffective? Why?
- What can be done to improve it?

The final stage offers an additional opportunity to evaluate the entire issue education process. Stakeholders may ask:

- What happened at each stage?
- Why did this happen?
- What else might have happened?
- Has the situation improved?
- What can we do to improve the situation?

In a sense, stage 8 offers a chance to begin the cycle anew—with more information and experience begin clarifying concerns.

TOOLS: EXERCISES AND TEMPLATES

2A) Using a policy assessment checklist

What is it?

Policy Process Assessment is a technique where a policy is in the policy development process.

Who uses it?

Individuals and/or groups.

Why use it?

To plan your course of action for advocating change based on where the policy is in the development process.

How to use it?

- if working with a group, explain to them the objective of the exercise;
- describe in one sentence the policy you will be assessing. Policy description:

- then agree on where in the process of policy development the policy is by placing **X** in the appropriate box.

Stage of development	
<i>Problem identification and agenda setting:</i> In which policy problems are defined and the policy agenda set.	
<i>Policy formation:</i> Is the stage in which policies are created or changed.	
<i>Adoption:</i> Is the stage when the policy is enacted, or brought into force.	
<i>Policy Implementation:</i> Includes the actions and mechanisms whereby policies are brought into practice.	
<i>Policy evaluation:</i> The final stage in the policy-making process includes monitoring, analysis, criticism and assessment of exiting or proposed policies.	



Challenges and Opportunities for CSOs in Support of Participation

TRAINING PREPARATION

Once participants have a sound understanding of the key concepts relating to ‘participation’ and the various stages of the ‘policy cycle’ they will need to focus on specific skill sets required of their organisations. CSOs need to have particular capacities in order to take practical steps in terms of promoting Citizens’ Participation. Thus, training sessions should be designed so that CSOs can respond to three fundamental questions: firstly, what is the role of CSOs in support of Citizens’ Participation; secondly, what opportunities exist for exercising that role; and thirdly, what challenges do CSOs face in fulfilling that role and how should they address those challenges.

To deliver training in these three topic areas requires considerable time as participants will need to workshop a number of practical exercises and then be able to develop their own capacity building strategies. Alternatively, if little time is available, the topics can be reviewed in a theoretical manner and participants encouraged to undertake the practical work once they have returned to their organisations. This latter approach would be most effective if accompanied by some sort of organisational development support from the trainer or other external consultants.



<p>Learning Objectives</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Various roles and opportunities for CSOs to support Citizens' Participation identified and improved understanding of the mechanisms related to those opportunities; ▪ participants able to use a SWOT analysis to identify the strengths and weaknesses of CSOs in support of Citizens' Participation; ▪ improved capacity for analysing stakeholders and their interests, and in building relationships with specific stakeholders; ▪ knowledge of the practical steps for establishing and running an effective coalition.
<p>Methodology</p>	<p>To achieve the learning objectives it will be necessary to design at least two or three sessions to be run in a 'workshop' style.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Open the first session with a plenary discussion (brainstorming activity) to elicit participants' views on the role of CSOs in support of Citizens' Participation. The ideas can be captured on a flip chart for later reference. Next, in order to be able to successfully fulfil the suggested roles, CSOs need to be able to assess both the internal and external environments and develop and implement strategies to deal with the environmental conditions. Thus the trainer will introduce the SWOT analysis tool and set up small groups to do an exercise whereby participants either do an analysis of their own organisation(s) or an analysis of CSOs in general. The groups feedback in plenary; ▪ in relation to strengthening understanding of both internal and external conditions, CSOs need to be able to a) undertake a stakeholder analysis, and b) implement strategies for building partnerships, coalitions and other relationships in support of Citizens' Participation. Thus the trainer will briefly present the concept and tools for stakeholder analysis and ask participants to do an exercise using the stakeholder analysis matrix. The exercise can either be done quickly in plenary on a general basis, or in more detail in small groups on a specific issue. Thereafter, a brief presentation introduces the key issues related to developing partnerships and coalitions; ▪ to summarise the main attributes and capacities that CSOs need to have in order to support Citizens' Participation the trainer leads on a presentation of the concept of 'Policy entrepreneurs'. Next, focus should be given to exploring the barriers to participation in the external environment. This can again be done either as a plenary practical exercise or in small groups. Participants use the template for analysing the 'Barriers for participation' by firstly listing the main barriers, then discussing and agreeing on practical steps to address or mitigate these barriers. The results can be recorded on flip charts. <p>An additional session can be run to explore the national level mechanisms used in the EU and regional experiences for guiding CSO-public co-operation. The trainer can use a PPT presentation to introduce some examples and thereafter moderate a plenary discussion stimulated by prepared key questions.</p>
<p>Timing</p>	<p>Each session will take between 60-90 minutes. In the case of restricted time, it is advised that Sessions 2 and 3 be combined into one 90-minute session, with exercises undertaken in plenary and the trainer acting as lead facilitator.</p> <p>The session on EU practices can be between 30-45 minutes.</p>
<p>Tools</p>	<p>Flip chart paper, pens; PPT slides on 'Challenges and opportunities for CSOs in support of CP'; handouts: 'Common strengths/weaknesses of CSOs'; 'SWOT analysis'; 'Stakeholder analysis template and exercise'; 'Case studies of coalitions'; 'Barriers to participation' template.</p>
<p>Other Resources</p>	<p>Projector; display stands for flip chart presentations.</p>

TOOLS: PRESENTATIONS

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CSOs and Citizens' Participation

Challenges and opportunities for CSOs in support of Citizens' Participation

Building on strengths;
Addressing weaknesses

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CSOs and Citizens' Participation

Citizens' Participation 'aims to empower citizens, to give them better access to information and better forums for debate because 'information is power'. Clearly, this requires cooperation from civil society organisations (CSOs). CSOs are well placed to organise polls, petitions and trans-national forums for debate on the web in order to enable citizens to make their voices heard.

Margot Wallstrom, Vice President of the EU Commission
3 October, 2007 - European Citizen Action Service

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CSOs and Citizens' Participation

However, CSOs need to have a clear understanding of their own **Strengths and Weaknesses** in relation to their role for Citizens' Participation, and to analyse the **Opportunities and Threats** presented by the environment in which they are operating.

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STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES	Internal environment
OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS	External environment
positives	negatives	

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Understanding the stakeholders

A stakeholder can be a person (a citizen), an institution (including various government compartments), a business or an association representing business interests, a specific group or category of individuals (e.g. youth, elderly, men, women, etc.), a neighbourhood or even the whole community. Stakeholders are those individuals and/or groups who will be in some way, either positively or negatively, affected by the policy.

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CSOs should ask the following questions, in order to **identify stakeholders**:

- Who do you think will benefit from this particular piece of policy or project?
- Who can be negatively affected?
- Who can delay or hinder the implementation of activities?
- Who can have qualities, money or other resources to support the policy?
- Who is in charge of making decisions on this policy or project?
- Who is missing from our list of stakeholders?!

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Stakeholder groups	Role in the policy issue	Policy impact on stakeholder or group	Stakeholder group influence over the policy		
			Policy preparation	Policy decision	Policy implementation
1					
2					
3					

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Systematic considerations which affect CSOs' capacities for research and analysis:

- Do you have a strategy for how to develop your organisation's analytical skills and to ensure that you have access to the necessary research resources (including external experts)?
- What potential partnerships or alliances can you develop in order to access and benefit from the research undertaken by others, such as universities, think-tanks, multi-lateral agencies?

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- Do you have feedback mechanisms/quality control systems (such as peer reviews) to assess your research findings and conclusions?
- Is there a differentiation between the presentation of research findings with the presentation of your organisation's viewpoint?
- What opportunities are there (such as seminars and conferences) to nurture long-term relationships with key stakeholders in the decision-making processes?

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Level of citizens' influence in decision making

Establishment of channels and bodies for mutual cooperation

LEVEL OF CITIZENS' INFLUENCE IN DECISION MAKING

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CSOs and Citizens' Participation

Developing partnerships

Building coalitions

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Partnerships

- Principles: equity, transparency, mutual benefit;
- Be clear on your criteria for partners;
- Assess risks and rewards of any potential partnership;
- Formalise the partnership;
- Clear system for partnership governance and reporting;
- Agree and regularly update management plans for the partnership (roles, activities, resources);
- Monitor, evaluate, and document lessons learnt.

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Coalitions

- Establish an initiative committee/group;
- Define goal, objectives, scope;
- Select/canvas coalition members;
- Hold constituent assembly;
- Develop action plan;
- Implement activities;
- Monitor/evaluate;
- Communicate success and share lessons learnt.

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CSOs as policy entrepreneurs

Storytellers

Successful policy entrepreneurs need to be good storytellers. This is because narratives inform policy. Narratives are simple, powerful stories that help policy makers understand a complex reality. Scheherazade was a consummate storyteller: she managed to survive the daily threat of beheading by telling the Sultan the most wonderful stories.

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CSOs as policy entrepreneurs

Networkers

Good networkers are likely to have more policy influence than those who are not. One ultimate networker was Paul Revere. The night that Revere rode out in 1775 to raise the militia against the British in America, another rider also set out: William Dawes. In all the villages that Revere went to, the militia turned out and defeated the British. In the villages that Dawes went to, no-one turned out to fight. Why? The answer is that Revere was networked. He was well known, well-connected and trusted.

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CSOs as policy entrepreneurs

Engineers

To be convinced policy makers need to see things working in practice. So policy entrepreneurs need to practically test their ideas if they expect policy makers to heed their recommendations. Who better to represent this way of working than Isambard Kingdom Brunel. The best story about him is apocryphal: Brunel was very much engaged in the debate about whether paddle wheels or screw propellers were more efficient and powerful for moving boats. In order to test that theory, he is supposed to have built one of each, tied them together and put them in the Bristol Channel to see which would tug the hardest.

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CSOs as policy entrepreneurs

Fixers

The fourth and final model of the policy entrepreneur is the 'fixer'. Examples could include Rasputin and Machiavelli. This model is about understanding the policy and political process, knowing when to make your pitch and to whom. Rasputin famously became indispensable to the Russian Tsarina. He presented himself as the only one with a solution. CSOs need to understand and respond to contexts to be effective in policy engagement.



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External conditions

Assessing the threats and barriers to participation

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Barriers to Citizens' Participation	Root cause of the constraint	Mitigation strategy
List the barriers to Citizens' Participation within the community/communities that your CSO serves	Undertake a simple problem analysis to identify the root cause(s) for each of the 'barriers'	Discuss and identify possible strategies to mitigate or minimize the impact of these 'barriers'
1.		
2.		
3.		

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**EU examples of good practices
at the national level
to guide NGO-public cooperation**

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France

- **The National Council of Associative Life, 1983**
Consultation institution depending on the Prime Minister. The Council missions are to study and follow relevant topics related to associative life, agree on legislative or regulatory projects, propose useful measures for the development of associative life and report every three years.

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Estonia

- **Estonia Civil Society Development Concept (EKAK), 2002**
Document which describes different roles of the public sector and non-profit sector and their cooperation principles in developing and implementing public policies and building up civil society. For the long term EKAK wants to raise civil education, foster citizen action and guarantee the functioning support system for civil initiatives.

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Croatia

- Program for Cooperation between Government and NGOs (2001);
- Civil society recognised as important social actors, especially in creation, monitoring and implementation of public policies and provision of public services;
- Principle of independency.

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Croatia

- National Strategy for Creation of Environment Stimulating to Development of Civil Society (2007–2011);
- Code of good practice of consultation;
- Government office;
- Council for Civil Society development.

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Bosnia and Herzegovina

- General framework: agreement on cooperation between the Council of Ministers of BiH and non-governmental sector;
- Board of Civil Society.

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FYR Macedonia

- Strategy for cooperation of the Government with the Civil Society (2007–2011);
- The office for contact between NGOs and Parliament;
- The National Council of Euro-Integration.

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England

- COMPACT is the example of the institutional partnership between government and the third sector, established in 1998.
- The Compact is an agreement between government and the voluntary and community sector in England. It stands for better partnership working, and recognises shared values, principles and commitments and sets out guidelines for how both parties should work together. Its commitments are divided into three areas covering 'involvement in policy development', 'allocating resources' and 'advancing equality'. Attached is the general information about the Compact, explaining who it applies to, how to implement the Compact and resolve differences.

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Office of the Third Sector (OTS)

The OTS was created at the centre of government (as part of the Cabinet Office) in May 2006 in recognition of the increasingly important role the third sector plays in both society and the economy.

Role:

- Driving cross-government action to improve partnership working and ensure better terms of engagement between government and the third sector;
- Investment in programmes to support the sector's development and promotion;
- Ensuring a good policy and regulatory environment for the sector;
- Developing a strong evidence base and analysis to better inform the work of the government and third sector.



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The UK CSO actors influencing development policy

- BOND is a successful advocacy body influencing policy on a transnational level, e.g. the EU's international development agenda;
- This umbrella CSO is great example of how civil society organises and uses available influencing mechanisms—both in the UK through DFID and EU—to lobby, advocate and influence aid policies.



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Relevant links:

- <http://www.bond.org.uk>
- <http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk>
- <http://www.thecompact.org.uk>
- <http://cps.ceu.hu>





TOOLS: HANDOUTS

Common strengths and weaknesses of CSOs in support of Citizens' Participation

Strengths of CSOs in support of citizens' participation:

- A solid track record of activities and community engagement enables CSOs to be trusted by a wide range of stakeholders, including government, and therefore offers opportunities to bridge gaps between opposing groups;
- CSOs frequently have specific expertise in facilitation and mediation and thus offer an effective forum for dialogue and debate;
- for government entities that are committed to transparency and democratic processes, close cooperation with CSOs offers great mechanisms for demonstrating this commitment;
- CSOs also offer governments a mechanism for tapping into additional resources, particularly in terms of expertise and local 'know-how';
- can enhance communication between the legislative and executive branches of government, between government and the community, and between branches of local government;
- public institutions are often looking for new insights and creativity in policy analysis, which their bureaucratic environment can otherwise stifle;
- CSOs can assist in reaching out to the more remote stakeholders;
- in communities that have deep political, social or ethnic divisions, CSOs that are broadly representative of the make-up of the whole community can help to defuse tensions and de-politicise the process of governing.

Common weaknesses of CSOs in support of citizens' participation:

- Not seen as having legitimacy within the community and constituency they claim to represent;
- perceived or actual hostility towards government entities which makes them seem as unlikely partners in governance;
- lack of both human and financial capacity for consistent cooperation;
- poor capacity for communication with stakeholders and a lack of organisational transparency
- research and analysis of evidence for policy debates is often compromised or incomplete, and its presentation ineffective;
- strong motivation, but often unrealistic objectives. This is well summed up by a comment from Nihat Yildirim of the Turkish TEGV Foundation:

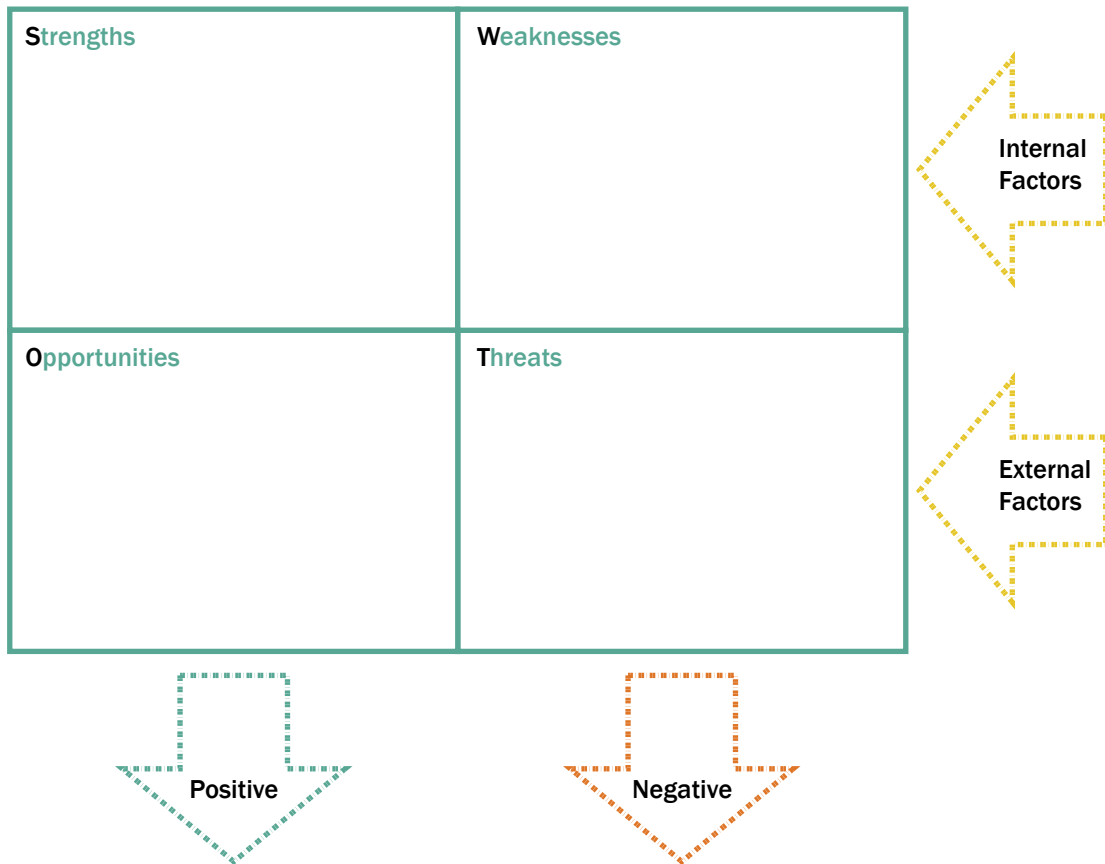
“One of the common weakness is what we may call a “as if we’re going to save the world” approach, which causes an “inconsistency” of participation to NGO activities even for the people who do not have prejudices or doubts. Such activists have high hopes for the power of NGO work, but their unrealistic approach often leads to a loss of motivation and the NGO loses its volunteers.”



TOOLS: EXERCISES AND TEMPLATES

3A) Undertaking a SWOT analysis

An evaluation of the internal and external environment is an important part of the strategic planning process for CSOs. Internal factors relating to a CSO's capacity for supporting Citizens' Participation usually can be classified as strengths (S) or weaknesses (W), and those external to the organisation can be classified as either opportunities (O) for supporting Citizens' Participation, or threats (T) to such support. This analysis of the strategic environment is referred to as a SWOT analysis.



3B) Stakeholder analysis matrix

Stakeholder groups	Role in the policy issue	Policy impact on stakeholder groups	Stakeholder group influence over the policy		
			<i>Stage preparation</i>	<i>Stage decision</i>	<i>Stage implementation</i>
1					
2					
3					
4					
5					
6					
7					
8					
9					
10					

Legend:

U = unknown

1 = no importance

2 = low importance

3 = relative importance

4 = high importance

5 = critical

Stakeholder case study exercise

Pitești Municipality pursued, all throughout 2001, the rehabilitation of a large area in the main park—Strand Park. In a first attempt to stimulate citizen participation the Municipality identified those stakeholders who will be the main beneficiaries of the facilities provided by the park:

- athletes' association;
- students from a university adjacent to the park;
- tenant associations in the neighbourhood;
- parents of the children who use the playfield in the area;
- students of nearby schools;
- the elderly, especially those in the Citizens' Advisory Group;
- Roma communities adjacent to the park;
- NGOs.

The stakeholder representatives were interviewed and invited to take part in focus groups, in order to provide information to the project team.

(Pitești Municipality, 24 Victoriei Street, 0300 Pitești, county Argeș; tel: 048-626287; contact person: Dan Teodorescu, Division for Heritage and Social Activities)

1. Do you think there are other stakeholders in the rehabilitation of the Strand Park in Pitești?
2. Assuming that you represent the interests of (a) the Roma community, (b) a tenants' association, (c) an athletes' association and (d) an ecological NGO, what questions would you ask the project manager?

Barriers to Citizens Participation	Root Cause of the Constraint	Mitigation Strategy
<i>List the barriers to citizens participation within the community/communities that your CSO serves</i>	<i>Undertake a simple problem analysis to identify the root cause(s) for each of the 'barriers'</i>	<i>Discuss and identify possible strategies to mitigate or minimise the impact of these 'barriers'</i>
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		
6.		
7.		
8.		
9.		
10.		



Entry Points and Tools for Engagement

TRAINING PREPARATION

The accompanying Manual on 'CSOs and Citizens' Participation' has information on more than 30 different tools that can be used or facilitated by CSOs in support of participation. Some of the tools are straightforward and simple to use, whereas others are very technical and require considerable expertise to apply successfully. If you are working with a target group that is advanced and has considerable experience in participatory practices you may need to design dedicated sessions, with practical exercises, to explore how to use specific tools (as guided by the training needs assessment).

If this is the case, this Guide can be taken as a starting point. However, you will need to prepare yourself by researching materials (tools instructions and case studies of their use) from the websites listed at the end of this Guide. If your target group is looking for more basic instruction and an introduction on how to use some of the simpler participatory tools, then the guidance below will be of help. However, remember that training sessions on the use of the tools should involve practice and, ideally, should be followed-up by coaching so that participants can access guidance in using the tools during their day-to-day activities.



<p>Learning Objectives</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Participants have an overview of the types of participatory activities possible at each stage of the policy cycle; ▪ increased knowledge of the range of tools available for Citizens’ Participation; ▪ increase in the skills for applying some basic tools for participation; ▪ knowledge of where to find more information about tools for Citizens’ Participation; ▪ an overview of the key aspects to successful lobbying.
<p>Methodology</p>	<p>An introductory session should be delivered so that a range of tools are presented in the context of the different stages of the policy cycle. This can be done through a short presentation and plenary discussion. To further develop insights into how best to use the tools it is useful to assemble a ‘panel of experts/practitioners’ and ask each one to give a brief presentation of their experience of using one or two tools. The panel presentations can be followed by a plenary Q&A session.</p> <p>Practical exercise should be designed according to the needs and levels of experience of the participants. For those trainees who are ‘beginners’ and need an overview of the tools, trainers can choose practical work from the following list:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ in small groups, participants are given a scenario and asked to propose which tools could be used in the situation. Once they have chosen the tools, the groups should explain the reason/s for their choice and the potential advantages/disadvantages. Each group can have different scenarios and each will then present their findings in plenary. ▪ in small groups, participants are given a scenario case study and asked to prepare a finished tool to be used—this will involve describing the constituents of the tool; how, where and when it will be used; what will be the expected outputs from the use of the tool; how will the outputs be used; and, what risks there are in using the tool and how to mitigate these. ▪ a ‘bus top’ exercise, whereby five or six tools are written up on flip chart paper and pinned on different ‘stops’ around the training venue. In small groups, participants visit the ‘stops’ (one group at a time) by getting on and off ‘the bus’, and at each ‘stop’ the group discusses the ‘+’ and ‘-’ of each tool. The discussions last for just three minutes at each ‘stop’ before the group moves on to the next one. Once all the groups have visited all the ‘stops’ the trainer displays all the groups’ comments in one place and facilitates a plenary discussion. <p>For more advanced groups and with those with a specific need to practice the use of particular tools, trainers will need to either design a detailed case study exercise or facilitate participants to design tools for actual use in their organisation’s work. This latter approach will require that participants come to the training with preparatory materials/information from their organisations.</p> <p>An additional session can also be run to introduce the role of lobbying and how to organise lobbying activities. This session can use the presentation prepared below and follow the suggested exercises in the presentation.</p>
<p>Timing</p>	<p>A basic training programme on this subject can be covered over two sessions of 90-minutes each. A more advanced course may require a day or longer.</p>
<p>Tools</p>	<p>Flip chart paper, pens; PPT slides on: ‘Tools for Citizens’ Participation’ and ‘An introduction to lobbying’</p>
<p>Other Resources</p>	<p>Projector; display stands for flip chart presentations; panel of experts.</p>

References

Civicus

www.civicus.org

This is a useful site that promotes the active involvement of local citizens in their communities, wherever they live. Of special interest is a new dedicated portal on 'participatory governance', which acts as a facilitator for sharing knowledge and experiences of participation throughout the world. This is a highly recommended community of practice site: www.pgexchange.org.

Involve (UK)

www.involve.org.uk

Involve are experts in public engagement, participation and dialogue. They carry out research and deliver training to inspire citizens, communities and institutions to run and take part in high-quality public participation processes, consultations and community engagement.

Participatory Budgeting Unit (UK)

www.participatorybudgeting.org.uk

This is a web-based resource run by an NGO in Manchester (UK) to support public sector and community groups in developing participatory budgeting processes in their local areas.



TOOLS: PRESENTATIONS

TACS Technical Assistance for Civil Society Organisations

CSOs and Citizens' Participation

Tools for Citizens' Participation

at different stages in the policy cycle



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Tool

Civic education

A large element of civic education is about implementing communication strategies, which often involve various kinds of awareness-raising campaigns: leaflets, posters, radio broadcasts, online forums, electronic flyers, public lectures, social events, door-to-door campaigns, competitions, public appearances of 'champions' and 'role models', and many other strategies.

At what stages in the policy cycle can it be used?

Continuously

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Tools

Opinion polls, surveys, online forums, 'open house' meetings, roadshows, video 'soapboxes'

At what stages in the policy cycle can it be used?

Agenda setting
Drafting
Monitoring

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Tool

Citizens' advisory groups and panels

A group of 10-20 members of the community which can be a representative sample of the local population, representatives of particular groups (for example, older people) or specific individuals, such as community leaders.

At what stages in the policy cycle can it be used?

Agenda setting
Drafting
Implementation
Monitoring
Reformulation

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Tool

Public hearings

Open and widely publicised, and held at a convenient time and location for the community, public officials make brief presentations, then listen to moderated comments from participants; feedback recorded and shared; outcomes publicised

At what stages in the policy cycle can it be used?

Agenda setting
Drafting
Monitoring




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Tool

The planning cell

Approximately 25 randomly selected people work as public consultants for a limited period of time (e.g. one week) in order to present solutions for a given planning or policy problem. Two moderators are responsible for the information schedule and plenary sessions. Experts, stakeholders and interest groups have the opportunity to present their positions to members. The final results of the cell's work are summarised as a citizen report, which is delivered to the authorities as well as to the participants themselves.

At what stages in the policy cycle can it be used?

Drafting
Reformulation

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Tool

Investment planning

A form of participatory planning that facilitates citizens' engagement with the lengthy process of identifying and prioritising the infrastructural needs of a local authority district. It can also be applied to local economic development.

At what stages in the policy cycle can it be used?

Agenda setting
Drafting
Reformulation




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CSOs and Citizens' Participation

Tool

Public barometers, Community Score Cards, report cards, focus groups, community interviews, direct observation.

At what stages in the policy cycle can it be used?

Implementation
Monitoring

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Tool

Training workshops

For many members of the public there is a desire to be involved in how public funds are allocated but they often struggle with the technical aspects. Because of this some basic civic education on this topic can be very effective. Likewise, finance officers in public administrations often lack experience and expertise in working in a participatory manner so CSOs can offer them training.

At what stages in the policy cycle can it be used?

Drafting
Implementation



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CSOs and Citizens' Participation

Lobby mechanisms for recognition of the importance of civil participation at the local and national level

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Lobby mechanisms for recognition of the importance of civil participation at the local and national level

- Background of lobbying;
- Building and managing coalitions;
- How to prepare a lobbying campaign;
- How to lobby effectively;
- How to influence legislation;
- How to evaluate the success of the campaign.

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Finding the best lobby mechanisms for civil participation at the local and national level

Exercise (group work):

Subjects on environment, drafting a law (free to choose), social inclusion and anti-corruption:

- Four lobbying campaigns related to the issues mentioned above through combination of mechanisms for civil participation;
- Presentation;
- Discussion.

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Lobby mechanisms for recognition of the importance of civil participation at the local and national level

Role play (group work):

Simulation (subject free to choose):

- Two groups take the role of two government bodies: one central and one local.
- Two other groups take the role of CSOs: one represents the coalition at a national level and one at a local level.

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Citizens' Participation in decision-making processes – local context –

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Local context: Information and civil society participation

- Providing regular and updated information's regarding central / local policies, strategic planning, agendas, public hearings and budget expenditures.
- Accessible approaches/ deliveries by the GO incorporates: Information office, periodic bulletins, brochures, electronic and printed media, openness on monitoring and watchdog by CSOs, e-government, providing accessible documents in time.
- **Discussion:** At what level is the environment where there is sufficient ground for sufficient information gathering in time enabled by central/local authorities at your country level?

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Case study: Opening of offices for public information in Albania (country and municipal level):

- Challenges and obstacles in creating opportunities for citizens' information from local authorities in Albania;
- Opening of the Office for Public Information in Tirana, Albania.

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Establishment of the offices for public information in Albania

- The first office for public information was opened in 1998;
- Now more than 16 offices operate in full or partial capacity at the local level;
- Six offices operate at the central level;
- Main donors who supported the establishment of offices: USAID, SIDA, SOROS etc.

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Opening of the first office for public information in Tirana – a new experience

- Opening date: 3 February 2003;
- Citizens are provided services carried by 12 municipality officers;
- Citizens come on a daily basis to get standard information and to apply with standard forms required for processing documentation;
- Citizens can appeal through the office;
- Citizens can get information on strategic planning and budgetary expenses.

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Lack of public information – one of the biggest obstacles in Albania

The main obstacles:

- Legacy of the previous political system: hesitation in sharing documentation;
- Lack of strategy for sharing information and communication;
- Lack of reforms in judiciary system;
- Lack of necessary infrastructure;
- Untrained staff;
- Lack of resources (financial and technological).

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The role of the office for public information in developing governmental capacities in Albania

- Improvement in governmental strategy;
- Improvement of political agenda;
- Feedback from citizens;
- Indicators of government performance;
- Effectiveness in service delivery;
- Improvement in internal and external communication;
- Participation in finding the best solutions in relation to public service.

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Local context: consultation in decision-making process

Consultative decision making has, as its foundation, the theory that collective intelligence creates and implements better solutions than authorities alone.

Consultative decision-making can be used in all matters and is implicitly or explicitly related to a wide range of topics concerning Citizens' Participation. Consultative decision-making provides important inputs throughout participatory processes.

Discussion: *At what level is the environment where there is sufficient ground for consultation levels of participation between GO and CSOs at your country level?*

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Local context: dialogue in decision-making process

Opportunity for citizens to express their views on the community policies and central/local administrative effectiveness. Participation in policy strategies through helping to implement the processes that incorporate the dialogue as a part of decision-making.

Discussion: *At what level is the environment where there is sufficient ground for dialogue between GO and CSOs at your country level?*

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Local context: partnership in decision-making process

- This is the highest level of civil society engagement in decision-making processes. This level needs to be understood as a mutual level of cooperation between government, CSOs and other potential stakeholders. The successful partnership is reached only where there is sufficient willingness of authorities to engage civil society representatives in joint decision-making. Within the partnership agreements, roles and responsibilities are clearly defined in the process.
- **Discussion:** *At what level is the environment where there is sufficient ground for partnership between GO and CSOs at your country level?*

TOOLS: HANDOUTS

Please refer to the 'Toolbox' at the end of the 'CSOs and Citizens' Participation' Manual which includes handouts on ten different tools. These can be used to either support presentations and discussions or to guide practical exercises. Also, within Chapter 'Entry Points and Tools for Engagement' of the Manual there are case studies and examples of tools which can be 'cut and pasted' into stand-alone handouts for training.



TOOLS: EXERCISES AND TEMPLATES

4A) Developing a Community Score Card

In small groups, discuss and decide upon a local public service which has recently been changed and then use the guidance below to design a Community Score Card (CSC) to measure community feedback on the service. The group will also need to record how, where and when the card will be used.

The CSC is a participatory, community-based monitoring and evaluation tool that enables citizens to assess the quality of public services such as a health centre, school, public transport, water, waste disposal, and so on. It is used to inform community members about available services and their entitlements and to solicit their opinions about the accessibility and quality of these services. By providing an opportunity for direct dialogue between service providers and the community, the CSC process empowers the public to voice their opinion and demand improved service delivery.

Score cards are often used by local authorities, often in collaboration with CSOs, and are also used independently by CSOs for data collection.

Key steps in implementing a CSC are:

1. Preparatory groundwork and research:

- identify the subject and scope of the assessment (e.g. health provision for pregnant women in a specific district);
- carry out preliminary research regarding current inputs, entitlements, degree of usage etc.;
- identify people or groups within the sample area who can help to facilitate the implementation of the CSC process, such as traditional leaders, NGO staff, and officials of local governments;
- conduct an awareness campaign to inform people about the purpose and benefits of the CSC;
- train facilitators.

2. Help community members generate a scorecard:

- Convene community members into one or more focus groups.

Ask each group to identify performance/quality indicators for the public service in question:

- ask the group to score each indicator and give reasons for the scores.;
- ask the group to develop their own suggestions on how to improve the service, based on the performance criteria they have identified.

A Sample Community Score Card for a Health Centre

SI No.	Indicators (in order of importance)	Score out of 100	Scores after 12 months
1	Attitude of staff	20	
2	Affordability of services	50	
3	Availability of medicine	40	
4	Distance to health centre	35	
5	Equal access to the health services for all community members	25	

3. Help service providers to generate a self-evaluation score card:

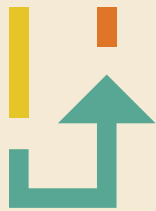
- hold a brainstorming session with service providers, including the management and the staff, to develop self-evaluation indicators;
- ask the service providers to score each indicator and give reasons for the scores;
- invite service providers to discuss and propose possible solutions.

4. Convene an interface meeting between community and service provider:

- aided by the facilitators, each focus group presents its scores;
- reasons for scores are discussed;
- service providers react and give feedback;
- all participants discuss and potentially agree on possible solutions.

5. Advocacy and follow-up:

- document the process and record score card results in a brief, clear and easily understandable format.
- disseminate results through the media and communities.
- feed score card results into other policy and advocacy processes.
- ensure the implementation and follow-up of the solutions.
- take steps to institutionalise the process, for example, by supporting community-based organisations and/or service providers to repeat the exercise on an annual or half yearly basis.



Collecting and presenting evidence

TRAINING PREPARATION

It is very challenging to run training activities related to skills for research and analysis, and the most effective approach is actually through a process of mentoring on a real piece of research rather than formal training events. However, training events to look at approaches to research and analysis, and the tools needed to collect data, are an important part of CSO capacity building. The guidance below is given so as to assist trainers to set up an introduction to the topic of 'research and analysis' and to encourage CSOs to accordingly adopt 'in-house' strategies for how they can increase their own capacities for research.

Much of the training delivery will rely on extensive experience from the trainer (or training team) and therefore it is often a good idea to supplement the training input with a) external experts who can contribute as resource people, panellists, and so on, and b) activities that will facilitate peer-learning amongst participants.



<p>Learning Objectives</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Participants improve their understanding of the 'place' and importance of sound evidence in influencing policy; ▪ improved skills for designing research frameworks and the choice of data collection tools; ▪ better knowledge of available participatory research methodologies; ▪ improved skills for presenting research findings.
<p>Methodology</p>	<p>An introductory course for CSOs on 'Researching and presenting evidence for policy making' can be designed to run over a period of two days. Such training is best delivered as a workshop with participants joining the training with 'real life' research topics already identified (or at least partially identified). The training can then be used to help participants actively fine-tune their research framework and practise the tools needed to undertake the analysis and presentation. The workshop would have sessions as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ an introduction to the 'role of evidence' for CSOs wishing to influence policy, and how to go about collecting it. This can begin with the 'Presentation on designing a research framework', followed by participants (either in groups or as individuals) identifying their topic for research and related key questions. The draft research frameworks can then be presented in plenary and critiqued by participants; ▪ once the 'key' research questions of participants have been confirmed and the objective of the research made clear (including the target groups to be involved), participants need to be assisted in drafting a basic data collection plan (see Exercise/Templates below). This can be easily introduced through a template drawn on a flip chart with explanations from the trainers. Then in groups/individuals, participants draft their own plans. As before, there needs to be a plenary session to review the plans and to critique the choice of tools/methodologies. As an additional activity, a panel of experts can be arranged to offer their critiques of the draft frameworks and to provide illustrations from their own research experiences. ▪ different types of data collection tools and methods can be reviewed by looking at the 'tools' columns in the data collection plans drafted in the exercise above. The trainer should list the tools on a separate flip chart and ask participants to briefly describe what the tool is and how to use it. Thereafter participants are put into groups to do a 'bus stop' exercise to review the 'pros' and 'cons' of each tool. (See exercise in Chapter 4 above for methodology of 'bus stops'.) ▪ participants explore the importance of ensuring their research analysis is credible and valid, as are their approaches to presenting findings. This can be done as a moderated discussion led by the trainer. Key remarks should be recorded on a flip chart. Thereafter, the trainer makes a presentation about 'Presentations'. This followed by giving pairs of participants an exercise whereby they must design a presentation (of a given topic) of just five minutes duration. The pairs make preparations for 45 minutes and then each pair 'presents'. The participants give peer reviews at the end of all presentations and the trainers sum up the lessons learnt.
<p>Timing</p>	<p>Sessions 1 and 2 will take between four-six hours and are therefore delivered in one day, followed by Sessions 3 and 4 which will take a minimum of six hours.</p>
<p>Tools</p>	<p>Flip chart paper, pens; PPT slides on: 'Designing your research framework'; Presentations handouts: 'Context of evidence'; 'Some data collection tools'; 'Focus groups guidance'; 'Nominal group technique guidance'.</p>
<p>Other Resources</p>	<p>Projector; display stands for flip chart presentations; panel of experts,</p>

References

Civicus

www.civicus.org

This is a useful site that promotes the active involvement of local citizens in their communities, wherever they live. Of special interest is a new dedicated portal on 'participatory governance', which acts as a facilitator for sharing knowledge and experiences of participation throughout the world. This is a highly recommended community of practice site: www.pgexchange.org

Participatory Budgeting Unit (UK)

www.participatorybudgeting.org.uk

This is a web-based resource run by an NGO in Manchester (UK) to support public sector and community groups in developing participatory budgeting processes in their local areas.



People move freely from display to display and hold discussions with the organisers.

TOOLS: PRESENTATIONS

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What evidence to collect and how?

Designing a research framework

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Be clear on the policy topic that needs to be explored.

Make the very design of the research attractive and its application explicitly linked to potential benefits for the community.

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- What are the key questions of the research—namely, what are the information objectives of the research?
- What kind of information do we want to collect, and how much—are the information needs of a quantitative nature, or qualitative, or both? How big is the target group? Will the research focus on representative samples or the whole group?
- What resources are available for collecting the data and how will the data be recorded and stored?

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- What are you going to do with all the data once you have collected it? How are you going to retrieve and analyse your data?

(Considering the expression ‘optimal ignorance’ is a good way to guide your planning. Only collect as much data as you actually need to satisfy your research objectives and to be credible)

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- How will you verify your data? If you only use one data collection tool and rely on a small sample of informants and only collect data at one fixed time the chances are that your data will not be very reliable.

To avoid this, ensure that you ‘triangulate’, which means using a variety of tools, various sample groups, various data collection times, all involving a number of different researchers.

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- What resources are available for doing the analysis?
- What is the time-frame for the research—are there important deadlines or milestones that are guiding the research process?

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Making Presentations

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Content
What do you want to say ...?
What is the core message ...?

Think

Process
What is the best way to communicate it ...?
What things would help your listeners hear your message ...?

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Remember the rules of 'learning'

100%
0%

Passive Passive to active Active

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Top tips for presentations

- The first **39 words** are the most important...
- Try to enjoy and feel **passionate** about the subject, as if your life depended on it;
- Speak to the back of the group ... **project your voice**;
- Don't speak too **fast**;
- **Pauses** are OK and can be very powerful;
- Find a way of being **comfortable**.

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Enhancing your message

Flip charts/ acetates/ PowerPoints

- Pre-prepare
- Keep it simple and linked to the message
- No red, yellow, orange, writing
- Black + white can be the best
- Big letters in simple clear fonts
- Simple diagrams—using cartoons and humour helps
- Keep the animated effects to a minimum
- Use few words per page
- Use colour backgrounds and effects
- Use different types and colours of paper

Use of metaphors

Fruit and vegetables

Vehicles

Cartoons

HATS

(sports)

Artefacts

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Relying on PowerPoint slides can become very boring!!

- Mix up your presentation media

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Don't stand in front of the screen/flip chart

Hand **gestures** are ok

Study good speakers and comedians

Actions while speaking

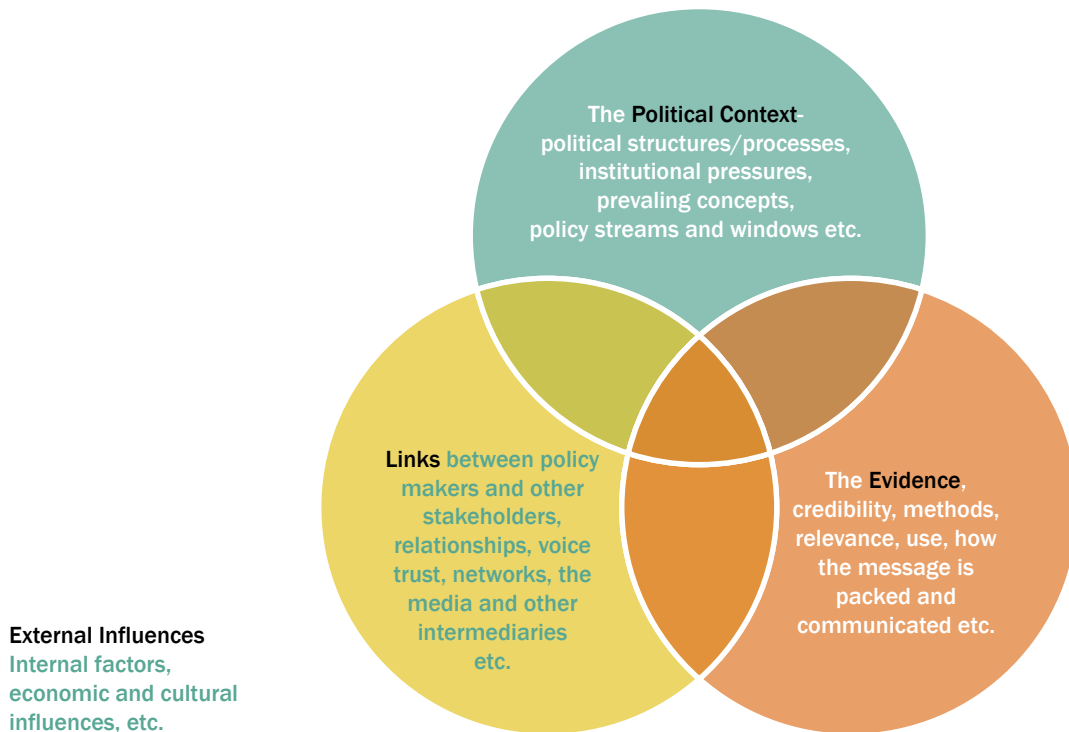
Give out **handouts** at the appropriate time

Watch the group and move accordingly, stand up or sit down, move towards them ...

TOOLS: HANDOUTS

Visualising the factors influencing CSOs' policy influencing

At the Overseas Development Institute there is a Research and Development Programme (RAPID) which over the last few years has documented critical lessons learnt for CSOs wishing to strengthen Citizens' Participation. In the RAPID framework, understanding of the wide range of inter-related factors that determine whether research-based evidence is taken up by policymakers is facilitated by organising them under three headings and giving them a graphical representation. This framework helps CSOs to visualise the task before them.



The three headings are 'The political context', 'The evidence' and the 'Links' between policy and research communities, all of which are conditioned by a fourth dimension, external influences, such as the socio-economic context.

- **political context:** includes the degree of political freedom in a country, levels of contestation, strength of vested interests, institutional pressures, attitudes and incentives among officials, their room to move and be innovative, power relations;
- **evidence:** must be topically relevant and credible. Research and analysis presents viable solutions to problems, which are even more persuasive if ‘pilot-tested’ to prove their usefulness. Communication with policymakers must be interactive, and the results of research should be presented in such a way that they are appealing and easily understood;
- **links:** involvement of researcher/influencers in networks with policymakers such as policy communities or advocacy coalitions creates trust, legitimacy and openness. Those playing a role in aiding communication between the researchers and policy people, such as the media, are also important for building links;
- **external influences:** these range from the impact of international policies and processes, such as liberalisation or democratisation, to donor attitudes and priorities that may influence the usefulness of research projects to beneficiaries.

From a very practical point of view, ODI has tested the framework through case studies and workshops and confirms that research ‘is more likely to contribute to policy if’:

- it fits within the political and institutional limits and pressures acting on policymakers, and that it resonates with their assumptions (or at least sufficient pressure is exerted to challenge them);
- the evidence is credible and convincing, providing practical solutions to pressing policy problems, and is packaged to attract policymakers’ interest;
- researchers and policymakers share common networks, trust each other and communicate effectively.

Data collection methods

Non-participatory

- Use of **existing or 'secondary' data** – undertake a literature review of your policy area and look for all published and, if possible, unpublished reports and articles on the topic. The Internet makes this quite an easy task but for the unpublished material you will need to consult with partners and potential collaborators such as universities and international organisations;
- **empirical research tools** such as laboratory experiments.

Participatory

- **Interviews** are a quick and simple way of learning the opinions of stakeholder groups regarding a program or policy;
- **brainstorming** is a relatively easy to implement technique, with low costs and no need for specialised skills. The essence of a brainstorming session is focusing on a certain issue and stimulating groups to generate ideas and solve that particular issue;
- **nominal group technique** requires participants to generate ideas individually, at first, rather than in an interactive group process, hence the term 'nominal'. (See more on this in the Toolbox section);
- **focus-groups (group interviews)** are interactive meetings facilitated by small groups of citizens. Their moderator leads the group to discussions by a set of questions about a certain topic. A guide to managing focus group discussions is in the Toolbox;
- **opinion polls (surveys)** are used to discover realities (including attitudes and opinions) within various categories of population. There are three types of polls:
 - a) whole group polls
 - b) random sample polls
 - c) straw polls.
- **public hearings** are characterised by attentive listening by public officials. A public hearing is usually held when the city has made a plan, has carried out a public information campaign, and is about to make a commitment. (See Chapter 4 and the Toolbox);
- **public debates** are public meetings that provide a formal opportunity for information exchange as opposed to a public hearing, which is more a mechanism for 'listening' to citizens.

Data collection tool: the focus group

Preparing for a focus group discussion

- Identify the major objective of the meeting;
- carefully develop five to six questions (see below);
- plan your session (see below);
- call potential members to invite them to the meeting. Send them a follow-up invitation with a proposed agenda, session time and list of questions the group will discuss. Plan to provide a copy of the report from the session to each member and let them know you will do this;
- about three days before the session, call each member to remind them to attend.

Developing questions

- Develop five to six questions. Each session should last one to 1.5 hours and in this time one can ask, at most, five or six questions;
- always first ask yourself what problem or need will be addressed by the information gathered during the session. For example, to examine if a new service or idea will work, further understand how and why a piece of policy is failing, and so on;
- in addition to your main questions, draft a few supplementary questions to help guide the responses if the group 'gets stuck' on one of the questions. However, be careful not to ask 'leading' questions.

Planning the session

- Scheduling – plan meetings to be one to 1.5 hours long. Make sure that they are at a time convenient for the participants: perhaps during lunch time or at the end of the working day might be good;
- setting and refreshments – hold sessions in a conference room or other setting with adequate air flow and lighting. Configure chairs so that all members can see each other. Provide name tags for members if they do not already know each other. Provide refreshments, especially box lunches if the session is held over lunch time;
- ground rules – it is critical that all members participate as much as possible, yet the session move along while generating useful information. Because the session is often a one-time occurrence it is 's useful to have a few, short ground rules that sustain participation yet do so with focus. Consider the following three ground rules: a) keep focused, so any 'rambling' responses will be cut short; b) maintain momentum; c) ensure every participant has an equal opportunity to speak; and d) get closure on questions;

- agenda—consider the following agenda: welcome, review of agenda, review of goal of the meeting, review of ground rules, introductions, questions and answers, wrap up;
- membership—focus groups are usually conducted with six-ten members who have some similar features, for example, similar age group, status in a program, and so on. Select members who are likely to be participative and reflective. Attempt to select members who do not know each other;
- plan to record the session with either an audio or audio-video recorder. Do not count on your memory. If this is not practical, involve a co-facilitator who is there to take notes. Remember to always get the permission of participants before starting the recording.

Facilitating the session

- The major goal of facilitation is collecting useful information to meet the objective of the session;
- introduce yourself and the co-facilitator, if used;
- explain the means to record the session;
- carry out the agenda (see 'Agenda' above);
- carefully word each question before that question is addressed by the group. Allow the group a few minutes for each member to carefully record their answers. Then, facilitate discussion around the answers to each question, one at a time;
- after each question is answered carefully reflect back a summary of what you heard (the note taker may do this);
- ensure even participation. If one or two people are dominating the meeting, then call on others. Consider using a round-table approach, including going in one direction around the table, giving each person a minute to answer the question. If the domination persists, note it to the group and ask for ideas about how the participation can be increased;
- closing the session—tell members that they will receive a copy of the report generated from their answers, thank them for coming and adjourn the meeting.

Immediately after the session

- Verify that the tape recorder, if used, worked throughout the session;
- make any required clarifications of your written notes, ensure pages are numbered, fill out any notes that do not make sense, and so on;

- write down any observations made during the session. For example, where did the session occur and when, what was the nature of participation in the group, and so on? Were there any surprises during the session? Did the tape recorder break?

Using the nominal group technique

To use this methodology for collecting information and opinions you will need to be prepared for:

- **Organisation and introductions.** The plenary group is divided into small groups of five to nine persons and seated at tables. At each table there is a staff member or two, a flip chart or newsprint sheets, and some index cards or pieces of paper and felt-tip pens. Introductions take place.
- **The questions.** One or two questions (designed very carefully beforehand) are presented to the plenary group and posted at each table. The question(s) should be more specific than general and designed to elicit concrete ideas. Examples are (a) What specific measures can we take to make our neighbourhoods more pleasant places in which to live? and (b) What resources can be used to accomplish this end?
- **The ideas.** Participants (individually or in pairs) are given 10 to 15 minutes to come up with answers to the questions and write them down on sheets of paper. The group leader then goes around the group asking for the ideas, one at a time per participant, and writes them on a flip chart or newsprint (an assistant could handle the writing task) until there are no more ideas. Participants need not be limited to the ideas they initially wrote down if further thoughts are stimulated by the discussion.
- **The discourse and comprehension.** The group discusses each item to achieve full understanding of the idea and to make sure that it is written in its clearest formulation. Anyone can take part in this process, though the leader should speed it along.
- **Selecting and ranking ideas.** Each participant in the group is asked to select and rank some specified number of ideas, say five, that they prefer and to write these down on a card, one idea per card. Then rank the ideas, writing on the cards a 'five' for the highest ranking through to 'one' for the lowest rank. Each card should have one idea and one number.
- **Scoring.** Cards are collected and shuffled and the scores are tallied to determine the scores for the various ideas. Any member of the group can monitor the tallying process. The highest five or so ideas (leaders should look for a natural break in the scoring) for each question are clearly identified so that the group can then discuss their relative merits.

- **Consensus building.** The group then discusses the chosen ideas. This may lead to a revised ranking if the group is uncomfortable with the initial ranking because of the new information and insights flowing from the discussion. This is the final product that is reported out to the plenary session.
- **Consensus in the larger group.** Time permitting, a discussion can take place in plenary with a new round of selections and ranking based on the top ideas of the whole group. If this is done, some synthesis of the top ranked ideas that are similar will be necessary to reduce their numbers and avoid overlaps. Step 8 could also be put off to a further session at another meeting of the group if time is short. Alternatively, this task could be left to a smaller group, such as a task force or committee assigned to this particular problem.



TOOLS: EXERCISES AND TEMPLATES

Drafting a data collection plan

A simple table as below can be used to draft a basic data collection plan. To use the table, CSOs must first establish the policy issue they want to research and then develop key questions that will help to explore policy options on that issue. These key questions are written into the left-hand column and then the following columns are filled in. The resulting draft data collection plan should then be reviewed and critiqued by the CSO and partners.

Key question	Indicators/ data required to answer key question (quantitative/ qualitative; specific; attainable; time frame)	Sources of information (informants, documents, records, sampling options)	Tools for data collection	Comments
<i>For example, what evidence is there that palliative care provision at local level in country X meets the needs of community group Y?</i>	<i>For example, change in the numbers of patients accessing the service since the last policy change on this issue; rates of satisfaction as expressed by family members in community group Y accessing the service, etc.</i>	<i>For example, formal records of country X health services; sample of family members of patients, etc.</i>	<i>For example, review of reports on health ministry website; semi-structured interviews.</i>	

