Helpdesk Research Report: Monitoring and Evaluation of Participation in Governance
Date: 01/10/08

> **Query:** Please identify toolkits, methodologies and indicators for monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of programmes aimed at improving governance (particularly of urban infrastructure/services). Please highlight methods of relevance to NGOs for monitoring and evaluating poor people's participation in decision-making processes.
>
> **Enquirer:** Practical Action UK

Contents

Overview

A large number of programmes aimed at improving the governance of urban infrastructure/ services include methods for increasing citizens' participation in decision-making processes and their capacity to monitor, evaluate and ultimately influence the delivery of services (at local, regional and national levels). However, there is generally very little information available on evaluating the effectiveness of the inclusive/participatory aspects of these programmes and there do not appear to be any toolkits available that were designed specifically for this purpose.

Given this gap in the literature, this report is structured as follows:

 ➢ Part 2 focusses on toolkits and indicators to monitor and evaluate urban governance programmes. Whilst this material is generally aimed at government officials and donor agencies, it also has relevance for NGOs.
 ➢ Part 3 identifies methods for evaluating public participation in a variety of contexts.
 ➢ Part 4 presents two approaches to monitoring and evaluation which aim to assess governance-related aspects of development programmes (rights and empowerment). It also identifies a selection of ongoing participatory governance programmes as a starting point for further enquiry.

Most commentators agree that monitoring and evaluating governance programmes is an under-researched area. A particular difficulty is that there is a limited understanding of what improvements in governance actually look like. Even where indicators do exist, there is little evidence of them being applied in practice. Furthermore, it is not always feasible to systematically gather the required data. Nevertheless, certain principles for successful monitoring and evaluation are common in the literature, including;

- ➢ Both quantitative and qualitative indicators are needed to successfully monitor and evaluate inclusive/participatory programmes. Qualitative indicators must be related to some observable activities and be part of a system of continuous monitoring.
- ➢ The evaluation of participatory/inclusive programmes should itself be participatory;
- ➢ The evaluation should focus on purpose, processes, context and perception as well as outputs and outcomes; and
- ➢ M&E systems should be practical, flexible and not overly complicated.

Some common indicators for assessing the effectiveness of participatory programmes include:

- ➢ the level of participation of different types of stakeholders (representativeness and inclusiveness);
- ➢ institutional arrangements to facilitate engagement;
- ➢ active engagement of stakeholders in the programme, and confidence and willingness to get involved in future;
- ➢ the extent to which participants are mobilising their own resources;
- ➢ transparent access to and use of resources;
- ➢ equality of access to decision-making;
- ➢ transformation of power through e.g. new relationships and access to new networks;
- ➢ level of trust and ownership of the process;
- ➢ behavioural changes of stakeholders (values, priorities, aims);
- ➢ level of self-reliance, self-management, capacity and understanding of the issues; and
- ➢ sustainability and ability to resolve conflict.

Monitoring and evaluating urban governance programmes

UN-HABITAT, 'Urban Governance Index (UGI). A tool to measure progress in achieving good urban governance', United Nations Centre for Human Settlements, Nairobi
www.unhabitat.org/downloads/docs/2232_80907_UGIndex.doc

The Urban Governance Index (UGI) is intended primarily for use by city authorities and their partners. It focuses on inputs, processes, performance, perception, output, and outcomes of urban governance programmes. The Index is composed of four sub-indices, namely: participation sub-index; equity sub-index; effectiveness sub-index; and accountability sub-index. It is supported by tools, training guides and an appendix of additional indicators to help cities develop their own monitoring systems.

IRC International Water and Sanitation Centre, 2008, 'Mapping the Measures of Success', Report on the Impact Evaluation Round Table, 13-14 May, De Lindenhof, Delft
http://washimpacttable.files.wordpress.com/2008/06/20080627-round-table-on-impact-evaluation-may-2008-report-v1.pdf

The purpose of the '*Mapping the Measures of Success'* roundtable was to identify existing practice, experiences and challenges related to evaluating the impact of development interventions in the context of governance of water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) services and institutional change. According to the report, there are unresolved questions about how to understand the links between an intervention and the final impact, and even about what the final impact is understood to be. These questions include: "What do improvements in governance in the WASH sector look like?" and, "Is it safe to assume that good governance leads to good WASH services?" The report suggests that evaluation might address a number of different questions:

> ➢ Do improvements in governance provide measurable benefits to users?
> ➢ Did this project provide measurable (expected or unexpected) impact to beneficiaries?
> ➢ Did the project provide improvements in governance?

The following indicators for evaluating governance of WASH services were identified:

> ➢ equitable representation of the interests of the different end-user categories in services and processes;
> ➢ equitable management of water resources (across uses and areas);
> ➢ equitable provision of basic needs (water, food, sanitation, housing, education, health), with no undue competition between (sub)sectors;
> ➢ transparent use of resources;
> ➢ everyone gets good quality goods and services at equitable prices without leakage of funds or hidden extra payments;
> ➢ service providers account for their use of resources and service management.

ECON Analysis and Centre for Local Government, 2005, 'The Impacts of City Development Strategies', Report prepared for the Cities Alliance, Econ Analysis, Oslo, and Centre for Local Government, University of Technology, Sydney
http://www.citiesalliance.org/doc/resources/cds/cds-impact-study-final-report-august-11-2005.pdf

The broad aim of the City Development Strategy (CDS) process is to produce a multi-faceted development framework with wide-ranging stakeholder support that will improve city governance. Chapter 6 (pp 67-73) of the report outlines nine basic principles for integrating monitoring and evaluation into the implementation of CDS (although the evidence suggests that these have not been applied comprehensively):

> ➢ Audience – be clear about who the users of the framework are and that the information collected meets their needs;
> ➢ Practicality - be practical and realistic in terms of the availability and reliability of information;
> ➢ Flexibility – it should be capable of being modified as the city gains more information and/or as the challenges change;
> ➢ Building Capacity- it should build on the existing information available;
> ➢ Relevant and Focused – it should be relevant to and focused on the key objectives of the CDS;
> ➢ Simple and To The Right Scale – it should be to the right scale beginning with a core set of indicators that can be refined and expanded over time;
> ➢ Appropriate and Meaningful –it should include both quantitative and qualitative measures that make sense and are relevant;
> ➢ Balanced – it should cover both what the CDS is hoping to achieve (its outcomes) and how it is to be done (the process);
> ➢ Benchmarking – it should make it possible to make comparisons with other cities where these are helpful and informative.

The report also includes a number of city case studies. The Colombo CDS process included a proposed set of indicators for consultation and participation:

> ➢ type of stakeholders;
> ➢ number of stakeholders;
> ➢ level of participation in stakeholder group discussions;
> ➢ number of stakeholder meetings;
> ➢ type of institutional structures created for stakeholder participation;
> ➢ number of representatives from civil society organisations including NGOs who have access to CDS Taskforce, Steering Committees and Working Groups;

> ➢ contributions by each municipal council for CDS process and for implementation of strategy in terms of time and money;
> ➢ political support for CDS process and implementation; and
> ➢ outputs/documents produced.

Evaluating poor people's participation in decision-making processes

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UN-HABITAT, 2001, 'Tools to Support Participatory Urban Decision-Making', United Nations Centre for Human Settlements, Nairobi
http://ww2.unhabitat.org/campaigns/governance/documents/toolkit_presentation_IFUP.pdf

The toolkit presents participatory decision-making processes and tools in four phases. Phase IV is concerned specifically with M&E and includes: monitoring tools, programme evaluation and institutionalisation of participation. The toolkit also includes practical examples from cities around the world.

Section 2.16 (pp 91-94) focuses on monitoring tools to provide information for measuring progress at three levels: applying the process, achieving results and sustaining the process. It suggests working out appropriate monitoring methodologies to address a wide range of different aspects, such as:

> ➢ diversity in participation of different types of stakeholders from various sectors;
> ➢ inclusiveness of marginalised groups such as the poor, and women;
> ➢ competence, level of authority, views, ideas, and decision making capacities of participating stakeholders;
> ➢ quality of information, knowledge, and outcome of assessments and reviews, and levels and quality of information-sharing;
> ➢ degree and success of implementation of decisions and actions agreed upon;
> ➢ number, type, and range of demonstration projects undertaken, together with measurements of implementation success and "demonstration" outcomes;
> ➢ financial resource mobilisation, especially from diverse local sources, and sustainability of the process and its projects;
> ➢ institutionalising or making routine the new participatory approaches to solving issues.

Section 2.17 (pp 95-97) presents a number of sequential steps for programme evaluation in order to strengthen the transparency of the process:

> ➢ preparing an evaluation plan;
> ➢ developing indicators;
> ➢ structuring indicators;
> ➢ data collection and data analysis and assessment; and
> ➢ learning from the evaluation.

Section 2.18 (pp 98-102) addresses the institutionalisation of participation. This involves building in participatory decision-making processes, specifically:

> ➢ fundamental principles - stakeholder involvement as integral to decision making; focussing on connectivity between issues, sectors and institutions; an over-riding concern with cross-cutting issues;
> ➢ capacities and functions - specialised capacities and functions as well as system wide functions and general capacities which are needed by participating stakeholders; and
> ➢ process products - concrete outputs generated during the lifetime of the project.

Interact Evaluation, 2001, 'Evaluating Participatory, Deliberative and Co-operative Ways of Working' Interact, Brighton
http://www.sharedpractice.org.uk/Downloads/Interact_Working_Paper.pdf

This paper sets out a framework for evaluating participative ways of working. It suggests that, ideally, the evaluation of participatory/inclusive processes, projects and programmes, should itself be participatory. When evaluating any participatory project or programme, both the process itself and the impacts of that process will need to be assessed. Some of the main issues to be considered include:

> - Objectives - What were the stated objectives of the process or programme? Were the objectives practical, transformational or both? How were they set? Have they changed over time?
> - Context - Is the process or programme part of a larger strategy? How does it relate to that larger strategy, structurally and informally? What impact have external factors had on the process?
> - Timing - What stage of the project/programme has been reached (where in the overall timetable)?
> - Methods and techniques - What methods and techniques were used? How were those methods identified, assessed and agreed upon? How was each event, method or technique evaluated?
> - Levels of involvement - How inclusive is the process? What steps have been taken to reach excluded groups?
> - Commitment - What is the commitment to using the results from evaluation?

Evaluating inputs, outputs and outcomes is most likely to identify specific costs and savings associated with participatory ways of working - in both the short and long term. Inputs may include time and money. Outputs may include newsletters, events at which people debate and/or decide issues, questionnaires, interviews etc. Evaluating the outcomes will essentially focus on assessing what changes have been achieved as a result of the participatory work, including:

> - increased information and understanding;
> - increased level of trust among stakeholders;
> - increased level of ownership of the process;
> - increased level of 'capacity' among stakeholders;
> - level of understanding about the process and the specific project;
> - changes in values, priorities, aims and objectives;
> - new relationships between organisations (formal and informal);
> - increased openness and transparency; and
> - increased representativeness of participation.

OECD-DAC, 1997, 'Evaluation of Programs Promoting Participatory Development and Good Governance: Synthesis Report.' Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, Paris
http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/39/44/35019452.pdf

Chapter 8 (pp 86-98) of this report discusses the evaluation of participation in development programmes. The report first differentiates between evaluation *of* participation and participation *in* evaluation. The former refers to the assessment of a specific objective or outcome of an activity, whereas the latter refers to the degrees of involvement of different categories of social actors in the evaluation process.

Data collection methods for the evaluation *of* participation include traditional quantitative methods (questionnaires, sample surveys) to measure quantifiable aspects of participation, such as number of project beneficiaries, frequency of project meetings, proportions and total numbers of

beneficiaries attending meetings, recruitment of leadership as a function of social position or stratification pattern, rotation of leadership over time, distribution and circulation of key functions or tasks within the project or beneficiary organisation, beneficiary contributions in the form of labour, money or material, distribution of benefits resulting from the project.

Qualitative indicators are also necessary to describe the relations between leaders and general members of an organisation, forms of organisation, forms and dynamics of decision-making, group solidarity, community spirit, conflict and problem-solving capacity, etc. Qualitative indicators must be related to some observable activities and be part of a system of continuous monitoring. Four categories of indicators are suggested:

  ➢ project or group activities;
  ➢ changes in project group behaviour;
  ➢ group action and articulation; and
  ➢ project-group relationship.

Methods to judge these phenomena include: group records, log-books, and diaries; group discussions; key informants; and field workshops.

UK Overseas Development Administration, 1995, 'Guidance Note on Indicators for Measuring and Assessing Primary Stakeholder Participation', ODA, London
http://www.euforic.org/gb/stake3.htm

This guidance note from ODA (now DFID) argues that effective participatory strategies require indicators for progress in participation, as well as the more usual indicators for achieving outputs. It includes a checklist of qualitative and quantitative indicators for participation:

Quantifiable dimension of indicators:

  ➢ Who is participating?
  ➢ How many people are participating and through what institutional arrangements?
  ➢ Are local project institutions developing satisfactorily?
  ➢ Are people actively engaged in the project?
  ➢ What is the level of participation in key activities?
  ➢ Are participants mobilising their own resources and contributing to the project materially?
  ➢ Are installations kept in good running order by participants?

Qualitative dimension of indicators:

  ➢ How are groups expected to achieve stability?
  ➢ What capabilities are participating groups being encouraged to develop?
  ➢ What are the expected qualities of participants' contributions?
  ➢ What behavioural characteristics are groups and participants expected to display?
  ➢ Are groups achieving increased self-reliance and control?

Warburton, D., Wilson, R. and Rainbow, E., nd, 'Making a Difference: A guide to evaluating public participation in central government', Involve, London, and UK Department for Constitutional Affairs, London
http://www.sharedpractice.org.uk/Downloads/Making_a_difference.pdf

This guide looks at public participation in the context of public policy making in the UK. It argues that the success of any engagement initiative (i.e. a successful outcome) depends on a clear understanding of the purpose, process and context of participation. Part 5 (pp 10-12) sets out a framework for measuring success under four headings: improved governance; social capital and

social justice; improved quality of services/projects/programmes; and capacity building and learning. Examples of indicators of successful stakeholder participation include:

- ➢ increased trust in government;
- ➢ increased equality of access to decision-making;
- ➢ the development of new contacts / increased access to new networks;
- ➢ costs saved by people taking more responsibility for service outcomes and making less demand (e.g. healthy living);
- ➢ quicker decisions by avoiding conflict;
- ➢ greater awareness and understanding of the issues; and
- ➢ more confidence and willingness to get involved in future.

Russell, H., 2008, 'Community Engagement: Some Lessons from the New Deal for Communities Programme', Liverpool John Moores University and UK Department for Communities and Local Government
http://extra.shu.ac.uk/ndc/downloads/general/community_engagement_NDC_programme.pdf

This report looks at the experience of a sample of New Deal for Communities (NDC) partnerships in England in relation to community engagement. Part 9 of the report sets out four dimensions of community participation and from these derives twelve benchmarks:

Influence:

- ➢ The community is recognised and valued as an equal partner at all stages of the process.
- ➢ There is meaningful community representation on all decision-making bodies from initiation.
- ➢ All community members have the opportunity to participate.
- ➢ Communities have access to and control over resources.
- ➢ Evaluation of regeneration partnerships incorporates a community agenda.

Inclusivity:

- ➢ The diversity of local communities and interests is reflected at all levels of the regeneration process.
- ➢ Equal opportunities policies are in place and implemented.
- ➢ Unpaid workers/volunteers are valued.

Communication:

- ➢ A two-way information strategy is developed and implemented.
- ➢ Programme and project procedures are clear and accessible.

Capacity:

- ➢ Communities are resourced to participate.
- ➢ Understanding, knowledge and skills are developed to support partnership working.

In addition NDCs have used household surveys to assess changes in outcomes in respect of perceptions and involvement. Indicators include the following:

- ➢ increasing the proportion of people who have heard about NDC;
- ➢ increasing the level of participation in governance structures;
- ➢ increasing the proportion of residents engaged in voluntary activity;

- ➢ increasing the proportion of residents holding offices in local community and voluntary organisations;
- ➢ increasing the proportion of residents that feel involved in the community;
- ➢ reducing the proportion not interested in getting involved in the local community;
- ➢ maintaining or increasing the number of tenant and resident associations;
- ➢ the number of residents who believe the area is getting better; and
- ➢ reducing the proportion wanting to move out of the area.

Additional resources

Other approaches to monitoring and evaluating governance

RAVI, 2005, 'Rights-based Monitoring and Evaluation. A Guide to Practice.' The Rights and Voice Initiative, Ghana
www.ravighana.org/documents/File/Resource_Library/RAVI%20ME%20Guide.doc

Part 4 of this guide presents the rights-based monitoring and evaluation (RBME) framework which focuses on three major, inter-linked areas:

- ➢ expansion of meaningful voice and participation, and improving processes of accountability;
- ➢ transforming and re-balancing power within, and between, individuals, groups and institutions, by working to change relationships and create new linkages; and
- ➢ encouraging change in the way that institutions, of all kinds, respond to human security issues, asset acquirement and to vulnerability.

The framework has five components, each of which is accompanied by a series of question areas (indicators):

- ➢ voice, participation and accountability
- ➢ transformation of power: relationships and linkages
- ➢ institutional response
- ➢ tangible evidence
- ➢ sustained change

INTRAC, 2000, 'The Monitoring and Evaluation of Empowerment: A Resource Document' International NGO Training and Research Centre, Oxford
http://www.intrac.org/docs/OPS26final.pdf

Section 2 of this document outlines the elements of a 'minimum but effective' M&E system designed to gain a better understanding of the output, effect and impact of empowerment programmes.

The paper suggests a series of generic quantitative and qualitative indicators which should be able to monitor a number of changes over time: recruitment into programme (enrolment), continuing interest (attendance), development of new knowledge and skills (learning), and change behaviour (adoption). In place of indicators, a simple question is put to stakeholders: 'During the past month, in your opinion, what do you think was the most significant change that took place in the lives of the people participating in the project?' The potential responses to this question are then broken down into three areas: changes in people's lives; changes in people's participation; changes in the sustainability of people's institutions and their activities. Stakeholders' responses to the above questions are in two parts: a) descriptive: what, who, when,

where and so on; and b) explanatory: stakeholders' subjective assessment of the significance of the changes. The paper then suggests some more specific indicators for both internal and external empowerment:

Internal empowerment:

> self-management - membership growth and trends, clear procedures and rules, regular attendance at meetings, maintaining proper financial accounts;
> problem-solving - problem identification, ability to analyse;
> democratisation - free and fair selection of leaders, role for weaker members in decision-making, transparency in information flow; and
> sustainability and conflict resolution - self-reliance actions initiated by group, legal status, intra-group support system.

External empowerment:

> building links with project implementing agency - influence at different stages of project, representation on project administration, degree of financial autonomy;
> building links with state agencies - influence on state development funds, influence on other state development initiatives in the area;
> building links with local social and political bodies - representation on these bodies, lobbying with mainstream parties, influence in local schools, health centres;
> building links with other groups and social movements - formation of federations, networking with local elites and level of dependence on local elites; and
> building networks with other non-group members – degree of conflict, ability to increase power.

Participatory governance programmes

CIVICUS Participatory Governance Programme (2006-2008)
http://www.civicus.org/pg

The main objective of the current phase of the Participatory Governance Programme, launched in 2006, is to enhance the capacity of southern civil society practitioners (CSOs and government actors) to promote participatory and accountable governance of public institutions at local and national levels.

The specific objectives are to:

> Enhance southern practitioners' knowledge and learning of participatory governance principles, rights, benefits, critical issues and strategies.
> Assist southern practitioners to acquire the skills and tools they need to effectively promote participatory governance.
> Build bridges between civil society and government practitioners and strategic networks for the promotion of participatory governance.
> Promote innovation

Whilst the programme in the process of collecting a substantial amount of information on various participatory governance/social accountability practices it hasn't, as yet, looked specific materials for monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness/impact of such initiatives.

Promoting Accountability through Participatory Urban Planning, Society for Participatory Research in Asia (PRIA), India
http://www.pria.org/projects/pup_edited.php

The Project Purpose includes:

- ➢ enhancing capacities of small and medium municipalities to promote citizen participation in urban planning; and
- ➢ enhancing capacities of civil society to engage with urban governance for promoting accountability and transparency.

The Project Output is expected to be:

- ➢ replicable models of town plans for at least two towns in two states prepared with the participation of various stakeholders, particularly urban poor and marginalised;
- ➢ a comprehensive methodology of participatory urban planning which could be emulated by the state governments and other stakeholders in preparing town planning; and
- ➢ a collaborative model of knowledge generation, capacity building and advocacy on urban planning involving various stakeholders – elected representatives, civil society organisations, governmental institutions, media and academia.

Improving Citizens' Access to Urban Services in Select Cities, Society for Participatory Research in Asia (PRIA), India
http://www.pria.org/projects/citizen_service.php

The over all goal of the project is to improve citizens' access to municipal services in the intervened cities. The purpose of the project is to demonstrate multiple models of citizen engagement and citizen monitoring in urban governance with a focus on improving service delivery.

The project is expected to bring the following general outputs

- ➢ strong citizen forum at the ward level engaged in monitoring of municipal service delivery performance;
- ➢ network of civil society/citizen groups led by strong leadership engaged in urban governance issues; and
- ➢ strong City level Technical Advisory Group (CTAG) and City level Volunteer Technical Corps (CVTC).

The Global Campaign on Urban Governance, UN-HABITAT
http://ww2.unhabitat.org/campaigns/governance/activities_7.asp

UN-HABITAT's Global Campaign on Urban Governance has developed a series of tools which include approaches, processes, methods and best practices which operationalise the campaign's principles of good urban governance.

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Websites visited

ActionAid International, African Evaluation Association, Afrimap, Aid-IT Solutions, Ansa-Africa, Care Internaitonal, Centre for people Empowerment in Governance (CenPEG), Christian Aid, Cities Alliance, CIVICUS, Community Planning, Development in Practice, Eldis, Enterprise Development Impact Assessment Information Service (EDIAIS), Euforic, Focuss, Google, Google Scholar, GDRC, GSDRC, Id21, IDEAS, IFAD, IIED, International Development Research Centre (IDRC), International Budget Project, INTRAC, Involve, Joseph Rowentree Foundation, Logolink, Loughborough University, MandE News, Network of Networks Impact Evaluation Initiative (NONIE), OECD-DAC, Participatory Development Forum, People and Participation, POLIS, Poverty Action Lab, PPM&E Resource Portal, PRIA - Society for Participatory Research in Asia, Public Affairs Centre, Bangalore, Rights and Voice Initiative - Ghana, Sage Journals, Science Direct, Shared Practice, Sheffield Hallam University, Slum Dwellers International, The PARC, Toolkit Participation, UNESCO, UN-HABITAT, University of Birmingham, World Bank, 3ie Impact

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