



2010 United Nations Public Service Day - Awards and Forum

21 - 23 June 2010, Barcelona, Spain

Workshop II

Engaging Citizens in Development Management and Public Governance for the Achievement of the Millennium Development Goals

WORKSHOP CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- When there is an opportunity, citizens are engaged. With deliberate democracy, citizens are pressed to participate.
- There is a need for top down (government-led) but also bottom up (citizens-led) processes (engagement vs. participation). Both approaches are necessary and complementary.
- There is not a “most appropriate level of engagement”, since engagement opportunities exist at different levels (local, regional, national) and also at different stages of the public policy cycle.
- Context matters.
- Trust is fundamental. Governments should create an environment in which people believe that engagement matters and wherein spontaneous citizen’s initiatives have a place (bottom-up). To this end the provision of reliable information and open data is the key.
- Need to collect and disseminate best practices/success stories to use them as a source of inspiration (ICTs favour replication) in order to develop a community of practice (to explore what works and what doesn’t work): “ecosystems of knowledge”

- ICTs are a powerful tool to foster citizen engagement. However, the digital divide must be taken into account.
- Resolve the tension between quantitative representation and voluntary and qualitative participation. Foster digital literacy among citizens and civil servants (through education; promoting a mentality shift, etc).
- Key success factors: leadership, transparency, accountability.
- When designing the systems: think about people – processes – tools in this order. (People need to be put at the centre of the process).

Prepared by the rapporteur of the Workshop, Mr. Hernan Charosky, as an outcome of the Workshop deliberations and working group discussions.