



Open Government

Citizen Engagement Toolkit



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Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia

Open Government

Citizen Engagement Toolkit



United Nations
Beirut

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United Nations publication issued by ESCWA, United Nations House,
Riad El Solh Square, P.O. Box: 11-8575, Beirut, Lebanon.

Website: www.unescwa.org

Preface

Open government is an emerging concept in developed and developing countries, aimed at enhancing governance by applying specific concepts and relying on the power of information and communication technology (ICT) to facilitate the implementation of open government concepts. To promote open government in the Arab region, ESCWA developed a framework customized to the needs and specificities of Arab countries to aid a gradual transformation towards open government through four phases, namely: openness, participation, collaboration, and full engagement.

In the last two years, ESCWA has also produced capacity-building materials to assist Arab decision makers and practitioners in designing and developing more efficient open government programmes. The materials focus on the main aspects of open government, namely open data; participation, collaboration and engagement; and legal aspects of open government. They take into account national context and needs, ICT infrastructure, and the development level of e-government programmes in Arab countries.

To facilitate the implementation of open government in the Arab region, ESCWA is preparing toolkits covering the main aspects of the ESCWA framework for open government. The proposed toolkits are designed to be practical and user-friendly for developers, as they translate theory into practice. In addition to the present toolkit on citizen engagement, there is one on open government and one on open data. Others will be developed in the future.

The present document proposes a toolkit for citizen engagement that covers how to design, develop and implement citizen engagement programmes to achieve full citizen engagement, which is a key purpose of open government. The toolkit design presents citizen engagement as a concept divided into three levels of sophistication and implementation. These levels provide an opportunity for all institutions, with varied needs and desired levels of engagement, to plan or upgrade their programmes for citizen participation, collaboration or engagement.

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I. Introduction

A. What is citizen engagement?

Citizen engagement is the interaction between Government, or public institutions, and citizens or other legitimate actors, such as the private sector, non-governmental organizations, associations or individuals. Citizen engagement means that citizens become part of the decision-making process, whether in developing policies, programmes and projects, or at the level of public service delivery. This engagement process ranges from obtaining public feedback, to directly working with citizens to ensure that their concerns and aspirations are well understood, to partner with them, and to place decision-making in their hands.¹

B. Why citizen engagement?

Government and public institutions do not have a monopoly on knowledge, resources or power to tackle societal challenges and fully achieve societal goals. Citizen engagement could therefore play an essential role in mobilizing resources to address social and economic challenges. This engagement improves the decision-making processes, builds confidence and trust, and combats corruption. Additionally, it helps in the following:²

- (a) Better identification of the public's values, ideas and recommendations;
- (b) More trust in each other and local government entities;
- (c) More informed public;
- (d) Faster project implementation, wider impact, and better outcomes.

C. Levels of citizen engagement

There is no one-size-fits-all in the implementation of this concept, since all countries, especially Arab countries, have their own specificities and local contexts, and disparate levels of digital transformation and ICT in government processes. Consequently, each Arab country, or public institution, can select the best engagement level to move forward. Levels range from participation, to collaboration, to full engagement. In principle, all levels revolve around the same concept.

¹ International Association for Public Participation, IAP2 Public Spectrum of Participation. Available at https://cdn.ymaws.com/www.iap2.org/resource/resmgr/pillars/Spectrum_8.5x11_Print.pdf.

² Institute for Local Government, What is Public Engagement and why should I do it? Available at www.ca-ilg.org/sites/main/files/file-attachments/ilg_what_is_public_engagement_and_why_should_i_do_it_8.31.16.pdf?1472685794.

However, each engagement level has its own features and goals in line with planning and implementation levels. Table 1 sets out these levels.

Table 1. Levels of engagement

Level of engagement	Goal	Feature
Participation	Boosting the involvement of non-government actors in government work through feedback loops providing ideas and knowledge.	Participation is two-way between government and non-government actors, where both sides are active but the Government sets the agenda (the Government is active and non-government actors are reactive).
Collaboration	Increasing collaboration between government and non-government actors to co-create innovative services, strategies and plans, among other initiatives.	Collaboration is two-way between government and non-government actors, where both can set the agenda and be active, but action is based on an overall policy framework provided by the Government.
Full engagement	Moving towards the total engagement of non-government actors in government work through shared responsibility.	Engagement is multi-way between government and non-government actors, where both parties can set the agenda and the overall policy framework, and can be pro-active based on a shared agenda in the form of 'co-governing'.

Source: ESCWA, *Capacity Development Material on Participation, Collaboration and Citizen Engagement*, 2018.

II. Developing a citizen engagement policy

A. Importance of an engagement policy

An engagement policy is crucial in supporting civil servants and encouraging them to freely engage with citizens, because it builds common ground and understanding for all government employees. In other words, civil servants will be more willing to engage with citizens if they are supported by an engagement policy and other relevant regulations.

Table 2. Basic principles to be considered when designing and implementing engagement policies

Level of engagement	Basic principles when designing and implementing engagement policies
Participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) The Government should establish an overall philosophy by being transparent about why participation is important and the specific purposes it serves; (b) The Government should develop a list of feedback facilities and functions, with information on the methods of participation and the specific role of each function; (c) The Government should communicate expectations about user behaviour through a user code of conduct.
Collaboration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Proactive involvement in decision-making should be considered at this level; (b) People should be informed of government decisions and services, consulted about certain decisions and asked to take part in decision-making, or they should themselves become proactive in framing and taking decisions by actively engaging in setting the policymaking process.
Full engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Non-government actors should, in principle, be fully involved in all aspects of public governance; (b) The Government should consider opening up all government activities to engagement by all legitimate actors, both where the government proactively takes the lead and where it enables others to do so; (c) Effective government structures and procedures should be put in place to ensure continuous improvement and innovation in citizen engagement for maximum impact.

Source: ESCWA, *Capacity Development Material on Participation, Collaboration and Citizen Engagement*, 2018.

B. Effectively designing and implementing an engagement policy

To ensure the smooth implementation of the engagement concept, especially when designing and implementing an engagement policy, necessary steps should be considered where the ‘participation phase’ represents a building block for all other phases. Table 3 summarizes the main steps to be considered.

Table 3. Necessary steps for developing an effective engagement policy

Level of engagement	How to achieve better results
Participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Seek high-level (political) approval, because this support could be crucial; (b) Be clear about the purpose and expectations of participation, and focus on real (e-) participation needs at the start of the process, covering the needs of women and men, and young people; (c) Before beginning a participation initiative, decide how to collect input, how to analyse it and how to use it, and make this clear to participants; (d) Take citizen inputs seriously (whether they are asked to give them, or they give them unsolicited), and show how they are used; (e) Use words and language that people understand; (f) Participants should be involved as early as possible in the policy lifecycle; (g) Use careful, independent and trustworthy moderators and transparent guidelines; (h) Be wary of digital divides, especially the gender digital divide; (i) Evaluate the processes and the outcome.
Collaboration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (j) Have a clear e-collaboration strategy that strikes a balance among the e-information, e-participation, and e-decision-making phases; (k) Ensure that necessary e-tools are available; (l) Clearly define targeted population groups, and explain consultation and decision-making procedures, while giving attention to the needs of vulnerable groups; (m) Have clear rules and procedures in place to process inputs.
Full Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (n) Determine the extent of engagement by legal provision; (o) Ensure that citizens understand decision-making processes, since the full engagement strategy should connect ordinary people with political and policymaking processes; (p) Enable citizens to speak with politicians and decision makers and vice versa; (q) Ensure that people are heard and included when decisions are made.

Source: ESCWA, *Capacity Development Material on Participation, Collaboration and Citizen Engagement*, 2018.

C. Citizen engagement policy template

As mentioned above, an engagement policy is important because it supports civil servants and encourages them to freely engage with citizens. Like any policy, a citizen engagement policy comprises several elements and requires mainstreaming of gender and youth considerations and the needs of vulnerable groups.

The Alberta Urban Municipalities Association (AUMA) and the Rural Municipalities of Alberta (RMA) published a comprehensive guidebook entitled “A public engagement guide”.³ The guidebook applies to the municipal level, although it could also be useful at the national, city or institutional levels. Table 4 summarizes the essential elements to be included in an engagement policy.

Table 4. Essential elements of an engagement policy

Element	What to include	Example
Policy statement	The main purpose of developing the policy.	Policy statement of Edmonton City’s policy for public engagement: “ <i>The City of Edmonton values public engagement processes and activities that contribute to policy, program, service and project decisions by providing City Council and Administration with the best possible information to support decision making</i> ”. ^a
Vision	The vision that motivated the development of the policy.	The public engagement strategy of the University of Manchester states: “ <i>We believe that universities and research institutes have a major responsibility to contribute to society through their public engagement, and that they have much to gain in return</i> ”. ^b
Principles	The main principles that ensure effective citizen engagement.	Maitland City Council includes several principles in their citizen engagement strategy, such as inclusiveness, diversity, openness, respect and accountability. ^c
Definitions	Define all terms related to citizen engagement, and other terms included in the policy.	Edmonton City defines ‘public engagement’ as: “ <i>Public engagement creates opportunities for people to contribute to decision making by City Council and Administration about the City’s policies, programs, projects, and services, and communicates how public input is collected and used</i> ”. ^d

³ <https://rmalberta.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/RMA-AUMA-Public-Engagement-Guide.pdf>.

Element	What to include	Example
Relevant legislation	List all legislation and other policies/strategies that govern or are related to the policy.	Maitland Citizen Engagement Strategy has a section listing all relevant legislation; e.g. the Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009, and the Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998.
Roles and responsibilities	Identify all potential actors and stakeholders, and explain their expected roles and responsibilities.	At the municipal level, the administration or elected officials are responsible for ensuring the council's understanding of people's views, interests and perspectives.
Approaches	Clarify the approaches deployed to involve all actors and stakeholders, and how they will fulfil their roles.	Maitland's strategy for citizen engagement includes two sections about the engagement framework and the model of engagement that they depend on, as follows: inform, consult, involve and collaborate.
Plan (optional)	Develop a citizen engagement action plan and attach it to the policy document. This will maximize the chances of success and enable the follow-up and evaluation of the processes.	The plan could include several sections including the following: project background, project decision, project team, project stakeholders, the purpose and goals of engagement, activities and schedule, required resources, input management, and evaluation.
Monitoring and evaluation report	Identify the components that should be included in the report and to whom it should be submitted.	Include when and how the evaluation will take place, and how results will be useful for future improvements.

Source: AUMA and RMA, *A Public Engagement Guide*, 2018.

Notes: ^a www.edmonton.ca/documents/PoliciesDirectives/C593.pdf.
^b www.engagement.manchester.ac.uk/resources/Public%20Engagement%20Strategy%20FINAL.pdf.
^c www.maitland.nsw.gov.au/document/citizen-engagement-strategy-2016.
^d www.edmonton.ca/documents/PoliciesDirectives/C593.pdf.

III. Technology features and channels

There are technological tools, channels and features that assist in implementing an engagement policy. At the beginning, an e-participation portal should be developed with supporting features, such as audio/video content, multilingualism, online forms on policies and services, news on upcoming participation activities, access to the parliamentary calendar, frequently asked questions on sending comments, and access to the e-law-making system. These features should be fine-tuned to increase citizens' ability to input feedback, comments and opinions or to access decisions already made that include the results of consultations with citizens on education, health, finance, social welfare, labour, and the environment.

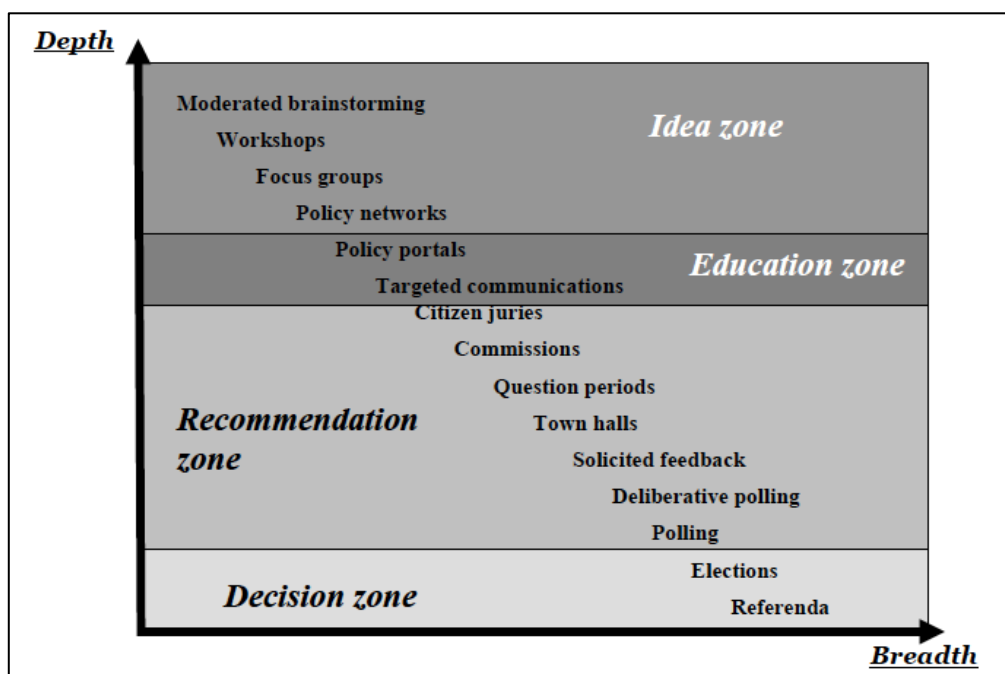
Given that open data and participation are linked and support each other in open government, open government data tools can also be applied. With reference to the five-star scheme of open data, this gradual improvement could start from the two-star level to the five-star level. For example, at the beginning of implementing an engagement policy, data could be at the two-star level (in a machine-readable format, such as Excel, instead of an image scan of a table); or the three-star level (data in a machine-readable and standard format, such as comma-separated values instead of Excel). Additional improvement are achieved in the next stages, by moving to machine-readable open formats and open standards so that anyone can access and use the data (such as the Open Document Format or PDF/A), or open standards for open government data (such as RDF or SPARQL). For more information please read the Open Data Toolkit.

It is also important to establish data protection features, such as e-identification/authentication, and to appoint an information (privacy) commissioner to advise citizens on their concerns and provide guidance on cybersecurity.

A. Digital age participation, collaboration and engagement methodologies

There are various citizen engagement methodologies, with disparate purposes. Figure 1 considers engagement and participation in terms of the following four 'zones': the idea zone, the education zone, the recommendation zone, and the decision zone. Each zone is made up of several specific types of activities.

Figure 1. Digital age participation, collaboration and engagement methodologies



Source: ESCWA, *Capacity Development Material on Participation, Collaboration, and Citizen Engagement*, 2018.

Although there is a tendency for ICT to play a stronger role in the steps indicated in the bottom right-hand side of figure 1, the specific application of citizen engagement in practice varies according to circumstances, objectives, and new applications. For example, as indicated in box 1, the Service Monitoring System in Mozambique solicits feedback from users through channels that are tailored to local characteristics.

Box 1. Mozambique: Engaging citizens to monitor waste management services

The Service Monitoring System is designed to support marginalized and underserved populations in overcoming barriers to entry in the urban services sector.

The system is based on a software platform, Ntxuva, which is designed to collect information from people via SMS, a mobile app, and a web portal. A voice interface in local languages is used to enhance access by less-educated poorer populations. Members of the public can dial *553# or access the www.mopa.co.mz website through a computer, smartphone or mobile phone (via SMS) to report failure to empty waste bins, illegal dumping or inappropriate rubbish burning. The project involves citizens in the process of monitoring the quality of solid waste management services, especially when contracted to third parties (with the support of the World Bank and other bilateral donors).

The system provides visualizations and statistics originating from public information about urban services. The system also promotes engagement among the local software development/innovation community. Users can add photos, comments and other clarifications for quick intervention by the City Council. The Municipal Directorate of Hygiene and Cemeteries, with the help of the municipal districts, manages and monitors the information.

Source: www.mopa.co.mz.

B. Participatory tools

Table 5 compares several participatory tools, in terms of their advantages, disadvantages and description. Each tool may be useful for a specific purpose, enabling public sector institutions to select what tool suits their context and meets their needs.

Table 5. Types of participatory tools

Tool	Description	Advantages and disadvantages
Networks	<p>An online service or platform built upon and reflecting networks and relationships between people through their interests or activities.</p> <p>A network generally consists of a representation of each user (often a profile), social ties, and a broad range of services (such as email, chat, messages, blog posts, and content). It offers users the opportunity to exchange ideas, activities, events, and interests with members of a personal network.</p> <p>Examples: Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter.</p>	<p>Advantages:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • User and target audience are present; • Informal tone, two-way dialogue, and open to all; • Input directly from users and stakeholders; • Can be combined with various publications and feedback components; • Dialogue creates ideas and innovation; • Good communication and PR channel; • Independent, neutral platform. <p>Disadvantages:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use and feedback are not guaranteed and the dialogue on social networks is often superficial and it is difficult to encourage a constructive debate; • The need to use other channels of communication for specific issues or for clarification, such as emails or phone calls.

Tool	Description	Advantages and disadvantages
Platforms	<p>An online platform, facilitating the cooperative and work processes that help more people to interact and share information to achieve a common goal and thus promote innovation.</p> <p>The Internet makes it easier to disseminate and exchange information and knowledge, and facilitates contributions from individuals. A crucial element of collaboration is that ideas occur everywhere and that individuals can share these ideas. Social cooperation corresponds to crowdsourcing, where individuals work together towards a common goal.</p> <p>Examples: Wikis like MediaWike, DokuWiki, TikiWiki, Google page wiki, blogs like Wordpress or Blogger and collaborative office solutions such as digitaliser.dk, Debategraph, Teamwork or Work Spot.</p>	<p>Advantages:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two-way dialogue and discussion forum; • Input directly from users and stakeholders; • Can be combined with various publishing and feedback components and a portal; • Dialogue creates ideas and innovation; • Common platform, forum and resource. <p>Disadvantages:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use and feedback is not guaranteed and it can be difficult to encourage a constructive dialogue; • Alternate channels, such as emails or phone calls; • Added value unknown.
Publication	<p>An online service or platform that facilitates sharing, publication, changes, folksonomies, user creation, and mash-up of content.</p> <p>Content may be in the form of video, images or text.</p> <p>Examples: YouTube, Flickr, SlideShare, RSS feeds, and Twitter.</p>	<p>Advantages:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active updates by stakeholders and/or users; • Helps to maintain interest; • Gives the user a 'share' in the content and how it is used; • Alternative tools for mediation and alternative to text – web accessibility; • Compliment a platform with audio, pictures, and text; • Give users a choice of medium; • Can be used on different networks and collaborative platforms and a portal. <p>Disadvantages:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential information overload; • The value of user-generated content can fluctuate significantly; • Copyrights not always respected; • Can be heavy/time-consuming to read and upload/download.

Tool	Description	Advantages and disadvantages
Feedback	<p>An online service or platform facilitating input from an audience through one or two-way communication. Two forms of feedback exist: quantitative forms like voting and rating, and qualitative forms such as commenting, discussion, surveys, wikis, and blogs.</p> <p>Feedback types are often combined and are often found on website or as functional elements in different networks and collaborative platforms.</p> <p>Examples: Vote and debate on borger.dk or 'Debategraph', rating, and commenting on Facebook or digitaliser.dk, surveys as survey monkey, pirate survey, free online surveys, blogs, wikis, Wikipedia's article feedback tool, various public solutions.</p>	<p>Advantages:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can be used on different networks and collaborative platforms; • Two-way dialogue and discussion forum; • Input directly from the users and stakeholders, thus facilitating inclusion and involvement. <p>Disadvantages:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use and feedback is not guaranteed; • Alternative method of user and stakeholder feedback; • Added value and resource unknown.

Source: ESCWA, *Capacity Development Material on Participation, Collaboration, and Citizen Engagement*, 2018.

C. Electronic voting

Electronic voting (e-voting) uses electronic means to either aid or handle the task of casting and counting votes. The degree of automation may vary from simple tasks to a complete solution that includes voter registration and authentication, vote input, local or precinct tallying, vote data encryption and transmission to servers, vote consolidation and tabulation, and election administration.

In general, there are two main types of e-voting:

- E-voting which is physically supervised by representatives of governmental or independent electoral authorities (for example, electronic voting machines located at polling stations), such as in Brazil and India;
- Remote e-voting via the Internet (also called i-voting) where voters vote from home or without going to a polling station, such as in Estonia.

The most successful examples of e-voting comply with a set of standards established by regulatory bodies, and are also capable of meeting strong requirements associated with security, accuracy, integrity, swiftness, privacy, auditability, accessibility, cost-effectiveness, scalability, and ecological sustainability. Estonia and Switzerland have implemented such e-voting systems.

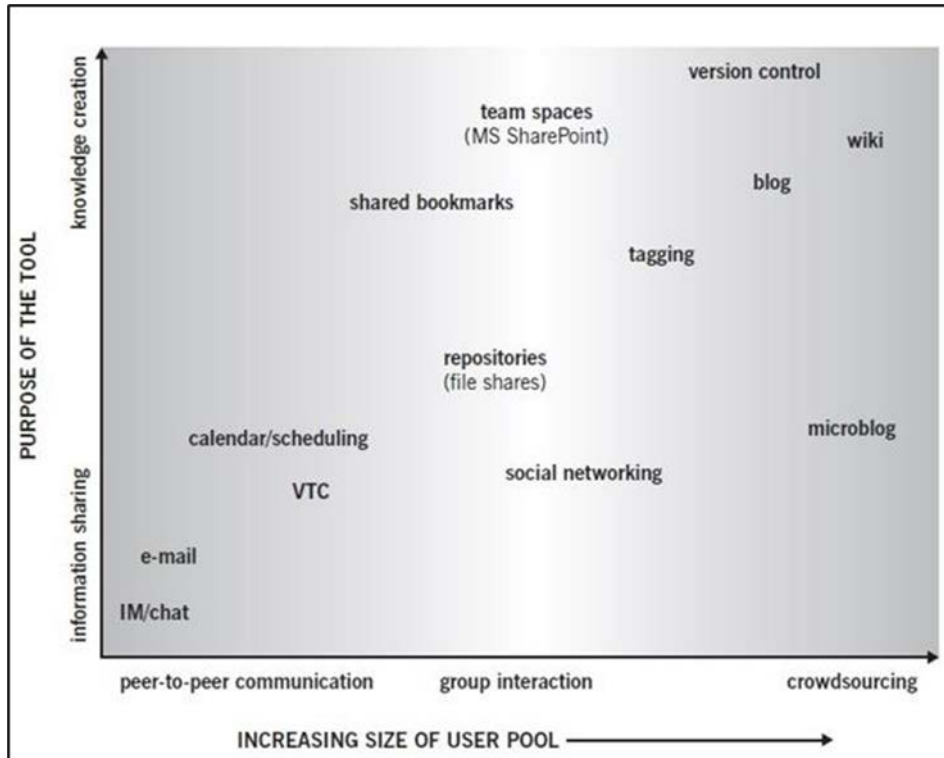
E-voting/e-polling remains controversial owing to the possibility of hacking, cyberattacks and severe disruption of results, although it is also claimed that the dangers are no greater – though of a different nature – than with traditional physical voting systems. ICT security measures should be well considered during the design and implementation phases to ensure that the system is not hacked.

D. Collaborative tools

At the collaboration phase, it is necessary to give particular attention to the use of new technology and information tools that allow ‘collaborative projects’ to be implemented.

Unlike expressive social media tools (traditional), these tools are less common and more complex in their design and use. It is imperative, at the start of this stage, to monitor the tools available (whether available for general use or not), and classify them in terms of the functions they contain. Figure 2 depicts a classification of collaborative tools in terms of their purpose and volume of their user base.⁴

Figure 2. Classification of collaborative tools



Source: Bernhard Krabina and Brigitte Lutz, Implementation of Open Government – Version 3.0, 2016, p. 52.

Note: VTC stands for ‘video teleconference’; IM for ‘instant messaging’; and MS for ‘Microsoft’.

4. Gregory F. Treverton, New Tools for Collaboration – the Experience of the US Intelligence Community, Centre for Strategic and International Studies, 2016.

Figure 2 shows that by increasing the size of the user pool, moving from peer-to-peer communications, through group interactions and then to crowdsourcing, the tools deployed change from information sharing to knowledge creation. Information sharing is mainly at the participation phase, seen when citizens simply submit information in the form of feedback and comments. In comparison, knowledge creation is mainly at the collaboration phase, enabling citizens (and other non-government actors) to co-create knowledge with the Government, which might result in new products and services.

Detailed criteria that could be considered when choosing the appropriate tool:

1. Is the tool technologically available?
2. Does the tool require installation by the user?
3. Does the tool require registration procedures?
4. Does the use of the tool require submission of data about the entrepreneur and/or the users? Do these data go to a third party?
5. Does the tool guarantee data integrity?
6. Is the use of the tool free or paid?
7. Is the tool impervious to security and safety threats (hacking)?

E. Collaborative projects

Collaborative projects can be classified by type, management, and beneficiaries, as shown in table 6.

Table 6. Types of collaborative projects

	Description
Open administrative cooperation	This type of collaborative projects focuses on the participation of citizens or the representatives of civil society organisations in the initiative of the public administration department, which actively shapes the process. For example, citizens are involved in advisory councils, and such projects could be included in the context of activities under 'Government-to-Government'.
Citizen sourcing	This type of participatory or collaborative projects helps citizens to fulfil public duties as co-producers (such as mobilize ideas; finish some work the government needs by the assistance of public citizens, like collecting data or mobilizing funding). Even though public administration is mainly responsible for this type of activity, citizens can influence the direction and the results and may actually assist in day-to-day implementation. These projects could be included in the context of activities under 'citizen-to-Government'.

	Description
Public-civic partnership	In this type of collaborative projects, public administration and citizens share the responsibilities equally. Both sides contribute their specific skills to solve problems together and generate public value. These projects could be included in the context of activities under 'Government-with-citizens'.
Government as a platform	In this type of collaborative projects, the public administration helps citizens organize themselves. The public administration is not responsible for the activities, but can work its powers and influence to generate higher public value. These projects could be included in the context of activities under 'Government-to-citizen'.
Do it yourself government	In this kind of collaborative projects, citizens help themselves and each other. Public administration plays no active role in daily activities but can provide supporting framework conditions. These projects could be included in the context of activities under 'citizen-to-citizen'.

Source: Bernhard Krabina and Brigitte Lutz, [Implementation of Open Government – Version 3.0](#), 2016; ESCWA, [Fostering Open Government in the Arab Region](#), 2018.

When implementing collaborative projects, it is imperative to first look for 'cooperation partners' since the primary objective of this stage is to target appropriate cooperation partners, by topic, and not necessarily to cooperate with all citizens at the same time, as was the focus of the previous stage.

'Health volunteering' is one of the recent examples of collaborative projects in Saudi Arabia. This platform has been approved by the Ministry of Health to provide people with the opportunity to offer their services to assist the public health sector in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. More than 100,000 volunteers have registered.⁵

Since, Governments and their public institutions do not have a monopoly on knowledge, resources or power to tackle most challenges, especially a pandemic, this type of collaboration is a viable solution.

F. Participatory budgeting

Participatory budgeting is a process of democratic deliberation and decision-making, and a type of participatory democracy, in which ordinary people decide how to allocate part of a municipal or public budget. It enables citizens to identify, discuss and prioritize public spending projects, and empowers them to make real decisions about how money is spent.

Participatory budgeting generally involves several basic steps:

- (a) Community members identify spending priorities and select budget delegates;

⁵ DESA, [Compendium of Digital Government Initiatives in Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic](#), 2020.

- (b) Budget delegates develop specific spending proposals, with help from experts;
- (c) Community members vote on which proposals to fund;
- (d) The city or institution implements the top proposals.

A comprehensive case study of eight municipalities in Brazil, analysing the successes and failures of participatory budgeting, has suggested that it often results in more equitable public spending, greater government transparency and accountability, increased levels of public participation and collaboration (especially by marginalized or poorer residents), and democratic and citizenship learning.

G. Collaborative co-production, multi-stakeholder partnerships, crowdsourcing and crowdfunding

The collaborative production of services via social networking and interactive web-based tools enables people to play a more active role in the design and production of public services within the context of public-civil partnerships and partnerships between public institutions, the private sector and local people.

Multi-stakeholder partnerships can harness the resources, knowledge and ingenuity of the private sector, civil society, the scientific community, academia, philanthropy foundations, parliaments, local authorities, volunteers and other stakeholders. This collective power is important to generate ideas, mobilize and share knowledge, expertise, technology and financial resources. It complements government efforts and supports the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in developing countries.⁶

Such multi-stakeholder partnerships can also be considered a form of crowdsourcing, in which individuals or organizations use contributions from users (normally obtained electronically) to obtain needed services or ideas. Finance may be sourced in the same way (crowdfunding), and the World Bank estimates that it could represent at least a \$90 billion market within 20 years in developing countries alone.⁷

Using ICT, citizens, communities, civil groups and businesses are no longer simply passive consumers of data and knowledge, but increasingly become active producers. The following example from India (box 2) provides a compelling illustration of the ability of ICT to enhance transparency and accountability, and highlights the people's power to combat corruption in public institutions.

⁶ United Nations, Report of the World Summit for Social Development, 1995.

⁷ infoDev, Crowdfunding's Potential for the Developing World. Washington, D.C.: World Bank, 2013. Available at <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/409841468327411701/pdf/840000WP0Box380crowdfunding0study00.pdf>.

Box 2. I paid a bribe, India

The 'I paid a bribe' initiative was set up by the non-profit organization Janaagraha in 2010 to harness the collective energy of citizens to tackle corruption in public services across India.

The site collects citizens' reports about the nature, number, pattern, types, location, frequency and values of actual corrupt acts. Citizens can contribute in several ways. They can provide reports about bribes they paid, bribes they resisted, and instances where they received a public service without paying a bribe, that is, when they encountered 'honest officers'. There is also a bribe hotline for people to ask for advice about rules and regulations, how to avoid paying bribes, and how to deal with corrupt officers. Together, these reports provide ongoing snapshots of bribery and corruption in a specific locality.

The information collected through the site is then used to advocate changes in governance and accountability processes, and to tackle incidences of corruption. For example, there are numerous instances where government rules and procedures have been changed as a result, including in the Department of Transport in the Government of Karnataka in Bangalore. About 20 senior officials were issued with warnings. Similarly, changes were made to registrations of land transactions at the Department of Stamps and Registration in Bangalore.

The success of the initiative and the ICT tools that enabled it has led to it being emulated in many other countries, including Ghana, Greece, Kenya, Zimbabwe, Pakistan, Azerbaijan, South Africa, Ukraine and Tunisia. For example, in Romania, an online service enables citizens to share their experiences of bribery when interacting with public services, including sharing information on the amount of money they paid.

Source: www.ipaidabribe.com.

VI. Building capacity

Building capacity related to open government in general, and citizen engagement in particular, is important for both the Government and the general public. This will ensure that the whole process runs faster and smoother, will save a lot of time, and will achieve the objectives of engagement.

A. Upgrading government capacity

Training government employees to master specific competencies and skills, such as dealing with social media and ICT tools, is strongly recommended. However, there is a wide range of additional issues that should be considered and treated while preparing civil servants to deal with this kind of transformation. The following are specific recommendations.

1. Understanding how to select issues

- Use local, specific and concrete topics to start the participation process, which can then be expanded to include more general issues;
- There are two areas in which participation works well, and both are at city/local level: participatory budgeting and public planning;
- Civil servants need to be trained and have the resources to distinguish and select the issues they can interact on.

2. Framing the debate and linking issues

- As Governments increasingly become one player among many, they are finding that they need to be an arbiter between competing interests in society. In this role, the intelligent and balanced framing of issues is critical;
- All parties should seek to avoid 'false polarization';
- It is important to focus on the Internet's potential to provide space for deliberation and debate.

3. Which processes and which actors

- It is important to directly address the needs of all actors involved, understand their situation and motives, and involve them in identifying and designing the process;
- Actors should try to define their own interests and strategies to determine why and how they will use e-participation;
- Participation must take place early enough in the process to make a difference to the outcome;
- Objectives need to be clear from the outset, and participants need to understand the procedure in a transparent way.

4. Security and privacy of civil servants

- Civil servants should be educated about the security risks and the precautions that must be taken regarding ICT and security policies;
- Although opening up data and sharing it is a must towards applying open government, civil servants must be aware to not share sensitive government information, such as confidential data or private information about themselves or others;
- It should be clearly stated what type of information civil servants can disclose when using social media. For more information, please read the Open Data Toolkit.

5. Strengthen professional communities at every level

- Organized professional groups should be encouraged to use online debate and knowledge exchange tools at all levels. For example, e-rule or e-regulation-making, where professional organizations and experts help prepare rules and regulations and disseminate them for general consultation, should be more widely exploited and adapted to local conditions;
- Frameworks of incentives and support should be provided to promote employing user-controlled wiki systems that enable everyone in a group to join the discussion and contribute.

6. Countering the challenges

- Governments should be ready to respond to rapid technological changes, and civil servants should be prepared to tackle cybersecurity concerns and improper social media use;
- Governments need to be alert to and attempt to counter many of the challenges and risks of e-collaboration and e-decision-making, especially through international cooperation.

B. Hanging roles of Government

The following new or enhanced roles need to be adopted by the Government in the engagement phase.

Government as facilitator and orchestrator: When the Government sets up engagement platforms at many levels, its role is to coordinate, facilitate and enable, while also regulating and arbitrating the activities of others in delivering public value.

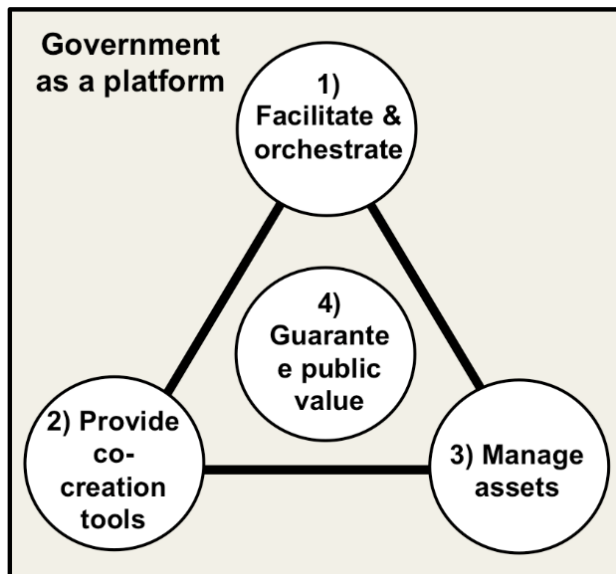
Government as the provider of tools, guidance and incentives for co-creation:

Governments should provide structured guidance, under which service co-creation with users can take place. Guided support for co-creation should also be designed to reduce the burden of participation on users, while optimizing benefits for both public administrations and citizens. In addition, Governments should provide incentives by highlighting the benefits service users can derive from the co-creation process, giving them more power to make decisions about their services in adapting them to their own needs and supporting them with relevant data and other resources.

Government as the manager of societal assets: The role of the Government in using the power of ICT, particularly in collaboration with other actors, is to identify, match, orchestrate, broker and coordinate assets which can be shared and converted into public value impacts, instead of doing nothing while those assets go to waste. Already many non-government actors are launching typically bottom-up and small-scale ICT-based platforms that have such a role, for example as part of the so-called sharing and collaborative economies, such as the civil society organization “Shareable” based in the United States.⁸ In many cases, however, the Government has greater power and scope to do this by linking actors and sharing its own assets internally, and this is both a growing challenge as well as a huge opportunity. This would involve widening the scope of ICT-based content management systems to become asset management systems.

Government as guarantor of public value over the longer term: Seeing the Government as a platform ensures that public value is appropriately created and deployed. It is important to recognize, however, that even when the Government collaborates with other actors in producing public value, this does not necessarily imply that the Government has become just one actor among many, given that it still needs to fulfil roles that other actors normally cannot. Such roles include being responsible for overall quality standards and mechanisms for asset sharing and legal frameworks, even in situations when these are formally delegated to other actors. Other such roles include data protection and security. Governments provide longer-term stability and continuity, which other actors are not able to do.

Figure 3. Government as a platform for new roles



Source: J. Millard, European strategies for e-governance to 2020 and beyond. In *Government 3.0: Next Generation Government Technology, Infrastructure and Services*, Adegboyega Ojo and Jeremy Millard, eds., 2017.

C. Recommendations on building public capacity

Public capacity-building is also vital to ensure the success of engagement programmes. In the following table, you could find recommendations could be considered while building or upgrading these capacities.

Table 7. Recommendations on building public capacity

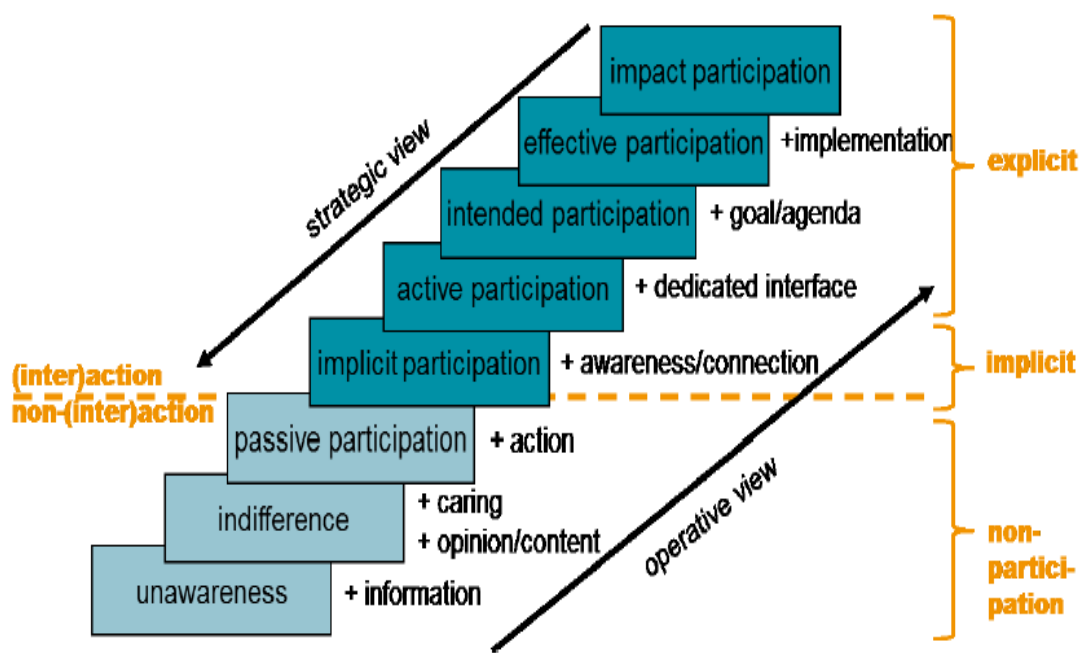
Level of engagement	Recommendation
Participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Most citizens are interested primarily in specific issues which have a direct impact/influence on their own lives, these interests should be used to build citizen participation in a national or local public space from the bottom up; (b) For non-government actors, it is recommended to encourage, design and support skills acquisition and education/training in participatory, digital and political literacy, and to ensure that ICT channels complement non-ICT channels; (c) It is important to show how local debates have wider relevance, and to provide tools and mechanisms to hook them together in a two-way process that provides context for local debates and substance for the wider debate.
Collaboration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Building citizen collaboration from the bottom is similar to the participation phase but upgraded to take account of the e-collaboration and e-decision-making context, as outlined above; (b) In the collaboration phase, participatory, digital and political literacy should already be anticipated in participation phase public capacity initiatives, taking into account collaboration policies, strategies, institutional frameworks and legal and regulatory frameworks adopted.
Full engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) The public capacity-building blocks for this phase are similar to those described in previous phases, and they are built upon them, but should be designed to facilitate the engagement and e-engagement policy and strategy context; (b) Building citizen collaboration from the bottom and actively supporting participatory, digital and political literacy need to reflect these engagement and e-engagement policies and strategies.

Source: ESCWA, *Capacity Development Material on Participation, Collaboration, and Citizen Engagement*, 2018.

D. Types of participants

While building public capacity, it is important to notice that citizens' participation is not at the same level at all stages. Figure 4 sets out a 'ladder' that measures and evaluates citizens' participation by successive degrees: 'down' (i.e. from a strategic point of view) or 'up' (i.e. from an operative point of view), to ensure that citizen participation truly impacts the quality and breadth of government service delivery.

Figure 4. E-participation ladder



Source: Bernhard Krabina, The E-Participation Ladder – Advancing from Unawareness to Impact Participation, 2016.

The following is a brief on these types of participants, starting from an unawareness stage to impactful participation.

Table 8. Types of participants

Degree	Description
Unawareness	Citizens may be unaware of the importance of participation, therefore providing information about the potentials of participation is vital.
Indifference	Citizens receive information about participation, but they still feel indifferent towards the issue.
Passive participation	Citizens are interested in participation, but they do not take any positive step because there are no sufficient incentives.

Degree	Description
Implicit participation	Citizens start participating through available means, including commenting or watching videos. However, this participation is still implicit because citizens do not recognize the importance of their participation.
Active participation	Citizens start participating intentionally and sharing their opinions, but this will include misuses. Government departments must therefore work to ensure that citizens' comments are limited to specific platforms.
Intended participation	Participation is tailored towards achieving its objectives.
Effective participation	Citizens do not post comments arbitrarily, but are part of announced programmes with a clear action plan. The focus is on maximizing the benefits of participation.
Impactful participation	Participation takes its sustainable form, and there are valuable contributions from citizens resulting in better public services, improved government programmes and successful initiatives.

Source: Bernhard Krabina, The E-Participation Ladder – Advancing from Unawareness to Impact Participation, 2016.

Figure 4 and table 8 assist in identifying the current stage of citizens' participation to tailor capacity-building programmes accordingly.

Aside from the participation ladder, the different types of citizens participants can be classified into the following categories:

- (a) Creators, who proactively create and publish contents;
- (b) Critics, who create and publish contents in a reactive and participatory way;
- (c) Collectors, who subscribe to social media, with no regular participation;
- (d) Spectators, who merely consume the contents without actively contributing;
- (e) Inactive citizens, who are primarily not concerned with participation.

V. Engaging young people in government work

Communicating and engaging citizens in government work and decision-making processes can be achieved through multiple methodologies and tools. However, when it comes to young people, public institutions should pay more attention to the tone and style of communicating with them, and select the most appropriate channel to maximize the benefits from engaging them. Table 9 sets out recommendations for communicating and engaging young people in open government activities.

Table 9. Channels and recommendations to engage young people in open government activities

Channel	Description		Advantages	Challenges
Youth councils	Representative bodies that elect a group of young people to convey youth's messages and perspectives to policy makers on specific issue.	Operates on a local level or national level e.g. schools and municipal councils.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • These councils represent a channel in which government officials could interact with organized youth; • Building a strong relationship between public institutions and citizens. This will create and foster the active citizenship. 	How to reach and engage more young people since this requires commitment and resources, especially when it comes to reach vulnerable groups.
Collaborative projects	Young people and adult facilitators (civil society or researchers) collaborate together on specific project or program.	They are preceded by an educational phase to ensure that participants are fully informed, and succeeded by a follow-up phase to demonstrate to participants the impact their involvement has had.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This channel makes young people more experienced and it gives them a group of useful skills; • It could be used as part of a communication program by Governments to focus on particular themes. 	Long-term commitment from all parties.

Channel	Description		Advantages	Challenges
Deliberative projects	Young people representatives with different backgrounds debate a specific issue or policy.	The same as collaborative projects.	Increasing trust among all parties and engaging marginalized groups.	Require an active role of civil society and sufficient time for effective engagement.
Digital participation	Through digital or online tools, young people could participate in campaigning groups and engage in polls, and data exchange.	Gathering input on youth-relevant issues and for building a more participatory political culture.	Reaching very large and diverse participants, cost effective, and easy to apply.	Monitoring of conversations to avoid going off track.

Source: OECD, Engaging Young People in Open Government.

Digital participation and a mix of communication channels are the most effective methods to reach a wider audience, close the gender gap, and engage marginalized groups in the community.

Box 3. 'e-Partool' an e-participation platform for young people in Germany

The German Federal Youth Council established an e-participation platform for involving young people' in shaping the policies that affect their future. The objective of this platform is not only to promote youth participation, but also to ensure that it is impactful.

All young people between 12 and 29 can participate, either individually or collectively as groups. In case of a group, young people can appoint a representative to enter contributions on their behalf. Moreover, participants can freely choose what question they want to answer. All the input is checked to avoid inappropriate content, then it is published. The Council then conveys youth messages, concerns, opinions and demands to the Government, parliament and public.

Source: <https://mitwirkung.dbjr.de/>.

Recommendations to effectively communicate with young people

1. All initiatives, programmes and projects should be tailored to young people's concerns and interests.
2. The objective should not be simply 'engaging young people', but also how to effectively engage them to achieve specific goals and realistic outcomes.
3. A mix of communication channels, traditional and newer digital ones, should be used to ensure the effectiveness of the process.
4. The presence of third trusted parties, such as civil society, is important because they are relatively closer to young people than public institutions, which will activate young people's role more efficiently.
5. The tone and style used in communicating with young people is critical. They should not be treated as 'citizens in training' nor as lacking in experience. The tone should also focus on building a strong relationship and long-term engagement, and not on short-term outcomes.
6. Each communication should mention the impact of previous contributions received.



