

# **CIVICUS Participatory Governance Programme**

## **A Report on Lessons Learnt from Regional-level Skills Development, Innovation Grant and Networking Activities (2008-2009)**

**January 2010**



<b>Table of Contents</b>	<b>Page</b>
<b>1. Background &amp; Introduction</b>	<b>3-5</b>
1.1. About the lessons learnt report	3
1.2. Introduction to CIVICUS Participatory Governance Programme	3
1.3. The regional participatory governance skills development activities	4
1.4. Assessment of the lessons learnt from round one of the regional skills development activities	5
<b>2. Lessons learnt from the regional skills building workshops</b>	<b>6-15</b>
2.1. Selection of partners who have a strong regional presence, network and capacity and ensuring adequate regional representation in the skills building event	6
2.2. Targeting the participation of CSO practitioners	8
	8
2.4. Eliciting government participation	9
2.5. Participation of media representatives	11
2.6. Thematic focus, workshop methodology and action orientation	11
2.7. Effects of workshop process and methodology	12
2.8. Workshop evaluation	14
2.9. Conclusions	15
<b>3. Lessons Learnt from the Mentoring Activities</b>	<b>16-19</b>
3.1. Different conceptualizations of the mentoring component across regions	16
3.1.1. Western Africa - mentoring follows innovation grants	16
3.1.2. Southern Africa peer me	17
3.1.3. Latin America Mentoring eventually becomes a preparatory activity for innovation grants	17
3.1.4. South Asia- <i>Online Mentoring Forum</i> takes off	18
3.2. Summary of lessons learnt from the mentoring component	19
<b>4. Lessons Learnt from the Innovation Grant Component</b>	<b>20-25</b>
4.1. Level of interest in innovation grants and their regional spread as a function of skills building event and mentoring activities	20
4.2. Criteria for selection of innovation grantees- definition of what is and	21
	21
4.3. Issues addressed and tools applied	21
4.4. Quality of support to grantees provided by partners	22
4.5. Government interfaces in the grant projects	23
4.6. Media interfaces in the rant projects	23
4.7. Targeting the participation of marginalized groups	24
4.8. Innovation, impacts and challenges	24
<b>List of Annexes</b>	
<b>Annexure 1:</b> Comparative summary of the regional skills building workshops organized in various regions (2008-09)	26-27
<b>Annexure II:</b> by the regional partners (2008-2009)	28-29
<b>Annexure III:</b> -2009)	30-32

## 1. Background & Introduction

### 1.1. About the lessons learnt report

This report aims to distil the lessons learnt from the first round of the regional-level skills development, mentoring, innovation and networking activities of CIVICUS Participatory Governance Programme conducted during 2008-2009 in order to guide similar initiatives in future and to share good practices emanating from these activities with the regional partners and other interested individuals and organizations.

During the first round, partnerships were established with organizations in four regions of the world viz. Society for Participatory Research in Asia (PRIA) in South Asia, IDASA in Southern Africa, CLUSA-Ghana in Western Africa and Polis-LogoLink in Latin America. The second round which is currently being implemented, has established partnerships with organizations in three other regions namely, Middle East and Northern Africa, Central America and South East Asia. In the first round, a total of four regional learning/skills-building events were conducted which saw participation of a total of 122 practitioners (84 from civil society and 38 from government), representing 54 organizations from 17 countries across the four regions while around 20 organizations received mentoring support.

Furthermore, a total of 15 grants were made. The grant activities spread across several sectors such as health, education, water and sanitation gender equity, child rights, youth employment, local government, racial and ethnic discrimination, right to information, municipal financing, city planning. The grants also application of many PG tools like people-centred advocacy, public forums, stakeholder forums, town hall meetings, youth manifestos, social audits, government information-sharing, joint (community-LG) planning, etc.

### 1.2. Introduction to CIVICUS Participatory Governance Programme

The CIVICUS Participatory Governance Programme aims to enhance the capacity of civil society and government practitioners to promote and practice participatory governance. In order to do so, it supports the four following objectives:

• **Knowledge and information-sharing:** By creating a space for practitioners to reflect, learn, and interact with leading researchers and scholars and developing a practitioner-friendly information and learning resources, the programme aims to generate valuable new knowledge and help practitioners to: better articulate their vision and views; strengthen their analytical capacity; gain confidence as advocates of participatory governance; and design and implement more informed programming and

advocacy activities.

centre, offers practitioners around the world free access to key participatory governance tools, resources and opportunities for peer learning and knowledge-sharing.

ÿ **Skills development:** The programme works with a network of regional partners to support skills training and capacity development for targeted civil society and government practitioners around the globe. These initiatives including multi-country workshops, study exchanges and mentoring opportunities focusing on specific priority interests and needs, aim to help participants enrich and expand their participatory governance practices.

ÿ **Innovation:** Through a small grant scheme, the programme promotes innovation and evolution of participatory governance practices in a number of countries around the world. In addition, by identifying, analyzing and documenting a number of innovative joint initiatives by civil society and government practitioners, the programme seeks to simultaneously practices, learning and sharing lessons from these experiences.

ÿ **Networking and building bridges:** By supporting multi-stakeholder networks at national, regional and global level, the programme seeks to promote knowledge-sharing, networking and enhanced working relationships amongst and between civil society and government actors. The programme envisages to create a comprised of participatory governance practitioners and researchers working in different capacities and at different levels.

### 1.3. The regional participatory governance skills development activities

In implementing the objectives stated above, the Participatory Governance Programme undertakes a range of activities both at the global and regional/country levels. The regional skills development activities launched in 2008 are designed as a major intervention towards realizing some of the broader objectives of the PG programme and has four specific objectives:

- ÿ To enhance participating practitioners knowledge on PG tools and approaches and their practical skills and operational capacity in translating the learning into concrete actions;
- ÿ To promote sustained mentoring through peer-support and information-sharing, regional/cross-border learning and partnering;
- ÿ To promote innovation and evolution of PG practices and international knowledge base on participatory governance; and
- ÿ To promote regional level networking amongst PG practitioners

The regional skills development activities consist of four interrelated components:

**Component 1- Regional skills building workshop:** Implemented by the regional partner organizations with the support from CIVICUS, the regional skills-building workshop aimed to enrich and expand the understanding and skills of country, sub-national and local level civil society and government practitioners in participatory governance approaches and practices.

**Component 2 – Mentoring:** As a follow-up to the regional skills building workshops, the mentoring opportunities are provided to selected workshop participants to not only further enhance their capacity for participatory governance tools and methods but also to offer continuous hands-on and problem-

**Component 3 – Innovation grants:** The objective of innovation grants is to identify, prioritize and support short-term, creative, practical and replicable ideas on participatory governance as a means of generating valuable evidence and learning which would then be shared across regional and global networks of practitioners.

**Component 4 – Regional level networking:** The activities of the first three components viz. the regional skills building events, mentoring services and innovation grants are expected to facilitate active and sustained networking amongst the practitioners at the regional/country level for knowledge and experience sharing and issue based coalitions while also bridging the gap between the state agencies and the civil society organizations.

The regional skills development component is being implemented in two rounds. The first round commenced in early 2008 and concluded in December 2009 involving four regions viz. South Asia, Western Africa, Southern Africa and South America. The second round which involves, Central America, Middle East/North Africa (MENA) and South-East Asia commenced in 2009 and is expected to conclude in late 2010. This report focuses on distilling lessons learnt from the first round of activities in the four regions.

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#### **1.4. Assessment of the lessons learnt from round one of the regional skills development activities**

**Objective:** In pursuance of the PG programme broader objective of generating and sharing knowledge on operational lessons and practical experiences in the area of participatory governance, the purpose of the lessons learnt report is to share lessons on successful and replicable as well as avoidable practices, thereby strengthening operation in relation to capacity-building for participatory governance.

**Target audience:** The Lessons Learnt report is intended for both internal consumption and external dissemination to the regional and local partners of the PG programme, the CSO members of CIVICUS, various other forums and networks and other interested individuals and organizations.

**Data sources:** This Lessons Learnt report was prepared based on the project completion reports submitted by regional partners, individual grant completion reports filed by grant recipients from the four regions, a comparative analysis of regional-level activities carried out by CIVICUS, and feedback from

December 2009.

**Structure of the lessons learnt report:** The report will outline the major lessons learnt in terms of the processes, key outcomes/results, indications of impact, successes and challenges across the three key components of the regional skills development activities viz. the skills building workshops, mentoring services, and innovation grants.

## **2. Lessons learnt from the regional skills building workshops**

**Implemented by the regional partner organizations with the support from CIVICUS,** the regional skills-building workshop aims to enrich and expand the understanding and skills of country, sub-national and local level civil society and government practitioners in participatory governance approaches and practices. The workshops were expected to be demand-driven, target priority needs and interests of practitioners and provide practical, hands-on training in participatory governance strategies and tools.

The comparative analysis given as Annex 1, provides an at-a-glance overview of the basic information about the four regional workshops held in the South Asia, Southern Africa, West Africa and South American regions.

### **2.1. Selection of partners who have a strong regional presence, network and capacity and ensuring adequate regional representation in the skills building event**

Each of the regional partners selected had prior experience in participatory governance and also had some form of presence or prior relationship with civil society organizations in most countries of their respective regions. In terms of regional representation, the programme did not deliberately stipulate coverage of as many countries as possible in a given region. Rather, the approach was to invite a small critical mass of participants each from three to five identified countries. This perhaps, explains the wide variations observed in the regional representation of participants at the skills building workshops. Though the workshops had representatives from most of the countries from their respective regions, there are wide variations in terms of proportional representation of other country participants vs. host country participants. For instance, Southern Africa had the highest number of participants from other

countries (81%), followed by South Asia (50%), Latin America (35%) and Western Africa (10%).

These variations are a function of various attributes that are both internal and external to the partner organizations. For e.g. t

Africa which had most participants from Ghana, the host country, was on account of a conscious decision owing to the thematic focus of the workshop (participatory local governance) and the expertise of the partner organization. An almost equal representation in South Asia probably reflects greater opportunities for regional networking. In Southern Africa which registered the highest percentage of since the regional partner is directly working and implementing projects in many countries of the region, it was able to mobilize greater participation from other countries. In Latin America, the specific thematic focus on youth participation meant fewer organizations to choose/invite for the workshop. Despite the variations in the regional representation, all the regional partners have, nevertheless, endorsed the importance and usefulness of a multi-country vs. a single country approach at the December-

However, given the regio -building activities, it would be useful to stipulate a certain percentage range (between 40 to 50%) of participants from neighbouring countries to ensure the regional spread in the workshop which constitutes the entry point for regional skills building activities.

#### *Political, logistical and practical constraints for regional representation*

have been cited to have restricted the participation from neighbouring countries. For e.g. in the case of South Asia, participants from Pakistan were unable to participate since they were denied visa owing to the long standing diplomatic hurdles between India and Pakistan. The visa application process was also compounded by time constraints. In the Latin American context, the CSOs from Paraguay could not participate since the workshop schedule collided with the time when the country was facing a political transition with a newly elected government set to assume power. Regional representation could be limited by other practical constraints such as incidence of natural calamities, events such as national elections in a given country, lack of a well developed civil society network in the region, a nascent civil society owing to repressive political regimes, etc.

Though some of the constraints are unpredictable and therefore, unavoidable, regional partners can mitigate some of these constraints by making sure that: adequate time is budgeted for preparatory work; logistics are better communicated and coordinated; and the political situation in the neighbouring countries is given due consideration in the planning and scheduling of the events.



## 2.2. Targeting the participation of CSO practitioners

The regional skills building event was expected to be demand-driven and cater to the needs of the local CSO practitioners or national CSOs concerned with local governance. Almost all the regional partners were successful in mobilizing the participation of such CSO practitioners across various sectors, some of whom had a single or multi district focus, while others were issue-centric and some others were national level organizations.

It appears that different regions followed different strategies in inviting and choosing the participants. In Latin America, the CSO practitioners were chosen from an existing regional network called PMSS which has striven to achieve a regional integration of CSOs. Since the thematic focus in Latin America was on youth participation, the CSOs interested and involved in youth issues were targeted. Western Africa seems to have followed a similar pattern where district level CSOs (Civic Unions) involved in local governance were selected from CLUSA. In the case of Southern Africa, the regional partner and prior working relationships with CSOs in many countries of the region might have been leveraged to mobilize participation. In South Asian region, though the regional partner did not have a direct presence in the countries, its existing regional network seems to have helped in zeroing in on participants.

From the participant profiles provided as part of workshop reports, it is observed that though all the participants are PG practitioners, it is not clear if at least some of them are in a strategic position to carry forward the capacity building efforts either at the country/sub-national or local levels in their own contexts. This is explained by the programmatic emphasis on targeting grass-roots practitioners who were only expected to implement PG activities and not to act as second tier capacity building organizations. In order to enhance the sustainability and up-scaling of skills-building activities, it is recommended that targeting institutions that possess the capacity to act as second tier/country level nodal points for capacity building on participatory governance, would perhaps be considered as a potential target group in future activities.

For effective targeting in general, it would also be useful to develop a network of CSOs across thematic areas of participatory governance, which can be a joint effort between CIVICUS and regional partners.

## 2.3. Ensuring women's participation

On an average, women constituted about 35% of the total number of participants in the skills building workshops. Though, it falls short of achieving complete gender balance, it can still be considered as a positive outcome. However, there are regional variations with Latin America recording highest



percentage of women participants (52%), followed by South Asia (40%), Southern Africa (29%) and Western Africa (21%). The regional variations are also indicative of the prevailing socio-political position of women in the respective regions. The case of Western Africa which recorded highest government participation (50%) and lowest women participation (21%) also reiterates that women are yet to assume a prominent role in political governance. On the whole, the gender composition data suggests that concerted and targeted efforts are required to achieve gender balance in skills building events. Recommendations include stipulating a 40-50% participation rate for women in the skills-building events as a cross-cutting criteria and specifically requesting the invitee organizations to nominate female staff as participants.

#### **2.4. Eliciting government participation**

Participation of government representatives in the skills building workshops was envisaged to help build bridges between CSOs and the government while also exposing and sensitizing the government officials to concepts and methods of participatory governance.

From the available information, one can observe wide regional variations in not only the percentage of government participants but also the level of government they represented. Government participants constituted 50% and 40% in Western and Southern Africa respectively. In the case of Southern Africa, the government participation was slightly higher since the Government of Botswana requested the regional partner to accommodate more local government officials, while undertaking to bear their participation costs. Government participation was relatively lower in both Latin America (12%) and South Asia (14%).

The type of government as well as CSO participants seems to be related to the thematic focus of the workshops. It appears if the workshop themes are specifically related to the functional domains of government and action-oriented, it would be relatively easier to elicit government participation. This stands out clearly in the case of Western Africa, which had participatory local governance as its main focus and therefore all the CSOs and all the government participants were from the local level. More importantly, since the CSOs and the local government officials also shared a spatial relationship, fostering the bridge-building between CSOs and the local government, one of the key goals of the PG programme, could also be set in motion. However, too narrow a thematic focus might complicate the objective of regional representations, as the themes have to be relevant to all the participating countries.

This was true of Southern Africa to some extent which also had participatory local governance as the primary focus. However, as cited in the workshop report, the over-representation of government officials from Botswana had

reportedly tilted the balance leading to government domination during the group discussions.

As evident from the workshop report, in South Asia, since the thematic focus was much broader, the representation of government officials was rather low and those few who did participate had no organic linkage with the CSO participants nor were the themes specifically related to their particular departments/agencies. The workshop report further concurs that the long duration of six days might have also lowered the interest amongst the invited government officials.

In Latin America, though the theme was specific viz. participation of youth in shaping public policies, the thrust was more on mobilization of youth and policy advocacy, whereas efforts to mobilize government participants were only partly successful owing to the still evolving relationship between the youth organizations and the government functionaries.

#### *Summary of lessons learnt related to government participation*

- x In general, it is not easy to elicit participation of the government in events such as skills building workshop unless the thematic focus is specific and In addition, absence of prior relationships or communication channels between the state agencies and the CSOs, the long drawn administrative procedure to obtain internal permissions etc. may limit their participation. Therefore, factoring in adequate time for preparatory work becomes all the more important.
- x Since regional partners may have severe limitations to elicit government participation from the neighbouring countries, it is recommended that the CSO participants could be requested to nominate government participants from their respective countries.
- x It may be easier to elicit participation of local government officials than those from the provincial or national government. While involving local government officials, it would be beneficial to have CSOs also from the same districts/ towns in order to strengthen the bridge between local government and civil society.
- x Without undermining the importance of the need to promote mutual and shared learning between the state and civil society, it might be more practical to elicit government participation in the form of plenary or inviting them as resource persons or through field visits to government agencies, particularly in skills building events that are largely focused on CSOs.
- x One of the suggestions emerged at the Dec- ing was to organize separate skills building event for government officials at a regional level where civil society element could be introduced in the form of resource persons, plenary, case studies and field visits to CSOs. Though this might be an easier proposition, the key challenge is to depart from this traditional approach and make concerted efforts to mobilize participation of the government officials alongside CSO participants by creating spaces where both come together on equal terms and learn from

each other. One way of achieving this as the regional partner from South Asia have suggested in their workshop report, a 40% participation rate for government officials must be made mandatory part of the programme requirements.

## **2.5. Participation of media representatives**

Though media participation in the skills building events was not envisaged as a programmatic requirement, the South Asian workshop did manage to rope in media representatives as participants. Media plays an important role in fostering participatory governance and through a symbiotic relationship it shares with the civil society, it also plays a crucial role in shaping public opinion and thereby public policies. In many transitional democracies, media even constitutes a structurally prominent part of the civil society. However, media role or participation has not figured prominently in any of the deliberations undertaken as part of the regional skills development activities. Therefore, sensitization of the media to the concepts, methods and tools of participatory governance is recommended for future regional skills-building programmes, though it may have resource implications..

## **2.6. Thematic focus, workshop methodology and action orientation**

The thematic focus of the workshop appears to be a major determinant of not only the extent and level of government and civil society participation, but also of the workshop methodology, and the nature of final outcomes and the extent to which they are action-oriented.

In Southern Africa, the key theme was participatory local governance and the participant profile was more or less homogeneous, while the emphasis was more on experience-sharing. This leads to infer that if the focus is less on and the skills building events may strengthen networking but not necessarily result in actionable outputs and vice-versa.

In South Asia, the thematic focus was broader and covered a wide range of participatory tools and the participant composition was heterogeneous. Though as such, the workshop did not result in a specific follow-up/action plan, it did set a strong foundation for the mentoring phase of activities that eventually elicited the largest number of grant proposals for any region.

Where the thematic focus was specific, the participant composition tends to be more homogenous with enhanced action orientation resulting in concrete outputs. Western Africa which had participatory local governance as its focus, is a classic example where all the participants were drawn either from district assemblies or civic unions and district-level action plans as the main outputs. The case of Latin America is somewhat similar. With youth participation in policy process as its explicit focus, the Latin American workshop brought together only those CSOs from the region who had been engaged with issues

concerning the political participation of youth and generated specific action plans around this thematic focus. In both Western African and Latin American cases, the specific thematic focus and a targeted orientation to the needs of the participants and the actionable outputs were used to develop proposals for innovation grants.

However, if the skills-building workshops were to be conceived as a stand-alone, one-off event (like for e.g. without opportunities for mentoring or innovation grants), then, it cannot be said with certainty whether a broader thematic focus without orienting participants to think and reflect in a structured process for translating learning into action in their own contexts, would have resulted in a more sustained process of learning and skills-training.

It is evident from the reports that some time was devoted to discuss the idea of a South Asian network on participatory governance mooted by some

distinct post-workshop possibility it needs to be specifically addressed and follow-up plans charted out as an integral part of the workshop agenda.

These observations are in no way meant to undermine the merits and the intrinsic value of broader thematic focus as a means of introducing and exposing CSOs and the government to participatory governance concepts and methods, particularly in those geo-political contexts characterized by repressive/undemocratic political regimes.

## **2.7. Effects of workshop process and methodology**

Thematic inputs by resource persons, exchange of experiences, field visits and group work were common elements of methodology employed across Western Africa and South Asia. Western Africa had integrated action planning into the workshop methodology to address a specific thematic focus (i.e. of promoting participatory local governance). The South Asian workshop aimed at broadening knowledge of participants on a variety of PG tools while showcasing examples from India through field visits.

Inclusion of strategic action planning as part of skills building workshop has several pedagogical advantages since it: helps internalize and apply the

indicates whether the participants are able to convert knowledge into practice;

the trainer/facilitator to gauge the effectiveness of the training content and methodology. This proposition also resonated well at the Dec-09 Global Learning which unanimously recommended inclusion of an entire session on action planning as part of the PG Learning Module being prepared by CIVICUS as part of its global skills development activities.

Field visit is another methodological attribute that merits attention in both Western Africa and South Asia. In the former,, where the field visits followed

the action planning exercise, the p it is important to allocate sufficient time for field visits and that they should preferably precede the action planning exercise in order to allow assimilation of information and insights obtained from the field.

In the South Asian case, the participants were divided into two groups with each group spending two days interacting with rural CSOs and local authorities in Northern India, with another full day devoted to discuss the learnings and insights from the field and cross-fertilization of ideas.

Though the field visits were well coordinated and well appreciated by participants in the South Asian case, it flags up an important question in terms of costs Vs benefits particularly since three days were devoted for field visits and related activities. Since field visits do offer useful spaces for learning and reflection they must be incorporated into the workshop schedule whenever possible. Care must be taken to choose locations that are situated in the vicinity of the workshop venue that are less time-consuming. Considering the logistics, coordination, resources requirements and the generic nature of learning benefits of field visits in multi-country skill building events, it may be useful to explore proxies/alternatives to field visits. For example, using documentary films available on interesting and replicable CSO initiatives is recommended as a basis for stimulating discussion amongst the participants. It may even be worthwhile for CIVICUS and regional partners to create a database/library on such films/audio visuals at their offices and even make them accessible through the online resource centre, PG Exchange.

Southern Africa differed from their counterparts in not including a general introduction to participatory governance. A review of the workshop methodologies adopted point to the importance of having a general introduction to the PG concepts in order to set the premise of the workshop process. In Latin America, the PG overview session followed other thematic sessions. Both Southern Africa and Latin America adopted a peer learning methodology using different formats. Southern Africa involved multi-country case study presentations on pre-identified themes related to local governance followed by group discussions and plenary sessions. The workshop, however, did not aim to generate any concrete follow-up plan either for networking or country-specific actions. The Latin American workshop, on the other hand, devoted an entire day to action planning on strategies for youth participation in public policy processes as a follow-up to the workshop.

Based on participant feedback in Southern Africa, it is observed that peer learning approach was appreciated by a majority of participants and was consciously chosen since the regional partner strongly felt that it would address the existing gap in sharing of good practices in the region. From the workshop report however, neither networking nor developing a follow-up plan figured prominently in the workshop.



## 2.8. Workshop evaluation

Participant evaluation of the workshops is crucial as it helps the trainers/facilitators/organizers to understand the positives and the negatives as well as obtain a sense about the effectiveness of the training from the participants. It is also an occasion for the participants to reflect on the workshop process, their participation, the new knowledge they have gained, their commitment to participatory governance, and freely express their

views. In later sessions tend to speak during this last, but not least important, session.

Across regions, a questionnaire-based rating scale was used to collect written feedback from participants on the various aspects of the workshop such as the methodology, networking possibilities, content, attainment of workshop objectives, logistics and facilities etc. According to the reports, in the South African case, only two thirds of the participants returned the filled-in evaluation forms thus leaving a significantly large number of participants out of the feedback loop. It indicates the evaluation was either affected due to time constraints or the participants were not aware of the importance of their own feedback.

Qualitative feedback was collected only in the Latin American region, first through an open discussion and then using a structured questionnaire. End-of-the-day evaluation through an open discussion was conducted only in the case of Western Africa. Both these are good practices that need to be integrated into workshop itinerary in future initiatives.

regardless of the thematic focus and the methodology, a majority of participants across regions have reported general satisfaction and improvements in their knowledge of participatory governance concepts, tools and methods. They have also given high ratings for the group work, participatory nature of facilitation, the quality of facilitation, reading materials etc. Time management received a universal low rating, suggesting that all the workshops potentially suffered from the (extremely common but, nevertheless troublesome) problem of an overloaded agenda. On the logistics and facilities, though a majority of participants expressed satisfaction, the evaluations suggest some room for improvement. In South Asia for instance, some

participants had high expectations and standards at the very outset of the preparations for the skills building event through clear communication.



## 2.9. Conclusions

The analysis of the lessons learnt from the regional skills building events clearly demonstrates that there are various approaches for implementing such events, each with its strategic advantages and limitations and applicable in particular geo-political contexts. All these approaches or models hold potential for replication subject to incorporating suitable modifications based on the lessons learnt across the regions such as for example: Ensuring the participation of government officials, political functionaries, media representatives and women and inclusion of social mobilization and policy advocacy strategies as part of the thematic focus.

- x The Western African model was training-driven, issue-specific and action oriented. This model is better suited for training grass-roots PG practitioners who might not have been previously exposed to PG concepts and methods. The methodology could be further enhanced by incorporating an element of peer-learning into the programme since it would highlight the need for networking and mutual learning amongst Civic Unions and the District Assemblies as well.
- x The Latin American model was issue-specific, peer learning-driven and action-oriented. It is apt for creating/strengthening a regional advocacy forum of organizations working on policy issues. However, the training and the networking component needs strengthening to enhance its replication potential.
- x The South Asian model was training-driven, issue-generic and appropriate for providing exposure to a wide range of civil society organizations while also setting a strong premise for mentoring activities. This model holds strong potential with the incorporation of action planning exercise as part of the workshop process and methodology.
- x The South African model was peer learning-driven, issue-specific and tends to strengthen the existing regional networks for sharing good practices and knowledge transfer. It will benefit from incorporating training and action planning into its methodology.

### 3. Lessons Learnt from the Mentoring Activities

As a follow-up to the regional skills building workshops, mentoring services were envisaged to help selected workshop participants to not only further enhance their capacity for operationalizing participatory governance tools and methods but also to offer them continuous hands-on and problem-solving support.

The regional partners were expected to invite expressions of interest from workshop participants for mentoring services and provide a certain number of hours of mentoring services and arrange exchange visits over a six month period to the selected mentees. The mentees were to be selected based on the following criteria suggested by CIVICUS:

- x Active participation of the participant in the workshop.
- x Commitment and capacity of the organisation to implement the PG tools in their respective country.
- x Position of the participant within the organisation to gauge the proposed need for mentoring.
- x External environment within which the participant and the organisation are able to undertake the implementation of the PG tools.

*A mentoring proposal was also supposed to clearly outline:*

- x need for mentoring, along with the expected learning objectives from the mentoring;
- x Specific types of activities that are planned to undertake as a result of mentoring;
- x What the applicant plans to do in order to contribute to success of mentoring process;
- x How the learning would be shared amongst other members of the organisation.

#### 3.1. Different conceptualizations of the mentoring component across regions

A comparative summary of mentoring activities across the four regions is provided as Annex 2.

Though a set of core criteria and basic guidelines was provided by CIVICUS, mentoring was conceived and implemented in varied ways across regions, since the partners were encouraged to adapt the same based on their assessment of local capacities, needs and priorities.

**3.1.5. Western Africa - mentoring follows innovation grants:** In Western Africa, the mentoring component was conceived as an activity to support the innovation grantee organizations in the effective implementation of the grant projects. Due to time and resource

constraints, mentoring activities were limited in most cases to a single field visit. Also the strict focus on developing district-level action plans during the skills building workshop might have led to focus more on implementing their respective action plans rather than participating in mentoring activities.

**3.1.6. Southern Africa – peer mentoring doesn't evoke interest:** In Southern Africa, calls for mentoring applications elicited only one proposal which had to be dropped since it did not provide enough information on the objectives and the content of the process. Like the skills-building workshop, mentoring activities were conceptualized as a inviting participants to learn from the experiences and approaches of other participants. It is also possible

**3.1.7. Latin America – Mentoring eventually becomes a preparatory activity for innovation grants:** In South America, mentoring activities commenced in the right earnestness with four organizations and *not individuals* selected as mentees from amongst the workshop participants. The mentees were guided by the mentors to develop action plans specific to their contexts. Subsequently, the mentors also visited the mentee organizations for onsite guidance and discussions. The mentees were expected to regularly exchange information, experiences, stories, photographs and news between them. The mentors created an email group as well as a web-blog to facilitate such exchanges and also posted useful materials on relevant PG themes and tools, while repeatedly requesting the mentees to write articles on LogoLink/Polis news letter. These efforts, however, failed to elicit much of a response from the mentees, thus inhibiting the formation of a regional network of peer practitioners.

The lack of communication and sharing between mentees seems to be due to lack of enough familiarity with each other given that for all the mentees, the workshop was their first occasion of getting acquainted with each other. Since the communication between the mentors and the individual mentee organizations was regular, mentoring eventually turned into a preparatory activity to assist mentee organizations in writing proposals for seeking innovation grants.

The South American mentors have opined that the mentoring activities could have been more effective had there been provisions for second level workshops and inter-CSO exchange/exposure visits prior to the commencement of the mentoring activities.

**3.1.8. South Asia- Online Mentoring Forum takes off:** South Asia was the only region that conceived and implemented mentoring as an ongoing service to the selected individual mentees.

In South Asia, mentoring was implemented in two stages. During stage

Board services. Prior to this, the mentor sought mentoring proposals from the workshop participants to which 15 of them responded with rather generic applications which they were asked to resubmit in a more focused and detailed format. The applications represented a good mix of regions, issues/sectors and gender. By November 2009, the online mentoring forum had 18 discussion topics, a total of 73 posts from all the participants and 877 hits thus expanding the scope to interested individuals and organizations other than the participants of the skills-building workshop. In addition, twelve rounds group of emails and one round of personalized mails were sent to participants seeking their active participation in the online forum.

In stage two, the second round of mentoring was undertaken for a deeper analysis of the issues raised by the participants who were also sent reading materials on participatory planning and social audit. The participants were encouraged to post their specific needs to which four participants responded and they were supplied with reading lists, articles, and manuals on participatory governance, participatory planning, right to information, etc. However, exchange visits between the mentees did not take off due to logistical, time and resource constraints. The two rounds of mentoring also provided an opportunity for the mentors to gain deeper insights about the potential candidates for the innovation grants phase.

The online mentoring forum has many benefits and challenges:

- o Is certainly an innovation in mentoring and holds tremendous potential for replication since it can overcome the problem of long distances while also reducing the response time, less resource intensive, user friendly, and is easily accessible.
- o However, it may not be effective in regions with limited internet connectivity, low levels of literacy and e-literacy.
- o Effective management of online forum requires dedicated personnel and resources.
- o Online forums must be conceived in a longer time frame than the six months, the current programme had envisaged.
- o Issue specific online forums may elicit more focused queries and facilitate stronger networking.
- o Latin American region also had an online mode for peer mentoring in the form of web-blogs. The difference between the online mentoring forum and the web blog is that the latter had far fewer

participants, was narrowly focused and heavily depended on sharing of experiences.

### **3.2. Summary of lessons learnt from the mentoring component**

- x On the whole, it is very clear that regardless of its implementation or non implementation, mentoring was conceptualized in different ways across the various regions. This is suggestive of the regional variance prevalent in terms of local capacities, priorities and needs. Though the experimentation was intentional, sharpening the conceptual clarity of mentoring is recommended for future up-scaling efforts.
- x Perhaps, increased allocation of time during the skills-building event for a detailed discussion of mentoring or a separate workshop on mentoring may be necessary to better equip both the partners and participants on the concept, process and modes of mentoring. Alternatively, a more comprehensive manual on guidelines including information on various mentoring methods and strategies would be a fairly good substitute.
- x Adequate budgeting of time and monetary resources are always desirable and certainly mentoring initiatives need to be conceived as long term interventions. Restricting the mentoring to six months
- 
- x Online mentoring forums hold tremendous promise for future mentoring initiatives and therefore, require further feasibility study.
- x That none of the regions were successful in involving government officials/agencies in the mentoring process reiterates the need for targeted efforts and designing tailor-made programmes to suit specific needs and conveniences of the government officials.

## **4. Lessons Learnt from the Innovation Grants Component**

Governance Programme. The objectives of the innovation grants component implemented as part of the regional skills building activities were to:

- x Identify, prioritize and support small-scale, creative, practical and replicable ideas pertaining to participatory governance;
- x Enhance the conceptual and operational capacity of CSOs in designing and implementing projects in the arena of participatory governance, and;
- x Generate valuable evidence and learning to be shared across regional and global networks of practitioners.

Since a detailed comparative analysis of innovative grants component across the four regions is provided as annexure 3, this section will focus on lessons learnt in some of the key attributes of the innovative grants component.

### **4.1. Level of interest in innovation grants and their regional spread as a function of skills building event and the mentoring activities**

Both Western Africa and South Asia accounted for two thirds of the total 15 projects as there was greater interest and higher number of applicants compared to their counterparts in Latin America and South Africa. Western Africa received grant applications from all the 12 host country participants of which five were selected for grants. The high number of applications was also due to the action-planning approach of the skills building event that had already oriented the participants to expect grants for implementation of their action plans. In South Asia, the interest was evoked during the mentoring phase which saw submission of 14 proposals of which five were selected for grants.

In Latin America, which was single-issue focused (youth participation in governance) right through the skills development project, only four mentees were selected out of which three were granted innovation funds. In Southern Africa, the peer-learning approach of the workshop combined with lack of action-orientation and non-implementation of the mentoring component led to lower level of interest with only three applications received of which two selected for grants. Though smaller size of the grants was cited as a constraint across the regions, in South Africa, it was cited as the main reason for lower level of interest amongst the participants.

One can observe a correlation between the regional representation in the skills building event and the regional spread of the innovation grant projects. South Asia which had a proportional representation of neighbouring countries at the skills building event had its five projects distributed across four participating countries. Western Africa which had 90% of the workshop



participants representing the host country also had all its five projects granted within the host country itself. The same pattern is observed in Latin America.

#### **4.2. Criteria for selection of innovation grantees – definition of what is and isn't innovative missing**

Both Western Africa and South Asia had to apply selection criteria to screen the grant applications such as: gender, strengthening engagement between local government and citizens, resource base, conceptual clarity, relevance and feasibility etc. In South Asia, the grant project proposal format required the applicants to mention any innovative features of their proposed work as part of describing the rationale for their proposal. In Ghana, innovative nature of the proposed work was not part of the selection criteria.

On the whole, it appears from the various final reports that what innovation is undefined throughout the process. Innovation can be understood in many ways. Applying a time-tested tool/strategy in a new context or an issue/sector other than the tool in question was originally tested for can be perceived as innovative or developing a new tool or an improved version of an existing tool can also be regarded as innovative. These varied attributes of innovation were present to some extent in some of the grant projects

a clear definition and guidelines on what constitutes innovation may contribute to better clarity and a more focused selection of grantees in future initiatives.

#### **4.3. Issues addressed and tools applied through innovation grant projects**

The innovation grant projects addressed a wide range of cross sectoral issues in the governance arena and a region-level correlation can be observed between the focal issues of the grant projects and the thematic focus of the skills building events. The focal issues of grant applications in Western African (participatory local governance), Latin American (youth participation) and Southern African regions (local governance) were determined by their respective thematic focus of the skills building events. In South Asia, the workshop focused on a range of PG themes and tools and the grant projects also had varied focal issues rights, rural employment generation, empowering the media, right to information and participatory urban governance.

Many participatory governance approaches and tools were applied/tested as part of the innovation grant projects. In Western Africa, the main tools were town hall meetings, public forums, joint planning meetings In South Asia, social audit, people-centered advocacy, citizen-local government committees were the main tools, while in Latin America, it was mainly focused on policy advocacy.

In Southern Africa, a multi-stakeholder workshop was organized which did not elicit the expected level of participation from the local government.

Some grant projects also focused on awareness creation and capacity building of local communities. Since most grantees were already active in their own respective fields implementing projects and activities supported by more than one donor, they probably perceived innovation grants with their short-term focus and small size fu

components of their existing work and not necessarily as a strategic, long term opportunity to initiate a new activity. This observation was corroborated ting where

some of the participants expressed the view that they could achieve more with innovation grants if they were used to support an existing activity rather than pilot a new initiative.

#### **4.4. Quality of support to grantees by regional partners**

Across regions, the partners supported the grantees in the preparation and fine-tuning of the grant proposals and had maintained regular communication through emails, Skype etc. In Western Africa and Latin America, the partners visited the various grantees on the field to assist in operationalizing the projects and supported them with relevant information, coordination etc.

In South Asia, the grantees were mentored through the online mentoring forum in addition to being taken on a field visit to some rural local government agencies (Gram Panchayats) in India where the partner was actively involved. A review of the strategies adopted by regional partners for mentoring the grantees suggests that it would be more useful to pay visits to the grant-areas and provide on-site guidance and support.

Only in Western African region, the partners undertook post-grant field visits to the project areas to observe the impacts, evaluate, plan follow-up activities and help consolidate the new relationships between grantees and other stakeholders. This certainly is an important and replicable feature for future innovation-grant initiatives since it helps a smoother transition into post-grant phase and beckons the participants to be cognizant and committed to follow-up activities.

#### **4.5. Government interfaces in the innovation-grant projects**

Government involvement was one of the stipulated criteria for selection and approval of grant projects. The grant proposals were expected to outline the process of involving the government. In both the regions of Africa, the innovative grant projects hinged upon the active participation of local government. In Western Africa, local government participation and support was of the highest order, since some of the local government officials concerned had been exposed and sensitized to concepts, methods and importance of participatory governance officials during the skills building event.

The story is different in Southern Africa where a multi-stakeholder workshop on participatory local governance (Participation Junction), organized as part of one of the grant projects, failed to elicit meaningful participation from the local government officials. This also indicates that though national/central governments may be committed to participatory governance, this may not be transmitted to the local level where traditional ways of public governance characterized by feudal mindset, local fiefdom and paternalistic patterns are still dominant.

In South America, though the impetus was on mobilization and sensitization of youth through youth assemblies, government officials from the national, provincial and local levels were involved as either panellists or resource persons. It is also the only case where even judicial officers and legislators were involved.

Though all the grant projects in South Asia were conceived in the local governance arena, only two of them had a strong interface with the local government. Given the criticality of building bridges with the government in participatory governance, proactively engaging with the government is a sacrosanct principle that cannot be compromised under any circumstances.

#### **4.6. Media interfaces in the innovation grant projects**

Two innovation grant projects emphasised media involvement/interfaces. One of the grantees (Bangladesh) in South Asia was quite innovative in conceiving a project that was entirely focused on educating, involving and empowering the media actors in the participatory governance arena. Another project in Western Africa (Berkeum) used FM radio as a medium of information dissemination.

Considering the important role of the media in fostering democratic governance, concerted and creative efforts are called for to engage with the media, and build a sustained and strategic alliance with democracy.

#### **4.7. Targeting the participation of marginalized groups**

All the regions except Western Africa, had one or more projects targeted at specific marginalized groups like women, children, youth and ethnic minorities. Though some women were present at the various town hall meetings/public forums that were organized as part of grant projects in Western Africa, special or concerted efforts to involve women or youth or ethnic minority groups was absent. Proactive targeting of marginalized groups must be made a non-negotiable provision in future innovation-grant initiatives.

#### **4.8. Innovation, impacts and challenges**

Given the limited time-frame and small size of funds, the innovation grant projects were not expected to yield significant tangible impact. The innovation grants were primarily conceived as experimental opportunities for a select number of participants of skills building events to help them translate their learning into action and further strengthen their capacity. The grant projects have succeeded in meeting this basic objective to a large extent in terms of opening up spaces for citizen voice and participation in the erstwhile restricted arenas of local governance while enhancing the capacity of local partners and their communities. It is highly commendable that despite the constraints of time and funds and the political environment, two of the grant projects succeeded in making tangible impacts as direct outcomes of their intervention. Berekum Assembly in Ghana (Western Africa) is a case in point where the district assembly forged partnership with CSOs and succeeded in increasing its revenue from public sources. In Sri Lanka (South Asia), the grant project succeeded in signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between the citizen groups and the Municipal Council for establishment of Ward Committees represented by elected community members to decide on the priority development needs for their respective municipal wards.

In addition to the factors highlighted elsewhere in the report, other critical factors that might potentially contribute to better targeting and impacts of innovation grants to guide future initiatives are analyzed here:

- x The three components of regional skills building project viz. skills building workshops, mentoring and innovation grants must be clearly explained both in conceptual and operational terms and their interrelationship established unambiguously at the very outset and communicated to all the partners and participants. Preparing and circulating an operational manual/guide for this purpose would be useful.

- x It is recommended that innovative grants be conceived as larger size with a longer time frame (12 to 18 months) and as an add-on or enhancement of an existing initiative. .
- x Provisions must be made to facilitate more frequent meetings and exchange visits between mentees/grantees to enhance better learning and networking.
- x Innovation grants must explicitly focus on action and place more emphasis on measuring impacts and outcomes.
- x Ensuring local ownership of grant projects from the inception/design stage is a critical prerequisite for success of innovation grant projects.
- x Though most of the grant projects were generally conceived in the local governance arena hinging upon the support and cooperation of local government, their participation cannot be taken for granted, despite of an expressed policy commitment at the level of national/provincial governments. In Western Africa for e.g., the grant proposals needed endorsement/statement of commitment from the District Assemblies. This appears to be a good practice to ensure government participation so long as the nature of the project
- x Peer learning and networking at the regional level cannot evolve and function in a vacuum and needs constant nurturing and servicing.
- x Adequate care must be taken to prevent delays in communication between the donors, partners, and participants and in the release of grants to the partners/grantees.
- x Extraneous factors such as: diplomatic ties between the countries in a region which has implications for obtaining visas; incidence of political conflicts and civil strife; and national political events like elections, might pose serious hindrances to participatory governance interventions. Therefore, adequate flexibility must be built into the programme design in order to deal with such eventualities. ]

**Annexure 1 Comparative summary of the regional skills building workshops organized across the various regions 2008**

Comparison Parameters	Regional Partners			
	Western Africa CLUSA, Ghana	South Asia PRIA, India	Latin America Polis & Logo Link, Brazil	Southern Africa IDASA, SA
Date, Place and duration	27-28 November, 08; Agona Swedru Central Region; 4 days	20-26 August, 08 New Delhi 6 days	21-24 September 08, Sao Paulo; 4 days	2 <sup>nd</sup> to 5 <sup>th</sup> December 08 Pretoria 4 days
Total no. of participants	40	22	33	27
No. of participating organizations	14: All district level Civic Unions/CBOs	19: 9 national level, others state and district level CSOs	11: All city level CSOs	10: all national level
No. of participating countries	4: Ghana, Benin, Niger and Sierra Leone	4: India, Bangladesh, Nepal & Sri Lanka	4: Brazil, Argentina, Chile & Uruguay	5: South Africa, Mozambique, Botswana, Malawi & Zimbabwe
Regional representation	Host country: 90% Other countries: 10%	Host country: 50% Others: 50%	Host country: 65% Others: 35%	Host country: 19% Others: 81%
Gender composition	Female: 21% Male: 79%	Female: 40% Male: 60%	Female: 52% Male: 7%	Female: 29% Male: 71%
Government representation	About 50% All local government officials	About 14%: two national level and one provincial level	About 12%: one from national level and one from provincial level	About 41% ( a major portion from Botswana) on national level and all others district/city level
Criteria and process used for selecting participants	Not stated in the report	Not stated in the report	Organizations involved in youth issues were V H O H F W H G X network and through call in CIVICUS	Not stated in the report
Workshop title	Working Together: Enhancing Participatory Local Governance	Regional Skills Building Workshop on Participatory Governance	Capacity Building on Tools for Citizen Participation and Social Control over Public Policies	Peer learning on Participatory Governance at Local Level
Key workshop objectives	Knowledge enhancement Generate and share relevant information on best practices; and strengthen skills on tools	Enhanced understanding and skills of PG and empowering for networking and alliance building  ( mentoring and innovation grants are also stated as objectives, though the Z H U H Q ¶ W	Exchange of experiences about tools for youth participation and design strategies for implementing new tools	Enhance understanding of all about PG and Local governance and share lessons and tools on development planning, budgeting, performance monitoring; and mode mechanisms and resource allocations to support participation
Thematic focus	Specific: Engaging with local government and citizen participation techniques	Broad: Public expenditure budget, M& E of public service, public oversight; civic education; advocacy mentoring; networking; innovation pilots	Specific: Participation of youth in shaping public policies	Specific: Local governance, planning, decentralization, performance monitoring and public participation in local governance
Workshop methodology	Thematic inputs, group work, experience sharing, plenary, field visit and	Thematic inputs, group work, case studies, video, experience	Thematic inputs, group work, case studies through video and	Completely case study driven with panel discussion and group



	action planning	sharing and field visits	experience sharing	work but no thematic inputs nor field visits
Workshop evaluation by participants	Questionnaire using five point rating scale with 10 questions with summary of results	Questionnaire using a five point rating scale on 35 items with summary of results. But only 20 have submitted the evaluation forms.	Both oral and written; Descriptive /narrative feedback; no summary of results;	Written but only 19 participants submitted the completed forms
Workshop evaluation results	About 75% of the participants felt the sessions and group exercises were useful. And about 75% of the time was adequate	On a rating scale of 0 to 5, the ratings of most participants across all attributes of the workshop was divided almost equally between 2 and 3 ratings	Not translated to English from Spanish	A majority felt the workshop met its objectives and about 60% felt the sessions were very good while about 60% felt the logistics were good
Workshop outcomes	District wide action plan for six districts	No concrete proposals	Plan of action formulated by each of the 11 groups	No concrete proposals for follow up or actions
Challenges	Time constraints since only selected few presentations possible on day 3	Time constraints and visa problems for Pakistani participants	Managing Spanish/Portuguese mix; time constraints.	
Quality of workshop report	Comprehensive and includes all the relevant information of the workshop	Comprehensive and includes all the relevant information of the workshop	Incomplete; 3 D U W L F L S D G profile, evaluation results and program schedule are missing. Some sections of the report not translated into English.	Incomplete. The list of participants and their profile, the lessons learnt, constraints etc are missing
Observations	Action planning preceded the field visits and therefore could not benefit from field learning	No specific follow up plans	No field visits and no government representation	No thematic inputs, no field visits and specific follow up action plan



Methods and process of mentoring: exchange visits, peer learning, expert inputs, problem solving etc.	Guidance on proposal development; facilitation activities; peer learning experience sharing; interaction with district assembly and CSO rep	Online mentoring Forum; resource materials on planning, participation and social audits; 12 rounds of group emails about the discussion forum and personal emails asking for specific queries	One visit each by Polaris/Loglink teams to the individual groups in Argentina and Brazil for detailed discussion, counseling and guidance. Web logs and email were also tried but with little success	NA
The type of linkage between mentoring and innovation grants	Direct linkage. In fact mentoring appears as a subset of innovation grants component.	The Online mentoring forum served to provide follow up support to all workshop participants while customized mentoring was intended to assist grantees in developing and implementing their activities.	Direct linkage. Mentoring was as a conduit to help groups apply for the innovation grants.	NA
Key outcomes of mentoring (intended & unintended in terms of CIVICUS guidelines)	The outcomes were mostly intended. Mentees were assisted in formulating proposals for innovation grants and implement the grant projects while also enhancing their capacity and skills in participatory local governance	The outcomes were mostly intended. Four participants were assisted with specific queries in addition to the five grantees whose PG skills were strengthened. Some of the generic outcomes were in terms of knowledge enhancement, networking and cross learning etc.	Mostly intended since mentoring was mainly aimed at strengthening the capacity of the mentees in formulating the action plans and converting them into proposals for innovation grants and implementing the same. However the networking amongst the mentees through internet did not take off as intended	
Challenges faced & lessons learnt	Since mentoring was conceived as a part of innovation grants, the challenges and lessons will be described as part of innovation grants comparison in table 3	Online forums are effective in terms of overcoming long distances but not effective in areas with limited internet connectivity and low literacy rates; individualized mentoring did not evoke much response particularly from those who were not keen on innovation grants. Constant follow up required to sustain active online participation	Incipient nature of the network and lack of prior familiarity with each other restricted the exchange of experiences and other relevant information amongst the mentees in particular and the workshop participants in general.	
Evaluation of the quality of mentoring by recipients	Information not available on whether any such evaluation was conducted by the partner.	The online forum had 18 topics of discussion, 73 posts and 877 hits thus far. The online forum was appreciated for its quick and focused response, for aiding inter participant learning and knowledge enhancement	Information not available on whether any such evaluation was conducted by the partner.	

Annexure III Comparative analysis of the L P S O H P H Q W D W L R Q R I , Q Q R Y D W L R Q \* U D Q W V as part of the Regional Skills Building Programme supported by CIVICUS Participatory Governance Programme (2008-2009)

Comparison Parameters	Regional Partners			
	Western Africa CLUSA, Ghana	South Asia PRIA, India	Latin America Polis & Logo Link, Brazil	Southern Africa IDASA, SA
No. of proposals received and grants made	Twelve proposals received and five grants made	Twelve proposals received and five grants made.	Four proposals received and three grants made	Three proposals received and grants made (One proposal was dropped owing to a larger budgetary estimate than what permissible).
Grants made	Kassena Nankana District Sustainable Citizen Participation in Governance at the Local Level and Generating Revenue for Provision of Social Services in West Bank; Working Relationship for Revenue Mobilization East Gonja; Working Together East: no title	BMSF: Participatory Governance Partnerships: Promoting Participatory Governance among Poor and Marginalized Communities in Rural West Bengal, through Participatory Committees to Promote Participatory Governance	Canto Jovem and Leila 'L Q S' strengthening the role of youth in the social regulation of public policies in Natale Sao Miguel Do Gosto's Youth Building Participatory Governance Strategies Youth Network: no title	Participation in Local Government on Public Works; Increasing Participation at the Grassroots
Criteria for selecting grantees	Selection criteria were in line with CIVICUS guidelines and included (100 points): strengthening engagement between local government and citizens (30); activities support other (20); gender (15); value for money (20); & support by both local government and CSOs (20).	Grant applications were scored on the following (scoring scheme not specified): women applicants; a mix of countries, resource base support; and opportunities available for the countries	Information not available on the criteria used to select the grantees	Information not available on the criteria used to select the grantees
Regional spread of grantees (host vs. other countries)	All five grantees were from Ghana, the host country	The five grantees spread across four countries in India and one each in Nepal, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka	Two grantees in Brazil and one in Argentina. Chile and Uruguay not part of the grants.	One from South Africa and the other from Malawi
Period of implementation	December 2008 to July 2009: eight months	March to October 2009: six months	April to October 2009: six months	May to November 2009: six months
What is the innovation about the projects selected?	Civil Society Forums and Revenue Mobilization training for local government officials and involvement of traditional authorities in public forums	Signing of MoU between citizens and a Municipality followed by formation of Ward Committees in Sri Lanka; participatory in west Bengal, India; and capacity building of the media in Bangladesh through Media Forums.	The exclusive focus on youth issues and their political participation is the single most innovative feature that runs consistently across all the components of the programme	Facilitating dialogue between state and civil society outside government structures and the local level are contextually innovative
PG tools	Stakeholder forums, Public Forums, Town Hall	A few PG tools such as social audits, RTI have been used	Policy advocacy through youth agenda/manifesto	The stakeholder workshops organized in the South African

propagated through grants	Meetings, & People centered Advocacy	applied. Otherwise, the interventions have mostly focused on capacity building of various stakeholders and advocacy efforts	youth forums and assemblies	case failed to elicit government participation. While in Malawi, the impetus was on joint planning meetings between community government and information dissemination.
Sectors of grant activities	Education, municipal finance, water & sanitation health and district planning	Rural employment, child rights, city planning, Right to Information etc.	Racial and ethnic discrimination; gender equality; employment; and reproductive health in the context of youth	Participatory local governance and gender equality
Nature of interaction with various levels of government	Interactive, consultative partnership oriented exclusively focused on district local government across all projects	Only two projects had a direct involvement of local government agencies.	The workshops, seminars, public debates and conferences involved municipal and provincial level officials from the executive, legislature and judiciary.	Both the grants were hinged on interaction with and active participation of the local government actors
Participation in terms of gender and youth	Only in few of the public forums the participation of the women was targeted. Otherwise women and youth were present in most of the interaction forums	One project had targeted participation of women while in all others it was incidental. Only one project had youth involvement.	Young men and women formed the exclusive focus of grant interventions as they participated in large numbers.	Specifically targeted while youth were not.
Targeted beneficiary groups	The grant projects did not target any specific beneficiary groups but youth, women and marginalized/disadvantaged groups were present in most of the interaction forums	Women and children, ethnic minority groups and the media.	Youth were targeted in terms of gender, rural areas, ethnic and racial minority status	Women and urban communities
Nature of media involvement	FM Radio was used in Berekum district to mobilize and sensitize citizens on governance issues. Otherwise there is no mention of having print or other electronic media involved.	In Bangladesh, the project exclusively focused on capacity building of the media while in Nepal local media was one of the local stakeholders. There is no evidence of media involvement in other projects	7 KH UHSRUW mention any media involvement	Information not available on any media involvement
Key outcomes (intended and unintended)	Enhanced capacity of Citizens unions to engage District Assemblies in dialogue; broadening the space for public involvement in local governance; enhanced citizen awareness and appreciation of key issues; increased potential for municipal revenue generation; increased solidarity amongst CSOs and building trust between local government and citizens	Increased scope for citizen participation in urban governance in a Sri Lanka municipality; enhanced capacity of a Village Development Council to engage with the citizens in Nepal; enhanced capacity of the media to engage with the state in Bangladesh; enhanced awareness of community members about government schemes in a Panchayat in Kashmir; and increased participation of women and children in a West Bengal district.	Created spaces for youth participation in political governance and public policy formulation; secured commitment of public officials to the youth agenda for public policy; consolidated and empowered youth networks; and strengthened the trust of the young citizens in the governance process; and increased capacity of the groups to make structural and systematic interventions.	Absence of government representatives in the South African case reinforced negative perceptions of the community members about the local councilors and local government. In Malawi, the project has succeeded in enhancing citizen awareness on the need for local governance and created a conducive environment for enabling women assume political leadership.
Challenges faced and lessons learnt	Time line for completion of projects was perceived as rather restrictive and so the quantum of funding; exchange visits between the grantees would	Limited interest in innovation grants; grants must focus on action and not just capacity building; need for specific reporting format for innovation grants	Ownership was weak due to lack of their involvement in the design of the programme from the inception; incipient nature of networking amongst	Grants are quite small and time rather short to elicit interest amongst CSOs or to have any discernible/tangible impact; though national governments may be favoring greater participatory

	enhance better learning; timing of intervention is crucial; building capacity all stakeholders is crucial	etc. Besides this many logistic related challenges have been listed like delay in keeping up with schedules and so on.	groups impeded the cross fertilization of experience delays in release of grant and the outbreak of H1N1 Influenza in Argentina delayed the implementation; extend time frame and increase quantum of funds crucial to sustain the impacts	G R H V G S P W Q R T at the local government level;
Nature of mentoring/support provided by regional partners to grantees (before, during and after implementation of grant activities)	<p><u>Before</u> to develop action plans, fine tune and prep project proposals</p> <p><u>During</u> field visits to the project areas to facilitate and guide the grantees as well as strengthen the citizen-government relationship</p> <p><u>After</u> field visits to the project areas to observe evaluate and plan follow up activities consolidate the relationships</p>	<p><u>Before</u> fine tuning the project proposals</p> <p><u>During</u> An exposure visit to some Panchayats in India organized in June 09 for grantees. Grantees were also assisted through the online mentoring forum. Otherwise there is not much info available in the report about the nature of mentoring</p>	<p><u>Before</u> reformulating and fine tuning the project proposals</p> <p><u>During</u> field visits to guide and assist the groups in implementation supply of relevant information and coordination support and regular communication through emails and Skype</p> <p><u>After</u> Information not available on post project mentoring</p>	Information not available on the nature of mentoring support provided by partners to the grantees at any stage of the innovation grant process
Quality of assistance provided by CIVICUS to regional partners	Information not available any such feedback given by the partners to CIVICUS	Information not available any such feedback given by the partners to CIVICUS	Relationship with CIVICUS found very rich and F R Q V W U X F W L openness, flexibility and quick response time considered as crucial success factors	Information not available on any such feedback given by the partners to CIVICUS