SOCIAL PARTICIPATION:
A key element for development and governance

Some notions for discussion with regard to the Millennium Agenda and Climate Change Initiatives

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OVERVIEW

1. Role of SGMB/PADM/DESA/UN
2. Basic notions on development, governance and social participation
3. Issues about social participation
4. Millennium Development Goals
5. Climate change initiatives
6. Concluding remarks

Annex
1. ROLE OF SGMB/PADMD/DESA/UN

UNITED NATIONS GOVERNING BODIES
  General Assembly,
  Economic and Social Council, etc.

UNITED NATIONS SECRETARIAT
  Office of the Secretary General and executive offices

DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS (DESA)

DIVISION FOR PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AND DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT (PADMD)

BRANCH FOR SOCIAL GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT (SGMB)

DESA

OTHER DIVISIONS AND OFFICES
  Economics, Social, Environment, Gender, etc.

OTHER BRANCHES AND UNITS
  Capacity development, eGovernment, UNPAN support unit, etc.
As a part of PADMD, the Branch for Social Governance and Management (SGMB) is to assist Member States in:

- Transforming their public administration and public sector institutions to be more development- and citizens-oriented, efficient, transparent, accountable, participatory, innovative, knowledge- and ICT-based.

- Enhancing and improving the delivery of public services at national and local levels, especially using ICT.
• DEVELOPMENT:
  – A complex and multidimensional process, by which
  – human beings attain higher standards of living (in terms of income, health, education, living space and satisfaction of other fundamental needs) and enjoy wider rights to exert their capabilities
  – within a social context characterized by equity and inclusion
  – in ways that are sustainable and increasingly safe in relation with natural, economic and political risks
• **GOVERNANCE:**

  – The *whole set of arrangements* by which a human group strives *to harness or control* its development process, including:
    – Formal and informal *rules*
    – Public, private and social *institutions and organizations*
    – *Information, communication and coordination means*
• SOCIAL PARTICIPATION:

– The aggregate of different **contributions** made by **human beings, individually or organized with others** in diverse manners, to **public affairs** related with their **development and governance**, including

– Expression of needs, proposals, recommendations and critiques

– Identification and analysis of challenges and opportunities

– Collaboration in the provision of inputs or in performing diverse functions to enhance public policies, programs, projects or activities
3. ISSUES ABOUT SOCIAL PARTICIPATION

• RATIONALES

✓ Individuals can contribute significantly to enhance public policies, programs, projects or activities
  • Inputs and partnerships (labor, capital, technology, natural resources)
  • Ideas and analysis (for design, implementation, monitoring, auditing, evaluation, continuous improvement)
  • Consensus building, ownership, continuity

+ Individuals derive intrinsic benefits from this participation
  • Skills acquisition, expansion and fulfillment of rights, inclusion

+ Individuals obtain collective gains from their participation
  • Relationships and networking in connection with important matters of public interest
  • Social organization, trust, social capital
  • Checks and balances on public authorities and entities
3. ISSUES ABOUT SOCIAL PARTICIPATION

**PRECONDITIONS**

– Individuals need several **fundamental skills**, depending on the nature and goals of their participation

– **Public authorities must be convinced** of the net benefits resulting from social participation, and be **receptive**

– **Rules** regarding social participation have to be put in place in advance, and accepted by all actors, in government and in the private and social sectors

– Issues for participation must be of **meaningful substance** and relevant for participants
3. ISSUES ABOUT SOCIAL PARTICIPATION

• CONSIDERATIONS
  
  – Participation is **costly (time, resources), yet if well conducted has a net positive effect** on development and governance
  
  – Participation may result from spontaneous events, but its consolidation requires **explicit strategies and leadership**
  
  – Fostering participation needs in each context keen **sensitivity from stakeholders and leaders about existing structures and prevailing and foreseeable circumstances**, with regard to economic, social, political and environmental matters (there is no universal model for participation)
3. ISSUES ABOUT SOCIAL PARTICIPATION

- **CONSIDERATIONS** (continued…)
  - Participation best accomplishes its rationales when established as an *ongoing or permanent function*, not only as an occasional or ephemeral phenomenon.
  - Participation needs to *root in the political culture and juridical structures over time*… superficial, simulated or forced participation may be counterproductive for development and governance in the mid and long terms.
  - Participation may contribute to development and governance in connection with *local, regional, national or global matters*, although evidently it must be shaped appropriately.
• CONSIDERATIONS (continued…)

• Successful advancement to establish social participation as a useful permanent function within public administration in interested countries is without doubt to **contribute to State reform and government modernization**, in terms of

  – more responsiveness to citizens’ aspirations
  – higher efficiency in the use of public resources
  – enhanced inclusion
  – greater transparency and accountability
  – permanence of sound public policies
  – democracy
3. ISSUES ABOUT SOCIAL PARTICIPATION

• RISKS
  – Participation **may not readily bring in less advantaged individuals or groups**, and active strategies must be pursued to this aim (women, the poor, indigenous peoples, etc.)
  – Participation processes **may be captured by vested interest groups**, so counterbalancing strategies need to be adopted
  – Participation **may be used for populism**, if not expressly cared for sound, evidence based and constructively critical objectives
  – Regulation for participation can contribute to certainty and sustainability of this function when it preserves proven effective methods and organizational schemes, **premature juridical interventions may cancel or distort valuable social learning in the field**
3. ISSUES ABOUT SOCIAL PARTICIPATION

• POSSIBLE WAYS FORWARD

– Expand a publicly available **knowledge base on good practices and indicators around social participation**, about diverse public policies, programs, projects or activities

– Foster **networks of knowledgeable or interested actors**, including practitioners from different levels of government, universities, civil society organizations, international organizations, etc.

– **Promote capacity building** for social participation among actors in the public, private and social sectors of interested countries, to enhance their work on relevant matters (including MDGs and CCIs) at the local, regional, national and global levels
4. MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS

• Development encompasses a considerable large array of matters, so to focus attention and concentrate efforts from relevant actors in a set of very fundamental ones, the Millennium Declaration adopted by the UN General Assembly in 2000, highlighted the following and set corresponding targets for the year 2015 to guide adequate progress.

• How is social participation contributing so far (or may contribute in the coming years) in different countries, to the achievement of the several Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)?

(continued…)
4. MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS

• What experience can be gathered about good practices in this regard, to be offered to interested countries to further advance towards the MDGs?

• How can MDGs be accomplished not only as national averages, but also at subnational levels. throughout the diverse regions and localities of a country? How can rural and urban lenses help?

• How can countries be helped in this field to bring forward their own efforts to achieve the MDGs?

• How can ICT be efficiently applied in this context?

➤ The Workshop organized by SGMB/PADMD/DESA/UN, to be held within this World Civic Forum 2009, is intended to provide answers to these questions, building on previous ones obtained from past similar workshops held in different countries (Australia, Sri Lanka, etc.)
5. CLIMATE CHANGE INITIATIVES

• The MDGs do not exhaust the catalog of most important development issues under consideration by the international community, many other internationally agreed development goals (IADGs) can also be subject to similar examination under the lens of social participation

  • For example, IADGs in connection with Global Climate Change, on matters related with awareness, preparedness, adaptation, mitigation and further understanding of global natural phenomena

  Ø Questions analogous to those put forward before for the MDGs are to be considered in respect of CCIs at an Expert Group Meeting also organized by SGMB/PADMD/DESA/UN and to be held within this World Civic Forum 2009
6. CONCLUDING REMARKS

• The time schedules and rooms for the several sessions during the rest of this week, for the Workshop and for the Expert Group Meeting, appear in the week-at-a-glance page of the World Civic Forum official brochure.
6. CONCLUDING REMARKS

• SGMB/PADMD/DESA/UN encourages you to attend and actively share in the deliberations
  • Feel free to invite other interested persons who are attending this World Civic Forum 2009

• For related matters, questions and suggestions, please contact the members of our team, specially Ms. Flor Velazco-Juarez and Ms. Aerin Park.
MANY THANKS

END OF PRESENTATION
• The Department for Economic and Social Affairs (DESA) of the United Nations (UN)
  – Promotes and supports international cooperation to achieve development for all, and assists governments in agenda-setting and decision-making on development issues at the global level
  – Supports the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) and the General Assembly with system wide guidance for economic and social development
Within DESA, the Division for Public Administration and Development Management (PADMD)

- Assists the UN intergovernmental bodies by providing information and policy oriented analysis on public administration matters geared to development, in particular the Committee of Experts on Public Administration (CEPA)
- Serves Member States in improving public service delivery, building enhanced public institutions and increasing capacities in the public sector, through research, information sharing, advocacy, advice, training and technological modernization (particularly ICT)
- Operates the Online Network on Public Administration (UNPAN), www.unpan.org
Goal 1  End Poverty and Hunger
  • Target 1: Halve, between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people whose income is less than $1 a day
  • Target 2: Achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all, including women and young people
  • Target 3: Halve, between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people who suffer from hunger

Goal 2  Achieve Universal Primary Education
  • Target 1: Ensure that, by 2015, children everywhere, boys and girls alike, will be able to complete a full course of primary schooling

Goal 3  Promote Gender Equality and Empower Women
  • Target 1: Eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education, preferably by 2005, and in all levels of education no later than 2015
Goal 4  Reduce Child Mortality
  • Target 1: Reduce by two thirds, between 1990 and 2015, the under-five mortality rate

Goal 5  Improve maternal Health
  • Target 1: Reduce by three quarters the maternal mortality ratio
  • Target 2: Achieve universal access to reproductive health

Goal 6  Combat HIV/AIDS, Malaria and Other Diseases
  • Target 1: Have halted by 2015 and begun to reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS
  • Target 2: Achieve, by 2010, universal access to treatment for HIV/AIDS for all those who need it
  • Target 3: Have halted by 2015 and begun to reverse the incidence of malaria and other major diseases
Goal 7  Ensure Environmental Sustainability

- Target 1: Integrate the principles of sustainable development into country policies and programmes and reverse the loss of environmental resources

- Target 2: Reduce biodiversity loss, achieving, by 2010, a significant reduction in the rate of loss

- Target 3: Halve, by 2015, the proportion of the population without sustainable access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation

- Target 4: By 2020, to have achieved a significant improvement in the lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers
Goal 8  Develop a Global Partnership for Development

- Target 1: Address the special needs of least developed countries, landlocked countries and small island developing states
- Target 2: Develop further an open, rule-based, predictable, non-discriminatory trading and financial system
- Target 3: Deal comprehensively with developing countries’ debt
- Target 4: In cooperation with pharmaceutical companies, provide access to affordable essential drugs in developing countries
- Target 5: In cooperation with the private sector, make available benefits of new technologies, especially information and communications