



## DEMOCRATIC ASSESSMENT OF COLLABORATIVE PLANNING PRACTICES

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### Abstract

Over the past decades, collaborative planning as the communicative and interactive nature of planning practices has been increasingly emphasized (Forester, 1989, Friedmann, 1973, Healy, 1992, Innes, 1996). Nevertheless the evaluation of collaborative planning practice is not elaborated extensively yet (Laurian and Shaw, 2009). Some efforts have been spent on devising comprehensive practical assessment frameworks (Frame et al., 2004, Innes and Booher, 1999, Margerum, 2002b, Moote et al., 1997), but they all ignore specific democratic values essential for any collaborative practice as part of urban democracy (Agger and Loefgren (2008).

Agger and Loefgren (2008) tried to fill this gap by suggesting a conceptual structure called “Democratic Assessment Framework”. To be applicable in practice, the framework however lacks well-defined criteria. This study therefore aims at defining a comprehensive set of criteria for a framework that enables planners to assess to what extent different phases of collaboration (input, process and outcome) meet democratic norms. The defined criteria were used to evaluate different cases and types of collaboration (decision-making and consultation). The result reveals that with the criteria the framework gives a good overview of the success or failure of the practice and its reasons. As a complementary aspect, defining a set of qualitative explanatory criteria can further explain output of evaluation process by explaining the context in which the practice is happening.

### 1. Introduction

Collaborative planning was introduced during 1980s in response to failures of technocratic planning which was predicated on independent experts and scientific analysis. Relying on critical theory of Jürgen Habermas, this new approach was built on the idea of public involvement in planning. The fundamental assumption was that stakeholders with different preferences can come up with shared goal and principles through unconstrained discussion (Pellizzoni, 2003). In practice this approach seeks to bring together major stakeholders to address controversial issues (Margerum, 2002b) in order to come up with more innovative solutions.

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Despite considerable attention given to public participation in planning practice and research, the field of collaborative planning evaluation is still behind. Published evaluations of participation are limited and they mostly rely on few case studies (Laurian and Shaw, 2009). Planning professionals and academics lack definitions and criteria of success in participation as well as methods to assess participatory processes. Hence for devising any assessment framework it is important to explore ideals of urban democracy in theory and practice.

## **2. Urban Democracy in Theory**

In urban planning context understanding and explaining the democratic character of urban transformation processes and the power relations that lie in such processes continue to challenge planning theorists and practitioners. Two dominant theoretical frames are commonly used to explain and understand democracy in urban governance processes: communicative planning theory and Mouffe's radical agonistic pluralism which are both predicated on deliberative democracy notion (Bond, 2011).

The term communicative planning is used to refer to a broad and varied range of concepts including collaborative, deliberative and argumentative planning. This concept was introduced in 1960s and later was developed by many planners such as Patsy Healy, Judith Innes and others. Habermas theory of communicative action became basis for many of these works. In communicative approach it is assumed that the most democratic way of decision-making in planning practices is consensus oriented debate between all the relevant stakeholders (Bond, 2011).

Reaching such consensus require a communicatively rational process and appropriate tools and techniques. Focusing on reaching consensus will also influence the process and tools used in the practice. It will overemphasize the importance of key communicative events in planning, such as public meetings and consequently fails to capture the importance of non-communicative processes and action (Friedmann, 1973). It is believed that Habermas's efforts to achieve more rationality and democracy draw attention away from critical attention to relations of power (Flyvbjerg, 2002).

An alternative approach to urban democracy is the agonistic theory. According to Hillier (2003) in planning practices, making a decision requires accommodating for some values against others. In this sense consensus cannot exist without control and exclusion of some ideas. So instead of trying to omit differences in conceptions and values of participants in communicative theory, agonistic approach tries to values them as driver for reaching better decisions (Flyvbjerg, 1998, Flyvbjerg, 2002, Gunder, 2003, Hillier, 2003).

The Foucauldian approach criticizes existing planning tools and processes, suggesting the need for a power-sensitized understanding of the nature of knowledge, rationality, spatiality, and inclusivity in planning theory. According to this approach effective communicative planning comprises an impossible set of tasks for the planner to successfully achieve within the real world (Flyvbjerg, 1998, Gunder, 2003, Hillier, 2002). Hence as Forester (1989) express the planner responsibility is to “work toward the correction of needless distortions, some systematic and some not, that disable, mystify, distract and mislead others”.

Adopting an agonistic approach to urban democracy and Dahl’s theory of democracy (Dahl, 2009), the main standpoints in this study is considering the ideal practice of collaboration as a process which does not seek complete consensus, instead it should be able to unmasked power relations and as an outcome it should give all participants the better insight of how existing power relations are. On the other hand, the process should be supported by urban or general laws as part of its accountability and effectiveness.

### **3. Urban Democracy in Practice**

Communicative theory was introduced to the planning domain in 1966 with the work of Godschalk and Mill (1966). They believed that “meaningful and effective planning must be based on a two way communication flow between the public and the planning agency” (South Manchester Regeneration Team, 2010). Although the terminologies have been changed during decades, “planning as collaborative process” is still the main element of planning domain (Margerum, 2002a) and over the past several decades, it has been increasingly emphasized as communicative and interactive nature of planning practice (Forester, 1989, Friedmann, 1973, Healey, 1992, Innes, 1996). Adopting different approaches to urban democracy, planners have designed different tools and processes for engaging all affected parties in urban projects. These processes vary greatly in their aim, approach, tools and responsibilities and roles of those involved in the process. Therefore for developing any framework for assessing these practices, understanding the different components of these practices is essential.

To better practically reach theoretical ideals of participatory approaches, different guidelines and principles have been developed in governance and planning fields. Although there are some differences in suggested guidelines, there exists a huge overlap between concerns of different practices. Specific characteristics of context, such as social, political and cultural backgrounds, can partially explain these differences. Therefore in reviewing and analysing different guidelines it’s important to have in mind how context can influence details of principles and guidelines.

Although in some cases there exist some guidelines for monitoring and preparation of the process of participation, most of the guidelines and principles are focused on the appropriateness of the process of collaboration itself. This can be considered as

one of the main limitation of existing guidelines for collaborative practices. For the purpose of this study it is necessary to classify different guidelines and principles based on each phase and step of collaboration. Therefore it adopts the three step structure proposed by Gunton (2010) being input, process and outcome.

#### **4. Urban Democracy Assessment**

Some efforts have been made to develop frameworks for assessing small scale urban democracy as public participation. According to Gunton (2010) evaluation of collaborative practices is so challenging due to great number of “confounding variables” and absence of consensus on the variable to be used.

Innes and Booher (1999) devised their framework for evaluation based on three sources being the results of theirs and others’ research and practice in consensus building, the emerging ideas of complexity science and the concept of communicative rationality. Based on complexity perspective which suggests that a high quality consensus building process in an uncertain and changing society should be self-organizing and evolving, good at gathering information from the environment, and effective at making connections among participants (Innes and Booher, 1999). Using this concept they conclude that consensus building should help a community to learn and be creative. They discuss that for the framework to be practical it needs a set of criteria for process and outcome of collaborative practice.

Margerum (2002b) studied existing frameworks for consensus building in land use planning practices. According to him the important factor influencing the effectiveness of collaborative planning is the quality of the process. Reviewing existing frameworks he has used following indicators as suitable indicators for evaluation of participatory land use planning practices: “Include the full range of stakeholders”, “Include public participation and involvement”, “Support and facilitate the process”, “Establish a common problem definition or shared task”, “Organize the process in terms of ground rules, agendas, etc.”, “Engage participants, jointly search information, and invent new options”, and “Reach agreement through consensus”.

Considering all the discussed frameworks Frame et al. (2004) introduced one of the most comprehensive frameworks and criteria for evaluating collaborative practices. The framework consists of 14 process criteria, which define desirable features of process design and 11 outcome criteria, which define desirable outcome objectives. For using this framework in different cases he had done a comprehensive survey of participants in the collaborative planning process and a review of all relevant planning documents (Frame et al., 2004).

Although most of the criteria which are defined in these frameworks are helpful for using in any context, there are some limitations in nature of criteria and applying the framework to practice. In most of the evaluation studies done in urban planning or

environmental planning field, the main focus is on process and outcome of collaboration. Although they have mentioned some criteria for pre-negotiation phase most of the time, they have overlooked the importance of considering all three collaboration phases. On the other hand the defined criteria are not as specific as they should be for being used in practice. So there is a need for more comprehensive framework which covers all collaboration phases and provides well-defined criteria.

## **5. The Democratic Assessment Framework**

Considering collaborative planning as part of urban democracy and comparing main components of frameworks for assessing democratic nature of governance and collaborative practices, one can conclude that the existing frameworks used in planning context, have not considered certain democratic components (Agger and Löfgren, 2008). Although there is a huge overlap between existing frameworks in planning context and democratic governance, there is a need for reconsidering components of evaluation frameworks. Agger and Lofgren (2008) have come up with five criteria for developing their framework. These criteria are: “access, public deliberation, democratic adaptiveness, accountability, the development of democratic identities (political identity)”. Agger and Lofgren give some guiding questions which reflect the main points to be discussed in each norm in each phase. The output of their study can be considered as conceptual basis for a comprehensive assessment framework for collaborative practices.

To be used practically for assessing collaborative practices, this conceptual framework needs to be elaborated. All the broad concepts which are introduced in this framework need to be investigated in more details in a way that they can be related to real practices of collaboration. Then it would be possible to reflect these concepts in a number of criteria by which different aspects of collaborative practices can be evaluated. For defining the criteria, concepts and evaluation methods can be used from many different fields such as large scale urban governance, urban democracy and also ideals of collaborative planning practices.

### **5.1 How to Make a Practical Democratic Assessment Framework**

Three main sources are used to define criteria: Literature on collaborative planning and its ideals, existing principles and guidelines for effective participatory practices and existing frameworks for evaluation of large scale governance and collaborative planning. So in the first phase of this study, extensive literature review was done to define all the possible appropriate criteria related to democratic nature of collaborative planning. Then criteria were categorized based on the suggested structure of democratic assessment framework. In order to make criteria more understandable and measurable, a set of sub-criteria were suggested for each criterion. The summary of the defined criteria is shown in table 1.

Table 1: Democratic Assessment Framework Criteria

	INPUT	PROCESS	OUTCOME
<b>ACCESS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information on project</li> <li>• Information on stakeholders</li> <li>• Appropriateness of channels</li> <li>• Citizen's right to the city</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information on project</li> <li>• Quality of provided data</li> <li>• Appropriateness of chosen tools for participation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accessibility of outcome</li> <li>• Fair distribution of costs and benefits</li> </ul>
<b>POLITICAL IDENTITY</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Existence of social institutes in city</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contribution to empowerment of different social groups in the process</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contribution to empowerment of different social groups</li> </ul>
<b>PUBLIC DELIBERATION</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inclusive targeting of stakeholders</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inclusiveness of the process</li> <li>• Equal chances and resources for all stakeholders</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public monitoring of outcome of the project</li> <li>• Compatibility of final plan with agreed outcomes</li> </ul>
<b>ADAPTIVENESS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Flexibility of project alternatives</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Flexibility of process and the chosen tool</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Flexibility of plans for implementation</li> </ul>
<b>ACCOUNTABILITY</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public trust in urban authorities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Transparency of process and chosen tool</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ownership of produced maps and data</li> <li>• Sustainability of participatory practices</li> </ul>

Due to the complexity of collaborative practices and importance of specific characteristics of context in which collaboration is happening, it is impossible to evaluate different practices using single type of data and criteria. Hence an embedded type of integration of quantitative and qualitative data is adopted. Furthermore this approach will reduce possible bias of an evaluator in the assessment framework. This way, using the same criteria, two different evaluators can come up with the same results.

In this framework evaluating criteria will be in a form of checklist in which existence or non-existence of certain democratic qualities of collaborative practices will be evaluated (see annex 1). After defining all the possible criteria and sub-criteria, the maximum score a project can achieve in each criterion will be defined based on measurement of its sub-criteria. Beside this binary measurement there are also some quantitative criteria which directly are measured (such as number of people who attend the practice out of maximum number of possible attendants) and the result is combined in the score of criterion. To be able to better describe outcome of this checklist, certain qualities of context have been studied qualitatively. Also to be able to judge on existence or non-existence of certain criteria in the practice qualitative analysis have been performed. Using different tools such as content analysis, document review and interviews with real and potential participants of collaborative

practice, existence and non-existence of democratic values are evaluated. For qualitative analysis direct observation, interview and document analysis have been performed.

The final score of the project in each phase is presented by a radar chart including five points which represent five democratic norms in each phase. Since the number of criteria is not equal in different norms, scores are standardized to enable the user to compare performance of the project in different norms in the final radar chart. The criteria in each phase are defined in a way that there is no correlation between different norms within a single phase. But based on existing literature it is assumed that a combination of two norms in a phase may affect other norms in following phases.

## 6. Case studies

This framework was applied to three case studies. Case selection was based on aim, scale, tool and specific context of each project. All cases are similar in their scale as they are all plans for neighbourhood. The other important factor in case selection was whether the project is completed or not. Since the framework contains the outcome phase, the chosen project should be already completed and have approved or implemented plans. Two cases were chosen in England and one case in the Netherlands.

**Chorlton Local Action Plan:** City of Manchester has a long history of practicing collaborative planning. In Manchester Partnership's Community Engagement Strategy for 2011-15 typologies of different participation practices have been defined. From different typologies two most commonly used in urban planning context have been chosen for this study. Developing action plans for different neighborhoods (in this study Chorlton neighborhood) is part of consulting type of participation. Chorlton District Centre is one of the strongest and most distinctive district centres in Manchester. Therefore a plan was developed for its centre. Along with the plan public consultation was carried out for 3 months and its findings was used for refining the plan. In this program gathered feedback on the strengths, challenges and draft key principles in order to form a foundation for the District Centre Action Plan. Survey results were obtained from 1,003 completed questionnaires and targeted focus group feedback (South Manchester Regeneration Team, 2010).

**'U Decide Events':** Apart from regular participatory practices for preparing urban plans, the city of Manchester is experiencing another type of public engagement which is called 'Participatory Budgeting'. According to the developed toolkit (Manchester City Council, 2009) for carrying out such project, Participatory Budgeting (PB) is a "mechanism of community engagement to devolve power or influence of public budgets to the community at a local level." In Manchester council has some grants (CASH grant) dedicated to each neighbourhood. So Manchester



Councillors, Ward Co-ordinators, and Support Officers have been encouraged to use these money to engage residents and community groups to discuss and vote on spending priorities. This has been done through holding “U Decide” Events. Among practiced participatory budgeting, Chorlton and Whalley Range neighbourhood were the most successful ones (Manchester City Council, 2011, Manchester City Council, 2010).

**Roombeek Redevelopment Plan:** With its 154,000 inhabitants, Enschede is one of the most important cities in the east of the Netherlands (Gideon Consult bv., 2008). “In 2000, a major explosion in a fireworks storage depot destroyed the entire urban district of Roombeek in the city. More than 900 people were injured, well over 1,500 citizens were displaced because their homes were destroyed, and more than 200 companies were forced to relocate” (Denters and Klok, 2009). Weeks after the disaster intensive participation was initiated among all groups concerned: young people, older people, tenants, home owners, migrants, entrepreneurs, building corporations and schools. Simple question were asked from the residents: ‘what do you want to keep – or bring back – from the former neighbourhood or district, what must be different, and what is important?’ In the end, more than 3,000 wishes, suggestions and ideas were received (Gideon Consult bv., 2008).

## 7. Results

Adding all the criteria and sub-criteria scores in each norm and phase, the overall performance of projects is evaluated. The maximum possible scores are also calculated by adding maximum possible scores of each criterion in different phases and norms.

**Chorlton Action Plan:** As it is shown in radar charts (figure 1), in the input phase this project meets democratic values quite well except for accountability. This is mostly because of the unsuccessful participatory practices that have previously happened in this neighbourhood. The project though has not fulfilled ideals of democratic process of collaboration. Avoiding conflicts is the main cause of such low score. In the outcome phase, although in the public deliberation and political identity norms, project has scored low, the overall outcome of the negotiation phase and the project is as democratic as the input phase.

Although different stakeholders had a quite well access to information about the project and they were invited to participate (high score in public deliberation), the actual participation in the process (public deliberation score in process phase) is not high. One of the factors that explain this low score is the lack of trust among public in urban local authorities which is reflected in the very low score of accountability norm in the input phase. On the other hand high score of political identity in input phase shows that there are a lot of opportunities for collaborative practices but with low amount of actual participation in the process and low accountability score in the input phase, the project was not successful in using this potential or to enhance it.

**‘U Decide’ Events:** Since these events directly engaging public in decision making process, they seemed to be more democratic than previous practices. The results shows that ‘U Decide’ event were not successful in meeting democratic values in the input phase (figure 2). Inability of the project in identifying stakeholders, strict timing and plan for participation and number of previous unsuccessful participatory project lead to low score of these practices in input phase.

Despite insufficient stakeholder analysis, due to good publicity and high potential of participation (reflected in high political identity in input phase) in both wards, many people actually participate (high score in public deliberation) and that leads to more collaboration between different community groups in the process (high score of political identity in process phase). The design of the event in which decision making process happened once without any chance of modification, leads to 0 score in adaptiveness in process phase. In both prior and during the process, people have quite well access to all the necessary information for decision making. This can be one of the reasons that the actual participation is relatively higher than what it was planned. Compared to the Chorlton Action Plan case, these projects were more successful in enhancing political identity of the community.

The outcome of these practices highly meets democratic ideals of collaborative practices. The type of the practices which is decision making by public and the scale of the decisions allow people to be more involved in outcome of the project and it increases accountability of the outcomes. Since in most of the chosen projects public are responsible for implementation, people get more informed about different social events and consequently get more involved in them.

**Roombeek Redevelopment:** This case is considered as one of the successful participatory practices in the Netherlands and Europe in many studies. The specific context of this case was so influential in success of this project. The post disaster situation and the urgent need for the redevelopment plan and compensating people’s loss were factors which enforce authorities to involve people in the planning and decision making process from very early stages. The stakeholders were mostly former residents of the neighbourhood. So certain group of people with specific aim gathered together and planned for future of their neighbourhood. This can explain high public deliberation in process phase, adaptiveness of the input and high accountability in outcome phase.

The chosen method for informing people which was sending personal invitations for former residents leads to high public deliberation in the process phase (figure 3). Also due to high sensibility of the issue for city authorities and national authorities, full access to necessary information was given to all possible stakeholders prior and during the process. Also the planning of participatory process was so flexible because public were free to choose their desired way of participation but when the process was planned, during the process the methods and meeting was not so flexible

due to limited time for deciding on the final plan. That is why the adaptiveness in the process phase is low.

With high access to information, high accountability of the process and the fact that people were free to express their ideas, the outcomes are highly accountable. Also the process has helped the residents to strengthen their community activities. Although this practice is special in many aspects it can be considered as a successful practice in meeting democratic values.



Figure 3: Radar Charts for Chorlton Action Plan Assessment

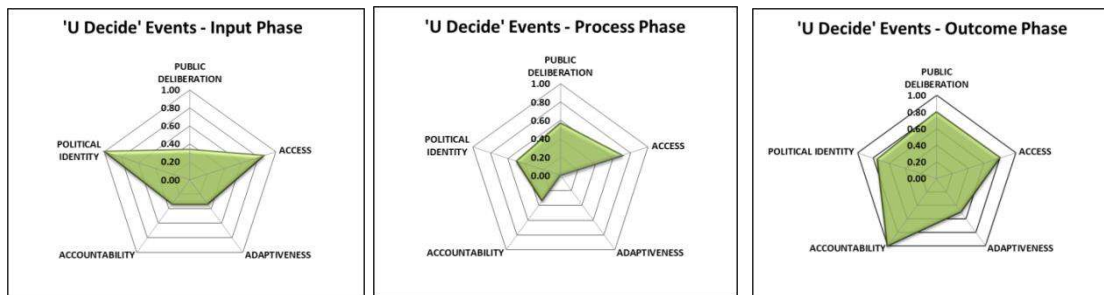


Figure 3: Radar Charts for U Decide Events Assessment

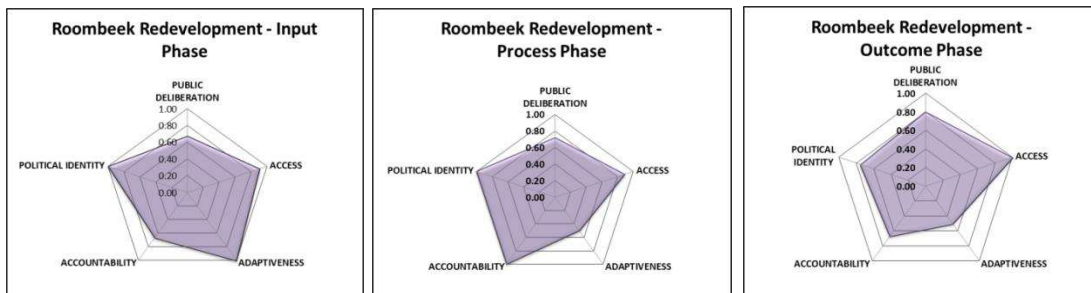


Figure 3: Radar Charts for Roombeek Redevelopment Assessment

## 8. Is a Democratic Assessment Framework Useful?

Applying the democratic assessment framework in different cases reveals that compared to other existing evaluation tools, this framework can more comprehensively evaluate the democratic nature of collaboration practices. Its structure with five norms and considering three phases enables the user to define which particular deficiency in input, process and outcome, has led to success or

failure of the practice in meeting democratic values. The overall output of this framework which is radar charts and detail score of the projects in different criteria, gives an overview of democratic nature of the practice and how they have changed during the phases. These outputs can be used as a starting point for defining processes and reasons behind success or failure of collaborative practices.

Although the output of this framework gives an overview of the processes, it cannot explain reasons behind it. With help of some explanatory criteria, the outcome of democratic assessment framework can be used for explaining reasons of success or failure of any collaborative practice. Democratic assessment framework evaluates a single practice. The scores of the project in any of the norms are explainable within the limits of the defined criteria and sub-criteria. On the other hand, the output of the framework for different practices and the reasons of their success or failure won't be comparable unless explanatory criteria are investigated. These criteria focus on the context in which the practice is happening and can for instance include:

- *Motivation for public to participate*: in any context, each individual can have his/her own reasons to participate in the process. In cases like Roombeek in which the situation after the disaster has led to collaborative planning practice, due to direct impact of the plan on people's life and the high importance of the issue, people are more eager to participate or even it can be said that they need to participate. So they have more motivation compared to regular collaborative practices for modifying neighbourhood plans like the Chorlton Action Plan case. So high score of public deliberation in the process phase can directly be related to this criterion.
- *Dominance of certain political/social/ethnic group*: in some cases dominance of certain groups limits existence or activity of community associations. These dominant groups can also influence number of participants in the process and the outcomes of negotiation and implementation phase. In some cases this criterion needs more attention. It can be the case that many active NGOs or associations are present in the context but all of them have same political or social view so although political identity will score high it is not comparable to the case which has different groups being active in several fields and in favour of different social, political or ethnic groups. Low public deliberation in process phase, low political identity in input phase, accountability of input and outcomes and unfairness of outcomes of negotiation can be all related to this criterion.

The outcomes of the democratic assessment framework can also be used in designing new processes and tools for participatory practices. The results of applying the framework in different cases show that some correlations can be found between norms of different phases. The structure of the framework and nature of the norms provided enable the user to explain the process between input, process and outcome phases. Investigating common co-relations which exist in all participatory cases, and determining how these relations influence the success of practice in each phase, can



be useful in designing new processes and tools. Although to be able to find these correlations the framework should be applied to several cases, general assumptions can be made as follows.

It is assumed that if in the input phase people do not have enough information about the project or not all the stakeholders are invited in the first phase, public deliberation in process phase won't score high. Also it is assumed that if public deliberation and political identity in the process phase is high, accountability will also increase in the outcome phase. Many other assumptions exist in collaborative guidelines and many evaluation frameworks are developed based on them but not all of these assumptions are proven. By applying this framework to different cases, validity of these assumptions can be evaluated.

Beside benefits of democratic assessment framework, there are some challenges in applying the framework in practice. Availability and accessibility of detail information about the process of participation is a crucial factor in successful application of the framework in different cases. Since the framework includes outcome phase, the participation process has happened at least some months or years before the assessment. In most cases the actual participants of the process are not accessible or some of them do not remember the details which are necessary in assessing the process phase. In the case of 'U Decide' events where evaluation forms were filled by participants immediately after the process, the evaluation is more precise than the other cases. Therefore for further assessment, it is better if after the process, based on defined criteria, an evaluation will be performed.

The other challenge is that unequal number of criteria and sub-criteria for different norms and phases make the framework sensitive to some qualities of participatory practice. Some norms such as access and public deliberation and specifically process phase have been studied and discussed more comprehensively. So properties of them are known to planners and more sub-criteria and criteria can be defined for them. Other fields such as accountability of planning practices have not been investigated as thoroughly. Therefore small variations in these norms can change the overall credits of the project. On the other hand a high number of criteria and sub-criteria will make the framework too complex to be used in practice and it will demand more data and information which may not always be available. Striking a balance between the complexity of the framework and its comprehensiveness will therefore be a decisive factor for the efficiency of the framework in practice.

## **9. Towards an Enhanced Democratic Assessment Framework**

This study attempts to examine how the given conceptual structure of democratic assessment framework would be useful in devising new assessment frameworks for collaborative planning practices. The outcome of this study showed that this structure equips planners with opportunities for further exploring the democratic nature of collaborative practices.

Different aspects of this framework can however be improved by further studies. From a conceptual point of view it is essential to determine which notion of democracy would better suit collaborative planning in an urban context. There are few studies about how urban democracy is defined within broader notions of democracy. This issue itself can be a subject of further studies since it would change nature of criteria in the framework. This would also influence scoring of projects. In this study 'rule of law' was considered as a component of democracy which can assure sustainability and accountability of any democratic practice. This was reflected in the framework by defining criteria concerning the existence of certain urban laws and regulations. But these criteria had a weight of 0.5 compare to other criteria. Adopting different notions of democracy would therefore change these components.

Besides the conceptual grounding of the framework, the main challenge in devising a framework is to define how the different criteria will be evaluated. This can be considered as one of the main aspects of any assessment framework which is greatly affecting the efficiency of the framework in practice. If the evaluation is completely quantitative, it would be unable to capture and evaluate the many democratic aspects of collaborative practice. If it is completely qualitative, due to the large number of criteria, collecting the necessary data would be too time-consuming. For qualitative assessment it is also important to have access to those who were present in the process which is in many cases impossible. The framework therefore should use a mixed method approach to evaluate each criterion.

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## Annex 1: Democratic Assessment Checklist

### Access

#### Input

- **Availability of information about the project for all stakeholders** **5 Credits**
  - Availability of information about purpose of the project and participation
  - Availability of information about the exact location of project
  - Availability of information about responsible authorities
  - Availability of information about the bigger context in which the project is being planned
  - Availability of information about the participation process (number of meetings, deadline of the project, location, time, etc.)
- **Availability of information about other stakeholders** **2 Credits**
  - Availability of information about all other involved stakeholders
  - Availability of information about the role and responsibility of each stakeholder
- **Clear ground knowledge about rights to the city** **1 Credit**
  - Availability of information about the legal rights of the citizens to the city
  - Availability of information about land administration laws
- **Appropriateness of channels for informing participants** **3 Credits**
  - Affordability of accessing information for all stakeholders
  - Time limits: how long before the process the information were provided? Is the provided time enough for stakeholders to collect enough information that they need?
  - Clarity of information provided before the process (clarity of maps showing location of project, explanation of technical terms, etc.)

### Process

- **Availability of information about the project and participants** **6 Credits**
  - Awareness of participants of goals and benefits of each stakeholder in the project
  - Availability of information about the costs of each alternative
  - Availability of information about benefits of each alternative for different stakeholders
  - Availability of information on short term and long term effects of each alternative on their daily life and business
  - Availability of information about other possible locations for implementing the project
  - Access to plans and maps of larger context of the plan (surrounding neighborhoods and important city-wide projects)
- **Quality of provided data** **5 Credits**
  - Availability of different version of data/reports for different stakeholders
  - Availability of explanations for technical terms and expressions or reading maps and plans
  - Level of accuracy and amount of information given (how detailed were the maps for determining spatial effects of the project on each participant property)
  - Equality in amount of information for different stakeholders: (Is it the case that amount of detail provided for different stakeholders benefit them greatly in decision making?)
  - Comprehensiveness of data provided: do they contain all the necessary information for proper decision making?
- **Appropriateness of chosen tools for participation** **6 Credits**
  - Possibility of giving feedbacks on previous discussions
  - Possibility of getting to know other stakeholder's feedbacks on the project
  - Accessibility of updated information about the participation process during the process
  - Accessibility of channels for getting more information about the project



- Affordability of the process and method for different stakeholders
- Compatibility of the chosen tool with resources of the target context

#### Outcome

- **Accessibility of outcomes of negotiation and agreed plans for all stakeholders** **3 Credits**
  - Accessibility of outcomes of the participation practice to all stakeholders involved in the process
  - Accessibility of final plan for all involved stakeholders
  - Accessibility of the final plan for public
- **Fair distribution of costs and benefits** **2 Credits**
  - Fairness of outcome of final plan: (Does the final plan favor specific groups of participants?)
  - Fairness of outcomes of the discussions: (Are they biased to favor ideas of specific stakeholders?)

### PUBLIC DELIBERATION

#### Input

- **Inclusive targeting of stakeholders** **3 Credits**
  - Presence of local knowledge/ their representatives in designing phase of the process
  - Existence of a clear stakeholder analysis and proper recognition of stakeholders before the start of the process
  - Existence of plans to approach different groups of stakeholders differently in participation process

#### Process

- **Inclusiveness of the process** **2 Credits**
  - Presence of different social/economic/cultural groups in the participatory process
  - Existence of a proper incentive for public participation
- **Equal chances and resources for all stakeholders** **5 Credits**
  - Equal chance for each stakeholder to express their point of view (opposition and approval groups)
  - Equal resources for all stakeholders to make others aware of their point of view (existence of appropriate media for doing so)
  - Handling conflicts: Success of the project in dealing with conflicts
  - Equal opportunity of changing properties of the plan and giving new alternatives for different stakeholders
  - Neutral influence of mediators (organizers) on emergence of or change in dominant ideas

#### Outcome

- **Public monitoring of outcome of the project** **3 Credits**
  - Existence of Clear ground rule for involving public in implementation phases for monitoring the progress
  - Existence of channels for communicating output of different phases of implementation with public: (like website, specific organization or a department in urban governance)
  - Possibility of monitoring and giving feedbacks on output of participation process which will be used in preparing final plan
- **Compatibility of final plan with outcome of participatory practice** **2 Credits**
  - Compatibility of outcome of participatory practice with final plan
  - Occurrence of modification in pre-defined alternatives

### ADAPTIVENESS

#### Input



➤ **Flexibility of project alternatives and participation process design** **3 Credits**

- Non-Existence of pre-defined alternatives for the plan
- Lack of possible changes in the alternatives based on practical larger context
- Non-existence of any political mandate for implementation of specific alternative or planning specific participatory process

**Process**

➤ **Flexibility of process and the chosen tools** **4 Credits**

- Possibility of modifying process and tool during the process, based on feedbacks
- Time limits: Enough given time to participants to evaluate the alternatives and make possible changes
- Possibility of getting data and operating analysis for new suggested alternatives for the project (whether the tool allows instant analysis of data for new alternatives or there is a need for another session)
- Existence of alternative tools (availability of alternative tool in case the chosen tool is not comprehensive for specific stakeholders)

**Outcome**

➤ **Flexibility of plans for implementation** **2 Credits**

- Existence of different agreed alternatives for implementation in case of facing problem in implementation of the most agreed alternative
- Existence of clear ground rule for determining responsible authority/organization for deciding on changes in the plan in case of facing unpredictable barrier in implementation
- Existence of clear ground rule for dealing with oppositions and negative feedbacks during or after implementation

**ACCOUNTABILITY**

**Input**

➤ **Level of public trust in authorities** **3 Credits**

- Existence of previous successful participatory practices in recent years
- Regular meetings of local authorities/representatives with residents
- Existence of specific known channels/plan for participatory practices in context

**Process**

➤ **Transparency of the process and the chosen tool** **3 Credits**

- Clarity of the logic behind analysis for all stakeholders (are stakeholders aware of the logic of analysis for defining alternatives and effects of each alternative)
- Awareness of participants of when and how other stakeholders will participate in the process
- Accessibility of updated information about the feedbacks and changes in the process during the process

**Outcome**

➤ **Ownership of produced maps and data** **1 Credit**

- Existence of clear ground rules for determining who will be the owner of output of participatory practice
- Existence of any urban law or regulation which legitimizes decisions taken in participatory sessions

➤ **Sustainability of participatory practices** **2 Credits**

- Low risk of dramatic changes in participatory practices by modifications in planning system
- Increase in trust of the people in participatory practices after this practice

**ACCOUNTABILITY**

**Input**



➤ **Existence of social institutes in the city** **3 Credits**

- Existence of different NGOs and social institutes with different domain focus
- Existence of active NGOs besides governmental organizations/groups
- Clear role of public representatives in structure of urban governance organizations

**Process**

➤ **Contribution to empowerment of different social groups** **2 Credits**

- Contribution of the process to unifying or separating different social, economic or cultural groups during the process (regarding the design of the process and chosen tool)
- Does the design of the process allows emergence of strong dominant opposition or approval group during the process

**Outcome**

➤ **Contribution to empowerment of different social groups** **2 Credits**

- Increase in number of members of different community groups
- Increase in number of organized social events after the practice

➤ **Addressing needs of specific social groups or institute in final plan** **2 Credits**

- Addressing specific needs of different economic groups of the community
- Addressing specific needs of a desired target group of the project (would it be different ethnic groups, elderly or children)