

2008

A JOINT RESEARCH PROJECT
OF THE INTERNATIONAL
ASSOCIATION OF PUBLIC
PARTICIPATION AND THE
CHARLES F. KETTERING
FOUNDATION

BRAZIL

PAINTING THE LANDSCAPE

**A CROSS - CULTURAL EXPLORATION OF
PUBLIC - GOVERNMENT DECISION MAKING**

1.1. Brazil

Prepared by
Daniella Hiche
Regional Coordinator

Background

The historical background and cultural heritage of Brazil are both mentioned in all interviews as key inhibitors to the perception of public participation as a participatory approach. Brazil was an **exploitation colony** and it was also under a **dictatorship**. As one interviewee mentioned, the **State was established prior to the people**, so Brazilians never had the opportunity to decide what form of government they desired. This **lack of options**, in addition to the practice of **clientelism** (exchange of favors and contact association favoritism) created a **bureaucratic vertical relationship between the State and the civil society**.

In turn and overtime, **civil society associated public participation to vindication** (demand-based public participation). Due to the dictatorship period, the only form of participation was the participation in **social organizations and workers' unions**. During this time, civil society became politically engaged and associated unions and organizations to public participation. The prevailing **mentality** was that in order for civil society to be heard, key leaders or civil society interest representatives had to **enter the State machine**.

The **re-democratization** of the country and the **new Constitution** (1988) promoted a more participatory public participation approach and delegated rights and responsibilities to the **civil society to become organized** and engage in public issues' discussion and deliberation. On one hand, there has been a tremendous **advancement** from the **State** to improve the communication between itself and civil society via **public participation**. Civil society has also become more organized in order to enable an interface between itself and the State. It was stated by the interviewees that the **Brazilian legislation is extremely modern**, and this applies to public participation mechanisms.

On the other hand, due to historical and cultural reasons, **public participation praxis** as a **participatory approach** in which stakeholders from the government, civil society and the private sector are engaged, is a very **recent** and **immature** phenomena in Brazil. In addition, the current practice of "**neo-clientelism**" is observed for appointed positions in the government, as well as among organizations that allegedly represent the public interest. During the colonial and dictatorship period, due to its practices, the **State weakened civil society organizational potential** and the consequences are still observable today: 1) **low civil society mobilization** and interest in engaging in public

participation; 2) **weak organization and management of civil society organizations**; 3) there is a current state of **confusion as to what is public participation**, what are the rights and responsibilities of each sector, and what are the mechanisms to engage in public participation. This last consequence is discussed in the paragraph below.

There is a **misunderstanding**, partly from the government and partly from society, regarding the role of the State towards society. This misunderstanding relates to the history and culture of the country, as well as the typical mistrust between civil society and the government due to the traditional vertical and elitist relationship between the two. All interviewees agreed that the **State** has the **purpose of serving the Brazilian population** and there are public participation mechanisms to serve such purpose. The **State has non-transferable responsibilities** towards civil society and it is, overall, considered an **essential stakeholder in public participation** processes. A clear **sign of this misunderstanding** was that **none of the interviewees emphasized elections or other mechanisms of public participation**. In all interviews the subjects **highlighted participatory approaches for public participation** within their respective entities.

All interviewees called for the necessity of **education** to assist 1) civil society in understanding the mechanisms and concept of participatory approaches for public participation and 2) governmental staff to become prepared to serve as public policy makers. Using different terms, interviewees commented on the lack of understanding of the **citizenship** concept in Brazil as an individual with rights AND responsibilities. Considering that the government offers a series of mechanisms to legitimate public participation and public deliberation processes, **interviewees agreed** that 1) the State has yet **to improve** its **communication** approaches to allow all sectors of civil society to acknowledge the public participation mechanisms and 2) **civil society has to become more protagonistic** in public participation initiatives, regardless of who was responsible for initiating the process. In this sense, civil society has to become **accountable** for its responsibilities in public participation processes.

It was observable that it was **difficult for interviewees to outline how public participation takes place**. It was clear that all examples offered had a formal or partially-structured protocol; however, probably due to the **informality culture** of the country and, due to such culture, a certain **resistance to strictly follow protocols**, participants of a public participation process find it difficult to outline the protocol and point out in which part of the process one finds oneself. The **local level interview** subject is an **exception** for this observation. The subject was able to outline the protocol, step-by-step, offering a great insight of how local Councils, which are spaces for public participation, function and how they are structured.

It was also particularly **difficult to interview subjects to explain how public participation is measured**. As pointed out by the interviewees themselves, there is a **need for improvement** in both **quantitative and qualitative measurement tools** to evaluate the process and impact of public participation processes. Throughout the interviews, subjects gave examples of the complexity of implementing public

participation as a participatory approach in Brazil, a country influenced by clientelism and paternalistic governments, in which the population has become used to demand interests to the government through organizations, unions and public demonstrations. A subject pointed out that **public demonstrations are an illusion of public participation and have no constructive influence on policy-making and deliberation**. They demonstrate the immaturity of the Brazilian society as to how to effectively engage in public participation mechanisms.

The **public participation** mechanisms presented by the interview subjects are considered a **social technology** because **public spaces for intersectorial dialogue on public interests and needs were (and still are) uncommon**. The interviewees, in general, pointed to the **different perceptions different people might have on what is public participation in Brazil**. For the reasons presented above, some might consider voting a sufficient degree of public participation, while others might consider it to be active in public spaces of discussion and deliberation (such as federal, state and local **Councils** – highly referenced by the subjects as the **main participatory approach offered by the State to involve society in public participation**), while yet others might consider public demonstrations a form of public participation. No conclusion can be assessed at this time regarding the difference between public participation and deliberation. However, it is worth mentioning that there were subjects that used the two terms interchangeably and others that made a clear distinction (in general, public participation was presented as a process that preceded public deliberation).

Process Report

Implications of the interviewee sample selected

- 1) Although the interviewee sample greatly contributed to the research, it was certainly not representative of Latin America. This limitation occurred due to research budget limitations.
- 2) The interviewee sample contributed to an overall picture of the Brazilian public participation context and culture, as well as rich examples of how public participation takes place in different spheres and levels in the country. However, the sample is certainly not truly representative of its universe.
- 3) Overall, the sample will certainly offer a great contribution to the international community regarding the status and culture of public participation in Brazil. The information presented will also be useful for researchers and others in Brazil who are unfamiliar with public participation theory and practice. Nonetheless, for those directly involved with public participation theory and practice in Brazil, the information will most likely appear to be superficial.
- 4) Because the sample excluded the public in general, the information does not account for several public participation initiatives and experiences that take place outside the government jurisdiction. Although this might not be significant in other regions, in the case of Brazil, this information would have been relevant.

How might the results have differed if another group had been selected?

1) In Brazil, as well as in most countries in Latin America, there are several under-represented groups (different and specific within each country and its sub-regions). This should not be simplified by income or educational status, neither ethnic background differences. For instance, there are groups with medium to high-income and education that are alienated from public participation processes for cultural reasons. There are also low-income and populations with limited access to education and information, and ethnic groups who are excluded from public participation. Had these groups been interviewed, the research results would indicate another perception of public participation.

2) The sample is biased because interview subjects were mostly from the Southeast part of Brazil and are primarily involved with public participation in urban settings. The development and cultural differences between the five regions of Brazil, as well as between urban and rural areas are striking. This sample is justified by the research budget constraints. Had this other groups been interviewed, the research results would indicate yet another perception of public participation.

What surprises were there? What did not go according to the plan?

Considerable time was spent by the research coordination to prepare the research protocol. Regional coordinators and interviewees received very specific research guidelines. Below are recommendation to improve the research timeline and planning:

1) Account for possible additional time to identify other potential interview subjects in case the pre-scanned ones cannot be contacted or are unavailable for the interview. In the Brazilian case, it is nearly impossible to identify potential interview subjects without contacting them. It is rather unusual to find the information requested by the Research Committee without the knowledge of the interviewee. It would be helpful, in case any further research of this type is conducted in Brazil, that IAP2 offered a standard contact letter that could be submitted to possible interview subjects, informing them that a research will be conducted and if they could submit their information. It would help formalize the interview subject identification process.

2) It would be appropriate that in the future that the Research Committee and the Regional Coordinators prepared a review to assess the best times of the year to conduct the research in different regions/countries. In the case of Brazil, at the time interview subjects were approved, along with the issue discussed above, due to several national holidays and government recess and reconfiguration, interviews had to suspended for months.

3) The time recommended for each interview was insufficient to conduct all the interview questions in Brazil. Thus, interviews were much longer than expected. In Brazil, the interview time recommended by the research protocol would have resulted in very superficial answers that would not enable the analysis of the cultural perception of public participation. In the future, it would be useful to provide interviewees with an outline of the interview prior to the interview so that they had the opportunity to become more prepared. Another idea would be a standard brief for interviewers to review personally with interview subjects prior to each interview. There were several cases when the interview subject had to be allowed to brainstorm aloud so that the interviewer could extract the information desired. This occurred because, although all interview

subjects were very aware of the topics discussed, the interview time and structure did not allow for reflection of the questions. Hopefully, once this research project is concluded, all participants will be able to assess what would be the appropriate time for the interviews.

4) Although great effort has been made by all involved parties in the research project, budget limitations posed great difficulties throughout the process. These limitations compromised the research results (discussed before) and not enabled strict obedience to the research timeline and protocol. It would be helpful in the future, in the case of Brazil that travel expenses and transcription and translation services be considered more carefully prior to finalizing budget allocation.

Overall, the research project proved to be an interesting learning process. I believe that some of the drawbacks that the research staff encountered will certainly serve as indicators to improve our planning and implementation performance in future projects. Considering that we are dealing with several different cultures, languages, and specific needs for each region/country, it would be enriching for all the research staff to become familiar with the overall process and the specific needs and outcomes of each region. This is a valuable experience that will benefit others not only with the research results, but also with the sharing of the research process.

I would like to compliment everyone for the effort, team-work spirit, and specially the respect and patience in order to accommodate specific needs in order to conclude this research.

Findings

Participants of this research were sourced from various organizations and positions in Brazil including Federal Administrator, State Administrator, Local Administrator, NGO Leader and Public participation practitioner.

Research Question 1

What is the nature of public participation/deliberation in government decision-making processes across different cultures?

Brazil, a federal republic in South America, has a population of approximately 186 million people according to U.N estimates from 2005.[\[1\]](#) The country was a colony of Portugal for more than three centuries until its independence in 1822. Brazil then maintained a monarchy-based government until slavery was abolished in 1888. The military subsequently proclaimed the country a republic in 1889 and its political system was dominated by Brazilian coffee exporters until 1930. The military regime peacefully conveyed power to civilian rulers in 1985, following more than a half century of military and populist government. With a considerable labor pool and significant natural resources, Brazil is South America's top economic power and also a regional leader. It is the most populous and the largest country on the South American continent.[\[2\]](#) Brazil's official language is Portuguese.[\[3\]](#)

Context of Public Participation

History of Political Stratification

Brazil's historical background was continually referenced by interviewees, and is a common theme throughout many of the research questions. According to one Brazilian federal administrator, "...The main problem here is the highly unequal society". This interviewee stated that the history of slavery, and stratified political interests created an "imbalance in political power resources" that still exists today. This official also observed that such imbalances present challenges for engaging people in public participation practices. "I think that...the answer may be superficial, but a society...with so many cracks as the Brazilian society of today...there are wide segments that are not part, let's say, even of the formal economy nor that which we agree to call the organized civil society. There are wide segments that literally live marginally". However, political parties that have historically dominated the representation of interests and political agendas are "going through a significant period of loss of credibility." According to this administrator, many powerful nongovernmental organizations are also enduring a similar "period of crisis" that represented the fragmentation of agendas and political representation.

The same transition could be said for this official's agency, which at the time of the interview was "completing seventy years of activities, which means that it is an organization with a lot of tradition in the development of [subject] policies in Brazil." This organization has "once again" achieved "relevance," and it fulfills "a prominent role, after the restoration of democracy in the country." This interviewee elaborated further. The agency "had previously occupied a prominent role in the fifties and early sixties. And with the advent of the military dictatorship, it lost much of its technical capacity and sphere of activity, and when the country finally...found the route back to democracy the [organization] was already quite frail, it was an institution that, that had a very limited structure. And it was only in the last ten years when the [organization] almost seized the... it was completely restructured, it had its attributions extended and once again took on a significant importance."

Historical Relevance

The concept of public participation, said the federal administrator, "has to be...qualified bearing in mind factors such as the political culture, the history of the country. It is closely linked to, let's put it like this, to the national ethos...and in the case of Brazil we cannot talk about political participation without considering a historical context which is the fact that...the country has a backing of *clientelismo* and *patrimonialismo* which, through Brazil's Republican history, have been terrible stumbling blocks that have hindered a more participative form of democracy."

Clientelismo - patronage system

Patrimonialismo - government politics

The administrator continued, “in practice, this means that for many decades, and especially during the period known as the Old Republic (1889-1930), but even more recently, except for the long periods of dictatorship that the country went through in the 20th Century, political participation has always been limited by a political structure that gave privileges to certain types of clientele rather with privilege of access to the State and its structures so the idea of *clientelismo* was based on local political bigwigs, the local oligarchies, that worked as if they were ingrained into the structure of the State, but that...was contrary to the Republican ideal of equality, and even the concept of citizenship...in the sense of everyone having recognition as citizens, with equity and equality.”

Later this administrator described the transition to civilian rule, marked by the 1989 democratic election for a new President. An agreement between elites required that the first 'civil president' be elected by congress, "by a restricted group, indirect elections...therefore we went from 1961 to 1989 without direct elections for President of Republic...and therefore the vote that you say is a basic instrument of participation was not granted for more than two decades".

According to a NGO leader, Brazil's historical context, society has the responsibility to “educate the State” in regards to public involvement and community engagement in political decision making. Similarly, “The State must not educate society. In a country like Brazil, where the State arose before society, we have this peculiarity, which is not the case with American society... or many other countries, here the State came about before society. It arrived by ship, with King John VI...there was no civil society, in the true sense of the term, when the State was constituted here, so there was the establishment of a relationship that we have inherited from the Iberian peoples, which is a asset-based relationship, a formal relationship, a vertical relationship, a paternalist relationship between the State and society, and this meant that the society started to wait for the State to take action, not making any moves themselves...and so we never got to say, as a Society, what kind of State we wanted.” Because of the powerful impact of Brazil's fragmented transition to democracy, what Brazil faces today is an "old political system". As a public participation practitioner described, "because we have a political culture where the very public and political spaces for decision making are taken up by people, by groups that, in a way, are still trying to uphold the status quo,...it places limitations on advancement".

This NGO leader also reflected on the growth of civil society during periods of military dictatorship, and what has occurred in the Brazilian political system since then. “We, because we have had 20 years of a military dictatorship, which means that the social movement itself was set up as someone organized against the State, to say that the State was to blame...because deep down they had the view that they could only do something in public terms if they were inside the State,” said this interviewee. "Much of the current Brazilian Government is made up of people who were formerly with the social movement, that organized themselves against the State to demand things from them, and then thought that it would be better to conquer the State and then enter inside the State, thus disarming civil society. And the civil society must not be a

springboard for you to reach the State... it must not be, otherwise there will be no autonomy as a sphere in its own right, that can subsist on its own." As union leaders entered the state system through public elections, this NGO leader argued that these leaders took on the "logic on the State...of that old State that they had once fought against, and against whom they had complained of clientelism when it was in the hands of the traditional élites, but not anymore, now they implement the very same policy of clientelism, a kind of neo-clientelism. They once complained about coronelism [power in the hands of a few families], and now they themselves are the new kingpins of coronelism."

Restoration of Democracy and Political Organization

Changes in recent years to the organization of the political system also have affected the political dimension of Brazilian participation, said the federal administrator. "...This experience of democratic normality which is quite recent in the country, the concept of alternating power...On the one hand you have in Brazilian civil society an intense rallying round...what started with the restoration of democracy...people are always getting mobilized." According to this administrator, the "spaces" or opportunities for participation are still "highly restricted". However, despite limitations, facilitation and dialogue has broaden in scope - specifically with nongovernmental groups and NGOs.

For example, this interviewee cited an organization that is "active on a national scale, and that was set up starting in the early eighties, within this struggle for the restoration of democracy in the country having, as its main banner, the struggle for agrarian reform, but over the last two decades the [organization acronym] has also become a leading player in the [subject] area, with its own initiatives for literacy building, and also highly active in making the State, and when I talk about the State I mean the three levels of Government." The emergence of these NGO's and social organizations helped to solidify political participation in a democratic regime. However, these were not the only groups that emerged. According to this administrator "Resident Associations, District Associations" also helped to solidify the role of public participation in representative democracy. "My understanding of political participation in a democratic regime, it takes place in permanent form firstly through the basic institutions within a democracy which are Parliamentary Representation.". Participation in Brazil "is channeled by the political parties, participation is very limited, and quite restricted to electoral periods, after all, the bases that each Member of Parliament may set. Indeed, political participation...public participation takes place, especially when institutional spaces are set up to allow the Public Power, to the State through its several organizations, to have a dialogue with social representations and this has been built in several areas through the setting up of Councils."

In addition, these "Councils are an important instrument," said the federal administrator. "You have a stronger presence in the Health and [subject] areas, in the Social area, Councils where, where in general these Councils have functions that are more to do with accompaniment or monitoring, debate and discussion, they are not deliberative, but they are, indeed, an important institutional space, this is because they are made up of representatives of social organizations, social movements, professional

classes, which can thus dialogue with public administration, with the policy-makers. Yeah, and then there is, indeed, the setting up of important situations where the policies are discussed and put to debate.”

Decentralized Political System of Government

According to the federal administrator, the political system in Brazil is "highly decentralized", specifically within specific subject areas. As an example, the specific agency that the administrator works within is actively in charge of states and municipalities, "so in the country we have twenty-seven units of the Federation, which are the 26 States and the Federal District, then a group of five thousand, five hundred and sixty-four municipalities, each of which with an [subject] network that acts predominantly in the areas of [subject], with the actors involved in the management of these [subject] networks, municipal and State managers.”

Movement towards Active Participation on the NGO Level

A history of colonialism and monarchism and the drive for democratic self-governance helped to prompt and support the continued advances by Brazilian civil society. In this vein, the NGO leader explained that “the type of participation that you can get organizing the people to make demands from the State or the so-called Governmental public power, is a kind of participation that is very, let’s say, fragile, delegated, reactive, with little creativity...and what we are indeed searching for is active participation, with creativity, innovation, and with this in mind you may not organize yourself just as someone who will pressure others.”

“You have to get yourselves together... not like someone who blames others because..., because there was a problem, you have to rally round to solve problems rather than just seek culprits, and make partnerships and increase your strength to find a good solution,” the NGO leader said, “and everything that was said about social and democratic participation in Brazil in the years that I mentioned, in the eighties and nineties, was much more in this sense of reactive participation. The very concept of citizenship turned into sectorial and territorial organization, or in a somewhat corporate manner, requesting, and this kind of participation is not creative, it is not a kind of participation that increases social capital. On the contrary, it increases adversary forms manifold, the forms, yeah... let’s say this... non-constructive forms of interaction between society and State.”

Urban Institutions vs. Rural Institutions

According to the federal administrator, Brazil has indeed undergone a significant and fast urbanization process over the last few decades,. Even after industrialization, there is "still a significant part of the Brazilian population who still live in rural areas, some 20 per cent, a bit less seventeen per cent, but there are still areas [...] urban and rural are not well defined.” This administrator explained that rural populations have not received specific services at the same "levels" and therefore have not had the same access to public participation processes.

Compounding the situation is the fact that these kinds of rural institutions “are less equipped” than their urban counterparts, “are in poorer conditions, as far as the buildings and equipment go, the [professionals] are less qualified, there is the problem of geographical dispersion and therefore many of the rural establishments are [institution]s with one single [profession] and multiple classes, which means that there is only one [profession] dealing with pupils of different ages, and therefore at different stages of development, in one [room type], and this is a situation that has not been solved.” As a result, this particular organization “has now, especially with the opening up of new room for dialogue, to have a more present form of action, this is an example of a social actor that now has direct interlocution,” said the federal administrator.

Recent Political Initiatives and Alternative Models

The federal official described a recent initiative that reflects the nature of Brazilian participation from a political perspective. It involved a particular initiative that resulted in two different proposals being drafted, one by trade union organizations, corporations with links to federal organizations and one by a civil society organization related to Brazilian state universities. According to the federal administrator, this initiative required the federal Government (including Congress, and Parliament) to recognize and respond to a variety of proposals set out by non-governmental agencies that ensured room for public participation processes.

“Five or six years have already elapsed since the plan was unveiled,” the interviewee said, “and the country has been through this large political inflection in [year], with [name]’s inauguration as President in [year]. So our current evaluation of this plan in 2006...the political atmosphere is now completely different, those organizations that were at the helm of the preparation of the [initiative name], they took on a posture which was more one of dialogue and participation in the forums created by the Ministry. Because of this, there is not an political and "ideological guidance which is much closer and more tuned in with the current Government". Following this evaluation, a working group was established by the State which was established to support dialogue and discussion, "it has no administrative or deliberative functions at all" unlike the national organization. "So the relationship is that these two organizations are very different. [Working group] is an instance that we could consider as parastate. This is an institutional space that permits this dialogue, and generates policy proposals. On the other hand, the [organization] is an administrative unit that receives this suggestion from the [working group], takes it to the higher spheres and, in the end, turns this into a policy.”

Political Representation and the Role of 'Interlocutor' (Facilitator) in Public Participation

One important byproduct of this political process is a new administrative power or influence established by social movement leaders, according to the federal administrator. “ This "establishment of social roots" has become more and more popular in recent years, and in turn has helped ensure to leaders of social movements, such as "activists in non-governmental organizations" or "leaders in trade unions", hold positions of political appointment in public administration. This particular feature distinguishes this

administration “and previous administrations,” the federal administrator said. “In the specific case that we are now using here, as an example in the Ministry of [subject], this [administrative unit], for this [administrative unit] a profile was established, that of someone who has been active in the rural area and therefore, historical links with the organizations. That these organizations recognize as an interlocutor who is trustworthy, in some way identified with the demands. This establishes a difficulty that has even inspired debates about the passage of these individuals, we are talking about individuals, from one side of the counter to the other, brings about some...some questions, in the sense that the individual was active as a social agent, an activist, a mobilizer, an organizer, or even a consultant, a technical advisor for social movements, trade unions, a manager, after all, and the following moment is appointed to carry out a public office, he is identified with that cause with the banners and requests, of those movements, and now he is a public administrator. He thus becomes a policy-maker.”

This administrator went on to describe the unique role of the "interlocutor" or facilitator. “Thus, he starts to be responsible for decisions, and now on taking up this function he sees, on the one side, the tax restrictions of the Public Budget, with the legal restrictions, with bureaucratic restrictions, and a series of contingencies that limit the service of the requests that, in the previous period, the same player had been striving to see them met by the State, so, on the one hand there is this clash of realities, right, and on the other hand, on being invested in a public office he has to respond to the demands from other actors. He can no longer be just a mere militant of the cause in which he was previously engaged. He now has to dialogue, and listen to requests from actors that have different agendas. So, it is required that this individual has an ability to negotiate, conciliate, after all, exactly. So, this all requires political learning. And, on the other hand, the social movements see themselves directly faced with the challenge of not...being...there is a very important word...of not just being co-opted by the State, by the Government.

Role of Government in Facilitating and Encouraging Public Participation

"It is essential to set up channels of dialogue with society", said a federal administrator. "Any Government that wishes to govern making use of democratic instruments needs to permanently work on...the act the gaining the consensus of Constituent Members of Parliament." Therefore, "the fundamental element", as the administrator described, is that the Government operates as transparent, or "open" - that public participation creates legitimacy. This interviewee also emphasized the role of an "organized civil society" in public participation, stating that public participation requires an open and democratic government, as well as a civil society which is "mobilized and organized". Furthermore, "I understand public participation, as collective action, fundamentally, and not an individualized action. Indeed, public participation is exactly the construction of a public space where multiple actors can make dialogue, dispute...especially in the division of public assets and resources."

Similarly, a local administrator emphasized the essential role of the state government in regards to the facilitation of participation. This person said, “you also have to have the involvement of the Government complex in the processes of participation.” This

administrator went on to describe their role in regards to public participation, specifically through councils and public forums. “So, I...deal with a Government group, with the main areas of the City Hall, because this is where the demands arise...with the Councils, Forums, Conferences, with the main Secretariats of, of the Government.” The councils established by the local government are comprised of elected officials and members of the general public. Other governmental structures also create opportunities for participation. For example, according to this local administrator, particular communities have a Municipal Committee of Public Policies that is comprised of members of civil society and private enterprise. In order “to publish a document informing that there will be an election [for members of the committee], we have to give a certain period of time for the civil society to sign up, already saying which segments are part of this, that are part of this Committee, so we have a rallying and articulation so that these segments do indeed sign up, right, then we have the signing up and, after this, the electoral process.” Appointments to the committee are for “a term of two years, this is in the Organic Law of the City.” Committee members also can stand for “consecutive re-election.”

Community/Government Expectations Regarding P2

Institutional, societal and individual expectations for public participation or engagement were described by Brazilian interviewees. An NGO leader said, “Each one has its own expectations, right. On the part of [organization], when it is working institutionally it’s that these networks exist and continue to do so, being denser and denser, more connected, carrying out more things and... assess and monitor... assess their own results, both in terms of performance and also of impact and, currently, the impact, we are measuring the impact by the number of actions in partnership, that are carried out...and also by the number of volunteers that take part in these actions, this is an important issue as well. The new public sphere is a sphere that essentially depends on the voluntary participation of the citizen.”

A public participation practitioner, by contrast, does not view public participation as an expectation of government. “No. Not from the Government as a whole, even if they receive something that has ah... a signature, we must not forget that part of the profits generated, yeah, were not fully achieved due to the lack, the discrepancy, right, often large, compared with the efficiency or effectiveness or relevance of this procedure, of this political practice. So, to a certain extent, I would not say that this is a success or a consolidated result for the Government as a Government policy. I think that those were the results of... sectors, right, that are also the part of any Government, yeah, but between saying that is a Government policy, has not become a Government policy. Right, it has not become a Government responsibility. Not there, no, no.”

Finally, an interviewee offered a more collaborative opinion, that expectations span individual, social and institutional dimensions. “For us to have effective control over the services rendered, and then it’s like this, not only execution but also the use,” said a local administrator. “That people take over these spaces, take care of such spaces, managing them jointly with us. Because this which is ours, I think like this, this is the great result we expect. We hope that our equipment shall be taken care of, used, and in

fact taken over, but in a way where people use them, and another worry, and never, ever, be privatized, right. Because we have already had cases of privatized public spaces, and today, we have managed to change all this, thank God. But the space is public and everyone can use it, and use it by taking it up and taking care of it, managing such spaces together with us.” In contrast, a federal administrator described the challenges associated with the "methodological inconsistency" of specific public participation practices which creates a "cultural bias that privileges some groups rather than others". According to this interviewee, "Brazil has a certain degree linguistic unity...but if you prepare national tests that have an identity with the South Zone of Rio de Janeiro, in terms of language, referece and so forth" you run the risk of potentially excluding other regional or social groups.

Maturation of Engagement Underway

“Brazil has not yet succeeded despite recent advances and such, in solving the basic shortcomings,” the federal administrator said, “and the same is the case with [subject]. Last decade, we got close to universal access to [subject] while many developed nations achieved this feat at the end of the 19th Century. And even so the [subject] indicators of the country are still completely unsatisfactory. So the very pressure of the social agenda made the field of social policies become a field which is very fertile for participation. And once again, the fact of having an administration with a social agenda that is very proactive for important policies, so this is the field where I think participation has been more encouraged, and has acquired greater presence.”

Despite these factors, the federal administrator observed that “I believe that there has been a...maturation process here. We have passed from a requesting phase in which public participation was through large demonstrations, street movements, protest marches, occupation of urban and rural land sites, to a new phase, I think there again it is largely to do with the recent political history of the country, alternating power, a government with a popular base, due to the very historical roots, yeah, of the Workers' Party, which is the party to which the President of the Republic belongs, we have left this requesting protest phase and come to a phase of construction. This is not a... short-term process, as I mentioned, some examples, right here in the Ministry for [subject], I could give several examples of cases where there has been construction these last few years, with the participation of several social actors. These instances are not deliberative, but have a strong influence on the formation of public policies, in the drawing up of public policies.”

Greater Political Leverage Exacted by Select National Actors and Private Sector

“I think that a trend, a trend is important, not only in Brazil, I feel that this is an international fact, it is a growing influence from economic thinking, on one hand, of the economists as a professional class, and on the other hand the basic technical knowledge in the construction of public policies,” said the federal administrator. “And this was exaggerated in Brazil during the military dictatorship, the so-called technocrats, that it was the military dictatorship in the period of repression, and this is an antithesis of what we are discussing now, public participation. According to this administrator, this wave of 'technical knowledge' determined many policies, and in turn has continued

served as a 'block' to popular participation practices in governmental decision making. "In a democracy these trends have not disappeared," this interviewee continued. "They have somewhat agreed with this hegemony of economic thought, it is actually becoming even more consolidated. The issue of technical knowledge must also not be ignored, but I believe [there is] a real possibility that there is no need for a great deal of technical knowledge..." For example, the subject of telecommunications needs "a highly specialized technical knowledge so that you may have an effective participation in the discussions about politics," said the federal administrator. "Even when there is willingness to promote public participation it ends up very limited to a small group of actors who have, or can get access to, this knowledge."

Brazil, now, in the private [subject] sector is the majority. Almost 70% of the total enrollment in [subject] is concentrated in private institutions, and this has also become an important economic player, and thence a political player with branches in Congress, and exerts immense power. [Interviewer: So you see this as an impediment?] No. Not as an impediment, but a concrete item of date of, of, of the space for construction of [subject] policies, that these actors...powerful actors linked to [subject] has this capacity of blocking the agenda and setting an agenda, to a certain extent.

Influence of the Public Marginalized by Special Interests

"A public consultation makes a new legislative item available, a directive of some sort, for public reference. This is a legitimate form of participation, after all, but the return shall be very limited, because there is a need for technical expertise, and then it is much more likely that groups with specific interests, the industry of this segment, that could have lobbying consultants, hired at high prices, may have an influence which is much larger, and prevailing," the administrator said.

"In the social area, looking at my specific field of activity which is that of [subject], there is also a clear trend towards economic thought becoming hegemonic, on one side and on the other side technical knowledge taking up the space this idea of technical solutions... that...at some moment this discourse gained a lot of... strength in Brazil. That in fact the social problems, the [subject] problems can be solved through a more efficient management, and a management based on empirical evidence, and therefore more of a technical form of management. In the current Government, although these two lines of discourse are highly present they have in no way been superseded the opening to public participation in debates is much more ideological, as it allows much more active involvement of social actors. So, I do indeed see the social area as a privileged field of public participation, more so because this is a central issue, Brazil is a developing country which has a social side which is still extremely... extremely... negative in that we have one of the most unfair distributions of income in the world, poverty and basic shortcomings."

Research Question 2

How do different cultures support or provide space for public participation/deliberation in government decision-making processes?

This research question sought to understand how different cultures – and in turn, different associated governments – provide support for or how they facilitate the practice of public participation among those they serve. Like all countries included in this study, Brazilian participatory or deliberative processes is related to how participation/deliberation is conceived and defined. We identified support for public participation/deliberation in the data through responses to interview questions concerning how such processes are defined, how people access such processes and the specific tools or practices that are used to support engagement.

How is Public Participation/Deliberation Defined?

This part of our research focused on how public participation is defined and the corresponding design framework

Concept of Public Participation

Brazilian interviewees identified many different conceptual definitions of public participation or deliberation.

- **Deliberation, Dialogue and Facilitation ("Interlocution")** - "Clearly public participation depends on two key elements," said a federal administrator. "On the one hand or at least if you think of public participation in the sense of deliberation, to the extent the social actors have an influence on public policies. On the one hand, there is the need to have a Government where its leaders...that the Public Administration...a clear disposition to dialogue and interlocution.. Basically this is the essential condition...Now, any democratic Government, and the previous Government, that had a somewhat different ideological profile, needs to create spaces for dialogue and interlocution, for the very legitimization of public policies. And this is done." A public participation practitioner said that participation "is, indeed, an assignment of identification of opportunities." For this person, the transition to democratic rule created a new interpretation of public participation. "You can say, a bunch of meetings, a heap of whatever, and this, indeed, is participation. Yes, it is a level of participation...but for me participation nowadays...through my experience, activity and observation of this and that, for me participation takes place, or is possible, when there is a level of deliberation". Moreover, this person said, "As an essential aspect to say that this is participation so, I can take part in meetings, such and such, but if I don't have, if I am not heard, if I do not take part in the decision-making process that will lead to the preparation of a policy that shall set the priorities, and define the scope, even that of concept, that shall in turn define the institutional administration"
- **Consultation** - A state administrator expressed a more flexible definition of public participation "...I mean, there are some people who interpret that popular participation is a consultation, yeah a punctual consultation about specific cases...like a plebiscite, a referendum, or something like that, while there are other people who think that true popular participation is that which takes place

every day, in the morning, in the afternoon and at night, and other people feel that an Internet site will suffice. We work with the concept which is most useful at the time, we are very pragmatic about this," this interviewee said.

- **Citizen Input into Governmental Policy Making** - "Citizen participation is, in fact, having the citizens interfering in the policies that we are implementing. Effectively, with clarity, information and grounding." said a local administrator. There is "co-responsibility, the sharing of power, rather than transfer" of power. It introduces "social control," and it "is a method and a brand of the Government."
- **Response to Community Needs** - For the public participation practitioner, engaging the public requires not only a specific governmental capacity, but a level of "translation" or capacity to respond to the needs expressed by "different actors". These issues or needs are then "incorporated" and considered throughout the public involvement process. During the process, emphasis is placed on "cohesion of objectives, of interests, of purposes."
- **Addressing the Public Interests at Large** - According to an NGO leader, "Public participation is participation in the public sphere but, as I see it, the public sphere is not limited to the State sphere, it is wider in scope than that". This person stated, "The public sphere is what is public in the true sense of the word, which means that it is public in its purpose, and not just because it has been declared public by the Constitution or by some law or other, in these cases they are public by name, but not so public in fact. The term public refers to what has not been privatized, whether for business or economic reasons, or for corporate interests, or for political reasons."

Going Beyond Deliberation

A NGO leader also saw participation as "not just public deliberation". According to this interviewee, "Participation is a way of, how can I put it, helping with your opinions, your suggestions, your work, your effort, with your action, for the strengthening of the public sphere, for the expansion of the public sphere, for the common good, it's...in general there is a, a superimposition of the public and the democratic, which means that we, myself and many others, who work here with this view, we think that there can only really be a public sphere in democracies."

More specifically, "public participation is the participation in the public sphere, by whomever it may be, whether on the part of the Government, or private enterprise, or of a common citizen, or civil society, if it is participating in an action that has public purpose and public character, then it is considered as public action, then it is a form of public participation...err... and the second thing is that public participation can only take place in democratic airs, meaning that there is a sort of equivalence between the public and the democratic. When I talk about the democratic, I do not mean democratic as a representative régime, of representative system of electing representatives, Government, I am not talking about this, I am talking about politics rather than policy, I am speaking about the kind of politics that is made by the common citizen, in mediating a conflict, getting people together to get something done, all these actions are public,

also when they are democratic actions or actions to create democracy. So the public, the reality of the public, is born at the same instant as democratic invention.”

However, the NGO leader noted that, “for many people it is the same definition I have just given you, while for others it is... I mean, others do not, do not consider public participation in this sense, for example, business sectors, let’s say, consider it less... in short, it depends.” The interviewee also said, “when you use the expression “public participation”, this expression is not universal and it has different concerns, meanings, this being the true sense of the term, it is like an ordered pair, with intention and extension, it has different intentions or different extensions, right, in semantic terms, then yeah... this is not certainly correct, there are people... public participation that if you consider it, you imagine the participation of the Government, while others will understand that public participation refers only to that which are formal public actions”.

Common Terms

Common terms for participation used in Brazil included **popular participation** (state administrator), **public management** (local administrator, public participation practitioner) and **citizen participation** (local administrator). The NGO leader used the terms “social or public participation or citizen participation, participation in the public sphere.” The term “popular participation” was distinctive to Brazil.

In addition, the local administrator said, “Here, we do not use the term public participation, but rather that of citizen participation.” This person also said, “I believe in public participation and, in this case, we use the term citizen participation.”

Types of public participation/deliberative processes

Interviewees detailed the design or framework for public participation processes that were used to engage citizens. Several of these correspond to the IAP2 Toolbox, including techniques that seek to share information, compile or provide feedback or bring people together.

Brazilian interviewees revealed several types of participatory or deliberative processes, including three general types: Social/Political Movements, decision making/management, and policy development.

- **As a ‘technical form of management.’** "Social problems, the [subject] problems can be solved through a more efficient management, and a management based on empirical evidence, and therefore more of a technical form of management." said the federal administrator. "In the current Government, although these two lines of discourse are highly present they have in no way been superseded the opening to public participation in debates is much more ideological, as it allows much more active involvement of social actors. So, I do indeed see the social area as a privileged field of public participation".

- **Social/Political Movements.** “Last decade, we got close to universal access to [subject] while many developed nations achieved this feat at the end of the 19th Century,” said the federal administrator. “And even so the [subject] indicators of the country are still completely unsatisfactory. So the very pressure of the social agenda made the field of social policies become a field which is very fertile for participation. And once again, the fact of having an administration with a social agenda that is very proactive for important policies, so this is the field where I think participation has been more encouraged, and has acquired greater presence.” Similarly, “with the democratic transition, there obviously was a rapid mushrooming of trade union organizations, and the number of trade unions multiplied quickly and, more important, there was the advent of new social actors. A short while ago I mentioned the Landless Peasants Movement, but thousands of other social organizations appeared. NGOs, Residents’ Associations, District Associations, and so forth. There is a true effervescence in this regard.”

National Conferences and Community Events

One particular application for participatory or deliberative processes used in Brazil includes what a federal administrator described as ‘eventology.’ “There is a very ingrained culture that deepened in recent years, that we often refer to as ‘eventology.’ Essentially, participation is measured by the number of events and participants. Events, work... workshops, conferences. National conferences are tops, this has much to do with a leftist culture in Brazil. You start at the base, with local conferences, than municipal and state conferences, and then you end up in a large national conference. It is a real climax, or would be like this in practice in many areas.”

“There is a lot of strong value linked to the national conference,” this person said. “You get three thousand people together in the Brasília Tennis Academy, this is the peak of glory in any area of politics....The national conferences are given an enormous power of... construction of an agenda and such... they go as far as proposing, with [subject] affairs, that the regular holding of national conferences and such is mandatory. So then, this means that public participation is currently measured, especially in large... largely by the number of events and participation. If you just get some reports from the Ministry you will find the following: so many meetings held, so many regional seminars and so forth. So many events are arranged to reap a thunderstorm. Yeah... there are a lot of events, is this an issue? Yeah ... in the specific case of [organization] many of the activities do indeed have a highly technical connotation, so technical meetings are very common and often used. Yeah... number of accesses to an Internet page, for example, has also become another [measurement]....So, it is difficult, it is much more difficult to think of a qualitative assessment, and is largely a practice that is still not often used.”

- **Participation as promotion or information-sharing.** A state administrator said, “when we have an action, a promotion, such as lectures about the promotion of human rights in general, fundamental rights awareness, yeah... we can do something directly, right, making use of some equipment, some premises that we own, right, but we know that this doesn’t cause much repercussion if we don’t do it in partnership with the institutions that have local action.”

Justifications

Justifications provided for public participation processes and practices included the reference to a national and on-going democratic transition (good governance), public expectations, and economics.

Essential Democratic Process

A local administrator explained that participatory or deliberative processes are justified because of the transition in recent years in the Brazilian political system. “Historically, in Brazil we have always had a dictatorship, so democracy in Brazil is a very recent development,” said this person. “So it is like this... the citizens, they did not have this... how do we say it... they do not use participation in an effective way. They did not interfere, neither did they manage to discuss, have a dialogue, and also there was a discussion like this: we simply had requests, and that was all.” Later, this administrator explained, that when democratic practices led to the election of ‘popular administrations’, “this brought about a more effective participation...public participation is in fact controlled, there is a kind of social contract with what the Administration has been doing.”. This interviewee described effective public participation as an open and honest ‘discussion’ about service delivery - justifying public participation processes as the key to ensure citizen ‘interference’ in policy development.

Responsibility of Sharing Power

“We are talking about co-responsibility, the sharing of power, rather than transfer....who has the responsibility for signing, paying and controlling is the State, so there is no point in thinking that the population will, because they will not, and neither can they and then I am talking in the administrative and legal sense, so we have a relationship of co-responsibility, a sharing of power, so that people feel responsible, in who is deciding...this responsibility does not only lie with the Government, but also the population, so people feel responsible”, explained a local administrator.

“It is easy to talk, now in practice this is not so simple. People do not have a clear understanding of this fact, yeah, but I think this is a process, it is a process,” the local administrator said. Moreover, “we have further strengthened the process of participation,” said the local administrator. “To make a good Administration we need to have citizen participation.” For example, through local Councils comprised of civil society and the general population “creates a relationship of solidarity between [people], and solidarity includes practicality, so my region is difficult, but yours is worse. So, therefore, I also want your region to be OK. So they manage to do this, they manage to

reach an agreement about having needs, and the worst ones, yeah, in the worst regions from the needs standpoint, they contemplate them on the proposals, in the proposals they present.”

Working With A Range of Stakeholders

A public participation practitioner justified engagement processes as a means of working with a range of stakeholders. Participatory activities “are all aimed at the articulation and joint work with these three sectors, right, so I think that we end up getting a general view, let’s say both privileged and rich, right, multidimensional, yeah, to the extent that we are always dealing with several different players, not just on one side, not only private, not only public, not only within social organizations.”

This person also said, “it is a belief that becomes even a strategic viewpoint of mine, of the company, that is important that we are active in the articulation between different sectors...I think that with all problems nowadays we have a multidimensional view of them, of their complexity, right, of the fact that we must now have less and less of a sectored or specific view...because not only the problems are complex but also there are other viewpoints”.

Outgrowth of NGO's Mission

From an NGO perspective, participation is justified as an outgrowth of the organizational mission. “Well...the main theme of [organization] is development, and development is always a public issue,” said an NGO leader. “Social capital is a public resource, by the very nature of the environment, social coexistence, of co-operation, of reciprocity, of, in short, of solidarity, yeah... and they are public values. So the main issue we are working with is that of the public item.”

Good Governance and Economics

Good governance and economics are also at play. In order “to induce development or local solidarity governance, which is also development, that development has two, two large dimensions, one of which is economic prosperity and the other is good governance,” this interviewee also said. “These two dimensions are the most visible. Isn’t it? We, that the development process ends up generating good governance and, on the other hand, this is not the same as government, it is a good relationship between the Government and society while, on the other hand, it should generate economic prosperity, innovation or, in short, participation of a growing number of players, and so forth.”

What Participation Means in the Framework for Engagement?

Interviewees also discussed what participation means them in terms of the framework for engagement. A local administrator said, in this particular community, “public participation is in fact controlled, there is a kind of social contract with what the Administration has been doing, so then, yeah, we provide a service, and how is this service working at present? And, in fact, is it really meeting the needs of the population? That we have the responsibility of... of giving them such a service? This is because there we have an obligation and the population also has duties so this discussion, it also

goes through this issue of rights and duties. That throughout our lives we just claim rights so what is duty? So this is a discussion, this logic that we have been breaking. So, for us, citizen participation is, in fact, having the citizens interfering in the policies that we are implementing.”

Speaking about the use of Councils at the local level, half of which are comprised from the general population and half from civil society, the administrator said, “So this also creates a relationship of solidarity between them [Council members], and solidarity includes practicality.” In practice, this means that, hypothetically, “my region is difficult, but yours is worse. So, therefore, I also want your region to be OK. So they manage to do this, they manage to reach an agreement about having needs, and the worst ones, yeah, in the worst regions from the needs standpoint; they contemplate them on the proposals, in the proposals they present.” Other uses for participation at the local level include the decision making structure and role of City Halls. According to one public participation practitioner who contracted with public agencies, in one specific community the City Hall “hired the services of two offices, including mine, to draw up a strategic city development plan for [community name].”

A public participation practitioner who is a consultant saw a clear role for civil society and government in facilitating participation. This person said, “I am not naïve to the point of thinking that it is not the responsibility of the public sector, the public sphere, to centralize decisions...it is the responsibility of the public sphere to implement centrality, you know, of promoting...creating spaces.” This practitioner also explained that participation is sometimes a framework for securing funding in Brazil. For example, a project this organization was implementing at the time of the interview was the result of “a request by the [foundation name], that wishes to get to know Brazilian experiences in the field of, organizations, man, that are endowments or not, yeah, asset funds, yeah, to ensure the permanency of such actions, and everything else, man, because they want to see a bit about whether there is favorable terrain for them, actually to... make an endowment for an organization aimed at Human Rights.”

How people access participatory processes

Access to public participation and deliberative processes is made possible through several different mechanisms. *[Editor's Note: The categories to which these strategies/techniques have been assigned were made by the project team (and not by interviewees) as one means for organizing what appear to be like activities together.]*

Meetings, Committees and Community Dialogue – Face to Face

- According to a local administrator, there are **forums, conferences, and committees**. A local administrator explained that business people, or “professional people”, typically do not participate in public participation processes through community forums. This interviewee explained that this ‘professional’ class took part in Committees, such as the “Economic Development” or “Tourism” Committee. Moreover, this person emphasized, “it is not just a matter of opening channels of participation, you have to provide the

conditions so that this may be done, then all our participation spaces are deliberative, this is guaranteed by the Organic Law of the City.” With the Councils, “in the administrative and legal sense...we have a relationship of co-responsibility, a sharing of power, so that people feel responsible, in he who is deciding, and, once decided, there shall be a burden and a bonus, so we decide, and it is known that there are other things that shall not be done, so this responsibility does not only lie with the Government, but also the population”. Items are distributed to Committees based on the particular subject area it is responsible for, the local administrator said.

- **Committees.** Some Committees, such as the Municipal Budget Committee, work on structuring projects, according to the local administrator. In terms of the Committee’s formulation, there is “diversity in the different Committees”. As an example, this administrator described the duties and responsibilities of the Municipal Budget Committee. According to this administrator, there are a set number of representatives from the ‘civil society’, and a set number of ‘deputies’ or representatives from the Government. The number of representatives varies depending upon the committee’s scope/duty, said the local administrator. The largest of these committees is the Security Committee.

The local administrator explained that the Municipal Budget Committee makes decisions about the City budget. “In the Municipal Urban Practice Committee, you discuss urbanistic guidelines for the City as a whole, right, housing coefficient, construction, where is a commercial zone, where is an industrial zone, commercial zone, and so forth...in Housing you discuss housing guidelines. With health, it is the same thing.” In addition, “in most of our Committees, there is an executive coalition,” said the local administrator. This executive coalition is composed of “the Presidency like in the City Hall, or the Vice-Presidency owned by civil society, and then there is... in our case, of the Municipal Budget Committee, we have a paritarian co-ordination, five, government, and five, civil society, and the construction of the agenda is done jointly. “

The local administrator provided further context to his department’s use of forums, conferences and committees. “Citizen participation is an act and a method, it is a landmark and a method of this Government...Because we believe that to make, to make a good Administration we need to have citizen participation. We believe in this process... we get things done and have a relationship of co-responsibility, of co-management in public things.”

- **Participative Budget Committee.** In Brazil, there is a “ready-structured system of sectorial conversations and political dialogues,” said the public participation practitioner. For example, there is a “tradition” of public participation “in education, the housing division, there is a tradition in health services, there is a tradition in housing, in transport and so on, of having a dialogue with the organized representatives of this segment”. However, the value of the **Participative Budget**” is that it “is transversal,” meaning that it “started to put this [system or practice] in check.”

An example of this is the local 'theme meetings' that are part of the Participative Budget process. The "main aim of the Participative Budget" is to bring as many people as possible into an organized decision making process "with regard to the issues of their personal interest and those of City interest."

This practitioner explained that Participative Budget delegates are selected through a public election process. The "Council of Representatives and Delegates of the Participative Budget" are then "constituted and institutionalized". As part of the Participative Budget process, meeting material is distributed a few days in advance of the theme meetings". According to this practitioner, these materials are disseminated "through base organizations, regions, etc...passing through the neighborhood to announce...that there would be a thematic meeting and so on, such a date and such a place". These meetings –lasting 3-4 hours – would be held in public spaces in the community, such as a church, or club. During these meetings, which can have up to four-hundred thousand people – according to the public participation practitioner – use a method of voting made popular in the Barcelona City Hall. "Voting, for approval, green and red cards, things like that, which is a method for a group of people that have been hired, even to train the Participative Budget in the use of this method." The agendas are "thematic, or in other words, the discussion was a quick and general overview of the problem." In advance of the Participative Budget meetings, "the coordinators would collect information about problems regarding demand and deficits, the social debt of the region" presented in general terms.

As the public participation practitioner described, members of the Participative Budget Committee "could participate at highly local levels, of communities and things like that...because in general there is a sort of participation, or in other words, at Church, in requests and rallies for service improvements, and other things like that", however, the opportunity to directly participation in the 'vision' for the city expands the viewpoint of the city – and understanding of priorities. "There are several groups fighting for the same budget. So this is an important aspect of political learning... in spite of these mechanisms that are sometimes restrictive...they make the democratic space shrink, participative and suchlike."

- **State and Local Council.** The federal administrator said that "institutional spaces are set up to allow the Public Power, to the State through its several organizations, to have a dialogue with social representations. And this has been built in several areas through the setting up of Councils. In Brazil, the Councils are an important instrument. You have a stronger presence in the Health and...in the Social area". Continuing, "Where in general these Councils have functions that are more to do with accompaniment or monitoring, debate and discussion, they are not deliberative, but they are, indeed, an important institutional space, this is because they are made up of representatives of social organizations, social movements, professional classes, which can thus dialogue

with public administration, with the policy-makers.”. Councils also exist at the state level. The state-level Council “are collegiate groups consisting of representatives of the different State Secretariats, and representatives of the civil society,” said a state administrator. “Each council acts in its own way, each council has its own legal responsibilities, each council has a location of its own, it is very varied, but the large majority of them, maybe ninety percent of the Councils of Rights, are connected to the Civil Office, and why? This is because the rights, they surpass all Government actions, therefore they have to have representatives who are members of most of the Secretariats with which they have an interface.”

There are different Councils for different subject areas – e.g., health or education. The state agency or program – “does indeed play a part, but it is internal, because each Council has its own by-laws...”, said the state administrator, “we create an interface both with the representatives of civil society and also of the government coming to the Secretary”.

- **Dialogue Events** - A federal administrator described “the creation of an administrative structure that was set up in [year]. So the creation of an administrative structure for [subject] in the countryside also showed an opening on the part of the Ministry of [subject] for, for, for discussion and the creation of this space for dialogue with the countryside organizations...”
- **Public meetings.** A public participation practitioner said, “there are expectations or viewpoints or levels of satisfaction that are different.” According to this interviewee, many people feel that they are participation in governmental decision making if they attend a public meeting “where they raise their hands and things like that”. “By perception, by ones experience, can say, I am participating, I am part of a process, one is right to say that this is indeed being part of a process, others, yeah, say no, this is part of a process but truly the participation only materializes...when I know that the public form, the public response” was taken into consideration.
- **Inter-religious forum.** “So, for example, there is something we call the inter-religious forum, where you have the opportunity to talk to a Evangelical Pastor, a Tibetan Buddhist monk, a *babalorixá* [from Afro-Brazilian religions], and thus try to create a participatory forum, where the participants, you know, the followers of these religions, sects and the like, whatever name you want to give them depending on the case, can come and talk”, explained the state administrator. “This is a very common occurrence, so you will talk about religious tolerance, so if you are speaking to people willing to listen, right, then there will not be these problems”.

Trainings, Education and Research

- **Workshops.** “Indeed, we held a series of workshops about thematic issues in Brasília, in Belo Horizonte, but mostly in Brasília, and we invited, to take part in these workshops, only organizations from the [subject] field, right,” said the federal administrator. “In general, these were the national

representative bodies of different segments within the [subject] field, yeah. And the Government players I mentioned before: the [organization], the [organization]. So, the interlocution in the drawing up of the official proposal was very much uh... limited to this space. On one hand, there were the Government actors, and on the other side the corporations of the [subject] field."

- **Needs analysis.** According to the public participation practitioner. "We seek to identify, in fact, and truthfully translate that need expressed by the client...and check with the diagnosis of the problem, in relation to the problem that he says exists or would like to know better."

Information Sharing

- **Process and impact assessments.** The public participation practitioner also described the process associated with 'impact assessments'. According to this interviewee's statements, public participation practitioners are invited to make an "assessment of the procedures, and the impact and recommendations of the... the methodology of the activities that they have been developing". This assessment process was requested by City Hall, and required the practitioner to listen "to all the people involved in this project, right, and people involved... from the management team and co-ordination, with their technicians, as also technicians from other Secretariats with which they were related, as also the sub-mayors, several sub-mayors, with whom the Co-ordination was related, the delegates elected at Participative Budget Meetings, with which this co-ordination". In this case, "a diagnose is prepared with the reading of all official documents, or a complementary bibliography about the issue, with structured and qualified interviews in all these, right, and the setting of a scope, a guideline for the work, and a methodology that is shared, and there are moments of meeting and... how do we say it... of preparation, right, of all the people involved within the co-ordination with regard to the methodology that shall be applied and with regard to the objectives expected, right." Moreover, "there is in fact is a process which also includes the creation of trust along the whole [overall Participative Budget] process."
- **Written comments.** According to a federal administrator, many people access participatory processes by submitting written comments regarding specific policy decisions or service provisions. Many of these comments offer suggestions for improvement.
- **National survey.** According to this same federal administrator, Brazil had also recently implemented a national survey to invite greater public input. This effort including a "preliminary study, a census of some 6 thousand rural settlements, and therefore projects of [subject], set up over the last twenty years in the country. Ever since the restoration of Brazilian democracy." This survey resulted, "in special statistics" regarding " a complete picture of the conditions" of specific services and the profile of the national population (including some 500 thousand families, more than

two million people who live villages/settlements). According to this administrator, this survey was very powerful political as it showed that service delivery, infrastructure, and other situations were very poor in the settlement areas. "This survey, it was conducted in a very innovative way. Leaders of the communities of the settlements were interviewed heads of families, and also [professionals]... sought to check out the perception of each one of these segments." "It was a quantitative survey but with a qualitative viewpoint, as it captured a bit of this... and the dissatisfaction of the leaderships, and also of the parents, became quite clear" So this example, this research, generated "public impact, and from the moment in which it was made and the results made public"

- **The internet.** The federal administrator said, "once again the core issue is the fact that on the one hand you have a segment of society with easy access to information and this, to a certain extent, depends on...financial resources and also...even access to technologies, for example to the Internet, computers and the like. Much of communication, publicizing and spread of Government information, especially in the [subject] area, is made using the Internet. Even though Brazil is one of the countries to have recorded the highest growth rates in Internet access, Internet usage, wide segments of the population still do not have access to this technology. [The computer] then this strengthens somewhat this hierarchy and such. So in my area, above all, it is not a challenge with a very clear solution, exactly, it is just like democratization of information. We understand that information is about the results of [subject] assessments of the performance of [type of organization], they are extremely important, here there is not a market view of the type of choice made by the consumer. But they are extremely important so that families participate first and do in fact carry out an important role of demanding better results. And this is exactly the creation of an accountability mechanism. The information qualifies the activities of the different agents involved in the [subject] process. So our permanent challenge is to make, to give total transparency to information generated in the results of these national and statistical surveys which are of evaluative nature. Train people for the use of this information, promote this qualification training. Essentially I would say two things as fundamental elements for allowing the different social actors to have a more effective participation, and therefore that this more qualified public participation be established."
- **E-newsletters.** The NGO "personally, with the people from [organization] and several people who have participated in all the programs we have helped... I keep up a dialogue with them and, for example, send, I personally, and this is a personal trait of mine, since 2001 I have sent a letter... now the name of this letter is the [letter formal name], for all these people, personalized and... the letter is sent out by e-mail, there are now some 5 thousand people, a bit more in fact, that receive this letter, I'll tell what is happening, things that are being discovered, yeah... in short, issues for discussion, bibliographical suggestions."

Community Building and Partnerships

- **Electronic Voting.** The Committees described earlier by the local administrator also use electronic voting for project selection. The administrator said, “ we have information technology applied right from accreditation, to the voting of the demands and the Councillor. This local administrator explained that this electronic voting “is much more interesting because of the following, it makes sure that the process is transparent, it is very quick and... allows a... as you say, an online result. The last person has just voted, and five minutes later you have the result.” In the past, “...it would have been madness to do it because we lacked a computerized process, so you imagine those twenty... fifteen... up to thirty demands that they made, they would have to choose three. It is very complex. Not anymore.” Moreover, “the other reason [technology is used] is that we have policies of our very own, of the Municipality itself, with... the issue of automation, digital inclusion, so that people have access, right. It is not a thing that the people cannot get or do not know, of course, like in everything, we have people with greater and with lesser difficulty. Now, there you have people to give guidance and show how to use the tool not to make the person vote, as you cannot even get near, but as there already is, it has been automated since 2002, so this is normal for them.”
- **Partnerships.** A state administrator said, “for example, when we have an action, a promotion, such as lectures about the promotion of human rights in general, fundamental rights awareness... we can do something directly”. However, “we know that this doesn’t cause much repercussion if we don’t do it in partnership with the institutions that have local action”. As an example, this administrator provided the example of giving a lecture on the rights of the child and the teenager in a specific community/region of Brazil. In order to reach to target audience, or ‘target public’, you must identify the “main local actors”, or stakeholders. These stakeholder associations are described as the “interfaces of the region” “They identify what their greatest needs are, and we see, within our limitations and our technology, what we can do, we could show a film or give a lecture, we could hand out materials or even take along people from other Secretariats, like the Secretariat for Health, to talk about teenage pregnancy, about sexually transmitted diseases”. As this administrator described creating and sustaining community partnerships are a “ very important line of action that we think we have in this job”. “What we actually see is that these communities have millions of demands, millions of anxieties, millions of dreams”.
- **Local tours.** According to the local administrator, all local committee members take a tour of the regions in order to become “familiar with their realities”
- **Endowments and Long Term Community Projects** - There are also short-term projects that may become long-term efforts, such as in the

instance of the foundation that is possibly interested in making “an endowment for an organization aimed at Human Rights,” as noted previously by the public participation practitioner. The strategic city development plan and the implementation of projects for “promotion, defense and so on of the rights of children and teenagers” are also examples of specific project-based work, also noted earlier in this section.

- **Social Movements/Trade Unions.** According to the federal administrator, the transition to civilian rule created an emphasis on the importance of civil society, and in turn social groups and trade unions. “The trade union movement is one of the riches of Brazilian political history, from where the current President sprouted and later stood out as a trade union leader in the seventies, at the end of the seventies, at the helm of one of the professional classes that was best organized at the time, and most influential, that was the category of metalworkers in the industrial heartland close to São Paulo which is the main economic hub of the country,” said the federal administrator, “then with the political opening, with the democratic transition, there obviously was a...rapid mushrooming of trade union organizations, and the number of trade unions multiplied quickly and, more important, there was the advent of new social actors.”
- **Personal relationships.** “Institutionally, we have, right, a sort of hierarchy to be followed, I report to the Secretary, to the Adjunct Secretary, right, and to the Office Manager, then ‘you talk, for example, with other Governmental organizations, at what level?’ Can I talk to the Secretary? Yes, right? The [program type] is quite liberal, you can do anything,” said the state administrator. “This is a great [program type], you can do anything, we don’t normally have this in the Government, you have this, this is a really relevant question, yes, you have a path to follow, yes, but here we have this freedom....We have some freedom. Do you talk to [secretariat name]? In many cases, yes. Indeed, in many cases yes, but normally it’s more of an institutional relationship with the Secretary for [subject], so I can, for example, talk to the Judge of the local court, it is... from...Vila Matilde where there is a serious problem, I talk to the Prosecuting Attorney in the Santo Amaro Court, that is taking care of Father Jaime’s problem, with the, with the Movement for Peace in the South, South Zone, are you with me? So, in fact we meet and do not use this label of Secretary or the State crest very much, like a key to open doors. Yeah? Does the Governor get to know about it? Yes, he does. Yes, just yesterday, we, I went as representative of the State Government in the [organization], and I am also a participant in this Association, I am a lawyer, and have been a militant there for more than fifteen years, having been on several Commissions, including that of [subject], and I was there on behalf of the Government, so the Subway Workers’ Union went over to talk about the issue of the Subway landslide tragedy, right? This is another point that’s worth talking about. There were teachers, really respectable people indeed, but who always have a political connotation, yeah? And then he asked, I said, I am not representing the State Governor, I am not

the State Attorney to defend, make the Court defence of the State... Lawyers' House, so, may it be clear that I am not from the Secretariat for Transport, who is responsible for this work..."

- **Deliberations and listening sessions.** "So we have divided the City into 19 regions, and in each region we held plenary sessions... when it is time to show what has been done, I will insist, this year shall be just a case of showing what has been achieved, we really do not have any deliberations," said the local administrator. "And we have one as well, a... session of listening to the population, in relation to the services we are providing, of maintenance, then there are problems, we have to solve the problems as this is our obligation. In the deliberative year, we choose three demands, and they indicate three demands for each region, and one for the City, so that they may come out from just working for this region and start to look at the whole City a bit more, as we use the whole city. So all these demands are shown in [number] regions, ah, and in addition we elect the representatives, yeah, the Councillors. This means the post holder, or Councillor, yeah, one post holder and one deputy. And then there are the regional representatives. The Councillor has the role of representation, here on the Municipal Budget Committee, and establishing what shall in fact be incorporated into the budget part. So, together with the Government, they decide what shall be done and where it shall be done and... within the predicted budget for... for the City. In the case of the regional representatives, they have the role of checking on what has been voted and approved, incorporated there, in their region."
- **Local network.** A local administrator explained that in this community, "we do not have television, just one regional newspaper that works against the Administration. It is totally... even excludes, yeah, it is not a newspaper that works together, on the contrary. What we have is... radio stations as well, they don't work with us, so we are limited from the communication point of view. But we have a network in the City, where we use our own spaces, that is of Education, Health, any public equipment we have, and we have an established relationship with the City as a whole, yeah, so we manage to make this communication."
- **Relationships between organizations and individuals.** "Now, the obligation of the Government is to make people aware that these processes exist, and of course to encourage... to attract these people... it is... I am going to use a word that normally people do not like using, but I have no difficulty, which is that of seduction. To seduce a citizen about the need to participate, for this, these spaces, so that they achieve social control," explained the local administrator. "So we have a lot of work as well, of these people here in my Department, which are the [formal name of staff responsible for public participation], which establishes the relationship with the community." This person also said, "I think this is one of the most interesting things today, within this Secretariat, which is the role of the [formal name of staff responsible for public participation], which creates a direct link with the community, as well as our public instruments,

they also have this relationship, and having this discussion, this dialogue, this articulation with citizens, with regard to the importance of taking part in these spaces.”

- **Network cultivation.** The NGO leader said, “...the network must not be based on meetings, as if it is based on meetings then it is sure to diminish. The network has to be based on connection, contacts and action. Sometimes celebrations, parties or other type of activity, if you reduce it to meetings, then you will reduce the contingent to those meeting professionals, those people who have become infected to the extent that ‘I am going to the meeting because I need to have a discussion with someone’ [*laughs*], it is a vice. Well, this is a problem [*laughs*] and you must be careful about it. You must inform the participants about the network, if you are getting a network together on a permanent basis. Whatever may be going on, they have to know about it. If you choose a co-ordination of animation, if you do not take care, this co-ordination shall start to walk alone, leaving the network behind. So you must take utmost care, as the subject is always the network, and not those that are encouraging the network, then there is a series of tips, tricks and mechanisms to avoid the process closing in and getting narrower... “ There must be a “reinforcing [of the network] all the time, because...it is a tendency” for it to narrow.

Other

- **Development agents.** An NGO leader described how this particular organization “train[s] development agents, also drawing up methodologies to induce local development”. According to this NGO leader, there is a specific part of the organization’s scope of work that provides “training for fund-raising and management of organizations of society, and also with business sectors, in... with... these business sustainability issues, business social responsibility, management of stakeholders, all this connected with the issue of sustainability.” This organization “work[s] with several different organizations, the [organization] has worked with more than 500 different organizations, Universities, organizations dedicated to development, business organizations, industrial federations, governments, at all levels, State, Municipal and Federal, other public organizations, that are not exactly of the State but that live off public funds, like SENAC, SEBRAE and others, which means that, in a nutshell, the range is wide...” The NGO leader explained further: “for example, if you are providing advice or giving consultancy, or training agents for a development process, then you have a methodology to do this. This interviewee emphasized “that much of what we call social or public participation or citizen participation, participation in the public sphere, is still assemblyist and is biased thanks to this idea that you will decide something for the public authorities to do. So there is no autonomy for it to transform itself into a public agent. It wishes to discuss to collect interests and opinions to hang somewhere, this is to say ‘ah, the Government has

to do this, I don't know who has to do something,' right? And we end up having a private lobbying action on public spheres, rather than public action..." In addition, generally "within this process of development induction, the Government power is a partner of theirs [the corporate sector]. It is not something done as I talked about, making a lobby, to hand over to the Government to make a request, but rather something for which the Government, as a partner, will reach a pact regarding what they will do, while others, who are not in the Government, shall do other things. The idea is the following: the Government power is indeed necessary, essential and irreplaceable, but does not suffice, this is the central idea."

Regularity/frequency

The regularity of such processes include monthly meetings (such as the Municipal Budget Committee, noted by the local administrator). These meetings are formally "stipulated," and take place "in the first week, on the first [day of week] of the month." There are also "penalties if you do not do as told. First, you are elected to represent, for the representation of this Committee, yeah... and then you have the following, if you miss three days in a row without justifiable reason, you are out. If you have five non-consecutive absences without any justified reason, you are also out."

More informally, the NGO leader noted that generally for networks in Brazil, "anyone linked up to a network must receive information weekly or fortnightly." For the network this leader is part of administering, "...I keep up a dialogue with them and, for example, send, I personally, and this is a personal trait of mine, since 2001 I have sent a letter... now the name of this letter is the [letter formal name], for all these people, personalized and... the letter is sent out by e-mail, there are now some 5 thousand people, a bit more in fact, that receive this letter, I'll tell what is happening, things that are being discovered, yeah... in short, issues for discussion, bibliographical suggestions..."

These networks are self-organizing. In them, "people start to get together in an autonomous way, not against the State but rather seeking partnerships with the State to reach public aims, they make changes to this political logic that turns society into a kind of dominion of the State," said the NGO leader. As a result, "people start to trail their own paths, because this is the true essence of development, as community networks of development or governance or development forums, agencies, whatever the name may be, and that people may say we wish to get there, and we shall join forces here with the Government, with businesspeople, with everyone, in short, and this kind of participation is capable of making changes to the very base of the way politics was made, for what? To exclude those people from issues concerning them, yeah... because someone would do this on their behalf, someone would represent them, and the whole story is now the following, participation is no longer based on representation, participation has to have, let's put it like this, it has to be consolidated by participation itself, by action, by action, rather than by representation 'I am going to elect Joe Bloggs who will do things on my behalf' or 'I'll find someone here who shall defend my interests over there,' all delegation of power and representation is a form of alienation of power itself, we have known this since Rousseau, and I don't care a hoot if the political system, in large

complex societies, cannot be fully participative, but it has to get more and more participative...”

Who is Included and Excluded

Who is included

Interviewees also noted who is included in Brazilian participatory processes. This included:

- **Government officials.** A federal administrator said, “we work in permanent bases with the [organization], which is the organization that brings together the [subject] Secretaries of the twenty-six States and the Federal District, and also the [organization]. This is also the representative body of the [organization]. Similarly, a state administrator noted the involvement of other professionals from government, such as “people from other Secretariats, like the Secretariat for Health.” A local administrator also expressed working with other government officials, such as with “the main Secretariats of the Government.” A public participation practitioner said, “nowadays our clients are about 80 to 90 per cent, you know, consultancy services provided to City Halls, or Secretariats, or other organizations that are closely linked to the public sector.” This person also said, “indeed, we have a closer relationship, with the managers, yeah, I mean the directors of these organizations.”
- **Stakeholder groups**, such as “countryside organizations,” as noted by the federal administrator. Others this agency engaged included “national representative bodies of different segments within the [subject] field.” An NGO leader said, “we work with several different organizations, the [organization] has worked with more than 500 different organizations, Universities, organizations dedicated to development, business organizations, industrial federations, governments, at all levels, State, Municipal and Federal, other public organizations, that are not exactly of the State but that live off public funds, like SENAC, SEBRAE and others, which means that, in a nutshell, the range is wide...”
- **Social movements**, according to the federal administrator, including those at the rural level.
- Rural settlements, including leaders of the communities of the settlements and parents, and Brazilian cities and towns (federal administrator)
- **Main local actors** [stakeholders], who are the associations, as these would be the associations that most effectively have a closer contact with the region’s problem, they are the interfaces of the region,” said a state administrator.
- **People with specific problems.** “Who comes to listen?” asked the state administrator, when government staff go into the field. “The people who live on squatted land who are having problems with the City Hall who have, yeah, the rent, they are not able to pay the rent and shall then be evicted, or else the husband, ex-husband or the father of the children does not pay pension and this is really why the rent can’t be paid; she is

working but the person has a problem with food, in other words, what, what is happening with this?" This includes the population in general, whether the overall civil society or highly specific segments of the population.

- **Faith leaders**, such as through the inter-religious forum (state administrator)
- **Organization creation network members.** An NGO leader works with "development agents that are part of the [organization] staff, and also from the [organization] creation network, which are a group of specialists, scholars in areas such as business spirit, the third sector, networks, developments, micro finances; in short, these are the specialists that make up what we call the [organization] creation network." This network "is always a network of community development, a network of local development, and this network can include people from the Government, people from private enterprise, people within society that take part in organizations, and people within society who do not. People, people, like citizens who do take part." Generally, these kinds of networks "are open to participation, which means that the secret of this... of the community development networks is that they are not so closed, they have to be open to the entrance of any person..."

The state administrator emphasized the partnership aspect of this person's work. "We do not work alone, whether internally for the Government or outside the community, this is, for example, when we have... how can I explain this... who I work with, who are the people that we work with here, right? **We work with anyone who shows up...**"

The local administrator said, "**I talk to the whole city.** Because as we divided the city for us to have a better, it is for us to make the participation of other people feasible, so we got the City and divided it into [number] regions....These regions consist of several districts, so we have a list with the whole City. So the view that we have of the City, and not me alone, but the Department itself and the City Hall, through the [project name], it is very interesting because there you see the prospects and the weaknesses of each region, So we also have the task of collecting indicators for these regions, even before we think about which policy we shall carry out, right? Because without this information, how can you propose any policy? So, my relationship includes everything from...Neighborhood Associations to criminals that are part of these regions, and here we have some strange facts: in some regions of the city we have people who are really involved in crime and that have a political participation, that are active within their region, that...stand for office, both politically speaking, as also for the work that we carry out at [department name?], so you have a diversity of relationship with the Participation work, and the [project name], that is one of the main channels of the City Hall... so that's it, I have a segment that is more difficult or, in other words, there is less shortage, more shortage, now, there are other actors within the City, that are the businesspeople, professional people, they do not take part in this forum, yeah, in these forums, whether it is the [project name], mainly they do not have this participation in the [project name], but they do take part in some Committees, such as that of Economic Development, like

Tourism, that of Urban Development, yeah, that is the Council of Urban Policies, so these players do have this participation, so we end up in a relationship, with the whole City in its diversity so this is very wide in scope and very interesting.”

A public participation practitioner described Participative Budget theme “meetings which sometimes had one thousand, two thousand people, or three or four hundred thousand people there” from **the general population**. Moreover, sometimes there is work internal to a specific engagement effort: “So, the methodology used was that of listening to all the people involved in this project, right, and people involved, what I want to say is right from the **management team** and co-ordination, with their **technicians**, as also technicians from other Secretariats with which they were related, as also **the sub-mayors**, several sub-mayors, with whom the Co-ordination was related, the **delegates** elected at Participative Budget Meetings, with which this co-ordination, yeah, has close relationships, and so forth, I mean, as if seeking to identify the several interfaces, actors who participated directly or indirectly in the budget, right.”

Barriers to participation

Among the barriers to participation that Brazilian interviewees noted were:

Institutional/Structural Barriers to Public Participation

However, structural barriers to a majority-based political participation are present, according to the federal administrator. For example, this interviewee describes a historical 'logic' that resulted in the formation of multiple city/regional councils, responsible for responding to a variety of subjects and services. According to this federal administrator - "Each new [subject] program created would require a Local Council for inspection and monitoring. The [program name], dealing with [subject], would then require a [subject] Council in each city or town, to check on the use of resources that the National Central Government sends to the cities and towns, and also to the States of the Federation, for this program." Recent legislation also establishes a Council that includes “the participation of Government representatives, and from civil society.” According to this administrator, the Federal Government began to "distribute resources for basic maintenance expenses, repairs and other basic things" to communities, with the requirement that these communities would have to have developed a specific council to receive such funds. "...the effectiveness of this Council was never seriously assessed. And much more, what I think, one error is the multiplicity of Councils, instead of you having a well-structured Council to take care of this, then the participation was often thought as a purely legal and institutional structure, but not as an effective process where things happen in a way... it really deserves criticism.”

Institutional and structural elements such as the multiplicity of community councils, in turn have had an impact on the Brazilian political culture. “Brazil always gave some prevalence to this form of politics based on...what da Mata calls a ‘relational society,’” said the federal administrator. “Depending on your association with these local oligarchies, you had access to certain assets, public services such as [subject] itself. And also political participation, it is public participation, it is very closely linked to...especially since the return of democracy, to popular movements". This administrator

stated that it is because of this 'popular participation', largely inspired by the Base Ecclesiastical Communities, that an instrument for political mediation and social mobilization was created during a period of political repression.

Other barriers to participation that Brazilian interviewees identified included:

Institutional Barriers

- **Political involvement.** “I particularly have the following opinion, that Administration has to work independently of the Government that is in office,” said the local administrator. “However, unfortunately, things do not work like that. So, therefore, all this work we put in, to make people really be protagonists of their own history, so that they may make Administration work independently of the Government that is coming. For them to take this up, so that they may participate, so that they may decide and that this is a duty they have.”
- **Need for social inclusion and equality of justice.** A local administrator said, “we need to set up for this City to work, to have a quality of life with social inclusion, and equality of justice.”
- **Limited resources.** “I think that the difficulty is that of resources, that we cannot do everything we want to, or, in other words, we must set priorities,” said the local administrator. “Because the resources are not enough for everything.” This person also said, “we have to think that it is important for the City as a whole, what is a greater priority, yeah, everything is a priority but then we must get the priority among the priorities, and this, for me, I think this is the most difficult part, the people have to decide about one thing and the other and for the Government as well. I think this is the greatest difficulty, and then there is the following, we have done marvelous things but we cannot do everything. After all, there are financial limits involved.” Sometimes “you got something approved but people forget that it was conditional on finance. So they think that you are not getting things done because you do not want to,” said the local administrator. “So I think this is one of the difficulties, you approve it conditionally and then you are not able to do it, right? That we have some things that we have not been able to do as yet. Like basic sanitation in an area of springs, where we need to get authorization from... from the State Government, and which we have not obtained so far. One part is done, and there is another part which we have not managed to complete as yet. So I feel these are the stumbling blocks, that you approve things on which you have no governability from the viewpoint of the City that you depend on. I feel that this is not good, not good. Because this remains like this, as if we did not want to get things done. And then the population forgets, the population does not want to know if it was conditional or not. The population wants things done. And I think this is quite right. However, it is not educational and it is... it is not constructive either.” The public participation practitioner, “There are regular information meetings, yeah, but with scarce resources, right, they lack infrastructure, advisory services, paper and transport, and the like, to go and make things known, right, yeah.”
- **Need for more intensive training and qualification.** “I think we have to speed up the process of training and qualification, right, I think that if we manage to make people understand how the process is... how it really has the role of

definition, having the information and the qualifications to enable decision making, then I think that the qualification and training program needs to be enhanced, and worked on better,” said the local administrator. In addition, this person said, “at the moment of implementation things are not easy because you are dealing with a diversity of technicians that also lack this posture of dealing with the population. So this means you also have to internally work with the technicians to make them able to handle this. So be prepared. Because they think that what they know is important. They do not take the population’s knowledge into account. And this is bad.” Similarly, a public participation practitioner also said, “I promote the participation of actors, but they are so unqualified, so poorly informed. No, it is not part of it. So poorly informed, so unqualified... right? So I am, manipulate them, yeah, or in other words, they participate, so, then there is also something which must be worked on, yeah, I mean, for there to be a qualified participation.” This person also said: “I am talking about the lack of manager formation policies, creation of teams, of leaders that are active here and there, this is one thing, the lack of clear policies, yeah, for empowerment and qualification of social organizations, right, and I think that they should have Government investment, right, with public control over this, but resources should be invested in the organizations that are active in the Councils, yeah, to stop being a joke,” said the public participation practitioner.

- **Lack of measurement of results from participation.** “So, we have a shortcoming here, exactly, we have a deficiency in this area,” in terms of measuring the results from participation, said a local administrator.
- **Lack of relationships.** “I feel it would be much more productive for the City, as also for the population and the Government, if we managed to set up a relationship with civil society, with the Universities and the Government, right?” said the local administrator. “Because I think that the University has richness and we cannot do this here.” This interface does not exist, this interviewee said, “Because the Universities we have today are private, so things are punctual. They are not... and here, this is more for their own interests than for any other reason.”
- **More transparency, professionalism, and reliable information are needed.** The public participation practitioner said, “the public sector, the area, the public sphere, must also make sure that these actors, these organizations, have information, yeah, transparency, so this is now a question of ideas within the State that the society expects, yeah, transparency, professionalism, uhm, reliable information, right? Mechanisms, institutionalization of spaces, etc, right, but this is in itself not enough.”
- **Limited access to processes.** A federal administrator said, “...participation is channeled by the political parties, participation is very limited, and quite restricted to electoral periods, after all, the bases that each Member of Parliament may set.”
- **Lack of training.** “Train people for the use of this information, promote this qualification training,” said the federal administrator. Doing so would allow “the different social actors to have a more effective participation, and therefore that this more qualified public participation be established.”

- **Favoritism.** Sometimes there has been “a steering towards those organizations that the management sympathized with, there was a steering towards sympathizing organizations or leaderships, or from A or B, what I want to say is, from Councillor so-and-so or Congressman so-and-so, right, so what we had was a view of mine, it was almost all in the perception of the Co-ordination, or the actors, that they were working like producing the antidote to the conservative politics of old, right, or in other words, criticizing the fact that in the past there were true electoral corrals, or ghettos of influence, and things like that, right, and they thought that the antidote was to do the same thing,” said the public participation practitioner.
- **Lack of diversity of viewpoints.** “Because the complementary participation, yeah, is a space which promotes a confrontation,” said the public participation practitioner. “It is a space for conflict, yeah, and if you think that producing or promoting a meeting where in principle the several people...that are present there converge to one same viewpoint, you can be hindering what is the richest aspect within a process of construction of consensus, which is diversity and conflict, and confrontation, yeah, and there is no growth, no development of democracy that is possible if this is not ensured. The public space is, by nature, the space of diversity and confrontation, plurality and things like that, right. So, in this regard it was very faulty. It was given a direction, right, even to create someone who knows about influences and power spaces, political power for a certain segment or political line within the party X, just because it has taken on the Participative Budget, you understand? It is not, I mean, then, there were conduction vices arising from vices of viewpoints and practices.”
- **‘A frail representative democracy.’** “What I think is that what is missing is exactly the practice, the political praxis, right, the exercise [of] the radicalization of participative democracy and this is very recent, right. We have a frail representative democracy,” said the public participation practitioner.
- **Need for legitimacy of participatory methods.** A federal administrator said, “it is absolutely crucial that the instruments used have legitimacy. The methodology used, the theoretical grounding, that the instruments used are...there is a process of technical validation, but I am not talking specifically about this, but validated and recognized as trustworthy, as fair, as suitable for the multiple actors involved.... Without this, without this validation, this legitimization... it is surely the policies, after all, in active or passive form, they are resisted, and do not reach the tip of the system. Or they do not speak, and much in relation to what is required. Or they just fall into discredit; an assessment, for example, which is questioned for its methodological inconsistency, technical and such. Or it is considered unfair having a cultural bias that privileges some groups rather than others.”
- **Need for clarification of roles.** The public participation practitioner said, “we should clarify the role of each player within the process, right. There is a lot of confusion, yeah, and I think that confusion, I think that it is sometimes part of the process, yeah, and on purpose, done by managers or governors, but the clear definition of roles, yeah, yeah, or in other words, a company is a company, a social organization is a social organization, and the public sector is public, and

has this public responsibility, yeah, this is important, man.” Moreover, “I think that the sharing of viewpoints, purposes, the problem and such, this has to be done in an extremely open manner, wide in scope, like this, this and that, now, in performing the role that each one has, this must be made very transparent and clear, then this is one of the things, also one of the greatest difficulties, this clarifying, right, because this is an ethical issue, this clarification of responsibilities, yeah, there is a social organization like any other organization, and I think that there is a greater need for inclusion and participation in the preparation, like this and that, and control, right, do not evade the responsibility, right, of accompanying of controlling, yeah.”

- **Society’s adoption of participation.** “I mean, therefore society has not incorporated nor institutionalized this practice as being theirs,” said the public participation practitioner.
- **Political decisions versus public-oriented decisions.** Councils “need to be well prepared, it is not only political discourse, a political vision, but they also have to sit on these Councils to make good decisions with levels of knowledge, right, also important, ah... good levels, yeah, it is not just political discourse,” said the public participation practitioner. “So I think there are several things, yeah, I mean, like lack of political guidance, lack of investment, yeah, that I think also plays a part in us not having a quality leap in political participation, and the public know.”
- **Co-optation.** “We see... paralysis, so, what is going on?” said the public participation practitioner. “A process of immense co-opting of social and political movements and the like, right, therefore a dismantling of this fabric, yeah, of this network, yeah, rich, yeah, of control yeah, accompaniment, yeah, criticism, yeah, politics, to governments, the Police, that is somewhat dismantled yeah, so this is something for us to think about.”
- **Social fragility, lack of creativity.** The NGO leader said, “the type of participation that you can get organizing the people to make demands from the State or the so-called Governmental public power, is a kind of participation that is very, let’s say, fragile, delegated, reactive, with little creativity...requesting, and what we are indeed searching, in the case of human, social and sustainable development, is active participation, with creativity, innovation, and with this in mind you may not organize yourself just as someone who will pressure others. You have to get yourselves together... not like someone who blames others because..., because there was a problem, you have to rally round to solve problems rather than just seek culprits, and make partnerships and increase your strength to find a good solution and everything that was said about social and democratic participation in Brazil in the years that I mentioned, in the eighties and nineties, was much more in this sense of reactive participation. The very concept of citizenship turned into sectorial and territorial organization, or in a somewhat corporate manner, requesting, and this kind of participation is not creative, it is not a kind of participation that increases social capital. On the contrary, it increases adversary forms manifold, the forms, yeah... let’s say this... non-constructive forms of interaction between society and State.”

- **'Feudal relationship.'** There "is a still somewhat feudal relationship of the State and society, as if society was the land owned by the feudal lord," said the NGO leader.
- **Participation that is based on representation rather than independent action.** The NGO leader said, "the whole story is now the following, participation is no longer based on representation, participation has to have, let's put it like this, it has to be consolidated by participation itself, by action, by action, rather than by representation 'I am going to elect Joe Bloggs who will do things on my behalf' or 'I'll find someone here who shall defend my interests over there,' all delegation of power and representation is a form of alienation of power itself, we have known this since Rousseau, and I don't care a hoot if the political system, in large complex societies, cannot be fully participative, but it has to get more and more participative..."
- **Bias.** An NGO leader said, "much of what we call social or public participation or citizen participation, participation in the public sphere, is still assemblyist and is biased thanks to this idea that you will decide something for the public authorities to do. So there is no autonomy for it to transform itself into a public agent. It wishes to discuss to collect interests and opinions to hang somewhere, this is to say 'ah, the Government has to do this, I don't know who has to do something,' right? And we end up having a private lobbying action on public spheres, rather than public action..."
- **Discrimination.** Discrimination and racism are also barriers to participation, according to a state administrator.

Perceived Public Barriers:

- **Short-term perspectives.** A local administrator said, "people manage to think in the short term, but in the long term they are not able to do this."
- **Apathy.** "I would like to know, as a citizen, but I do not want to participate," said the local administrator. "That this exists. So it's like this, the person wants to know, wants to be informed that we have these spaces for participation, but the person does not wish to take part. And then you have countless reasons, right, countless reasons for the person not to take part. But this is a concern we have, I still think it is very deficient, this communication. But we have managed to handle it. And in our participative processes people have taken part, have renovated themselves, and there is a keen competition to take part."
- **Highly reactive people.** "The expectations are altered from the start to the end of the process, right, and needs as well, and so forth. That often, as a long... an action, it is also slightly typically Brazilian, it is unpleasant to say this, but it is somewhat part of our culture, yeah, there are many... an action, very... how do we say it, without a target, it is... very... the people are highly reactive," said the public participation practitioner.
- **Civil society cannot achieve change on its own.** The public participation practitioner said, "before anything else this is a profound knowledge of what you wish to change, right, and... I repeat, an organization of civil society cannot do this alone, right, it makes a contribution within a dimension, no matter how much it may have a critical political view of the... of the thing on which it acts, the area,

the theme that it is on, that it addresses, yeah, but its action is limited in itself, it is limited, right, now from the standpoint of the public sphere, or the standpoint of the intersectorial construction of solutions, this diagnosis, right, it has, it has to be well structured and well done.”

- **Strong dependence on the state.** “There is a... public power, political culture, which, especially in a country like Brazil, generated strong dependence on the State,” said the NGO leader. “So a kind of vicious circle was thus created, the people wait for the Government to have the initiative, that the Government may get things done, that the Government may bring things, that the Government... and this way they got accustomed, or their conscience was added to the extent that they think that nothing can be done unless the Government makes the first move, right? In fact, the Government sort of seized people’s rights...”
- **Lack of confidence.** The NGO leader said, “many of the problems that people face when promoting their own development in an endogenous fashion are problems related to lack of confidence, of self-esteem, which are so interwoven with this political culture that it has turned these populations into passive and permanent beneficiaries, of things that come from above and not things, right, that they can do.”

Rural Barriers:

- **Lack of resources.** “Rural [institution]s are less equipped than urban [institution]s, are in poorer conditions, as far as the buildings and equipment go, the [professionals] are less qualified, there is the problem of geographical dispersion and therefore many of the rural establishments are [institution]s with one single [profession] and multiple classes, which means that there is only one [profession] dealing with pupils of different ages, and therefore at different stages of development, in one [room type], and this is a situation that has not been solved,” said a federal administrator. This also includes limited “access to technologies, for example to the Internet, computers and the like.”

Research Question 3

What positive and negative outcomes occur as a result of public participation/deliberation in government decision-making processes?

This question sought to examine the results of participatory or deliberative processes and associated accountability mechanisms. The goal was to isolate what interviewees and their respective organizations saw as beneficial and also not beneficial as a byproduct of such efforts. The ethical dimension of engagement was also considered.

Among the outcomes of public participation or deliberative processes that Brazilian interviewees identified included **public impacts**. A federal administrator cited research that “generated public impact, and from the moment in which it was made and the results made public, it was binding on the social organizations of the countryside, and the [organization] seized the results of their research, on which to base their requests,

look here, a research conducted by the [organization], which is an organization within the Ministry for [subject], showed that this is the situation, so we need to expand the [institution] structure, with the construction of new [institution]s, the hiring of new [professional]s and such like...”

Service Delivery and Responsiveness

Another outcome provided was that of **interactions that meet community needs**. A local administrator said that outcomes of participation are “not always obvious.” This person also said, “...of course we have a general insight into the City of needs, I have no doubt about that, because we were not like this, our Government, our Mayor, our Deputy Mayor, they were not elected for any reason, there is a Government Program that has been guiding us through our four years in office. Now it’s like this, our perception as Government is obviously that this interaction with the City has made us correct our routes, makes us implement policies that do in fact meet the needs of the City as a whole. So not always, yeah, we think it is obvious yeah, because this is not always the case, so therefore like this, we have already had interesting things like this, and this is a thing that for me has been very significant, yeah.”

For example, “in [year], when we came back into office, then like this, during the discussion of our Government Program, we did the same with society as a whole, we committed ourselves while, that is a commitment in our Government Program, that we would be landscaping a park which is the [park name], it is in a very central location, in the very heart of the city, it is a wonderful park, in [year], when we discussed this, and then we started with a discussion of the [project name] in [year], in the City as a whole, we had demands from all regions, but in all, without exceptions. We were to make an investment in expansion of a [hospital name]. So we needed to expand the [hospital name].”

“So when it was put to discussion and this came to the Municipal Budget Committee, where we had to define what we would do, so it’s like this, civil society would bring its demands, and the Government would bring theirs too. Then, as we had this Government commitment within the Government Program to revitalize the park program, we placed this on the table. And of course it would not go in, we were negotiating, so there was not the horizon of expansion of the [hospital name], they said that this is not important for us, so they gave us guidance. We took out the [park name] and it was not even just us, yeah, Government and civil society, took away the [park name] and actually proceeded with the expansion to the [hospital name] so they had no doubt, they took funds from the [hospital name] for, those of the [park name], to be able to make the necessary repairs to the [hospital name], and then there was no way of working on the [park name].”

“And you know when we started to work on the [park name]? Now, just recently, right? So, recently we delivered the [park] as it should have been revitalized. But it is this as well, this is the guidance, and so I say, that when the population takes part, because it’s like this, they live the daily routine. They know. Never underestimate the capacity of the population or of the citizen. Because they live the daily routine, they may exaggerate,

but there will always be relevance. We just need to clean things up, and give the due importance to what we hear. And there, we must know how to listen. So, therefore, this is very important for us. This listening with civil society, this definition, this deliberation, guides us to where we are going, also, it's not that we don't have it, but it helps us to correct the things that we already had as a Government Program over the four years. It's a big coincidence too, right? between what they bring and what we propose."

Diversity of Opinions and Counterproposals

This local administrator also spoke about **counterproposals** that result from deliberations by local Committee members and government officials. "So, then, what are the needs and potential that we have in Region A. In Region B the same thing, then in Region C, and then they are going to see the region. So this also creates a relationship of solidarity between them [the Committee members], and solidarity includes practicality, so my region is difficult, but yours is worse. So, therefore, I also want your region to be OK."

"So they manage to do this, they manage to reach an agreement about having needs, and the worst ones, yeah, in the worst regions from the needs standpoint, they contemplate them on the proposals, in the proposals they present," said the administrator. "Because the proposal which is the priority of priorities, they are the people who do them, in the light of all the discussion that we present, so because all demands are, when they are presented, yeah... they come to the City Hall. So everything from the Education Department, they shall make a report of what is possible, considering technical feasibility, how much it costs, what will be done, where it will be done, and how it will be done. So it is based on this information that the deliberations are made. And whatever is not possible from the financial standpoint, and is not possible from the technical standpoint, they also have information. Then they also seek alternatives, right, if not everything can be done, but part can be done, they also present a counterproposal."

Increased Capacity

There is also **the development of capacity** by Committee members. "And you have another thing that happens," said the local administrator, "which is the following: people who take part in one Committee move on to another. Right, they do this." In this community, "there is a term of two years, this is in the Organic Law of the City. And... that we also understand that this is necessary and important, this is our proposal even if we can have a term of two years with consecutive re-election. Then you have to change things. And then the person can choose to stay for another two years, as also there can be a change."

Political Transformations

In addition, **the political culture shifts**. "I think that there is a real change in political culture... if we practice greater tolerance, especially among the interlocutors of different sectors, yes, why? Because as an inheritance, right, which is one thing I also seek to work on in terms of methodology, is that of creating, mediating a space, a building, a building process, conscientious, or in other words, that people want," said the public

participation practitioner. “Yeah, of dialogue and trust, right, because both the public and the private sectors and also the organizations of civil society, for historical and cultural reasons, in this country, there is no trust in each other, right.”

This results in “tolerance, right, in the enrichment of your universe, yeah, in **understanding of collective building, or activity in the public arena, in politics and so on... the finiteness...of resources**. Possibly priority, learn to understand, yeah, why suddenly a pothole in the [area] is more important, at this particular moment, than a pothole in the [area], right. This tolerance, this understanding, this civil and political solidarity, yeah, this is something that we realize in some way.”

Changes in plans are another byproduct of engaging people, said the public participation practitioner. “Indirectly, there have been large changes to planning, and especially, yeah, this was made quite clear, in relation to the sub-mayors who felt that they had been extremely sidelined from the process, or in other words, the Co-ordination, that is like this, the Participative Budget took the sub-mayors that were a leadership, yeah, a qualified interlocution at the Mayor’s Office.”

There is also **attention that is drawn to particular problems** as a result of Committee processes. Through the [project name], through the Committees, through the [project name], yeah... yeah... in the proposal, in discussion, articulation and the quest for alternatives, right, in effective social control, for example, if maintenance is not that good, people will, they discuss, they complain, they speak out, you understand,” said the local administrator. “I think that the case is like this, this has changed quite a bit, the way in which Administration gets things done.”

Participation has resulted in **the emergence of social movements** in Brazil. “Here it is like this, it is very interesting indeed, historically as well,” said the local administrator. “The [acronym for area] has a history of struggle, of participation, right, either through the Church, the Trade Union Movement, the Women’s Movement, after all, social movements in general. This has always been present here in the region. Right now, in [community name], yeah... the existing spaces for participation, the people take them up and really come, in other words, the Conferences, the Committees, the seminars – after all, any activity to which we are invited, as well as inaugurations of our spaces, you have the participation of the population.”

“Now... it is still not as we would like... right, we have a partnership, even though it is within the predictions... on the whole, in the country, that already within the process of participation in the [project name], we also have the participation of the nucleus of people between two and five per cent of the total, which is a normal figure within the... than what has been happening in Brazil, right?,” said the local administrator. “We would like to expand on this. Of course we would like to expand this participation, right? Now it’s that we have the obligation to say that we have the publicity of this and thereby encourage people, now the people have the right to choose, right? Whether they take part or not. Now, they really want to know. And I think they really need to know.”

Outcomes have also **changed as a result of civil society**. The local administrator said, “the example that I think is clearest is that of the [hospital name]that... it’s like this, in our proposal we were not going to do this not in that year anyway... but the participation of civil society changed this, changed this. So, therefore, the decision of the Government was due to the participation of civil society (Ahem). And there was another intervention that we made that always is... that always has health equipment involved. This was the re-urbanization of a commercial center of the district. And this was not planned either, there we have health equipment and educational equipment yeah, a library, and there were plans for the revitalization of this equipment, of such equipment in this revitalization. The decision was taken within the Municipal Budget Committee. No, no chance. No chance. The two types of equipment had to come in, reducing the scope of revitalization, so that the two kinds of equipment could enter.”

“The Councillor brought this, but the decision was there, in the region. There was no way out. We were there, and there was no agreement. So the decision was taken and decided there. Right, because the population brought the arguments that were relevant, and in fact it had to be done, we changed the scope, and we went, we agreed things there and then, and you also have the interests of the other side, the commercial outlets. So we managed to bring together all the viewpoints, and made a joint decision and also managed to intervene as it should be done and we included the two types of equipment in the revitalization. So these decisions, this decision making, it is either within the scope of the Committees, or taken at conferences, but at the conferences we do not make decisions yeah, it’s more a matter of guidelines. The Committees are the spaces we really have for decisions, right? And also the plenary sessions of the [project name]. There, decisions are taken as well.”

Participation creates **a culture of tolerance**, said a public participation practitioner. This person said, “often we want to measure the efficiency or effectiveness, let’s put it this way, of this participation, let’s put it like this, yeah, what impact it could have on legislation, on legal reviews of the laws, or even the concrete results for this and that, things like that, I think that in this case we must not just look at participation from this standpoint, if they cause an impact, verifiable or not, right. I think that one thing I learnt is the following, this insertion, or multiplication of spaces, or this agenda, this agenda of actions and activities, it starts to generate a kind of culture of tolerance.”

Discussion Topics of Importance on a National Agenda

Having issues or subjects placed on a national agenda has also resulted from participatory efforts. The public participation practitioner highlighted the Participative Budget process as an example of this outcome. According to this interviewee, the Participative Budget process has an impact "caused by the fact that the decisions taken at the meetings have been taken to the agenda of the Secretariats." In this specific example, it is the responsibility of the public sector to review proposals and to determine appropriate actions. As an example, elected officials and regional decision makers must look at the outcomes/priorities of the Participatory Budget process and determine if these proposals are feasible. "This is an obligation of the public sector to say 'this

can't be done in this region because it goes against the environment'...it will come out expensive because it slopes, or because it is marshy, or because it is a preservation area". In the end, the Secretariats determine if a project moves forward. "This negotiation is touch...but it has often occurred", stated the practitioner.

Conflict Resolution

Sometimes **conflicts are aired** as a result of participation. A public participation practitioner spoke of how the Participative Budget "influenced contributed, made public a series of problems and disputes, sometimes beyond the aims of the PB [Participative Budget] itself." Discussing publicly these problems and disputes in turn had an effect on the level of participation in the Participative Budget process.

Similarly, managing conflict may be part of resolving differing opinions. According to the same public participation practitioner, participation (or 'complementary participation') invites or promotes confrontation. This is because multiple interest groups are often pushed to converge or to reach consensus, to 'converge to one same viewpoint". This practitioner argued that without open public participation process that welcome divergent viewpoints (diversity, plurality) there is 'no development of democracy." The practitioner also spoke about a mechanism that is used to help navigate such conflicts as part of the Participative Budget process, specifically "a method that was very much publicized at the Barcelona City Hall, that of cards, for voting, for approval, green and red cards, things like that, which is a method for a group of people that have been hired, even to train the Participative Budget in the use of this method."

Finally, an NGO leader described the political impact that participation has, that it its "main impact shall be of a political nature." This person saw participation as hopefully contributing "more and more to this network connection between people, democratic participation, the reinvention of politics based on the real life of common citizens, and the base of society, the expansion of people's freedom to innovate, to have a entrepreneurial spirit, to do things for their own development and for the development of the society in which they live."

How is feedback provided?

Interviewees noted instances where feedback does or does not occur as a result of participatory or deliberative processes:

Feedback mechanisms are employed as part of participatory or deliberative processes in Brazil. For example, a local administrator described how this happens. "So there you have the executive project, then the real project that we present to the community and for the surroundings. We go back to the region, we present what we intend to do, the schedule and details of the work, and then we have people from the, the [project name], who were elected, the Councillors and Regional Representatives, who take part in the control of inspection of this, and you have the residents who also do this. So there is a permanent dialogue, because housing has this, they have special call-out times within these housing estates that are being landscaped, so they have these call-outs all the time, and there is also a, a direct channel to communicate with us, and with the area being worked on."

This reporting process is quite detailed. “The project shows how the square will be in the end,” said the local administrator. “And then they start interfering. And, during execution, you have the inspection, whether from the Regional Representatives, the Committees, or the community where it is being done, and how it is being done...yeah... the services or the work. So we have control the whole time. The community is there, present. The whole time, we go back and give return, and we get established. And the [formal name of staff responsible for public participation] is also in the region all the time, ‘oh the project we shall be presenting is coming,’... not only the [project name] representatives, but the population that is to benefit takes part, discusses, has a dialogue, changes, and then forges ahead to implementation, but then there are no complaints, right?”

By comparison, a public participation practitioner said there is not much feedback. “I promote the participation of actors, but they are so unqualified, so poorly informed. No, it is not part of it. So poorly informed, so unqualif... right? So I manipulate them, yeah, or in other words, they participate, so, then there is also something which must be worked on, yeah, I mean, for there to be a qualified participation.”

Efforts to balance opinion among varying interests present a challenge for the Brazilian interviewees, several reported. “Well, the main problem here is the highly unequal society, as is the case with the Brazilian society, broken by... in fact, by their very historical background, the heritage of slavery, after all, the perpetuation of structures that concentrate an absurdly unequal one, and this is clearly reflected in the public space,” said the federal administrator. “The actors uh... have different resources... after all, you have a set of organizations that finish, I mean, interests are highly stratified but the representation of these interests, this does not occur on a leveled field, after all obviously. You have an imbalance in political power resources, really enormous, enormous, enormous.”

Financial and Technical Barriers

Sometimes there are financial and technical difficulties in doing so. Local Committees consider “whatever is not possible from the financial standpoint, and is not possible from the technical standpoint, they also have information. Then they also seek alternatives, right, if not everything can be done, but part can be done, they also present a counterproposal.” Moreover, this person said, “I think that the difficulty is that of resources, that we cannot do everything we want to, or, in other words, we must set priorities. Because the resources are not enough for everything.”

For a project to receive funding, the local administrator said, “we have to think that it is important for the City as a whole, what is a greater priority, yeah, everything is a priority but then we must get the priority among the priorities, and this, for me, I think this is the most difficult part, the people have to decide about one thing and the other and for the Government as well. I think this is the greatest difficulty, and then there is the following, we have done marvelous things but we cannot do everything. After all, there are

financial limits involved.” These challenges mean that “you have to be transparent, in the discussion, in the presentation of data, in the difficulties and potentialities.”

Expectations

Expectations expressed for engaging the public include in order to provide a “clear response to a demand from the social movements in rural areas,” said a federal administrator.

A public participation practitioner distinguished between several kinds of expectations. This person said, “...there are several levels, right man, of expectations and such that expectations and such are directly connected with the insertion of A, B or C into the public space, right, so what there is a conscience which comes more from political praxis, right, rather than the level of response to the needs, because there are people who say, I elected Councilor so-and-so, and I elected him or her with a commitment that he would fill in the holes in my street, right, he filled in the hole and that’s that. That’s the end. I participated. It is democratic. The system is democratic. My requests were answered.”

“So this varies, and depends on political praxis, right, yeah, of how I see the world, how I see the nature of problems, my extension beyond the navel, right, to think that the world is much more than just myself, than my satisfaction in seeing that the hole had been filled in, you understand.” This means that “expectations are altered from the start to the end of the process, right, and needs as well, and so forth. That often, as...an action, it is also slightly typically Brazilian, it is unpleasant to say this, but it is somewhat part of our culture, yeah, there are many... an action, very... how do we say it, without a target, it is... very... the people are highly reactive.”

There are also expectations of public-oriented action as a result of participation. An NGO leader said, in “all the networks we have worked with or helped to stir up, man... are... the participation is always public, this term ‘public’ being understood as something that you carry out in the public sphere, rather than aiming at private goals, but rather public goals, I mean public participation, not only participation, of Government actions, but actions by citizens and all sorts.”

Moreover, each network “has its own expectations, right. On the part of [organization], when it is working institutionally it’s that these networks exist and continue to do so, being denser and denser, more connected, carrying out more things and... assess and monitor... assess their own results, both in terms of performance and also of impact and, currently, the impact, we are measuring the impact by the number of actions in partnership, that are carried out and also by the number of volunteers that take part in these actions, this is an important issue as well. The new public sphere is a sphere that essentially depends on the voluntary participation of the citizen.”

Effect on Capacity

Finally, these interviewees discussed their view of the effect on capacity that participation has in the Brazilian context. One spoke about how participation has resulted in the development of autonomy within civil society. “There is the autonomy of civil society, right, it needs to have autonomy, must walk on its own legs, we have to provide all the training, all the information,” said a local administrator. “To make and to help with the processes, contribute with the processes.” As part of this, “I think we have to speed up the process of training and qualification, right, I think that if we manage to make people understand how the process is... how it really has the role of definition, having the information and the qualifications to enable decision making, then I think that the qualification and training program needs to be enhanced, and worked on better.”

A public participation practitioner was less optimistic about the effect of participation on capacity. “I promote the participation of actors, but they are so unqualified, so poorly informed,” said this person. “No, it is not part of it. So poorly informed, so unqualif... right? So I manipulate them, yeah, or in other words, they participate, so, then there is also something which must be worked on, yeah, I mean, for there to be a qualified participation.”

However, the practitioner also was more sanguine in another comment. This person said, “there are expectations or viewpoints or levels of satisfaction that are different, yeah, there are people that... that feel they are participating if they participate in the manner I mentioned, yeah, in a public meeting, yeah, where they raise their hands and things like that, yeah, this can indeed, yeah, by perception, by ones experience, can say, I am participating, I am part of a process, one is right to say that this is indeed being part of a process, others, yeah, say no, this is part of a process but truly the... the... participation only materializes, yeah, when I know that the public form, the public response, and considered, took into consideration, this perception of problems, this contribution from ah... the organizations or society and things like that, preserving public interest, right?”

A federal administrator said there is the “construction of legitimacy” as a result of participation that builds capacity. “That these actors... make the policy legitimate, as also that instrument or result in itself, this is one aspect. The second, that may be more of an expectation...a State perspective, really of public policy, is that it may generate change, and essentially I do not know, somewhere I read... that, but in practice that’s about it, that public policy is essentially an intervention in that the central aim or the instrument for making public policy is to alter either the expectations of the agents, the actors, or the values. The inclusion of new values and generation of change based on this. So, fundamentally, we have, in the field in which we operate the [organization], it is that the results encourage and induce change. And change depends on behavior, the practices of different agents, so if we conduct an assessment of [subject] and detect the results and show such and such shortcomings, [negative outcome] in the early years, yeah, not [subject] mathematics and such, then what we expect is that, on the one hand, there is the generation of pressure from society.”

“The [organization] essentially works in the field in which we act, we expect the results, yeah, yeah, this is a very poor [subject] theory. Even if you show that things are getting even worse in [subject], you expect that this may rally society, generating reactions from those opinion-forming actors, the editorial of the newspapers, coverage in the National News, everyone... yeah... speaks out, and this causes change. It does not always work, but in practice there is a clear expectation thus: generation of change, changes to behavior, changes of attitude, and essentially all this would lead to the attainment of certain objectives or common goods, something like this... in an ideal world, it would be like this [laughs].”

[1] Population Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat, *World Population Prospects: The 2008 Revision*, <http://esa.un.org/unpp>, Accessed on November 1, 2009.

[2] CIA World Factbook – Brazil. <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/br.html>. Accessed on February 19, 2009.

[3] ESL World, <http://www.englishclub.com/esl-world/Brazil/index.htm>. Accessed on February 19, 2009.

Summary

Brazil	
Common Terms For P2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Popular participation (state administrator) • Public management (local administrator, public participation practitioner) • Citizen participation (local administrator) • “Social or public participation or citizen participation, participation in the public sphere” (NGO leader)
Conceptual Definition For P2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliberation, Dialogue and Facilitation ("Interlocution") • Consultation • Citizen Input into Governmental Policy Making • Response to Community Needs • Addressing the Public Interests at Large
Select Barriers To Participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Institutional/Structural Barriers to Public Participation • Lack of resources • Limited access to processes • Lack of training • Need for legitimacy of participatory methods • Imbalances of power • Discrimination • Lack of understanding of co-responsibility • Need for authorization • Need for people to ‘see for themselves’ • Need to ‘seduce’ people to participate • Short-term perspectives • Political involvement • Need for social inclusion and equality of justice • Limited resources • Need for more intensive training and qualification • Lack of measurement of results from participation • Lack of relationships • More transparency, professionalism, and reliable information are needed • Lack of capacity • Little influence on outcomes • Ensuring there is “no hidden agenda” • Favoritism • Lack of diversity of viewpoints • ‘A frail representative democracy’ • Mechanisms of participation are not used enough • Status quo

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highly reactive people • Civil society cannot achieve change on its own • Need for clarification of roles • Power as a limitation to democracy • Society’s adoption of participation • Political decisions versus public-oriented decisions • Co-optation • Bias • Political limitations • Strong dependence on the state • Lack of confidence • Lack of a sense of organizational responsibility • Social fragility, lack of creativity • ‘Feudal relationship’ • Participation that is based on representation rather than independent action
<p>Select Examples Of Best Practices</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Needs analysis that seeks to identify and translate client needs and to “check with the diagnosis of the problem, in relation to the problem that he says exists or would like to know better” • Process and impact assessments • Inter-religious forum, involving representatives from various faiths for the purpose
<p>Select Outcomes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service Delivery and Responsiveness • Interactions that meet Community Needs • Diversity of Opinions and Counterproposals • Increased Capacity and Desire to Participate • Development of capacity by Committee Members • Political Transformations and Shifts in Political Culture • An Understanding of Collective Building, or Activity in the Public Arena and of the Finite Nature of Resources • Creation of a Culture of Tolerance • Discussion Topics of Importance on a National Agenda • Conflict Resolution