

Cultivating Participation

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Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia



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Overview: Generic Strategic Objectives

- Developing Policy & Strategy
- Providing institutional frameworks
- Setting up legal and regulatory frameworks
- Upgrading government capacity
- Rolling out technology features and channels
- Improving public capacity

Participation Strategy



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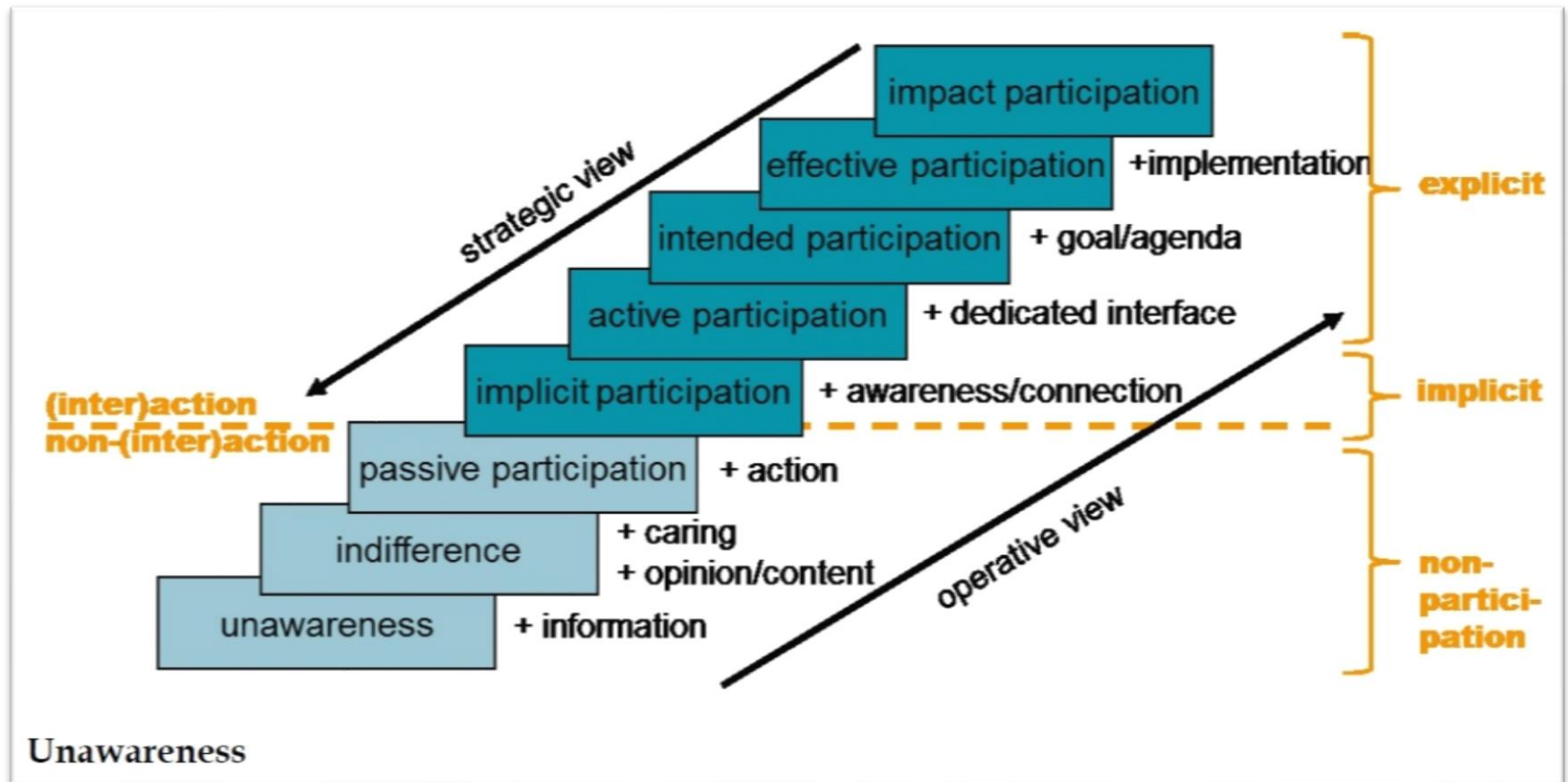
Goals of the Strategy

- Two-way exchange of information, knowledge and opinions
- Active and re-active Government
- Public contribute ideas and expertise
- Government determines the agenda
- Government maintains the leading role
- Activities to be fully open to public participation (with legally defined exceptions)

Developing Policy and Strategy

- **Basic principles**
 - Philosophy on participation
 - List of facilities and functions
 - Rules for participation
 - User code of conduct
- **Process simplification**
 - Forms, processes and legal
 - Using ICTs
 - Analyze and benchmarking processes
- **User-centered Design**
 - Enhance user experience
 - User-service design methodologies
 - UK ministers (2014)
- **Personalization**
 - Increased usability
 - Users can choose what they see, based on interest
 - Denmark MyPage

Policy considerations: e-Participation Ladder



Source: Krabina, Bernhard. (2016). The E-Participation Ladder – Advancing from Unawareness to Impact Participation. Paper delivered at International Conference for E-Democracy and Open Government 2016, At Krems, Austria Available from

https://www.researchgate.net/publication/303371027_The_E-Participation_Ladder_-_Advancing_from_Unawareness_to_Impact_Participation.

Providing frameworks

- **Institutional frameworks**
 - **Institutions**
 - State authority that administer participation
 - **Governance**
 - Who will be responsible for what...
 - Centralization vs decentralization
- **Legal & Regulatory frameworks**

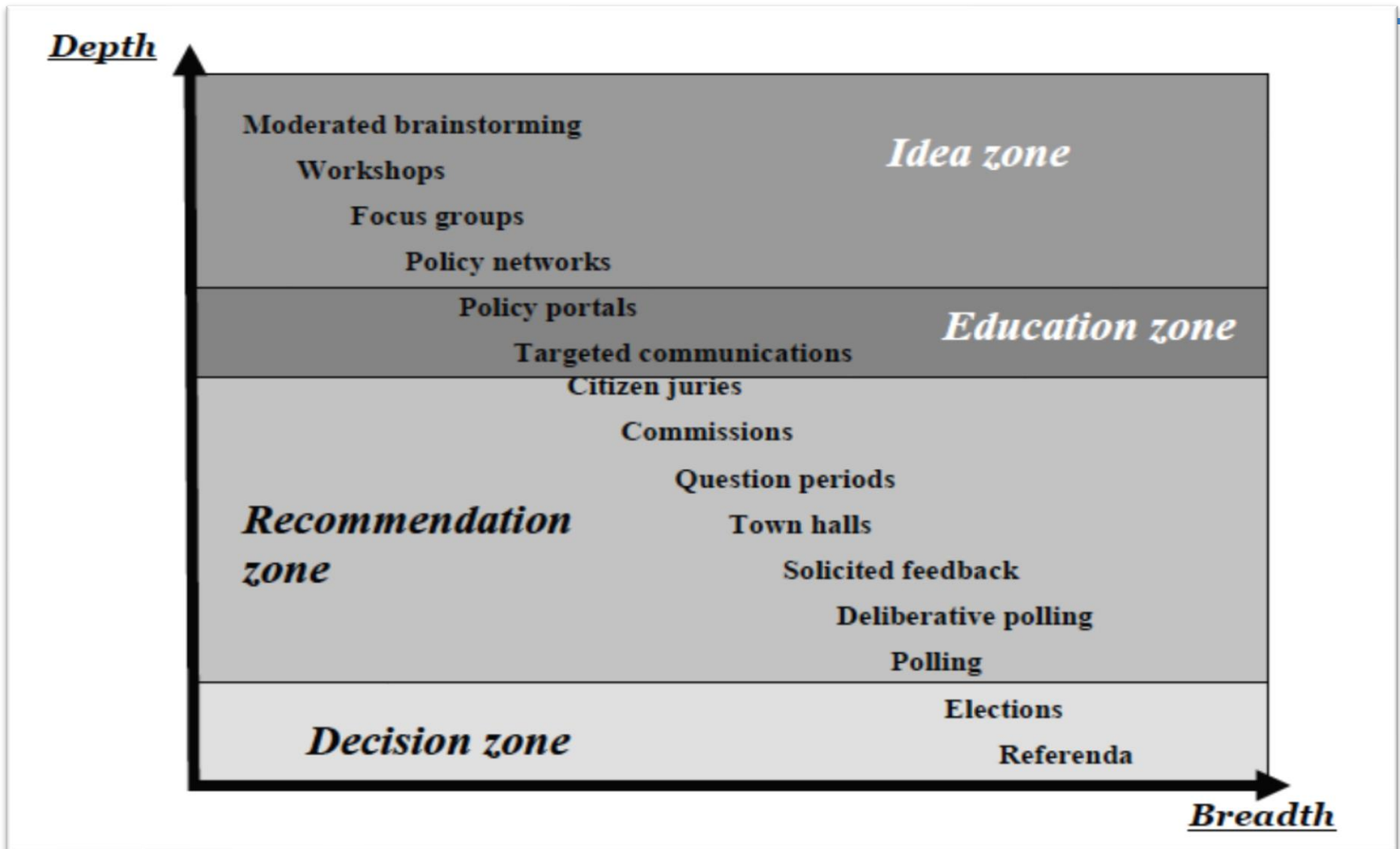
Upgrading government capacity

- Guidance for civil servants
- Civil servants
 - Understanding how to select issues: what issues can you help
 - Framing the debate and linking issues
 - Which processes and which actors
- Security for civil servants
- Example
 - Government officials removed due to comments made online.

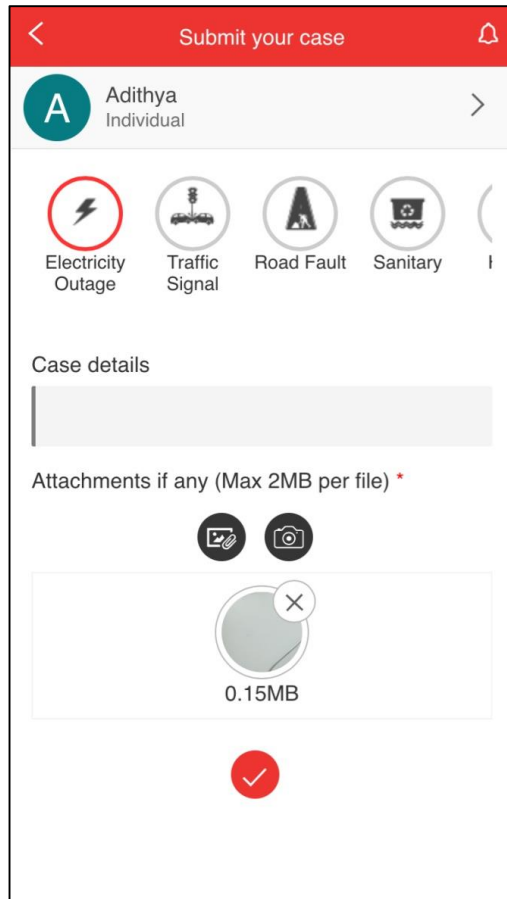
Rolling out technology features & channels

- Tools and features
- Aligning purpose and types of e-participation
- Channels and the digital divide
 - Multi-channel approach
 - Digitally excluded - Gender digital divide
- Social media
 - Networks, platforms, content, feedback, publish

Rolling out technology features & channels



Fix2Go, Bahrain



- Citizen feedback with direct communication channels
- Feature in the Tawasul Mobile App
- Direct and easy channel
- Communication between the public and government
- Select the type of complaint, take a picture and provide the details
- Accessible channel available 24/7
- Actively promote the app on social media

Improving public capacity

- Bottom-up citizen participation
 - People are interested in that which affects them directly
 - Some – broader public impact
 - Show local debates can have wider impact
 - Connect localities, share ideas
- Digital and political literacy
 - Elites – dominate discourse
 - Using technology carefully could mitigate this
 - Build digital and political literacy skills of those excluded
 - New interfaces, training programs, and complimentary channels

Example: eCitizen ideas, Singapore

- Singapore
- pioneer in e-services (1999)
- Currently 680 services online from 120 agencies
- eCitizens Idea Portal
 - Government voice certain challenges that citizens can then respond to by sending their ideas
 - Financial awards are given in this regard
 - 2019 – 1,316 ideas, 7,658 contributors, 88 completed challenges
 - Game component – badges and leaderboards for participation

<https://www.ideas.gov.sg/home>

Thank you

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