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Local and Regional Economic Development Dialogue Facilitation Guidelines



**Local and Regional Economic
Development Dialogue
Facilitation Guidelines**

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PREFACE: WHY LRED DIALOGUE

Nepal is set to graduate from the Least Developed Countries status by the end of 2026 due to its remarkable progress in addressing human assets and economic vulnerability. The country is in the process of implementing federalism. Although it continues to face socioeconomic and political challenges, it is striving for economic growth through sustainable development. In the past, many thought that violence, street demonstrations, vandalism, clashes with the police, and strikes were the only means of presenting political demands and ensuring they were met in Nepal. Therefore, the importance of dialogue processes between the government and the public cannot be overstated for Nepal. In the meantime, there is a growing recognition of the importance of engaging in dialogue among relevant stakeholders in Nepal.

This context makes the Local and Regional Economic Development (LRED) agenda more relevant and pertinent. It is especially important now that local governments are stable, strong, mandated to take on responsibilities through the federalization process, and have gained experience in LRED. Despite abundant natural and human resources, many local or provincial governments still struggle to generate internal revenue and retain or attract a representative sample of the

local community, including youth, women, marginalized and disabled to contribute to the local economy. This has sparked an enormous initiative among political leaders, the private and cooperative sectors, civil society, academia, and other stakeholders to promote and contribute to local economic development.

LRED never happens in isolation. It is a collaborative effort that requires coming together as diverse people to initiate a conversation and dialogue with the aim of effecting change. In the past, the common practice used to be addressing economic development matters, project selection, and resource allocation in private, away from public scrutiny. The economic agenda was (and partly still is) treated as a secretive matter, and designing economic policy is considered a way to maintain power and do favours to those who assisted in gaining and retaining it. The LRED dialogue process is helping to change this “tradition” to make it more participatory, inclusive, transparent, and thus more sustainable.

This LRED dialogue facilitation guide is a knowledge product that contains collective learning from various public-private-cooperative dialogue (PPCD) events conducted in the provinces of Lumbini, Karnali, and Sudurpashchim from November 2019 to June 2024. The guidebook serves as a framework for initiating, organizing, conducting, and following up on PPCD events by GRAPE partners and other organizations in Nepal. It aims to support dialogue organizers, champions, resource persons, and moderators, to enhance the structure, effectiveness, and outcome orientation of dialogue processes.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This publication results from collaborative efforts and the dedication of numerous individuals and organisations committed to fostering dialogue, promoting sustainable development, and enhancing Nepal's local and regional economic development (LRED) processes. We sincerely thank everyone who contributed their expertise, time, and support to complete this document.

We extend special thanks to the authors Christian Schoen, Anil Chitrakar, Tej Hari Ghimire, and Deepti Khakurel, for their meticulous research, insightful analysis, and dedication to documenting best practices in dialogue facilitation. Their collective expertise and dedication to participatory development have greatly enriched the content and relevance of this guide. A warm acknowledgement goes to Ann-Christin Berger for her editorial contributions, ensuring clarity, coherence, and accessibility in presenting complex ideas. Her attention to detail and precision have enhanced the readability of this guide, making it an invaluable resource for facilitators, development practitioners, and policymakers.

The LPED/GRAPE project team based in Nepal has played a key role in shaping and implementing the ideas presented here. We express our sincere gratitude to the local champions,

facilitators, and resource persons who contributed their on-the-ground experiences and innovative solutions during the dialogue forums. The dialogue participants from various municipalities and provinces provided critical insights and shared invaluable perspectives reflecting Nepal's socio-economic landscape's rich diversity and complexity. Special recognition is extended to the Federation of Nepalese Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FNCCI) for their instrumental role in promoting Public-Private Cooperative Dialogue (PPCD) and fostering stakeholder collaboration.

We thank the elected officials, municipal leaders, representatives from the cooperative and private sectors, and members of civil society who participated in the LRED and PPCD initiatives. Their commitment to fostering collaboration and transparency in local economic development processes is commendable and has become a beacon of hope for sustainable development in Nepal.

To our readers and users of this guide, your commitment to promoting inclusive dialogue and sustainable development inspires us. We trust that this guide will serve as a practical tool to enhance your efforts and enable transformative changes within your respective communities.

We acknowledge and thank all contributors, without whom this publication would not have been possible.

ACRONYMS

CA	Constituent Assembly
CAO	Chief Administrative Officer
CCI	Chambers of Commerce and Industry
CPA	Comprehensive Peace Agreement
DCED	Donor Committee for Enterprise Development
DCU	District Cooperative Union
EDS	Economic Development Strategy
FNCCI	Federation of Nepalese Chambers of Commerce and Industry
GRAPE	Green Resilient Agricultural Productive Ecosystems
GIZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit GmbH
GoN	Government of Nepal
HBR	Harvard Business Review

LED	Local Economic Development
LEDA	Local Economic Development Agency
LPED	Local and Provincial Economic Development
LRED	Local and Regional Economic Development
MC	Master of Ceremony
MoFAGA	Ministry of Federal Affairs and General Administration
MoLCPA	Ministry of Land Management, Cooperatives and Poverty Alleviation
M&E	Monitoring and evaluation
PPCD	Public-Private Cooperative Dialogue
PPD	Public-Private Dialogue
QR	Quick Response (code)
Q&A	Questions and answers
SMC	Sub-metropolitan city
USD	United States Dollar

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I. INTRODUCTION: DIALOGUE IN THE NEPALI CONTEXT

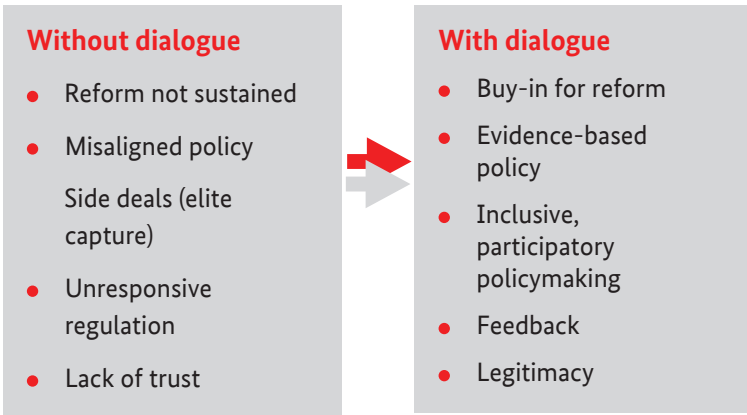
Public Private Cooperative Dialogue (PPCD) is a means to an end and seeks to make companies and cooperatives more competitive and sustainable while generating prosperity and ensuring inclusive processes that involve municipalities and other local communities (The Cluster Competitiveness Group, 2011). The Donor Committee for Enterprise Development (DCED) defines public-private dialogue (PPD) as the process of exchanging ideas between the government and businesses to develop or adapt policy reforms. PPD, therefore, plays a significant role in establishing a favourable business environment. This exchange can take place through formal communication channels, such as meetings, workshops, conferences, or informal conversations (Nielsen 2021), thereby expanding “the space for policy discovery” (Bettcher, Herzberg, and Nadgrodkiewicz 2015).

The latest definition describes PPCDs as “*bringing together government, private sector, [cooperatives] and relevant stakeholders in a formal or informal process to achieve shared objectives and play a transformational role for a particular set of issues*” (Herzberg and Sisombat 2016).

PPCD is a standard tool used during all phases of economic development. It can be utilized ad hoc or integrated into planned development processes to achieve specific objectives. PPCD comes in different dimensions, focuses on various topics, employs different tools, and can range from formal communication channels to informal conversations.

The potential benefits of PPCD are manifold, as demonstrated in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Benefits of PPCD



Source: Herzberg and Sisombat 2016

PPCDs possess typical characteristics that can be combined in various ways, as shown in Figure 2. The framework illustrates potential configurations of a PPCD. Each of the seven characteristics has two extreme expressions, and a PPCD can be configured to meet one of the extremes or any points in the range between them.

Figure 2: Seven-point framework on PPCD characteristics



Source: Bettcher, Herzberg, and Nadgrodkiewicz 2015

In the Nepali context, PPCD refers to the structured and moderated interaction between the public, private, and cooperative sectors to promote an enabling environment for private and cooperative sector development, improve the business climate, and reduce poverty. It is about stakeholders coming together to define and analyse their problems, discuss, and agree on specific reforms, and their joint and coordinated work to make these ideas a reality.

In summary, PPCD in Nepal should:

1. collect **diverse perspectives** and **ideas** on related challenges and opportunities and
2. create a **common platform** for a theme-based or problem-based discussion,
3. enable an open **conversation** and facilitated **discussion** on topics relevant and vital to different stakeholder groups,
4. reach a **shared understanding** of how to address them,

5. formulate common strategies,
6. contribute to participatory and **evidence-based policymaking**.

Textbox 1: GIZ dialogue with Maoists cadre

At the peak of the armed conflict and violence, GIZ took the lead in organizing “business talks for change” at its premises to help break the ice and bring all concerned parties to the table to start the conversation. One of the business talks brought a Maoists cadre to the table. The dialogue began by trying to understand each other’s position to get to the bottom of what drives people to carry arms, resort to violence, and kill others. This safe space facilitated open dialogues to help better understand the perspective of the warring side. It ultimately brought everyone to the peace negotiation table. A result of one of the dialogues was to introduce around eighty vocational training activities for Maoist fighters in their camps so that they could better integrate into the local economy and the Nepalese society at large.

Source: authors’ elaboration

PPCD forums have the potential to be both effective and productive, but they can also be a waste of time and cause frustration, if not planned thoroughly. The success or failure of a dialogue event is influenced by various factors outlined in this guide.

Here are some key success factors for organizing a PPCD:

- The selection of the champion or host,
- The selection of the moderator and the quality of moderation,
- The selection of the core topic or issue to be discussed,
- The selection and invitation of the participants,
- The selection of moderation tools and techniques applied and how they are combined (process flow),
- The formulation of the dialogue questions,
- The appropriate timing to organize the dialogue.

It is important to note that there is no “one-size-fits-all approach” to organizing and conducting a PPCD. Each dialogue forum should be uniquely designed and implemented and follow the 13 PPD/PPCD principles outlined in the Charter of Good Practice (see Annex 1).

Textbox 2: Federalism dialogues in Nepal

Following the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) between the Seven Party Alliance, the Government and the Maoists in 2006, Nepal conducted its first Constituent Assembly (CA) Election in 2008. The CA declared Nepal a sovereign, federal, and secular state. Despite having a few political agendas, Nepal was largely unfamiliar with federalism in terms of its approaches and consequences. Dialogue forums were established for high-level political leaders and bureaucrats, essentially starting from scratch by educating them on the fundamental essence of a federal state.

These forums discussed how Nepal, a diverse, unique, and historically centralized country, could design its own customised federal structure. Development partners, when involved, shared their experiences and practices, and the forums were always facilitated by neutral moderators respected by all political parties.

Source: authors' elaboration

PPDs or PPCDs can also play a critical role in fragile, conflict, or post-conflict situations. They can support institutional development, ensure transparency, create trust among the different parties involved in the conflict, and thus contribute to peacebuilding. In these situations, PPCDs can prioritize and promote measures that have the potential to generate new investments and jobs. By convening different actors to discuss issues that are relevant to and benefit all, PPCDs can strengthen democratisation process (see Textbox 3).

Textbox 3: PPD in a fragile and conflict-affected situation

The Nepal Business Forum, established in 2008, played a crucial role in building trust between different sectors and addressing post-conflict development issues. The forum examined various aspects of Nepal's business environment, including regulatory reforms, investments, labor force skills, access to finance, and the establishment of new businesses.

An evaluation conducted by the World Bank, after the completion of the Nepal Business Forum project, found that the promotion of PPD regarding private-sector reforms in a country striving to establish democracy was beneficial. By the end of the project's second phase, notable results included the implementation of over 41 out of 120 recommendations, private sector cost savings of USD 5.67 million, and the establishment of public-private and private-private dialogues despite significant political turmoil.

Source: Bettcher, Herzberg, and Nadgrodkiewicz 2015

The above discussion about the nature and objectives of dialogues and the examples provided show that this kind of moderated exchange between different stakeholder groups can play a crucial role in various development processes.

The next chapter will elaborate on how multi-actor dialogue processes are embedded in Nepal's LED/LRED approach, making it an essential tool to drive or consolidate local and provincial economic development processes. The LRED Booklet published by GIZ's LPED/GRAPE project in 2023 highlights the importance of PPCD as an LRED tool and elaborates on how to weave it into the overall LRED process (Schoen, Khakurel, and Bhandari 2023). As the project's intent is to ensure the sustainability and replicability of its concepts, methods, and tools, producing guidelines on organizing,

facilitating, documenting, and sustaining dialogue processes seemed to be a sound decision.

Accordingly, this guideline provides dialogue organizers, champions, and facilitators the required instructions to implement dialogue forums, particularly in the context of LED/LRED. Knowing LED/LRED as a concept and development process is advantageous when using these guidelines, but it is not a precondition.

Some literature quoted in this guidebook had been written in different thematic contexts and adjusted to the LED/LRED context as far as possible and necessary. Success criteria and implementation steps of multi-stakeholder dialogue are mostly independent of the thematic context and can be applied universally.

II. LEVELS OF DIALOGUE FORUMS IN LRED

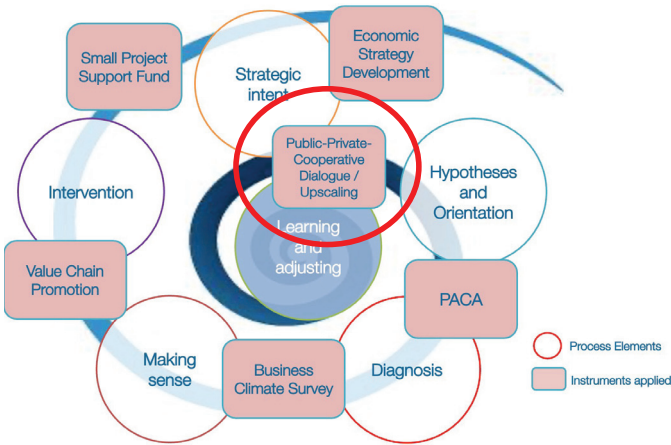
The GIZ LPED/GRAPE project facilitated intra-municipal, inter-municipal, and provincial-level PPCD to stimulate stakeholder exchanges on topics related to local and regional economic development (LRED). The overall goal of these events was to assist local and provincial stakeholders in increasing their locations' competitiveness and supporting private sector development through a participatory process.

The three types of forums differ in scope and stakeholder participation:

1. **intra-municipal PPCD**: with stakeholders within a given municipality,
2. **inter-municipal PPCD**: with stakeholders from different municipalities, and
3. **Provincial-level PPCD**: with stakeholders from different municipalities of one province and the provincial level.

This chapter illustrates how PPCDs are integrated into the LRED process and how they add value at various stages.

Figure 3: The LRED process in GIZ's LPED/GRAPE project in Nepal



Source: authors' elaboration

Regardless of the type of LRED forum (see three types of forums presented above), a structured exchange format between public, private, and cooperative sectors is essential to effectively utilize local resources and build local capacities to promote LRED. The LRED dialogue should not be a one-time event but should occur regularly. Since no “one-size-fits-all approach” exists and each municipality or province has unique needs, every PPCD requires a customized agenda and process flow to achieve desired results. Additionally, a PPCD should be well-moderated to ensure that clear objectives are set and achieved and to safeguard inclusiveness. Dialogues are crucial platforms in the LRED process. Therefore, sufficient resources must be allocated to them, considering the local context and opportunities.

Textbox 4: Inter-municipal dialogue in Lumbini Province in December 2022

An inter-municipal dialogue and orientation meeting on LRED took place from December 4th to 5th, 2022, in Lumbini Sanskritic Municipality. The event was organized by MoFAGA with support from GIZ LPED/GRAPE. More than 110 participants attended the two-day event, including elected officials from 25 municipalities, CAOs, and representatives from the private and cooperative sectors. The dialogue featured a panel discussion on LED topics, where participants exchanged knowledge and information, shared best practices, and presented LRED initiatives in various formats. Two LRED success stories were shared to demonstrate effective LRED implementation. The first story highlighted a public-private-cooperative partnership project between a cooperative and Butwal SMC on waste management, where the cooperative led the implementation with grant money from the municipality. The second case study from Nepalgunj illustrated the municipality's approach to promoting innovative entrepreneurial ideas by establishing an incubation center.

Source: authors' elaboration

Figure 3 presents the flow of instruments and process elements in an LRED process. The LRED process proposes six elements that might happen consecutively, in parallel or overlap. Applying each instrument and weaving them together will ultimately achieve change. Each instrument supports different process elements simultaneously. For instance, a PPCD forum supports learning about LRED, validating hypotheses, adjusting or revitalizing the LRED process, collecting ideas for intervention design and agreeing on a strategic intent.

Figure 3 and Figure 4 illustrate that intra-municipal PPCD events are integral to the overall LRED process and are incorporated into specific instruments, such as developing an economic development strategy (EDS). In this context, a PPCD forum will be convened following the future foresight workshop, which will use scenario writing. The PPCD forum is then used to refine the future vision, identify sector priorities, examine trends, and determine future prospects.

Figure 4: PPCD built into the EDS process in Nepal



Source: authors' elaboration

When the EDS was drafted in 2022, five PPCD events were conducted in Nepalgunj, Kohalpur, Siddharthanagar, Ghorahi, and Lamahi to develop visions for each municipality's economic development. After three rounds of panel and open discussions, each PPCD concluded with the participants agreeing on a common vision for economic development in their respective municipalities (see Textbox 5).

Textbox 5: Vision statements generated in intra-municipal PPCD as part of the EDS process

“Prosperous Ghorahi and happy citizens”: Through sustainable development of industry, commerce, agriculture, tourism, and cooperatives, Ghorahi will prosper. This will lead to happy citizens, dynamic entrepreneurship, competitive, inclusive, balanced, and equitable economic development using local resources.

“Prosperous Kohalpur and delightful citizen”

“Prosperous, happy, and green Nepalgunj”

“Thriving City, Green Siddharthanagar”

“Prosperous municipality, happy citizens” (Lamahi)

Source: results of PPCD forums in Nepalgunj, Kohalpur, Siddharthanagar, Ghorahi, and Lamahi

Provincial PPCD events are designed to facilitate the exchange of selected LRED topics of interest and urgency among various municipal and provincial participants. The four specific objectives of provincial PPCDs are:

- Collect diverse perspectives and ideas on related challenges and opportunities, and reach a shared understanding of how to address them,
- Enable an open conversation and facilitated discussion on topics relevant and vital to different stakeholder groups in a province and some of its municipalities,
- Create a common platform for a theme-based or problem-based discussion and formulate common strategies.
- Contribute to participatory and evidence-based policymaking,

III. DIALOGUE FORUMS: PROCESS VS. ISSUES

This chapter examines the advantages and disadvantages of issue based PPCD and process-based PPCD, helping to determine when to use each.

Dialogue forums can be arranged for long-term strategic purposes, following a structured process, or as short-term events, depending on various factors like circumstances, resources, time constraints, and issue complexities. Pursuing long-term strategic purposes typically adheres to established processes, structures, and stakeholder agreements.

Additionally, PPCDs, serving as consultation processes, may range from addressing narrower issues with shorter timeframes to more institutionalized dialogues with longer-term horizons (Cornick, 2013).

- **Ad-hoc, issue-based PPCDs** focus on achieving a short-term objective, solving a pressing issue instantly, identifying quick wins, or receiving immediate stakeholder buy-in. Most Ad-hoc PPCDs usually consist of only one forum. Issue-based dialogues are often kicked off by the local stakeholders through informal or

semi-structured conversations. Event-based dialogues are focused on changes at a specific administrative level, e.g., a ward or municipality, at a given time.

- **Process PPCDs** help shape a long-term strategy, let solutions emerge over time, and provide an opportunity to monitor earlier PPCD agreements. They usually consist of more than one forum. Within process-oriented dialogues, advocacy driven by results aims to elevate structural changes from lower levels to higher ones.

Pro Tipp:

- In process-oriented dialogues, it is easier to identify and address influential stakeholders' vested interests than in issue-based dialogues. Issue-based dialogues, constrained by shorter timeframes and often limited to single events, pose greater challenges in filtering vested interests.
- Process dialogues offer the advantage of monitoring results at the implementation stage to maintain the impact of advocacy efforts, whereas issue-based dialogues have constraints in influencing actors' behavior changes.

Textbox 6: Slaughterhouse along Kathmandu's rivers

In the 1990s, Kathmandu's rivers serve as dumping ground to unload livestock, slaughter them, and dispose of the waste. The dialogue forums unfolded between slaughterhouse operators and the elected mayor, initially fraught with accusations, threats, and unrealistic demands. The city sought clean rivers, while butchers desired alternative sites for their work. As the dialogue proceeded, both parties had to acknowledge each other's perspectives. Initially, in a negotiation process, the slaughterhouse operators demanded city funding for new facilities. The joint discussion then focused on exploring the potential revenue from higher-priced, better-quality meat, as well as the utilization of skins for leather products and bones for garment industry buttons. This offered slaughterhouse operators additional sources of revenue, if they slaughtered in different places and use their waste differently, creating a win-win solution for all.

Source: authors' elaboration

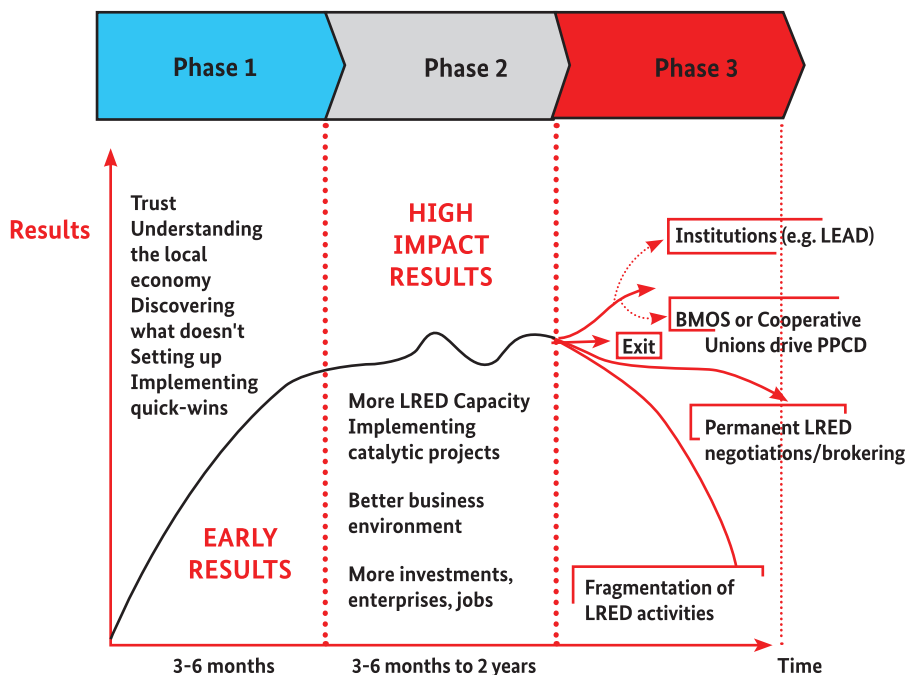
The example in Figure 5 below shows the evolution of a process-oriented PP(C)D over time, structured into three phases:

- **Phase 1 is the discovery phase**, lasting from three to six months. The main objective is establishing trust between the public, private, and cooperative

sectors. This is done by educating all three parties on interacting and exploring the effectiveness of the reform ideas submitted and discussed through the dialogue. The aim is to identify what works and what does not work concerning the proposed changes and reforms.

- **Phase 2 is the high-impact phase**, which may last another six months to two years. Partners are typically more productive than in Phase 1 due to their increased motivation gained from witnessing quick wins in the process and their greater experience in jointly designing LED proposals that are more likely to be accepted and successfully implemented.
- **Phase 3 is the sustainability/transfer/exit phase.** PPCD initiatives are often established to bridge the communication gap between the private, public, and cooperative sectors. Once trust and dialogue have been established, public officials consider private and cooperative sector concerns. Typical questions asked in this phase are: What will be the future of the dialogue mechanism? Should the dialogue be maintained, or should the energy and capacities built during Phases 1 and 2 be transferred to government institutions and advocacy groups? Does the future LRED process need continuous or sporadic dialogue events?

Figure 5: Evolution of an exemplary PPCD



Source: Based on Herzberg and Wright 2006, adjusted by the authors

Textbox 7: Buffer zone and Nepal's success in wildlife management

The political shift in 1990 ushered in a new wave of political leaders who were ready to challenge the existing system that prioritized wildlife conservation over the welfare of local communities. This led to a dialogue process that sought to address the root causes of conflicts between national parks and local residents across Nepal. Among the primary concerns were access to fodder and fuel for local communities, with simple technologies like biogas (methane) plants proposed as solutions. Another significant challenge was the damage to crops and livestock caused by wildlife from protected areas.

The process-based dialogue engaged various stakeholders, including local communities, park managers, enforcement agencies, global technical experts, and ultimately, members of Nepal's parliament. This culminated in establishing buffer zones, wherein communities living adjacent to the parks became fifty percent shareholders in revenue sharing.

Source: authors' elaboration

IV. STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE FOR DIALOGUE EVENTS

A. Selection of a Champion for the Dialogue

The PPCD initiator chooses a champion to host and organize the dialogue at the municipal or provincial level. The selected champion must demonstrate strong dedication to advancing a shared cause, exhibit a genuine enthusiasm for promoting the local economy, effectively balance the interests of all relevant stakeholders, and commit to following through on the results or advocacy processes established during the dialogue.

A meeting with the primary stakeholders is essential to designate a champion for the PPCD forum or process. Preferably, the champion selection should be reached through consensus among local stakeholders. The chosen champion should represent an institution of equal standing among economic actors, such as a chamber, sector association, cooperative union, civil society organization, consumers' forum, or local government body. For a provincial-level PPCD in Nepal, suitable candidates for a champion include the Provincial FNCCI or the Provincial Planning Commission.

Pro Tipp!

Champions shouldn't be excessively influential, as this might limit the scope of the agenda and lead to reliance on a single individual or a small group of actors (Herzberg and Wright 2006).

B. Selection of the Moderator

The choice of a moderator for the dialogue is critical. Having a skilled moderator, who enjoys broad acceptance by all stakeholders can significantly improve the prospects of a successful PPCD.

Important qualifications for a moderator include:

- Being respected ensures that their words carry weight, and their instructions are adhered to.
- Possessing a thorough and balanced understanding of the issue at hand and the diverse perspectives surrounding it.
- Being familiar with the panellists and their stances on the matter.
- Having the ability to effectively communicate with a broad range of individuals, from mayors to micro-entrepreneurs.
- Being proficient in mediation, negotiation, and settling disputes (arbitration).

- Ensuring good time management.
- Keeping abreast with the latest dialogue methodologies.
- Synthesizing key insights from the dialogue process.

An innovative and entrepreneurial approach to organizing and implementing PPCD has proven helpful. However, one difficult question that needs to be addressed is whether the moderator should be a local or external person. While local knowledge can be advantageous, an external facilitator may not carry any personal or cultural biases or drive specific agendas, which can also be beneficial.

The essential functions of a PPCD facilitator are to:

- Consult with stakeholders to determine their interest, willingness, and ability to participate and find ways to foster broad representation from the public, private, and cooperative sectors (before the event).
- Develop the objectives, agenda, formats, and key questions for a dialogue forum, injecting energy while paying close attention to the discussion flow and assessing whether the discussion remains on track to achieve the set objectives (before and during the event).
- Keeping accurate and transparent records and providing impartial and timely summaries of each forum (after the event).

Important lessons learned for selecting moderators (Herzberg and Wright 2006) include:

- Demonstrating a high level of professionalism throughout all phases of PPCD is essential.
- Preparing the PPCD forums early is critical to ensuring their value and productivity.
- Establishing a timetable and moderation guidelines in advance is crucial is consistently adhering to them while adapting flexibly to the participants' needs and speed.
- Paying attention to logistical details is important for smooth operations.
- Providing complete and transparent documentation that is readily accessible and widely available.
- Having relevant experience in the sector or topic being moderated, while maintaining political neutrality and avoiding personal stakes in the topic.
- Preparing specific panel questions and communicating them to panellists beforehand, if a panel discussion is part of the forum.

The moderator designs a customized agenda in consultation with the organizer and champion before each event. Specific topics to be discussed are usually agreed upon before the events.

C. Identifying and Framing the Dialogue Issue

Selecting topics for a PPCD requires careful consideration of the different interests, concerns, and objectives of all three sectors involved.

Reminder!

Within a process oriented PPCD, topics commonly stem from preceding processes in which a PPCD event is integrated. LRED, for example, integrates PPCD events as inherent components. Conversely, arranging an ad-hoc PPCD event typically addresses a sudden or escalating issue that has emerged over time or reached a critical juncture.

Whatever the nature of a PPCD, the following approach should be considered for identifying and framing a dialogue topic:

- **Identify common interests:** find areas where public, private, and cooperative sector interests intersect.
- **Consult stakeholders:** engage the sectors to understand priorities and challenges.
- **Assess impact and urgency:** focus on pressing issues with broad relevance.
- **Consider LRED relevance:** choose topics relevant to economic governance and the LRED process.
- **Balance diverse perspectives:** listen to and accommodate different stakeholder concerns.

- **Address challenges and opportunities:** select topics addressing both challenges and opportunities.
- **Promote innovation and growth:** prioritize topics with a forward drive, such as fostering innovation and sustainable solutions.
- **Build trust and collaboration:** Choose topics that promote trust and collaboration.
- **Review and prioritize:** Finalize topics based on relevance, feasibility, stakeholder input, and their integration into the ongoing LRED process.

Throughout the PPCD discussion, the participants should explore the complexity of the selected issue and create a shared understanding of its challenges and the scope of possible solutions. To enable such a solution-oriented discussion, the moderator prepares questions that break down the topic into different perspectives, seeks clarifications, and focuses on developing solutions (see sub-section F. below).

D. Selection of Resource Persons

The PPCD organizer should work with the identified champion to find one or more local resource persons to help them delve deeper into the issue. This person should be able to clarify the issue and identify the groups affected by it. The resource person should also be able to generate interest from stakeholders to discuss the issue and support in developing

ideas and questions for dialogue. The resource person could be a local person severely impacted by the issue to be discussed or an external person with in-depth knowledge on the issue.

The key criteria for selecting the resource person(s) are:

- Respected by local economic actors or the broader expert community,
- Solid experience in the topic or economic sub-sector,
- Comprehensive understanding of relevant issues and context,
- Effective communication and presentation abilities,
- Free from conflicts of interest, and
- Relevant academic background as needed.

The role of the resource person is to help catalyse the dialogue by making a short impulse presentation on the current state of the issue. The presentation helps to provide context, frame, and focus the discussion. It should be thoroughly researched and unbiased. It is common practice to conclude with a slide containing a set of questions to initiate the dialogue process. Incorporating images and data aids in improving comprehension of the issue and reduces redundancy. Typically, a fifteen-minute time slot is adequate for the presentation.

During the later sessions of the PPCD forum, the resource person should be available to provide expert answers and participate in a panel discussion.

E. Selection of Venue

The choice of venue for the PPCD forum must be made with the following criteria in mind:

- The venue should be agreeable and uncontroversial for all participants.
- It should provide easy access for all attendees, including those with disabilities or requiring wheelchair access.
- Adequate ventilation is essential within the hall.
- There must be a reliable power supply with a backup generator and diesel available as needed.
- Clean and accessible toilets should be provided for all participants.
- Assurance of food and water quality is imperative.
- Ensuring that audio-visual equipment is in good working condition, with a technician on standby, is crucial. Issues such as fresh batteries and fully charged microphones should be addressed.
- The venue manager should be informed in advance about the required layout.

F. Formulating the Dialogue Questions

In successful PPCDs, questions are used to steer discussions, foster collaboration, spark innovation, ensure inclusiveness,

assess progress, and prompt reflection. The questions, their sequence, and combination for each PPCD event must be tailored to achieve the best results. Each topic and event are unique and require a tailored approach.

While the moderator is tasked with drafting the questions, he/she will collaborate with the champion and other organizers, such as the initiating development project that sponsors the event or series of events, to refine and finalize the questions.

When creating questions for PPCD, it is important to consider multiple factors to ensure effectiveness:

- **Clarity:** Ensure questions are clearly formulated and easy to understand.
- **Relevance:** Focus questions on the event's topic and objective.
- **Open-endedness:** Use open questions to encourage detailed responses and avoid yes/no answers.
- **Balance:** Include questions that reflect all sectors' perspectives.
- **Diversity:** Address various aspects of the topic for inclusivity.
- **Sensitivity:** Use respectful language to prevent conflict.
- **Complexity:** Match questions to participants' levels of expertise.

- **Engagement:** Formulate questions that spark interest and encourage active participation.
- **Progression:** Organize and sequence questions logically to guide the discussion.
- **Flexibility:** Be ready to adjust questions based on the discussion flow

In general, the questions should:

- enable discussions and exchanges related to the topic,
- explore the topic's complexity,
- create a shared understanding of its challenges,
- and possible solutions.

Textbox 8: Provincial PPCD (2022) - Dialogue on LED in Nepal: Need and prospect in Lumbini Province

Key questions discussed:

1. **Why is local economic development needed?**
2. **How do we identify local competitive advantages?**
3. **How can we connect/link physical infrastructure and social development with the issue of local economic development?**
4. **How can we continue the LED dialogue process beyond this particular event?**

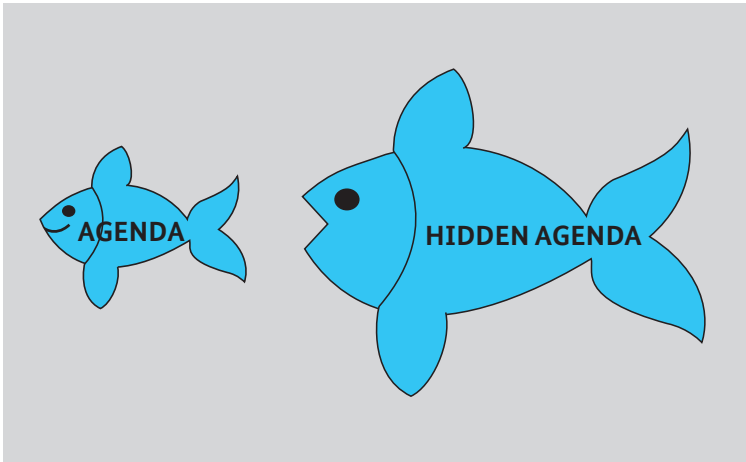
Source: GIZ GRAPE/LPED, 2022

The Harvard Business Review (HBR) research reveals that strategic questions can be grouped into five categories: *investigative*, *speculative*, *productive*, *interpretive*, and *subjective*. Each question unlocks a different aspect when exploring a topic. Together, they can help examine a topic from different angles, explore its complexity, and find sustainable solutions to trigger change or address an issue (Chevallier, Dalsace, and Barsoux 2024).

- **Investigative questions** (*What's known?*) identify and analyse an issue or topic in depth. These questions dig deeper to generate non-obvious information and clarify the “why” and the “how” of an issue.
- **Speculative questions** (*What if? What else?*) broadly examine a problem. These questions help reframe the problem or explore more creative solutions.
- **Productive questions** (*Now what?*) help assess the availability of resources. They analyse solutions for feasibility, impact the speed of decision-making, introduce initiatives, and impact the pace of implementation.
- **Interpretive questions** (*So, what?*) help to make real sense and go beneath the surface. These questions ask, “*What is really going on?*” and logically follow the investigative, speculative, and productive questions.
- **Subjective questions** (*What's unsaid?*) attempt to reveal tensions and hidden agendas. They address the meta-

level where personal or organizational motivations, conflicts, frictions, taboos, and hidden agendas lie. These questions ask, “*What is the elephant in the room?*” (see Figure 6)

Figure 6: *What’s unsaid?*



Source: Jack Ziegler, 2007

Not every PPCD needs to include all five types of discussion questions. Additionally, the order of the questions can be altered. Nevertheless, utilizing these categories as a structure to create questions can be advantageous and result in meaningful conversations.

Textbox 8 and Textbox 9 present questions used at provincial and municipal PPCDs. The provincial PPCD aimed to raise awareness and exchange experiences on LRED initiatives, primarily featuring investigative and productive questions. In

contrast, the municipal PPCD in Siddharthanagar, part of the local strategy development process, utilized speculative and interpretive questions.

Textbox 9: Municipal PPCD (2022): Joint understanding of economic development vision of Siddharthanagar for B.S 2100

- 1. What would be the economic vision of Siddharthanagar City for the year 2100?**
- 2. What are the vision pillars that help realize your desired vision?**
- 3. What economic benefits would Siddharthanagar offer when the city's vision is realised?**
- 4. Who would get the economic benefits in Siddharthanagar when the city's vision is realised?**
- 5. Which values would improve economic services in Siddharthanagar generated by the year 2100?**
- 6. What five key economic strategies would help to realise the desirable vision, and who could take the lead in formulating / implementing them?**

Source: GIZ GRAPE/LPED, 2022

G. Options of Dialogue Formats (layout, flow, tools)

Various dialogue formats can incorporate different moderation tools to enhance the discussion. These may include impulse

presentations by resource persons, open moderated feedback sessions, panel discussions with representatives from diverse sectors and interest groups, case studies, photo galleries visualizing the issues, break-out groups, World Café sessions, or Open Spaces.

New virtual technologies, such as online polling tools like TedMe, Mentimeter, or Slido, can be integrated. These tools allow for real-time opinion polls and the collection of ideas from the audience during or after the event, facilitating the evaluation process. The ideas gathered through these apps can be visualized as word clouds, summarizing the general mood of the participants. Utilizing such technology can significantly aid and enhance the progress of PPCD by addressing challenges like expanding stakeholder participation, ensuring transparent processes, and sharing consultation results (Nielsen 2021).

The selection, combination, and sequencing of tools in a PPCD flow can vary greatly between events, influenced by the time available, resource persons, process maturity, moderation skills, and the need for novelty. The room layout also impacts the choice of tools. For example, breakout groups are challenging to implement in a fixed classroom-style setting, whereas a venue with a stage or central free space is ideal for panel discussions.

Important! The topics to be discussed and the stakeholder mix invited to the event determine the moderation method, not the layout of the room.

Annex 2 gives an overview of tools and facilitation methods frequently used in PPCDs/PPDs, each with a brief explanation of its nature.

H. Initial Communication Process

The initial communication of a PPCD is crucial in setting the tone for the collaboration and in establishing a framework for the ongoing interaction. This communication typically involves several key components to ensure clarity, mutual understanding, and a shared commitment to the dialogue's objectives. Effective PPCDs implement communication strategies that highlight the value of dialogue to both participants and the public. Its shape and future direction are determined in the early phases of a process oriented PPCD. Communicating these critical aspects to stakeholders and the wider public in the locality is essential. The success of a local PPCD relies on identifying the right issues and process steps and effectively communicating them to garner attention, interest and buy-in from potential participants.

I. Participants and Invitation Process

Relevant and representative stakeholder participation should be agreed upon in a transparent process and be balanced,

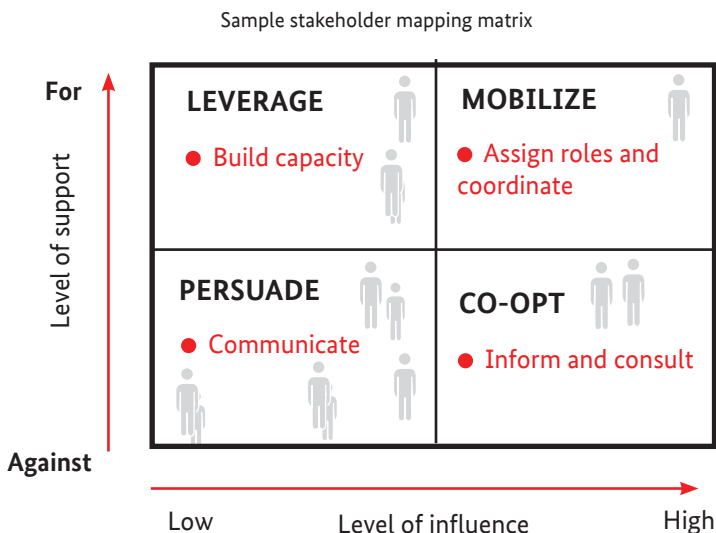
practicable, and inclusive to serve the dialogue's objectives and to best mitigate the risk of process or event capture by one interest group. A diverse, gender-balanced audience from the public, private, and cooperative sectors should be invited to each PPCD event. The PPCD should include a range of diverse groups, for example representatives of community organizations, different ethnicities, and disadvantaged groups, and cooperate with them to ensure a more balanced and inclusive local development process. Concerned economic sub-sectors and development organizations supporting LRED should also be represented.

The size of the group of participants matters as well. Smaller groups tend to generate greater trust and produce more effective dialogue, but this must be balanced against the need for inclusivity and representation. To be effective and results-oriented, the total number of participants should be at most 40 persons.

Key representatives from the municipalities, including high officials (mayor, deputy mayor, chief administrative officer), the local CCI president, and the DCU president, should participate in each PPCD. Important provincial stakeholders from the public, private, and cooperative sectors, civil society, and representatives from development organizations supporting LRED or interested in the topic should complement the group.

Stakeholder Analysis

Figure 7: Stakeholder analysis matrix



Source: Herzberg and Wright 2006

A stakeholder analysis can support the champion and moderator to identify and invite the right stakeholders. It could help answer the following questions (Herzberg and Wright 2006):

- Which individuals and local/provincial government agencies or departments are the most willing and capable of engaging in the dialogue process/event?
- Which government agencies or departments are most crucial for the dialogue's success, and what is their level of capacity and political will?

- How can we use the public sector pockets of capability and enthusiasm to involve key agencies and departments in the process?
- Are there private and/or cooperative sector interests that have undue influence over government decision-making?

Which stakeholders might oppose the idea of dialogue, and for what reasons? Can existing intermediary organizations be strengthened, or is there a need to create new structures to address the gap? The stakeholder analysis matrix depicted in Figure 7 offers a valuable framework for assessing the quality of different stakeholders and determining the appropriate strategy to approach them.

Actors favouring PPCDs and having a high degree of influence can be involved early in developing the dialogue format by being assigned roles and coordinating their input.

Stakeholders being positive towards the dialogue but have less influence can be selected for capacity building.

Those who oppose the dialogue may need to be asked why, informed, consulted, and communicated with compelling and persuasive arguments to gain their support. This approach can help make the process or event more acceptable to them.

Invitation Management

An invitation letter must be drafted with clearly stated objectives and expected results of the dialogue. The participants list must be prepared, ensuring they are checked for accuracy and the right salutation. The list must have updated e-mail contacts and telephone numbers because participants often depend on receiving a reminder phone call a few days before the event. The letter must also contain the contact addresses of the organizers, hosts, or facilitators to address questions and reduce confusion. Hard copies are often not required, but letters must be registered at the office, and some may not accept a personal invitation but require an official invitation. Thus, both official and personal emails will be required.

In Nepal and across many South Asian countries, it is taken for granted that there will be a follow-up phone call after the official invitation letter has been received and accepted by the following:

- Chief guest
- Chair of the session
- Members of the panel
- Resource persons

- Case study presenters
- Rapporteurs /translators (if needed)

Some may ask for details about the stated objectives and results, request a few talking points, or even wish to meet the moderators and organizers before the event to discuss format and content.

Pro Tip! In many cultures, having a cup of tea together is even better than a phone call.

J. Facilitating the Dialogue Forum

- The moderator facilitates the dialogue forum. The key features of a moderator are neutrality and impartiality. She/he needs a good knowledge of the key topic to guide the discussion without actively engaging in the discussions. The moderator facilitates the dialogue event in **three stages**:

Stage 1: The **preparation stage** consists of the following tasks:

- Grasping the issues or agenda and gaining contextual knowledge,
- Receiving a briefing on the quality and depth of participants regarding shared issues,
- Familiarizing oneself with the venue and its setup,
- Preparing to choose the appropriate format or tools,

- Thoroughly understanding the ideas or options of resource persons,
- Preparing discussion prompts or questions for participants and panelists,
- Ensuring the discussion results are effectively captured.

Stage 2: During the dialogue **event stage**, the moderator needs to take care of the following activities:

- Organize an (optional) inaugural ceremony,*
- Request the champion and/or local government representative to chair the dialogue event,
- Introduce participants or allow participants to introduce themselves,
- Introduce the objectives and agenda of the event to the participants,
- Initiate the dialogue by prompting discussion or asking set questions to panelists, participants, or focused groups, following the selected format,
- Record key discussion results,
- Foster a friendly atmosphere,
- Demonstrate neutrality to assist the participant in expressing their ideas,

- Engage participants by making eye contact, acknowledging them, making them feel important, and encouraging contributions to the discussion,
- Keep discussions on track to manage time effectively,
- Ask participants to stay focused on the agenda when expressing their views or ideas,
- Encourage participants to propose common solutions rather than personal interests,
- Conduct a Q&A session and wrap up the dialogue.**

*A formal inauguration ceremony should be optional as it often takes time and consumes valuable energy from the main dialogue event. In case it becomes necessary, it is important to designate:

- The chief guest
- The chair
- The keynote speakers and
- The MC
- Any other invited guests

The method of inauguration should also be planned in accordance with local traditions and protocols. The shorter the inauguration ceremony, the less energy it will consume.

Having a prominent chief guest can enhance the visibility of the dialogue. Depending on the local culture, guests are often welcomed with flowers and scarves.

** After two rounds of questions and panellist comments, the moderator opens the floor for further questions. This can be achieved by having small groups or tables formulate collective questions, passing the microphone to those who raise their hand, or collecting questions digitally via online platforms. With some help, the facilitator can categorize or cluster repetitive questions. Specific questions may be directed to individuals, while others may be addressed to all speakers. In this process, it is essential to prevent certain participants from dominating the discussion to ensure diverse participation. Finally, the moderator should summarize the key issues at the end to properly conclude the session.

Stage 3: In the **way-forward stage**, the moderator considers the following measures:

- Encourage decision by consensus if it arises naturally, but avoid pressuring participants to reach a consensus.
- Based on the dialogue's progress, either summarize the event's outcomes and propose a way forward or ask the chair of the dialogue forum to provide concluding remarks.

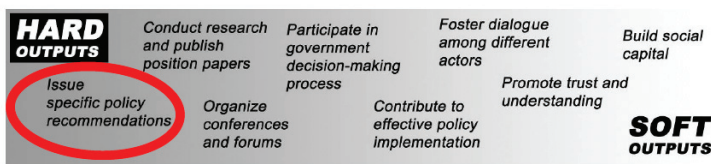
K. Documenting the Dialogue Forum and Reporting

The dialogue event organizer and moderator should arrange and brief a note-taker and documenter when preparing the event. The documentation should contain the key questions and main results of the discussion. The notes should be brief but complete, compiled in the local language, and phrased as neutral as possible. The general content of the PPCD event documentation should include, but is not limited to:

- Objectives of the dialogues,
- Process description,
- Constraints for addressing the discussed issue,
- Private and cooperative sector concerns and capacity for dialogue,
- Public sector attitude and capacity for addressing the issue,
- Interest and role of support organizations,
- Main discussion results and agreements made,
- Conclusion and way forward.

The PPD handbook distinguishes between hard and soft outputs in PPD with a local business climate reform agenda (Figure 8). Both types of outputs and all varieties in between are important and can positively contribute to a locality's LRED progress.

Figure 8: Types of PPCD Outputs



Source: Herzberg and Wright 2006

L. Follow-up of Dialogue Forum

There are several ways to follow up on a LRED dialogue:

- Create a record of proceedings documenting the key results and the process undertaken, including the list of participants and event photographs.
- Send a thank-you letter to all participants.
- Develop action plans based on the ideas and recommendations generated during the dialogue. These plans should outline results, roles, and required resources for implementation.
- Support local leaders and dialogue champions in launching new dialogues on various topics and assist them in organizing these events. These dialogues can be thematic, geographic, or responsive to emerging challenges and opportunities.

The designated champion will monitor the dialogue forum's progress and ensure that the agreed-upon activities are

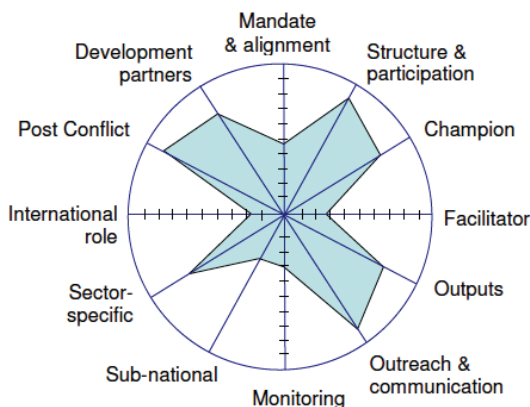
implemented, and the results are followed through. It may be more challenging to follow up at the provincial and national levels to bring about policy changes, and support from others may be necessary. A process oriented dialogue designed within a strategic framework could be pursued to focus on a long-term reform agenda.

M. Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring and evaluation (M&E) are effective tools for managing the PPCD process and illustrating its purpose and effectiveness. Once a process oriented PPCD is underway, halting it may prove challenging. Therefore, it is vital to establish objectives and milestones early in the process. It is crucial to determine when to conclude the PPCD before it is even initiated (The Cluster Competitiveness Group 2011). Simple process milestones (e.g., number of participants, etc.) set at the outset of the process should be continuously monitored throughout its various phases. Monitoring in later phases of the process involves overseeing the implementation of actions resulting from the PPCD and their impact on the central topic of discussion, such as the local economy. One possible method of assessing a PPCD's performance and achievements is to devise a monitoring and evaluation wheel comprising predefined indicators. Figure 9 illustrates a sample

evaluation wheel from an exemplary PPD process. Depending on its nature and specific characteristics, this type of M&E wheel can be tailored to suit any PPCD process.

Figure 9: Sample evaluation wheel



Source: Herzberg and Wright 2006

The assessment of the achievements per indicator in the M&E wheel can be done regularly in a participatory way, involving the champion, moderator, event/process organizers, and sponsors. Inputs from event participants collected at PPCD events through online tools, such as TedMe, could also be utilized.

V. LESSONS LEARNT FROM PREVIOUS APPLICATIONS (DO'S AND DON'TS)

- The critical lessons presented here are based on the experience in Nepal and shared experiences from other countries' public-private dialogue forums.
- There is no universal approach to selecting a format or tool for a PPCD event. The chosen format and tool must be adaptable to the specific circumstances, including the number of participants, location, and time commitments of attendees. Adjustments may be necessary to ensure the event's success.
- Selecting the right champion and issue for discussion is pivotal for initiating a successful dialogue.
- Establishing trust among the organizer, champion, and participants is essential for fostering a productive dialogue.
- It is crucial to avoid 'Manels' (all-male panels) and ensure inclusivity among contributors/panellists (including women, youth, disabled individuals, and other marginalized groups).
- Hosting a meal for panellists and speakers before the event can enhance their comfort and facilitate an open exchange of views and perspectives.

- Providing economic actors with information on issues and potential solutions one week before the discussion can enhance the quality of participation and promote productive exchanges among stakeholders.
- A dialogue event should not exceed two hours in duration.
- Before an event, it's prudent to inquire about any concerns regarding the venue, dietary restrictions, or the attendance of assistants, bodyguards, and photographers. For instance, a mayor expressed reluctance to attend a program at a hotel subject to a court-ordered demolition.
- Many process dialogues aim for policy changes, and the majority achieve their objectives.
- Avoiding unnecessary discussions beyond the agenda can free up time for meaningful dialogue. Keeping the discussion agenda-focused is key to the event's success.
- Involving multiple stakeholders in dialogue adds value and benefits, enabling economies of scale and enhancing the effectiveness of collective actions when implemented and followed up.
- PPCD has significant potential to benefit from support and facilitation through new technologies.
- Plants, books and local speciality products make excellent gifts for panellists, resource persons, and other speakers.

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VII. ANNEX 1: CHARTER OF GOOD PRACTICE

Charter of Good Practice in Using Public-Private Dialogue: 13 Principles¹

Principle I - Contextual Design: considering various forms, levels, and timeframes.

Principle II - Open Governance Process: functioning under open, transparent, and fair governance rules.

Principle III - Mandate and Institutional Alignment: stating objectives clearly.

Principle IV -Structure and Participation: having a solid structure and representative participation.

Principle V - Facilitation: being facilitated professionally with dedicated staff and resources.

Principle VI - Champions: having leadership from a set of individuals or organizations.

Principle VII - Outputs: consisting of structure and process outputs, analytical outputs, soft outputs or recommendations.

¹ (Herzberg and Sisombat 2016)

Principle VIII - Outreach and Communications: enabling communication of a shared vision.

Principle IX - Monitoring and Evaluation: demonstrating its purpose, performance, and impact.

Principle X - Appropriate Area and Scope: tailoring to the set of issues to be addressed.

Principle XI - Crisis and Conflict Response: mitigating entrenched interests, rebuilding trust.

Principle XII - Development Partners: benefiting from their input and support, partnership, coordination, and additionality.

Principle XIII - Sustainability: sustaining the PPD platform by transferring its operations, management or financing from a development partner to local institutions.

VIII. ANNEX 2: DIALOGUE TOOLS

Every dialogue is unique and serves a distinct purpose. Each type of dialogue format can incorporate a variety of moderation tools. These may include case studies, a presentation by a resource person, a moderated open feedback session, a panel discussion involving representatives from various sectors and interest groups, photo galleries illustrating the issues, breakout groups, World Café sessions, or Open Space discussions. Before each event, the moderator will work with relevant stakeholders to create a customized agenda.

Annex 2 briefly describes frequently used dialogue tools and links to further sources to search for more details.

Case studies

One way to make a dialogue relevant and authentic is to have one or two case study presentations. This should be done by individuals engaged in those cases so that questions from the audience can be answered competently. Case studies have a story, people involved, dates, photos, results, impacts, challenges, success, and lessons learned gathered from success

or failure. Preparation time is often needed to tailor the case study to the dialogue objectives and audience. Facts need to be laid out objectively. Using the same presentation for all events is not advisable if a series of PPCDs is underway in different locations. Do not forget to source information.

Panel discussion

Panel discussions are among the most popular methods to conduct dialogues. They capture a wide range of opinions in a joint and structured discussion, usually in front of the audience. Panels include a group of individuals or institutional representatives who are relevant to the dialogue. Panel discussions are facilitated by a moderator who introduces the panellists and then opens the conversation by asking general questions about the topic. In each of the following rounds of discussion, the questions to the panel members become more targeted to explore the topic in more depth.

After each round of discussion, the moderator may allow the audience/participants to ask the panellists questions.

The moderator, who is neutral to the topic, summarizes the discussion after each round and concludes the panel discussion with a joint agreement or statement of understanding. He/she also describes the outlook of the issue and concludes the conversation. Panel discussions can sometimes be entertaining and dynamic, depending on the topic.

Photo Galleries

“A picture speaks louder than 1,000 words”. Photo galleries can be instrumental in holding a dialogue on sensitive issues such as human trafficking, conflict victims, sexual exploitation, broken-down neighbourhoods, etc. Participants could start the dialogue by visiting a photo gallery and viewing the photo stories. This process can stimulate the participants' interest in the topic. After receiving a visual impression of the topic, participants can better relate and contribute to the dialogue in the next step.

Breakout groups

Breakout groups are commonly utilized to facilitate dialogue with a larger participant pool. Participants are organized based on topics or areas of interest, with group discussions occurring as the main participant body divides into smaller groups for more focused conversations. This enables participants to delve deeper into sub-aspects of the main topic with heightened focus and increased interaction compared to the main group discussion, fostering more extensive participation among a larger number of individuals. Typically, one participant selected from each subgroup who engaged in the earlier discussion presents a summary of the discussion from each breakout session in the plenary.

World Café

The World Café² is a tool that creates an informal café setting to facilitate discussion or explore a topic in a small group table with ideally 5-8 participants. Usually, the discussion is done in three rounds, each lasting for 15-20 minutes, and a key question for each round on the topic. One host is selected at each table by the first-round participants. The host remains at the same table throughout the process while other participants change the table in each round. The hosts at each table act as rapporteurs and moderators, ensuring the discussion flows and that each group captures their results on paper tablecloths with colour markers. Participants use the color-coded markers to answer the question in each round, and they are asked to be creative by writing, drawing, and doodling on the tablecloths.

The World Café allows participants to be open and communicative and contribute creatively. The discussions result in colourful murals, drawings, sketches, word art, graffiti, poems, and writings.

In 2005, an LED Café approach and manual were created to help facilitators and local stakeholders carry out large-scale events on Local Economic Development (LED). The main objective of an LED Cafe event is to familiarize participants

² <https://theworldcafe.com>

with modern concepts of LED and, by this, open up new perspectives on improving living conditions in their respective territories (InWEnt 2005).

Open Space

Open Space³ is a method that allows people to express and discuss opinions on important topics freely, without any formal agenda. Although it is a structured process, the course and results cannot be precisely predicted.

Four Principles and One Law guide the leader and all participants. The **principles** are:

1. Whoever comes is the right people,
2. Whatever happens is the only thing that could have happened,
3. Whenever it starts, is the right time,
4. When it is over, it is over.

The first principle reminds each person of the obvious fact that those present are the only ones there. Whatever gets done will get done with them, or not at all. There is little point in worrying about all those who should have come but didn't. It is essential to concentrate on those who are there. The experience is that, in some strange way, **the group present is always the right group**. In more practical terms, it has been discovered that if the group is deeply involved in the issue at

hand and excited by the possibilities, that involvement and excitement are contagious, and others will soon join in. Even if the technical expertise is not the highest order, a committed group will find the needed expertise.

The second principle is yet another statement of the obvious. Given the theme at hand and the people in attendance, **whatever happens, is the only thing that could have happened.** Change the people, time, place, or theme, and something different will result. It is, of course, possible that the result of the gathering could be a miserable failure, but experience shows that such a negative result is usually the product of negative expectations. Expect the worst, and you will very often get it. Expectations are critical. Those who come to an Open Space event with a precise and detailed list of intended results will be frustrated. More than that, they will inevitably miss the positive and useful things that might occur.

The most complex and vital point about leadership in Open Space is that the leader must genuinely trust the group to find its way. Attempts to impose specific results or agendas will disrupt the process. People not prepared to let go of their detailed agenda should not lead.

The third principle will be wrong to those whose lives have been dictated by the clock, which is all of us. Conventional

³. <https://openspaceworld.org/wp2/>

wisdom says you must start on time to finish something. Conventional wisdom is correct if you know what you will do and how to do it. On the other hand, when creativity and authentic learning are involved, the clock can be more of a detriment than an assist. **Things will start when they are ready, and whenever they start is the right time.** When the creative learning moment arrives, it seems to create its own time. Of course, open space events occur in time, meaning there must be a beginning and a closing. But everything in the middle must be allowed to run its course.

The final principle, "**When it is over, it is over,**" emphasizes that deep learning and creativity have their internal life cycle. They may take more or less time, but they are over when they come to completion. Occasionally, this means that we must spend more time than we had planned, but often, the reverse is true. The creative moment has the habit of occurring very quickly, and there is no reason to sit around after the moment has passed.

The One Law of Open Space must be observed by all participants, or the process will not work. The Law of Two Feet says that everyone has two feet and must be prepared to use them. Each participant is responsible for a successful result in any Open Space Event. Individuals can make a difference and must make a difference. If that is not true in each situation, they must take responsibility to use their two feet and move

to a new place where they can make a difference. By word or gesture, indicate that you have nothing further to contribute, and go and do something useful.

Online Polling Tools

An online poll is a survey in which participants communicate their responses online, typically by completing a questionnaire on a web page. Online polls may allow anyone to participate, or they may be restricted to a sample drawn from a larger panel, e.g., the audience in a PPCD.

An online poll can be used at the beginning of a PPCD to learn about the participants' current knowledge or opinions on a specific topic. After attending the dialogue forum, it can be used again at the end of a PPCD to see how knowledge or opinions have changed. Participants can conduct the poll using a QR code with their smartphones, laptops, or tablets. The results can be visualized in colourful graphics and shared with the participants on a large screen in real-time during the event.

It is advisable to allocate the task of moderating the polling session(s) to one team member who is not the moderator. The polling questions must be carefully crafted to fit into the overall flow of the dialogue process. The result of an opening poll at the beginning of a PPCD event can even be used as a prompt during plenary or panel discussions. Also, the resource person can comment on the polling results and contextualize

them during his/her input.

Polling tools can also be used to evaluate a PPCD event and learn about suggestions for improving the next forum.

There is a multitude of polling apps. Popular are TedMe, Slido or Survey Monkey.



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