

Deliverable D3.1:

Participatory process framework model

<i>Work Package:</i>	<i>WP3 – Overcoming social barriers</i>
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Table of contents

1. Introduction.....	3
2. Model's objectives and approach:.....	3
3. Phases of the participatory process	4
3.1 Preliminary phase (1 to 3 months):.....	4
3.2 Initial phase (duration from 2 to 4 months).....	5
3.3 Central phase (2 to 6 months)	6
3.4 Final phase (1 month).....	7
4. Methodology.....	8

1. Introduction

The success of a participatory process (PP) depends on the effective participation of the decision makers that have the formal duty/right to take decisions on the issue to be addressed during the process.

Participation means an effective involvement not merely a superficial support.

When decision makers do not organize the participatory process, a critical situation may arise. It requires an accurate activity of motivation and involvement to ensure effective participation of all stakeholders¹.

Below an indicative model is reported, to be modified during the initial phase of the PP, to take into account the stakeholders' point of view.

2. Model's objectives and approach:

Participation can develop in many ways, from simple information to a real empowerment of people involved in the process². In this case a consultation process will be designed, where citizens will be listened and have the opportunity to state opinions on biogas, considering the arguments for and against provided by stakeholders and experts.

"Deliberate" etymologically comes from the Latin word *libra* (balance), it means "to evaluate, decide after mature consideration". This is the objective of the PP: to find a deliberation on biogas and bio-methane, i.e. determining what is the best for the community, considering on one hand the opinions of experts, on the other hand the knowledge, needs and values of the community.

The process does not end with a YES or NO answer to biogas, but with complex statements relating to the issue and to the territory. Citizens will weigh the possibilities, finding a consensus on advices and recommendations.

The main objective of the PP is building consensus on biogas, rediscovering the original meaning of "consensus", from Latin *consentire* "feel together, understand together and agree on a position".

The entire population will be much more aware at the end of the process. The jury of citizens and other participants will give their opinions based on deeper knowledge of the issue, free from prejudices or hearsay.

¹ US Environment Protection Agency, "Public participation Guide", Washington, <https://www.epa.gov/international-cooperation/public-participation-guide-process-planning>

² Paolo Tamburini, "Partecipare e decidere. Insieme e' meglio" in "Quaderni della Partecipazione", Regione Emilia Romagna, 2009

Additionally, an indirect impact in the whole population is expected through the participant's contacts and the medias.

In particular, as mentioned in "I quaderni della partecipazione" published by Emilia Romagna Region, participatory consultation processes aim to get a feedback by citizens on specific options and choices:

	DESCRIPTION	WHEN IS EFFECTIVE	WHEN IS NOT EFFECTIVE
Consultation	<p>The community has a small role and few choices.</p> <p>There are some alternatives, facilitators gather negotiated observations to be taken into account by decision makers.</p> <p>There is no involvement in the implementation phase.</p>	<p>You have to improve a service/project/plan.</p> <p>There is a clear vision and a precise framework for the implementation of the project.</p> <p>It appears there is a limited range of alternative choices.</p> <p>Prospectives are expressed in terms of impacts to the community.</p>	<p>When statements of the community are not taken into account.</p> <p>It is used as the only way to achieve local development objectives.</p> <p>There is no clear view of the problem.</p>

Source: Paolo Tamburini, "Partecipare e decidere. Insieme è meglio" in "Quaderni della Partecipazione", Regione Emilia Romagna, 2009

3. Phases of the participatory process

3.1 Preliminary phase (1 to 3 months):

1.a) Definition of the context

A report will be focus on: (a) what is stated by the laws and local regulations for biogas and biomethane projects, (b) which is the decisional process referred to the local biogas project, (c) the description of the specific situation, outlining which decisions are already taken, where the population can still intervene, who are the decision-makers, which role they will allow to the recommendations of citizenship.

An easy summary of the report will be presented to the inhabitants.

1.b) Title and logo selection:

The title will be a word, phrase or acronym to present the event.

The logo will be provided only if it helps understanding. Not to be considered as necessary.

1.c) Identification of the area and the population that will be affected by the biogas project (at least at municipality level).

1.d) Interviews with experts and local observers (at least 20) and mapping of stakeholders.

1.e) Preparation of a clear and effective presentation (with graphics and easy to read) in order to explain the topic and the PP (objectives, expected results, timing and methodologies). The Executive Committee (see below 2.c) will be asked to review the document before spreading.

3.2 Initial phase (duration from 2 to 4 months)

2.a) Involvement of stakeholders.

Through semi-structured interviews, stakeholders will present their point of view on the local biogas project.

2.b) Sharing the objectives and the PP program with stakeholders.

The presentation (point 1.e) will be shown and, in case, modified during a meeting that aims also to facilitate the contacts between stakeholders and to create a shared workspace, fulfilling the expectations of everybody, with a deep legitimacy due to a consensual agreement on the objectives and the process.

2.c) Election of an Executive Committee (EC) .

The Committee has the task of (1) checking the information on flyers and other communication tools prior to dissemination, (2) deciding the list of experts to be invited, (3) checking the accuracy of web responses, (4) choosing the issues to be discussed during the technical meetings planned in the project. Members of the EC include representatives of (or persons appointed by) the City and Region Administrators, local committees, local associations, the Managing Authority of the plants and other stakeholders.

2.d) Publication of clear and simple flyers describing the complexity of the issue in an easy way.

Such information are prepared based on the stakeholders' initial interviews and on the material delivered by them. In case of a conflictual situation (i.e. part of the population is against and part is in favour of the local project), it is important to spread out the information only after the approval of the EC, that decides by consensus.

2.e) Website and/or Blogs and Facebook page to store and send information and to answer citizens' questions.

2.f) Biogas hotline

Its aim isto collect questions from citizens. Based on a guideline, questions will be categorized in 2 sections:

- Those related to the participatory process that can get immediate response
- Those relating to the content that, if not already focussed, will be forwarded to experts and / or to the jury of citizens, with the purpose of discussing any questions raised during the participatory process.

Afterwards the person who raised the question will be informed about the answer.

(This instrument should be considered as a mean to involve those citizens who do not have access to internet and who cannot physically attend the meetings, i.e. old inhabitants).

2.g) Appointment of the jury of citizens, consisting of a group of citizens (min. 12, max. 24) randomly selected as a population sample, taking into account the criteria of age, sex, occupation, residence (town/city centre or suburbs).

3.3 Central phase (2 to 6 months)

3.a) 3 open-door events with experts.

Participants will include both members of the jury of citizens and other residents. We expect about 50 people for each event.

3.b) 2 technical meetings involving stakeholders

The meetings will involve 15/30 representatives of public and private sectors with at least 30 persons; the aim is to answer technical questions of citizens and to develop the issues the Executive Committee finds meaningful to highlight for a better understanding of the local project.

3.c) Meetings of the jury of citizens

They will be closed doors and will produce a report at the end of each meeting to be spread as a press release and through the blog/web page/Facebook page.

3.d) Guided tours to existing biogas plants, considered as best practices

3.4 Final phase (1 month)

4a) Presentation of the results at the end of the process, with a request to the local institutions to read it in official meetings and to take them into account during the decision process for biogas plants' projects.

4.b) Evaluation of the participatory process.

The perception of the process will be evaluated through a specific questionnaire.

The following frame shows the phases of the PP.

Depending on the degree of conflict on the topic in the community, we suggest different solutions: in high conflict situation we recommend to take specific strategies to reduce the elements of conflict.

ACTIVITIES	Low conflict situation	High conflict situation
1a) Definition of the context	Necessary	Necessary
1b) Selection of title	Necessary	Necessary
1c) Selection of the logo	Additional tool	Additional tool
1d) Interviews with experts and local observers (at least 20) and mapping of stakeholders	Necessary	Necessary
1e) Preparation of a presentation	Necessary	Necessary
2) Involvement of stakeholders	Necessary	Necessary
2b) Sharing of the objectives of the process and the program together with stakeholders	Useful but not necessary	Very useful to involve the stakeholders, especially when who takes decisions is not the requester of the participatory process
2c) Selection of an Executive Committee	Not Necessary	Very useful
2d) Publication of flyers	Necessary	Necessary – with the consensus of the EC
2e) Website-blog and Facebook	Necessary	Necessary, facilitate by an external moderator
2f) Biogas hotline	Additional tool	Additional tool
3a) 3 events with experts (50 people each)	Necessary	Necessary
3b) 2 technical meetings (15/30 representatives of public and private sectors with at least 30 persons)	Necessary	Necessary. Every technical meeting has to develop a specific topic.
3c) Meetings of the jury of citizens	Necessary	Necessary
3d) Guided tours to biogas plants	Very useful	Very useful
4a) Presentation of results	Necessary	Necessary
4b) Evaluation of the participatory process	Necessary	Necessary

4. Methodology

The participatory process will be based on the Jury of Citizens Model, widely used in USA, Germany and UK, and adopted in several participatory processes of Tuscany Region (e.g. the participatory process on biogas in Buonconvento-Siena in 2013).

A Citizens' Jury generally counts around 12-24 randomly selected citizens (through stratified random sampling) representative of the demographics of the area, who come together to deliberate on a given issue. According to the Jefferson Centre, which designed the method in the US, a citizens' jury should work 4-7 days.

The model uses also other tools (such as the web site/blog or Facebook page, open door events and the biogas hotline) in order to promote a larger participation of the local population. Furthermore, technical meetings and guided tours to biogas plants aim to let people know the issue in a deeply way.

Facilitators will chose the suitable methodologies to lead the meetings after initial interviews with stakeholders. Methodologies will be probably changed considering the local contexts and situations.

Where the project is still at a concept phase, we can for instance use the EASW (European Awareness Scenario Workshop) or GOPP (Goal Oriented Project Planning)³ that aim to develop a shared vision on the future of the community and to propose ideas on how to achieve it, by answering the following questions:

- How can we face the problem?
- Who is primarily responsible for their solution?

The EASW allows the introduction of technological and organizational decisions to improve urban and environmental management and it is widely used in Denmark in the field of new technologies. The GOPP is a method used for long time in the contexts of both north and south of the world and on different issues.

In the case of an advanced project, already defined in details, these methods are not recommended, so we will use other tools, such as Consensus Conference or Scenario Workshop⁴.

The methods named above have no copyright. In any case, we will not use these terminologies during the PP, because they are too technical and not very intelligible, with the result of creating a barrier to participation rather than support it.

³ Federico Bussi, "Progettare in partenariato. Guida alla conduzione di gruppi di lavoro con il metodo GOPP", Franco Angeli, 2001

⁴ Ida-Elisabeth Andersen and Birgit Jæger "Danish participatory models", Science and Public Policy, volume 26, number 5, October 1999
https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Birgit_Jaeger/publication/238725790_Scenario_workshops_and_consensus_conferences_towards_more_democratic_decision-making/links/53e88bde0cf2fb74872437b4.pdf

During the process the following deliveries will be provided:

- Flyers and papers on biogas and bio-methane in general
- Flyers and papers related to local biogas projects
- A website - blog for each participatory process