

## **Results from Panel 2 Small Group Discussion**

*Question 1: What are the ideas from the panel that resonate most in your small group?*

### **Citizen Participation is Key**



- Participation is the way to “solve” the problem of public apathy
- Engage the community at the earliest stage possible
- Decentralization is CRITICAL:
  - Empower neighborhoods in solving their own challenges
  - “Centralized budgets” is a challenge that must be overcome to achieve participation
  - Communities need to have the ability to set priorities

### **Education is Required**



- Capacity building is very important to achieving community participation
- Government needs to help citizens develop new skill sets
- Citizens need to feel ownership over important local level issues
- Citizens must see a benefit to engaging in order to overcome apathy

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*Question 1: What are the ideas from the panel that resonate most in your small group?*

### Leadership is Crucial



- Federal level leadership AND leadership that represents the community in question is key
- Leaders need to be willing to listen to their citizenry
- Leaders need to encourage citizen involvement in problem-solving

### Public Private Partnerships Play an Important Role



- NGOs enable stronger collaborations
- PPPs produce participation and lead to empowerment

## Results from Panel 2 Small Group Discussion

*Question 2: What other promising approaches in this area deserve attention?*

### Leverage existing institutions



- Leaders “moving toward” the people, where and when they meet
- Don’t impose constructs
- Use formal institutions (religious or otherwise) and informal institutions

### Engagement across jurisdictions



- Engagement with different agencies, and at local, regional, national, and (int’l)
- Coordination between government levels on matters of engagement
- Local issues easiest to engage

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*Question 2: What other promising approaches in this area deserve attention?*

### **Civic education (young and old)**



- Incorporate opportunities for engagement in public educ.
- Youth engagement strategies
- Begin with achievable project to build confidence
- Successful communities “evangelizing” others

### **Engaging the poor**



- Use the “informal sector” to build effective organizations with roots in the community
- All points of view must be represented
- Assist people to participate, e.g., provide child care, transportation money, etc.

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### **Pitfalls of Engagement**



- Engagement becoming demagogic and manipulated
- Policy makers imposing their perspective on citizens
- One group “hijacking” process
- Ensuring all points of view included in pluralistic society

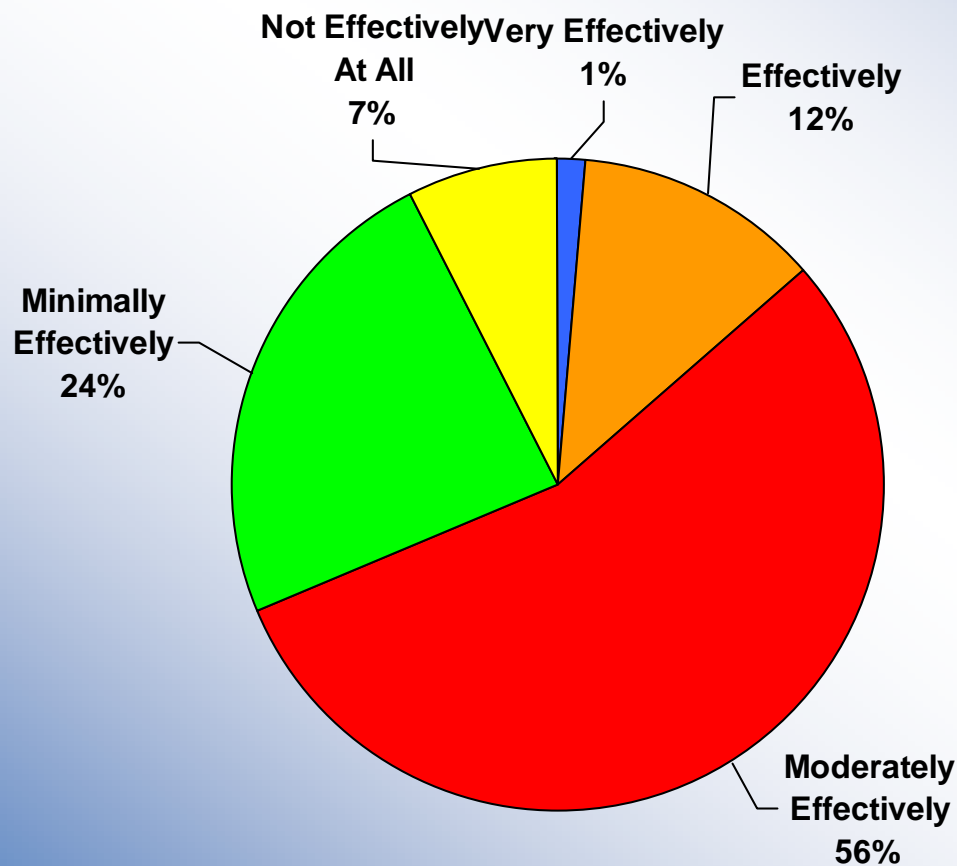
### **Role of Technology**



- Virtual community – role-play and experimenting with negotiation for planning (e.g. Second Life)
- New technology to promote participation
- Open-source policy development – use web collaborative technology to engage citizens in policy development

## Results from Panel 2 Small Group Discussion

*Question 3: How effectively do your country's local governments currently engage citizens?*



*Total number of responses: 147*

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### **Comments and Observations**



- It was difficult for those at our table--from areas of high poverty--to relate to this discussion
  - There are key differences in citizen engagement between developing and developed world (North and South)
- All 3 panel examples were "top-down" approaches, citizen engagement was driven by the government and not citizens
- A discussion of practical methods to engage the citizenry would have been appreciated:
  - All 3 panel examples succeeded in mobilizing a section of the population not usually reached. The question is: how did the innovators manage that? What methods did they employ?
  - What were the structures, tools, and methods used to educate and engage?