

The search for influence, dialogue and social control

What kind of discussion forums for state and non-state actors?

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In the framework of its Coproduction of Public Goods and Multi-Actor Partnerships programme, the IRG has observed for several years the processes of interaction between public institutions and non-state actors, including in that category “the private sector, economic and social partners including trade union organisations, civil society in all its forms according to national characteristics”¹. In the previous issue of the *Chroniques de la gouvernance*, Michel Sauquet and Martin Vielajus showed among other things how civil society or economic actors had gradually earned the right to partake in the definition of the public good alongside the state, having in many countries and at the international organisation level contributed to the devising and implementation of public policies, international conventions, regulations or norms. Calling for a critical analysis of the conditions of this co-production, they suggested examining the workings of the discussion forums between state and non-state actors as well as the latter’s influence strategies by means of advocacy or confrontation.²

Influence strategies have been addressed by the IRG over the past few years, notably via the “Non-governmental diplomacy” award and thanks to a range of seminars on international networks. Advocacy is a way civil society organisations have found to influence the devising of public policies. According to Executive Secretary emeritus of the Voluntary Action Network in India Anil K Singh,³ the influence capability of social organisations depends first and foremost on the identification of a shared problem to work at, then on these organisations’ ability to find popular strategies to make the position taken by the community felt. This author suggests that the influence – or the impact – of the organisations’ participation thereafter may be a process rather than a result or a concrete outcome. In effect it offers many social actors the opportunity to open negotiation forums with public authorities, as well as the possibility to throw in new building blocks of social justice, access to justice and any other aspects of public action. It would thus partake in the reinforcement of democracy and in a co-construction of the public good.

This thesis reaches the same conclusions as the IRG who has studied diverse influence processes. We need go no further for an example than the 2007 action by the Confederation of Malagasy Workers (FMM) towards the implementation of an

1. Definition proposed by the European Union in article 6 of the Cotonou Agreement’s General Provisions.

2. SAUQUET Michel, VIELAJUS Martin. “Les acteurs non étatiques : le nouveau maillon fort de la gouvernance?” [Non-state Actors : Governance’s New Strong Link?], *Chroniques de la gouvernance 2009-2010*, ECLM, p. 105-106.

3. Anil K. Singh, “Concept, Theory and Practice of Advocacy”.
<<http://www.sansad.org.in/pdf/concept.pdf>>.

economic partnership between Madagascar and the European Union. We shall quote here a remark heard during the retroactive capitalisation work the IRG conducted for the French Committee for International Solidarity⁴'s Civil Society and Participation programme: "In the short term – the summary of the 2007 CGT⁵ business report reads – it is evident that the Malagasy trade unions could not change the course of negotiations between the EU and Madagascar's public authorities. No doubt their implication in the debate occurred too late [...]. We could call it a failure of advocacy. However [...]the mobilization of Madagascar and Indian Ocean trade unions contributed, along with other African trade union mobilizations, to a stronger implication of the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) [...]on this question of economic partnerships."⁶ In this instance, the FMM's low impact on the partnership as such has to be admitted. Nevertheless its action registered in depth with a powerful international movement. Meanwhile, it is that same movement that helped bolster FMM members at Malagasy level. This example fully reflects the ambiguity of the experience: on the one hand the adopted policy yielded no concrete result, on the other it had a very real impact on the organisation now acknowledged at international level. This conclusion fits with Singh's analysis: even though there may not always be a positive outcome, the byproducts from such an advocacy exercise form part and parcel of the process.

As for the IRG's analysis of multi-actor forums it was initiated more recently via an encounter the University of Virginia organized in 2010 around the governance of health policies (see box below)

Non State actors and the governance of health policies: Virginia colloquium

Patients associations, professionals, scientists and businesses are more and more often the significant actors of health policies. For instance, the contribution of associations, has been decisive in many countries, be it in the case of AIDS, mental health or access to care for the most disadvantaged. But how can they contribute to public policies without losing their power to criticise or without absolving public

4. Comité français pour la solidarité internationale [French Committee for International Solidarity] (CFSI) <<http://www.cfsi.asso.fr/>>.

5. The General Confederation of Workers, a French trade union.

6. LAUNAY Claire, SAUQUET Michel, VIELAJUS Martin, 2010. Prendre part aux politiques publiques [Taking part in Public policies], evaluation of the CFSI programme on civil society and participation. Report published on the IRG website : <<http://www.institut-gouvernance.org>>.

authorities from their responsibilities? How do they set themselves up as legitimate partners for discussion? What are the strategies available to non-state actors?

A colloquium organised in 2010 by the IRG in partnership with the University of Virginia brought together public and private actors from France, China and the United States. The three countries faced the same constatation: the State is not equal to its health policy and has henceforward to come to accommodations with civil society actors. For instance it expects the associations to be the relays for its action, mobilising citizens, reporting back, etc.. It is not, however similarly prepared to give them a significant role in its policy making. Associations are not always in a position to play this role, for instance when they have specialised in certain pathologies and lack an overall view, when their territorial range is inadequate, when their volunteers lack competence or availability, when they fear losing their freedom of speech or for other reasons. Besides, influence strategies may in some cases have counter-productive effects, for instance when the criticism of certain organisations, amplified by the media, ends up undermining efforts towards the devising of public action in partnership. "Cosmetic participation" may open the door to disappointment, to the radicalisation of extremist talk or to a pressure group (lobby) strategy. Given all these obstacles as well as power relations and inequalities in the access to knowledge, the co-construction of public policies all too often remains pie in the sky. Conceiving of a multi-actor governance remains a challenge for all.

Several participants enquired about the situation in France post the 2002 law providing for the implementation of a "health democracy". Where are the discussion forums and do they work? With the support of a diversified follow-up committee, the IRG has undertaken in 2011 to question the French health system actors with a view to take stock of the discussion forums in the field of health (see below box by Sophie Verrier)

Pierre-Yves Guihéneuf, IRG

Discussion – or dialogue forums that bring together public and private actors, notably around sectoral or research policy issues have indeed proliferated in several countries, notably under the impulse of national legislative inducements and international conventions, added to the pressures of social expectations. They often emerge at a local (but also national and indeed international) level in such domains as economic development, the environment, social issues or even more broadly solidarity and humanitarian endeavours (see box below).

**Building a collective and influent NGO voice:
A study of French and American platforms**

In 2010 in the framework of the Young Consultants Project run by Sciences Po Paris' School of International Affairs, the IRG supervised a comparative study of French and American platforms for non-governmental organisations (NGOs) providing emergency and development aid.

With a view to achieve positions the stronger for being shared, NGOs have over the past few years got together under the umbrella of national and international platforms. These platforms are notably tasked with representing the positions of their member organisations before the public institutions. Coordination SUD coordinates French international solidarity organisations at national level. InterAction is its American counterpart.

A Young Consultants Project group (including Xenia Beck, Denise Mansurova and Roman Troxler, under the tutorship of IRG's Boris Martin) sought to provide the material for a joint group discussion around these two organisations' practices in terms of collective advocacy and of tools to reinforce the legitimacy and the impact of these processes. More practically, they sought to describe and analyse these organisations' positions at national, European and international level, to appraise governance models at different levels, to describe and analyse advocacy operations. The specific theme of farming and food supply was picked because it was the task of a dedicated unit within each structure, namely the Commission Agriculture et Alimentation (C2A) for the French platform and the Food Security and Agriculture working group (FSA) for the American one. This sector choice offered the best chances of conducting a thoroughly comparative study.

To satisfy this commission (the students were assigned the role of young consultants answering a commission from Sciences Po Paris' School of International Affairs), the Young Consultants Project first interviewed, using the same questionnaire (face to face or, failing this by phone) some of the organisations belonging to the C2A (Comité catholique contre la faim et pour le développement-Terres solidaires, Comité français de solidarité Internationale, Peuples solidaires, Secours catholique, Groupe de recherche et d'échanges technologiques, Agronomes et vétérinaires sans frontières). Then the young Consultants Project moved to Washington from 1 to 7 November 2010, in order to run interviews with key personnel at InterActions and at some of its member NGOs.

What becomes clear is that, since the organisations belong to national platforms that share the same value system, working groups usually have few problems reaching a consensus. Coordination Sud's C2A members enjoy more independence in their work than US FSA members, but the American platform InterAction plays a more important part as it conducts its own advocacy operations with its own human and financial resources. Whilst, over the past few years, both platforms have thus committed to institutional advocacy, InterAction's approach remains more pragmatic than that of Coordination SUD: At United States level advocacy is

often conducted by an *ad hoc* alliance of a few powerful NGOs taking up a particular issue, whereas Coordination SUD and the commission Agriculture et Alimentation (C2A)'s advocacy is more representative of all the platform's member organisations, this in the name of consensus, a rule that sometimes prevents the platform from taking a stand on certain themes.

Boris Martin, IRG

In years to come the IRG wishes to achieve more detailed observation of these forums. It also wishes to turn its attention to new types of action from non-state actors and more specifically to social control which exhibits similar forms of development in several continents. There are activities of vigilance, publication of public accounts, follow-up and evaluation of public policies. These new interfaces between state and non-state actors cause many actors' strategies to evolve and they rekindle the debate on the co-construction of the public space.

This evolution of the ways the State interacts with society carries with it hopes as well as potential risks. The IRG observes these interfaces with interest and keeps a broad watch: this is not just about questioning the non-state actors' strategies or measuring their outcomes, it is also about taking into consideration the actions of public actors as well as the workings of discussion forums and the relations between them and with decisional processes. In a public action which could result from a complex set of confrontations, dialogue and surveillance played out between public and private actors, how do the roles even out between constituted actors (professional organisations, development or social change set-ups, social movements, enterprises...), representative actors (political parties, elected representatives, etc.) and the unorganized sectors in civil society? What is the real impact of dialogue and vigilance strategies on public policies? What outcomes do they bring about? What are – with governance in mind – the challenges and the problems resulting from the institutionalisation of these discussion or control forums?

Though not seeking to address all these questions, the IRG tackles in the framework of this programme those which it feels represent today's strategic issues for governance: the shift from the defence of specific interests to the opening of multi-actor forums, redefining the aims and objectives of the actors involved, the growing stature of the citizen, the attention given to methodology and, last but not least, the outcomes expected from or yielded by these initiatives.

From defending specific interests to opening multi-actor forums

An archetypal blueprint has long driven the course of action taken by many social organisations: individuals with shared interests (say factory workers or farmers) create collective organisations (trade unions or professional organisations) in order to build themselves up as the state's discussion partners, engage into a process of recognition (e.g. through media operations, creating a critical mass or other means), create a field of interaction with the public authority (e.g. on the street or in the media) and, should they succeed, win deals often by means of bilateral negotiations. Such a blueprint has not failed to elicit reservations, not least regarding the segmentation of public action it supposes. The opening of multi-actor forums shows how to bypass this drawback, a telling illustration of which can be found in the evolution of the debate on farming in Europe. Farming issues once deemed the exclusive business of one profession, now affect many social sectors in that they also involve health and the environment, the consumers' buying power or land use, thereby involving a whole range of actors. Now it is precisely the job of governance, as the IRG understands it, to organise the interactions between them and the public authorities with in mind the co-production of public action. It is when actors mobilised on these diverse questions move to discuss them together that they are able to create genuine multi-actor discussion forums. Strategies are also being evolved in the field of health: Patients' associations are gradually foregoing the notion that it will be possible to guarantee a population's welfare through the juxtaposition of their interventions aimed at such and such a condition; they now acknowledge the need for a more global analysis that requires alliances between them, and the advisability of public action strategies.

The governance of public policies in France: dialogue's ramifications

In association with a follow-up group comprised of specialists in health and participative democracy the IRG is running a study on dialogue forums between public authorities and non-state actors in France. To that end, in 2011, Sophie Verrier conducted interviews with health actors involved in these processes.

Over recent years, legal framework and new organisation of the health system have colluded to foster dialogue. The law No 2002-303, 4 March 2002 regarding patients' rights and the quality of care introduces the concept of "health democracy", providing for health users' participation in the decision-making outfits. This is a major advance for patients and users' associations. The hospital reform act No 2009-871, 21 July 2009 concerning patients, health and local administrations

reinforces health democracy and redefines the role of participation processes in the new organisation of the health system.

This new organisation currently implemented on the French territory provides for the participation of all health actors in the devising of public health policies within forums set at three main levels of decision: a) national with a National Health Conference, b) regional with Health and Autonomy Regional Conferences (consultative as well as multi-actor bodies set up by the Health Regional agencies),⁷ c) local (county or more closely defined) with local Health Conferences. Besides those three tiers, there exist many forums open to health system actors from the neighbourhoods (Ateliers santé ville or "Urban health workshops") to the national level of consultative committees and councils (e.g. on AIDS or disability; some of which are comparable to expert committees and others to participation set-ups).

As a result of the interviews with health actors belonging to the CNS, the CRSAs or local Conferences in four French regions, it was possible to draw a first evaluation. The participants consider that health actors are well represented, that they are motivated and in their majority assiduous and involved in the work entrusted to them. Legitimacy, recognition and the right to be heard are the same for all. Finally working out the answers to the problems discussed is a collective process, having been reached by consensus via debates and exchanges within working groups. So they find the conditions for dialogue within these forums satisfactory.

However, the forums still face some challenges. First, the capitalisation of resources: a diverse range of health knowledge is needed to cover all the subjects in hand but everyone must ensure they are able to contribute to a joint analysis reaching beyond their own interests and to summon up more cross-disciplinary responses for health. The acquisition of shared knowledge and language requires that time be given over to know and understand the other and to learn how to co-construct. Second, keep a watch on objectivity: health actors are working at devising public health policy jointly with state decision-making structures (ministry for health, regional health agencies). It is no less desirable that they keep a suitable distance in order to preserve their critical ability, their whistle-blowing capability and their innovative powers. Third, optimise coordination: with a view to better coordinate public health policies, forums had better improve exchanges with each other. Make time: the new organisation of the health system was carried out at break-neck speed, a slave to imperatives of urgency and a results-driven culture. The time allocated to dialogue is largely inadequate. These forums will have to impose their own *tempo* if they are to work well and to define policies effective in the long term. Fourth, weigh in on the decisions: the advice and proposals emanating from these forums must be considered by decision-making state structures. There is a fear that these dialogue outfits be instrumentalized and used as an endorsement. In due course one of the issues at stake for them will be to flex their muscle and bear on health policy decisions.

7. Respectively Conférence nationale de santé (CNS), conférences régionales de santé et de l'autonomie (CRSA), agences régionales de santé (ARS).

To sum up, the forums are young structures, the collective participation and the working of which still need to be fine-tuned in order better to be integrated in the policy making process. The new organisation of the health system must stand by them as they grow into their role.

Sophie Verrier, IRG

This study can be found at <http://www.institut-gouvernance.org/spip.php?page=sante>.

For more details on this question, see in this issue the interview with Christian Andréo, p. 337 in the book.

Redefining the non-state actors' aims and objectives

If the non-state actors can no longer be confined to the defence of purely sectoral interests (be they the most just in the world in the eyes of those who took them up) and if a debate with other civil society actors proves necessary to improve proposals' cohesion, how should the purpose of their input into public action be redefined? The answer to this question, far from being settled, is subject to more or less open debates in many organisations, eliciting repositioning, alliances, scissions and crises. Two trends at least can be identified. The first seek to temper public policies no longer via negotiations with the wielders of public authority but by means of debates "on the public square", that is through the mobilisation of important sectors of society. Such is the case of many collective forums set up for the management of municipal water, for instance those in Mexico City (see box below)

Promoting local governance forums for the management of water in Mexico City (boroughs of Iztapalapa and Tlalpan)

The IRG and the department of social sciences of the Metropolitan Autonomous University (UAM) of Mexico ran until January 2010 a student workshop focused on the water management dialogue forums in Mexico City's boroughs of Iztapalapa and Tlalpan. This workshop proceeds from an IRG-driven research exercise on the dialogue between state and non-state actors in the management of public services. The development of the workshop is linked to research undertaken by the "Society and Politics" academic unit (Cuerpo Académico « Sociedad y Política ») of the UAM's department of social sciences.

Five students analysed with their tutor the populations' participation mechanisms and their effectiveness towards finding a solution to the problem of water supply to the urban borough of Iztapalapa and more rural Tlalpa. In both boroughs the

locals use two types of mechanisms: protest before the authorities responsible aimed at a speedy recovery of access to the water supply (which finds an expression in demonstrations in the neighbourhoods or road blocks) or the setting up of a dialogue with the public authorities to think up lasting solutions to water management. According to the analysis conducted here, the second option is possible only with groups of informed citizens, aware and trained to intervene on environmental issues. The two cases studied further show that the solution to water issues cannot be found without co-responsibility between both parties involved: public authorities and local folks.

Gabriel Pérez Pérez, UAM, and Claire Launay-Gama, IRG

The second trend consists in turning one's attention to the field of public action follow-up as do, for instance, citizens' watch and social control organisations. The latter's aim is to make the public authorities publish their accounts to the populations. In Africa, non-governmental organisations have taken many initiatives focused on following up on the sound use of natural resources by the government (e.g. the use of oil in Chad). In Latin America, many organisations of this type (observatories, control groups, organisational monitoring outfits, etc.) have sprung up since the end of the nineties and develop activities aimed at reinforcing transparency in public action and management; Élisabeth Ungar and Luz Angela Ramirez⁸ illustrate this in their article following an experiment recently undertaken by the Colombian section of the organisation Transparency International. This evidences a notable shift in citizens' organisations which, over and above their resistance and protest actions have moved into the forums dialoguing with the political actors or have set up a watch over their activities. Indeed a number of these practices have been enshrined in some constitutions, notably in Bolivia and Colombia. Though these practices are still fresh, they evidence the will to act in another way when devising, implementing or evaluating public policies. This form of active participation represents, according to César Montúfar⁹, a real bonus for democracy. The Ecuadorian researcher considers that information provided by these organisations is useful for the citizens on the one hand, as it puts them in a position to find out more about the public sector and to make better deci-

8. See in this issue the article by Élisabeth Ungar and Luz Angela Ramirez, "Les citoyens veillent sur la chose publique" [Citizens keep watch on the public bodies: an innovative experiment in social control in Colombia], p. 329.

9. MONTÚFAR César, "Representación y participación ciudadana en el Ecuador: tensiones y complementariedades", in Julie MASSAL (dir.), *Representación o participación ? Los retos y desencantos andinos en el siglo XX*, IEPRI, IFEA, 2008.

sions, and on the other hand for the state institutions who may sometimes access the information better through them than through their own outfits.

According to Montúfar this external view can help civil servants to correct their errors and to improve public management. He does however add that it has some drawbacks. The first rests with the fact that as these organisations are often funded by international cooperation agencies, it is worth asking whether these surveillance initiatives are genuinely rooted in the country or whether they meet an international demand liable to vary according to those external agencies' priorities. The second drawback rests with the kind of discourse pursued by these organisations: if theirs is a wholly anti-political stance, they may help reinforce the citizens' mistrust towards the institutions and thereby delegitimise them with the opposite effect to what was sought. In fact – and it is the third drawback – the public authorities often see this citizen action as a threat to their work. To affirm their credibility “accountability”¹⁰ or social control, the organisations must therefore fulfil their role in the strictest independence and with the clear aim of reinforcing institutional legitimacy.

The rise of the citizen

Collective actors have long been considered the driving force of social change. However a new figure has come to the fore over the past few years, that of the “mere citizen”, understood as the individual, the uninitiated. Democracy's prime actor – lest we forget – the citizen, is called to play a greater part in our societies' progress. Obama's Open Government¹¹ exercises are proof enough with their many and manifold personalised invitations to take part. A similar portent of this shift can be found in the call for private involvement launched by, among others, European and US local authorities by way of citizens' conferences, blogs and online forums analysed by public decision makers, participative budgeting or neighbourhood councils. A survey conducted by Bordeaux's greater metropolitan council regarding the review of its water and sanitation policy showed that a majority of its citizens did not consider the associations to be public authority's most legitimate discussion partner, stressing on the contrary the participation of the citizens in their own right. Are collective actors about to be driven off the public stage? Some fear it and suspect elected

10. Translation of the Spanish *rendición de cuentas* meaning “making the publication of accounts by the public authorities to the people take effect”.

11. See in this issue the article by Thomas Bryer, “Obama et le concept de ‘gouvernement ouvert’ : gage d'une gouvernance renouvelée ou simple ‘bulle démocratique’ ? [Obama and the concept of ‘Open Government’: a harbinger of renewed governance or just a ‘democracy bubble?’], p. 371. A version of this text exists in English at <<http://tinyurl.com/8alanfe>>.

representatives to seek, by means of novel citizen participation practices, to bypass them securing the support of an uninformed, nay credulous, public, mobilised at their discretion.

Now, it is often thanks to the collective actors that a social transformation exercise is perpetuated. It is they who capitalise in their structures or their network the lessons from the experience and ensure the training of new leaders. But there is no doubt that the non-governmental organisation sector can no longer claim as easily as it once did the role of civil society spokesperson. This evolution calls for its re-positioning and the setting forth of other criteria on which to found its perennity in the social debate, to wit its know-how in mediation situations or its expertise capability.

Is it possible to keep open a collective actors' space while opening the door to non-organised actors? And if so how? This is very much a question of methodology.

Issues of methodology

How is the dialogue between collective actors, ordinary citizens, experts and public authority to be organised? How are fresh exclusions to be avoided and the disenfranchised to be invited in? How can the requirements for numbers, the hallmark of participative democracy, be combined with the quality of the discussion that underpins deliberative democracy? Promoting the creation of discussion forums and seeking to break with past traditions necessarily raise many questions of methodology.

Methodological engineering is being developed, leading to the creation of a new professional field and of a new scope for social demands, that of dialogue as a constitutive element of improved governance. Handbooks are being published and training courses set up, up to and including in universities or schools of administration. Laying down the rules that will make them more effective also makes these processes more transparent and easier to replicate. There is however a risk to have them locked in methodological norms devised by new experts: consultants, researchers, functionaries and informed citizens. Such a regimented participation may well drown the very social demands for which it is claiming a new voice. This is the quandary faced in Ecuador and Colombia where citizen's participation has recently been enshrined in law by constitutions that recognise besides traditional executive, legislative and judiciary powers a new entity: the Council of Citizen Participation and Social Control. The institutionalization of participation in these two Latin American countries may well be followed with effect in that it brings the state and social organisations closer. However it may

also compromise the latter's freedom to protest. The adoption of these constitutions has been followed with the integration within the government of many social organisations' representatives: this evolution, the upside of which is an acknowledgment of the role and the importance of non-state actors in public action, also has its downsides. Former non-state actors, who have long practiced social control, now find themselves observing its action, nay opposing it: as they become stake-holders, many are confronted with dilemma and conflicts of loyalty.

What do these new initiatives have to show for themselves?

The plethora of citizen's participation initiatives and the creation of dialogue forums bring into question the quality of the outcomes. Does more participation entail a better management of public action, the reinforcement of democracy, more legitimate decisions?

In the framework of a Students' workshop on the impact of non-state actors on public policies in Colombia and more broadly concerning the capitalisation of a civil society participation programme coordinated by the French Committee for International Solidarity (CFSI) [see box below], the IRG has undertaken an analysis on the type of outcomes from citizen participation and its impact on public policies¹²

The participation of civil society into public policies, towards a North-South partnership: A capitalisation exercise with the CFSI and its partners

How is civil society organisations' (CSO) participation into public policies to be made more effective in Southern Countries? Which issues do civil societies in the North and in the South share in respect to this participation? In order to answer these questions the IRG and the French Committee for International Solidarity (CFSI)¹³ set up a capitalisation exercise.

12. This question of outcomes and impact of the participation bodies on public policies was at the heart of a vast research programme conducted by the Development Research Centre on Citizenship. In their article published in these *Chroniques de la gouvernance*, Nicolas Benequista and John Gaventa offer us its main conclusions –essentially positive in this respect: « Les dessous et les ressorts de l'action citoyenne [What we now know about citizen action and development outcomes]», p. 317.

13. Le Comité français pour la solidarité internationale (CFSI) brings together twenty-two organisations (association, federations, membership organisations, trade unions, local authorities) in an international solidarity platform drawing its original formation from a strong mobilisation of French civil society against hunger, the CFSI has positioned itself as an originator and coordinator of society-to-society solidarity (<<http://www.cfsi.asso.fr>>).

The growing clout gained by CSOs in Southern countries and their acknowledged role in development have led the CFSI to promote new cooperation models between CFSI French member organisations and their Southern partners and to reinforce the CSOs' ability to partake in their countries' public policies. For six years, the programme "Civil Society and Participation" has supported and privileged innovative cooperation practices towards a dialogue between civil society and public authorities, be they local or national. The object is to encourage new practices in partnership between South and North in order to make the CSOs more credible and effective before the populations and the public authority and to build in some exchange and advocacy opportunities around issues common to North and South.

In order to better grasp these evolutions the IRG conducted in 2010¹⁴ the retrospective capitalisation of five projects from the first phase of the "Civil Society and Participation" programme (2006-2009) in Colombia and Madagascar. This work shows that cooperation relationships gradually drop the trickle-down North-South pattern to move on to partnerships based on shared values and complementarities. As a result of which, working themes and priorities are identified on the basis of shared diagnosis, tools are being set up to exchange knowledge and experience or even partnerships and funding is made to dovetail with both the local and the global stakes in mind. Regarding the participation in public policies and influence strategies, achieving a common voice contributes to the CSOs being acknowledged as political actors in a position to contribute to a dialogue with the public authority, be it in formal or informal environments, in public or private dialogue forums. The ability to federate a range of actors and to transcend the defence of specific interests, the deep-rootedness of the actors in local action, international partnerships and access to the media: all these elements help better to master the political angles, to seek actively new solutions and to achieve recognition and influence when the CSOs participate in public policies.

This capitalisation process has been extended to the programme's second phase from 2010 to 2013. Devised by and for its actors, the capitalisation amounts henceforward to a fully fledged capacity-building exercise; it is ongoing and built into each of the 20 projects in the programme. Four projects (in Brazil, in the Republic of Guinea, in Madagascar and in Mali) are the subject of IRG-lead case studies supported by local students to analyse the conditions of efficacy and effectiveness of the CSOs' processes for dialogue and participation in public policies. Questions developed in participation are framed around two axes. The first is concerned with the ways to arrive at a collective voice, its foundations, its entrenchment or indeed its governance and representation models. The second axis is focused on the setting up of an effective dialogue between the public authority and the actors mobilised, their analytical and proposal capability, their recognition and tools of influence and finally the dialogue process as such and its impact.

The diversity of the experiments, actors and contexts in the CSP programme connects with a cross-disciplinary and strategic analysis of the conditions in which

14. LAUNAY Claire, SAUQUET Michel and VIELAJUS Martin, *Prendre part aux politiques publiques, op. cit.*

the CSOs can effectively contribute to a dialogue on public, local, sectoral but also international policies. The final capitalisation report will result in a publication in June 2013.

Delphine Arnould, CFSI, and Élisabeth Dau, IRG

Thus, numerous organisations seek to go beyond demand-bound strategies in order to engage in cooperative approaches supposing a dialogue with the public authority or to initiate social control set-ups it might accept, without foregoing their counter-power role in the process. These new approaches have not failed to raise questions but they also yield significant results. It is probably still too early to talk of a decisive evolution of the dialogue between state and non-state actors but the inroads are significant enough for their implications and risks to be looked into. Experts' analyses at this level will meet with interest only if they address the questioning and the approaches of the actors involved. This is a mine of research-action programs which will no doubt be at the heart of this IRG programme in the months to come.