



Policy Forum on Development

Toolkit for consultation

Final Draft
January 2015



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The Rationale

This toolkit is intended to support and enhance consultations around the EU Policy Forum on Development (PFD). It is intended for use as PFD members in their own outreach efforts to inform forum discussions. Specifically, the toolkit aims to support in: (i) expanding outreach towards your constituencies in matters around the PFD; (ii) gathering targeted information, relevant for PFD discussions and; (iii) providing feedback on the outcomes of the discussions held in the PFD.

The process

The toolkit is the result of a collective process in the framework of the PFD. The need for such a toolkit focusing on consultations was agreed by the PFD Task team (TT), based on a needs assessment amongst PFD members launched in early 2014. A preliminary draft, prepared by the Technical Assistance (TA) team, was presented in a training session organized on the 30th of September 2014, prior to the second global meeting of the PFD. PFD members validated the usefulness of the toolkit, noting the need to adapt it locally. Several PFD members shared their own experiences, and they were incorporated in a revised version. The Toolkit was then shared at the Africa Stakeholders meeting in Nairobi in early December 2014 and experiences from that meeting served as additional inputs.

Based on the input from the Task Team meeting of January 2015, the toolkit will be finalized and shared with all PFD members, to be used as support for the consultations and feedback organized in the framework of the PFD from 2015 onwards.

Your comments and contributions (i.e examples and experiences you believe are worth sharing, etc.) are very welcome. Please send them to the following email addresses: sara.simon.pfd@outlook.com and Carlos.buhigas-schubert.pfd@outlook.com

In particular we are very much interested in learning:

- What are the challenges you faced in consolidating contributions and packaging the inputs to have impact?
- Can you briefly describe a successful consultation for which you saw impact? What lessons did you extract from the experience?
- What are your most successful tools and/or experiences in providing feedback and information to your constituencies on the outcomes of a consultation?

I. Introduction: Consultation and the PFD

The Policy Forum on Development (PFD)

Conceived as a trust-building mechanism, the PFD brings together Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) and Local Authorities (LAs) from the European Union (EU) and partner countries with European Union institutions and bodies. It offers its members a high-level space to discuss, consult and exchange information and experiences, with the ultimate goal of promoting policy dialogue and enhancing mutual understanding. In addition to the EU, all four key EU cooperation regions are represented: Africa; Asia and the Pacific; the European Neighbourhood Region; and Latin America and the Caribbean.

The PFD pursues 3 key objectives:

1. Dialogue on cross-cutting issues directly related to the role of CSOs and LAs as relevant development actors in their own right.
2. Policy debate, consultation and exchange of information and experiences on key EU development policies and initiatives.
3. Regular follow-up of the Structured Dialogue's recommendations, providing a space for regular update and peer review by all actors.

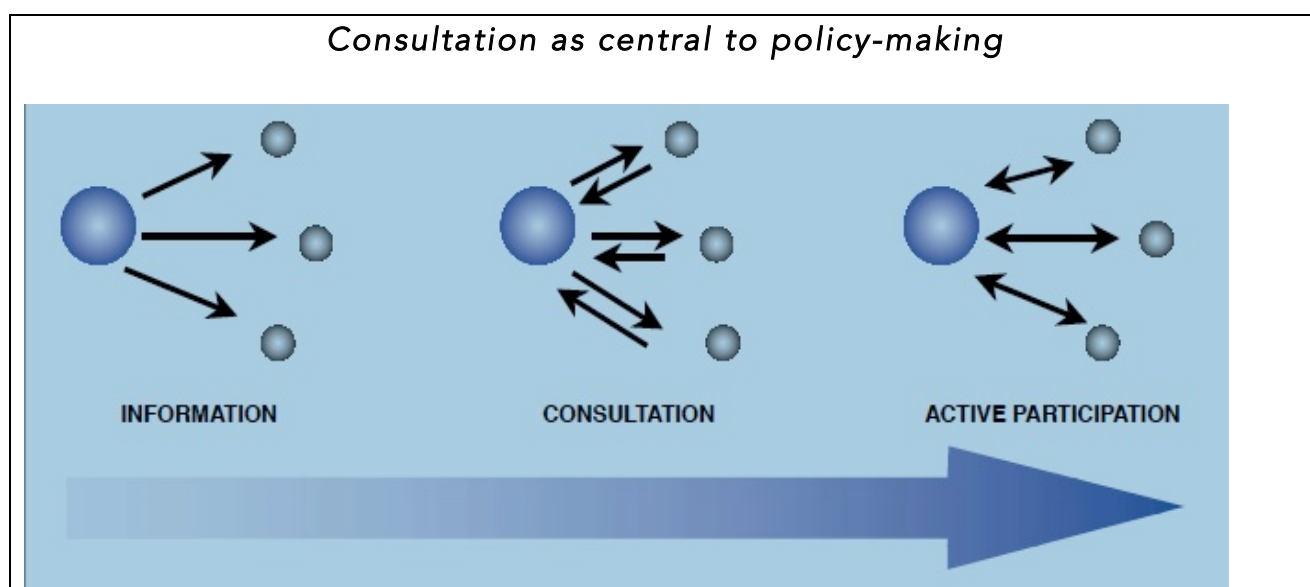
Members of the PFD are key CSOs and LAs, which include 42 regional networks, 6 global umbrella organisations and alliances and 13 European platforms. These organisational members sit together with representatives of EU institutions, bodies and Member States (MS) to discuss new EU development policies, their implementation through the various EU programmes and instruments, as well as synergies amongst European and international development policies. All in all, the PFD is a place where essential debates on the EU development agenda take place with EU actors who are, themselves, decision-makers. In this context, the importance of bringing relevant and in-depth input from PFD members and their members' constituencies cannot be underestimated. It is fundamental to the spirit, *raison d'être* and outcomes of the PFD.

Why is consultation important to the PFD?

The PFD is a unique opportunity to engage in policy dialogue and in the implementation of EU development policies. Members of the PFD are selected because of their outreach and are representatives of their constituencies, meaning that each PFD member organisation has a network of their own member organisations. Bringing the voices of the PFD members, and their members (their constituencies), requires continuous dialogue before and after PFD meetings. To maximize the effectiveness of engagement, PFD members must come prepared, bringing the key inputs from their own constituencies. As well, the information from PFD meetings and outcomes of the discussions must also be shared in a timely and

useful manner. This two-way, ongoing communication is essential to moving from giving basic information, to consulting to active participation.

As visualized in the diagram below, consultation is fundamental to active participation in policy making. Information is a one-way relationship, in which information is shared, either in a targeted way or upon request. For example, when the EC posts information, an issue paper or a press release on its website, this is one-way information sharing. Consultation is when the input of partners is actively sought. In this case, the EC may ask for input into a policy document and seek the opinions of partners. It is a two-way relationship. The ultimate form of cooperation is active participation, in a relationship based on equal collaboration. In this case, CSO and LA actors are recognized as equal partners in shaping the policy dialogue and actively engage in defining the process and content. The EU ultimately selects what is most relevant, but agenda, content and dialogue are all developed in full partnership. Active participation is an underlying paradigm of the PFD that will enhance the effectiveness and ultimately the impact of the Policy Forum.



Adapted from OECD citizens as partners, 2001, p. 23, adapted from Health Canada, 2000.

As shown above, consultation, or actively seeking this two-way dialogue, is essential to moving to active participation. The diagram above can be visualized for both relations with the EU institutions and for relations within PFD members' own networks (i.e. your constituencies).

Consultation is an ongoing process, and this toolkit aims to support it by outlining the steps for PFD members to: (i) consolidate gathered information via consultation within your own

organisational membership; and (ii) then provide feedback in order to engage in this continuous dialogue.

Consultation can serve in preparation for and during a PFD meeting in various ways, such as:

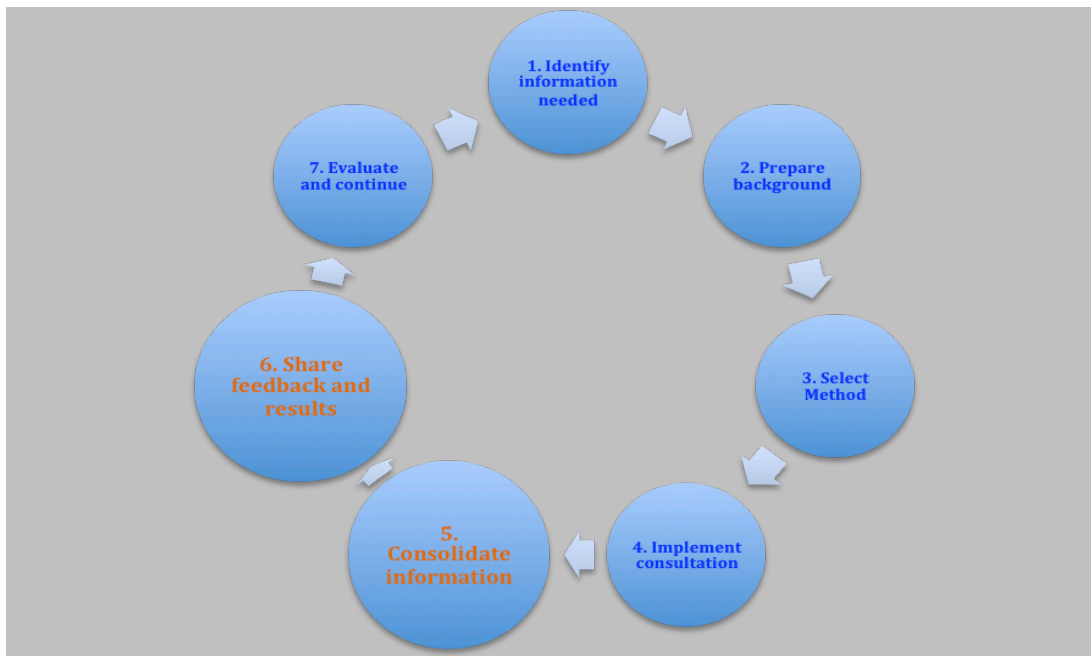
- Explaining PFD issues and hearing the reactions of your constituencies in order to shape your positions in the PFD
- Clarifying and validating key issues and messages from your own constituencies around new EU policies, or new arising issues, in order to take them to the PFD
- Better understanding where the challenges in policy implementation lie in order to effectively target your messages and discussions in the PFD
- Expanding your own outreach, to better engage individuals and networks in your organisation in the PFD and consequently, in EU development policy making and discussions around policy implementation
- Engaging other areas/constituents/regions with similar challenges (building coalitions) around PFD topics
- Working with other PFD members to understand and clarify which issues are recurrent at the global level and what messages to focus on during the forum (to better advocate as a group on key messages that the EU needs to hear)
- Reaching out to more people than those who can attend the actual PFD. Consultations are also a way of reaching people who may not be able to attend 'elite spaces' where 'expert voices' are heard, because they lack needed documentation, visas, travel costs, or where the jargon of the policy debate and necessary confidence to speak publicly are inhibiting factors.¹

Basic steps in carrying out a consultation: overview

Consultation takes place in different ways and is often used as part of delivering messages to a particular audience (i.e. government, policy makers, the public in general). For PFD members, the audience and focus of your consultation is already determined by the PFD agenda that you have jointly developed (through the work of the Task Team), as well as the participants of the meeting. This leaves you free to focus on gathering and consolidating input that is the most essential for the discussions themselves. This toolkit is intended to be a resource tool to help you synthesize gathered information, "pack it" in a way that is relevant to the PFD and provide feedback to your constituencies.

As a reminder, below is an overview of the basic steps involved in gathering and consolidating targeted information. This applies to the overall process of consultation, which is broader than consolidating the information collected and sharing the outcomes of the discussion within the PFD.

¹ Adapted from *IDS, the Participate Anthology*, p. 48.



1. Identify what information you are seeking	To determine the best way of obtaining it and understand your audience <i>Use the PFD agenda as a guide. You may choose to consult on a topic on the upcoming agenda, or a combination of topics. The PFD has a group page on capacity4dev, with both a private and a public group, where you can see what other members are working on and share information. You may want to use capacity4dev to determine which other PFD members are consulting in the same area and share ideas or even work together for a joint consultation.</i>
2. Prepare the background information	To engage your participants (PFD overview as well as background/summary of the EU development policy on which you are going to focus). <i>A fundamental step in any consultation is to provide information about the topic/subject about which information is to be gathered. Your members may or may not all have the same level of information about the PFD itself, therefore some introduction may be necessary. As well, an overview of the topic of the consultation and any relevant background information should be prepared.</i>
3. Choose the best methodology	Some examples include: • Surveys/Questionnaires (online, paper dissemination): ○ one way to get a general read of many people at once ○ use multiple choice to more easily and quickly compile data

	○ ideal for baseline information and regular follow up from the same group of individuals ○ for use in getting widespread feedback on aspects of a policy under discussion, or how implementation is viewed by many individuals. • Case studies/personal experiences/one-on-one interviews ○ may be more useful when you need to understand how a policy is being or should be implemented ○ especially useful if you want to discuss programmatic aspects with individuals with direct experience ○ helpful to understand the nuances and not just the larger issues • Focus groups (asking the same questions of multiple groups) ○ choose limited number of questions ○ allow for divergence but cover key questions ○ good method for gaining more information where issues will bring multiple views and you are trying to understand the details and search for consensus. Focus groups allow you to hear how individuals react to each other as well as hear details. • Research and building an evidence base ○ <i>'Central to the policy influencing process... is the capacity of people living in poverty and marginalisation to create knowledge as 'evidence' of their own issues, and to recognise the value of that knowledge through participatory research processes.'</i>¹ ○ This method is especially useful in bringing a new issue to the attention of policy makers. Developing an evidence base for changes you know need to happen requires thoughtful and longer term study
4. Carry out your consultation	Implement your consultation within a determined time frame, using your chosen methodology and ensuring adequate support. Regardless of what method you use, remember to record or input your data concurrently with data collection or as soon as possible, so that nothing gets lost. <i>Some of the things you might do with the information you collect include:</i> • <i>Gather together information from all sources and observations</i> • <i>Make photocopies of all recording forms, records, audio or video recordings, and any other collected materials, to guard against loss, accidental erasure, or other problems</i> • <i>Enter narratives, numbers, and other information into a computer program, where they can be arranged and/or worked on in various ways</i> • <i>Coding data (translating data, particularly qualitative data that isn't expressed in numbers, into a form that allows it to be processed by a specific software program or subjected to statistical analysis).</i>¹
5. Consolidate	Keeping in mind the audience of the PFD - policy makers, Member States, and EU institutional representatives - read through your data in search of focused

the information	themes or recurring responses. Understand what inputs you are extracting (policy advice versus implementation versus advocating for attention to a new issue). Make sure to begin by: • <i>Compiling any survey data (if done electronically or input as needed in electronic format)</i> • <i>When possible, necessary, and appropriate, transforming qualitative into quantitative data.</i> This might involve, for example, counting the number of times specific issues were mentioned in interviews, or how often certain behaviors were observed. • <i>Transcribing (making an exact, word-for-word text version of) the contents of audio or video recordings</i>
6. Share the results with all participants	Providing feedback is essential to building and maintaining trust and engagement. It is fundamental to achieving active participation. The process, findings, results and next steps are essential elements of feedback. Feedback for the PFD is provided via capacity4dev group page, short summaries and full meeting reports of all PFD meetings and regular newsletters. Sharing feedback on specific information gathering exercises is part of the feedback loop and the responsibility of all PFD members. You may want to encourage your members/constituencies to register and use the group page as one means of sharing information and encouraging exchange (see annex for instructions).
7. Evaluate and continue	Take time to review your process and measure your impact. Taking lessons learned and addressing challenges will enable you to improve as you continue your feedback and undertake your next consultation (on the next agenda item!)

This toolkit will focus on **Consolidating information and Sharing feedback** (i.e. steps 5 and 6). The task team of the PFD has requested a focus on these areas, understanding that these steps are less straightforward, and there is less clear-cut guidance in existence on how to carry them out. The case study below shows how important sharing information is to ensuring accountability in policy change.

Case Study: The importance of sharing information for impact

The Pacific Islands Association of Non-Governmental Organisations (PIANGO) influenced a new family bill in Tonga. A Bill to address domestic violence was drafted and presented to the Tongan Parliament. The Family Protection Bill 2013 was developed by Tonga's Ministry of Education, Women's Affairs and Culture, Women's Affairs Division and the Secretariat of the Pacific Prevention of Domestic Violence Programme. PIANGO worked to influence the drafting and passage of this law.

Strengths of PIANGO:

- The constituencies of PIANGO were better informed about the issue due to their high interest
- PIANGO had a strongly coordinated communication strategy
- There was an organized coalition of groups which included the groups affected by the new policy; i.e. children and women
- PIANGO mapped out the process of how legislation becomes law

Challenges brought by the consultation process:

- Tonga is not a signatory to the UN Convention to Eliminate all forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)
- 27 of 28 persons in the new Parliament were men
- The diversity of civil society was wide; therefore not all were experts on the issues and PIANGO needed them to be well-informed to influence the law
- The data on domestic violence is not easily available and under-reported

Lessons learned:

Know your audience: The strategy was to downplay the human rights focus of the law and focus more on the cultural context, highlighting traditional roles. Advocates had one-on-one conversations with parliamentarians, as well as their friends, daughters, and wives.

Educate the public for accountability: The debate in Parliament was broadcast live on the radio, so citizens could participate and send emails and sms to legislators and administrators in real time. This helped turned the tide and by the third day of debate, the bill had support.

Knowing that the emphasis is on implementation and use of the law, PIANGO widely **shared the information** on the legislation once it was successfully passed. In the two months between the passing of the law and its enactment, the coalition sent the bill back to constituents and put it in local newspapers. Ensuring that the public knows what is in the law will make them able to hold government accountable and use the law.

The next two sections of this toolkit focus on putting together contributions that you receive for input into a PFD meeting and developing ongoing feedback. Section II on consolidation includes: what kinds of information you are seeking; how to gather this information; and how to develop key messages from the information. Section III overviews how to ensure feedback becomes the two way, ongoing communication essential to active participation.

II. Consolidating contributions and inputting into the PFD

Consolidating different types of information

Consolidating information well will require you to understand:

- Who is the audience of the information?
- What kinds of inputs are expected? (policy messages, actions required, advice, evidence base, examples from the field)
- What are you asking your audience to do/what action is to be taken?

The European Network of Political Foundations (ENoP) shared their experiences in consultation and talked about the challenges of consolidating information. "We are a network of national political foundations comprising different political ideologies and as such, the opinions and viewpoints on some issues (e.g. private sector in development) can be very divergent. However, as ENoP we speak with one voice and therefore our challenge is to come forward with a meaningful input that lives up to and reflects the variety of our members." A case study below shows how ENoP members work to overcome this challenge in consolidating information and developing key messages.

You have the advantage of already knowing your audience, so you can immediately focus on what they need to know. Keep in mind that your messages should relate to the **three objectives of the PFD**, which implies that you will be focusing on a set of questions/issues, such as the ones highlighted below :

PFD Objectives	Key issues and questions to focus on
1. Dialogue on cross-cutting issues directly related to the role of CSOs and LAs as relevant development actors in their own right. Here you may want to discuss a current issue or bring a new issue to the attention of PFD members	• What information is new and most relevant? • What are the issues arising from your own organisational experience? • What is the EU role: what can the EU do to affect the situation? • What is your role and what can your constituency do to affect the situation?

2. Policy debate, consultation and exchange of information and experiences on key EU development policies and initiatives.	• The EU role: What can the EU do to help the situation? • How does or will the policy affect your members? • What changes need to be made to the policy so that your members are supported in their work? • What needs to happen at local level? regional level? global level?
3. Regular follow-up of the Structured Dialogue's recommendations, providing a room for regular update and peer review by all actors.	• What did you commit to doing to support the recommendations? • What progress do you see in the follow-up? • Where are the challenges? • What can you do to meet those challenges? • What can the EU/other PFD members do to meet those challenges?

Your information and how you bring your messages will need to be adapted depending on what kinds of inputs are required. For example, you may be commenting on a specific agenda item and bringing the concerns of your constituencies. The PFD may be looking at new policy or it may be looking at the programmatic implementation of existing policy. You as a member may be bringing a new issue of concern and updating the PFD membership about the issue and what needs to be done to address it. These require different inputs.

Types of input might include:

- **A policy consultation** will require analysis of the policy at hand and input to the PFD on how that policy resonates with your own constituencies. There may be supportive statements, drawing out where there is consensus, as well as recommendations for where the policy needs changes or expansion in order to respond to the needs of PFD members.

Case study: Policy Consultation on the Communication on Local Authorities

PLATFORMA carried out a comprehensive consultation in collaboration with the EC to gather input for the new Communication on Local Authorities, which was finally issued in May 2013 (COM(2013) 280 final). This six month long consultation included nine face-to-face meetings with partners in developing countries and an online survey. The EC issue paper developed for consultation was used as the basis to understand: (i). which issues were of importance for local authorities in partner countries and (ii). how partners would ideally work with the EC on those issues.

About the process:

A consultation methodology was developed, which included a timeline, a background note, guiding themes/questions for the face-to-face meetings as well as a template for reporting on these in-person meetings (in order to ease consolidation into a final summary report). Face-to-face meetings were held at already planned fora, where local partners identified appropriate participants. All face-to-face meeting reports (in English and in French) were read by one author, who is bilingual, and who consolidated into one final report. The final report was shared with the EC as well as online, in newsletters, via local partners and at events in order to feed back results to participants. The online survey focused on prioritization of issues and one person read the 95 responses and consolidated any open comments for inclusion in the final report.

Strengths of the process:

- There was adequate time to plan, develop and carry out the consultation
- Development of background materials brought everyone to the same level of understanding prior to the discussion
- Existing institutional infrastructure was used to implement the consultation: PLATFORMA members were able to identify appropriate participants and existing meetings
- The survey focused on prioritization of issues, rather than open comments, so easier to compile and have a clear answer

Challenges in the process:

- Balanced representation (associations were very present in this case)
- The issue paper was a complicated document

Lessons learned:

- Try to also **gather the input of technical experts** to add to the consultation.
- Because the EC was present in the meetings, the consultations served as a means to **strengthen the relationship between EC and local governments** in partner countries
- The consultation **improved the visibility of the network** towards stakeholders

Case Study: ITUC Africa Policy Consultation around the post-2015 agenda

The Trade Union Development Cooperation Network, which is the expert network of representatives within the Trade Union Confederation, first met to talk about the the post-2015 agenda in Istanbul in September of 2012. In a series of debates and working groups involving, among others, speakers from UNDP, the European Commission and the ILO, participants reflected on the lessons learnt from the MDG framework, the possible shape of the new framework as well as ways to foster trade union engagement in the process. The discussions informed a draft trade union position on post-2015 that was shared with ITUC Affiliates for comments. ITUC Brussels compiled all the comments received to come up with an official position. ITUC Africa then studied sub-regional positions to come up with a common position with examples from Africa. The process involved: face-to-face meetings; focus groups; skype conferences; questionnaires/surveys; and participation in UN-led country level consultations in Kenya, Ghana and Tanzania. A similar process was carried out in Europe, South America and Asia. Once they had an agreed position, ITUC Africa joined civil society at African and regional levels to participate in advocacy around the September 2014 meeting and to ensure that policy documents contained a reference to decent work.

Strengths of the process:

- Had a common position as trade unions to use and had the backing of the confederation as they worked regionally.
- ITUC worked to have the position in other key documents, such as the Commonwealth document; AU documents; and continue to follow up with governments

Challenges in the process:

- Negotiation around policy is not always well-understood by all actors in civil society
- Ensuring that your message is included in short outcome documents (in this case, only 3-5 pages) there.

Lesson Learned:

- Have an agreed position that has gone through all the validation process of members, affiliates
- The agreed position should also have input of experts. This not only makes people understand your position better, but also builds persona relations with key persons, organizations or networks.
- Work as a part of a coalition, not pushing an individual position. Negotiate with the coalition and always in partnership.
- Speaking on the same coordinated message as a group. Trade unions main message was decent work and Social Protection, however this message was supported with country examples, or region-based data to make sense at home.
- There will always be resistance to your position. Learn how to build alliances and support with countries, organizations, individuals that understand your course and will help in supporting your messages.

- **Programmatic implementation** of existing policy will require inputs from project

managers within the PFD membership and networks and implementing organisations on the ground. Your messages to the PFD may be more about "how" and a few key messages developed on essential requirements to make a policy actionable.

- Advocacy around a **new issue** or aspects of an issue that you as a member would like the PFD to address, within the goals of the PFD and specifically in follow up to the recommendations of the Structured Dialogue. This will require talking points showing the importance of the issue supported by research/evidence and widespread input from constituencies.

Case study: Bringing new issues to the Structured Dialogue: the case of local authorities in Africa

UCLG Africa carried out a consultation with African local authorities around the 10th EDF. The consultation was carried out during the first quarter of 2012 for 2 months. Questionnaires were distributed asking local government officials if they were participating in the definition of the policies or priorities of EU cooperation in their countries. They were then asked what burning issues they would like to bring to the Structured Dialogue. Information and findings were presented at the UCLG-Africa general assembly organized in December 2012 in Dakar, Senegal, where EU delegates were also invited.

Strength of the process:

- Participants were all democratically elected and in national authorities so there were no issues with legitimacy or representation.

Challenge in the process:

- The response to participation in EU development policy was 'no.'

Lessons learned:

- The first demand was the demand for political recognition, not for services or capacity building. This was translated into the communication on LAs. Requests for studies and surveys were translated into documents, for example, on assessing the institutional enabling environment of local authorities.

Identifying emerging themes

As seen in the case studies above, there are many ways of gathering information. Based on feedback of PFD members, some of the key ways in which information has been gathered include:

- individual contact/one-on-one meetings
- group meetings/focus groups/ multi-stakeholder meetings (including national conferences)

- media, including radio talk shows
- national dialogue fora
- questionnaires
- telephone
- email
- reference groups/technical experts meeting
- surveys
- online consultation
- meeting with authorities
- general discussion with key practitioners
- consultations with national executive council
- consultation with donor community
- membership consultation

Analysing your content (date/information) for common themes requires carefully reading your feedback and pulling out key themes or messages that are emerging. This is best done by more than one person so that subjectivity is limited. Ideally two or more people read the material collected, taking notes of key themes or responses that are coming out. Then the analysts discuss their key themes and agree on a few themes that are relevant for the work and the PFD. Then the material collected needs to be reread to draw out responses, quantify how many respondents shared similar ideas or themes and understand what key messages are coming out. This can be time consuming. Some PFD members noted the need to dedicate months to this, depending on the size and timeframe of the consultation.

Tips to Keep it simple

If you are limited in resources, ensure that one person is dedicated to reading and analysing your data, even if it is by an external key expert. It will be important to ensure that someone familiar with the data is available to talk through the emerging conclusions with the person analysing the results. If this seems beyond your reach, consider using multiple-choice questionnaires that can be shared and compiled electronically to gather some input. This is much less time consuming (reading for common themes is not required because you have identified them in your choice of questions). As well, compilation is quantitative and immediate. For example, Survey Monkey has free online versions that are easy to use and share results.

The Committee of Regions (CoR) used questionnaires to query all members of local governments in gathering information for the EU 2020 strategy. Each questionnaire provided background information and explained the aims of the survey. The questionnaires used multiple choice, fixed answers or allowed for open responses. Collating open questions was more rigorous and time consuming, but allowed for more detailed input. It also allowed for answers that the survey designer have not predicted or thought of. Multiple choice is more

practical for saving time but gave less content, as these questions only gather data choices that you have foreseen.

The CoR learned to ensure that many eyes checked a questionnaire to get the questions right. Open questions also required multiple readers in analyzing the data due to subjectivity when reading. The use of questionnaires allowed for a broad response.

Case Study: Challenges of consolidation during a thorough consultation

Concord's Beyond 2015 European Task Force carried out a one-year consultation around the post-2015 agenda. They developed a first draft position, based on a series of workshop meetings, research and thematic expert input, on which they received 800 comments from 56 organisations in Europe. They read and considered all comments, noting which were used, why and how. The second round gathered 482 comments from 20 organisations.

Strength of the process:

- This year long process was considered to be valuable because of the constructive, fully owned document that resulted in a strong foundation for moving forward.

Challenge in the process:

- The sheer number of comments received on the text from individuals and organisations that had to be collated. Then the authors of the position paper went through each comment individually to see how it could be best incorporated or why it was not deemed appropriate or relevant.

Lessons Learned:

- Request comments in the form of textual amendments in order to encourage clarity.

Translating to key messages

Once you have the emerging themes, you will need to work them into key messages that are easily understandable and drive your points home. When crafting messages, the key is to know your audience and to tailor the message for that audience. You have a great advantage here in that your PFD audience is known, and will not change radically from meeting to meeting.

As you review your themes in emerging data, continuously ask yourself "why" and "how" to distill the message to its core. For example, if you see an emerging theme that participation of small business should be more engaged in discussions about the role of the private sector

in development policy, ask yourself 'how' that could be improved or take place rather than just stating that it needs to take place.

Key messages usually have the following characteristics:

- Concise: easy to understand - avoid jargon and acronyms
- Simple: can be explained in a short sentence aloud
- Positive and persuasive: focus on what can be done
- Specific: address a particular challenge

Your messages in the PFD may be spoken in the sessions, and therefore in the form of speaking points, with secondary messages to back up and expand on your key messages. Messages may also be presented in writing as position papers, a study (research/evidence) or summaries of such research (for example, if you are introducing a new issue). You will determine the most appropriate way to package and deliver your message. Keep in mind that for policy discussions, you will most likely need speaking points. For the introduction of new issues and for explaining the details of program implementation, written messages may be more appropriate. In either case, it is important to keep in mind the characteristics above and get the attention of your audience.

Case Study: Developing key messages

The European Network of Political Foundations (ENoP) participated in a consultation organised by the European Partnership for Democracy (EPD) on the "EU Strategic Framework and Action Plan on Human Rights and Democracy" in June 2014.

Practitioners, CSOs and EC/EEAS representatives came together to exchange ideas on the updating of the Strategic Framework. An initial meeting was held in order to grasp the issue and the tasks ahead. A report summarising the main points and highlighting the action points for ENoP was sent by the secretariat to the ENoP members. In order to collect more input and to guide the process of input collection, the ENoP working group on Democracy Support was defined as the main interlocutor, and convened a meeting in Brussels. During the meeting, two EEAS representatives were invited to exchange in a more in-depth manner about the subject. Members had the chance to pose concrete questions. Afterwards, an internal brainstorming was used to define which points to include in the updated version of the Framework. In the aftermath, after having captured the main ideas of the updating process of the Strategic Framework, a written contribution was sent to EPD. EPD used the input in order to draft a comprehensive position paper reflecting the views of CSOs. Since there is only a hand full of CSOs with hands-on experience in the democracy support field, being a part of the group of experts and coming up with a kind of concerted position allowed for a meaningful contribution.

Strength of the process:

- Existence of a working group to lead the process
- Use of key experts
- Creation of synergies with other organisations working in the same field (eg. EPD)WG members had the chance to meet in Brussels and develop the position

Challenge in the process:

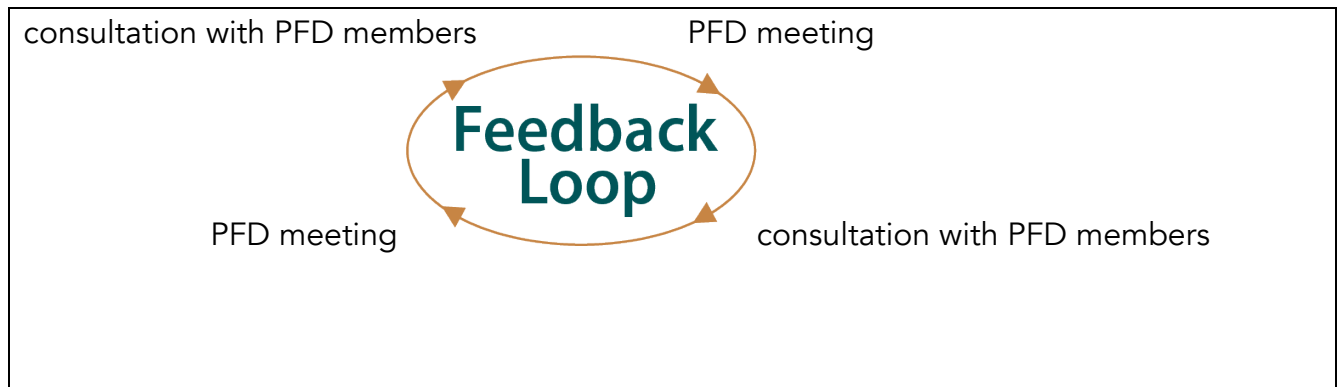
- Limited number of CSOs with first-hand democracy support experience
- Timelines with regards to consultations often very tight (positions have to be approved by decision making bodies)
- Formulating a joint position being balanced, representative and concrete at the same time

Lessons Learned:

- Working with a group of experts to develop positions was effective.
- Allowing for adequate time and multiple steps to deepen the discussion led to concrete and well-developed messages.

III. Providing feedback back to constituencies on the PFD discussions

As seen in diagram 1 below and reiterated in the overview of the basic steps of consultation, feedback is part of two-way dialogue and active participation. Feedback should become a loop, implying that it is continuous and never-ending.



Why provide feedback?

The feedback loop to the actual participants of the consultation is key to:

- building and maintaining trust;
- maintaining ownership and involvement in the policy dialogue; and
- maintaining and expanding engagement with the PFD.

Essentially, you are obtaining and maintaining active participation by building an ongoing dialogue before and after PFD meetings in which you engage members and constituencies in a discussion around development policy issues.

What should be included in feedback?

It is essential that participants of PFD meetings as well as PFD constituency members have transparent feedback that includes:

- the information gathering process in the specific consultation and key findings/common position to be put forward in the PFD meeting
- what happened during the meeting in relation to the findings/position and where this input fits in the decision making process

- the outcomes of the PFD at large: impact at the PFD and key reactions (put into context so participants understand clearly how this relates to their own work and lives)
- next steps

How can feedback be provided?

Feedback from your consultation and from the PFD can be shared in various ways. The PFD foresees existing communication tools that are already available:

- meeting notes and reports, as well as presentations;
- A public and private group on capacity4dev, so that web-based information about the meeting are easily accessible. PFD members can blog on the capacity4dev group page to quickly and easily share information.
- a short summary of the meeting to share; and
- regular newsletters about the PFD

Feedback should be easy to understand and relevant to the participants. You may choose to adapt the tools above, or use the group page to share information, or use a different method, such as a short report or video. You may use an existing meeting space to share feedback in person. Some of the ways PFD members and their members have provided feedback to past consultations include:

- written reports and recommendations, including progress reports
- press releases
- public declarations
- media/radio talk show
- meetings, including assembly meetings, stakeholder meetings, community meetings, focus group discussions
- newsletters
- letters to key stakeholders
- website to share reports
- emails/google groups
- presentations

Continuous feedback requires time for preparing and sharing simplified background documents and questions, and gathering feedback. While the steps mentioned in this manual are ideal, the reality is that managing, collecting and consolidating information in a short time frame is a huge challenge. As well, the PFD represents a difficult concept for most members of members who are not well-versed in European development policy and dialogue. Shorter, simpler documents are needed, which are easier to understand. As well, PFD members must adapt the content to be most relevant for their region and constituents.

In order to maintain a constant feedback loop, Cooperativas de las Americas has a board correspondence list by which they are constantly in touch with members. When they need to organize polls, they develop an action plan, send out a mission statement and formulate target questions to gather input. There must be adequate time to allow for national organizations to understand the context and contents of the questions. As well, the context and questions must be explained simply, so that participation can be broad.

IV. Conclusion

This toolkit is meant to be a dynamic and useful reference for PFD Members to bring more focused input and better engage their constituencies. In order for this to be a "living" document that continues to be a resource, examples and updates from PFD Members' experiences will be added throughout the progression of the PFD. The toolkit and lessons that are compiled via its use will ideally be an ongoing support to dialogue, policy debate and follow up on the implementation of recommendations.

V. Annex 1: Resources Consulted

- CARE, Advocacy Tools and Guidelines, Atlanta, January 2001.
- Health Canada Policy Toolkit for Public Involvement in Decision Making, Minister of Public Works and Government Services Canada, 2000.
- IBM, Public Deliberation: A Manager's Guide to Citizen Engagement, 2006.
- Institute of Development Studies, Knowledge from the Margins: An anthology from a global network on participatory practice and policy influence, Brighton, June 2014.
- Local Government Improvement and Development's Healthy Communities Programme, Not another consultation!, November, 2010.
- ODI, Rapid Outcome Mapping Approach: A Guide to policy engagement and influence, 2014.
- OECD, Citizens as Partners: Information, Consultation and Public Participation in Policy Making, 2001.
- Scottish Executive's Action Programme for Youth, Consultation Toolkit, Sept 1999.
- Sheedy, Amanda. Handbook on Citizen Engagement: Beyond Consultation, Canadian Policy Research Networks, March 2008.
- Stakeholder Forum and CIVICUS, et al. Sustainable Development Toolkit: advocacy Toolkit for Influencing the post-2015 development agenda. (www.SD2015.org, www.stakeholderforum.org, www.civicus.org)

VI. Annex II: Additional Resources

- Open forum for CSO Development Effectiveness - focuses on consultation and not advocacy strategies - develops issues paper with background, guiding discussion/consultation questions and resource links. www.cso-effectiveness.org
- The Community Tool Box is a free, online resource for those working to build healthier communities and bring about social change. It offers thousands of pages of tips and tools for taking action in communities. More than 300 modules; available in English, Spanish and Arabic. <http://ctb.ku.edu/en>
- www.wageningenportals.nl/msp/tools. The MSP Resource Portal provides a thorough introduction to multi-stakeholder processes, covering concepts, methodologies, tools, facilitation skills and current literature.
- www.worldwewant2015.org - campaign by the United Nations and civil society on the post-2015 agenda. Includes kits to engage in advocacy interactive tools to gather input and give feedback, as well as compilations of citizen input around the topic.
- www.innonet.org/advocacy: this is an online resource for impact measurement, particularly tools to measure advocacy impact. Registration is free and access is easy to research, tools, etc.

VII. Annex III: Policy consultation background note example

DIALOGUE BETWEEN THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION AND EAST AFRICA LOCAL GOVERNMENTS ASSOCIATIONS Consultation on the Issue Paper preparing the Commission Communication on Local Authorities in Development

**Impala Hotel, Arusha (Tanzania)
25 September 2012, 2.00 – 4.30 PM**

Background

The European Commission is currently redefining its strategy of support for local and regional authorities in Europe's partner countries. A Communication² will be published early 2013 in this regard.

The European Commission has called on PLATFORMA, the European platform of local and regional authorities for development³ to conduct a consultation of these actors in order to further inform the Commission's future strategy. Consultation sessions like the meeting organised by EALGA, UCLG and CLGF in Arusha will take place throughout September and October 2012 in various regions of the world.

This is a choice moment to stimulate a debate and gather observations from local governments, from EU's partner countries in particular, on issues at stake for them and best possible ways for the EU to support them.

Since 2007, cooperation links between local governments and the European Union have strengthened considerably with the Non State Actors and Local Authorities programme dedicating about 35 million € per year to local governments' actions. In addition, through PLATFORMA, local and regional governments were involved in a structured dialogue with the European Commission, Parliament and civil society organisations in 2010 and 2011 to discuss their role in development.

The discussion will be based on 3 specific themes raised in the issue paper published by the European Commission.

1- SUPPORTING AN ENABLING ENVIRONMENT FOR GOOD LOCAL GOVERNANCE IN EAST AFRICA COUNTRIES

² A Communication is the highest level policy document published by the European Commission. It plans out the policy strategy of the Commission in a given area.

³ PLATFORMA brings together the majority of national, European and international associations of local and regional governments active in decentralised cooperation. The objective of the network, whose Secretariat is hosted by the European section of UCLG, the Council of European Municipalities and Regions, is to coordinate their positions in this area and to promote them vis-à-vis the European Institutions. For more information, please visit: <http://www.platforma-dev.eu/>

Some food for thought

Recent EU policy documents put forward that development, democracy and good governance are intertwined and need to be supported at all levels (national, local and sector levels). In this framework, local governments should play a critical role in ensuring a “broad-based and democratic accountability and ownership” in country development agendas (as stated in the Busan Partnership Document on Effective Development Cooperation). They need to be provided with an enabling environment to allow them take up effectively their increasing responsibilities and develop multilevel and participatory approaches to development.

Decentralisation as a core element of the enabling environment needed for LRAs to deliver services and ensure good governance of the public policies implemented. In the concluding document of the structured dialogue, one of the recommendation is that the *“EC should attach fundamental importance to decentralization as an important building block for good governance and effective development assistance at the local level”*

Do you agree? What are the key challenges for a good decentralisation system? What efforts do local governments provide to improve their enabling environment and how could such efforts be supported? What kind of programmes would you expect from the EU in this regard?

2- LAS' CONTRIBUTE TO TERRITORIAL DEVELOPMENT AND THE QUALITY OF LIFE OF THEIR COMMUNITIES IN EAST AFRICAN COUNTRIES

Some food for thought

What areas for local governments to contribute to development? What main challenges and support?

Capacity building of municipal and territorial staff, in particular for project and planning departments. Devolution putting additional administrative, managerial, lobbying, communication and technical pressure on local governments, greater transfer of resources and technical capacity is requested. Could this be a crucial investment for the EC to make?

Basic services delivery as a major responsibility for local governments: what needs in accessing services and infrastructure? What implementation of dialogue systems with local CSOs and joint work procedures such as public service delegation when CSOs are involved in the public arena?

Implementation of local policy programming and monitoring tools; development of public-private partnerships, and other multi-actor initiatives at the local and regional levels

How could EU funding programmes best reflect the public nature of local governments and facilitate their greater participation?

3- LOCAL GOVERNMENT'S ROLE IN BUILDING AN INCLUSIVE DEVELOPMENT AGENDA?

Some food for thought

In a 2010 report on “Cities and Climate change”, the OECD indicated that, “roughly half of the world’s population lives in urban areas, and this share is projected to reach 60% by 2030. Cities consume between 60 to 80% of energy production worldwide and account for a roughly equivalent share of global CO2 emissions. Cities are also highly vulnerable to climate change. Many of the world’s largest cities are located in coastal areas. This increases their vulnerability to rising sea levels and storm surges, risking livelihoods, property, and urban infrastructure.”

Cities have particularly turned out to be frontline actors in tackling the urgent challenges that urbanisation brings, such as social exclusion, livelihood, urban infrastructures (housing, health, transport, etc.), depletion of existing resources, public safety and environment. A large and increasing proportion of urban populations are forced to live in unauthorised settlements, which lack adequate services and facilities.

At the same time, there is a need to promote a balanced approach to urban development issues, taking into account overall territorial development and the role of local governments in rural areas and smaller towns in relation to the bigger cities. Access to land is also a pre-requisite to urban development and, as such, occupies a central role in any urban development strategy.

How to adopt a balanced approach to urbanization challenges (in particular arising demand for local public services), taking into account the role of medium-sized and smaller cities as well as that of rural LAs (including sustainability)? How can the participation of local stakeholders in local development be promoted and strengthened? How can the EU assist in improving LG and the LGAs’ capacities?

VIII. Annex IV: Policy consultation discussion format example

Consultation on the Commission's future Communication on Local Authorities in Development REPORTING TEMPLATE

1. Background of the Consultation session
 - a. Host organisation
 - b. Context of the event
 - c. Contribution of the European Commission services and of the PLATFORMA Secretariat
2. Participants: Who (positions, where they come from)? How many? (Please annex the list of participants to the reports)
3. Discussing the Issue Paper: questions discussed and recommendations

Please list the issues raised on the basis of the Issue Paper, and for each of them:

- a. explain briefly why they have been chosen as key issues if not all questions of the issue paper were covered;
 - b. provide a short summary capturing the main elements of the discussion, (the summary should not be linear detailed minutes);
 - c. draw up main conclusions and recommendations for the Communication
4. Was there any additional issue raised outside the scope of the issue paper that you deem important?
 5. Please describe the general feeling of the participants regarding (i) the Communication and (ii) the session; do they have a good appreciation of the political stakes and the signification of an EC Communication? Did they find this consultation relevant?

If there was any particular message related to the consultation process addressed to the European Commission or to the PLATFORMA Secretariat, please indicate.

6. Concluding remarks

Follow up note: You can find the report of the consultation here:

<http://platforma-dev.eu/files/upload/608/platforma-report-en-v4h2-low-.pdf>

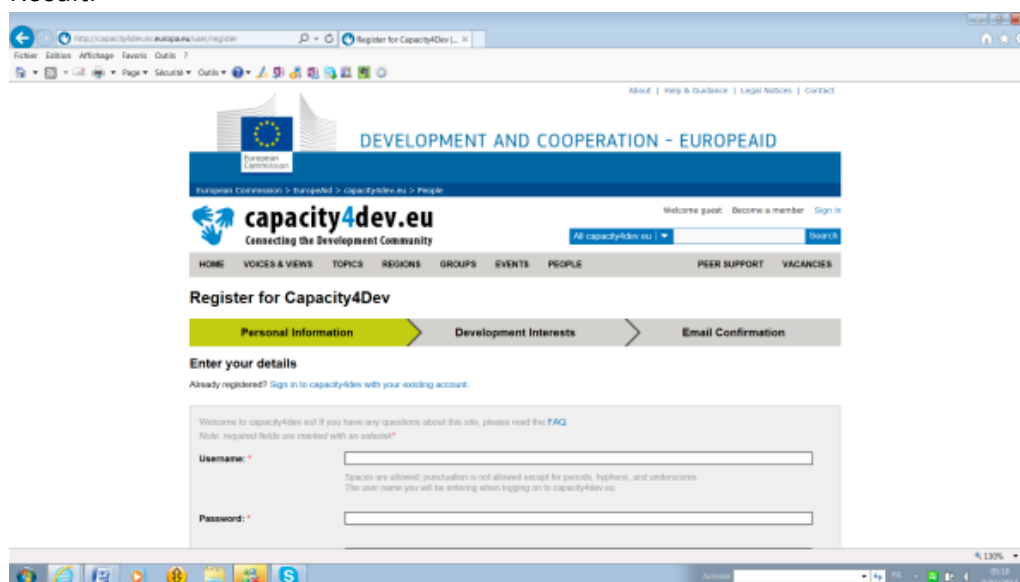
IX. Annex V: How to become a member of the PFD group on Capacity4Dev

Very easy, it takes just 2 steps and 5 minutes of your time!

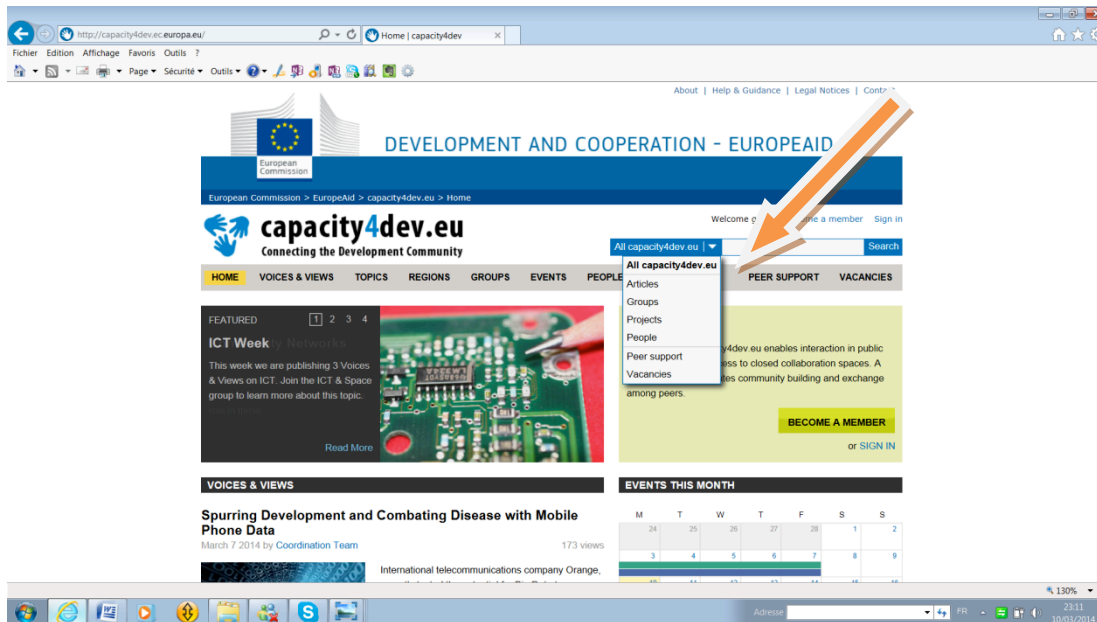
1. Please go to <http://capacity4dev.ec.europa.eu/> and fill out the form which appears after clicking on the button or link "Become a member" which can be found in 2 places:



Result:



2. **Look for the group** under the indicated menu by searching "Groups" and typing in "Policy Forum" in the search box. This should enable you to find the public group Policy Forum on Development at <http://capacity4dev.ec.europa.eu/policy-forum-development/> and **request membership** by clicking "Join this group".



Result:



3. We will invite you to this PRIVATE GROUP :

<http://capacity4dev.ec.europa.eu/policy-forum-on-development/>

Please make sure to carefully check out any future correspondence from Cap4Dev so you can validate our invitation!

Result:

The screenshot shows a web browser displaying the capacity4dev.eu website. The browser's address bar shows the URL <http://capacity4dev.ec.europa.eu/policy-forum-on-development/>. The website header includes the European Commission logo and the text "DEVELOPMENT AND COOPERATION - EUROPEAID". Below this, a blue banner reads "European Commission > EuropeAid > capacity4dev.eu > Groups". The main navigation bar includes links for HOME, VOICES & VIEWS, TOPICS, REGIONS, GROUPS (highlighted), PROJECTS, EVENTS, PEOPLE, and VACANCIES. The user is logged in as "Sara Simon" and can access their profile or sign out. A search bar is also present. The main content area features a "PRIVATE GROUP: EU Policy Forum on Development" with a group photo of many people. Below the photo, it states "Group created on November 18 2013" and provides statistics: "25 pages, 12 blog posts, 22 documents, 8 events, 42 members, 9 recommendations, 6 comments (show more)".