

Annex D: Other Tools to Get the Job Done (Checklist)

"The processes that occur in our [societies] are not arcane, capable of being understood only by experts. They can be understood by almost anybody. Many ordinary people already understand this; they simply have not considered that by understanding these ordinary arrangements of cause and effect, we can also direct them, if we want to."
- Jane Jacobs in *Death and Life of Great American Cities*, 1961

Studies, reports, debriefings, conferences and "more research" have been the main tools of trade of university educated policy advisors over the last decades. All are of course highly respectable and have their uses -- but also their limits and abuses. Given these limits and that the issues that concern us here are complex and systemic, and further that they often involve reconciling the positions of groups and interests which are usually far from identical and often highly conflicted, we must be prepared to try other less "academic" approaches to knowledge-building, communications, conflict resolution and, finally, to the mobilization of opinion and resources that is now required.

So, instead of always accepting automatically that the right next move is to have a distant and more often than not opaque technocratic "elite" take over control and in the process generate yet more paper (and that in a society that increasingly won't read, never mind act on what they read!) -- and bearing in mind the powerful educational levels, tools available to and competence of civil society in this new century, we should, therefore, be giving far more importance in all stages of each project to such things as ...

1. Understand that the problems need to be addressed with concrete remedial measures without delay!!!
2. Be wary of long reports and one more conference – which have their place but which should not substitute for responsible, near term remedial actions
3. Being willing to talk to everyone (even when you know that don't like what you are saying).
4. Being willing to listen to everyone (even when you may not like what they are saying).
5. Standing around and watching carefully what is really going on.
6. Insisting always on the use of simple language.
7. Looking for ways to heighten the impact of words (written or spoken, and which does not always necessarily mean even more words).
8. Using images, photographs, photo essays, film, architectural renderings, video scenarios, cartoons, posters, drawings and other forms of lively graphic expression and characterization ("before and after" illustrations)-- to impart greater depth and impact to the issues and realities being faced.
9. Using these and other media techniques to illustrate alternative futures and policy options, in ways which render them striking and understandable..
10. Creative, probing use of polls, surveys, feedback monitoring schemes which improve awareness of the diversity of needs and views - not as instruments to indicate easily satisfied uniform conditions and values..

11. Creative use of small samples (cheaper, faster and sometimes even more accurate).
12. Imaginative linking of quantitative analysis with more vivid information concerning the real impacts on individuals, families, firms & communities.
13. Socioeconomic analysis, studies and portrayals of actual daily life experience.
14. "Day in the life of ... " profiles, scenarios, stories, rapportages & other "literary" treatments.
15. Not excluding humor, wit, jokes, irony (& even the possibility of dubious taste, if that's what it takes to increase the level of critical thinking and creativity) from policy discussions.
16. Books and articles on these challenging issues aimed at informing and involving the general public (as opposed to only the usual specialist or academic readers).
17. Editorials, columns and op-ed pieces (carefully written) to hammer the key points home.
18. Games, educational and others, using a wide variety of media.
19. Contests, competitions to elicit broader, more vigorous and more imaginative participation in all stages.
20. More brilliant use of "commercials", spots, etc., To achieve educational and social objectives.
21. Events, books, images, programs aimed at informing and socializing children.
22. Finding ways to involve children actively both in the collective learning experience and in the solution process.
23. Use of the school system as a resource, to carry out surveys, mini-studies, demonstrations, parent education and activism on these issues, etc..
24. Maps – Both such things as Green Maps and other maps which help us to understand better and seek out new ideas
25. Illustrated path mapping – Point to point illustrated (drawings, images, photos, etc.) detailing the nitty-gritty of what it takes to get easily an well from many A's to B's in the city (with obstacle identification).
26. Using town halls, libraries, museums and other public places including the streets themselves as centers of exposition and public debate.
27. New techniques of knowledge building (including opening up of the policy process to public participants in new and more far-reaching ways).
28. Active networking at all levels of society -- using an increasing variety of media.
29. Electronic bulletin boards, networking, conferencing, new group work/groupware techniques.
30. Use of simulations, artificial intelligence, etc., to encourage depiction, emergence, and collective consideration of broader solution sets.
31. Innovative techniques of conflict resolution (including iterative adversary programs using video, audio and other feedback techniques).
32. Town meetings & other fora of debate, consensus building & group decision.
33. Process-oriented projects involving the semi-structured use of things like brainstorming sessions, roundtables, confrontations of opposing points of view-all oriented to attain specific objectives.

34. Cross-project and cross-country support by policy gurus, networks & public interest consortia.
35. Demonstrations of new ways of doing things (properly prepared, carefully monitored & flexibly fine-tuned for results).
36. New partnerships with the media, new and old, which increase public awareness of both issues and trade-offs, as well as direct public involvement in the solution process.
37. Active investigation & learning from post mortems of project experience, both successful & other.
38. Direct, frequent and interactive contact as equals with people and places who are not doing so well by present arrangements, including those who are handicapped, ill, aged, poor, physically or otherwise isolated, discriminated against, or out of work (and bearing in mind that this means a great deal more than just anyone who happens to be a "officially registered unemployment statistic")-- and making sure in the process that their interests are fully and fairly integrated in the central core of all new policies, institutions, and programs.

Now these are of course all things that are easy enough to say. But to do them right - and they are indeed virtually all valuable tools in cases such as those that we are confronting here -- is a challenge of some proportions. And as we work with them, we can bear in mind that if in this way we are able to mobilize the community as a whole in support of these remedial programs and actions -- which indeed we must -- there are out there in our societies many talents and energies which can be drawn on to these important ends. Once done, they will impart a great sense of competence and satisfaction to the community as a whole, thereby transferring the "ownership" and success of the venture to where it should be -- to the community as a whole.