

Democracy and Participation in the Global South: Lessons from the LogoLink network

Facilitators:

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We presented on lessons from the LogoLink network, in particular lessons from the Global South, where the majority of LogoLink partner organizations are located, and where a number of innovative experiences and democratic experiments are taking place. In our presentation we introduced LogoLink to the participants and discussed the functioning of the network, and the most recent international research projects our partners are engaged in, highlighting some recent experiences in citizen participation in local government around the world. The overarching question addressed was about means of fostering greater North-South collaboration and shared learning among practitioners, while keeping in mind that the reverse flow of democratic conversation by no means suggests that there is one model, one size-fits all model of democracy.

- What **innovations, ideas, opportunities, and/or action steps** received the most support among your group?

The group agreed that there is value in North-South sharing and learning exchanges and that these should be fostered to a higher degree. The session was more about networking and discussing North-South networking opportunities between organizations and practitioners in the two regions. There is a lot happening in the North and in the South and this dialogue is important in order to learn what works in different contexts.

Mark Linder, vice chair of the National League of Cities, supported an idea presented about getting the Sister Cities/Twin Cities program to go beyond a cultural exchange, to also encompass learning exchanges of democratic and participatory practices in local governance.

Another idea that resonated well among the group was the incorporation of training/internships in similar types of organizations for exchange students, as a means of strengthening the North-South learning as well as build the capacity of the students as democracy practitioners, as an international internship program.