Civil Society Organisations and their ability to influence policy

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MALTA HEALTH NETWORK
Agenda

• The public policy cycle
• Influencing the policy cycle
• Government’s interaction
• Different strategies of lobbying
• Traditional influencing strategies
• A new model for policy influence
• Going window-out & window-in
• Final reflections

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Knowledge Transfer

Decision-making analysis of policy alternatives, selection and prioritisation

Formulation detailed development of a set of policy alternatives into concrete proposals

Implementation putting the selected policy into practice

Evaluation appraising the effects and success of the policy

Decision considering whether to pursue, revise or terminate policy

The Public Policy Cycle

Campaigning

Consultations

Public-Private Partnerships

LOBBYING

Collective learning

RESEARCH

Knowledge Transfer

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So, why are CSOs important?

- Expressions of social diversity and political pluralism
- Vehicles of interest representation
- Instruments of political mobilisation
- Campaigners – using the discourse of rights, breaking the mould of traditional party politics – flexible, opportunistic
- Service delivery – especially targeted social services and community development
- Scrutiny of public office – part of the checks and balances of power
Models of how Governments deal with CSOs

Exclusion

Indifference

One-way dissemination

Consultation

Dialogue

Participation

Partnership

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Public authorities provide information (one-way info channel)

Public authorities tell CSOs what happens and ask for feedback (two-way info channel)

Both public authorities & CSOs are able to set the agenda, & authorities may respond to CSOs' concerns

Ideas put forward by CSOs are incorporated into policy design, dossiers & programs

A strong term denoting that CSOs are taken as partners, and play real role in all stages of policy making

Source: Social Platform (2009)
Lobbying Methods

Contact lobbying
- Direct interaction with government officials or staff in meetings, phone calls, or e-mail

Background lobbying
- Indirect lobbying activity designed to build friendly relations with lawmakers, officials, and staff

Grassroots lobbying
- The technique of generating an expression of public, or "grassroots," support for the position of a company, industry, or any interest
Traditional & new methods of policy influence

• Coercion tactics

• Encapsulation strategy

• Advocacy campaigning

• The new way of lobbying – Public Affairs Management
Public Affairs Management (PAM): The new model of influencing policy

• PAM entails the detection of those policy arenas where interest groups need to form coalitions and bargain collectively, build a workable agenda, set appropriate timing when to intervene and opt for the optimum tailored lobbying methods, techniques and routes. This is a complex process involving a simultaneous matrix constituted of ‘internal preparatory work’ and ‘fieldwork interactivity’.

• Groups need not only be rational in their choices to maximise their interests in the arena, but they must also be eager to learn through constant processes of evaluation and socialisation.

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## Public Affairs Management (PAM) (Van Schendelen 2005)

Taking influence strategies a step further ...

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<td><strong>&amp; result?</strong></td>
<td>process evaluation</td>
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PAM: Going Window-Out & Window-In

• The new techniques are, in contrast, based on the belief that the domain and the scope of influence are always limited and fragile.
• The domain has to be scanned by going window-out and the scope has to be enlarged by acting window-in.
• The popular catchword for both is influence.
• A CSO group can be an association acting both window-out [external fieldwork] and window-in [home organisation and strategy formulation]
• The approach proposed by the PAM is considered by many as a core constituent of good governance not only within organised groups structures but, more importantly, in securing more legitimate processes of policy-making.
Two final reflections

“The problem is, of course, that these interest groups are all asking for changes, but their enthusiasm for change rapidly disappears when it affects the core of their own interests.”

Angela Merkel
German Chancellor

“You cannot open a window and expect the wind not to blow through.”

Prof Joe Friggieri
Maltese philosopher and writer
Thank you

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