



How to establish a local participatory democracy

Conference paper by Samia Jelasseh

The concept of »civil society« is often used in the context of democracy and is increasingly linked to the good governance. Among the principles of good governance: a decentralized and participatory system of decision. Participation in decision-making can take many forms: consultation, collaboration and referendum.

Therefore challenges are:

- 1- The improvement of the legislative environment for NGOs of civil society
- 2- The entrenchment of rights and freedoms
- 3- The entrenchment of the right to submit petitions
- 4- The entrenchment of institutions of human rights and participatory democracy
- 5- Promoting a local democracy
- 6- The improvement of the electoral system
- 7- Enhancing the dialogue between government and civil society
- 8- Creating an extended networks and a lasting coalition between NGOs in order to build a strong community and a valuable counterweight to the state
- 9- Strengthening the partnerships research: International partners will be useful to provide financial and material aid, but it should also be helpful for an ideological support to facilitate the work of civil society and consolidate their structures. And also to enlarge their resources and capacities, then increase their considerations to the people and government.

The factor of »trust« must be the bedrock between public actors and civil society. In the case of Tunisia, slowly but steadily we see the establishment of a local participatory democracy through the adoption of a »participatory budget«, in which, citizens and civil society are »co-takers of decisions«.

Indeed, an agreement is made between the municipalities and civil society, in which it sets the rules of the game of the participatory budget, providing each partner to have a role in the establishment of this local participatory democracy.

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