PROMISING PRACTICES TOOLKIT

Making public participation inclusive and equitable for all women

Promising Practices

Toolkit 2020

2020

MAKING PUBLIC PARTICIPATION INCLUSIVE AND EQUITABLE FOR ALL WOMEN

PROMISING PRACTICES TOOLKIT - 2020

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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INTRODUCTION

Concertation Montréal (CMTL), the Coalition montréalaise des Tables de quartier (CMTQ), and Relais-femmes aim to contribute to changing practices and policies related to public participation in order to promote the active and meaningful participation of women in all their diversity to influence the decisions that affect their everyday lives.

If barriers to citizen participation can be reduced, women will be better able to speak out more freely and it will be easier for them to get involved in additional democratic processes. These would be truly tangible outcomes that would show just how important it is to adopt practices that promote equality and inclusion!

This toolkit was produced as part of the MTElles project and is intended specifically for municipal, paramunicipal and community development partners. However, the practices contained in the toolkit can be adapted to any organization wishing to promote inclusion and parity through its practices. We hope that the toolkit will enable cities and community development structures to be better equipped to serve the community and provide more equitable and inclusive ways of appropriately addressing the needs of all women in the community.

Although the main objective of the MTElles project was to promote women's participation in Montréal's democratic life, we are convinced that the practices and tools contained in this tool kit will be useful for society as a whole. By adopting practices that promote equality and inclusion, we improve our organizations and foster everybody's civic participation, while also taking concrete steps to reduce sources of discrimination for the people most often excluded from these processes, particularly women in all their diversity. In this way, we fight inequality and promote greater social justice.

TIP

This toolkit includes a **Guide for implementing a gender-inclusive public participation process.** Use it to help determine which practices you would like to set up.

OVERVIEW OF THE MTElles PROJECT

MTElles is a three-year action research project (2017-2020) that examines both municipal and paramunicipal consultation and participation practices (city council, borough councils, city council standing committees, consultations led by the *Office de consultation publique de Montréal (OCPM)* [Montréal Public Consultation Office] as well as neighbourhood-level civic engagement (neighbourhood roundtables) in the urban agglomeration of Montréal. This project was funded by Status of Women Canada (now Women and Gender Equality Canada) and led jointly by Concertation Montréal (CMTL), the Coalition montréalaise des Tables de quartier (CMTQ) and Relais-femmes.

THE PROJECT'S OBJECTIVES WERE TO:

1   Identify and examine the systemic barriers to women's participation in consultations organized by municipal bodies and neighbourhood roundtables

2   Implement innovative and inclusive participatory practices to eliminate barriers to women's participation in democratic life

By the end of the project, CMTL, the CMTQ, and Relais-femmes aim to contribute to changing practices and policies related to public consultations and public participation in order to promote the active and meaningful participation of women in all their diversity to influence the decisions that affect their everyday lives. In this way, both cities and neighbourhood roundtables will be better equipped to serve the community and to ensure they adequately address the needs of all residents regardless of their gender.

THE FOUR STAGES OF THE MTElles PROJECT

▶ EXPLORATION AND RESEARCH

Understand how women currently participate in Montréal's democratic life by producing a baseline study (État des lieux)

▶ CONFIRMING AND CONCEPTUALIZING

Convening a discussion forum (Forum d'échange) to validate the results from the baseline study and identify practices to pilot in Montréal

▶ PILOT-PROJECTS

Implement pilot-projects to experiment practices to promote women's participation in 17 different citizen participation spaces

▶ PUBLISHING RESULTS

Develop and publish this toolkit so that other groups can benefit from the MTElles project

▶ MTElles PROJECT PARTNERS

Lead partners

MTElles : Pratiques participatives pour l'égalité [MTElles: Participatory Practices for Equality] is a project that was led jointly by three organisations that share rich and complementary expertise.

Concertation Montréal's (CMTL) mission is to develop the region of Montréal through consultation. To do this, it brings together socio-economic leaders and elected municipal officials on the island of Montréal to launch and support innovative and strategic regional initiatives. The organization is recognized by the urban agglomeration of Montréal as its main partner for intersectoral consultation and regional development. It is funded by the urban agglomeration of Montréal through the *Fonds de développement des territoires by the Ministère des Affaires municipales et de l'Habitation*. CMTL brings together over 120 regional organizations and elected members and more than 200 partners. It works in a range of sectors, including sustainable development, education, science and technology, children, youth, governance, diversity, parity, and healthy living habits.

The **Coalition montréalaise des Tables de quartier (CMTQ, or the Neighbourhood Roundtables Coalition)** brings together the 30 neighbourhood roundtables of Montreal. The CMTQ works at the city level on a range of issues aimed at improving the quality of life for everyone living in Montréal, based on local concerns identified in the different neighbourhoods. Over the years, the CMTQ has worked on many major issues, all aimed at making Montréal a more just and inclusive city by emphasizing the importance of the neighbourhood as the place people feel most connected to, and where they socialize and help each other out. Fostering citizen participation is one of its areas of focus. In partnership with the City of Montréal, the *Direction régionale de santé publique du CIUSSS du Centre-Sud-de-l'Île-de-Montréal* [Montréal Public Health Department] and Centraide of Greater Montreal, the CMTQ is involved in the Initiative montréalaise de soutien au développement social local [Montréal Initiative to Support Local Social Development], a program supporting the neighbourhood roundtables in their work to foster civic engagement in order to improve living conditions for all Montrealers.

Relais-femmes is a feminist non-profit organization that uses knowledge mobilization to work for social change and to promote women's rights and organizations. As a network organisation, it provides research, training, and support for its members, but also to other women's organizations, community groups, and various communities. It grew out of the women's movement and was founded by Québec's major women's groups in 1980. It serves as a focal point and a bridge between these groups and academic researchers so that partnerships can be established with the aim of knowledge development, management, and transfer, and offering training and support services, while increasingly using intersectional feminist perspective to add nuance. Relais-femmes' membership includes over 90 local, regional, and Québec-wide women's groups, as well as 20 or so individual members. Relais-femmes is actively involved in identifying issues related to the living conditions of all women.

▸ FRAMEWORK AND KEY CONCEPTS

Gender-based Analysis Plus (GBA+)

MTElles applied a **Gender-based Analysis Plus (GBA+[1])** approach to the project. GBA+ Is an analytical approach used by the Canadian government that assesses the range of identity markers that intersect between groups of people in order to develop, set up, and evaluate initiatives as part of a more inclusive process. Relais-femmes defines GBA+ as "a process aimed at constantly taking into account different realities for diverse groups of people — women, men, people of diverse gender identities — whenever a new initiative is set up". In fact, our place in society (and our own identity) are influenced by a range of social factors in addition to our sex or gender, including "race"; social class; ethnicity; religion; age; Indigenous status, immigration or refugee status; gender identity; sexual orientation; and whether or not we have a disability." [Our translation] (Relais-femmes, 2020)[2]

Equity and equality are not only about sex and gender. By addressing systemic barriers, we allow women facing different kinds of oppression to fully participate.

The "**plus**" indicates, therefore, that gender-based analysis goes beyond sex and gender and is also concerned with how they intersect with other identity markers such as sexual orientation, gender identity, ethnicity, and cultural background, Indigenous status, religion, social class, age or disability. This is what we call **intersectionality.**

"An intersectional perspective" *seeks to take into account the ways that different forms of oppression intersect and overlap. Some women are oppressed in a variety of ways, while also being oppressed by our patriarchal system at the same time. These different systems of oppression work with and reinforce one another. When we belong to certain groups (class, gender, disability, age, ethnicity, sexual orientation, etc.) or have a certain identity – actual or presumed –, this leads to different lived experiences between men and women, but also among women. In this way, an intersectional approach underscores the idea that the category 'women' is far from homogeneous."[Our translation]*

– Relais-femmes, 2020

The following expressions are used interchangeably in this toolkit to remind us all that **women are not a homogeneous group and have a range of experiences:**

- **Women in all their diversity**
- **The diversity of women**
- **Women including those facing multiple forms of oppression**
- **All women**
- **A full diversity of women**
- **Women in the community, women citizens, participating women, and women residents[3]**

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[1] This definition was largely taken from the videos available online on the microlearning videos page under the GBA+ tab on the Women and Gender Equality Canada website. They were posted as part of the GBA+ Awareness Week that took place from May 20 to June 2, 2017. www.swc-cfc.gc.ca, accessed May 9, 2018.

[2] Definition based on: Status of Women Canada, 2018 and Secrétariat à la condition féminine, 2007.

[3] These terms are used to refer to women living in a given area, regardless of her immigration status. All women have a right to participation in democratic life.

Systemic discrimination

Le Tribunal des droits de la personne [Québec Human Rights Tribunal] defines systemic discrimination as "[...] the sum of the disproportionate exclusionary effects resulting from the combination of often unconscious attitudes marked by preconceived notions and stereotypes, and of policies and practices that are generally adopted without taking into consideration the characteristics of those members of the group who are the object of the prohibition of discrimination."[4]

Equality

The Canadian Women's Foundation uses UN Women's definition of equality. UN Women defines equality as, "'equal rights, responsibilities, and opportunities" for all genders. It doesn't mean that everyone should be the same. It means peoples' rights, responsibilities, and opportunities shouldn't depend on their gender. It implies that the interests and needs of everybody, in all their diversities, are important. It's not a "women's issue." It's everyone's issue, and it makes life better for all of us."[5]

inequality   equity   equality
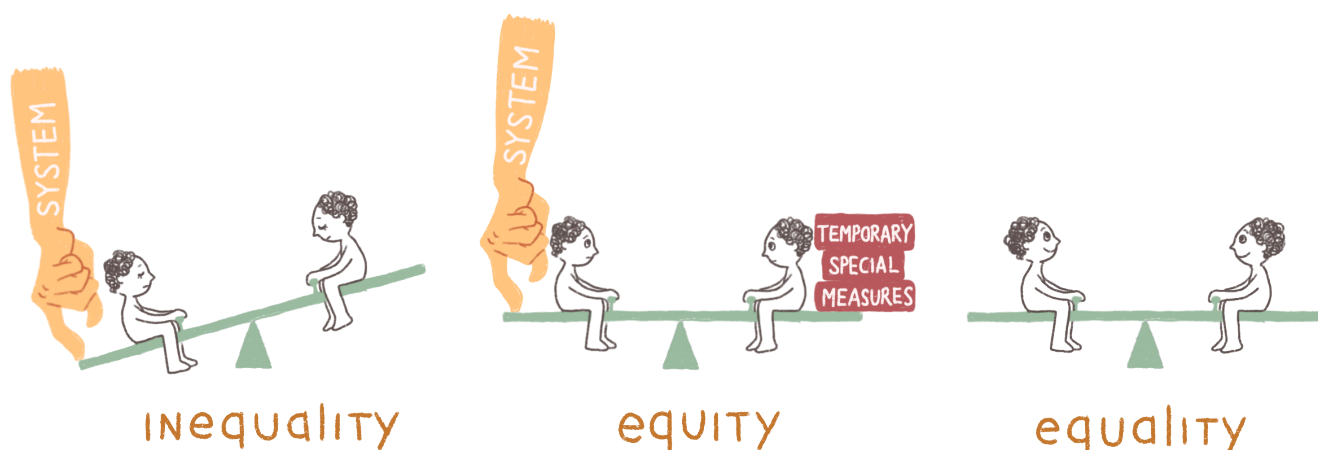
[4] Commission des droits de la personne et des droits de la jeunesse v. Gaz Métropolitain Inc., 2008 QCTDP 24, par. 36; confirmed on appeal: Gaz métropolitain Inc. v. Commission des droits de la personne et des droits de la jeunesse, 2011 QCCA 1201.

[5] Canadian Women's Foundation (n.d.) "What is gender equality"?, available at: https://canadianwomen.org/the-facts/

Gender

Gender is defined as "all the socially constructed social roles, behaviours, and characteristics that are considered to be appropriate for men (masculinity, virility) and women (femininity). Gender is constructed within a specific society and at a specific point in time." [Our translation][6]

"Gender identity is the gender with which a person identifies, regardless of which box the doctor checked on the birth certificate (sex assigned at birth); it is a deep and personal feeling. For this reason, only the person themselves can determine their identity (self-identification) and start an appropriate transitioning process, if need be. Gender is on a self-identification continuum which is generally considered to have two ends, one masculine, and the other feminine, but there exist many nuances between the two ends, all of which are personal and legitimate." [Our translation][7]

Socialization

Socialization is "the process by which culture is learned and acquired. During socialization, people internalize the dominant cultural social control mechanisms, along with values and norms that define what is right and what is wrong." [Our translation][8] **Gendered socialization** is "all the socially constructed social roles, behaviours, and characteristics that are considered to be appropriate for men (masculinity, virility) and women (femininity). Gender is constructed within a specific society and at a specific point in time." [Our translation][9] While gender identity exists on a continuum, gendered socialization is often linked to the sex assigned at birth.

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[6] *Ibid. p. 12.*

[7] *LGBTQI2SNBA+, Les mots de la diversité liée au sexe, au genre et à l'orientation sexuelle*, Dominique Dubuc, FNEEQ-CSN, 2017, p. 6.

[8] Regroupement québécois des Centres d'aide et de lutte contre les agressions à caractère sexuel – RQCALACS (2014) *Des mots pour parler de diversité. Lexique des termes utilisés dans le cadre de la formation "Une pour toutes et toutes pour ELLES"*, p. 22.

[9] *Ibid. p. 12.*

Inclusion

Inclusion is the "principle which recognizes that every person is a full-fledged member of the group and of society." [Our translation][10] To respect this principle, "societal norms adapt to accept differences: develop strategies to ensure that every group, with its particular characteristics, feels welcome." Inclusion implies that it is possible to access opportunities, spaces and services, and to be able to actively participate in democratic, social, and civic life. It is not about asking individuals to adapt to an existing framework, but rather to transform the structures and systems in place so that everyone, regardless of their gender, feels they are represented and are comfortable participating.
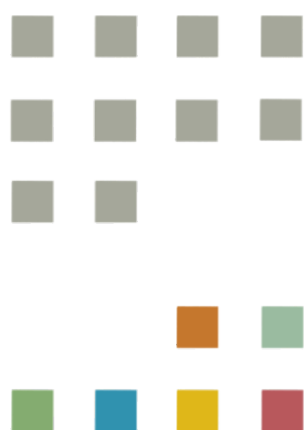
exclusion   integration   inclusion

[10] Table sur la diversité, l'inclusion et la lutte contre les discriminations (rapport final) (2019), p. 25.

Oppression

Oppression is "the way that a dominant group's power and privilege are maintained, by force, threats, and physical, psychological, social or economic violence. Oppression denotes an unequal power relation that is the source of domination, exclusion, discrimination, exploitation, and alienation." [Our translation][11]

Intersectional oppression

Intersectional oppression refers to the impact of "the experience of a person who faces a combination of different forms of oppression that interact and overlap, in other words, how systems are interconnected and constructed together."[12] Several intersecting systems of oppression exist, such as social class, colonialism, racism, sexism, ageism, and ableism.

Privilege

The definition used here expands on the one developed by the Canadian Race Relations Foundation: "The experience of unearned freedoms, rights, benefits, advantages, access and/or opportunities afforded some people because of their group membership or social context, generally not acknowledged and taken for granted."[13] Marginalized, disadvantaged or less valued groups are denied these same freedoms, rights, and benefits.

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[11] Regroupement québécois des Centres d'aide et de lutte contre les agressions à caractère sexuel – RQCALACS (2014) *Des mots pour parler de diversité. Lexique des termes utilisés dans le cadre de la formation "Une pour toutes et toutes pour ELLES"*, p. 20.

[12] Ibid. p.12.

[13] Ibid. p.22.

RESULTS FROM THE BASELINE STUDY:
THE IMPORTANCE OF ADDRESSING THE GENDER GAP

Women face discrimination due to their gender, and different women have different needs

UNEQUAL LIVING CONDITIONS

Issues related to social development and socio-economic problems affect a greater proportion of women, who, for example, are mainly responsible for taking care of their families and raising children. It is therefore important to consider their realities and create more conducive conditions that will encourage them to express their opinions and articulate their needs.

POLITICAL SOCIALIZATION

Research has shown that certain characteristics currently associated with being involved in politics (ex. self-assertiveness, speaking in public, combativeness, being strategic, arguing, and taking decisions based on a majority vote) are still conveyed more to boys than to girls during childhood.[14]

Factors that encourage women's participation

- Recognizing the validity of their ideas for community development and the expertise they have gained through everyday life

- Acknowledging women as credible spokespeople

- Other women's participation in democratic processes that result in the decisions made and actions taken being more inclusive and reflective of the specific needs of women

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METHODOLOGY

▶ **LITERATURE REVIEW**

▶ **65 OBSERVATION SESSIONS**

▶ **FOCUS GROUPS AND INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEWS WITH:**

- **45 women**

- **11 people working in municipal and paramunicipal organizations**
  7 elected officials and 4 support staff

- **21 people involved with neighbourhood roundtables**
  managers, community workers/organizers,
  integrated urban revitalization (IUR) coordinators

- **9 people from other organizations**
  a firm specializing in supporting collective action, women's groups

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[14] CSF, 2017 ; Angers, 2003 in *État des lieux MTElles*, 2018.

IMPORTANT BARRIERS TO WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION

Relationships and power dynamics

- The impression of not having any real influence on decision-making

- Long delays between sharing ideas during a consultation and these ideas resulting in concrete action

- The fact that citizens' concerns are not sufficiently taken into account and that the needs expressed are not adequately addressed

- The feeling that the presence of citizens is not accepted by all organizations involved in the process

- If there are tensions or even conflicts, these may disrupt the smooth running of meetings and undermine the sense of trust needed to ensure that women will feel comfortable freely expressing their opinions

- Unequal power dynamics

  1. Associated with gender – between people identifying as men, women, or other gender identities

  2. Associated with social or professional status – between female residents and professionals in organizations or government bodies

Organizations and bodies that are unrepresentative and that ignore or are unaware of different social realities

- Lack of women role models, especially racialized women role models and differently-abled women

- Insufficient education within organizations to deconstruct structural inequalities and systemic discrimination

- The lack of awareness of different realities has an impact on facilitation techniques that are not always sensitive to issues around women's active participation, especially those facing multiple forms of oppression

Issues related to communication and mobilization

- Short notice of upcoming consultations, which makes it difficult to obtain information and to prepare for meetings
- Lack of understanding of topics, structures, and consultation processes
- Difficulty in varying public engagement practices, which results in the same people constantly being mobilized and makes it hard to mobilize women who are most often excluded from democratic processes

Procedures around speaking in public

- Lack of understanding of ways to participate
- Overly formal settings
- Lack of confidence about speaking in public

Precarious socio-economic conditions

- Becoming involved in democratic life at the local and municipal levels is harder when basic needs are not met (housing, food, clothing)

The difficult balance between work, family life and civic engagement

- The unequal division of labour within couples
- Lack of time
- Feeling guilty for sacrificing family time to get involved in the community
- Lack of conditions to make it easier for women to participate, such as childcare, convenient meeting times, offering food on-site, etc.
- The risk of burnout because of the over-solicitation of women who do get involved

Physical barriers

- The challenges women with reduced mobility face when it comes to universal access, whether in terms of paratransit, physical access to buildings, interior space design that does not restrict movement, or in terms of language or facilitation techniques, etc.

- Meeting locations too far away or difficult to access using public transit

- Symbolic barriers within regions that can affect women's sense of belonging (e.g., needing to go outside of one's neighbourhood to participate, or agglomeration activities organized downtown).

- Not feeling safe in or around the meeting location, especially at night.

Language barriers

- Lack of translated materials about the consultation, including background information

- Difficulty in expressing oneself in either of both official languages to be able to contribute to discussions

- Lack of knowledge of technical terms and the language used by experts (specialized language, jargon, acronyms, program name, number and section of the legislation, etc.)

FOR MORE INFORMATION :
Click here to download the *État des lieux* (available in French)

THE MTElles EXCHANGE FORUM

WHO?

The MTElles Exchange Forum, held on May 30, 2018, brought together some 75 people, including women living in Montréal, representatives from neighbourhood roundtables, women's and community groups, unions, as well as academics and Ville de Montréal employees and elected officials.

HOW?

After learning about the results emerging from the baseline findings about the current status of women's participation, including gap areas and barriers to participation, participants were invited to share their experiences and expertise in workshops on topics related to women's civic participation. During these workshops, participants proposed possible solutions to overcome the barriers to women's participation that were identified in the baseline assessment.

Issues related to women's participation that emerged during the baseline were grouped into five themes (see below). Each workshop addressed one of these themes, which allowed the exchanges to be more focused and ensured that recommendations would directly address the real-life concerns and challenges shared during interviews and focus group discussions held during the data collection phase.

FOR MORE INFORMATION
Forum d'échange 2018 (in French)

RESULTS

Following the forum, the recommendations made by participants were grouped together and served as a guide to the development of the action plans for the pilot-projects that would begin in the next phase of the project.

WORKSHOP THEMES

- **Logistics, procedures and format of meetings**
- **Communication and access to information**
- **Inclusion of marginalized groups**
- **Empowerment and support of local women**
- **Governance and potential impact of citizen participation**

▶ THE MTElles PILOT-PROJECTS

The objective of the pilot-project phase was to change or introduce a number of practices with government and partner organizations to increase women's participation in democratic processes and to gain a better understanding of both barriers to participation and the effect the new practices had in these public participation spaces.

Identifying which practices to test

Practices were thus integrated into a range of public participation processes organized by several municipal and paramunicipal partners and neighbourhood roundtables. The MTElles team worked with its partners to determine the best time to introduce these practices and to identify the most relevant and feasible ones, depending on the specific context.

After identifying which practices would be implemented, the MTElles team, in collaboration with its partner, adapted these practices according to their needs, available resources, and priorities. As for long-term processes, we opted for a reflexive approach where we could make adjustments along the way, both in terms of the practices themselves and the implementation processes.

Community involvement

Right from the beginning, it was important that partners, support staff, and committee members collectively embrace the pilot-projects. This was in part for them to develop their capacities to implement gender-responsive practices while also getting into the habit of implementing the promising practices so that it would become second nature later on once the MTElles project was over.

Depending on the projects or the processes, this might translate into greater involvement in terms of:

- **Organizing activities**
- **Analyzing data**
- **Writing**
- **Working committee meetings**

Support

The technical support and accompaniment provided the MTElles team took many forms depending on the project and the partners' expertise and needs. The MTElles team's role was to support and guide our partners without doing the work on their behalf. Here are a few examples:

▶ **Identifying which socio-demographic factors to include in generating a profile of the community**

▶ **Supporting the development of mobilization strategies**

▶ **Supporting the development of tools to support facilitation or moderation**

▶ **Helping to analyze data collected during a consultation using a GBA+ approach**

Evaluation

Several evaluation tools were used by the MTElles team to assess how the various practices were implemented and what impact, if any, they had on women's participation (ex. observation table, including noting the amount of speaking time allotted to women; surveys distributed to participants to assess how they felt about their experience; meetings organized with pilot-project partners to get their impressions and lessons learned).

The pilot-project phase included:

78 WORKING MEETINGS
to determine the direction and the support needed for the projects

3 TRAINING SESSIONS ON GBA+ LED BY RELAIS-FEMMES:

- For project leads at the neighbourhood roundtables involved in the pilot-project phase

- For commissioners at the Office de consultation publique de Montréal

- For professionals and managers at the Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie borough

115 OBSERVATIONS DURING MEETINGS
where recommended practices were tested

550 RESPONSES
to 20 different surveys distributed at the meetings

12 WORKSHOPS TO PRESENT THE MTElles PROJECT
and its approach to members of the neighbourhood roundtable teams and municipal and paramunicipal partners

1 DEBRIEFING SESSION
with each of the neighbourhood roundtables involved and individual interviews with the women who participated in the roundtable consultation processes

The pilot-project phase allowed us to identify promising practices which seem to have a positive impact on participation in democratic life for the diversity of women. This toolkit was developed based on project evaluations, in other words, written comments while observing meetings, debriefing sessions with organizations, as well as surveys and telephone interviews with participating women.

PILOT-PROJECT PARTNERS

Municipal and paramunicipal bodies

People living on the island of Montréal have many opportunities to participate in democratic life. The urban agglomeration of Montréal is made up of the Ville de Montréal and its 19 boroughs, and the 15 other cities on the island. There is also the **Bureau de la présidence du conseil** [Office of the Council Chair], which is a neutral body ensuring that the rights of residents are respected during city council meetings. It is considered to be "the watchdog of democratic values at city hall."[15] Each level within the Montréal agglomeration has its own mechanisms for participation:[16]

▶ **AGGLOMERATION COUNCIL**

▶ EACH OF THE 15 CITIES ON THE ISLAND OF MONTRÉAL,
   AS WELL AS THE VILLE DE MONTRÉAL, HAS ITS OWN **CITY COUNCIL**

▶ EACH OF THE 19 BOROUGHS HAS ITS OWN **BOROUGH COUNCIL**

Other **public consultations** are also organized by the various levels of government. In addition, there are **standing committees** which are public consultation bodies set up by the Ville de Montréal city council and the agglomeration council.[17]

On top of more conventional ways of enabling citizen participation, such as city council, Montréal also relies on other bodies, including the **Office de consultation publique de Montréal (OCPM)**. The OCPM is an independent, advisory body that is mandated to carry out public consultations on issues affecting different geographical areas, as requested by the Ville de Montréal city council or executive committee, or through the right of initiative to public consultations (consultations launched by a Montréal resident requiring 15,000 supporting signatures). According to the OCPM website, "The mandates primarily involve urban and land-use planning projects under municipal jurisdiction, but may include any project submitted by the executive committee or city council."[18]

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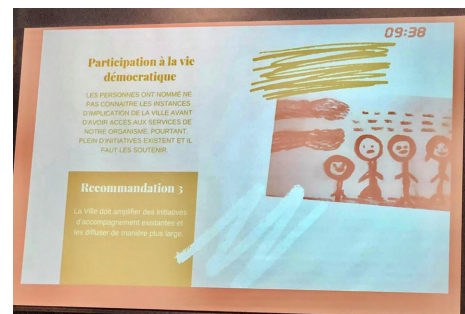
[15] http://ville.montreal.qc.ca/portal/page?_pageid=5798,142137262&_dad=portal&_schema=PORTAL (in French).

[16] The urban agglomeration of Montréal covers the island of Montréal, made up of the city of Montréal (Ville de Montréal and its boroughs) and the other cities on the island.

[17] For more information: https://montreal.ca/en/city-government/agglomeration-council

[18] For more information, refer to the OCPM website: https://ocpm.qc.ca/fr/english.

Tables de quartier [Neighbourhood Roundtables]

Neighbourhood roundtables are local networking structures where community stakeholders can come together and join forces to improve the social environment and the quality of life for residents. Using a comprehensive territorial approach, the roundtables organize different events with neighbourhood residents to identify local concerns and determine priority actions in a range of areas linked to social and urban development. The level of participation in these democratic processes may vary depending on the subjects addressed and the processes used, ranging from consultation to working together to develop collective action.

The MTElles project supported the pilot-projects implemented in the organizations listed on the following page to gain a better understanding of both the barriers that limit women's full participation and the impact of practices set up in these citizen participation spaces.

LIST OF PILOT-PROJECT PARTNERS IN THE MTElles PROJECT

Corporation de développement communautaire (CDC) Centre-Sud
[Centre-Sud Community Development Corporation]
Soupe locale

Corporation de développement communautaire (CDC) de Rosemont
[Rosemont Community Development Corporation]
Espace 40ᵉ/Beaubien

Concertation en développement social de Verdun (CDSV)
[Verdun Social Development Table]
*Collaboration à la Charrette d'urbanisme organisée par l'arrondissement
[Participation in the Urban Design Charrette organized by the borough]*

Concertation Ville-Émard/Côte-St-Paul
[Ville-Émard/Côte-St-Paul Community Development Table]
*RUI Opération-Galt [Operation Galt Integrated Urban Revitalization
Project]*

NDG Community Council
Westhaven Project 2020

La Table de quartier Hochelaga-Maisonneuve
[Hochelaga-Maisonneuve Neighbourhood Roundtable]
Projet Caravane Santé [Health Caravan Project]

Table de concertation du Faubourg Saint-Laurent
[Faubourg Saint-Laurent Community Council]
Projet École [School project]

Table de Quartier Sud de l'Ouest-de-l'Île
[Southern West Island Community Council]
Initiative en sécurité alimentaire [Food security initiative]

Vivre Saint-Michel en Santé [Leading Healthy Lives in Saint-Michel]
*Planification stratégique du quartier and Mobilisation citoyenne
[Neighbourhood strategic planning and citizen engagement]*

Ahuntsic-Cartierville Borough

Côte-des-Neiges—Notre-Dame-de-Grâce Borough

Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie Borough

Ville-Marie Borough

Villeray—Saint-Michel—Parc-Extension Borough

Bureau de la présidence [Office of the Council Chair]

Ville de Montréal city council

Commission permanente du Bureau de la présidence
[Office of the Council Chair Standing Committee]
Public consultation on question period
*Caravanes de la démocratie
[Democracy caravan]*

Office de consultation publique de Montréal (OCPM)
Public Consultation on the Faubourgs sector
Public Consultation on Lachine Est
*Public Consultation on Systemic Racism
and Discrimination*

Montréal-Ouest

● **NEIGHBOURHOOD ROUNDTABLE**

● **MUNICIPAL/PARAMUNICIPAL BODY**

● **NEIGHBOURHOOD ROUNDTABLE AND MUNICIPAL/PARAMUNICIPAL BODY**
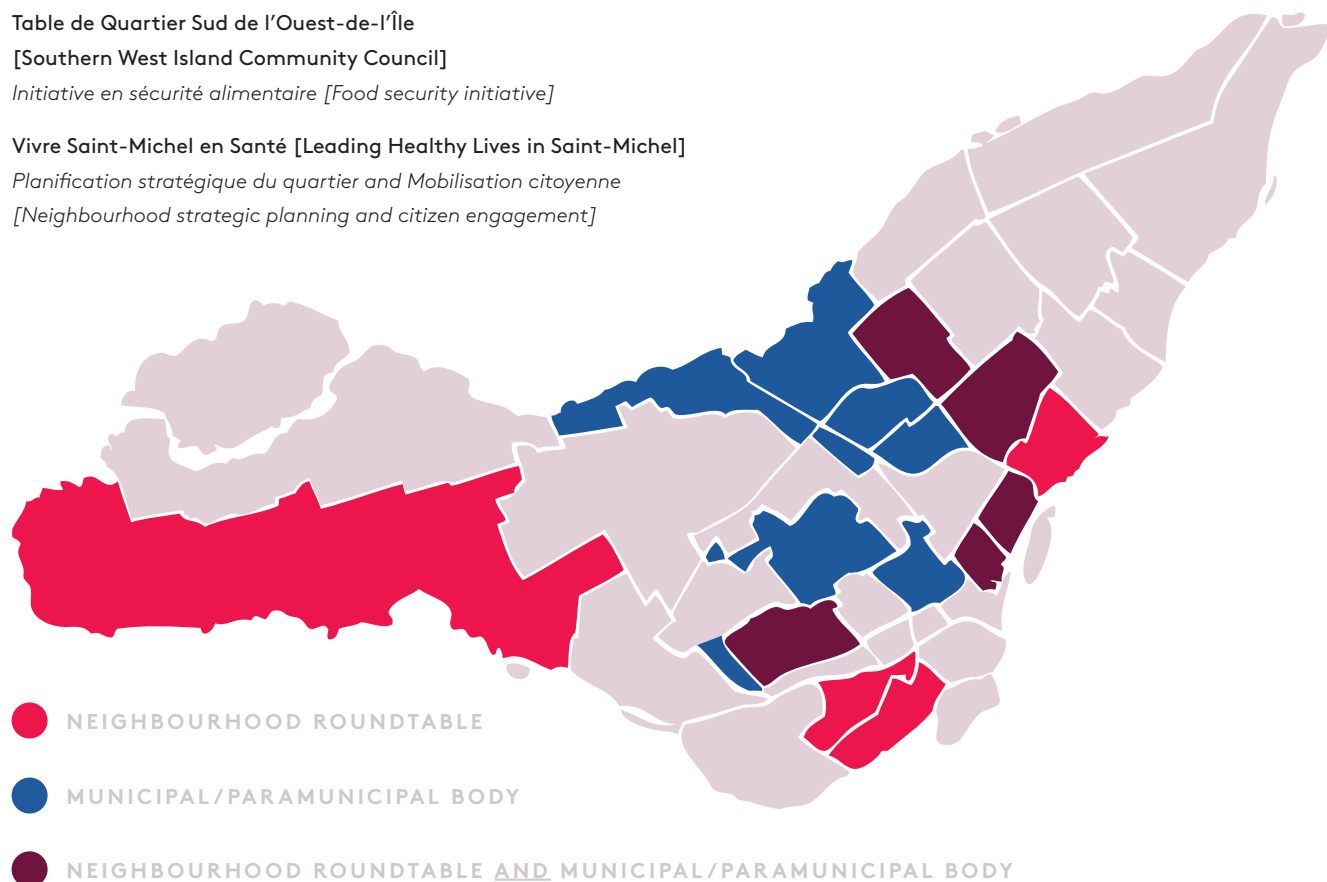
GUIDE FOR IMPLEMENTING A GENDER-INCLUSIVE CITIZEN PARTICIPATION PROCESS FOR ALL WOMEN

KEY ELEMENTS FOR PROMOTING WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION

Be aware of barriers to women's civic participation

Setting up more inclusive and varied measures to encourage the presence of women who are often less represented in democratic life contributes to the renewal of organizational practices. It is a way of establishing a better balance of power – in all its forms – between marginalized, often oppressed groups and privileged groups.

> *When organizations take it for granted that women and men have basically the same needs, lived experiences, realities, and economic status, there is no need to actively encourage women to participate in consultation processes. On the other hand, when organizations acknowledge that many men and women have different realities and that inequalities (stemming from different forms of discrimination) exist among participants during discussions, then they set up policies and practices such as GBA+, the collection of gender-disaggregated data, and consultation processes that fully include women to ensure that decisions will be made that are both inclusive and informed.*
>
> **(FCM, 2004 in** État des lieux MTElles, **2018, p. 25).**

Have an accurate picture of the population and collect intersectional gender-disaggregated data

Having an accurate picture of the population living in the area that is the subject of a consultation is key to identifying which groups are most at risk of encountering barriers to participation. The organization can then focus its efforts on setting up measures that would encourage participation by members of these groups.

Intersectional gender-disaggregated data compiled at the various public participation events can be compared to the demographic profile of the area in order to determine which segments of the population are not present or are not represented - including women - especially those facing multiple forms of oppression. Efforts to engage these groups can then be made for future events. By encouraging everyone's participation, we ensure that the diverse concerns of the population are taken into account.

Secure commitment from decision-makers

Decision-makers' commitment to explore and adopt practices that promote equality and inclusion is a prerequisite for success in order to:

▶ Integrate this **analytical approach** into the organizational culture over the long term.

▶ Facilitate **communication and information sharing** between the different divisions and projects.

▶ Systematically adopt good practices that have a greater impact on participation by all women.

Identify one or several people to be in charge of implementing measures to promote gender equality and inclusion

Having one or several people in charge of implementing and monitoring measures to promote gender equality and inclusion within the organization is important in order to:

▶ Develop tools to support teams.

▶ Evaluate the practices being implemented.

▶ Systematically share information on the practices being implemented and their impact on participation.

Although it is necessary to assign the role of sharing information to one or several people, it is better and even more impactful to involve all members of the organization in GBA+. In this way, people do not always have to refer to one individual and are not tempted to shift the burden of responsibility onto this person.

Take a critical approach to practices set up

Keeping reflections and analyses on gender equality and inclusion front and center at every meeting gives us an opportunity to continually improve our practices. For example, when critically assessing participation processes or events, it is good practice to always include a point on following up and evaluating our equality and inclusion practices. We can also develop evaluation tools to measure the impact of these practices and take time to talk with women to get their impressions on the changes introduced. We can evaluate what the individuals in charge of the public participation process have learned by reflecting on the results of the practices that were set up and considering the level of effort required, the resources provided, and the results obtained. Lastly, it is important to identify the practices that should be institutionalized and implemented systematically.

IMPLEMENTING PRACTICES THAT PROMOTE EQUALITY AND INCLUSION

The MTElles project identified twenty-three promising practices which appear to have a positive impact on the level of participation of women from diverse backgrounds and their experiences of public participation. The twenty-three practices are groups into five priority action areas. The promising practices are described in separate information sheets, which will help you set up your own practices to encourage women's participation in democratic life.

Promising practices can take many forms depending on the citizen participation process, local expertise, and partners' needs. It is important to observe and recognize what is already being done, and to talk about what more could realistically be done, depending on time, available resources, and the potential impact of each practice. Please note that the *Guide for implementing a gender-inclusive citizen participation process for all women* should not be seen as a step-by-step instruction manual, but rather as a source of inspiration you can use to take stock of what is already being done in your organization and to make improvements.

Having said this, throughout the MTElles project, several partners told us they would like to have a general idea of a citizen participation process that includes practices that promote gender equality and inclusion. This is what we are providing in the following pages. To help you further explore the practices that are included and to help make using the toolkit easier, we have indicated the number of the practical information sheet you can refer to in a triangle that is the same colour as the associated Action Area. **AXE 1** **AXE 2** **AXE 3** **AXE 4** **AXE 5**

The practical information sheets can be found in this document, starting on page 45. You can use the Promising Practices Inventory on pages 42-43 to locate the title of the practice more quickly.

A GENDER-INCLUSIVE CITIZEN PARTICIPATION PROCESS: INTEGRATING PRACTICES TO PROMOTE THE INCLUSION AND EQUITABLE PARTICIPATION OF ALL WOMEN

BEFORE GETTING STARTED

First of all, if there is one person within the organization who is designated to be in charge of introducing measures to promote equality and inclusion, it is key that they participate in all the stages of the consultation process in order to guide and validate all decisions made, whether as a member of the organizing committee or on an ad hoc basis.

2.4 This also means encouraging diverse women to become involved in setting up the process, especially in key roles and decision-making positions.

PREPARATION

Preparing for a public participation process is a key moment where direction is provided to guide the next steps in the process. Below are several points you will need to clarify right from the start in order to:

- **Develop a shared vision of the process and the potential impact of citizen participation in it.**

- **Be completely transparent with the women who participate.**

- **Identify promising practices that can be implemented to encourage women's participation, keeping in mind the organization's needs and constraints, as well as available resources.**

Structure and direction

Identify the organizational components that show you are being transparent and explain what women bring to the process.

3.1

Establish a time frame for the process that takes into account the various steps that need to be taken and is realistic in terms of expectations to meet the organization's needs, while also allowing sufficient time to inform, mobilize and support women.

Calculate the budget available for holding the consultation and mobilizing people to participate. Achieving equality implies that you will need to allocate additional funds for gender budgeting to mobilize women who face additional barriers to participation so that gaps between different segments of the population can be reduced. For example, in the budget for the event, you might want to budget for setting up measures to improve accessibility for deaf women and/or differently-abled women or for workshops leading up to the event to help demystify the process.

3.4

Provide conditions to foster the inclusion and equitable participation of all women

Vary the types of consultations.

3.3

Organize events where registration is not required.

4.8

Establish meeting times that are tailored to the target group, keeping in mind constraints in terms of family life and work.

2.4

Plan for food and beverages that will be provided.

4.8

Consider different meeting locations.

3.2 **4.5**

Ensure that universal accessibility is standard practice - or even a requirement - when choosing meeting locations.

4.5

Determine whether translation services will be provided at meetings and allocate resources to do so.

4.5

Plan for the presence of children and organize ways to accommodate them.

4.4

Ensure that whatever materials are needed for women to participate are made available in advance and are made publicly available.

1.2

Mobilization and Support

Develop a mobilization strategy adapted to the needs of the women you want to engage:

2.1

- Use available data to assess whether standard mobilization strategies are effective to mobilize all women.
- Determine what additional efforts are required and what resources and partnerships are needed.

Plan for preparatory activities to help women prepare for upcoming consultations or meetings.

2.3 **2.4**

La communication

Involve local women in the development of communication tools or check with them to see if the tools are effective.

2.4

Publicize information in both physical and digital formats in places where women gather (e.g., women's groups) and ensure that the information is available well in advance to allow enough time for participants to prepare for meetings.

1.1 **1.2**

Use several communication channels likely to mobilize women most often excluded from participation to announce the process (e.g., religious organizations, community groups).

1.1

Translate the communication tools to reach the desired group.

1.2

> ⚠ **Make sure that all the languages into which the communication tools are translated are also available during the event.**[19]

Make sure that the information included in all communication tools is consistent.

1.2

Avoid referring people to a website for more information.

1.2

Use images that reflect the diversity of the group you want to mobilize.

1.3

Announce all conditions that will be put in place to simplify women's participation in communication tools.

1.4

Make sure that all materials previously published and distributed are available on-site during the consultation and be sure to:

1

    Use inclusive, non-sexist language.

1.3

    Present intersectional gender-disaggregated data.

1.5

    Simplify specialized language, acronyms or jargon used.

1.2

    Ensure that documents are accessible for people with different limitations, including people who are blind or visually impaired.

1.2

[19] Make sure to respect all language laws in your region.

ON THE DAY OF THE MEETING OR CONSULTATION

Setting up the room so that all women will be encouraged to come and voice their opinions

Make sure men and women alternate turns speaking and use one or several microphones.

4.7

If there is a maximum amount of time each person is allowed to speak, set up a timer so they will be responsible for respecting the time limit themselves.

4.3

If photos or illustrations are displayed, make sure that the people included in the images reflect the diversity of women living in the area.

4.2

Make sure that the room is set up in such a way as to allow people to move around easily, especially people with limited mobility, and have seating available to comfortably accommodate overweight people.

4.5

Ensure that everything is ready before participants arrive so you will be completely available to answer any questions they may have or simply to show them that you are glad they came.

4.1

Avoid discussions among team members and/or professionals that often exclude women who have come to participate.

4.1

Welcoming participating women

Set up a reception area and involve other staff members to help participants find their way.

4.1

Show interest in new faces and have staff present whose role it is to spot women who have come for the first time and welcome them.

4.1

Compile intersectional gender-disaggregated data.

1.5

Facilitation

Encourage women in all their diversity to get involved in key roles (organization, facilitation, presenting). **2.4**

Set up one or more microphones for facilitators. Do not take it for granted that everyone's voice is loud enough to be heard by the whole room. Some women might have trouble hearing and be too shy to say so when people in the room are asked if everyone can hear and most people say yes. **4.5**

Avoid reproducing stereotypes within our organizations that are sexist and associated with other types of discrimination (for example, do not automatically assign women to welcome participants or take notes, or ask them to lead a workshop on children and families).

Use inclusive, non-sexist language when speaking. **1.3**

Use accessible language (for example, by avoiding acronyms and jargon as much as possible and simplifying specialized language). **1.2**

Read out loud whatever is written down; do not take it for granted that everyone can read. **1.2** **4.5**

Invite people who are asked to speak to use the microphone even if they may be embarrassed to do so.

Conducting the meeting

Clearly state the rules around participation or develop them with the people attending the meeting. **3.1**

Educate participants on the dynamics of inequality that continue to exist between some people and some organizations, and that may translate into disparities in terms of speaking time. **4.6**

Highlight the importance of the presence and input of all women, especially racialized women whose voices are generally less heard at meetings and consultations. Once disparities in speaking times are explicitly mentioned, participants are more conscious of their responsibility to share speaking time. **4.6**

Explain the consultation process, including its limits, the people involved, the various steps, and the anticipated timeline. **3.1**

Clearly state expectations and available resources. **3.1**

Specify the purpose of the meeting (to provide information, to consult, to make decisions) and explain at which points in the process participants will be able to exert real influence. **3.1**

Explain how the meeting will proceed and when people will have a chance to speak. **4.3**

Present intersectional gender-disaggregated data so that the potential impact of decisions on marginalized groups is taken into account when decisions are made. **1.5** **3.4**

Speaking at the meeting

Offer a range of possible ways people can participate by accepting various forms of expression (written submissions, drawings, poems, presentations/briefs, etc.). **3.3**

Use a graduated approach toward public speaking (e.g., start with individual reflection activities or small group discussions before coming together as a whole group). **3.3**

Offer support to help people express their opinions by having someone available who can ask questions on behalf of another person who is not comfortable speaking in public or with the topic being addressed. **2.2**

Accept presentations given jointly by two or three people. **3.3**

During the meeting, note whether concerns or specific issues are raised by particular groups of women that are linked to different forms of oppression or privilege affecting them.

Make sure that the group attending the meeting or consultation is representative of the broader community and set up mechanisms for speaking that encourage all women to express their opinions. **2.1** **5.2**

If there are obvious differences in the way people introduce themselves or voice their opinions during the various interactions, (ex. based on their gender, background, or social condition (if identified)), offer other ways they can express their views. **1.5**

Calculate the proportion of people speaking at the meeting who identify as men, women, or who have another gender identity. **1.5**

If possible, calculate the amount of speaking time for each speaker. This data will be used at the debriefing session. **1.5**

Facilitate the discussion period in a way that promotes equality and inclusion when it comes to speaking at the meeting (ex. respecting speaking times, ensuring that women and men take turns speaking). **4.7**

DO

RAISE HANDS — KEEP IT SHORT — LISTEN — ASK QUESTIONS

DON'T

INTERRUPT — DISMISS QUIET VOICES — BLAME — TAKE PHOTOS W/OUT PERMISSION

Conditions to make it easier for women to participate

Put in place all the conditions to make it easier for women to participate that were previously announced (i.e. announce conditions put in place to make it easier for women to participate (1.4); plan for the presence of children (4.4); ensure that meetings are held in accessible locations (4.5); and offer any and all other conditions conducive to women's participation, depending on the women who are expected to attend (meeting times, offering food, etc.) (4.8)).

1.4 **4.4**
4.5 **4.8**

Point out where participants can find food, beverages, and childcare, and explain the procedure for getting reimbursed for transportation expenses, if applicable.

4.1

Indicate where translation services are available or determine ways of bringing people who speak the same language together if they wish to do so.

4.5

Respect the schedule, including the time the meeting is supposed to end, so that people who have to leave at the scheduled time, especially those using paratransit services, are not discriminated against or miss out on information or group discussions.

4.8

Conclusion, evaluation

Refer women whose concerns are outside the scope of the topic being covered by the consultation or the responsibility of the parties present to bodies where they can address their concerns or to more appropriate citizen engagement groups. For example, if a woman brings up a problem with health services at a borough council meeting, it would be good practice to take the time to refer her to the local CIUSSS [Integrated University Health and Social Services Centre], rather than simply saying that health is not under municipal jurisdiction, without telling her where she can go to address her concern.

3.1

Explain the next steps in the consultation process including the anticipated timeline and invite women who are present at the meeting to leave their contact information so they can be informed of follow-up meetings, outcomes, etc.

3.1

For women who would like to continue their involvement in the process, be prepared to offer other spaces or opportunities for their continued engagement.

2.2 **2.3**

Distribute an evaluation form to participants at the end of the meeting or consultation that includes questions on the practices that aim to promote gender-inclusive participation processes that were implemented. The evaluation forms should include socio-demographic information so that intersectional gender-disaggregated data can be compiled. Offer help filling out the form and write down any verbal comments.

3.4

Take a moment to talk with the women who came to the meeting to get a sense of their level of satisfaction with the event. Make sure you are open to criticism and do not react defensively by trying to provide justifications.

5.2 **4.1**

Set up measures to ensure the safety of women who came to the meeting when they leave, such as suggesting they wait together at the bus stop, offering rides home, or organizing car-pooling.

4.1

Ask the women directly if they feel comfortable going home alone and tell them they should feel free to express any concerns they may have to members of the organizing team.

4.1

Leave some time at the end of the event to be available for women who would like to talk to you, who could not work up the courage to ask their questions in front of everyone, or who feel safer waiting for their transportation inside. Make sure you do not push them out the door prematurely by starting to pack up material.

4.1

FOLLOW-UP AFTER THE PROCESS

Several women we met with reported feeling demotivated because they felt that there was no follow-up after the consultations they participated in. They mentioned that it can sometimes be very long between consultations and any resulting concrete actions. In addition, they felt that the proposals accepted did not address their concerns or even reflect discussions that took place during the meetings. For this reason, it is important to follow up on the process within a reasonable time frame in order to:

Report on the outcomes of the consultations and next steps towards implementing the resulting actions. **3.1**

Justify decisions made. **3.1**

Inform participants on additional ways that the concerns and needs expressed during the consultation will be followed up on, even if they are outside of the scope of the consultation process itself. **3.1**

CRITICAL ASSESSMENT OF THE PARTICIPATION PROCESS BY THE ORGANIZING TEAM

Review the evaluation forms filled out by participants and assess the level of satisfaction and the comments based on socio-demographic data. **3.4**

Critically assess the process and the practices that were introduced, with a particular focus on how they contributed to fostering more inclusive and equitable participation of all women. **5.2**

Evaluate the success of mobilization efforts: **3.4**

- Were the people who attended the meeting representative of the range of women in the neighbourhood?
- Was speaking time shared equally?
- What should be done to mobilize the women who did not attend, either as part of the same consultation or for a future consultation process?

Review observations on who spoke at the meeting and for how long, as well as concerns raised. **5.2**

- What can we do with concerns that could not be integrated into the process? How can we address them differently?
- Do women's groups have similar concerns, keeping in mind that these concerns are not always uniform? How can we address them in the next phases of the process?

TAKING ACTION

Draw from and build on the MTElles toolkit and the promising practices information sheets.

Implement the most promising practices for promoting equality and inclusion. **5.2**

Appoint a person responsible for monitoring the issues or concerns raised by women in all their diversity. **3.4**

Evaluate the impact of decisions on all women. **3.4**

Use GBA+ when new actions are introduced. **3.4**

PROMISING PRACTICES INFORMATION SHEETS

INSTRUCTIONS FOR USING THE INFORMATION SHEETS

1. Review the list of promising practices to identify the ones you would like to implement.

2. Find the number associated with the information sheet by identifying the colour code of the action area and the number associated with the promising practice.

3. Each information sheet includes the following:

   ▶ A DESCRIPTION OF THE PRACTICE

   ▶ ITS OBJECTIVES

   ▶ HOW TO IMPLEMENT IT

   ▶ A MAP OF THE PLACES WHERE THIS PRACTICE WAS TESTED

   ▶ EXAMPLES OF SUCCESS STORIES

   ▶ OTHER POINTS TO CONSIDER THAT MAY VARY, DEPENDING ON THE PRACTICE (CHALLENGES, VARIATIONS, TIPS, QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELF, ETC.)

4. Under the title of each practice, we have suggested what the potential gains and level of effort are for introducing the practice based on three elements (listed below). These are a guide and will change depending on your context and any adaptations you introduce.

P: POTENTIAL FOR IMPACT	T: TIME	R: HUMAN RESOURCES NEEDED
the probability that implementing the practice will encourage women's participation	the time required to prepare to introduce the practice and the time required to implement it during a consultation or meeting	the level of effort required by one or several people to introduce the practice

5. Read the information sheet carefully and think about how you could tailor this practice to your needs and context, while considering the opportunities and constraints that you face.

6. Implement the practice.

7. Look back on your experience and identify potential improvements for next time.

AXE

NUMÉRO DE FICHE

ÉVALUATION DE LA PRATIQUE

**POTENTIEL D'IMPACT
TEMPS DE PRÉPARATION/RÉALISATION
RESSOURCES HUMAINES NÉCESSAIRES**

ACTION AREA 4 - LOGISTICS, MEETING FLOW, AND WELCOMING PARTICIPANTS

MEETING ROOM — DAYCARE

4.4

ENCOURAGE AND WELCOME THE PRESENCE OF CHILDREN

DESCRIPTION

Public consultations, citizen meetings, and city council or borough council meetings often take place in the evening or on weekends. Although this facilitates participation by people working weekdays, it nevertheless constitutes a barrier for people with small children, particularly women who continue to be the primary [ ] children and most often the heads [ ]rent households. Several solutions [ ] this situation and encourage [ ]icipation.

[ ]VES

[ ]the presence of children as well as [ ]s' participation.

[ ]e and take into account [ ]y people have balancing all [ ]nsibilities (work, family, civic [ ], etc.).

HOW TO IMPLEMENT

There are a number of different options that you can provide to parents. Providing childcare onsite, setting up a children's area in the meeting room, or reimbursing childcare costs to parents are several options that can be considered, depending on available resources. It is important to allocate a sufficient budget to cover the costs of whichever option you have chosen (childcare, children's area, reimbursement of childcare costs). Here are some options:

- Set up a childcare service in another room so that parents can leave their children in the care of other adults while they participate in the meeting.

- When people register, ask them whether they have children and ensure that parents with children have speaking priority. This may apply to people who have brought their children with them as well as to parents who have children at home.

- If no other room is available for childcare, set up a cozy space in the room where the meeting is being held and provide markers, crayons, puzzles, etc. so that children can stay in the room and do quiet activities while their parents participate in the meeting and can also keep an eye on them.

- Include children in the consultation by organizing activities related to the topics being addressed that are adapted for children.

VERSO

4.4 ENCOURAGE AND WELCOME THE PRESENCE OF CHILDREN

SUCCESS STORIES

At a citizen participation day in Montreal West devoted to the environment, a childcare service was provided where children played games and read books about the environment. They also decorated rocks for the garden and planted seedlings they could bring home afterward.

At a borough council meeting in Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie, a children's area was set up in the room where the meeting was held. The daughter of a woman who was attending a borough council meeting for the first time did a drawing that she showed to her mother and the other participants at the end of the question period.

A woman came to a participatory budgeting activity organized by the Ahuntsic-Cartierville borough with her 10-year-old daughter. After a short while, the daughter seemed to be getting bored, so the mother suggested she go next door to play in the childcare room, which the daughter did. The mother was able, therefore, to continue participating because the borough had provided childcare.

CHALLENGE

Providing childcare is expensive and organizations sometimes question the relevance of offering it since it is not always used. To overcome this barrier, we suggest you refer to Practice 1.4 of this toolkit, "Ensure that women are aware of the conditions put in place to make it easier for them to participate". If women do not know the service exists, chances are that it will not be used.

Furthermore, another point mentioned by the women we met during the MTElles project was that they sometimes felt guilty about leaving their children in childcare during evenings or on the weekend when the children are at school or in daycare all week. It may also take some time to build a sense of trust with the people taking care of the children. Childcare services tend to be abandoned quickly when they are not used but it is perhaps worthwhile to persevere and make the services more widely known.

TIP

Depending on the topic being addressed at the consultation, it could be a good idea to organize a parent-child activity or an activity for children so they can contribute their thoughts. Parents and children can then discuss the topic together and share their reflections with the group. Do not forget to mention this activity in all your communications!

PRACTICAL ADVICE

We recommend not requiring parents to register for childcare in advance and providing it at every event you organize so that people can decide to participate at the last minute.

PILOT-PROJECT SITES

NEIGHBOURHOOD ROUNDTABLES

CORPORATION DE DÉVELOPPEMENT COMMUNAUTAIRE (CDC) CENTRE-SUD
TABLE DE CONCERTATION DU FAUBOURG SAINT-LAURENT
LA TABLE DE QUARTIER HOCHELAGA-MAISONNEUVE
VIVRE SAINT-MICHEL EN SANTÉ
CORPORATION DE DÉVELOPPEMENT COMMUNAUTAIRE (CDC) DE ROSEMONT
CONCERTATION VILLE-ÉMARD/CÔTE-ST-PAUL

MUNICIPAL/PARAMUNICIPAL

BUREAU DE LA PRÉSIDENCE – CONSEIL MUNICIPAL
MONTRÉAL-OUEST
AHUNTSIC-CARTIERVILLE
CÔTE-DES-NEIGES—NOTRE-DAME-DE-GRÂCE
ROSEMONT—LA PETITE-PATRIE
VILLERAY—SAINT-MICHEL—PARC-EXTENSION
OFFICE DE CONSULTATION PUBLIQUE DE MONTRÉAL (OCPM)

NEIGHBOURHOOD ROUNDTABLE

MUNICIPAL/PARAMUNICIPAL BODY

NEIGHBOURHOOD ROUNDTABLE AND MUNICIPAL/PARAMUNICIPAL BODY

ÉLÉMENTS DE LA FICHE

LIST OF PROMISING PRACTICES

ACTION AREAS

| **1** COMMUNICATION AND DISSEMINATION OF INFORMATION | **2** MOBILIZATION AND EMPOWERMENT |

PROMISING PRACTICES

1.1 Adopt a wide-ranging and diverse dissemination strategy
⚡ 2.5   🕐 2.5   �̲ 2

1.2 Make means of communication and language accessible
⚡ 2.5   🕐 2   �̲ 1

1.3 Use inclusive, non-sexist language
⚡ 2.5   🕐 1.5   �̲ 1.5

1.4 Ensure that women are aware of the conditions put in place to make it easier for them to participate
⚡ 3   🕐 1   �̲ 1

1.5 Collect intersectional gender-disaggregated data on participation
⚡ 2   🕐 2   �̲ 2

2.1 Develop inclusive mobilization strategies
⚡ 3   🕐 3   �̲ 3

2.2 Support and accompany women in their participation
⚡ 3   🕐 3   �̲ 3

2.3 Offer targeted activities to reach women most often excluded or underrepresented
⚡ 2.5   🕐 3   �̲ 3

2.4 Involve women in organizing meetings and in decision-making structures
⚡ 2.5   🕐 2   �̲ 1

3 REVAMPING PARTICIPATION MECHANISMS AND STRUCTURES

3.1 Be completely transparent about consultation processes

⚡ 2.5   🕐 2   ⏲ 2

3.2 Hold participatory activities and consultations close to where women are

⚡ 3   🕐 variable   ⏲ variable

3.3 Offer a range of ways women can participate

⚡ 3   🕐 2   ⏲ 2

3.4 Evaluate the impact of actions taken and decisions made on all women

⚡ 2.5   🕐 2   ⏲ 2

4 LOGISTICS, CONDUCTING THE MEETING, AND WELCOMING PARTICIPANTS

4.1 Ensure a warm and welcoming environment

⚡ 2.5   🕐 1   ⏲ 1.5

4.2 Set up the room so that all women will be encouraged to come and voice their opinions

⚡ 2.5   🕐 1   ⏲ 1

4.3 Share tools that make it easier for women to actively participate

⚡ 3   🕐 1.5   ⏲ 1

4.4 Encourage and welcome the presence of children

⚡ 3   🕐 2   ⏲ 3

4.5 Ensure that meetings are accessible

⚡ 3   🕐 2   ⏲ 2.5

4.6 Clearly state the importance of not reproducing unequal power dynamics

⚡ 2.5   🕐 1   ⏲ 1

4.7 Alternate speaking turns so that a balance of voices is heard

⚡ 2.5   🕐 1   ⏲ 1

4.8 Offer any and all additional conditions conducive to women's participation

⚡ 3   🕐 2   ⏲ 1.5

5 TRAINING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

5.1 Train key people involved in mobilizing, organizing, and facilitating public participation events

⚡ 2.5   🕐 2   ⏲ 3

5.2 Take a critical approach to introducing new practices

⚡ 3   🕐 3   ⏲ 3

ACTION AREA 1

Communication and Dissemination of Information

Communication and dissemination of information emerged as a key issue for all partners involved in organizing public participation events. How can we ensure that a full diversity of women feel that their contribution is important to the citizen consultation process? What are the best means and channels of communication to mobilize the target population and provide the information needed for women to adequately prepare for the meeting?

1.1 ADOPT A WIDE-RANGING AND DIVERSE DISSEMINATION STRATEGY

1.2 MAKE MEANS OF COMMUNICATION AND LANGUAGE ACCESSIBLE

1.3 USE INCLUSIVE, NON-SEXIST LANGUAGE

1.4 ENSURE THAT WOMEN ARE AWARE OF THE CONDITIONS PUT IN PLACE TO MAKE IT EASIER FOR THEM TO PARTICIPATE

1.5 COLLECT INTERSECTIONAL GENDER-DISAGGREGATED DATA ON PARTICIPATION

1.1

ADOPT A WIDE-RANGING AND DIVERSE DISSEMINATION STRATEGY

DESCRIPTION

Access to information is a prerequisite to being able to participate in democratic life. Lack of knowledge about opportunities to participate can be due to a number of factors, including: information being unavailable; the location of the venue being inaccessible; lack of understanding of the topics addressed; and lack of understanding of the bodies, structures, and consultation processes. These represent real barriers to participation. Communication strategies currently being used are not always adequate to mobilize a full range of women, particularly those who are generally underrepresented in democratic processes.

OBJECTIVE

- Vary communication strategies in order to mobilize a full range of women, including those who are most often excluded from citizen participation processes, especially women facing multiple forms of oppression.

HOW TO IMPLEMENT

- Add women's groups to the mailing list for the event.

- Publicize information in both physical and digital forms in places where women form the majority of users (libraries, community centres, neighbourhood cafés, women's groups / immigrant and/or racialized women's groups, seniors' centres, LGBTQ+ groups, etc.).

- Organize information sessions and hold them in places frequented by women from diverse backgrounds (for example, organize a 'lunch & learn' focusing on demystifying citizen participation processes, in collaboration with a local women's group).

- Inform community organizations and local women's groups about consultations currently underway and invite them to circulate the information within their groups and networks.

SUCCESS STORIES

A woman reported being inspired to actively participate in a public consultation on question period because she had seen a poster announcing the event on the wall at the intercultural library where she often went. She explained that it was the first time she had participated in this kind of event and that it was because a poster about the event had caught her eye and inspired her to take part.

During the Caravane de la démocratie [Caravan for Democracy], which was organized by the Bureau de la présidence and intended for seniors, many participants, mostly women, learned about the event from organizations they were involved with: the Association québécoise des retraité(e)s des secteurs public and parapublic (AQRP) [Québec Association of Retirees from the Public and Parapublic Sectors], the Groupe Harmonie, Action Centre-Ville, the YWCA Montreal, the Conseil Interculturel de Montréal (CIM) [Montréal Intercultural Council] and Concordia University's Senior Non-Credit Program. These organizations relayed information about the event to their members, which meant that seniors from many different backgrounds knew about it.

PRACTICAL ADVICE

Community workers, liaison officers, and others whose role it is to promote community mobilization are deeply anchored in their neighbourhoods. As such, they have many opportunities to engage with a broad range of residents and to develop strong, trusting relationships with women living in the community. This allows them to become aware of local women's concerns. Their unique positions in the community mean that they can be strategic partners whom you can rely on to relay information and mobilize the community in effective and impactful ways.

HOW DID YOU HEAR OF THIS EVENT?

PERSONAL INVITATION 33 %

MAILING LIST 9%

SOCIAL MEDIA 5%

A FRIEND 5%

OTHER 10%

COMMUNITY GROUP 38 %
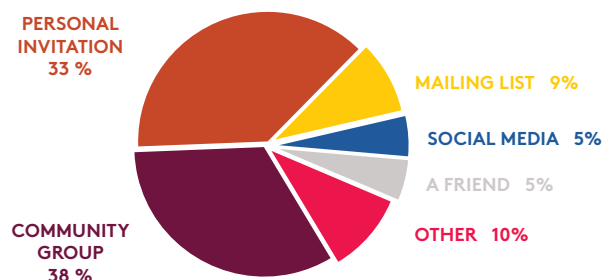
REACTIONS OF WOMEN WHO PARTICIPATED

Most women who participated in evaluating the pilot-projects at the neighbourhood roundtables noted that direct contact (through email, text messages, or verbally) was the best way to reach them. Half of them also got their information through social media such as Facebook. It is important to remember, however, that some people do not have regular access to the Internet, which is why it is important to not only rely on digital tools which could inadvertently exclude some groups.

PILOT-PROJECT SITES

NEIGHBOURHOOD ROUNDTABLES

CORPORATION DE DÉVELOPPEMENT COMMUNAUTAIRE (CDC) CENTRE-SUD

TABLE DE CONCERTATION DU FAUBOURG SAINT-LAURENT

LA TABLE DE QUARTIER HOCHELAGA-MAISONNEUVE

CONCERTATION VILLE-ÉMARD/CÔTE-ST-PAUL

VIVRE SAINT-MICHEL EN SANTÉ

CORPORATION DE DÉVELOPPEMENT COMMUNAUTAIRE (CDC) DE ROSEMONT

TABLE DE QUARTIER SUD DE L'OUEST-DE-L'ÎLE

MUNICIPAL/PARAMUNICIPAL

OFFICE DE CONSULTATION PUBLIQUE DE MONTRÉAL (OCPM)

COMMISSION DE LA PRÉSIDENCE DU CONSEIL – *PUBLIC CONSULTATION ON CITY COUNCIL QUESTION PERIOD*

ROSEMONT—LA PETITE-PATRIE

VILLERAY—SAINT-MICHEL—PARC-EXTENSION

MONTREAL WEST

CÔTE-DES-NEIGES—NOTRE-DAME-DE-GRÂCE

AHUNTSIC-CARTIERVILLE

NEIGHBOURHOOD ROUNDTABLE

MUNICIPAL/PARAMUNICIPAL BODY

NEIGHBOURHOOD ROUNDTABLE _AND_ MUNICIPAL/PARAMUNICIPAL BODY
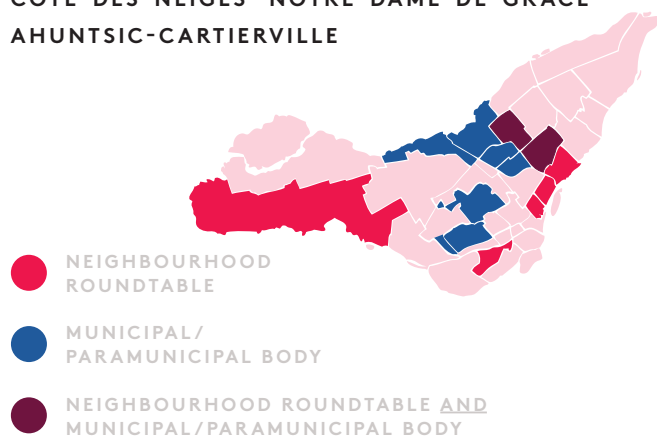
1.2

USE ACCESSIBLE MEANS OF COMMUNICATION AND LANGUAGE

DESCRIPTION

A significant issue hindering women's participation has to do with communication, because very often, information is simply not accessible.

Inaccessibility comes in many forms:

- Information is not easy to find.

- Information is not available within a reasonable amount of time.

- The information is written using specialized language or jargon that is not well understood by the general public.

- Materials are not translated into multiple languages, including Québec Sign Language (LSQ), or translation services are not provided during consultations.

- The information is not available for people with hearing impairments or people with other disabilities.

Making information accessible means that all women can access information, which in turn promotes inclusive and equitable participation. Furthermore, information that is shared during and after consultations should also be made available – in verbal, written, and visual forms – so that the participation process will be more inclusive.

OBJECTIVES

- Inform women about how the consultation will be run and about logistics.

- Provide relevant materials on the topic(s) that will be discussed.

- Ensure that verbal, written and visual forms of communication are universally accessible throughout the entire participation process.

HOW TO IMPLEMENT

- Make sure information is available within a reasonable amount of time before the meeting to enable women who would like to participate to prepare.

- Simplify specialized language and jargon on written materials and verbally during all public consultations or meetings.

- Use visual aids (symbols, diagrams, pictograms) to support written text.

- Make sure that all written materials are accessible for people with functional limitations.

- Translate written materials into several languages and provide simultaneous translation during the meeting.

QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELF

- Who are the women most affected by the issue? Is information accessible to these women, keeping in mind the various barriers to access (e.g., physical barriers, language)? Has the information been made available within a reasonable amount of time?

- Is the information available for differently-abled women, including those with hearing impairments?

- Has the information been translated into multiple languages, according to the needs of the population living in the area covered?

- Has the information been simplified, in both written and verbal communication?

- Have you used varied means of communication? Have you used symbols and images in addition to written text?

SUCCESS STORIES

- In the Côte-des-Neiges—Notre-Dame-de-Grâce borough, local residents felt there was not enough time to consult the relevant documents related to an urban planning project. So, at a borough council meeting, residents asked elected officials to postpone the consultation for a few weeks to give them time to get organized. Their request was granted and residents, who by then had had enough time to prepare their arguments against the proposed urban planning project, were able to present their point of view. The borough agreed with the arguments presented by the residents and the project was rejected.

- The CDC Rosemont developed easily recognizable and understandable symbols to explain the objectives of their project and included them in invitations to consultation activities and related evaluation tools.
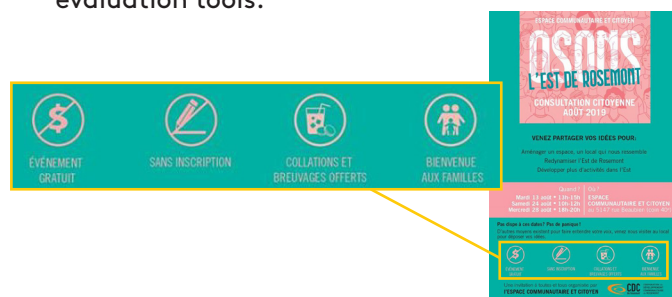

PILOT-PROJECT SITES

NEIGHBOURHOOD ROUNDTABLES

CORPORATION DE DÉVELOPPEMENT COMMUNAUTAIRE (CDC) CENTRE-SUD

TABLE DE CONCERTATION DU FAUBOURG SAINT-LAURENT

LA TABLE DE QUARTIER HOCHELAGA-MAISONNEUVE

VIVRE SAINT-MICHEL EN SANTÉ

CORPORATION DE DÉVELOPPEMENT COMMUNAUTAIRE (CDC) DE ROSEMONT

TABLE DE QUARTIER SUD DE L'OUEST-DE-L'ÎLE

CONCERTATION EN DÉVELOPPEMENT SOCIAL DE VERDUN (CDSV)

MUNICIPAL/PARAMUNICIPAL

CÔTE-DES-NEIGES—NOTRE-DAME-DE-GRÂCE

OFFICE DE CONSULTATION PUBLIQUE DE MONTRÉAL (OCPM)

ROSEMONT—LA PETITE-PATRIE

MONTRÉAL-OUEST
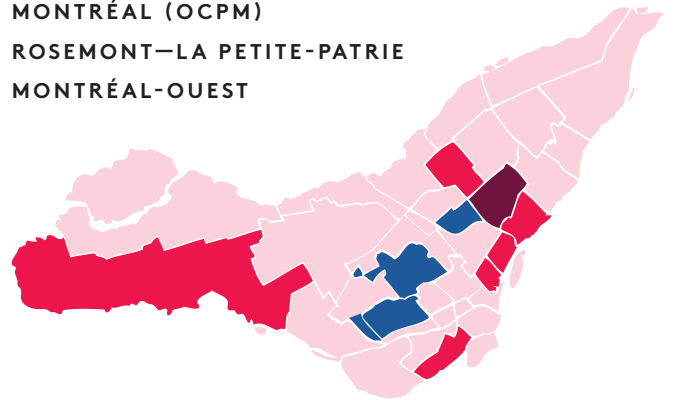
NEIGHBOURHOOD ROUNDTABLE

MUNICIPAL/ PARAMUNICIPAL BODY

NEIGHBOURHOOD ROUNDTABLE AND MUNICIPAL/PARAMUNICIPAL BODY

TIP

Prepare a document using plain language to explain the topic covered by the consultation and hand it out when people arrive.
This will contribute to a greater understanding of the issues involved and to more constructive discussions between professionals and participants. This practice was observed during an urban design charrette organized by a borough where a neighbourhood roundtable simplified the language used by urban planners.

1.3

USE INCLUSIVE, NON-SEXIST LANGUAGE

DESCRIPTION

Including all women begins right from the design phase of a citizen participation process. Inclusive, non-sexist language avoids using the masculine form (he) in both verbal and written communication, which does not reflect the entire population, since it makes women invisible and excludes them[20]. It is crucial for all women to be able to identify with what is written, said, or shown. They need to feel they are represented, whether in invitations, opening remarks at the start of meetings, or images including photographs that are used. The symbolic exclusion – verbal, written, or visual – undermines women's participation in public life.

OBJECTIVES

- Make women in all their diversity visible in all communications.

- Ensure that everyone understands they are welcome and have the right to express their opinions on issues being discussed.

HOW TO IMPLEMENT

1. **Systematically use language that is gender-inclusive in all oral and written communications:**

   a. Become familiar with the various non-sexist forms and approaches to writing

   b. Determine the non-sexist communication approach that is best for you

   c. Adopt guidelines around gender-inclusive, non-sexist language

   d. Raise awareness about the use gender-inclusive, non-sexist language

   e. Build the capacities of people responsible for communications and other relevant stakeholders to implement the guidelines on gender-inclusive, non-sexist language

   f. Make one or a few people responsible for ensuring proper use of gender-inclusive, non-sexist language by having them proofread documents, thereby also ensuring consistency

   g. Use gender-inclusive and non-sexist language in speeches and in oral communication

2. **Vary the images used in promotional and information tools to ensure it is representative of the population you wish to reach and of women in all their diversity.**

[20] While this is particularly relevant in French and in other languages that rely on pronouns, there are many examples of English words that tend to use the masculine as a default (ex. policeman, businessman, manpower).

SUCCESS STORIES

"Last April 24th, Ms. Gouin[21] came to express her views before the commission. She explained that she had been drawn to an image of a woman with grey hair on the cover of the flyer for Assomption Sud. At first, she thought it was an ad for a future seniors' residence but when she read the flyer, she realized that it had to do with a consultation where she herself could participate and give her point of view. As a senior, she felt she had something to add, so she decided to come and share her concerns about noise and dust caused by construction work, on behalf of her neighbours.

"We feel it is important to underscore that including images of people who will be impacted by the subject of the consultation on our flyers is key and contributes to richer discussions at the commission."

- Office de consultation publique de Montréal employee

CHALLENGE

There are a number of tools and techniques that can be used to ensure gender-inclusive communication[22]. It is possible that when an organisation or group decides to adopt a policy of using gender-inclusive, non-sexist language that they may encounter some resistance within their organisation and that different team members may have varying degrees of comfort with introducing such a practice. The various techniques used in French can make it more difficult to read a text as people get used to seeing the different forms of feminising the French language or making it gender-inclusive. In English, the choice to adopt gender-inclusive, non-sexist language does not typically make the text more complicated to read and understand.

PILOT-PROJECT SITES

NEIGHBOURHOOD ROUNDTABLES

CORPORATION DE DÉVELOPPEMENT COMMUNAUTAIRE (CDC) CENTRE-SUD

TABLE DE CONCERTATION DU FAUBOURG SAINT-LAURENT

VIVRE SAINT-MICHEL EN SANTÉ

CORPORATION DE DÉVELOPPEMENT COMMUNAUTAIRE (CDC) DE ROSEMONT

CONCERTATION VILLE-ÉMARD/CÔTE-ST-PAUL

MUNICIPAL/PARAMUNICIPAL

MONTRÉAL-OUEST

BUREAU DE LA PRÉSIDENCE DU CONSEIL, COMMISSION PERMANENTE DU BUREAU DE LA PRÉSIDENCE

AHUNTSIC-CARTIERVILLE

CÔTE-DES-NEIGES—NOTRE-DAME-DE-GRÂCE

ROSEMONT—LA-PETITE-PATRIE

OFFICE DE CONSULTATION PUBLIQUE DE MONTRÉAL (OCPM)

● NEIGHBOURHOOD ROUNDTABLE

● MUNICIPAL/ PARAMUNICIPAL BODY

● NEIGHBOURHOOD ROUNDTABLE AND MUNICIPAL/PARAMUNICIPAL BODY

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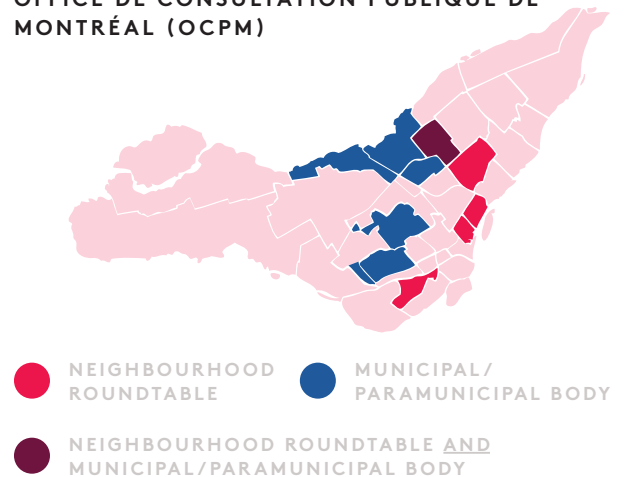
[21] Fictional name to preserve her identity.

[22] The United Nations has developed a toolkit on using gender-inclusive language: https://www.un.org/en/gender-inclusive-language/toolbox.shtml. Other tools exist as well to support the use of gender-inclusive language in English (ex. https://writingcenter.unc.edu/tips-and-tools/gender-inclusive-language/ ; https://www.unwomen.org/-/media/headquarters/attachments/sections/library/gender-inclusive%20language/guidelines-on-gender-inclusive-language-en.pdf?la=en&vs=2129)

EXAMPLES OF GENDER-INCLUSIVE, NON-SEXIST LANGUAGE

GENDER-NEUTRAL EXPRESSIONS

- Rather than *chairman*, use *chair, chairperson, head*
- Rather than *landlord*, use *owner*
- Rather than *the common man*, use *the common person*

USING BOTH FEMININE AND MASCULINE FORMS

- Each citizen must submit his or her vote by mail
- We will stay until every person has shared his or her idea

INCLUSIVE LANGUAGE

- Rather than *'each participant must use the microphone to ask his question'*, use *'all questions must be asked using the microphone'*

- Rather than *'each resident can call his elected representative at any time'*, use *'each resident can call their elected representative at any time'*

1.4

ENSURE THAT WOMEN ARE AWARE OF THE CONDITIONS PUT IN PLACE TO MAKE IT EASIER FOR THEM TO PARTICIPATE

DESCRIPTION

Many efforts have been made to encourage citizen participation in democratic life, but they are not always adequately explained to or known by the general population. We need to ensure that women are aware of these efforts if we want as many of them as possible to participate in civic and democratic life.

OBJECTIVES

- Let women know in advance what conditions will be in place to make their participation in democratic life easier.

- Eliminate as many barriers as possible to women's participation that have to do with them not being aware of conditions that were set up to make it easier for them to participate in civic and democratic life.

HOW TO IMPLEMENT

- Identify possible barriers to participation for different women.

- List the conditions that are already in place to make it easier for women to participate and plan to add other measures, if needed.

- Clearly indicate these conditions on all promotional tools and public notices. Examples of conditions you may want to announce:

  - Universal accessibility

  - Translation services

  - Childcare

  - Availability of food or water

  - Different ways for people to participate (online surveys, webcasts, email questions)

  - Availability of public transit / possibility of carpooling

- Use universal symbols, if possible (e.g., space for breastfeeding, universal accessibility), to ensure that a greater proportion of the population can easily understand.

- Clearly indicate contact information so people with special needs can get in touch with the organizers easily, while also mentioning that additional inclusive measures are available, if needed.

PRACTICAL ADVICE

If you announce that your event will be taking place in a universally accessible location, make sure this is really the case. The MTElles project team observed a number of events where, despite the fact that accessibility had been announced, people encountered several difficulties once on site. These included:

- **The entrance for people with reduced mobility was different from the main entrance but that fact had not been announced.**
- **The meeting room was often closer to the main entrance and the distance between the entrance for people with reduced mobility and the meeting room was sometimes significant. In addition, there were many obstacles between the two, such as locked doors, which meant people had to be accompanied.**
- **The doors to the building or to the bathrooms were so heavy that people had to ask for help to open them.**
- **The set-up of the rooms was such that it was not easy to move around (very little space between tables, room too small for the number of people at the meeting) so it was difficult to ask questions or get to the buffet and refreshment table.**

We believe that it is paramount for public events to be held in accessible locations. However, before announcing that a site is universally accessible, you should visit it and keep this element in mind when setting up the room to ensure that it will be physically accessible for all women. Depending on the level of accessibility, you can indicate "with assistance" if, for example, people with reduced mobility need to be accompanied inside the building. It is also important to specify the address of the accessible entrance if it is different from the address of the main entrance.

SUCCESS STORY

The vast majority of partners involved in the MTElles pilot-projects quickly adopted the practice of announcing all conditions put in place to make it easier for women to participate. This requires few resources and has a high potential for impact. The overwhelming majority of women named offering childcare as the number one condition that would enable women to participate. Therefore, mentioning on invitations and promotional material that childcare is offered is key to mobilizing a full diversity of women. This is even more so if registration for the childcare service is not required in advance.
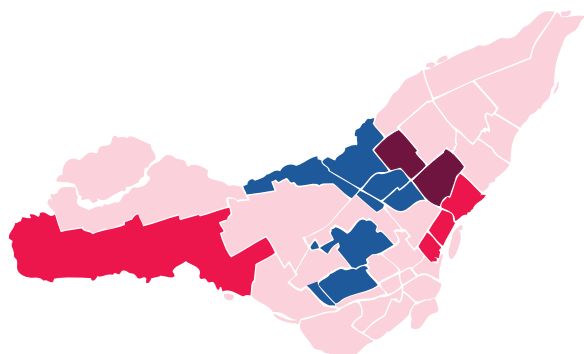
PILOT-PROJECT SITES

NEIGHBOURHOOD ROUNDTABLES

CORPORATION DE DÉVELOPPEMENT COMMUNAUTAIRE (CDC) CENTRE-SUD

TABLE DE CONCERTATION DU FAUBOURG SAINT-LAURENT

VIVRE SAINT-MICHEL EN SANTÉ

CORPORATION DE DÉVELOPPEMENT COMMUNAUTAIRE (CDC) DE ROSEMONT

LA TABLE DE QUARTIER HOCHELAGA-MAISONNEUVE

TABLE DE QUARTIER SUD DE L'OUEST-DE-L'ÎLE

MUNICIPAL/PARAMUNICIPAL

AHUNTSIC-CARTIERVILLE

CÔTE-DES-NEIGES-NOTRE-DAME-DE-GRÂCE

ROSEMONT—LA-PETITE-PATRIE

VILLERAY—SAINT-MICHEL—PARC-EXTENSION

OFFICE DE CONSULTATION PUBLIQUE DE MONTRÉAL (OCPM)

NEIGHBOURHOOD ROUNDTABLE

MUNICIPAL/ PARAMUNICIPAL BODY

NEIGHBOURHOOD ROUNDTABLE AND MUNICIPAL/PARAMUNICIPAL BODY

1.5

SET UP A SYSTEM FOR COLLECTING INTERSECTIONAL GENDER-DISAGGREGATED DATA ON PARTICIPATION

DESCRIPTION

Collecting intersectional gender-disaggregated data is a way of determining which women attended and/or were absent from an activity related to democratic life[23]. This information is key to determining communication and mobilization strategies, among other things, and to addressing shortcomings. Collecting data and subsequent analysis can be done using an observation chart during organized events, by asking non-invasive questions when welcoming participants, or through evaluations at the end of meetings. For example, socio-demographic surveys[24] can be completed by participants anonymously to get a more complete picture of their socio-economic status, sexual orientation, gender identity, immigration status, or other information.

Setting up a system for data collection enables you to get a detailed picture over time, draw conclusions about the effectiveness of practices set up to promote equality and inclusion, and take steps to correct shortcomings if needed.

OBJECTIVES

- Compile intersectional gender-disaggregated data on participants in the event.
- Determine who is missing from the participation processes and make necessary adjustments to include them.

[23] See Practical Tool 3.4.A
[24] See Practical Tool 3.4.B

HOW TO IMPLEMENT

- Keep a list of attendees, noting various identity factors.
- Add socio-demographic questions to the evaluation forms used at meetings and disaggregate this data, based on the different responses.
- Note speaking times and topics of concern, based on the various identity factors.
- Compare the breakdown of participants at events with the demographic profile of the population of the area covered to assess the degree to which decisions made are representative.

SUCCESS STORY

Neighbourhood roundtables integrated the practice of compiling intersectional gender-disaggregated data by adding socio-demographic questions to the evaluation forms used at meetings. In this way, they were able to have an accurate picture of participants and we could refer to this information throughout the time we worked with them. This informed other good practices that could be set up, including mobilization strategies to engage women who were absent from the processes.

PRACTICAL ADVICE

Data needs to be compiled systematically to determine which women attended or were absent from the process, as well as which issues were of concern to specific groups. It is not just a question of compiling statistics; the data needs to be analyzed in order to make improvements to the way mobilization is carried out and to how resources are allocated so that the population can be better represented. Increased mobilization will result in an increase in citizen proposals and in actions taken that are more in line with people's different realities. More specifically, compiling intersectional gender-disaggregated data allows us to:

- Determine the proportion of women who came to the meeting.
- Determine the proportion of women who spoke.
- Determine to what extent the diversity of women in the neighbourhood is reflected.
- Hear specific concerns from individual women as well as by women's groups.
- Develop ways of mobilizing women who do not typically participate.
- Respond to the interests and needs expressed by a diversity of women by addressing them in future meetings and by sharing more information about those topics or issues raised.
- Take steps to address the real needs of the community in all its diversity and, occasionally, take more specific action to support groups who have their own, unique realities.

USEFUL TOOL

Vivre Saint-Michel en Santé developed a data collection tool that can be used at different events to observe the composition of groups, who spoke and for how long, and note which good practices had been set up. The tool includes the following points:

- Name of the meeting
- Date of the meeting
- Number of women who attended
- Number of men who attended
- Number of women who spoke / percentage
- Number of men who spoke / percentage
- Speaking time (compare women's and men's total time)
- Number of racialized people
- Number of racialized people who spoke
- Whether inclusive, non-sexist language was used in all communications (written and oral)
- Whether documents used inclusive images or symbols
- Whether those responsible for mobilization worked hard to engage women
- Whether meeting times were determined keeping in mind implications for balancing work and family
- Whether food was served
- Whether childcare was provided
- Whether the location was easily accessible by public transit

PILOT-PROJECT SITES

NEIGHBOURHOOD ROUNDTABLES

CORPORATION DE DÉVELOPPEMENT COMMUNAUTAIRE (CDC) CENTRE-SUD

VIVRE SAINT-MICHEL EN SANTÉ

LA TABLE DE QUARTIER HOCHELAGA-MAISONNEUVE

CONCERTATION VILLE-ÉMARD/CÔTE-ST-PAUL

MUNICIPAL/PARAMUNICIPAL

OFFICE DE CONSULTATION PUBLIQUE DE MONTRÉAL (OCPM)

BUREAU DE LA PRÉSIDENCE - CONSEIL MUNICIPAL

ROSEMONT—LA PETITE-PATRIE

VILLERAY—SAINT-MICHEL—PARC-EXTENSION MONTRÉAL-OUEST

CÔTE-DES-NEIGES—NOTRE-DAME-DE-GRÂCE
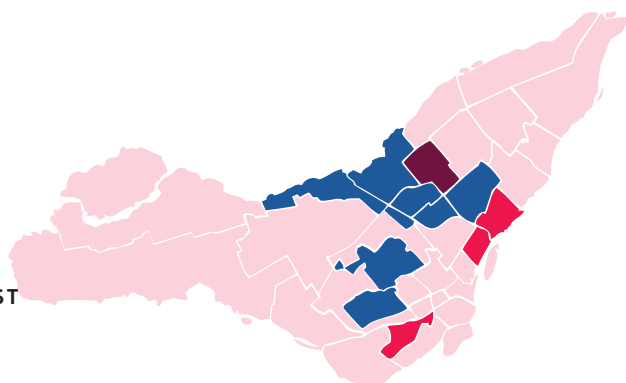
AHUNTSIC-CARTIERVILLE

● NEIGHBOURHOOD ROUNDTABLE

● MUNICIPAL/ PARAMUNICIPAL BODY

● NEIGHBOURHOOD ROUNDTABLE AND MUNICIPAL/PARAMUNICIPAL BODY

ACTION AREA 2

Mobilization and Empowerment

One of the main recommendations to come out of forum workshops was to reach out to women in the community. Whether for the purpose of sharing information or in order to consult with women as part of regular activities, people responsible for organising meetings and consultations should travel to meet women where they are instead of expecting them to come to the organizations or to the city to express their views. Finding ways to increase women's level of self-confidence is also key to fostering their participation. Finally, we suggest that organizations respond to the needs and priorities of a full diversity of women by organizing consultations on topics that are important to them, not only on those issues that the organizations consider to be a priority.

2.1   **DEVELOP INCLUSIVE MOBILIZATION STRATEGIES**

2.2   **SUPPORT AND ACCOMPANY WOMEN IN THEIR PARTICIPATION**

2.3   **OFFER TARGETED ACTIVITIES TO REACH WOMEN MOST OFTEN EXCLUDED**

2.4   **INVOLVE WOMEN IN ORGANIZING MEETINGS AND IN DECISION-MAKING STRUCTURES**

2.1

DEVELOP INCLUSIVE MOBILIZATION STRATEGIES

DESCRIPTION

Some local residents are very active in their neighbourhoods and cities and are key in our democratic processes, however, they do not always represent all voices within a given geographical area. The ongoing and active participation of select people allows them to develop their own specialised and in-depth knowledge of certain topics. The consequence of this is that, because it is often the same people who are quick to get involved, organisers may make less of an effort to simplify the language used during meetings since participants have become specialists on issues that matter most to them, which can inadvertently exclude women who are new to the process from speaking out. This is why it is important to use the intersectional gender-disaggregated data compiled in order to develop mobilization strategies that will reach a broader range of people in the community, particularly those women who do not generally participate in consultation processes, but who are very often the ones most affected by the issues being discussed and the decisions made.

OBJECTIVES

- Encourage women most often excluded from democratic processes to express their views.

- Broaden the profile of women who participate in democratic processes.

HOW TO IMPLEMENT

- Get a complete picture of the population living in the area, making sure the data is intersectional and gender-disaggregated.

- Tailor mobilization strategies to the population living in the area, particularly to women in all their diversity, especially those whose voices are generally not heard during public participation processes (keeping in mind the intersectional gender-disaggregated data previously collected).

- Work with grassroots organizations and key people in the community (community workers and organizers, outreach coordinators) to publicize the process among different groups of women.

- Go out to meet people and explain the process and the potential benefits of their participation (through door-to-door canvassing, posters in strategic locations, direct mailing, etc.).

EXAMPLE SHOWING SUCCESS

The *Bureau de la présidence du Conseil*, Ville de Montréal organized a *Caravane de la démocratie* [Caravan for Democracy] for women. They contacted several women's groups to invite them to participate and to relay the information through traditional communication channels. The women's groups mobilized their members who came together to participate in the Caravan.

QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELF

Using available data (picture of the neighbourhood and intersectional gender-disaggregated data), assess whether the usual mobilization strategies are sufficient to reach out to women of all ages and backgrounds.

• Are the people who usually participate representative of the general population living in the area?

• Which women's voices are not heard and what are the barriers to their participation?

• What measures can be put in place to mobilize them more effectively?

• Which local groups can we work with to foster engagement and explain the process so we can mobilize a full diversity of women?

• Can we ask them to support and accompany women who are involved with their organizations? Can we provide support to help them do this?

TIP

A communication plan is not enough to ensure citizen engagement. If we want to involve women facing the greatest barriers to participation, we need to put more effort into mobilization. A few ways of doing this include contacting grassroots organizations that can accompany their members or going door-to-door in targeted areas and participating in activities organized in the neighbourhood to foster discussion and publicize the process.

PILOT-PROJECT SITES

NEIGHBOURHOOD ROUNDTABLES

TABLE DE CONCERTATION DU FAUBOURG SAINT-LAURENT

VIVRE SAINT-MICHEL EN SANTÉ

MUNICIPAL/PARAMUNICIPAL

OFFICE DE CONSULTATION PUBLIQUE DE MONTRÉAL (OCPM)

VILLERAY—SAINT-MICHEL—PARC-EXTENSION

VILLE-MARIE

● NEIGHBOURHOOD ROUNDTABLE

● MUNICIPAL/PARAMUNICIPAL BODY

● NEIGHBOURHOOD ROUNDTABLE AND MUNICIPAL/PARAMUNICIPAL BODY

2.2

SUPPORT AND ACCOMPANY WOMEN IN THEIR PARTICIPATION

DESCRIPTION

One of the barriers to women's participation identified by the MTElles project is a lack of understanding of participation practices. Furthermore, women's active participation is also hindered when they have the impression that they do not know enough about a given topic.

Sending materials in advance enables women to read the information and feel better prepared before the meeting. We suggest therefore supporting women in order to foster their participation. Such support will serve to demystify citizen participation and help women build their capacities to be able to participate with confidence.

OBJECTIVES

- Demystify citizen participation.
- Build women's capacities to participate.

HOW TO IMPLEMENT

- Identify opportunities for participation (e.g., public consultations, evening discussions on a specific issue).

- Identify specific objectives about whose voices are important to broadening the understanding of the topic being addressed and who will be impacted by the subsequent decisions taken (e.g., hearing young people's voices, understanding what it is like for a visually impaired woman).

- Offer opportunities to engage less formally with women through less formal activities than borough council or city council meetings (e.g., coffee with the mayor or a walk with your city councillor).

- Offer workshops to help women prepare for meetings: explaining the various structures, the process and the objectives can help women gain confidence and be better equipped to participate in subsequent consultations. These workshops can be held at the offices of grassroots organizations and organized as part of their regular activities.

EXAMPLE SHOWING SUCCESS

The *Bureau de la présidence du Conseil*, Ville de Montréal organized a *Caravane de la démocratie* [Caravan for Democracy] to reach out to different groups of people (e.g., seniors, immigrant women) to tell them about the various opportunities for participation in Montréal. During one of the Caravans held at an immigrant women's service centre, women learned about different ways they could participate in Montréal. Women without legal status learned at this meeting that they too had the right to participate in consultations, to ask questions, and to express their opinions.

POSSIBLE VARIATIONS

Supporting and accompanying women in their participation can take many forms, including both passive and active support strategies. Several possible variations can therefore be considered:

- Preparing and distributing a simplified guide on citizen participation.
- Offering activities on the consultation topic and objectives to help women prepare.
- Mentoring groups of women as they get ready to participate.
- Accompanying women to the events where they would like to speak on an issue.
- Having resource people available to help women prepare their questions.

QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELF

- Who are the women who could benefit from support to better understand both what it means to participate and the importance of hearing citizen's voices?
- Which form of support will be offered?
- Will this support meet the needs of a diversity of women, including those who are most often excluded from participation processes?
- How can we encourage participants to be open to a diversity of ideas and opinions?

PILOT-PROJECT SITES

NEIGHBOURHOOD ROUNDTABLES

CORPORATION DE DÉVELOPPEMENT COMMUNAUTAIRE (CDC) CENTRE-SUD

LA TABLE DE QUARTIER HOCHELAGA-MAISONNEUVE

VIVRE SAINT-MICHEL EN SANTÉ

TABLE DE QUARTIER SUD DE L'OUEST-DE-L'ÎLE

CONCERTATION EN DÉVELOPPEMENT SOCIAL DE VERDUN (CDSV)

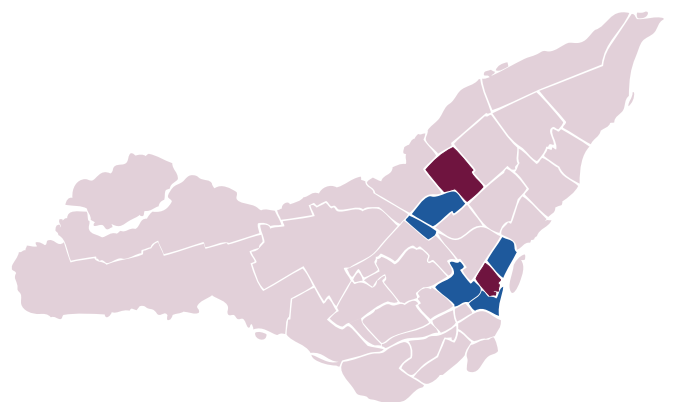### MUNICIPAL/PARAMUNICIPAL

OFFICE DE CONSULTATION PUBLIQUE DE MONTRÉAL (OCPM)

VILLERAY—SAINT-MICHEL—PARC-EXTENSION

ROSEMONT—LA PETITE-PATRIE

MONTRÉAL-OUEST

BUREAU DE LA PRÉSIDENCE

CÔTE-DES-NEIGES—NOTRE-DAME-DE-GRÂCE

● NEIGHBOURHOOD ROUNDTABLE   ● MUNICIPAL/ PARAMUNICIPAL BODY

● NEIGHBOURHOOD ROUNDTABLE <u>AND</u> MUNICIPAL/PARAMUNICIPAL BODY

2.3
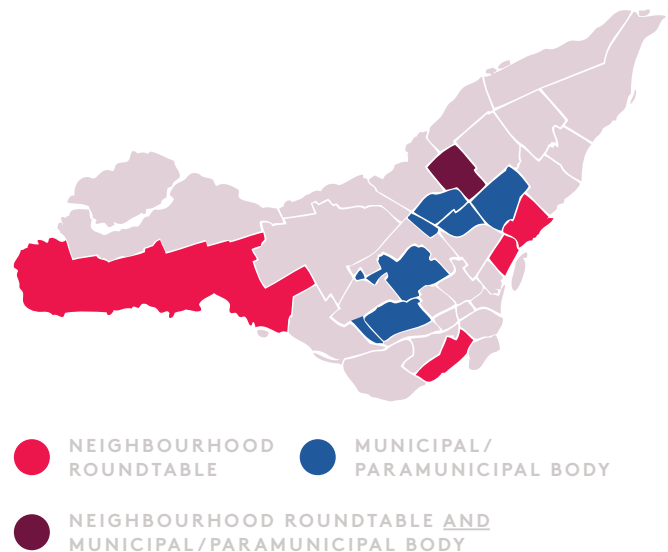
OFFER TARGETED ACTIVITIES TO THE WOMEN MOST OFTEN EXCLUDED

DESCRIPTION

Complicated participation processes, a lack of information, and the fact that participants and facilitators of participation processes are not representative of the general population are all barriers to women's participation. Some women experience even greater exclusion due to the multiple forms of oppression they face in their everyday lives. To mobilize women facing different oppressions who participate less and are less represented in democratic life, it can be useful to organize activities to prepare them for taking part in civic life as a pathway to building a trusting relationship and to encourage them to get involved in public participation processes in the long term.

OBJECTIVES

- Ensure that women in all their diversity are represented in democratic life.

- Reach out to women and build their trust in processes and democratic bodies.

- Encourage all women to participate and get involved in public participation processes in the long term.

HOW TO IMPLEMENT

- Organize one-off activities with women who are most often excluded to learn more about their lives, but also to get their ideas and views on developing their neighbourhood and their city.

- Offer activities to help them prepare for public participation and which allow you to establish an initial contact (open houses, coffee hours with elected officials, kitchen table conversations, citizen labs, exploratory walks).

- Encourage women to participate in more formal meetings and longer-term processes (city council meetings, public consultations, neighbourhood planning activities, participatory budgeting, etc.).

SUCCESS STORIES

In Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie, an exploratory walk (women's safety audit) was organized to get input from women on the redevelopment of a park in the borough. They were asked to present the results of the walk at a borough council meeting. In this way, the exploratory walk was an impetus to participate in other public consultation activities.

The Caravane Santé [Health Caravan], organized by the Table de quartier Hochelaga-Maisonneuve, presented gender-differentiated results at a grassroots workshop where citizens were encouraged to give their reactions. Twelve women, including five racialized women, and six men attended the workshop. The workshop's objective was to generate interest in longer-term involvement and in becoming community guardians, with support from the Table's Comité Santé [Health Committee]. One man and two women showed an interest in continuing their involvement. The Comité Santé would continue its mobilization efforts over the next few months, making sure that conditions are put in place to make it easier for women to participate and that the guardians involved are representative of the neighbourhood's population.

PILOT-PROJECT SITES

NEIGHBOURHOOD ROUNDTABLES

LA TABLE DE QUARTIER HOCHELAGA-MAISONNEUVE
VIVRE SAINT-MICHEL EN SANTÉ
TABLE DE CONCERTATION DU FAUBOURG SAINT-LAURENT

MUNICIPAL/PARAMUNICIPAL

OFFICE DE CONSULTATION PUBLIQUE DE MONTRÉAL (OCPM)
VILLE-MARIE
ROSEMONT—LA PETITE-PATRIE
MONTRÉAL-OUEST

● NEIGHBOURHOOD ROUNDTABLE   ● MUNICIPAL/ PARAMUNICIPAL BODY

● NEIGHBOURHOOD ROUNDTABLE AND MUNICIPAL/PARAMUNICIPAL BODY

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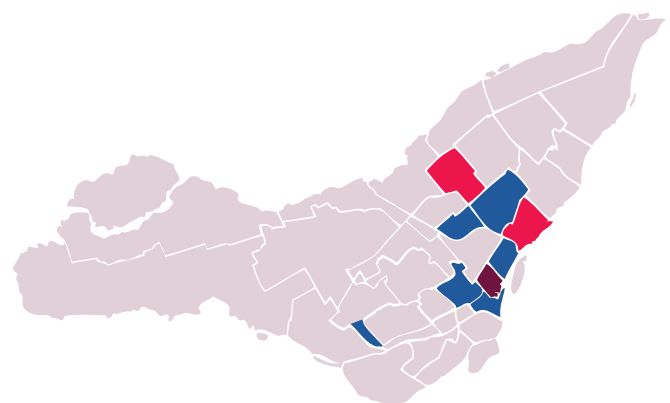
INVOLVE WOMEN IN ORGANIZING MEETINGS AND IN DECISION-MAKING PROCESSES

DESCRIPTION

Encouraging women's active involvement in all the steps required to organize meetings and in decision-making structures helps to eliminate gender gaps and gender-based discrimination. When women are given opportunities to participate in organizing meetings and in decision-making processes, it contributes to overcoming unequal power relations and ensuring that women have an impact on decisions affecting them.

OBJECTIVES

- Ensure that all women are represented when meetings are organized.
- Encourage better distribution of power by including women in decision-making.

HOW TO IMPLEMENT

Involve women in organizing meetings and in decision-making processes:

- Encourage hiring of staff that is representative of the general population, both for management positions and for key roles in consultation processes.

- Engage and systematically include women in all decision-making processes.

- Build the capacity of a wide range of women to get involved in organizing public participation activities.

- Involve women as of the earliest stages in order to fully understand their issues and priorities.

- Develop the agenda or the consultation process to include these issues and priorities.

- Acknowledge women's participation in the organizing process and decisions related to the event.

SUCCESS STORIES

In Ville-Marie, a group of citizens (three women and a man) from an ethnocultural community asked to meet their city councillor to share their concerns and to get answers to their questions. The group prepared the meeting in advance and submitted an agenda, which ensured that the meeting focused on their specific concerns.

In Montreal West, as part of the process of being recognized as an Age-friendly Town (Municipalité amie des aînés – MADA), seniors were invited to participate in an activity to codesign a web page for seniors. Seven seniors, all women, participated in this collaborative creation workshop where they shared their hopes for this new web page to ensure that it would meet their expectations. This activity allowed senior women to be directly involved in the MADA certification process.

At the Table de concertation du Faubourg Saint-Laurent, the Projet École [School project] was born out of a concern raised by a mother at a neighbourhood meeting. The Parents' Committee, made up mostly of women, is at the heart of the process and determines which topics need to be further explored. The project is being carried out in partnership with a research team at UQAM'S Service aux collectivités [Services to communities], and two of the mothers on the Parents' Committee sit on the committee overseeing the research.

PILOT-PROJECT SITES

NEIGHBOURHOOD ROUNDTABLES

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CÔTE-DES-NEIGES—NOTRE-DAME-DE-GRÂCE
VILLE-MARIE
MONTRÉAL-OUEST

CHALLENGE

It may be difficult to share power in making decisions, especially in more formal or official structures. In addition, this requires investment in terms of time and resources because it takes longer to reach decisions through consultations and working with stakeholders. It does ensure, however, that diverse needs are better taken into account, which leads to greater buy-in of decisions made.

NEIGHBOURHOOD ROUNDTABLE

MUNICIPAL/ PARAMUNICIPAL BODY

NEIGHBOURHOOD ROUNDTABLE AND MUNICIPAL/PARAMUNICIPAL BODY
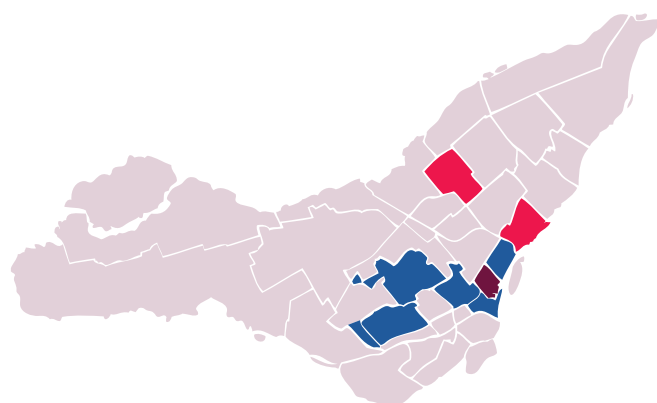
ACTION AREA 3

Revamping Participation Mechanisms and Structures

The need to revamp participation mechanisms and structures was underscored during the MTElles project, given that gender parity, representativeness, and ensuring universal accessibility are ongoing challenges in public participation. It is vital to question what we do and how we do it and to understand how open we are to sharing power with citizens and to introducing new practices in order to encourage women's participation. Furthermore, questioning the methods we use to ensure citizen participation helps us determine whether these methods are effective in mobilizing everyone in the community and truly enable women to express their views.

3.1 BE COMPLETELY TRANSPARENT ABOUT CONSULTATION PROCESSES

3.2 HOLD PARTICIPATORY ACTIVITIES AND CONSULTATIONS CLOSE TO WHERE WOMEN LIVE

3.3 OFFER A RANGE OF WAYS FOR WOMEN TO PARTICIPATE

3.4 EVALUATE THE IMPACT OF ACTIONS TAKEN AND DECISIONS MADE ON ALL WOMEN

3.1

BE COMPLETELY TRANSPARENT ABOUT CONSULTATION PROCESSES

exclusion   integration   inclusion

DESCRIPTION

The impression of not having any real power over decisions made was identified as being a disincentive to citizen participation by the women consulted during the data collection phase of the MTElles project. Another demobilizing factor was the length of time between a consultation and any resulting concrete action, especially if this action does not address the needs that were identified. Being completely transparent with participating women and explaining how their contributions fit into the process are ways of ensuring that their expectations are realistic and that their engagement will continue over time.

OBJECTIVES

- Increase women's level of confidence in consultation processes.
- Value women's participation in consultation processes.

HOW TO IMPLEMENT

BEFORE THE CONSULTATION

- Determine the consultation's objectives and the people you are trying to reach.
- Identify:
  - The importance that will be given to citizens' proposals.
  - Any limitations on possible follow-up action after the process, including resources available to implement recommendations.
  - The different stakeholders and steps that are involved in the subsequent decision-making process.

DURING THE CONSULTATION

- Explain the consultation process, its limits, the people and steps involved, and the anticipated timeline. Be clear about expectations and available resources.
- Specify the purpose of the meeting (to provide information, to consult, to make decisions) and explain at which points participants will be able to exert real influence.
- Refer people whose concerns are outside the scope of the consultation to organizations where these concerns can be addressed or to citizen engagement groups dealing with these issues.

AFTER THE CONSULTATION

- Report back to participants on the outcomes of the consultations and validate results.
- Explain why decisions were made.
- Follow up on needs that were identified but could not be addressed and explain why.

SUCCESS STORIES

The Office de consultation publique de Montréal has gone to great lengths to make sure its public consultation processes are transparent. It ensures this transparency by making webcasts and transcriptions of the various consultation activities available on its website, among other things. All documents that were submitted (including those submitted by the Ville de Montréal), as well as consultation reports and summaries, are also available on its website.

The Projet École [School project] at the Table de concertation du Faubourg Saint-Laurent is a project led by the Parents' Committee that mobilizes many partners, including current and future parents. The project, aimed at opening a school in downtown Montréal, may take several years to complete and it is far from certain that it will be successful. Many people are deeply involved in the project, believe in it, and devote considerable energy to achieving their goal. At the same time, no one tries to gloss over the various possible outcomes, even the most pessimistic ones. All meetings with parents in the community have included frank and open discussions where updates on actions taken and the various discussions with key partners were presented, and opportunities and obstacles to the project's advancement were outlined.

CHALLENGE

Tight deadlines and the pressure to show results sometimes make it difficult to take the time needed during the earlier phases to reflect on the project. This has an impact on the process as a whole. It is important to take time beforehand to determine a collective vision for the process and what role citizen participation will play in order to avoid misunderstandings and dissatisfaction during the process. Women sense when things are left unsaid or when their presence is causing discomfort. It is more motivating for them to know what their involvement really consists of, to understand where their influence lies, and to be aware of actual project deadlines and decision-making processes.

PILOT-PROJECT SITES

NEIGHBOURHOOD ROUNDTABLES

CORPORATION DE DÉVELOPPEMENT COMMUNAUTAIRE (CDC) DE ROSEMONT

LA TABLE DE QUARTIER HOCHELAGA-MAISONNEUVE

TABLE DE CONCERTATION DU FAUBOURG SAINT-LAURENT

VIVRE SAINT-MICHEL EN SANTÉ

MUNICIPAL/PARAMUNICIPAL

OFFICE DE CONSULTATION PUBLIQUE DE MONTRÉAL (OCPM)

MONTRÉAL-OUEST

AHUNTSIC-CARTIERVILLE
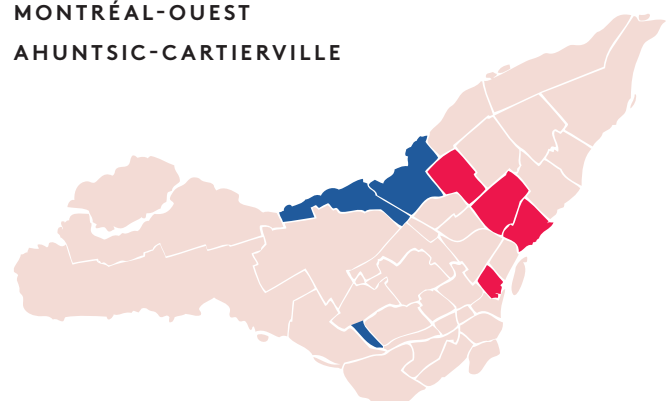
NEIGHBOURHOOD ROUNDTABLE

MUNICIPAL/ PARAMUNICIPAL BODY

NEIGHBOURHOOD ROUNDTABLE AND MUNICIPAL/PARAMUNICIPAL BODY

3.2

HOLD PARTICIPATORY ACTIVITIES AND CONSULTATIONS CLOSE TO WHERE WOMEN LIVE

VARIABLE **VARIABLE**
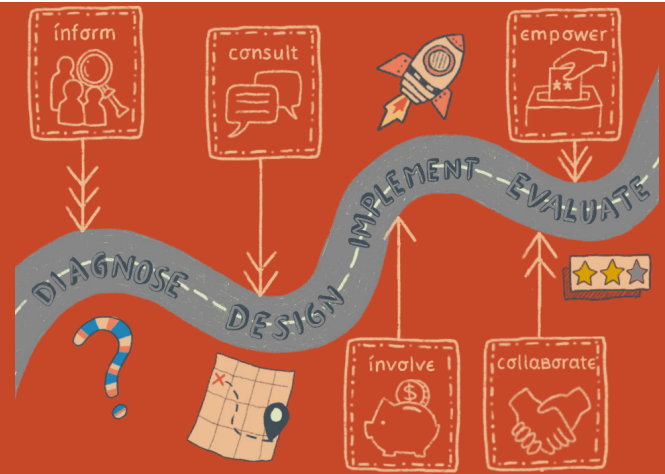
DESCRIPTION

Many events associated with democratic life are formal events held in city halls or borough council offices. People who are not used to these settings may find them intimidating, which may be a barrier to their participation. When we organize activities differently and reach out to women where they live, we connect with different women and we can bring elected officials and the general public closer together.

OBJECTIVES

- Hold events closer to where women live to make civic participation more accessible for a range of women.
- Allow for more impromptu participation in public consultation activities.

HOW TO IMPLEMENT

- Hold meetings in places commonly used by women and the general public (e.g., parks, community centres, libraries).

- Enable people to participate online (online surveys, possibility of emailing questions that will be asked during question period at council meetings, etc.).

- Organize public participation activities in less formal settings (travelling borough council meetings, mobile consultation units, vox pops, etc.).

- Establish partnerships with grassroots organizations and participate in their activities (neighbourhood celebrations, popular education workshops, coffee hours, dinner discussions focused on specific topics, etc.) to meet women in the community and tell them about the consultation process currently underway.

SUCCESS STORIES

During the public consultation set up by the Commission permanente du Bureau de la présidence, four travelling consultation sessions were organized to reach different groups of people, including a session for women at the YWCA Montreal. Another session was held at the Côte-des-Neiges intercultural library, which mobilized residents of Côte-des-Neiges—Notre-Dame-de-Grâce and the neighbouring boroughs and allowed their voices to be heard.

The Ahuntsic-Cartierville borough council held one of its meetings in a park, which meant that people at the park could meet elected officials and participate spontaneously. We noticed that women who happened to be there, including mothers with their children, came to meet city and borough councillors. The CDC Centre-Sud also held its last event of the year in a park next to its office and had the highest level of participation ever. Nearly 50 people, including 26 women, took part in this Soupe Locale [Soup Dinner]!

The Table de Quartier Sud de l'Ouest-de-l'île organized a consultation activity on the development of an area in its territory. The activity was held at the end of the afternoon in a central square located in the targeted sector, next to the train station. Lovely weather and rush hour foot traffic contributed to the popularity of the various consultation kiosks where citizens could learn more and express their views on a range of issues related to the development of the public square and the neighbourhood in general.

When the Table de quartier d'Hochelaga-Maisonneuve decided to organize workshops to present results from surveys conducted by the Caravane Santé [Health Caravan] project, it made sure to choose three different locations that were popular with residents and covered the entire neighbourhood: two community groups and a café. Twelve women, including five racialized women, and six men participated.

The objective of the CDC Rosemont's Espace 40e/Beaubien [40th Street/Beaubien] community centre project was to open a new community outreach space in a part of the neighbourhood with few community groups because of a lack of available rental space. Following a consultation process held both in this space and in other places nearby using a range of methods, it was decided that the new space would be used to foster citizen participation in the area and to offer activities and services to meet the needs of local residents. At one of the consultation activities that we observed, which was attended by seven women, friendships were formed and one of the women suggested meeting there every week and starting a walking group to help them break their isolation.

PRACTICAL ADVICE

When you organise a public meeting outside of your regular venue, make sure that the venues chosen for meetings are accessible.

PILOT-PROJECT SITES

NEIGHBOURHOOD ROUNDTABLES

CORPORATION DE DÉVELOPPEMENT COMMUNAUTAIRE (CDC) CENTRE-SUD

TABLE DE CONCERTATION DU FAUBOURG SAINT-LAURENT

LA TABLE DE QUARTIER HOCHELAGA-MAISONNEUVE

CONCERTATION VILLE-ÉMARD/CÔTE-ST-PAUL

VIVRE SAINT-MICHEL EN SANTÉ

CORPORATION DE DÉVELOPPEMENT COMMUNAUTAIRE (CDC) DE ROSEMONT

TABLE DE QUARTIER SUD DE L'OUEST-DE-L'ÎLE

MUNICIPAL/PARAMUNICIPAL

OFFICE DE CONSULTATION PUBLIQUE DE MONTRÉAL (OCPM)

COMMISSION PERMANENTE DU BUREAU DE LA PRÉSIDENCE

VILLERAY–SAINT-MICHEL–PARC-EXTENSION

ROSEMONT–LA-PETITE-PATRIE

MONTRÉAL-OUEST

CÔTE-DES-NEIGES–NOTRE-DAME-DE-GRÂCE
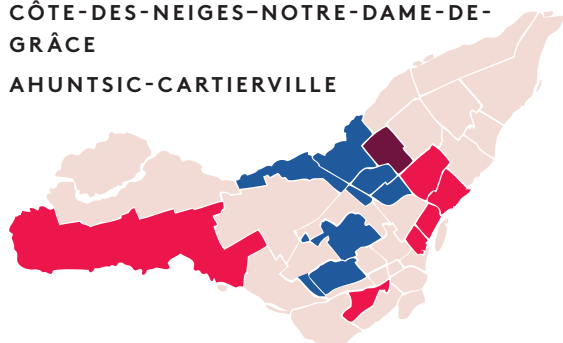
AHUNTSIC-CARTIERVILLE

NEIGHBOURHOOD ROUNDTABLE

MUNICIPAL/PARAMUNICIPAL BODY

NEIGHBOURHOOD ROUNDTABLE AND MUNICIPAL/PARAMUNICIPAL BODY

3.3

OFFER A RANGE OF WAYS WOMEN CAN PARTICIPATE

DESCRIPTION

Offering ways women can participate other than formal meetings can help create conditions that make it easier for women to express their views. Large meetings, which are usually more formal, can be intimidating for women who are not used to speaking in public and are not for everyone. This perpetuates several barriers to participation.

Thus, offering a range of ways people can share their opinions helps to achieve the consultation's objectives, while also giving everyone a chance to contribute according to their abilities, their availability and at times they find more convenient. It might be a good idea, therefore, to incorporate digital tools such as online surveys, or impromptu meetings in busy areas. Including interactive visual tools in consultations in order to solicit people's opinions without taking too much of their time is also good practice. Another good way to encourage women's active participation during meetings is to vary the ways they can express their opinions, rather than relying solely on discussions among the whole group.

OBJECTIVES

- Offer a range of ways people can participate so more women can feel confident expressing their views.
- Encourage remote participation.

HOW TO IMPLEMENT

- List the mechanisms by which people can participate.
- Identify the ways in which these mechanisms may limit people's ability to speak on an issue.
- Introduce new mechanisms to enable people to express their views in different ways, for example:
  - Encourage creative ways of presenting ideas and opinions (in teams of two, written reports, poetry, drawings, etc.).
  - Use a range of facilitation techniques to encourage the active participation of as many people as possible (individual reflection activities, discussions in small groups, and among the group as a whole).
  - Allow people to participate through online, interactive tools (online surveys, possibility of sending in an online question in advance).
  - Use interactive visual aids to help people give their opinions (neighbourhood map, stickers to indicate priorities, illustrations of issues).
- Plan for and find ways of ensuring that the opinions shared through these various forms of expression are taken into account.

SUCCESS STORIES

Concertation Ville-Émard/Côte-Saint-Paul organized several festive evenings on the steps of an old church in order to better understand the needs of and issues important to neighbourhood residents. Consultation kiosks were set up amid games where the young and young at heart could enjoy themselves. The kiosks presented different issues that residents could prioritize, and a map of the neighbourhood was displayed so that more could be learned about which stores people shopped at and what routes they took. Several women said they were happy to be able to come and talk about their neighbourhood while their children could have fun and be watched over by other adults.

The OCPM invited people to organise a "citizens' contributory activity" in order to mobilize as many people as possible for the Public Consultation on Systemic Racism and Discrimination. To support this self-organised consultation, they developed an animation guide and a step-by-step toolkit that was available to download on their website and that included a template for reporting results. These activities could be organized by different citizen groups and were a way of encouraging people to get together in smaller groups to identify issues and possible solutions that the Ville de Montréal could put in place to address systemic racism and discrimination. MTElles, in collaboration with the Maison d'Haïti, organized a citizens' contributory activity where five women participated and shared their ideas and opinions in a safe space that was more intimate and less intimidating.

PILOT-PROJECT SITES

NEIGHBOURHOOD ROUNDTABLES

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MUNICIPAL/PARAMUNICIPAL

OFFICE DE CONSULTATION PUBLIQUE DE MONTRÉAL (OCPM)

COMMISSION PERMANENTE DU BUREAU DE LA PRÉSIDENCE

ROSEMONT—LA PETITE-PATRIE

MONTRÉAL-OUEST

AHUNTSIC-CARTIERVILLE

● **NEIGHBOURHOOD ROUNDTABLE**   ● **MUNICIPAL/ PARAMUNICIPAL BODY**

● **NEIGHBOURHOOD ROUNDTABLE AND MUNICIPAL/PARAMUNICIPAL BODY**

3.4
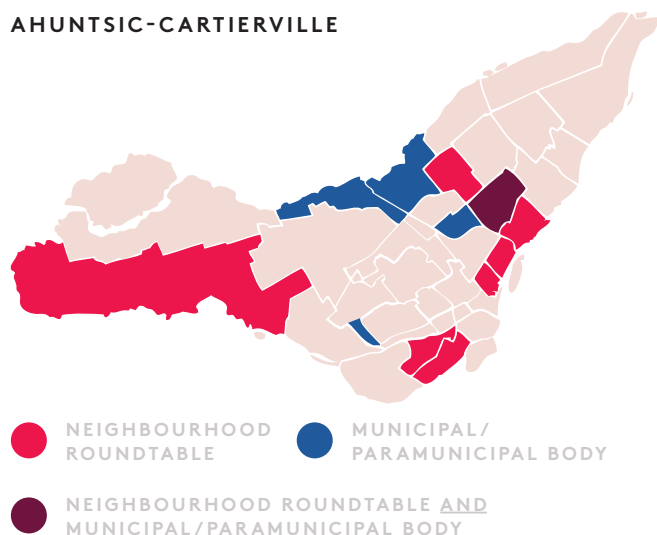
EVALUATE THE IMPACT OF ACTIONS TAKEN AND DECISIONS MADE ON ALL WOMEN [25]

DESCRIPTION

Adopting a gender-based and intersectional analytical approach (GBA+) helps to address different forms of exclusion and to ensure greater social justice. Learning more about GBA+ is a way of considering different realities faced by men and women in all their diversity. It is important to use this analytical approach during every phase of the development of projects, programs, policies, or territorial planning processes.

OBJECTIVES

- Analyse the topic in a way that considers the different realities faced by men and women, as well as among women themselves.

- Anticipate the possible gender-specific impacts of a public participation process.

- Set up a range of inclusive measures that will benefit everyone in the community.

HOW TO IMPLEMENT

- Allocate human and financial resources to introducing GBA+.

- Document the different impacts of decisions on all women: collect information on how the same situation might affect some groups differently, or on how a particular change in policy, program, or service might affect some groups of women and not others.

- Identify issues that are specific to women in all their diversity.

- Determine tangible measures that can be set up to reduce gender-based discrimination or other forms of discrimination associated with other actual or presumed identities.

- Distribute resources equitably to reach objectives related to equality and inclusion.

- Monitor and assess the measures set up, as well as whether the objectives were reached, making sure to involve the people concerned.

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[25] The training on GBA+ given by Relais-femmes provided the basis for most of this information sheet. http://relais-femmes.qc.ca/

A Brief History of Gender-Based Analysis Plus (GBA+)

THE 1990s:

1995 – The Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing: after decades of feminist demands and struggles, more than 180 countries and governments adopt a platform for action that includes tools to assess the impact of their actions, differentiated between men and women.

1996 – The European Union adopts an approach called gender mainstreaming.

1996 – The Canadian federal government introduces a gender-based analysis tool (GBA).

1997 – The Québec government develops gender-differentiated analysis (GDA).

TODAY

2020 - 25 years after the Beijing Conference and the adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, we examine the progress made and setbacks, as well as issues that still need to be addressed and that constitute barriers to gender equality.

SUCCESS STORIES

The Table de quartier Hochelaga-Maisonneuve used GBA+ throughout one of their projects. Socio-demographic data was collected through a survey in which 61.2% of respondents were women. Survey answers were cross analyzed, and the differentiated results were presented to residents during validation workshops, organized according to recommendations made by the MTElles project. The next stage of the project will be to form a group of citizens who will act as community guardians. As a result of the workshops, this group will be more representative of the community and will include conditions to make it easier for people to participate if they wish to do so. *"Even if our organization's mission is to combat social exclusion, I have never been so aware of this fact at each and every stage of a project as I was with this one!"* (Networking Coordinator, LTQHM)

QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELF TO MONITOR AND EVALUATE PRACTICES

1. Can you identify at least one impact (anticipated or not) of the practices put in place on:
   a. Women?
   b. Women facing multiple forms of discrimination?
   c. Men?
2. Were the objectives and results of your process reached?
   a. Do the people you were trying to mobilize through the process and practices set up feel that the objectives of your project were reached?
3. Were the gaps between men and women, as well as among women themselves, which were observed when you began this project, reduced or eliminated?
4. Who was not represented or did not participate? Why?
5. How should your practices be adapted in order to:
   a. Reach your objectives and the results you hoped for?
   b. Better address the gaps you observed at the start?

* Questions taken from:
   Relais-femmes (2019). « *Aide-mémoire ADS+* ». Internal document [unpublished]. 9 pages.
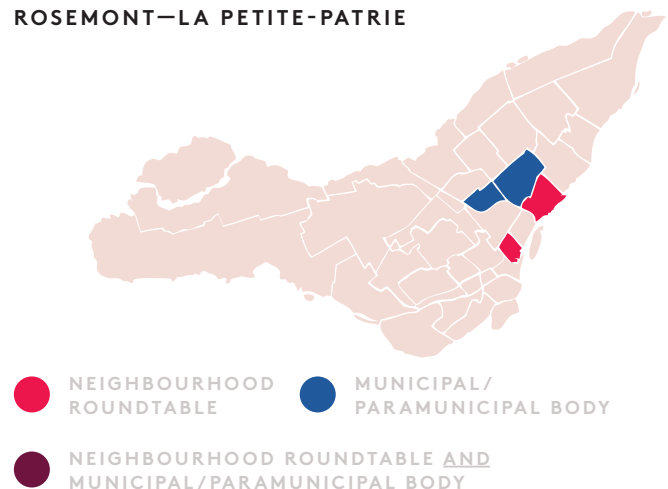
PILOT-PROJECT SITES

NEIGHBOURHOOD ROUNDTABLES

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LA TABLE DE QUARTIER HOCHELAGA-MAISONNEUVE

MUNICIPAL/PARAMUNICIPAL

ROSEMONT—LA PETITE-PATRIE

- NEIGHBOURHOOD ROUNDTABLE
- MUNICIPAL/PARAMUNICIPAL BODY
- NEIGHBOURHOOD ROUNDTABLE AND MUNICIPAL/PARAMUNICIPAL BODY

3.4.A   PRACTICAL TOOL: USING GBA+

GBA+
GENDER-BASED ANALYSIS FROM AN INTERSECTIONAL PERSPECTIVE

+

FOR GREATER JUSTICE

+

FOR GREATER DIVERSITY

+

FOR GREATER INCLUSION

+

FOR POLICIES AND PROGRAMS THAT BETTER ADDRESS EVERYONE'S NEEDS

+

FOR GREATER EQUALITY

WHAT DOES GBA+ BRING TO YOUR PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE?

- GBA+ is an analytical tool to help us make informed decisions

- GBA+ also assesses the differential impacts of measures on different marginalized groups, paying special attention to women in all their diversity

- GBA+ gets us to ask questions and to challenge preconceived notions. It is an attempt to avoid blind spots that inadvertently exacerbate inequalities

For every project under consideration, GBA+ looks at which groups of women or individual women are excluded or ignored, barriers they encounter, and ways to include them.

1. Do you have **data on, or a clear picture of,** the women affected by your project? Do you also have data on, or a clear picture, of their socio-demographic characteristics, including sex, gender identity, age, ethnicity or skin colour, presence of a disability, Indigenous status, immigration status, sexual orientation, economic status, mental or physical health, etc.?

2. Can you identify **commonalities and issues that differ**, for each of these groups?

3. Are the **expected results or impacts** of your project the same for these different groups?

4. Have you consulted **groups or women with expertise** on the issue or issues you hope to address or resolve with your project?

5. Are the **resources** allocated for the project (financial, material, human, time) **distributed equitably** according to the different needs of a full diversity of women you hope to reach. Is one group receiving a disproportionate amount of resources? Who was not represented in or missing from your project? Why?

6. Are **your communications inclusive**? In other words, have you used accessible, non-sexist, easily understood and clear language, as well as images that are representative and inclusive, etc.?

7. Are your projects carried out in **universally accessible** locations?

8. Were any special measures put in place to e**nsure that everyone can participate**, especially marginalized groups? Measures might include childcare, translation into other languages, including braille and sign language, choice of meeting times, etc.

3.4.B PRACTICAL TOOL: EXAMPLE OF AN EVALUATION QUESTIONNAIRE FOR PARTICIPANTS

FOR PARTICIPANTS IN AN ACTIVITY

1. **How did you hear about this event? (Check all answers that apply.)**

   ☐ ORGANIZATION'S WEBSITE

   ☐ COMMUNITY GROUP (SPECIFY)

   ☐ NEIGHBOURHOOD NEWSPAPER

   ☐ A FRIEND

   ☐ PERSONAL INVITATION

   ☐ POSTER IN A PUBLIC SPACE

   ☐ SOCIAL MEDIA

   ☐ OTHER, SPECIFY _____

2. **What expectations did you have coming to this event? (Check all answers that apply.)**

   ☐ ASK A QUESTION

   ☐ SHARE MY OPINION

   ☐ SHARE A CONCERN OR AN ISSUE

   ☐ SHARE AN IDEA OR A RECOMMENDATION

   ☐ GET INFORMED

   ☐ OTHER, SPECIFY _____

3. **Please indicate your level of satisfaction with:**

	VERY SATISFIED	SATISFIED	NEUTRAL	DISSATISFIED	VERY DISSATISFIED
WELCOME					
REGISTRATION PROCESS					
ROLE OF ORGANIZERS					
OPENING REMARKS BY FACILITATORS					
THE FACILITATION STYLE					
VISUAL AIDS USED					
YOUR EXPERIENCE IN SPEAKING OUT OR ASKING A QUESTION					
MEETING LOCATION					

4. **How did you feel after participating?**

   ☐ GREAT – I WAS ABLE TO SHARE MY IDEAS AND PEOPLE LISTENED TO WHAT I HAD TO SAY.

   ☐ PRETTY GOOD – I WAS COMFORTABLE SHARING MY IDEAS AND OPINIONS.

   ☐ FINE – I ENJOYED THE EVENT, BUT I DIDN'T SPEAK.

   ☐ NOT GREAT – I DIDN'T FEEL COMFORTABLE.

   ☐ VERY DISAPPOINTED– I TRIED TO PARTICIPATE, BUT PEOPLE DIDN'T LISTEN.

   ☐ NEUTRAL

   ☐ OTHER, SPECIFY _____

5. Have you noticed any changes over the last few months or the last few events regarding conditions put in place to make citizen participation easier?

_____

_____

6. Would the absence of any of these conditions have prevented you from participating? Please explain.

_____

_____

7. Are there conditions that would make it easier for women to participate that you would like to see put in place in other settings? Would you feel comfortable suggesting them?

_____

_____

8. What could have made your experience better? (Check all answers that apply.)

☐ LOGISTICS, PROCEDURES, AND FORMAT - *REGISTRATION, MEETING PACE AND FLOW, HOW THE ROOM WAS SET UP, MEETING TIMES, CHILDCARE, ETC.*

☐ COMMUNICATION AND AVAILABILITY OF INFORMATION – *BEFORE AND AFTER THE EVENT*

☐ ATMOSPHERE - *(RESPECTFUL, FRIENDLY ENVIRONMENT)*

☐ OTHER, SPECIFY _____

DEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONS

We are collecting socio-demographic data anonymously to provide a richer analysis of the data compiled. These demographic questions are all optional.

> **Please feel free to leave this section blank if you do not feel comfortable filling it out.**

9. What are your main occupations? (Check all answers that apply)

☐ STUDENT   ☐ RETIRED   ☐ UNEMPLOYED   ☐ VOLUNTEER

☐ WORKER   ☐ STAY-AT-HOME PARENT   ☐ NOT WORKING   ☐ OTHER, SPECIFY

10. What is your age group?

☐ 15-24   ☐ 35-44   ☐ 55-64   ☐ 75 AND OLDER

☐ 25-34   ☐ 45-54   ☐ 65-74

11. Gender (indicate the gender with which you identify)

☐ MAN   ☐ WOMAN   ☐ OTHER, SPECIFY _____

12. Do you have children under 14 years of age?

☐ NO   ☐ YES

12.1 If so, did you use the childcare services?

☐ NO

    ☐ MY CHILDREN ARE AT DAYCARE AND/OR AT SCHOOL.

    ☐ MY CHILDREN ARE AT HOME WITH A BABYSITTER OR FAMILY MEMBER.

    ☐ I TAKE MY CHILDREN WITH ME TO ACTIVITIES SO CHILDCARE SERVICES ARE APPRECIATED.

    ☐ I TAKE MY CHILDREN WITH ME TO ACTIVITIES, BUT I DO NOT NEED CHILDCARE SERVICES.

    ☐ MY CHILDREN ARE OLDER.

☐ YES

    ☐ YES, I USED THE CHILDCARE SERVICES OFFERED.

    ☐ YES, BUT I WOULD RATHER THAT MY CHILDREN STAY AT HOME WHEN I ATTEND MEETINGS.

13. Where were you born?

☐ CANADA   ☐ OTHER, SPECIFY   ☐ YEAR YOU IMMIGRATED

                                        _____   _____

14. Do you identify with one or several of the minorities below? (Check all answers that apply)

	RACIALIZED PERSON (VISIBLE MINORITY)	ETHNIC MINORITY	SEXUAL MINORITY	RELIGIOUS MINORITY	FIRST NATIONS	INUIT	MÉTIS
YES							
NO							

15. Do you have one or more functional limitations?

☐ YES   ☐ NO   ☐ YES, SPECIFY _____

ACTION AREA 4

Logistics, Meeting Flow, and Welcoming Participants

There are several aspects associated with the logistics of meetings and welcoming participants that can be modified to make public participation more inclusive and diverse. The way participants are welcomed, and the format of meetings are both key to promoting greater participation of women, especially if the focus is on creating a friendly, open, and empathetic atmosphere. It is important to consider a range of logistical elements to make all women feel welcome, despite any discrimination they may face in their daily lives.

4.1 ENSURE A WARM AND WELCOMING ENVIRONMENT

4.2 SET UP THE ROOMS SO THAT ALL WOMEN WILL BE ENCOURAGED TO COME AND VOICE THEIR OPINIONS

4.3 SHARE TOOLS THAT MAKE IT EASIER FOR WOMEN TO PARTICIPATE ACTIVELY

4.4 ENCOURAGE AND WELCOME THE PRESENCE OF CHILDREN

4.5 ENSURE THAT MEETINGS ARE ACCESSIBLE

4.6 CLEARLY STATE THE IMPORTANCE OF NOT REPRODUCING UNEQUAL POWER DYNAMICS

4.7 ENSURE THAT SPEAKERS ALTERNATE SO A BALANCE OF VOICES ARE HEARD

4.8 OFFER ANY AND ALL OTHER CONDITIONS THAT MAKE IT EASIER FOR WOMEN TO PARTICIPATE

4.1

ENSURE A WARM AND WELCOMING ENVIRONMENT

DESCRIPTION

It is important to create an atmosphere that will foster citizen participation by making sure participants feel welcome, supported, and valued right from the time they come into the room. When information about where and how to participate is not easily accessible, when we do not have the impression that our presence is appreciated, or when we feel that our presence is an inconvenience, we are less motivated and less comfortable participating actively.

OBJECTIVES

- Value women's presence and participation.
- Create an atmosphere conducive to participation.

HOW TO IMPLEMENT

BEFORE THE EVENT

- Think about the space where you will be holding your meeting and what you could do to make it more welcoming:
  - Include a reception area and staff to help participants find their way around.
  - Ensure that the venue and surrounding area are accessible and safe.

WHEN PARTICIPANTS ARRIVE

- Explain the layout of the venue and point out where participants can find the different services offered (ex. water, childcare, restrooms, exhibits).
- Hand out all materials needed for the meeting.
- Invite participants to help themselves to food or drink (if available) and to have a seat.
- Limit the role of security guards or the presence of police, if applicable. When police or security officers must be present, provide them with training about how they can contribute to creating a welcoming environment, despite their security role.

DURING THE EVENT

- Highlight the presence of women.
- Thank them for having taken the time to come to the meeting.

AT THE END OF THE EVENT

- Announce that you (or others from the organizing team) will be available after the meeting to answer any questions.
- Invite anyone who is waiting for transportation to wait safely inside.

SUCCESS STORIES

During the question period at the City of Montréal's council meetings, the role of security guards was reduced in order to make the environment more inviting and supportive for women. This role was assigned to staff from the Bureau de la présidence (all of them women), which made for a less intimidating presence.

In one borough, we noticed no signs were indicating how to get to the room where the borough council meeting was held, which was far from the main entrance - and on another floor! In response, the borough decided to put up a poster at the building entrance and next to the elevator to point people in the right direction. In addition, posters were put up to direct people to the place where they could register for the question period. The posters also included the following statement: *"People with reduced mobility using paratransit and parents with small children will be given speaking priority. We ask all individuals in these situations to inform us of their situation when they register."*

PRACTICAL ADVICE

This practice may seem simple, but it is important to appoint someone or several people to be responsible for greeting participants when they arrive and making them feel comfortable. It is often tempting to focus on greeting people we already know or partners with whom we need to follow up on specific files. We encourage you, however, to do just the opposite and be on the lookout for new faces - go up to them and show them you are glad they have come and are interested in finding out what has brought them to the consultation. It is also a perfect time to learn more about their interests and to give them more information about your organization and other ways they can become involved.

PILOT-PROJECT SITES

NEIGHBOURHOOD ROUNDTABLES

CORPORATION DE DÉVELOPPEMENT COMMUNAUTAIRE (CDC) CENTRE-SUD

TABLE DE CONCERTATION DU FAUBOURG SAINT-LAURENT

LA TABLE DE QUARTIER HOCHELAGA-MAISONNEUVE

VIVRE SAINT-MICHEL EN SANTÉ

CONCERTATION EN DÉVELOPPEMENT SOCIAL DE VERDUN (CDSV)
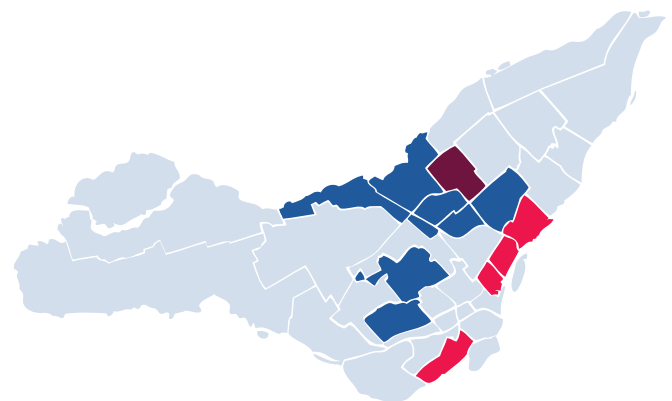
MUNICIPAL/PARAMUNICIPAL

BUREAU DE LA PRÉSIDENCE - CONSEIL MUNICIPAL

VILLERAY—SAINT-MICHEL—PARC-EXTENSION

ROSEMONT—LA PETITE-PATRIE

CÔTE-DES-NEIGES—NOTRE-DAME-DE-GRÂCE

AHUNTSIC-CARTIERVILLE

NEIGHBOURHOOD ROUNDTABLE

MUNICIPAL/ PARAMUNICIPAL BODY

NEIGHBOURHOOD ROUNDTABLE AND MUNICIPAL/PARAMUNICIPAL BODY

4.2

SET UP THE ROOMS SO THAT ALL WOMEN WILL BE ENCOURAGED TO COME AND VOICE THEIR OPINIONS

DESCRIPTION

When setting up a room that will encourage women to voice their opinions, we need to consider how a large room and/or a large group might make someone feel. Many women find it hard to speak in public and to feel confident doing so, especially if they do not feel represented by either the organization itself or other participants.

OBJECTIVES

- Provide a more human, accessible citizen participation process.

- Provide tools to empower participants when they speak.

HOW TO IMPLEMENT

- Put up photos of inspiring women who reflect the diversity of the people in the room.

- Set up a desk or table with a document holder that participants can use when they speak.

- Set up stations to encourage discussion, for example, round tables for small group discussions, as well as other areas (food, information displays, photos related to the topic, etc.) where participants can discuss informally among themselves, where they can make connections, and which encourage women to gain confidence to voice their opinions.

SUCCESS STORIES

As part of its strategic planning process, Vivre Saint-Michel en Santé organized a consultation meeting specifically for regular citizens (i.e. residents who are not necessarily involved in organised groups). Rather than following a formal agenda, the neighbourhood roundtable team set up a number of kiosks on a range of issues related to the desired changes for the neighbourhood. Women could move freely from one kiosk to the next, listen to discussions already underway, and provide their input whenever they wanted to. In addition, although a specific meeting time for this activity had been announced, people could arrive and leave whenever they wanted to and were welcome to help themselves to food and beverages whenever they wanted.

During a public consultation organized by the Commission permanente du Bureau de la présidence, round tables were set up around the room where elected officials and citizens could sit together. Each table had two elected officials seated at it. The goal was to encourage informal exchanges between women and other citizens and their elected leaders, to initiate relationships on a more equal footing, and to foster more dynamic discussions. Our observations showed that giving participants the chance to meet elected officials and other participants in a less formal setting before the consultation officially began seemed to make the space homier and less intimidating for women to participate actively.

The Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie borough decided to set up a table, chair, and second microphone next to the main microphone on a stand for citizens to use during the question period. During a council meeting, a woman with reduced mobility sat at the table to use the second microphone. Unfortunately, the microphone did not work due to a technical problem, but the woman decided to continue sitting at the table to ask her question. This was intended to eliminate the need to adjust the microphone when a person is using a wheelchair.

TIP

When a room is too large or cannot be set up in such a way as to:

- Greet everyone who comes in
- Ensure that everyone has a clear view of the front of the room and can follow visual presentations
- Enable everyone to hear the discussions

Projection screens can be used to ensure that each and every participant can clearly see, hear and follow everything that is going on.

PILOT-PROJECT SITES

NEIGHBOURHOOD ROUNDTABLES

CORPORATION DE DÉVELOPPEMENT COMMUNAUTAIRE (CDC) CENTRE-SUD

TABLE DE CONCERTATION DU FAUBOURG SAINT-LAURENT

VIVRE SAINT-MICHEL EN SANTÉ

MUNICIPAL/PARAMUNICIPAL

BUREAU DE LA PRÉSIDENCE - CONSEIL MUNICIPAL

ROSEMONT—LA PETITE-PATRIE

CÔTE-DES-NEIGES—NOTRE-DAME-DE-GRÂCE

AHUNTSIC-CARTIERVILLE
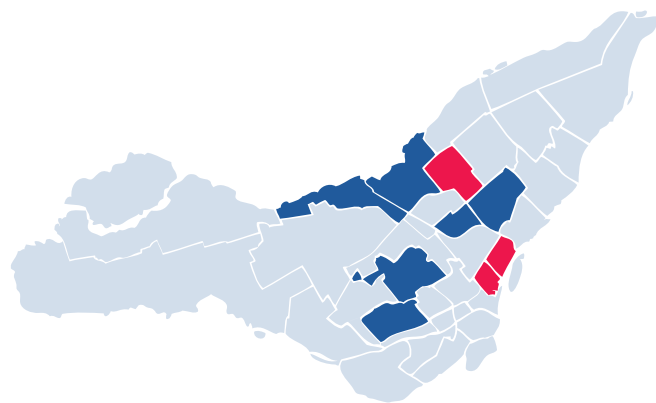
NEIGHBOURHOOD ROUNDTABLE

MUNICIPAL/ PARAMUNICIPAL BODY

NEIGHBOURHOOD ROUNDTABLE AND MUNICIPAL/PARAMUNICIPAL BODY

4.3

SHARE TOOLS THAT MAKE IT EASIER FOR WOMEN TO ACTIVELY PARTICIPATE

DESCRIPTION

Several women mentioned that feeling intimidated deterred them from actively participating in a meeting because they did not know when it was the right time to speak or felt that the rules around speaking were not always clear. In addition, the occasionally confrontational atmosphere at meetings or behaviour that could be perceived to be aggressive also had a paralyzing effect on some of the women we met. Both overly complicated procedures and rules in very formal bodies, and the total lack of rules at less formal meetings were identified as barriers to participation. It is therefore important to strike a balance between the formal and informal participation mechanisms and to establish a common understanding of the rules and protocols of participation at the beginning of the meeting.

OBJECTIVES

- Clearly state how the meeting will proceed.
- Make it easier for people to voice their opinions.
- Make all meeting participants responsible for sharing speaking time.

HOW TO IMPLEMENT

- Clearly explain how the meeting will proceed and when people will have a chance to speak.
- Present and explain your participation charter, if you have one.
- Establish rules for participation based on respect, the importance of listening, and a non-judgmental attitude.
- Name possible relevant power dynamics.
- Offer support to people who would like to speak.
- Develop various tools to explain the participation procedure at question period (ex. videos, brochures).
- Place a timer in the room for participants to share the responsibility for respecting time limits and sharing speaking time equitably.

SUCCESS STORIES

The City of Montréal published a guide explaining how citizens can participate in city council and agglomeration public question periods, available in English and French[26]. During renovations at city hall, the document was quickly updated to include information on the new registration procedures and the new venue for council meetings. This guide helps demystify the participation process, something that women felt was needed. The fact that it can be consulted in advance may help women feel more comfortable about speaking at meetings.

The pilot-project at the CDC Centre-Sud consisted of a series of monthly events. As the months went on, participants could consult various documents that were displayed on the walls of the meeting room, including a participation charter, ideas for questions they could ask the people presenting projects, information on projects presented, and a calendar of future events. In addition, despite the fact that many of the same people came back every month, each meeting began by outlining how the meeting would proceed, when participants would be able to ask questions and how these meetings came about. A warm welcome and all these resources meant that participants who were new to the process could feel confident about speaking and less intimidated in a group where many people already seemed to know each other.

TIP

Think about how you can make information available. You can publish it on your website, share it on social media, produce written material that can be handed out at consultation meetings and displayed in various public spaces. Information can also be included directly in meeting invitations. Remember that the more the information is made widely available, the easier it will be for people to participate!

USEFUL TOOL: PARTICIPATION CHARTER

There are several different participation charter models that can be tailored to your organization. Here are a few elements that you can include:

- **Contributing to discussions.**
- **Being concise in order to leave time for others to speak.**
- **Listening carefully to others and being open to their ideas.**
- **Discussing ideas, not passing judgment on people.**

PILOT-PROJECT SITES

NEIGHBOURHOOD ROUNDTABLES

CORPORATION DE DÉVELOPPEMENT COMMUNAUTAIRE (CDC) CENTRE-SUD

TABLE DE CONCERTATION DU FAUBOURG SAINT-LAURENT

LA TABLE DE QUARTIER HOCHELAGA-MAISONNEUVE

VIVRE SAINT-MICHEL EN SANTÉ

MUNICIPAL/PARAMUNICIPAL

BUREAU DE LA PRÉSIDENCE – CONSEIL MUNICIPAL

ROSEMONT—LA PETITE-PATRIE

CÔTE-DES-NEIGES—NOTRE-DAME-DE-GRÂCE

AHUNTSIC-CARTIERVILLE

NEIGHBOURHOOD ROUNDTABLE

MUNICIPAL/ PARAMUNICIPAL BODY

NEIGHBOURHOOD ROUNDTABLE AND MUNICIPAL/PARAMUNICIPAL BODY

[26] http://ville.montreal.qc.ca/pls/portal/docs/page/prt_vdm_fr/media/documents/brochure_citoyenne_periode_questions_public_an.pdf, accessed May 11, 2019.

4.4

ENCOURAGE AND WELCOME THE PRESENCE OF CHILDREN

DESCRIPTION

Public consultations, citizen meetings, and city council or borough council meetings often take place in the evening or on weekends. Although this facilitates participation by people working weekdays, it nevertheless constitutes a barrier for people with small children, particularly women who continue to be the primary caregivers of children and most often the heads of single-parent households. Several solutions can remedy this situation and encourage parents' participation.

OBJECTIVES

- Encourage the presence of children as well as their parents' participation.

- Acknowledge and take into account the difficulty people have balancing all their responsibilities (work, family, civic engagement, etc.).

HOW TO IMPLEMENT

There are a number of different options that you can provide to parents. Providing childcare onsite, setting up a children's area in the meeting room, or reimbursing childcare costs to parents are several options that can be considered, depending on available resources. It is important to allocate a sufficient budget to cover the costs of whichever option you have chosen (childcare, children's area, reimbursement of childcare costs). Here are some options:

- Set up a childcare service in another room so that parents can leave their children in the care of other adults while they participate in the meeting.

- When people register, ask them whether they have children and ensure that parents with children have speaking priority. This may apply to people who have brought their children with them as well as to parents who have children at home.

- If no other room is available for childcare, set up a cozy space in the room where the meeting is being held and provide markers, crayons, puzzles, etc. so that children can stay in the room and do quiet activities while their parents participate in the meeting and can also keep an eye on them.

- Include children in the consultation by organizing activities related to the topics being addressed that are adapted for children.

SUCCESS STORIES

At a citizen participation day in Montreal West devoted to the environment, a childcare service was provided where children played games and read books about the environment. They also decorated rocks for the garden and planted seedlings they could bring home afterward.

At a borough council meeting in Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie, a children's area was set up in the room where the meeting was held. The daughter of a woman who was attending a borough council meeting for the first time did a drawing that she showed to her mother and the other participants at the end of the question period.

A woman came to a participatory budgeting activity organized by the Ahuntsic-Cartierville borough with her 10-year-old daughter. After a short while, the daughter seemed to be getting bored, so the mother suggested she go next door to play in the childcare room, which the daughter did. The mother was able, therefore, to continue participating because the borough had provided childcare.

CHALLENGE

Providing childcare is expensive and organizations sometimes question the relevance of offering it since it is not always used. To overcome this barrier, we suggest you refer to Practice 1.4 of this toolkit, "Ensure that women are aware of the conditions put in place to make it easier for them to participate". If women do not know the service exists, chances are that it will not be used.

Furthermore, another point mentioned by the women we met during the MTElles project was that they sometimes felt guilty about leaving their children in childcare during evenings or on the weekend when the children are at school or in daycare all week. It may also take some time to build a sense of trust with the people taking care of the children. Childcare services tend to be abandoned quickly when they are not used but it is perhaps worthwhile to persevere and make the services more widely known.

TIP

Depending on the topic being addressed at the consultation, it could be a good idea to organize a parent-child activity or an activity for children so they can contribute their thoughts. Parents and children can then discuss the topic together and share their reflections with the group. Do not forget to mention this activity in all your communications!

PRACTICAL ADVICE

We recommend not requiring parents to register for childcare in advance and providing it at every event you organize so that people can decide to participate at the last minute.

PILOT-PROJECT SITES

NEIGHBOURHOOD ROUNDTABLES

CORPORATION DE DÉVELOPPEMENT COMMUNAUTAIRE (CDC) CENTRE-SUD

TABLE DE CONCERTATION DU FAUBOURG SAINT-LAURENT

LA TABLE DE QUARTIER HOCHELAGA-MAISONNEUVE

VIVRE SAINT-MICHEL EN SANTÉ

CORPORATION DE DÉVELOPPEMENT COMMUNAUTAIRE (CDC) DE ROSEMONT

CONCERTATION VILLE-ÉMARD/CÔTE-ST-PAUL

MUNICIPAL/PARAMUNICIPAL

BUREAU DE LA PRÉSIDENCE – CONSEIL MUNICIPAL
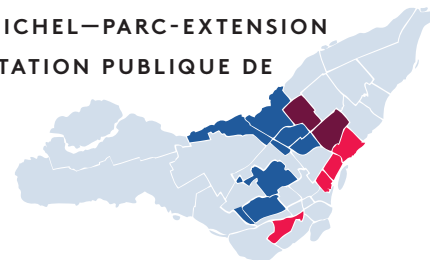
MONTRÉAL-OUEST

AHUNTSIC-CARTIERVILLE

CÔTE-DES-NEIGES—NOTRE-DAME-DE-GRÂCE

ROSEMONT—LA PETITE-PATRIE

VILLERAY—SAINT-MICHEL—PARC-EXTENSION

OFFICE DE CONSULTATION PUBLIQUE DE MONTRÉAL (OCPM)

● NEIGHBOURHOOD ROUNDTABLE   ● MUNICIPAL/ PARAMUNICIPAL BODY

● NEIGHBOURHOOD ROUNDTABLE AND MUNICIPAL/PARAMUNICIPAL BODY

4.5

ENSURE THAT MEETINGS ARE ACCESSIBLE

DESCRIPTION

Ensuring that meetings are accessible includes many aspects that each have an impact on whether or not all women will be able to participate in democratic processes. We need to pay special attention to the practices we put in place to foster inclusion, including the venue chosen, the area in which the venue is located, universal accessibility requirements, or any other amenities that will encourage women's participation. Differently-abled women are among those least represented in democratic life.

OBJECTIVES

- Foster participation by everyone in society, including women who are most often excluded from participating.

- Reduce sources of discrimination within organizations.

HOW TO IMPLEMENT

GETTING TO AND FROM MEETINGS

When choosing a meeting venue, it is important to keep in mind how safe the area is, especially for meetings held in the evening when getting home may be a barrier to women's participation. You should also consider how accessible the venue is in terms of public transit and whether parking is available nearby and how well-lit it is. It is also possible to set up a shuttle service or organize carpooling among participants.

- Keep in mind the symbolic barriers within geographical regions in order to choose a location where local women have a sense of belonging.
- Ensure that the area is safe (especially after evening meetings end).
- Allow for a time when women can wait together at the end of the meeting.
- Implement a "buddy system" for going home.
- Make sure the venue is accessible by public transit.
- Arrange for carpooling.
- Offer to reimburse bus and metro tickets.
- Provide a shuttle service or a service to accompany women home.

UNIVERSAL ACCESSIBILITY [27]

Making sure venues are accessible to people with reduced mobility is a significant challenge, especially for community groups. Despite this, it is imperative to make an effort to ensure accessibility. This can include establishing partnerships with institutions or businesses in the community that have accessible rooms you could use or who could help you address other accessibility issues. It is not simply a question of being able to get into the building, but also of being able to move around easily or access washrooms without assistance.

Anticipate any other accessibility needs and allocate a budget for potential requests (ex. sign language interpretation). Ask questions when people register

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[27] To take it to the next level, refer to the Accessibility Checklist produced by Accessibilize Montreal: https://coco-net.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/Access-Checklist-EN.pdf

for the event so that anyone with a functional limitation can let you know what they need.

- Set aside a budget to accommodate requests for accessibility measures. Make a list of resources offering various services and verify the costs of these services in order to come up with a realistic budget.
- Hold events in universally accessible venues, including outdoor locations. For indoor events, ensure that other amenities within the building are accessible (ex. washrooms, elevators) and that rooms are set up in such a way as to allow people to move around easily, including people using a wheelchair.
- Educate facilitators and presenters on the importance of using a microphone:
  - To ensure that everyone can hear. It can be awkward for a hearing-impaired person to request that a microphone be used.
  - To allow for simultaneous translation.
  - To enable the meeting to be webcast or recorded so people can watch it at a later date.
- Ensure that all visual tools are legible and that written materials are also read out loud.
- Give speaking priority to people with functional limitations.
- Provide simultaneous interpretation into sign language (ex. Quebec Sign Language or American Sign Language).

LANGUAGE AND TERMINOLOGY

- Provide onsite simultaneous translation into several languages, including sign language.
- Use accessible language during the meeting and simplify or explain specialized language and jargon, including acronyms.
- Use symbols, diagrams, drawings, and images to present information.

PILOT-PROJECT SITES

TABLES DE QUARTIER
CORPORATION DE DÉVELOPPEMENT COMMUNAUTAIRE (CDC) CENTRE-SUD
TABLE DE CONCERTATION DU FAUBOURG SAINT-LAURENT
LA TABLE DE QUARTIER HOCHELAGA-MAISONNEUVE
VIVRE SAINT-MICHEL EN SANTÉ
CORPORATION DE DÉVELOPPEMENT COMMUNAUTAIRE (CDC) DE ROSEMONT
CONCERTATION VILLE-ÉMARD/CÔTE-ST-PAUL
TABLE DE QUARTIER SUD DE L'OUEST-DE-L'ÎLE

INSTANCES MUNICIPALES/PARAMUNICIPALES
OFFICE DE CONSULTATION PUBLIQUE DE MONTRÉAL (OCPM)
ROSEMONT—LA PETITE-PATRIE
CÔTE-DES-NEIGES—NOTRE-DAME-DE-GRÂCE

SUCCESS STORIES

The Table de concertation du Faubourg Saint-Laurent project was conducted in partnership with UQAM and included a research component. Before presenting the results of the report on the project to local citizens, which would serve as the basis for the consultation, the Table sought the support of an organization whose mission is to simplify complex documents for the general public. During the forum where the report was presented, participants were grouped together into small English-language and French-language discussion groups.

During the OCPM'S Public Consultation on Systemic Racism and Discrimination, interpretation into LSQ and ASL was provided to ensure that both Anglophone and Francophone hearing-impaired people would have access to the information presented.

PRACTICAL ADVICE

Once a decision has been made to provide translation services, identify the languages you wish to prioritize. This decision should be informed by the languages commonly spoken in the region covered. You then need to make all information related to the public participation available in those languages, including by translating all communication tools and materials, ensuring that the people responsible for mobilization can speak the language, and considering that the offer to participate in different languages should extend beyond the meeting itself to any follow-up activities. You may find yourself facing several challenges related to human, material, or financial resources when you choose to provide translation services. While these constraints are a real barrier, it is often possible to find volunteers among the community who can translate materials or who can provide whisper translation during the meeting.
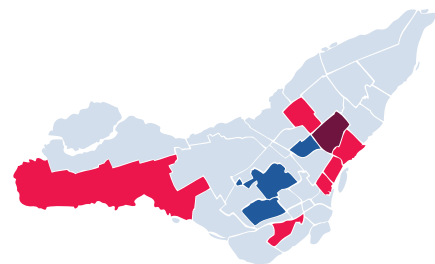
NEIGHBOURHOOD ROUNDTABLE

MUNICIPAL/ PARAMUNICIPAL BODY

NEIGHBOURHOOD ROUNDTABLE AND MUNICIPAL/PARAMUNICIPAL BODY

4.6

CLEARLY STATE THE IMPORTANCE OF NOT REPRODUCING UNEQUAL POWER DYNAMICS

DESCRIPTION

During the data-collection phase, women mentioned that they sometimes felt awkward voicing their opinions or wondered if what they had to say was relevant. They felt this was due to dynamics resulting from the different ways in which men and women are socialized.

Some women also pointed out that meeting facilitators did not always consider their specific realities when leading meetings, which was reflected in their choice of animation styles or facilitation techniques.

Taking care not to produce or reproduce unequal power dynamics is particularly important when people who are considered to be professionals or subject matter experts speak to a topic. These people may assert their expertise and ability to analyze a topic and show great theoretical knowledge, which can intimidate women who do not have this specialised knowledge and background, but whose expertise is gained through lived experience.

Making participants aware of existing unequal power dynamics, including disparities in terms of speaking time, is a way of acknowledging inequalities between men and women and among people with different social statuses. We need to highlight the presence and input of women, especially those whose voices are less often heard at meetings, namely young women, seniors, Indigenous women, differently-abled women, trans women, and racialized women. Participants are more conscious of their responsibility to share speaking time once this is explicitly mentioned.

OBJECTIVES

- Value citizens' opinions.

- Encourage a diversity of women's voices.

- Make all meeting participants responsible for ensuring that speaking time is shared fairly.

HOW TO IMPLEMENT

- Adopt an equality policy within the organization.

- Encourage the participation of women in all their diversity in opening remarks.

- Clearly state the frequent disparity in speaking times and that your objective for this meeting is equality.

- Systematically include a point about how the issues being discussed impact women specifically.

- Establish rules for participation that promote equality and inclusion.

SUCCESS STORIES

When Vivre Saint-Michel en Santé conducted its neighbourhood planning process, this practice was deemed to be a priority, both to ensure that women actively participated, but especially to value citizens' opinions and to narrow the gap between how their views are perceived compared to those expressed by professionals. On top of clearly stating this concern and the importance of hearing citizens' opinions in the opening remarks, the people leading the small-group discussions were invited to take part in a preparatory meeting to make them aware of issues related to unequal power dynamics. They were then given observation tables and feedback sheets on which they were asked to note several points: how speaking time was divided between women and men, as well as between professionals and citizens; if they had had to make a point of encouraging citizens, in particular, women, to voice their opinions and, if so, how they did this. During the debrief, it was found that group leaders had to intervene in a variety of ways to encourage women to make their views known.

At Concertation Ville-Émard/Côte Saint-Paul, people noticed that *"when women's participation is specifically referred to out loud, women are more assertive about giving their opinions because the imbalance was mentioned openly."*

During the participatory budgeting process in Ahuntsic-Cartierville, both the borough mayor and the meeting facilitator stressed the importance of thinking about communities that were not represented at the consultation. As a result of this reminder, it was observed that participants also showed concern for other borough residents when they voiced their ideas and concerns during workshop discussions.

USEFUL TOOL: EXCEPT FROM INCLUSIVE OPENING REMARKS

"We would like to take this opportunity to encourage you to ask whatever questions you may have. This applies especially to women who, according to our statistics, are less likely to participate. For this reason, we have started using a system where women and men alternate speaking turns.

If you don't ask your questions, there is a greater likelihood that this project will not reflect Montrealers' realities (...). We know that, historically, when we think of issues, for example, like women's safety or how to accommodate for the presence of children, if women themselves don't speak up to raise these issues, they will often be overlooked. That's why it's important for everyone to have a chance to speak so that our report will reflect the concerns of all citizens, both women and men.

To help families get home and back to their obligations as quickly as possible, we will give them priority to speak first. So, if you are using our childcare service or have children at home, please feel free to mention this when you register so you will be given speaking priority."

(Marie Leahey, president of the OCPM consultation on Lachine-Est, February 24, 2019)

PILOT-PROJECT SITES

TABLES DE QUARTIER

CORPORATION DE DÉVELOPPEMENT COMMUNAUTAIRE (CDC) CENTRE-SUD
LA TABLE DE QUARTIER HOCHELAGA-MAISONNEUVE
CONSEIL COMMUNAUTAIRE DE NOTRE-DAME-DE-GRÂCE
VIVRE SAINT-MICHEL EN SANTÉ

INSTANCES MUNICIPALES/PARAMUNICIPALES

OFFICE DE CONSULTATION PUBLIQUE DE MONTRÉAL (OCPM)
ROSEMONT—LA PETITE-PATRIE
CÔTE-DES-NEIGES—NOTRE-DAME-DE-GRÂCE
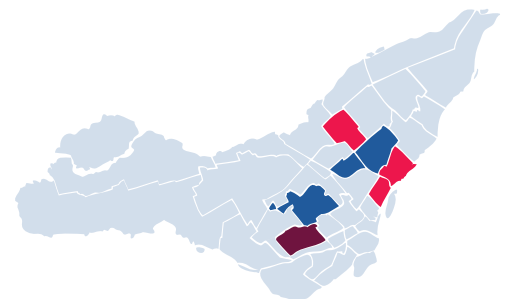
● NEIGHBOURHOOD ROUNDTABLE

● MUNICIPAL/ PARAMUNICIPAL BODY

● NEIGHBOURHOOD ROUNDTABLE AND MUNICIPAL/PARAMUNICIPAL BODY

4.7

ENSURE THAT SPEAKERS ALTERNATE SO A BALANCE OF VOICES ARE HEARD

DESCRIPTION

Ensuring that women, men, and people with other gender identities alternate as speakers gives women more of a chance to be heard and encourages them to express their views because:

> Despite advances that have been made, even in today's society, a certain proportion of women are excluded (through various internal mechanisms governing today's society (Fraisse, 1997). This exclusion affects women, their self-confidence in voicing their opinions, and their own perception of their abilities to discuss urban management and planning (YWCA Montreal, cited in Latendresse, 2007). (Excerpt from *État des lieux MTElles,* 2018)

Unequal power dynamics among women themselves also need to be considered. These have an impact on who speaks at meetings and whose needs are taken into account during meetings.

OBJECTIVES

- Encourage all women to voice their opinions.
- Highlight the importance of public participation, including by citizens who are not considered to be experts.

HOW TO IMPLEMENT

- Clearly explain how speaking turns will alternate at the beginning of the meeting.

- Implement a system whereby speakers alternate in one of two ways: either by asking people their gender identity when they register, or by setting up two microphones - one for women and another one for men, and possibly even a third one for people with other gender identities.

- Lead the discussion period in a way that ensures a balance of voices is heard:

    - Be aware of unequal power dynamics.

    - Divide speaking time fairly between women and men, and among women themselves to ensure that a range of women's voices is heard.

    - Value citizens' opinions during consultations and ensure a balance between time allotted to citizens versus professionals.

- Explicitly acknowledge the existence of inequalities when it comes to speaking at meetings. This makes people who take more time aware of this inequality and encourage the participation of people whose voices are less often heard.

SUCCESS STORIES

After the first meeting during the pilot-project at the CDC Centre-Sud, it was decided to introduce a system whereby speakers alternate during discussion periods involving the whole group. As meetings went on, this also had the advantage of ensuring that the same people did not always speak and that if a person had already spoken, priority was given to someone else before allowing this person to speak again.

During the OCPM consultation on the Faubourgs sector, a system whereby speakers alternate was introduced during the thematic forums. We noticed that the line behind the men's microphone filled up quickly, whereas it took longer to fill up the line behind the women's microphone. Having a dedicated women's microphone was beneficial in encouraging the participation of women who were able to take the time they needed to think about what they wanted to say and know that there would still be time for them to ask their question.

ADDITIONAL THOUGHTS

Using two microphones helps us realize the differences in men's and women's participation because we often see the line at the men's microphone get longer, while only a few women go up to the microphone. So, when there are no more women waiting in line at the women's microphone, priority is given to the next woman who stands up to speak, which can make women who are not used to speaking feel more intimidated.

The idea of adding a third microphone for people who do not identify as either female or male was raised several times, but there does not seem to be a consensus on this practice for the time being. Adding the third microphone is a way of recognizing that there is a wide diversity of gender identities other than women or men, but this might also have unintended consequences by setting some people apart in front of a group of strangers, which might be intimidating and put them in an uncomfortable position[28]. Further, encouraging people to share their gender identity in such a way can force people to come out before they are ready.

PILOT-PROJECT SITES

TABLES DE QUARTIER

CORPORATION DE DÉVELOPPEMENT COMMUNAUTAIRE (CDC) CENTRE-SUD
LA TABLE DE QUARTIER HOCHELAGA-MAISONNEUVE
CONCERTATION VILLE-ÉMARD/CÔTE-ST-PAUL
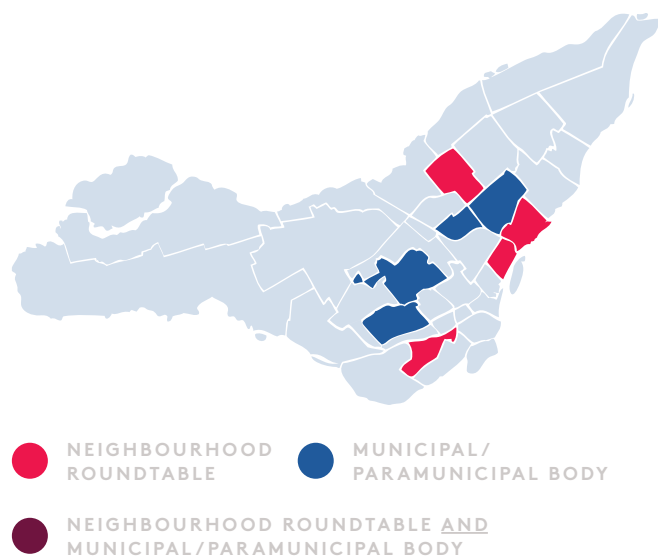VIVRE SAINT-MICHEL EN SANTÉ

INSTANCES MUNICIPALES/PARAMUNICIPALES

OFFICE DE CONSULTATION PUBLIQUE DE MONTRÉAL (OCPM)
ROSEMONT—LA PETITE-PATRIE
CÔTE-DES-NEIGES—NOTRE-DAME-DE-GRÂCE

● NEIGHBOURHOOD ROUNDTABLE ● MUNICIPAL/ PARAMUNICIPAL BODY

● NEIGHBOURHOOD ROUNDTABLE AND MUNICIPAL/PARAMUNICIPAL BODY

[28] While the MTElles project was done using a GBA+ approach, there were few members of the LGBTQ+ community whose views we captured. We suggest, therefore, that you contact LGBTQ+ community education and advocacy groups, which will be better able to provide guidance about this practice and on how to go further to ensure that public participation responds to the needs of all people regardless of their gender and sexual identities.

4.8

OFFER ANY AND ALL OTHER CONDITIONS CONDUCIVE TO WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION

DESCRIPTION

Every public participation event is a unique opportunity. It is worthwhile, therefore, to make the effort to consider how best to encourage the participation of all women. The balance between family life, work, and civic engagement was identified as a barrier to participation. Offering conditions that make it easier for women to participate is a way for the organizers of an event to remove some of the barriers to women's participation by minimizing the effort required to do so. Each event should be tailored to the venue and the people whose voices you want to hear. There is no limit to the number of conditions you could put in place that would make it easier for women to participate.

OBJECTIVES

- Ensure that the conditions are put in place to make it easier for all women to take part in the participation event.
- Anticipate and address women's specific needs to make it easier for them to participate.

HOW TO IMPLEMENT

- Tailor meeting times to the people you are trying to mobilize.

- Add questions to registration forms to be able to anticipate and respond to women's needs.

- Consider not making it mandatory for people to register prior to the event. For many women, it is difficult to know ahead of time whether it will be possible to participate on the day of the participation event. If it is not possible to organize an event without prior registration, you can use wording to the effect that registration is strongly recommended but that no one will be refused admission.

- Plan to serve food and beverages in line with the time of the meeting (ex. if the event is held between 11 a.m. and 2 p.m., think about providing a meal). This may make it easier for women to organize their daily activities and responsibilities and can enable more women to participate. In addition, serving food is a way of stimulating informal discussions among participants, which helps to build women's self-confidence and may encourage them to publicly express their views afterward.

- Provide translation services or use volunteers to translate into the languages most often spoken in the neighbourhood.

- Offer to contact meeting organizers to address specific needs.

- Consider setting up a room or private space for mothers who are breastfeeding or offer a childcare service to help women balance their family life and civic engagement.

SUCCESS STORIES

In Ahuntsic-Cartierville, one of the consultations that were part of the participatory budgeting process was held during the day on a weekday, in other words, at a time that was unusual for a public consultation, which is typically held in the evening. The event intended to reach older residents and was a huge success: more than double the expected number of people attended, the majority of whom were women.

The Soupe Locale [Soup Dinner] project in Centre-Sud, which aims to promote citizen initiatives in the neighbourhood, is built around the idea of residents sharing a bowl of soup once a month. The soup is prepared by a neighbourhood group and served with buns produced by a local business. As people enjoy the meal, they also engage in informal discussions, and connections are made between newcomers to the event and regular participants. Several participants, who had come for the first time to present a project, were so enchanted with the welcome they received and the friendly, open atmosphere created by organizers that they came back to all the subsequent soup dinners. One woman also mentioned that she would never have been able to participate – and to raise money for her project – if a childcare service had not been provided.

TIP

Organizing several meetings on the same topic at different times and in different locations throughout a geographical region, as well as online offers greater flexibility to citizens and is a way of mobilizing more women.
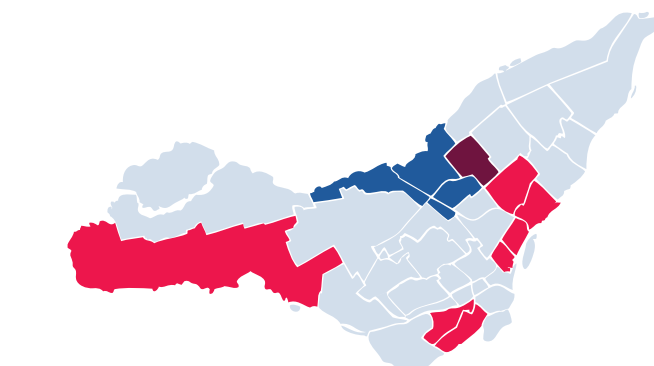
PILOT-PROJECT SITES

TABLES DE QUARTIER

CORPORATION DE DÉVELOPPEMENT COMMUNAUTAIRE (CDC) CENTRE-SUD

TABLE DE CONCERTATION DU FAUBOURG SAINT-LAURENT

LA TABLE DE QUARTIER HOCHELAGA-MAISONNEUVE

VIVRE SAINT-MICHEL EN SANTÉ

CORPORATION DE DÉVELOPPEMENT COMMUNAUTAIRE (CDC) DE ROSEMONT

CONCERTATION VILLE-ÉMARD/CÔTE-ST-PAUL

TABLE DE QUARTIER SUD DE L'OUEST-DE-L'ÎLE

CONCERTATION EN DÉVELOPPEMENT SOCIAL DE VERDUN (CDSV)

INSTANCES MUNICIPALES/PARAMUNICIPALES

BUREAU DE LA PRÉSIDENCE - CONSEIL MUNICIPAL

VILLERAY—SAINT-MICHEL—PARC-EXTENSION AHUNTSIC-CARTIERVILLE

● **NEIGHBOURHOOD ROUNDTABLE**　　● **MUNICIPAL/ PARAMUNICIPAL BODY**

● **NEIGHBOURHOOD ROUNDTABLE AND MUNICIPAL/PARAMUNICIPAL BODY**

ACTION AREA 5

Training and Professional Development

Identifying and training the people in charge of mobilizing, organizing, and facilitating consultations on a range of topics, including GBA+, power dynamics, and systemic barriers, participation practices that promote equality and inclusion, intercultural communication, issues important to LGBTQ+ communities, to name just a few, is key to making women in all their diversity feel more welcome, and to reducing the obstacles to their participation in democratic life.

5.1 TRAIN KEY PEOPLE INVOLVED IN MOBILIZING, ORGANIZING, AND FACILITATING CONSULTATIONS

5.2 TAKE A CRITICAL APPROACH TO INTRODUCING NEW PRACTICES

5.1

TRAIN KEY PEOPLE INVOLVED IN MOBILIZING, ORGANIZING, AND FACILITATING CONSULTATIONS

DESCRIPTION

Lack of understanding about privilege and the lived realities of specific groups of women can have many impacts at different moments of a public participation process. If we do not help develop the knowledge and know-how of both key people involved in the process and all the teams working in the organization, it will be hard to implement practices that promote gender equality and inclusion during the development or implementation stages of any project or policy.

OBJECTIVES

- Develop knowledge and skills that help foster gender equality and inclusion.

HOW TO IMPLEMENT

- Identify the people who will play key roles in the process.

- Clarify the roles and responsibilities of the people involved in the process.

- Determine the knowledge and skills that need to be developed as well as the topics that will be addressed (GBA+, power dynamics and systemic barriers, participation practices that promote equality and inclusion, inclusive facilitation techniques, intercultural communication, issues important to LGBTQ+ communities, etc.).

- Keep a roster of experts and specialized trainers in various fields who can be called upon when needed.

SUCCESS STORIES

On top of ongoing support provided to organizations, the MTElles project organized training sessions and workshops on GBA+ for pilot-project partners, including the Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie borough. Thirteen of the 15 city employees who participated in one of these training sessions said they would now be able to organize more equitable public participation activities.

Vivre Saint-Michel en santé relies on a number of community organizers working in various groups throughout the neighbourhood. One of their responsibilities is to mobilize residents to participate in events organized by the neighbourhood roundtable. Support provided by the MTElles project included working with key people to help them learn more about GBA+, to translate their knowledge into skills in their professional practice, while also exploring different strategies to more effectively mobilize the women least likely to participate.

In addition, when we asked what people remembered from these workshops several months later, someone from a neighbourhood roundtable made this comment: *"It isn't enough for an event or a meeting to be open to everyone: you also need to think about the different groups you are trying to reach and how to mobilize them. Women face particular barriers when it comes to participating in democratic life and these barriers may be different or be experienced to a greater or lesser degree depending on the women."*

SUCCESS FACTOR

Training is an investment to enable employees to gain new knowledge and skills which can then be applied in activities carried out by the organization. However, it is important to think about how this new knowledge can be transferred to other team members in order to overcome the challenge posed by staff turnover and to ensure that the expertise developed remains within the organization.

PILOT-PROJECT SITES

NEIGHBOURHOOD ROUNDTABLES

CORPORATION DE DÉVELOPPEMENT COMMUNAUTAIRE (CDC) CENTRE-SUD

CONCERTATION VILLE-ÉMARD/CÔTE-ST-PAUL

CORPORATION DE DÉVELOPPEMENT COMMUNAUTAIRE (CDC) DE ROSEMONT

VIVRE SAINT-MICHEL EN SANTÉ

MUNICIPAL/PARAMUNICIPAL

OFFICE DE CONSULTATION PUBLIQUE DE MONTRÉAL (OCPM)

ROSEMONT—LA PETITE-PATRIE

● **NEIGHBOURHOOD ROUNDTABLE**   ● **MUNICIPAL/ PARAMUNICIPAL BODY**

● **NEIGHBOURHOOD ROUNDTABLE AND MUNICIPAL/PARAMUNICIPAL BODY**

5.2
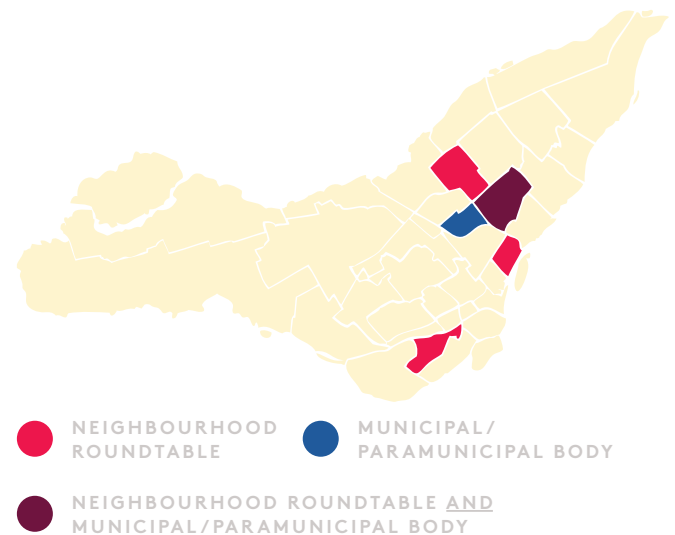
TAKE A CRITICAL APPROACH TO INTRODUCING NEW PRACTICES

DESCRIPTION

A critical approach involves doing a self-assessment of your practices, both as an individual and as an organization, in order to renew them and make them more effective. A critical approach implies that organizations are open to self-criticism when it comes to the efficacy of their current practices in order to make these practices more accessible, more effective, and more inclusive.

OBJECTIVES

• Self-assess practices with a view of making them more inclusive.

• Increase understanding about how effective and gender-inclusive current practices are.

• Based on the findings of the self-assessment, modify participation mechanisms to make them more accessible, more inclusive, and more effective.

HOW TO IMPLEMENT

• Critically assess current public participation mechanisms, considering, among other things, the degree to which women participate actively or are absent.

• Identify new practices that could be introduced to make women's participation more accessible, more inclusive, and more effective.

• Identify the potential benefits or advantages of new practices and communicate them clearly to your team so that they all understand why they are being introduced.

• Allot a budget to support activities aimed at promoting inclusive and equitable participation and equal representation of all people regardless of their gender identity.

• Test one or two new practices for a certain amount of time to assess their impact on the participation process.

• Appoint a person responsible for monitoring the issues raised by women in all their diversity.

• Assess how the practice was implemented and its impact on women, especially on women who are most often excluded.[29]

• Systematically introduce good practices.

TIP This toolkit is made up of a range of practices that have already been implemented and seem to have a positive impact on women's participation. Why not draw from and build on the practices described in our toolkit, and adapt them to your organization?

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29 Refer to Practical Tools 5.2.A and 3.4.B for questionnaires you might find useful.

SUCCESS STORIES

The MTElles project identified 23 promising practices that have a positive impact on the quality of women's public participation experience, on the number of women who participate actively, and on the range of women mobilized. Partners told us that being part of the pilot-projects got them to think more carefully about the practices they use to promote inclusion when organizing an event or developing a project. In terms of neighbourhood-level civic engagement, recommendations emerging from the MTElles project were discussed at team meetings of several neighbourhood roundtables. As a result, participating organizations have systematically integrated the following practices in their approach: ensuring that all communications mention the conditions set up that make it easier for women to participate, organizing events where registration is not required, and routinely offering childcare services.

CHALLENGES

The evaluation phase is often left out or very little time and resources are devoted to it. Furthermore, thinking about our practices in an effort to improve them requires a willingness by management to do so as well as a dedicated budget. Lastly, it can sometimes be difficult to change well-established processes that, at first glance, seem to work well; you might run into resistance to proposed changes.

DID YOU KNOW?

All of the MTElles pilot-projects adopted a critical approach. This was part of the accompaniment and technical support offered by the MTElles team to pilot-project partners. Team members were therefore present during the participation events in which the promising practices were introduced in order to monitor implementation, recommend improvements, and evaluate the qualitative impacts related to introducing the new practices *(see Practical Tool 5.2.A for an example of a questionnaire evaluating practices to promote women's participation).*

PILOT-PROJECT SITES

NEIGHBOURHOOD ROUNDTABLES

CORPORATION DE DÉVELOPPEMENT COMMUNAUTAIRE (CDC) CENTRE-SUD

CORPORATION DE DÉVELOPPEMENT COMMUNAUTAIRE (CDC) DE ROSEMONT

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VIVRE SAINT-MICHEL EN SANTÉ

MUNICIPAL/PARAMUNICIPAL

ARRONDISSEMENT AHUNTSIC-CARTIERVILLE

ARRONDISSEMENT CÔTE-DES-NEIGES—NOTRE-DAME-DE-GRÂCE

ARRONDISSEMENT ROSEMONT—LA PETITE-PATRIE

ARRONDISSEMENT VILLE-MARIE

ARRONDISSEMENT VILLERAY—SAINT-MICHEL—PARC-EXTENSION

BUREAU DE LA PRÉSIDENCE

CONSEIL MUNICIPAL DE LA VILLE DE MONTRÉAL

COMMISSION PERMANENTE DU BUREAU DE LA PRÉSIDENCE

CONSULTATION PUBLIQUE SUR LA PÉRIODE DES QUESTIONS

CARAVANE DE LA DÉMOCRATIE

OFFICE DE CONSULTATION PUBLIQUE DE MONTRÉAL (OCPM)

CONSULTATION PUBLIQUE SUR LE SECTEUR DES FAUBOURGS

CONSULTATION PUBLIQUE SUR LACHINE EST

CONSULTATION PUBLIQUE SUR LE RACISME ET LA DISCRIMINATION SYSTÉMIQUES

MONTRÉAL-OUEST

● NEIGHBOURHOOD ROUNDTABLE

● MUNICIPAL/ PARAMUNICIPAL BODY

● NEIGHBOURHOOD ROUNDTABLE AND MUNICIPAL/PARAMUNICIPAL BODY
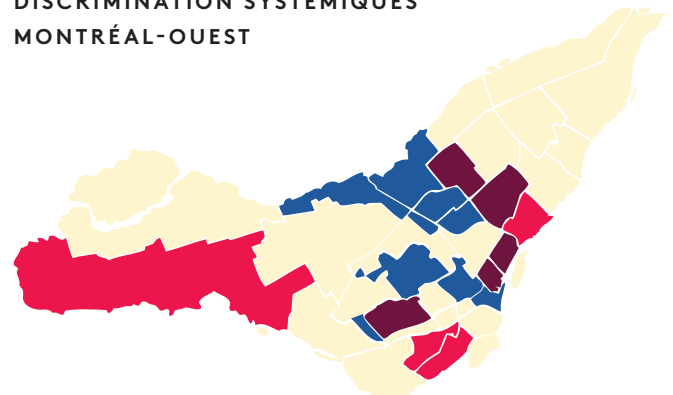
5.2.A PRACTICAL TOOL: EXAMPLE OF A QUESTIONNAIRE USED TO EVALUATE PRACTICES AIMED AT PROMOTING WOMEN'S PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

FOR ORGANIZERS OF THE PARTICIPATION EVENT

1. Based on what was planned and the activities that were held, what are the promising practices that you worked to implement?

   _____

2. Did this experience change anything within your organization? Are there some practices that will be routinely implemented?

   _____

3. What changes did you see in women's participation in the events held since these promising practices were implemented, both in terms of women's representation and their contribution to the discussions?

   _____

4. As a professional, what did you learn about practices that encourage all women to participate? Which worked or did not work? How do you plan to use what you have learned in the future?

   _____

5. What challenges/limitations did you encounter when setting up these practices?

   _____

   a. Are there problems that emerged with respect to the equitable and inclusive participation of all women?

   _____

6. Are there specific tools that you would have found useful? Or topics that you would like to delve further into? Is there a need for training?

   _____

7. What is your level of satisfaction in terms of the collaboration between you and your partners, and why? What worked well and what are the areas that could be improved?

   _____

8. Are there things that could have been done differently or that you would do differently in the future?

   _____

FINAL REFLEXIONS

The MTElles project aimed to better understand and to address the barriers to women's participation in democratic life on the island of Montréal. The project adopted a Gender-based Analysis Plus (GBA+) approach to get a more complete picture of which groups of women are less represented and less involved in participation activities (see Practical Tool 3.4.A to better understand how to use this approach).

In using a GBA+ approach, we noted that some groups of women were underrepresented in the participation events, and by extension the pilot-projects, that were implemented as part of the MTElles project. We acknowledge that there is a need for a more thorough examination to fully understand and address their specific needs in order to make public participation practices even more inclusive for:

- **Indigenous women**
- **People with other gender identities**
- **Women from the LGBTQ+ community**

While many of the resources listed on the next page can help increase our awareness of the various issues that women facing multiple forms of oppression have to deal with, we recommend doing more in-depth research with the women who are most often excluded from democratic life. In this way, we will be able to make our public participation practices even more inclusive.

The MTElles project ran from 2017 to 2020. The final version of this toolkit was written in confinement due to COVID-19. This pandemic has revealed many existing social inequalities and exacerbated others, including those affecting a full diversity of women, many of whom have been hit harder and in greater numbers[30]. We do not yet know how this will impact democratic life, but we are sure there will be consequences. Online participation allows women to better balance their time and overcome several barriers, such as the accessibility of venues or the perceived safety of the surrounding area. Virtual participation also means that more members of a family can participate, including children. However, confinement can also bring with it other barriers to women's participation, such as mental health challenges or care responsibilities including caring for a sick person or supporting children who are "attending" school from home. Although this toolkit recommends integrating digital tools to increase accessibility and make it easier to balance family life, work, and civic engagement, we are nonetheless concerned that using these tools exclusively could lead to more exclusion. We are only beginning to understand the consequences of some of these things, but it is important to keep in mind that the Internet is not universally accessible, either for geographical or financial reasons, that not everyone has a computer, a smartphone or a tablet and that women do not all have the same level of competency when it comes to surfing the web or using information technologies.

[30] Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OCDE), https://www.oecd.org/coronavirus/policy-responses/women-at-the-core-of-the-fight-against-covid-19-crisis-553a8269/, accessed September 21, 2020.

GOING FURTHER: KEY RESOURCES

Other MTElles Project Reports

- *État des lieux : Rapport d'évaluation des besoins, portrait de la participation des femmes dans les instances démocratiques de Montréal et pistes d'action*, MTElles – Pratiques participatives pour l'égalité, 2018. (In French)

- *Forum : Rapport des recommandations du Forum d'échange du 30 mai 2018*, MTElles, 2018. (In French)

Gender-based Analysis Plus (GBA+)

"What is GBA+" section of the Women and Gender Equality Canada website:
https://cfc-swc.gc.ca/gba-acs/index-en.html.

Equal and Inclusive Participation

- *Increasing Women's Participation in Municipal Decision-Making: Strategies for More Inclusive Canadian Communities*, Federation of Canadian Municipalities, 2004. (Available in English and French)

- *Pour favoriser la participation des Montréalaises à la période de questions du public du conseil municipal*, brief presented by the Conseil des Montréalaises, 2019. (in French)

- *Diversity Through Inclusive Practice Toolkit*, FemNorthNet and DAWN Canada, 2014. (Available in English and French)

- *Pistes de réflexion et d'action pour des milieux jeunesse accessibles et inclusifs*, Inclusion Jeunesse – Youth Inclusion, 2019. (In French)

- *Accessibility Guidelines for Organizers and Facilitators*, Accessibilize Montreal, 2015. (Available in English and French)

Inclusive Communication

- *Formation sur la rédaction épicène*, Marie-Ève Arbour and Hélène de Nayves, Office québécois de la langue française, 2018.

- *Le langage non-sexiste : un autre pas vers l'égalité entre les femmes et les hommes*, Mémoire du Conseil des Montréalaises, 2019.

- *Toolbox for using gender-inclusive language in English*, United Nations, n.d.

- *Gender-Inclusive Language*, The Writing Centre, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, n.d.

- *Gender-inclusive language guidelines* (English), UN Women, n.d.

Diversity

- *LGBTQI2SNBA+, Les mots de la diversité liée au sexe, au genre et à l'orientation sexuelle*, Dominique Dubuc, FNEEQ-CSN, 2017. (In French)

- *Indigenous Ally Toolkit*, Montreal Urban Aboriginal Community Strategy NETWORK, 2019.

- *More Than a Footnote: A Research Report on Women and Girls with Disabilities in Canada*, DisAbled Women's Network of Canada/Réseau d'action des femmes handicapées du Canada, 2019. (Available in English and French)

- *Des mots pour parler de diversité : Lexique des termes utilisés dans le cadre de la formation «Une pour toutes et toutes pour ELLES»*, Regroupement québécois des Centres d'aide et de lutte contre les agressions à caractère sexuel – RQCALACS, 2014. (In French)