

Enhancing public awareness, and stakeholders' empowerment and involvement in waste management

Magnus Bengtsson and Toshizo Maeda,
with contributions from Janya Sang-Arun

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Typical Situation of SWM in Developing Countries

- Weak efforts by local governments to involve stakeholders
- Citizens feel little ownership – “not my problem”
- Siting of treatment facilities often causing conflicts – NIMBY and NIABY
- Large share of city budget spent on collection and dumping
- Dumping causing environmental and health hazards

However,

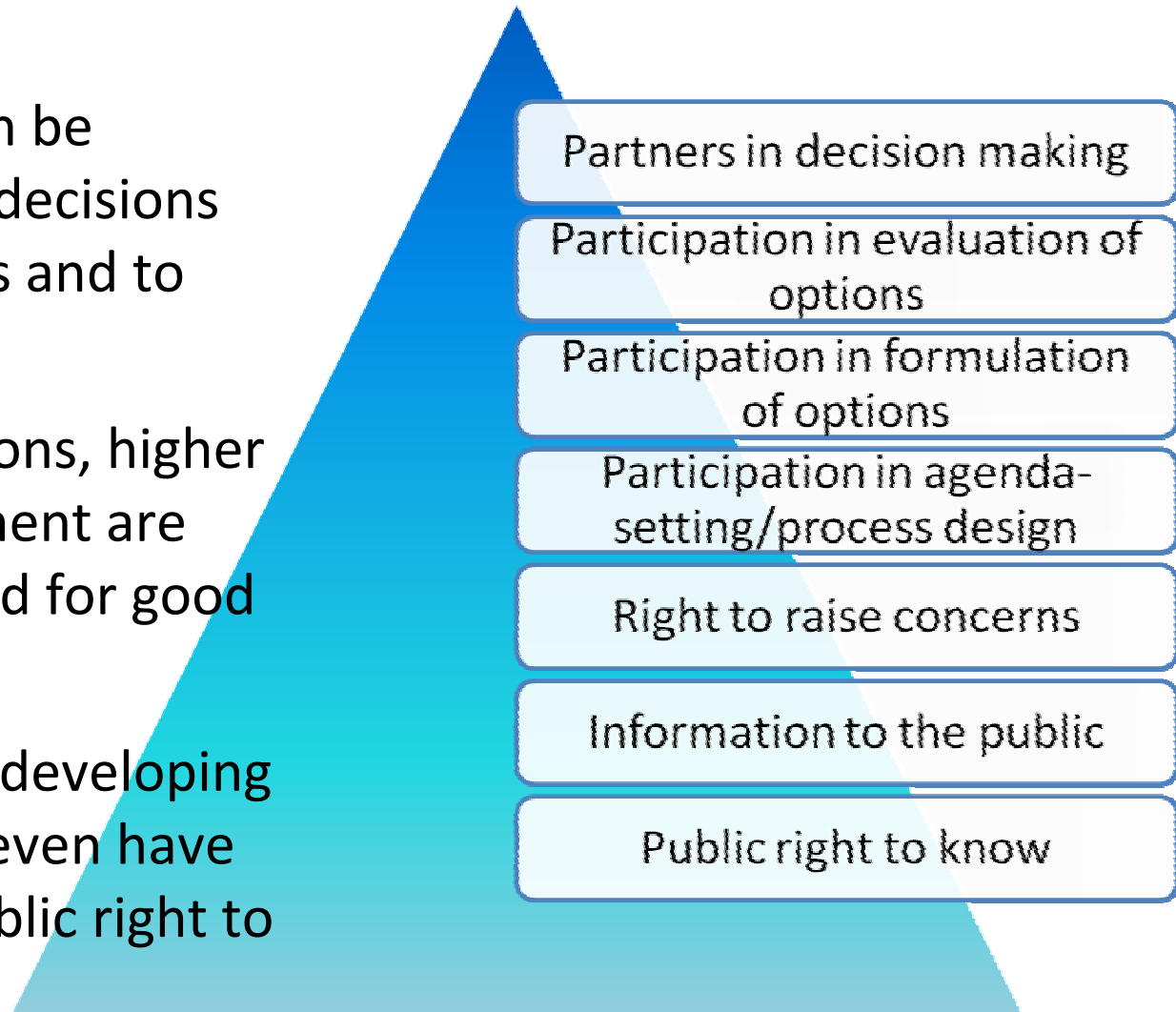
Improvements in SWM require residents' acceptance and/or active collaboration (source separation, household composting etc.)

Three Reasons for Participation – a Theoretical Perspective

- **Instrumental.** Involving stakeholders in the decision making process can raise their awareness and understanding, thereby **facilitating implementation**.
- **Substantive.** Stakeholders have detailed knowledge on local conditions and practices, which can **enrich the decision making** process.
- **Democratic.** Stakeholders have a **legitimate right** to have a say in decision making processes that are of concern to them.

Degrees of Stakeholder Involvement in SWM Decision Making

- Stakeholders can be involved in SWM decisions at different stages and to different degrees
- For major decisions, higher forms of involvement are likely to be needed for good outcomes
- However, many developing countries do not even have legislations on public right to know...



After: Wiedemann and Femers 1993

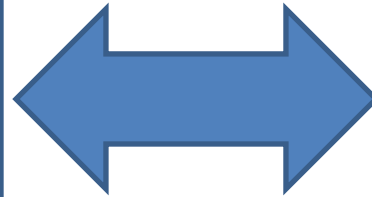
Common Obstacles to Involvement

- **Traditional policy culture.** Involvement of stakeholders is in conflict with the prevailing policy culture – the established way of “getting things done”.
- **Lack of skills.** Most local government officials are unfamiliar with participatory decision making and lack facilitation skills.
- **Technical focus.** Undue framing of waste management decisions as predominantly technical issues to be handled by “experts”
- **Established roles and power relations.** *Empowering* someone usually means that someone else will be *Depowered*. Can be seen as a threat by local government officials.
- **Citizens’ attitudes.** Lack of trust in public authorities. Lack of awareness and unwillingness to make efforts.
- **Representation.** Whom to involve – Difficult to find legitimate representatives of large and diverse communities.
- **“Lobbying”.** Pressure from the private sector not to involve other stakeholders if they see their interests being threatened.

Obstacles Increased by Attitudes of Key Players

Local government

- Low awareness on the benefits of public involvement
- Traditional top-down approach
- Technical framing of waste decisions
- Mayors' unwilling to demand efforts of their voters



Mutually reinforcing

How to break this negative pattern?

Citizens

- Low awareness on the benefits of improved waste management
- Low willingness to make efforts – source separate or pay waste fees
- “Not my problem”
- Lack of trust in public authorities

Engage Citizens through Trusted Channels and Established Networks

