

***Popularizing Scholarly Research. Working with Non-academic Stakeholders, Teams, and Communities***

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**Citizens' Juries**

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The ultimate impact of a Citizens' Jury on policy and practice is contingent on the power relations and the wider political context of the society in which it takes place. In this regard, some of the challenges that are commonly experienced by Citizens' Juries are discussed: prejudice about peoples' knowledge and their ability to meaningfully discuss complex issues; policy spaces that close down debates or co-opt Citizens' Juries; and ensuring that jury recommendations are debated by government and other decision-makers.

The practice of Citizens' Juries varies considerably and can best be seen as part of a continuum – from governments using Citizens' Juries for market research or as a means of legitimating their preferred policy choices to community co-inquiry and more grassroots based activism. In exploring this continuum, the standard Citizens' Jury model usually deployed by governments is contrasted here with a more open model based on a process of co-inquiry with local communities. The chapter argues that more open-ended Citizens' Juries

embedded in a long-term process of participatory community co-inquiry can significantly amplify the voice and agency of people hitherto excluded from decision-making. Finding better ways of realising this democratic potential is an important frontier for future Citizens' Juries.

### **Introducing Citizens' Juries**

Developed in the early 1970s by the Jefferson Center in the United States<sup>1</sup> and in Germany<sup>2</sup>, the Citizens' Jury is a method used to facilitate decision making based on deliberative and inclusive processes (DIP) (Box 1). A Citizens' Jury serves as a microcosm of the public and typically involves between eight to twenty-four randomly selected citizens (jurors) who listen to and question specialist witnesses about a technical subject over the course of two to seven days<sup>3</sup>. Jurors are paid to participate for two to seven days, during which they receive evidence from several different sources. The commentators (specialist witnesses) present contrasting perspectives on the issue under debate. The jurors cross-question them, with the guidance of one or more neutral facilitators or a chairperson. Members of a citizens' jury interview a series of experts in order to gather information needed to answer a specific question and make recommendations. Jurors can cross-examine witnesses and call for more information.

To reach their conclusions the jurors deliberate among themselves, without the specialist witnesses being present. In its standard form, a citizens' jury gives a verdict and policy

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<sup>1</sup> See: <http://www.jefferson-center.org>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.planungszelle.de>

<sup>3</sup> The Jefferson Center recommends 4 to 7 days. However, a Jury could meet over two or three consecutive weekends. There could also be a break in between meetings to allow jurors time to reflect on the information they have received and discuss the issue with family and friends.

recommendations that are made public at the end of the deliberative process. Usually, a short report is compiled with recommendations for policymakers.

In the standard model, a Citizens' Jury is initiated by a Commissioning Body usually made up of policy makers and other institutions. The Commissioning Body identifies the issue to be discussed but normally has no involvement in the process. It also usually makes some commitment to responding to the outcomes.

This participatory method is similar to the citizens' juries used in the legal systems of many countries. Like a legal jury, the basis of a citizens' jury is the belief that once a small sample of a population has heard the evidence, their subsequent deliberations can reflect the conscience of the wider community and fairly represent its views. However, unlike legal juries, it is an issue, not an individual that is 'on trial'.

**Box 1. Deliberative and Inclusive Processes (DIP)**

1. Deliberation is defined as 'careful consideration' or 'the discussion of reasons for and against'. Deliberation is a common, if not inherent, component of all decision-making and democratic societies.
2. Inclusion is the action of involving others. An inclusionary decision-making process is based on the active involvement of multiple social actors and usually emphasises the participation of previously excluded citizens.
3. Social interaction occurs. This normally incorporates face-to-face meetings between those involved.
4. There is a dependence on language through discussion and debate. This is usually in the form of verbal and visual constructions rather than written text.
5. A deliberative process assumes that, at least initially, there are different positions held by the participants and that these views should be respected.

6. DIPs are designed to enable participants to evaluate and re-evaluate their positions in the light of different perspectives and new evidence.
7. The form of negotiation is often seen as containing value over and above the ‘quality’ of the decisions that emerge. Participants share a commitment to the resolution of problems through public reasoning and dialogue aimed at mutual understanding, even if consensus is not being sought
8. There is the recognition that, while the goal is usually to reach decisions or at least positions upon which decisions can subsequently be taken, an unhurried, reflective and reasonably open-ended discussion is required.

Modified from Holmes and Scoones, 2000.

Throughout the world, Citizens’ Juries have been held on a wide range of issues, - including health care, education policy, environmental issues, development plans, cuts in public service spending, mental health service provision, taste and decency on television, as well as the evaluation of new technologies such as Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs) and nanotechnologies (Crosby, 1995; Delap, 2001; Dryzek, 2010; Singh, 2008; Smith and Wales, 2000; Stewart et al, 1994; Wakeford et al, 2008). As an approach to public participation, the Citizens’ Jury method is thus highly versatile in scope and application. It can be used to explore many different technical and institutional issues that are important for both policy makers and to people in communities.

As a mini-public<sup>4</sup>, a Citizens’ Jury can be particularly effective in addressing value-laden and controversial issues, where knowledge is contested and there might be important ethical,

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<sup>4</sup> Mini-publics are made up of small numbers of citizens, who may be self-selected or randomly selected from a larger population (Fung, 2003). Examples include citizens’ juries, forum for deliberative polls, consensus conferences, and citizens’ assemblies.

political and social repercussions. As Abramson argues: *“Deliberation is a lost virtue in modern democracies; only the jury still regularly calls upon ordinary citizens to engage each other in a face-to-face process of debate. No group can win that debate simply by outvoting others; under the traditional requirement of unanimity, power flows to arguments that persuade across group lines and speak to a justice common to persons drawn from different walks of life. By history and design, the jury is centrally about getting persons to bracket or transcend starting loyalties”* (Abramson, 2000).

To date, the vast majority of Citizens’ Juries have taken place in European countries and North America (Coote and Lenaghan, 1996; Crosby, 1995; Dryzek, 2010; Jefferson Centre, 2018; LGMB, 1997; Wakeford et al, 2008). Over the last twenty years however, there have been some notable citizens’ juries designed in parts of Africa, Latin America and South Asia. For example, citizens’ juries have generated policy recommendation on the use of Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs) in farming in Brazil, India, Mali and Zimbabwe (Rusike, 2005; Pimbert et al, 2003; Pimbert and Barry, in press). Others have been used to enable citizens to recommend a vision and development priorities for the future of food and farming in India and West Africa (IIED et al, 2012; Kuruganti et al, 2008).

### **Policy spaces created from above and below for Citizens’ Juries**

The organisers of Citizens’ Juries determine much of the content and style of the deliberative process through the choice of topics and objectives, the allocation of resources, decisions about the level of social inclusion, the style of facilitation, and the links to wider policy processes.

To date, most Citizens’ Juries have been commissioned or convened by government bodies in Europe and North America. There are also examples of Citizens’ Juries partially initiated by

international donor and overseas aid agencies working with governments in Africa, Asia, and Latin America. These are examples of *policy spaces created from above* in which the State has substantial control over how Citizens' Juries are to fit into policy-making, institutional choices, and technological risk assessments (Cornwall and Coelo, 2006).

By contrast – in *policy spaces created from below* – Citizens' Juries are organised by civil society organisations, grassroots social movements, activist scholars, and radicalised professionals (Cornwall and Coelo, 2006; Wakeford et al, 2008). Whilst these latter examples of Citizens' Juries usually extend the frame of decision-making to include wider questions of ethics and justice, they often have relatively weak links with formal policy-making.

This distinction between policy spaces opened up from above or below is important and should be considered when designing and facilitating Citizens' Juries. The nature and intent of these different 'policy spaces' can significantly influence the quality and validity of deliberative and participatory processes. This point is further discussed in the final part of this chapter.

### **A Case Study of Citizens' Juries on Democratising Agricultural Research in West Africa**

Over a five-year period, a series of three Citizens' Juries was organised in Mali to allow farmers and food consumers to make recommendations on the governance and priorities for agricultural research in West Africa. The Citizens' Juries were part of a long-term participatory process designed to enable hitherto excluded farmers and other producers to have more say in the policies and institutional choices that influence their lives. Based on adaptations of the standard Citizens' Jury model described above, all three juries were part of a larger and more open-ended political process in which jurors and other citizens engaged in a broader debate on societal choices. All Citizens' Juries were overseen by an independent

panel that was chaired by a former Minister for Territorial Administration in the government of Mali.

*Citizens' Jury one: GMOs and the Future of Farming in Mali*, which was held in Sikasso in January 2006. This unprecedented event in West Africa allowed 45 farmers, - both men and women -, to make policy recommendations after considering expert evidence from different sources on the pros and cons of GM cotton cultivation. The Citizens' Jury took place over five days. The 45 farmer jurors were divided into smaller groups that reflected differences in gender and the socio-professional status of the farmers. This allowed for four parallel juries (10 to 13 farmers each) to run side by side during this deliberative and inclusive process. Each of these four 'mini-publics' (Fung, 2003) thus acted as an enabling space for farmers with different wealth and social status (small, medium and large producers) and gender. An all-women's jury worked in parallel with three all-male mini-publics.

After carefully listening to the evidence and deliberating amongst themselves, the farmer jurors decided against the introduction of GM cotton in Mali. Moreover, they asked for a fundamental re-orientation of public research away from a focus on input-intensive farming and the development of new GM seeds. In their opinion, public research should instead support agriculture which does not require high chemical inputs. Research should improve local seeds and prioritise the development of local markets and food systems.

Organised under the auspices of the regional government of Sikasso, this Citizens' Jury was a policy space opened up from above. The recommendations from this first Citizens' Jury fed into the next stage of this process: two citizens'/farmer juries held in 2010 in Mali. Unlike the first jury, these two Citizens' Juries were organised a part of a policy space opened up from

below by farmer organisations and citizens groups who were able to broadly frame the issues to be addressed.

The Citizens' Juries complemented each other and allowed farmers, pastoralists, fisherfolk, forest dwellers and food processors to hear contradictory evidence from specialist witnesses on the following issues:

*Citizens' Jury two: What kind of knowledge and agricultural research priorities do small scale producers and food processors want (or not)?* This citizens' jury was held in January 2010. It involved 45 jurors drawn from different agroecological zones in Mali, Senegal, Burkina Faso and Benin.

*Citizens' Jury three: How can we democratise the governance of food and agricultural research?* Held in February 2010, this citizens' jury included 40 people who questioned specialist witnesses from West African and European countries on this subject.

For each event, a steering committee selected the men and women farmer-jurors who were drawn from different agroecological zones in Mali, Senegal, Burkina Faso and Benin. The jury composition reflected the demography of the region (gender, age...) and included small and medium-scale farmers, livestock herders, fishers, forest users, local food processors, and food consumers. A total of 15 specialist witnesses from West African and European countries gave evidence during each of these two citizens' juries. The role of the jurors was to consider all the evidence presented to them, and to assess the specialist witnesses' contributions in the light of their own knowledge and aspirations. They were then asked to devise a series of recommendations which could be implemented to achieve their own vision for the governance and priorities of food and agricultural research. Some of these recommendations are listed in box 2.



## **Box 2. Re-directing research to meet the needs of small farmers and other producers**

- Reconstruct agricultural policy to give farmers a central role in defining it and to ensure that research focuses on the concerns and resources of the poorest sectors of society.
- Directly involve producers, users and consumers (both women and men) in controlling, conducting and monitoring research activities.
- Involve farmers in every stage of creating and selecting crop varieties and focus research on improving the productivity of local varieties (growing practices, local adaptation, land use, and soil fertility management). Take into account local products in research protocols and topics, and their potential to replace imported products.
- Find strategies to promote the storage, exchange and use of local seeds as a means of achieving food sovereignty. Hybrid seeds and GMOs should be avoided.
- Identify and investigate mechanisms that will enable the state and national economy to provide more funding to research, thereby avoiding dependence on external funding.
- Generate knowledge and technologies to support sustainable agriculture (agricultural tools and machines adapted to small-scale farming, use of natural mineral resources and compost, integrated pest management, mixed cropping, and agroecology).
- Involve research much more in producing knowledge on local biodiversity in order to add value to its use and values.
- Help producers to organise themselves to ensure that their voice is heard in policy-making processes for legislation and agricultural research and to strengthen their own research capacities.
- Increase efforts to disseminate the results of participatory research, especially using local languages.

Adapted from Pimbert et al, 2010.

The last two Citizens' Juries took place under the patronage of the UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food, Professor Olivier de Schutter. This high-level patronage ensured that the farmer juries and their recommendations on agricultural research enjoyed significant 'political visibility' in West Africa and internationally. There was also considerable press, radio and TV coverage of all three citizens' juries in Mali, as well as across West Africa and in Europe.

Designed as key moments in a long-term participatory process, these three Citizens' Juries have had considerable impacts on policy and practice in West Africa. The outcomes of the first Citizens' Jury in Sikasso significantly changed national policy on the release of GM technology: the jurors recommendations led to a government decision not to introduce genetically modified (GM) cotton in farmers' fields in Mali.

The farmers who participated in the two Citizens' Juries on the governance of agricultural research asked to share their recommendations in policy dialogues with national and international research organisations as well as their donors. In 2012, a group of farmer-jurors was mandated by their CJ peers to travel to Ghana and take part in a High-Level Policy Dialogue with the senior scientists of the Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa<sup>5</sup> (AGRA) and its main funders (The Gates Foundation and the UK Department for International Development). This three-day policy dialogue allowed men and women farmers to present their own vision for the future of family farming in West Africa and share the Citizens' Juries views on the priorities for agricultural research in the region. This unprecedented intercultural dialogue between African farmers and scientists focused on how agricultural research and the production of knowledge needed to be fundamentally transformed to develop more just and

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<sup>5</sup> The Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA) seeks to catalyze and sustain agricultural transformation by increasing incomes and food security for smallholder households in Africa (<https://agra.org>). The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation has been AGRA's main donor and champion (<https://www.gatesfoundation.org>).

sustainable food and agriculture. The influence of these West African Citizens' Juries endures today as their recommendations continue to inform dialogues with donors, scientists, and global food sovereignty<sup>6</sup> movements.

Further details on this long-term participatory process and its outcomes are available as peer reviewed articles, photo stories, multimedia reports, and video films (CAWR, 2014; IIED et al, 2012 ; Pimbert et al, 2010; Pimbert and Barry, in press; [www.excludedvoices.org](http://www.excludedvoices.org)).

## **Methodological guidance for Citizen's Juries**

### **The Jurors**

Under the citizens' jury model most commonly used in the UK and US, jurors are usually recruited *via* a more or less randomized selection of people taken from the electoral roll.

Jurors can also be recruited through stratified random sampling. Stratified random sampling is a method of sampling that involves the division of a population into smaller sub-groups known as strata. Common sub-groups used in stratified random sampling include age, gender, race, religion, educational attainment, socio-economic status, and wealth. A stratified

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<sup>6</sup> Food Sovereignty is defined by La Via Campesina as: '... the right of peoples to define their own food and agriculture; to protect and regulate domestic agricultural production and trade in order to achieve sustainable development objectives; to determine the extent to which they want to be self-reliant; to restrict the dumping of products in their markets; and to provide local fisheries-based communities the priority in managing the use of and the rights to aquatic resources. Food Sovereignty does not negate trade, but rather it promotes the formulation of trade policies and practices that serve the rights of peoples to food and to safe, healthy and ecologically sustainable production.' <https://viacampesina.org/en/>

random sample provides a selection of jurors that is representative of the population in terms of gender, age, race, occupation, and socio-economic status (Frey, 2018).

In situations where there is no reliable electoral roll or census data, a snowballing technique can be used to recruit the jurors (Atkinson & Flint, 2001). For example, this approach allowed for the selection of unrecorded and ‘hard to find’ marginalised people in two major citizens’ juries in rural South India (Pimbert and Wakeford, 2003; [www.raitateerpu.com](http://www.raitateerpu.com)).

The jurors are expected to carefully listen to and interrogate the specialist witnesses’ contributions. Men and women participants critically engage with specialist witnesses, questioning them directly in plenary sessions. They carefully consider the expert evidence presented and deliberate to reach an informed judgement on the issues discussed. An important task of the jury is to make recommendations which are co-validated among jurors and then presented in plenary to a wider audience.

### **The Oversight Panel**

The role of the independent oversight panel is to assess the credibility, fairness, competence, and trustworthiness of the Citizens’ Jury process and its outcomes. Oversight panel members are selected by the organisers on the basis of their reputation for integrity, gender, class/caste, and their knowledge of deliberative processes and issue addressed by the Citizens’ Jury. As much as possible, the composition of the oversight panel should be carefully balanced to include a broad range of interests and perspectives without any one of them dominating (Coote & Lenaghan, 1997; LGMB, 1997). The inclusion of observers with a diverse range of interests helps ensure that the methodology is trustworthy and not captured by a group with a particular perspective or vested interest.

Organisers of a Citizens' Jury should aim to invite Oversight Panel members early on so that they can review and validate key decisions in the preparatory process (e.g. jury selection, choice of specialist witnesses and unbiased facilitators...).

### **Specialist witnesses**

A crucial part of a Citizens' Jury hinges on identifying individuals willing and able to defend a particular vision or perspective on the issue considered. Specialist witnesses are invited to help inform the deliberations of the jurors – and not simply give a lecture and leave. Their role is to clearly explain issues, present a viewpoint, advocate a position, summarise existing evidence, and respond to questions asked by the jurors.

Each potential specialist witness identified should be carefully briefed about the purpose of the Citizens' Jury and their expected role. Specialist witnesses who participate in a CJ are usually asked to prepare a 45 minute presentation to communicate their expertise in a clear and accessible manner to an audience of non-scientists. Specialist witnesses also have to agree in advance to answer any questions asked by jurors, - both immediately after their public presentation and later if called back by the jurors to give further evidence or clarifications during the CJ.

Other ingredients are essential to make Citizens' Juries work: good facilitators, skilled interpreters, funders, diverse institutional actors, and media professionals. Their respective roles are described next.

### **Ensuring the credibility and fairness of a Citizens' Jury**

It is vitally important that a Citizens' Jury be carried out in a rigorous and credible manner, - and even more so if it focusses on a politically sensitive issue. The quality and validity of a CJ often depends on introducing a number of checks and balances – or safeguards – designed

to ensure its credibility and fairness. Some of the safeguards to consider when designing a CJ are briefly discussed below.

### ***Diverse control and funding***

A multi-actor Steering Committee (SC) should ideally be set up to organise the Citizens' Jury. The SC includes representatives from a diversity of public, private, and civil society organisations. The SC is responsible for the logistical organisation of the CJ and facilitation of an inclusive process of citizen deliberation. It regularly reports back and discuss next steps with the Oversight Panel members.

Diverse control over a Citizens' Jury can also be ensured by relying on several different sources of funding<sup>7</sup>. For the sake of balance and pluralism, it is good practice to combine funding sources aligned with different interests and perspectives on the issue considered by the CJ.

### ***Diverse oversight and transparency***

Whenever a Citizens' Jury explores a controversial issue it is crucial that the entire process is transparent, and under the control of institutional actors with different vested interests and social aims.

Four primary safeguard mechanisms can be built into a CJ process with the explicit aim of enabling diverse control and transparency.

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<sup>7</sup> In the UK, a Citizens' Jury costs an average of £15,000 to £20,000 for two days.

1. *The oversight panel.* The panel has an explicit mandate to assess the Citizens' Jury's fairness, credibility and reliability. The panel critically oversees the entire process and systematically checked for possible bias and inconsistencies. The members of the oversight panel share their observations with the co-ordinating team at the end of each day of the jurors' deliberations. They ensure that all parts of the process are continually evaluated by individuals with a diverse array of perspectives. The panel also makes an overall evaluation of the Citizens' Jury process and outcomes after the formal closure of the event.
2. *The media observers and reporters.* Members of the press should be invited to document the hearings and outcomes of the Citizens' Jury. The role of these news and media professionals is to relay information about the jury deliberations and outcomes to a wider audience, both nationally and internationally. The semi-constant presence of the media (press, radio, TV) ensures another level of control and vetting of the CJ process.
3. *Multi-stakeholder observers.* Several other observers can be invited to witness the Citizens' Jury. However, they are allowed to be present on the understanding that they remain silent during the specialist witness presentations and the deliberations of the jury. These silent observers can include interested citizens, civil society and social movement representatives, researchers, policy makers and planners, trade union representatives, and corporate sector representatives. The presence of the silent observers further enhances the transparency of Citizens' Jury.
4. *The video archives.* The entire Citizens' Jury along with interviews of various participants should be recorded on digital video by independent film makers. The video archives provide a clear and accurate record of the event, including the location, the jury setting, the participants, the nature and quality of the debates, the process and its outcomes. The video archives allow any interested party or external organisation to learn from this

experience or check for possible bias, shortfalls in balance, fairness, or deliberative competence of the process.

Diverse oversight and transparency can thus be built into the very design of the Citizens' Jury. Moreover, control and scrutiny over the unfolding dynamics of the Citizens' Jury takes place in real time and *in situ*. Most notably, the oversight panel members act as an extended peer review community that is able to directly witness the dynamics of knowledge production and policy formulation by the Citizens' Jury. The independent oversight panel ultimately has the power to decide what constitutes a trustworthy method and valid knowledge in that context.

### ***Formation of safe spaces***

Given the power imbalances and inequities that exist in society, it is important to design Citizens' Juries as safe spaces for communication and action. In these 'safe spaces' people who might otherwise feel threatened when sharing their knowledge and experience with others are placed in carefully thought-out environments of empathy, mutual support, and respect. These safe spaces for communication and action make it possible for jurors to not only consider what they have heard from witnesses, but also to frame and articulate questions for the subject-matter specialists as well as critically debate the answers they received with other jurors.

Within these spaces, perspectives from the social and natural sciences as well as the knowledge of farmers and other people can be confronted, contested, negotiated, and combined to develop recommendations for action. This deliberative process recognises that there are differently situated knowledge(s), and each is partial and incomplete. Carefully designed safe spaces helps bring these multiple and separate realities together, combining the



strengths of outsiders' and local people's knowledge through intercultural dialogue and participatory learning.

The facilitators play a key role in making Citizens' Juries safe spaces for the jurors and other participants. The facilitators assist the jurors in plenary sessions and small group discussions to formulate policy directions and recommendations. Good facilitators will also allow jurors to collectively explore their feelings, doubts, views and preliminary conclusions, - for example at the end of each day's hearings.

The selection criteria for the facilitators should stress good local language and communication skills. Other criteria include an ability to help people with contrasting backgrounds and life experiences to work together, as well as experience with facilitation and conflict resolution. Importantly, male and female facilitators should be chosen in order to reflect the gender and ethnic composition of the Citizens' Jury.

The facilitators' attitude of respect toward the jury is crucial for the formation of a safe communicative space. In this context, non-hierarchical and enabling behaviours can do much to build trust and the jurors' spirit of constructive engagement. The quality of facilitation is vital. When working with historically excluded groups such as indigenous peoples, people with disabilities, marginalised family farmers and ethnic groups, or members of the LGBTQ2+ community it is crucially important to rely on facilitators who act out of genuine respect, - with attitudes, behaviours and beliefs that reverse normal professional practice (Chambers, 1997; Wakeford and Pimbert, 2013) as well as gender and intersectional discrimination (bell Hooks, 1994; Hill Collins and Bilge, 2020).

Enabling and allowing participants to define the issues to be discussed in the way they want is also fundamental for the formation of safe spaces for meaningful deliberations and

outcomes. The facilitators' approach usually has to strike a balance between providing perspectives useful to decision-makers and giving control to the participants by opening up opportunities for them to frame issues in their own way, using the knowledge(s) and experiences that they feel is most relevant.

Last, but not least, the degree to which jurors experience a Citizens' Jury as an 'inclusive and safe space' also depends on the choice of language used during the hearings. For example, skilled interpreters allowed farmers to speak their own language (Bambara, Senoufo, Fulani, Tamashek) in the West African Citizens' Juries described above. The interpreters translated the evidence presented by French and English speaking specialist witnesses into these African languages and translated the jurors comments and questions back into French or English. Being able to listen and express themselves in their own mother tongue was reassuring and empowering for the jurors, and for the women in particular. It gave them the confidence to share their thoughts and articulate their concerns and feelings with other jurors. It is noteworthy that several women jurors said that if the Citizens' Jury had been run in French – the language of the colonisers – they would have been intimidated and felt excluded from this space. Planning and budgeting for good interpreters is essential in contexts where several languages are used in Citizens' Jury hearings.

### *A diversity of witnesses*

The group of specialist witnesses should be diverse in its composition. A diversity of witnesses ensures that key sectors of society (government, trade unions, civil-society organizations, business, research institutions, farmers, indigenous peoples, social movements) contribute a broad range of views on the issue discussed by the Citizens' Jury.

A panel of specialist witnesses can - and in many cases should - represent radically different knowledge systems. For example, the views of a university-trained livestock scientist and the experiential knowledge of a non-literate pastoralist can usefully inform the deliberations of a Citizens' Jury on the management of grasslands in Africa or Mongolia. The jury process should indeed be open to alternative ways of articulating a case, including through non-rationalistic argument<sup>8</sup> such as story-telling, art, or the evocative expression of experiential knowledge. After all, the life experiences of indigenous peoples or marginalised women farmers, - for example -, can lead them to make their case in ways that differ from the delivery of a rationalistic argument based on western science. Opening up citizens' juries to alternative forms of voice and non-rationalistic perspectives is key for inclusion and the construction of collective intelligence on an issue.

Moreover, Citizens' Juries can better support the co-construction of transdisciplinary knowledge for decision-making when they involve a diversity of knowledge-holders as specialist witnesses. In doing so, a Citizens' Jury can help reverse what Boaventura de Souza Santos describes as "epistemicide," - *the failure to recognise the fundamental right of different knowledges and ways of knowing to exist and give meaning to peoples' lives* (Santos 2014).

More generally, epistemic or cognitive justice should ideally be at the heart of a Citizens' Jury that aims to be democratic and inclusive of diversity. The entire Citizens' Jury process

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<sup>8</sup> The standard Citizens' Jury model is grounded in the concept of communicative rationality described by Habermas, 1981. An emphasis is put on expert testimony, with expertise being understood in a rationalistic way (Coote and Lenaghan, 1997).

should reflect and reinforce *'the constitutional right of different systems of knowledge to exist as part of a dialogue and debate'* (Visvanathan, 2005).

### ***A commitment to an open framing of issues***

Deliberative and inclusive processes can provide ordinary people with the social and political space which they can use to bring about change. However, deliberative processes can also be used to legitimize and consolidate established power structures and their policy choices. For citizens to have the opportunity to develop their own risk assessments, institutional choices, and their visions for the future, facilitation should encourage an open framing and exploration of issues by the jurors. The way discussions are framed by information, witnesses and their interrogation is fundamental in this regard. Rather than narrowly concentrating on specific issues, sensitive facilitators of Citizens' Juries enable jurors to discuss an issue in the context of broader social, economic and political dynamics, - to open up and stretch the initial framing of questions so as to shed new light on the topic.

### **Sharing the jury's verdict for maximum impact**

Throughout their deliberations, the jurors develop and share their findings and recommendations amongst themselves. After validating each recommendation, the Citizens' Jury is ready to present its verdict publicly. This is done on the last day of the Citizens' Jury, and usually in the presence of representatives of the commissioning body, government, private sector, and interested citizens. One or several jurors are mandated by their peers to present in public the findings and recommendations of the Citizens' Jury on this occasion.

News and media professionals (print, radio, social media, TV) are invited to this final day so that information about the process and its outcomes can be relayed to a wider audience, - both nationally and internationally. Involving the media in scrutinising and reporting on the

deliberative process is good practice because it gives more visibility to the Citizens' Jury. Extensive media coverage ultimately helps enhance the impact and policy influence of the jurors' recommendations.

## **Common challenges**

### **Prejudice about peoples' knowledge and capabilities**

The following sentences paraphrase comments that are regularly made about Citizens' Jury and the intellectual abilities of ordinary people<sup>9</sup>:

- *A Citizens' Jury made up of non-literate women and farmers cannot be trusted to seriously assess new technologies and make policy choices for society and the environment. These questions are far too technical and complicated for uneducated people to understand, let alone decide on.*
- *People are just too selfish and do not really care. So how can a peoples' jury be trusted to see the bigger picture and make fair recommendations for society and the environment.*
- *Women are far too emotional in discussions. They should not be part of a debate that must be based on rational deliberation and objective science.*
- *Indigenous Peoples living in forests are ignorant. They cannot possibly make sound judgments on conservation policy and practice.*
- *Only scientists and other experts can analyse complex issues to provide the knowledge needed for policy making in a context of increasing uncertainty.*

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<sup>9</sup> Over the last thirty years, the author of this chapter has heard these views expressed by several government officials, international donors, academic researchers, trade union and farmer leaders, and staff of big international non-governmental organisations engaged in conservation and development work. Individuals who made these comments are not identified by their name here.

These value-laden comments often reflect a world view based on casteism, hierarchy, patriarchy, racism, sexism, and/or xenophobia. Hearing these opinions and judgmental views about people can be deeply challenging and profoundly disempowering for anyone wanting to organise, - or participate in -, his/her first citizens' jury. Fortunately, the evidence available on the performance of Citizens' Juries indicates that these prejudiced opinions are simply unfounded.

In a comprehensive analysis of first-hand studies on citizen deliberation, Dryzek concludes that the "*first lesson*" to be taken from these studies is that of "*citizen competence*." In his words: "[T]he most obvious finding is that, given the opportunity, ordinary citizens can make good deliberators. Moreover, issue complexity is no barrier to the development and exercise of that competence" (Dryzek, 2010). After running citizen panels for over two decades, James Fishkin also believes that "*the public is very smart if you give it a chance*". "*Citizens can become better informed and master the most complex issues of state government if they are given the chance*." (Fishkin, 2011). Reviewing the experience of citizen panels (citizens' juries, citizen consensus conferences...) in the francophone world, Jacques Testart comes to a similar conclusion: ordinary citizens have a high level of deliberative competence and ability to meaningfully decide on complex issues for the common good, including on science & technology and public policy (Testart, 2015).

Experience also shows that the concerns raised by ordinary citizens, - both men and women -, are often more diverse than those of subject-matter specialists or policy-makers. Discussion by these non-specialist 'ordinary' citizens usually involves looser commitments to subject boundaries together with a more insightful and open-minded approach to the tensions these boundaries can mask (Kerr et al, 1998).

Claims that citizens' juries cannot be trusted because ordinary people are inherently selfish, - and do not care about other human beings or the environment -, are also shown to be mere prejudice. Indeed, according to Dryzek and his colleagues: *“Analysis of the dynamics of deliberative citizen forums shows that there is often a shift in the direction of public goods and regard for the interests of others, as well as those of society as a whole. Normally increases in trust, confidence, interest and civic commitment are also found (indeed, for some participants it proves to be a life-changing experience)”* (Dryzek et al, 2011).

In sum, the organisers and facilitators of Citizens' Juries can be quietly confident that ordinary people, - in all their diversity – are perfectly able to act as competent jurors when invited in safe spaces to decide on the common good.

### **Policy spaces that close down debates or co-opt Citizens' Juries**

Working with governments or corporations that commission a Citizens' Jury can be challenging in situations where they have a vested interest in securing their preferred outcomes. Some of these policy spaces commissioned and created from above can indeed end up closing down debate or water down and co-opt the citizens' jury process.

For example, a Welsh Citizens' Jury on genetic testing ultimately acted as a technology of legitimisation for the commercial interests of the transnational pharmaceutical corporation that commissioned the jury process (Glasner, 2001). Similarly, there are many examples of national governments who have unilaterally steered Citizens' Juries towards their favoured policy outcomes. This has been a common practice in Europe where governments have organised large scale consultations and deliberative processes on GM technology (Levidow and Carr, 2009).

More generally, commissioning governments have often co-opted and trivialised deliberative processes when they create opportunities for agency and participation in policy making. In the late 1990s', the UK government's much-publicised experiment in deliberative democracy ended up being condemned by its own Parliamentary Committee as "*closer to market research than public consultation*" (Irwin, 2001). In the environmental field too, available evidence indicates that there are strong dangers of co-option of green ideas and jury recommendations by the State (Dryzek, 2000). There is always a danger for democracy when too much agenda-setting power is given to those who commission Citizens' Juries.

However, this does not mean that all policy spaces opened up from above by governments or donors will necessarily pervert or co-opt good Citizens' Jury practices. For instance, it was a regional government that commissioned the first citizens' jury described in the Malian case study (above). At no time did this regional government attempt to take over the Citizens' Jury process to impose its preconceived views. Nor did it censure critical policy recommendations made by the jurors. This positive outcome was partly because the President of the regional government of Sikasso in Mali was strongly committed to democratic values and partly because farmer unions and other relatively powerful organisations were represented on the steering group of this Citizens' Jury (Pimbert and Barry, in press). This suggests that when several differently positioned organisations are involved in the jury's commissioning body and/or its steering committee, attempts at rigging outcomes are more likely to be deterred or kept in check. This insight may be useful for the design of future Citizens' Juries.

### **Ensuring jury recommendations are debated by decision-makers**

The Commissioning Body of a Citizens' Jury usually makes a commitment to responding to the outcomes. However, in practice this commitment is generally not honoured by governments and powerful actors in many countries today. And yet when the recommendations of Citizens'



Juries are properly debated by decision-makers, evidence suggests that there can be significant gains for democracy and the common good. For example, deputies in the National Assembly of Mali actively debated on the key recommendations of the Citizens' Jury on GMOs and the future of farming (see case study above). Following this influential political debate in the National Assembly, the government decided to indefinitely delay the approval of legislation that needed to be in place before GM crops could be introduced in Mali (Pimbert and Boukary, in press).

However, it remains true that it is all too easy for the Commissioning Body to ignore the results of a Citizens' Jury, or cherry pick recommendations that align with existing policy only. It is noteworthy that many community leaders and critical scientists are increasingly reluctant to take part in mini-publics because they have experienced decision makers' reluctance to act on citizens' recommendations. As a result, Citizens' Jury fatigue has become rife across the UK, France and several other countries in Europe.

In response to this democratic deficit, several citizen-led initiatives have asked that new legislation be introduced to make it mandatory for decision-makers to debate on the conclusions and recommendations of Citizens' Juries and other methods for DIPs (consensus conferences, deliberative polling, scenario workshops...). In France, a group of lawyers, citizens and scientists has proposed pioneering new legislation and procedures that would commit the government to review the outcomes of deliberative processes, debate on the policy recommendations made by citizens, and explain any significant differences of opinion between the government and the views of citizens (Sciences Citoyennes, 2016; Testart, 2015). In Australia, groups like the newDemocracy Foundation<sup>10</sup> insist that the outcomes of any deliberative forum be subject to a free and open debate as well as a subsequent vote in

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<sup>10</sup> <https://www.newdemocracy.com.au>

parliament or by another relevant decision-making body. Mindful of not falsely raising peoples' expectations and wasting their time, organisations like *Sciences Citoyennes* and the *newDemocracy Foundation* insist that citizens be thus empowered *before* a deliberative forum is organised.

### **The challenge of achieving impact**

Citizens' Juries and similar mini-publics do aim to have some kind of impact on decision making and wider society. Some of the documented impacts of mini-publics are summarised in Box 3.

#### **Box 3. Impacts of Citizens' Juries and other mini-publics**

- Making policy in an empowered space. This almost never actually happens in practice.
- Citizens' recommendations are taken up in the empowered space of a policy process
- Informing public debate
- Legitimising policy
- Confidence building – citizens become more empowered as a result of participating in a mini-public
- Popular oversight of public officials who were asked to give an account of existing policies, plans, and practices before a mini-public.

Modified from Dryzek, 2010.

However, the type of impact achieved varies and greatly depends on the context in which a Citizens' Jury is deployed (Goodin and Dryzek, 2006).

This section focuses on how to enhance some of the impacts of Citizens' Juries. Two specific types of impact are briefly considered here: i) direct influence on decision-making and policy processes, and ii) building the confidence and agency of people involved in Citizens' Juries.

### ***Direct influence on policy making***

Evidence suggests that Citizens' Juries and other mini-publics rarely directly influence policy making and institutional choices. Examples of Citizens' Juries that have had a direct impact on decision-making and policy processes include the West African case study described above and the *Prajateerpu*<sup>11</sup> in South India (Box 4). However, these and other more positive examples, "*are outnumbered by cases where a mini-public is established but turns out to have little or no effect on public decision-making*" (Dryzek, 2010).

The following observations may be useful when planning and designing a Citizens' Jury for change and impacts that work for the common good.

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<sup>11</sup> *Prajateerpu* is the Telegu word for 'people's verdict'. Telegu is the main language in the south Indian state of Andhra Pradesh.

- The extent to which Citizens' Jury recommendations are included in policy-making depends on the way real political systems actually work. Although they may claim to be 'democratically representative', political systems differ significantly between countries. Technocratic States in which power is centralised or governments that impose restrictions on freedom of speech are less likely to 'listen to the voices' of Citizens' Juries than, say, more inclusive States which welcome a diversity of views and a broad range of interests. Deliberative outcomes have different effects in different political systems.

Before designing a Citizens' Jury, a judgment has to be made about the political feasibility and viability of doing so in a particular country or situation. For example, the organisers of the first successful Citizens' Jury on GMOs in Mali were invited to plan and facilitate a similar deliberative process in neighbouring Burkina Faso in 2006. At the time however, Burkina Faso did not offer a conducive political environment (e.g. freedom of speech and other civil rights, media independence...) to safely replicate the Malian Citizens' Jury methodology. Aware of the political risks for local partners, the Malian organisers therefore decided not to run a similar Citizens' Jury on GMOs in Burkina Faso (LRD, 2006).

- The chances of achieving impact and policy influence appear to be higher when a citizens' jury is not an isolated event. Citizens' Juries tend to be less impactful when designed as a stand-alone event done in response to, - and for - , a specific government authority which is the only one receiving the final report (as the Commissioning Body). In contrast, Citizens' Juries embedded in more open-ended political processes seem to have a relatively greater influence on policy and institutional choices. For instance, the deliberations on democratising agricultural research in West Africa (see case study above) involved three closely interrelated Citizens' Juries as part of a long-term Participatory Action Research (PAR) dynamic that drew in many different actors over a period of eight years –

government bureaucrats, academics, representatives of regional and international farmer organisations, civil society and social movement activists, donors, media professionals, as well as national and international observers. This PAR process iteratively combined Citizens' Juries deployed as policy spaces created from above (by a regional government) with Citizens' Juries designed as policy spaces opened up from below (by self-organising farmers and citizen groups). Moreover, these mini-publics and their outcomes were abundantly reported in the written press, local and national radio, television, information communication technology (ICT) and social media – thereby amplifying the voices of men and women farmers, fishers, forest dwellers, pastoralists, and local food artisans and processors. Last, the West African deliberative process also had clear links with farmers' organisations and social movements that were powerful enough to offer some resistance to the marginalisation of farmers' voices in policy processes. As a result, these mini publics have had macro-consequences which still endure today.

This case study from West Africa shows several features of what Hendriks (2006) has called an “*integrated deliberative system*”. The three citizens' juries were embedded in long-term and iterative PAR process in which there were multi-dimensional and multi-directional relationships with other actors in society as well as relationships with governments – from local to global. Actors who would not normally engage with each other interacted in new ways, and repeatedly. Cumulatively, this multi-actor deliberative process generated impacts at local, national, regional, and international levels.

Designing a Citizens' Jury with the intent of creating such “*integrated deliberative systems*” also confers more resilience to the overall process. This is an additional positive impact which organisers and facilitators of future Citizens' Juries need to be mindful of and encourage. Indeed, the ability to withstand shocks and stresses is particularly important

when a Citizens' Jury and its organisers are attacked and vilified by powerful actors whose plans or policies have been decisively rejected by jurors in a highly public way. For example, the *Prajateerpu* survived the wrath of the UK Department for International Development (DfID) largely because its participants were embedded in a global web of mutually supportive and multi-directional relationships with other actors who, - unlike DfID -, viewed the *Prajateerpu* as a balanced and trustworthy citizens' jury on the future of food and farming in Andhra Pradesh (Box 4).

**Box 4. *Prajateerpu* - a Citizens' Jury/Scenario Workshop on food and farming futures in Andhra Pradesh, India.**

Grounded in the tradition of participatory action research (PAR), *Prajateerpu* was a deliberative process which aimed to link local voices and visions of food and farming futures in the south Indian State of Andhra Pradesh (AP) with national and international policy making. *Prajateerpu* was devised as a means of allowing those people most affected by the government's *Vision 2020* for food and farming in AP to shape a vision of their own. *Vision 2020* was developed by management consultants McKinsey and Co. along with the Government of AP, and was backed by external development agencies, - with the World Bank and the UK Department for International Development (DFID) being the main donors. Although radical transformations of the food system and livelihoods were proposed in *Vision 2020* there had been no, or little, consultation with small farmers and rural people directly affected by *Vision 2020* plans. It was in this context that five organisations<sup>(i)</sup> designed and facilitated the *Prajateerpu* to encourage more public debate in policy choices on food and farming futures for AP.

The Citizens' Jury was overseen by a panel that included a retired chief judge from the Indian Supreme Court, a senior official from a donor agency and a number of local NGOs. The jury of 19 consisted of mostly Dalit<sup>(ii)</sup> or indigenous small farmers and farm workers. Over two-thirds of the

jurors were women, reflecting their demographic importance in agriculture. The jurors heard three clearly articulated visions of the future. The first depicted life under Vision 2020 – the World Bank and UK-aid funded plan to industrialise farming, introduce genetically engineered crops, and link farms to global value chains. The second looked at the export of organic crops. The third explored a path of self-reliance, promoted by Indian anti-colonial social activists such as Mahatma Gandhi. Jurors heard from people with expert knowledge on the different visions. Over four days, they cross-examined 13 witnesses, including representatives of biotechnology corporations, state government officials and development experts. Aided by three facilitators – all native Telegu speakers – the jurors questioned the ‘witnesses’ and slowly formulated their own vision for food and farming in their native state of Andhra Pradesh.

The *Prajateerpu* decisively rejected Vision 2020. The jury’s verdict opposed the proposed reduction of those making their livelihood from the land from 70 percent to 40 percent in AP; land consolidation and displacement of rural people; contract farming; labour-displacing mechanization; genetically modified (GM) crops; and loss of control over medicinal plants including their export. The jury’s vision emphasised food and farming for self-reliance and community control over resources; maintaining healthy soils, diverse crops, trees and livestock; and building on their own indigenous knowledge, practical skills and local institutions. The jurors’ vision for endogenous development echoed the demands of the growing global movement for food sovereignty.

The *Prajateerpu* report was first launched in the UK House of Parliament on 18 March 2002. A member of the jury – a woman farmer called Anjamma – shared her personal experience and presented the peoples’ verdict to invited journalists and Members of Parliament. The jury’s decision to reject capital-intensive industrial food and farming as an answer to the problems of smallholder farmers and food insecurity received global newspaper coverage. Members of Parliament in both the UK and Andhra Pradesh deemed the issues serious enough to table questions to their governments, both formally and informally.

*Prajateerpu*'s conclusions displeased senior DfID officials who made an official complaint to the two UK research institutes involved. Senior officials questioned the validity of the methodology used and accused the UK-based authors of bias. DfID demanded that the *Prajateerpu* report be removed from the web sites of both institutes which were major recipients of DfID funds. Although published jointly with Indian organisations, the *Prajateerpu* report was withdrawn by one of the two UK institutes involved. However, after sustained protest by groups in India, - where extensive Internet and national media coverage of the report's censorship helped to mobilise a popular campaign -, the UK institute lifted its ban. The disciplinary action taken against the two authors in the two UK institutes was also revoked.

By publicly raising questions about the quality of the participatory process in *Prajateerpu*, government agencies and some researchers (who scrutinised the methodology used in an on-line moderated forum sponsored by DfID in 2003) temporarily undermined the conclusions reached by nineteen rural smallholders and labourers. However, the robust response of a transnational coalition of civil society organisations, action-researchers, activist scholars, progressive policy makers, and marginalised groups ensured that the *Prajateerpu* was not side-lined or shut down by powerful actors with a stake in Vision 2020's project of modernity and economic progress.

The *Prajateerpu* is unprecedented in the history of policy-making in India and international development aid. Most notably, it demonstrated that potentially influential deliberative and inclusive processes can be organised from below by non-state actors, - including by some of the most marginalised and excluded people in society. Second, the *Prajateerpu* saga suggests that actors who open up such policy spaces from below should expect that powerful elites will often try to discredit such processes if they feel their interests are threatened. To enhance a Citizens' Jury's capacity to withstand assaults from such powerful actors, organisers must be highly coordinated and pro-active. For example, they should be prepared to use a range of advocacy methods, media, and other interventions to help people claim their right to participate in decisions on societal choices and the common good. Innovations are also needed to enhance the long-term resilience of a



Citizens' Jury process, including building the capacity of participants to deal with externally imposed shocks and stresses.

*Notes*

- (i) The *Prajateerpu* was the result of a collaboration between five organisations: the Andhra Pradesh Coalition in Defence of Diversity (APCDD), the University of Hyderabad, the All-India National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP), and the UK-based International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED) and the Institute of Development Studies (IDS).
- (ii) *Dalits* are members of the lowest social group in the Hindu caste system. The word *Dalit* means 'oppressed' or 'broken' and is the name members of this group gave themselves in the 1930s. Dalits are also known as 'Untouchables'.
- (iii) For more details on the *Prajateerpu* see Kuruganti et al, 2008; Pimbert and Wakeford, 2002; Pimbert and Wakeford, 2003; Scoones and Thompson, 2003; Wakeford and Pimbert, 2004.

***Building the confidence and agency of people through Citizens' Juries***

Whilst this is by no means true for all Citizens' Juries, jurors often speak about the new sense of confidence and empowerment they have experienced when deliberating on an important issue. This positive impact can be further encouraged by making changes to the standard citizens' jury model described earlier.

Citizens' Juries can indeed be consciously designed as spaces for popular education that build people's confidence and deliberative competence. To create this enabling context, great care needs to be put into the formation of safe spaces for communication and action. In these sensitively facilitated safe spaces, 'ordinary' people come together and gain the confidence to use their own voice and frame alternatives – both in small groups and plenary sessions. They

learn to build arguments and alliances. They self-organise, mobilise knowledge and act together.

Safe spaces create more opportunities for the agency of jurors – both individually and collectively. In turn, opportunities for agency can be further enhanced when organisers actively support a more open and participatory process for the design of citizens’ juries, - one in which the jurors become co-designers and co-inquirers in a wider Participatory Action Research (PAR) process. In this shift from the standard jury model, the participant jurors do more of the framing of key questions and set the agenda for issues to be addressed.

Some of the differences between the standard and open Citizens’ Jury model are summarised in table 1.

**Table 1. Differences between a standard citizens’ jury model and an open model based on a process of co-inquiry with local communities**

<b>Standard Citizens’ Jury model</b>	<b>Open citizens’ jury model and community co-inquiry</b>
Participants intended to be a cross-section of a particular population or region, often chosen through random selection.	Participants chosen through stratified random sampling or non-randomly, - to be fully inclusive of groups that are marginalised.
Sponsors and organisers set the agenda.  Lay people (i.e. non-specialists) invited to discuss a potential policy, scientific or technological development pre-determined by the organisers <i>via</i> the facilitators.	The agenda is arrived at through the widest possible open consultation, and remains open to modification by the jury.  A mixture of specialists and non-specialists start by identifying issues which matter to them in their lives and discuss what they’d like to change, - without any imposition of ideas from the organisers or facilitators.

Non-specialists (jurors) asked to reach judgements, having been presented with scientific ‘facts’ and evidence from specialists	The knowledge and perspectives of non-specialists and specialists are valued equally, as they all draw on rich experience and are open to be debated by the group
Emphasis on rationalistic deliberation	Emphasis on both non-rationalistic forms of argument and rationalistic forms
Specialists act merely as informers of non-specialists jurors	Specialists and non-specialists work with citizens on an equal footing in reaching conclusions
Process happens in facilitated sessions totalling around twenty to fifty hours, usually spread over a few days or weeks	Open-ended process that continues for as long as participants remain interested – an extended time frame
Emphasis on reaching unanimous decisions, with consensus seen as the ideal outcome of deliberations based on rationalistic arguments	Open and safe space in which jurors can question deeply held positions. As a democratic forum, the citizens’ jury allows for the expression of diverging views, serious antagonisms, and dissensions.
Standard-model juries report to the body that commissioned them.  Format and style of output (usually a report) determined by funder and/or facilitator.	The Citizens’ Jury is part on an open political process.  Form of output decided jointly between, funder, facilitators and participants.
Tends to be a more ‘top-down’ and non-participatory Citizens’ Jury	Tends to be a more participatory ‘do it yourself’ Citizens’ Jury with an element of grassroots control

*Adapted from Singh, 2008; Wakeford et al, 2008; Ward et al, 2003.*

The co-construction of more participatory Citizens' Juries with an element of local community control is usually more feasible in policy spaces opened up from below, as was the case for two of the West Africa Citizens Juries described above and the *Prajateerpu* in South India (Box 4). In contrast, the inherent top-down tendencies of policy spaces created from above (by governments, corporations, or big international non-governmental organisations) often prevents a decisive shift from the standard jury model to a more open-ended Citizens' Jury rooted in locally identified priorities and peoples' agency. Evidence from four continents indicates that these more top-down Citizens' Juries tend to marginalise groups already experiencing oppression, especially if appropriate safeguards are not in place (Wakeford et al, 2008).

Designing Citizens' Juries as a form of community-co-inquiry implies a more power-equalizing relationship between organisers and jury members – one in which the dynamic between facilitator-organisers and the jury also needs to be more interactive, less rigidly engineered, more flexible and respectful, as well as open to surprise and emergent complexity (see Peoples Knowledge Editorial Collective, 2017; Pimbert, 2018; Wakeford and Pimbert, 2013).

In sum, an Open Citizens' Jury model embedded in PAR and community co-inquiry (Table 1) has huge potential to build peoples' agency, confidence, and skills for the practice of deep participatory democracy. This is an important frontier for the theory and practice of Citizens' Juries.

## **Conclusions**

A Citizens' Jury is a procedure used to enable inclusive deliberation on a specific issue. Citizens' Juries have been used on all continents to explore many different environment and development issues.

The actual practice of Citizens' Juries varies and can best be seen as part of a continuum – from governments and powerful actors using Citizens' Juries for market research or as a means of legitimating their preferred policy-choices to community co-inquiry and more grassroots based activism.

In an age of uncertainty and rapid change, deliberative and inclusive processes based on an open citizens' jury model and long-term community co-inquiry may offer new opportunities for people to shape decisions on critical issues, including society's response(s) to climate change or to poverty and exclusion. This is a frontier that calls for new methodological and institutional innovations in the theory and practice of Citizens' Juries.

However, experience shows that a Citizens' Jury *in and by itself* should never be mistaken for a 'deliberative democracy' (Dryzek, 2010). Indeed, the organisers of Citizens' Juries are usually more effective when they act on the understanding that, - as a method and process -, a Citizens' Jury has to be part of a much larger deliberative sphere in the political system, and that its ultimate impact is contingent on the wider political context and balance of power in society.

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### **External links**

<https://jefferson-center.org/citizens-jury/>

<http://participedia.net/en/methods/citizens-jury>

[www.excludedvoices.org](http://www.excludedvoices.org)

[www.newdemocracy.com.au](http://www.newdemocracy.com.au)