
UNIT 9 CIVIL SOCIETY: POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SERVICE DELIVERY

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9.1 INTRODUCTION

Civil society organisations (CSOs) play an important role in Canada's economy and communities through their involvement in a range of public benefits. Approximately 175,000 CSOs in Canada provide community and social services; organise cultural, educational and recreational activities; and lobby for social, political and economic change. However, the ability to assess and evaluate the contribution of civil society has been hampered, to a considerable degree, by the absence of appropriate measures.

9.2 STRUCTURE OF CANADA'S CIVIL SOCIETY

By participating in civil society activities, Canadians play a central role in building vibrant communities and providing services to citizens. Indeed, the contribution of volunteers is a key factor in the ability of CSOs to do their work. About 1 in 3 (31%) Canadians volunteer their time, and more than 50% of Canadians participate as members in at least one group or organisation. There are a number of umbrella and networking organisations in Canada that aim to enhance the quality and vitality of civil society organisations. By building alliances, umbrella organisations help CSOs foster social and community well being, especially in areas where there are complementary aims and objectives. In 1993, individuals donated \$8.2 billion to registered charities, accounting for 9.5% of charities' total revenue. Corporate donations amounted to \$1.2 billion and only accounted for 1% of revenue. For charities, the government is the single most important source of revenue, accounting for \$48.8 billion (56%) of the revenues.

The way in which CSOs are regulated and taxed makes a difference to their ability to affect social and community well being. Also, if civil society is to have a real effect on government decisions, CSOs must have access to the executive and legislative levels of governments. There are approximately 300 joint initiatives between the federal government and the voluntary sector involving 34 federal departments and agencies. Research findings indicate that Canadians have a strong sense of civic participation.

Much is expected of CSOs in their efforts to deal with social justice and social inclusion, and to promote equity rights. Regardless of the scope of their activity. CSOs are first and foremost self-governing. Although the ways in which CSOs govern themselves differ considerably, CSOs in Canada are internally democratic and have relatively strong relations with their constituents and stakeholders.

If CSOs are to help improve social and community wellbeing, they need to figure prominently on the policy agenda. Although governments have used consultations to gather input into policy-making, various survey results suggest that they have not adequately reached out to CSOs. Changing government roles, increasingly diverse populations, and new political, economic and social realities have required CSOs to broaden and adapt their programmes and services.

9.3 RENEWED INTEREST IN CIVIL SOCIETY

In recent years there has been a renewed interest in promoting civil society organisations and increase in their role in policy making and service delivery. Rather than being a passing fad, such interest reflects certain fundamental changes in the nature of governing and in civil society, which began in the 1990s and are still unfolding. A number of these changes are summarised below, first for governance, then for civil society.

9.3.1 Renewed Interest in Society

The governing process has been altered in significant ways by two broad but related trends. One is the shift from a top-down model of government to horizontal governance, which is the process of governing by public policy networks including public, private and voluntary sector actors. Whereas a traditional top-down approach emphasises control and uniformity, horizontal governance recognises that governments alone may not have the capacity, knowledge or legitimacy to solve complex public policy problems in a diverse society. Therefore, it emphasises collaboration and coordination. The second trend is the emergence of the philosophy of New Public Management.

The essence of New Public Management is to encourage governments to steer not row, meaning that they should set basic priorities and policy directions, but that the actual delivery of services might be better done by the private or voluntary sectors. New Public Management has sparked alternative forms of service delivery such as contracting out, partnerships, privatisation, the creation of arm's length special operating agencies, and so on. New Public Management also favours pushing more programme decision-making from the centre of government to front-line bureaucrats. The preference for smaller government inherent in the New Public Management means that most Canadian governments, even in times of budget surpluses, are choosing to stick to their core business, while leaving the rest to non-governmental actors.

The implications of these changes for governments' relationships with citizens and civil society are significant. A smaller public service, shrunk in a relatively short period of time, has led to a significant loss of policy capacity and institutional memory. One consequence of contracting out and other new forms of service delivery is that the knowledge acquired through direct service delivery is lost to the public sector. Governments increasingly must rely on the input of both *expert* and *experiential* knowledge from voluntary organisations and citizens to supplement their limited in-house capacity.

At the same time, vacancies in the public service caused mainly by retirements have increased opportunities for advancement, with the result that internal mobility is very high. Such high levels of mobility are impairing the informal relationship building upon which much of the communication between government and civil society has traditionally depended. This occurred when public servants called upon key individuals or organisational representatives in a community for information and advice, and were available and receptive to hear their concerns. With public servants regularly on the move, there is little time to build the trust that is the glue of such relationships. This is happening not only at the individual level but also at the institutional level. The federal government's regional offices, which had once been important sources of ground intelligence and relationship building with local communities, have become more centre-directed over the last decade.

A third shift in governing that has provoked increased interest in civil society is the massive push for increased accountability, which is manifest both through requirements for outcome measurement and through an explosion of auditing of third-party contracts and contribution agreements.

9.3.2 Changes in Civil Society

The organisation of civil society and the structure of social and political relations within it also condition the level of interest in and capacity of citizens to be involved in meaningful ways in both traditional democratic processes and new forms of governance. The convergence of several long-term trends in civil society has contributed to the renewed interest in citizen involvement. A basic factor is rising education levels. It is well established that participation in civic affairs increases in direct measure to education levels and is particularly influenced by levels of post - secondary education.

Public opinion polls show that Canadians have a strong interest in participating in policy processes and that they want to see more of their values reflected in government. The Rethinking Citizen Engagement survey conducted by Ekos Research reports that the general public perceives, much more strongly than do decision-makers, a need to engage citizens in public policy issues. The paradox is that, while Canadian citizens still believe government has a role in improving their lives, they have declining levels of trust and confidence in it. Such decline is evident in many other countries. Canadians' level of trust in government is currently no lower than in most other advanced democracies, but as Graves argues, the rate of decline in levels of trust in Canada may have been more precipitous. Restoration of the public's trust and confidence in government became a major preoccupation of senior public servants in Ottawa in the late 1990s, and a driving force behind rethinking the effectiveness with which governments involve citizens in policy.

Ethnocultural and other forms of diversity have also enhanced interest in citizen involvement because they make the realities of political exclusion more palpable. Traditional

representative democracy, which is based on majoritarian principles, excludes minorities, and the greater the divergence of minority groups from the preferences of the majority, the greater the exclusion. As Anne Phillips argues, demands for the political inclusion of marginalised groups constitute a major reframing of democratic equality. She suggests "the separation between 'who' and 'what' is to be represented, and the subordination of the first to the second is very much up for question". In her view, the politics *of* ideas is being challenged by an alternative politics of presence, which stresses the significance of who is making representation. The Canadian diversity model, as noted by Jenson and Papillon, attaches cultural rights to individuals, not to groups. When this Canadian approach to diversity meets the politics of presence, the result is an increased interest in direct participation by individuals who are representing themselves.

It should be noted that Canada is not only a diverse society in cultural terms, but also geographically, which is played out largely in the context of urban life. In spite of the economic and cultural significance of Canadian cities, few issues are dealt with as explicitly as urban issues. There is, however, an emerging concern by the federal government that avoidance of urban issues means that federal programmes will be ineffective. According to Andrew, "the problem is that this federal concern is right – they do not understand urban issues, they do not understand how local communities operate and, therefore, are not able to support community action effectively." The recognition of the urban fact is prompting both federal and provincial governments to involve urban community leaders and citizens in more direct dialogue about policy issues affecting the major cities.

Finally, civil society is becoming more organised, as reflected both in number of associations and their changing character. The number of voluntary and advocacy organisations has risen steadily over the past 30 years to a current total of roughly 175,000. A more subtle change has been in their character, that is, in how organisations interpret their roles and responsibilities. In particular, voluntary organisations, even traditional service organisations, are becoming more politicised as they take on more responsibilities downloaded from governments. They are interested not only in delivering services but also in having a say in the policies and funding decisions that determine their capacity to function effectively,

Affecting both civil society and the nature of governing are the changes brought by technology. Communication technologies now afford opportunities for fast, direct communication between almost any citizen and elected officials and public servants. There is a considerable range of opinion on the nature of the impact that technology is having on citizen involvement and on democracy more broadly. At one extreme are claims that technology is *fundamentally* transforming representative democracy as we know it. "People who have grown up with the information society will no longer accept the ossified procedures of representative democracy, the reliance upon hierarchies and authoritative decision-making structures. Instead, they will insist on networks, interactivity, responsiveness and open discussion". Such communication poses real dilemmas for government, however. While the technology permits individual government officials to respond directly to citizens, the rules of accountability and the determination of what constitutes a formal response constrain the use of technology. In general, the consensus seems to be that the impact of technology has been more limited than expected but that future change may be enormous and not entirely predictable.

The result of these broad changes in governance and in civil society is to generate renewed interest in citizen involvement and, specifically, to create a movement for initiating a particular kind of involvement that has come to be known as citizen engagement. The shift in language is not a mere rhetoric. Rather, it reflects a desire to establish an ongoing interaction between governments and citizens that not only informs policy but also builds more capable citizens and stronger communities.

9.4 SIX STAGES OF THE POLICY PROCESS

Policy processes consist of several distinct stages. Although conceptualising stages may be a useful heuristic, it should also be noted that this approach risks overstating the simplicity and linear nature of the process. As some analysts have found, policy processes may very well start with solutions and then find the problems to which they can be attached. Nevertheless, for analytical purposes, we will focus on six policy stages, each of which presents somewhat different challenges for citizen involvement. These stages are:

- 1) *Problem Identification*, which begins the process with the initial identification, definition, and framing of a policy problem;
- 2) *Priority Setting*, which gets the issue on the political agenda as a priority to be addressed among competing issues;
- 3) *Policy Formulation and Design*, which establishes policy goals, develops various options, and selects preferred policy instruments for addressing the problem;
- 4) *Passage of the Policy Instruments*, which enacts necessary legislation, regulations, funding, and other means required to implement the policy;
- 5) *Service Delivery*, which activates the policy by delivering services, programmes or funding to users, either by governments directly or by agents from the voluntary or private sectors; and
- 6) *Evaluation*, which measures and reviews whether the intended goals of the policy were achieved, whether unintended consequences occurred, and whether the process itself was effective, with a view to being able to fine-tune or redesign policies as needed.

To say that new expectations in civil society and about governance have created an interest in and a need for more extensive citizen involvement does not necessarily imply that existing institutions must be reinvented from the ground up. Multiple routes for representation and participation are and will remain one of the strengths of liberal democracy. No single reform or new institution will be a magic formula that satisfies the current demands for citizen involvement. Moreover, although subject to a certain degree of inertia and path dependence, political institutions are flexible and adaptable too.

Before looking to the creation of new institutions or structures for citizen engagement, we need to consider how well the existing ones are performing, and whether they can be modified and adapted to better accommodate the involvement of citizens in the various stages of policy processes. Below, we explore the adequacy of Canadian political institutions in handling citizen involvement. For each of the six stages of policy, we ask, to what extent do the existing institutions and processes adequately facilitate the participation of citizens?

9.4.1 Problem Identification

The first phase of the policy process sounds relatively straightforward – identify the nature of the problem to be solved. It almost inevitably ends up being complex or however, involving a struggle over the nature of the problem and how it is to be framed and named. What is a "problem" for some may be an advantage for others. For example, the current patterns of income polarisation clearly benefit some people, while making poverty a problem for many. How an issue is framed also brings out institutional interests as well, because its framing largely determines the level of government and the department that will end up dealing with the issue. For instance, is genetically modified food to be defined as an agricultural issue or a health matter?

At this opening stage, the most important aspects of citizen involvement are to mobilise interest that a **problem** exists in the first place and that effort should be expended to fix it; to ensure that a broad range of citizens and communities have an opportunity to weigh in on the issue, so that the most vocal and well organised have a say; to enable representation and claims to be **made**; and to promote knowledge acquisition by governments so that they can genuinely appreciate how specific social and economic programmes are affecting particular communities. An often overlooked dimension is capacity building, which enables **communities** to mobilise the resources required to put the concerns raised by **citizens** into the policy hopper without waiting for government to act.

Problem identification entails, in simple terms, having an ear to the ground. Yet, the institutions that should be well suited to this task – parties, **MPs**, parliamentary committees, and the public service – all have significantly diminished capacities for listening. Parties are unduly thin institutions, which are lacking in policy capacity and atrophy between elections. **MPs** are not engaged in extensive policy discussions with constituents and, even when they hear of new policy problems, often have trouble in getting caucus to pay attention to them. Parliamentary committees lack research capacity, remain dominated by House leadership and partisan politics, and lack credibility with the senior management of the public service.

So where does this leave citizen involvement in the **problem** identification stage of policymaking? Other than opportunities for advocates to make claims, provided they are well organised **and** well resourced, there are few spaces for individual citizens to identify and articulate policy problems. Even the impact of advocates is limited to those with personal or organisational resources, and with access to those who set priorities, which leads us to the second stage in the policy process.

9.4.2 Priority Setting

Once a problem has been identified and defined as being a problem, it may still be a challenge to get it on the political agenda as a matter worthy of government attention. Competition with other issues and among political actors is often felt most acutely at this stage. In a general way, elections serve as a means for a political party to set a broad policy direction and, especially since the invention of policy books, to make specific commitments for action over the life of a government. In practice, the ability of elections to facilitate meaningful debate is severely curtailed by the problems inherent in **political** parties in **Canada** and by the difficulty of discussing complex policy issues in a **combative** environment or as a media "sound bite."

The real agenda setting is therefore done by Cabinet or, more specifically, by the Prime Minister and a small group of advisors. Over the postwar period, the drift in power from Parliament to Cabinet has made the latter the dominant institution for agenda setting. In recent years, there has been a **further** concentration of power focussed on the Prime Minister personally and on a small cadre of advisors in the Prime Minister's Office, the **Privy Council Office**, and Ministry of Finance, a system that Savoie refers to as "court government." The Prime Minister and this small circle control the important levers of power and policy instruments, and often make major spending decisions without first consulting Cabinet. They are, in other words, well beyond the reach of involvement by citizens.

The increasing significance of intergovernmental relations in establishing social policy priorities for the federal government, and the particular form of closed-door ministerial meetings it takes, reinforces this concentration of power. Under SUFA, the federal and **provincial/territorial** governments (except Quebec) agreed to involve citizens to a greater extent in the development of social priorities. At the end of its three-year life, however, there was little evidence that either level of government had done so or is about to do so in any meaningful way. The reason is quite simple. Priority setting is an inherently political process. The priorities that are pursued largely define the character of a government and influence its willingness and capacity to negotiate in the intergovernmental context. Although their governments may regularly conduct public opinion polls to determine "top-of-mind" issues, First Ministers are not going to willingly compromise their capacity to bargain effectively amongst themselves. Thus, in spite of SUFA, they remain reluctant to give away or share priority setting, whether with citizens or their elected colleagues.

Given this centralisation of power and the political nature of priority setting, citizen involvement at this stage of the policy process is virtually nonexistent, and there are no signs that this situation will change. Yet, from the citizen's perspective, how certain issues come to dominate the agenda at the expense of others is a critical aspect of the policy process.

9.4.3 Policy Formulation and Design

It is in the process of developing various design options for programmes that governments have had the most experience with involving citizens. Four dimensions of citizen involvement are especially important at this stage – acquiring deep slices of experiential and technical knowledge; being inclusive of who is heard; convening and deliberating; and analysing and synthesising the knowledge obtained from citizens so as to inform decision-making.

The dominant institution in developing and assessing alternatives in design is the public service. As a matter of course in most major **policy** decisions, federal government departments will undertake a round of public consultation. Over the years, a **common** consultation template has been developed. It consists of the **preparation** and circulation of a background **document**; a series of meetings or focus groups in at least one major centre per province, to which "stakeholders" are invited; prepared questions and answers for bureaucrats; a toll-free number and Web site to **permit** submission of comments; and a workbook to allow citizens to respond to specific questions. Frequently, the number of participants rather than the depth of their knowledge is of paramount **concern** because Ministers are likely to say that a large number of people participated, no matter how

superficial that participation may have been. Departments may also host smaller sessions or roundtables of between three and 25 people, sometimes in a multi stakeholder format involving representatives of different constituencies.

The shortcomings of this approach to consultation have been widely noted, including by the federal government itself, which recognised that it has not been sufficiently inclusive or kept up with technology, nor has it integrated consultation into policy decision-making in an effective manner. Public consultation normally occurs quite late in policy processes, once problems have been defined in concrete terms and a preferred policy option has been developed. Reaction to these is being sought. By the time a consultation is concluded, there is usually considerable pressure to move decision-making along, so there is seldom enough time for an in-depth analyses of the knowledge acquired or the opportunity to go back to citizens to discuss particular matters further. In general, then, such practices greatly limit the ability of consultation to inform public policy or to satisfy the other dimensions of citizen involvement.

9.4.4 Passage of the Policy Instruments

This stage first moves the process back to the central agencies and Ministers, where Memoranda to Cabinet and Treasury Board funding submissions are processed in a manner closed to public view or participation. It then offers an opportunity for participation as legislation, regulations, budget estimates, or other policy instruments are debated in the House of Commons and its committees. It is also at this stage that the media are likely to be most interested in the policy process, prompting a more broadly based reaction from citizens. The transparency of the citizen involvement process becomes a particularly important dimension as citizens who participated in or observed the process at earlier stages query how their inputs are being used to arrive at actual decisions.

As spaces for citizen involvement, parliamentary committees have significant drawbacks because they operate in fixed time frames, normally meet in Ottawa, and are quite formal. They are more accessible to well-recognised groups that have the resources to send representatives to Ottawa, but often freeze out the unorganised and low-income segments of society. Given that committee membership is allocated along party lines and the Canadian party system relies on party discipline, decisions made by the committees often reflect partisan interests more than what was stated during the hearing process. Committee restructuring has been a central part of numerous proposals for parliamentary reform made over the past two decades. In recent years, committees have been opened up considerably, creating a **stronger role** for MPs. Given the structural impediments, however, such reform has not provided a way to effectively use parliamentary committees as conduits into the policy process for citizens.

9.4.5 Service Delivery

The nature of policy **implementation** and the issues it raises for citizen involvement depend to a large **degree** on who is **responsible** for programme delivery and via what means. At this stage, the key institution is the public service, but it is not alone. In new forms of governance, a variety of non-governmental organisations from both the private and the voluntary sectors are also likely to be involved in implementation. The primary possibility for citizen involvement at this stage is to provide feedback on the actual delivery of services and, where difficulties exist, on how to fix them.

The devolution of service delivery to the voluntary and private sectors, spurred on by New Public Management and fiscal restraint, has created a new set of challenges for implementation. An expanding-contracting regime that uses voluntary organisations has brought citizens more directly into the policy implementation process – as volunteers, staff, and members of voluntary organisations. Yet, governments rarely have the institutionalised means to acquire the advice of these citizen experts. Moreover, there is a mounting evidence that voluntary organisations involved in public service contracting, either alone or in partnerships, curtail their advocacy activities for fear of jeopardising their contracts or other funding. If their main point of invited contact is with the officials who oversee their contracts, voluntary organisations are likely to be quite cautious about speaking frankly about any problems they are experiencing in the realm of service delivery.

The other major gap in devolved forms of implementation is community capacity building. As self-governing democratic bodies, voluntary organisations are themselves important sites for involving citizens in dialogue about the community needs. Yet, the competitive contracting process seldom takes into account the value of internal democracy (that is, of building and maintaining a membership and connections with local communities) or its costs, which are borne by non-profit organisations. When contracts are awarded primarily on the basis of price, voluntary organisations that support democratic infrastructure often lose out to for-profit firms that do not. Over time, the knowledge that is filtered through voluntary organisations is being lost to government, and the community capacity building that is undertaken by these organisations is being undermined.

9.4.6 Evaluation

The essence of evaluation is to determine what was achieved, both as intended and unintended consequences, to explain why, and to use this information to assess the design of programmes and policies. Evaluation is also intended to enable better systems of management, governance, and control to be put in place if necessary. Public policy evaluation has changed in two important ways over the past decade. First, New Public Management has put a greater emphasis on evaluation and, in particular, on the measurement of outcomes or results achieved, not just of inputs (resources used) or outputs (activities undertaken). Second, there has been a movement in the evaluation of field in recent years to recognise the value of evaluation as a participatory process in which multiple stakeholders are actively engaged, not merely in providing information but in generating the content and form of the evaluation process. An important question, then, is, can participatory evaluation and outcome-based performance measurement co-exist?

The federal **government** institutions involved in evaluation have a cautious history of involving citizens. Parliament, through its committee system, regularly assesses–public spending and reviews the effectiveness of specific **programmes**. However, the public service is the most important player – via the Treasury Board Secretariat; which sets overall guidelines; through departments, which conduct evaluations; and in the Office of the Auditor General, which acts as an independent watchdog. Both Parliament and the public service treat evaluation as a technical process of information gathering led by experts.

There is some movement, however, toward using performance-based measurement as a means of promoting citizen involvement. The attempt to develop performance-based indicators was seen by some in the public service as a vehicle for engaging Parliament and the public in value-based conversations. However, such engagement remains more rhetoric than reality. Moreover, although citizen involvement in reviewing the outcome-based measurement may sound appealing, a measure of realism is required. The outcome

measurement is enormously complex and the ability of citizens, as individuals, to be effectively involved in it will require assistance, both from governments and the **voluntary** organisations that provide many of the services in question.

9.5 AN OVERVIEW

The analyses to this point has focussed separately on each of the stages of the policy process. When we stand back to look at the entire process, what picture of citizen involvement emerges? By far, the bulk of opportunities for public involvement arise at the policy design stage, mainly through moments of invited consultation conducted by the public service. The point at which policy instruments are being enacted by Parliament provides an additional occasion for representation and claims making at committee hearings. By contrast, few options are available.

In addition, although knowledge may be acquired, it is not well integrated into the **decision-making** processes. The reports of "what was said at public consultations often consist of a series of quotes that do not offer solid analyses of the extent or diversity of views held by the public. Even the **quotes sometimes** appear **sanitised** of the more emotional and passionate interjections. Yet, if **senior public** servants, **MPs** or Ministers do not personally take part in the consultations, they are totally dependent on these reports for their own learning.

The dimension of **transparency and feedback** is also poorly satisfied because participants **are** seldom told how and why decisions were made. This may well serve to increase mistrust in government, if citizens feel that they did their part but have no idea whether the government bothered to listen. **Finally**, the **community capacity building** dimension that figured quite prominently in the early days of citizen involvement has been almost totally ignored in recent years at the national level.

This review of contemporary citizen involvement also reveals that political institutions are not being used **as** effectively **as** they might be. Political parties play an unnecessarily weak role in engaging citizens, and **MPs** and Parliament tend to be underused. The intergovernmental machinery, while increasingly important as a player, is as closed as ever to non-governmental actors. Although the public service has taken an active part in involving citizens, particularly at the policy design stage, the consistency and manner in which this is done varies enormously across departments. **Current** efforts at relationship building are hindered by increased mobility within the federal public service, which forces interpersonal connections to be constantly re-established and trust to be rebuilt. It is also the case that most of these efforts are focussed on engaging the organised parts of constituencies, not individual citizens.

On major policy issues, the standard template of public consultation is deployed, with all of the problems that have come to be associated with it. Government controls the **agenda** and determines who is invited, information **flows** in one direction, and the process is episodic and **ad hoc**. To be fair, there is experimentation with other approaches in a few departments but, overall, innovation is inhibited and leadership for change on a government-wide basis lacking.

In sum, there is a need for both institutional and procedural reform to produce more effective means of involving citizens **if the** Canadian government is going to work effectively in a more collaborative manner and if it is to respond appropriately to a more mobilised and empowered civil society.

9.6 SUMMARY

Emerging forms of governance and a more empowered civil society have created an interest in and a need to rethink how citizens are involved in policy processes. The shift from talking about *public consultation* to *citizen engagement* reflects an interest in creating more interactive forms of participation that lead to policy learning and promote the development of citizenship skills and community capacity.

When Canada was first constructing its own citizenship regime in the 1940s, the importance of voluntary organisations as vehicles for promoting citizenship was explicitly recognised. During the individualisation that the customer revolution advanced by New Public Management and populism precipitated, the value of organisations as democratic intermediaries was undermined. As we again rethink the relationship of government to citizens as part of a trend toward horizontal governance, the valued role of civil society organisations in promoting citizenship needs to be reconstituted.

Civil society organisations and citizens are already facing consultation overload and make their own distinctions between *consultation* and *meaningful consultation* in which it seems worthwhile to invest their limited resources by participating. Yet, if departments unilaterally decide that a policy issue is not of interest to citizens or that their input is of no value to government and prematurely foreclose on involvement, they also damage their relationship with the public. The challenge for the central agency machinery will be to help departments develop and communicate appropriate guidelines regarding when citizen *involvement* is required and valuable, and when it is not.

The best approach is to understand both citizen involvement and the policy process as multidimensional. Ultimately, although all of the dimensions we have described are important in creating a sustained, legitimate and effective approach to citizen involvement, some are more important at certain stages of policy-making than at others. Similarly, particular institutions are more capable of providing access and facilitating effective involvement at some stages of the policy process than at others. Expanding citizen involvement at one stage of policy processes, using a specific route or institution, does not necessarily cut out other institutions and players at other stages. What should be clear is that the effective involvement of citizens in policy processes *involves* a mix of institutions, processes and reforms. No one technique, nor technology, nor a single new institution is a panacea. Both old and new are needed. We are therefore challenged to identify the best mix, one that will enhance both governance and citizenship, and reduce the democratic deficit.

9.7 EXERCISES

- 1) Analyse the factors that have renewed interest in Civil Society participation in Governance in Canada.
- 2) Describe various stages of policy process in Canada and the role civil society plays in them.
- 3) Write an essay on the nature, role and limitations of Civil Society participation in Canada's policy process.