

POLS2015 Government and Politics of Hong Kong

Participatory Budgeting project

Summary and Reflections

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Part 1: Undertaking the Public Consultation

1. The purpose and objective of public consultation

2. Identification of stakeholders groups and individuals to be consulted

3. Appropriate and inclusive methods of consultation

4. Sufficient resources provided

5. Consultation advised online/ offline media



8. Evaluation of public opinion account for future consultation

7. Analyzation of the submissions received

6. Sufficient time to consider

Argue “For” citizens to participate in policy-making process

Improved governance: increasing the Hong Kong government’s credibility through listening to the public ideas	Opportunities for active citizenships to increase democratic legitimacy , improve reputations for public bodies , and increase greater accountability of public bodies
Improved quality of policies, projects, proposals: Hong Kong policies can be monitored by Hong Kong people in order to make good use of all the public funds	Enable people to share in the responsibility for improving their own quality of life (e.g. health and well-being, or the local environment)

Argue “For” citizens to participate in policy-making process

Greater social cohesion: public engagement and awareness of Hong Kong can be raised	Communication network for all citizens to share their opinions and monitor the government in order to increased equality of access to policy and decision-making processes
Greater capacity building and learning: people in Hong Kong (especially the youngsters) tend to participate in policy making for their society	Platform to raise the public awareness and increase their knowledge of public institutions with understanding the boundaries and limitations of different public bodies

Argue “**Against**” citizens to participate in policy-making process

<p>Low efficiency: serious filibuster always occur in policy-making process in Hong Kong</p>	<p>Traditional public engagement approaches takes a longer time with less satisfying results, leading to an even lower rate of participation.</p>
<p>Costly: lot of effort, human and material resources have to be put during the public participation exercise</p>	<p>The arrangement of forums, workshops or public meetings requires adequate funds, long preparation time, and enough staff. Comparing with the benefits, the transaction cost may be even higher.</p>

In part 1, the public consultation process, I understood more about the principles, and targets of **public consultation exercise in Hong Kong** by reading the general circular.

Moreover, in building up the public consultation database on the public consultation 2016-21 with my group 1 members, I figured out how to look at every government bill through the **reports of legislative council briefs, papers and relevant meetings.**

31 July 2008

General Circular No. 7/2008

Public Opinion

(Note : Distribution of this circular is Scale C. It should be brought to the attention of Directors of Bureaux, Heads of Departments, and officers who, because of the function of their post, are required to take action on, or to be informed of, the circular.)

This circular updates General Circular No. 3/97 which outlined the means by which the Government collects and assesses public opinion when formulating its policies and programmes. General Circular No. 3/97 is hereby cancelled.

A. Public Consultation - Policy and Principles

2. It is the Government's declared policy to be, as far as possible, open and transparent, and to be accountable to the public. To fulfil these commitments, it is essential for the Administration to respond in a timely manner to public demands, and to take public opinion into account when formulating policies and programmes.

3. A careful assessment of public opinion, obtained through consultation and analysis, should help the Government understand the likely reaction of the community to any proposed course of action or change in policy. Public debate assists both in achieving consensus on the direction of public policy and in securing acceptance of unpopular but unavoidable measures. Where measures proposed are known to be unpopular, it is particularly important that the Government consults in a timely and thorough way and is seen to have done so. A good public airing of the issues in advance is more likely to gain understanding and acceptance of the measures eventually adopted than secrecy and surprise.

Part 2: Objectives and positions of Participatory Budgeting

01

Reallocation of resources

- Reducing inequalities in the distribution of income and wealth In accordance with the economic and social priorities of the society

02

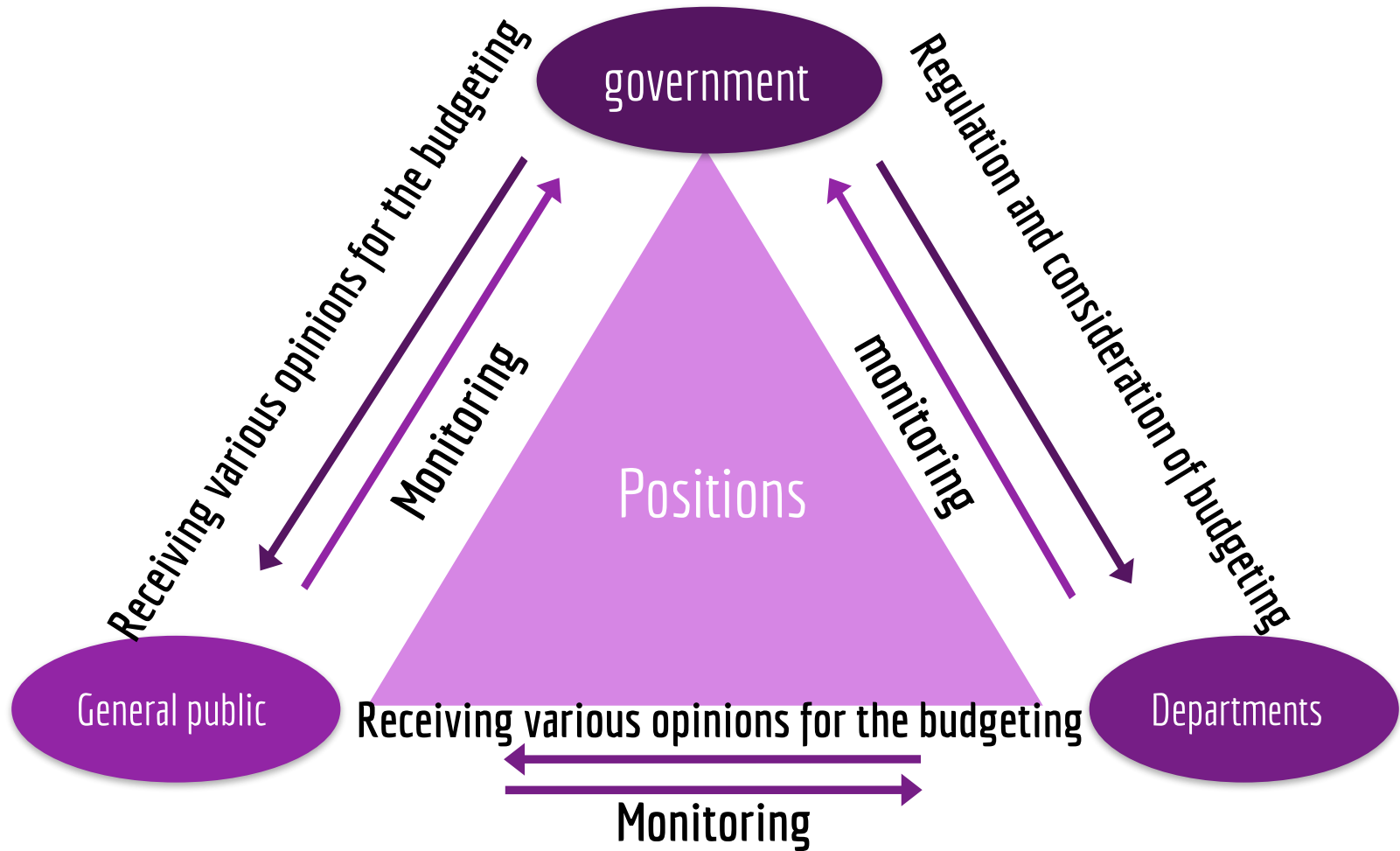
Tax concessions/
subsidies

- Maintaining economic stability to prevent business fluctuations, inflation and deflation

03

Directly producing goods
and services

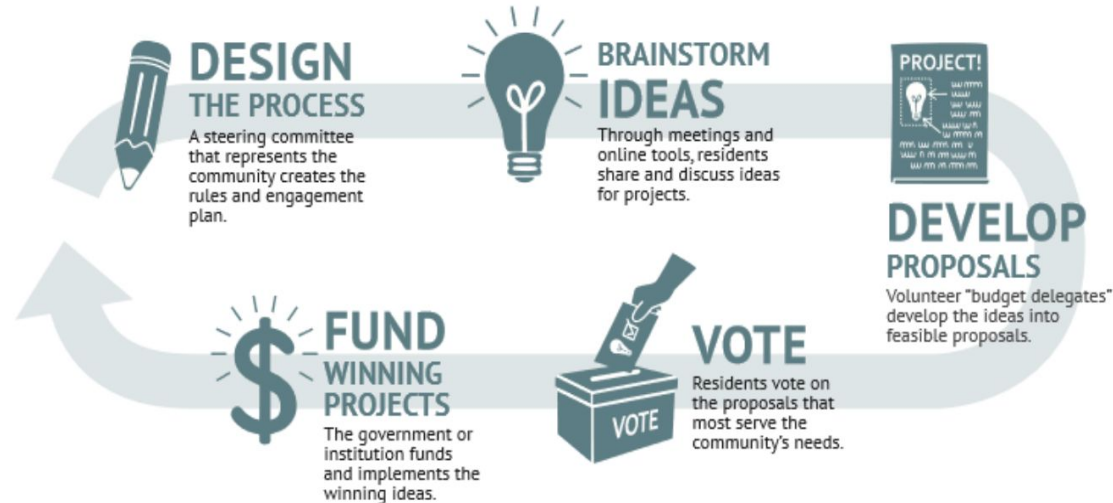
- Involving public to comment on the actual needs to improve governments' distribution



Then, I caught up on the whole **process** of participatory budgeting.

How does PB work?

PB is an annual cycle of engagement that is integrated into a regular budgeting process. A typical PB process follows these steps, usually over the course of a year:



Why do we need PB?

I also took a deep look at participatory budgeting exercises in Hong Kong, Wuxi (Jiangsu), and Paris. After comparing the exercises in these three places, I knew that the three constitutions of PB are **active participation, high level of redistribution, and transparency.**

*PB allows citizens to be **directly** involved in considering and deciding how to prioritize and manage the allocated resources by **monitoring** public spending.

Part 3: Conducting Opinion Surveys

Telephonic Interview

Advantages

1. Quickest of survey techniques
2. Low refusal rate
3. Memory factor eliminated
4. Low cost occasionally
5. High returns
6. Approach and questions standardized
7. Mostly reliable in matters of costly and time-consuming routine research

Disadvantages

1. No detailed data available
2. Observation eliminated
3. Limited information
4. Little time for orientation and reaction
5. Respondents' antagonistic
6. Not essentially representative
7. Low credibility

Advantages of an online survey



Accuracy

In an online research study, the margin of error is low, as the respondents register their responses by easy selection buttons.



Easy and quick to analyze

Since all the responses are registered online, it is straightforward to analyze the data in real-time.



Great branding exercise

Using logos and similar brand language gives the companies an advantage as respondents can connect better with the brand.



Ease of participation

Respondents can choose the appropriate time and place to record their responses.



Respondents can be honest and flexible

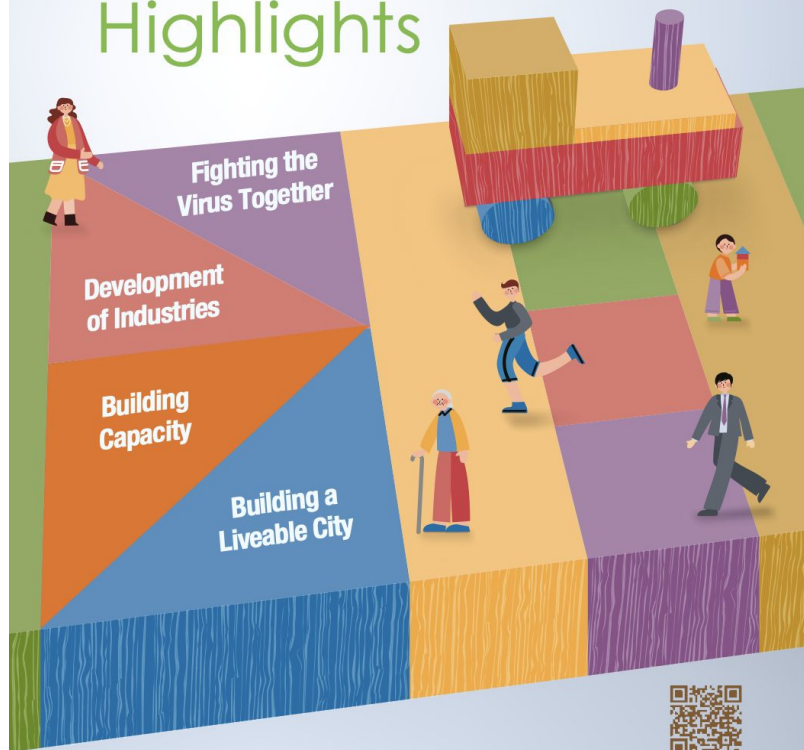
Respondents are honest with their answers and can omit questions or respondents to a more neutral option.



Survey templates

Leading online research tools have expert-designed ready survey templates that make it easier for researchers to choose from and conduct their research study.

The 2022-23 Budget Highlights



www.budget.gov.hk/2022/eng/index.html

In the last part of the project, I tried to find out the salient features of **Budget 2022/23** under the pandemic.

And I understood the principle of The Hong Kong Public Opinion Research Institute (PORI) in improving governance and social development by collecting the public needs, opinions and expectations.

How can I do better?

The zoom meeting on 19/4 was a grateful experience for me to understand how the participatory budgeting exercise progressed. Especially when I saw different perspectives of views and ideas raised by the participants, I thought I could do better in sharing my views to other groupmates too.

In addition, learning from the findings and resources in the past budgeting exercises may also allow me to have a more comprehensive understanding of the difficulties in the exercise.

Overall, I appreciate the work we have done in this semester, and I think the process of learning from 0 to all structures in the participatory budgeting exercise is the best gift after finishing the project.

