



UCLG TIPS TO ENGAGE YOUR CITY IN LEARNING

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WHAT IS A PEER REVIEW ?



PROLOGUE

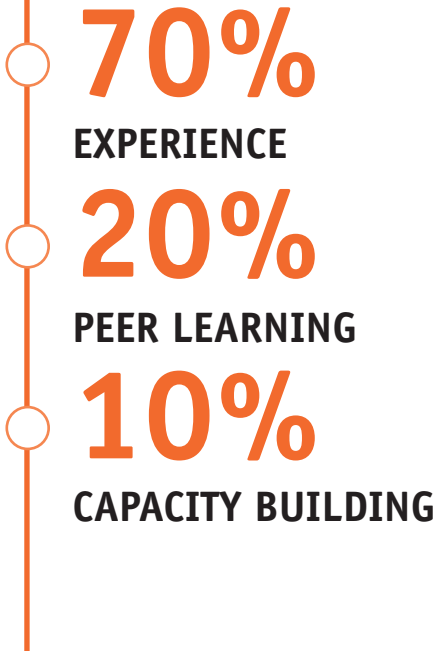
UCLG supports learning among local and regional governments and their associations promoting peer-to-peer ties as a means for mutual learning. UCLG believes in learning from experience as a strong tool to building capacities at the local government level and that officials themselves should share and learn from each other. Different methodologies exist such as peer learning and peer review among others. Many different peer learning events have been organized across the world by UCLG members and partners since the first learning exchange held in Durban in 2011. The on-site sharing of knowledge, practices and challenges is an inspiring opportunity for participants to learn from others. Moreover, peer reviews are a chance for cities to improve a policy or solve a problem with other cities' help.



1
What is
LEARNING?



LEARNING IS¹



Local government practitioners have the need for proved practical solutions. Practical experiences offer a holistic approach with technical aspects, governance practices, etc. Therefore, learning methods have to be action-oriented and tailor-made. Harold Jarche proposes that learning is, in its essence, social and states that "social learning is the process by which groups of people cooperate to learn with and from each other."

¹ Charles Jenning, 2013



2

Peer learning events

OBJECTIVES

KEY OBJECTIVES

1. Transferring knowledge, skills and experience from one municipality to another
2. Providing technical assistance to solve specific municipal challenges
3. Providing benchmarking and peer support

THE HOST

City or person in charge

- Be **action** oriented
- Confirm your strategy with **equals**
- From **theory** to practice and from **practice** to theory
- **Learn** faster from others' experiences

THE FACILITATOR

UCLG, Local Government Associations, Committees and Partners

- Gather on site information to nurture **advocacy**
- Have clear outcomes to **share** broadly
- **Support**
 - Development of methodological approaches
 - Networks with supporting organizations
 - The matching of cities
- Create opportunities of **exchange**

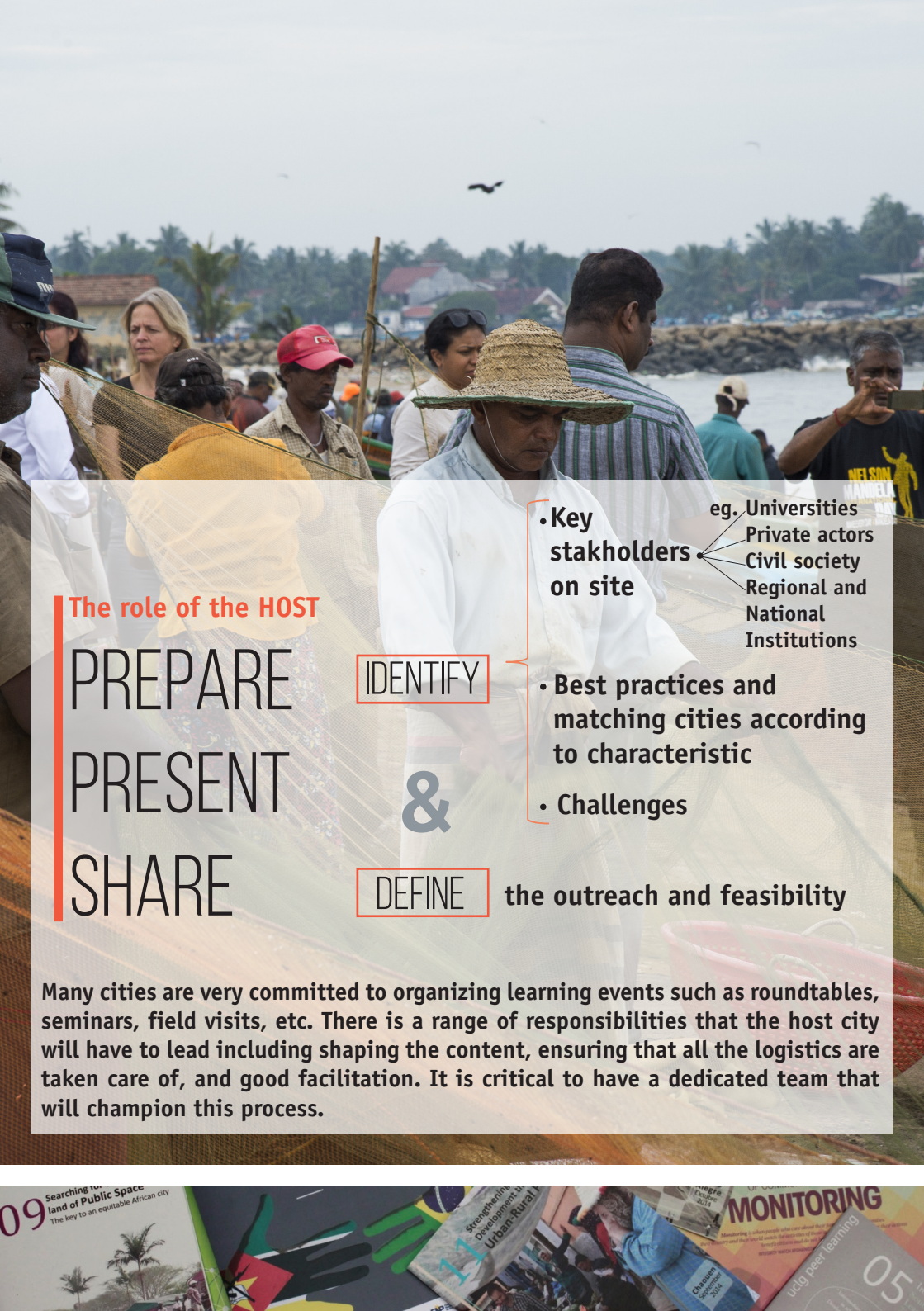
Peer learning means learning between equals who can be children, students, adults, practitioners, and even cities. During a peer learning event, participants listen actively and share their stories and experiences. Participants have different roles and are both trained and advisors which is different from the "classic" teaching relation in which the trained has a more passive role.



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Peer learning events

THE HOST



The role of the HOST

PREPARE
PRESENT
&
SHARE

IDENTIFY

DEFINE

• Key stakeholders on site

- eg. Universities
- Private actors
- Civil society
- Regional and National Institutions

• Best practices and matching cities according to characteristic

• Challenges

the outreach and feasibility

Many cities are very committed to organizing learning events such as roundtables, seminars, field visits, etc. There is a range of responsibilities that the host city will have to lead including shaping the content, ensuring that all the logistics are taken care of, and good facilitation. It is critical to have a dedicated team that will champion this process.





Peer learning event

The PARTICIPANTS



PARTICIPANTS' ROLE

- **Active listening**
- **Keep ad respect the rules**
- **Commitment**
 - Prepare
 - Present
 - Share & feedback
 - Continue & implement
- **Build trust**

The gathered participants of a peer learning have a certain expertise vis-à-vis the theme of the event. The big value of such an event is related to the comments reflecting on the presented cities' experiences. Also, a peer learning event gathers both decision makers and technicians to maximize the results. It is important that all the participants understand their roles and commit to respecting the ground rules. Participants must feel at ease and share openly and frankly in a climate of trust. This is very important for transformational action.



Peer learning events

UCLG & Partners

FACILITATOR:

UCLG OR PARTNERS' ROLE

ACTIVE LISTENING



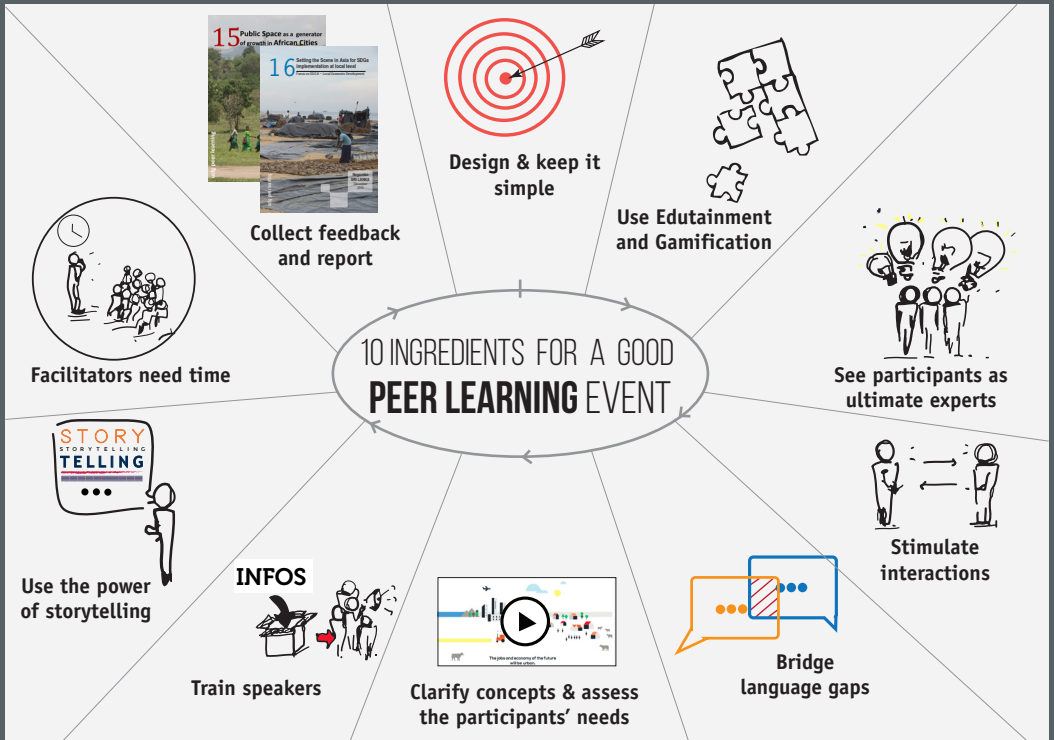
TALKING

- Help to build narrative from **concrete** to **universal**
- Document and relate evidences on **policies**
- Build **sense** from the received inputs
- Benchmark the city **status**
- Support the **analysis** of a challenge
- Support the **exchange** process

UCLG and partners, as well as experts have the role of converting lessons and outcomes into messages to be included in the International Urban Agenda for Local and Regional Governments. In other words, experts nurture advocacy from local experiences. Then, experts should have the capacity to adapt the general knowledge to cities' context. Experts must recognize that their knowledge and experience is contextual and that no "one size fits all" solution can work. Bottom-up and homegrown responses must be encouraged.

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Peer learning events Organizers' check list



Converting difficult issues of policy-making into "edutainment attention-intensive process" is extremely innovative and challenging. Each peer learning event is unique. Nevertheless, based on our experience some tips exist to make the events and workshops even more effective. If you think about a start, here we share some lessons:

1. DESIGN AND KEEP IT SIMPLE

Divide a learning event into separate structured sessions with a clear goal for each.

2. CLARIFY CONCEPTS AND ASSESS THE NEEDS OF PARTICIPANTS

Each theme has its own technical vocabulary and it should be clearly understood by all participants. Strong visual supports can be helpful.

3. AVOID COGNITIVE OVERLOAD

Create interactions between speakers and participants. Lectures and presentations should be limited to 15-20 minutes and separated by active learning modules (work in small groups, roundtable discussions etc.)

4. USE THE POWER OF STORYTELLING

Verbal storytelling combined with simple images and one-line concepts are the most powerful tool in reaching peoples' mind.

5. TRAIN SPEAKERS

Provide them bullet points with the expectations you have from them and the learning outcomes you are expecting. Include information about participants' profile and language skills.

6. BRIDGE LANGUAGE GAPS

International city-to-city learning events gather diverse participants. The level of a

common language can vary significantly. Lacking language skills, should not exclude anyone from taking an active part in the event.

7. RECEIVE PARTICIPANTS WITH PRACTICAL EXPERTISE

The key to the learning process lays in sharing the bottom-up knowledge from the participants. Experiences and knowledge from local participants are the greatest assets of international learning events. One of the interesting techniques based on case studies and "problem-based learning" treat learners as experts as they are challenged to solve a problem.

8. USE EDUTAINMENT AND GAMIFICATION

The more involved participants are, the faster and easier they learn. Gamification is the application of game-design elements and game principles in non-game contexts.

9. FACILITATORS are essential during city-to-city learning events as they make sure that the audience, the methodology, and the speakers are linked together. In order to be efficient, facilitators need reflection after each session and/or each day (if your event lasts more than a day). Without sharing observation, gathering outcomes of previous sessions it will not be easy to adjust methodology to the needs of each group and achieve the expected results.

10. COLLECT FEEDBACK AND REPORT

Each peer learning session, and more generally, each peer learning event is unique. Feedback and reports are therefore crucial to improve the coordination for the following event. Feedback can be collected ad hoc at the end of the sessions. Peer learning notes, used by UCLG, are essential to make the knowledge accessible and visible.

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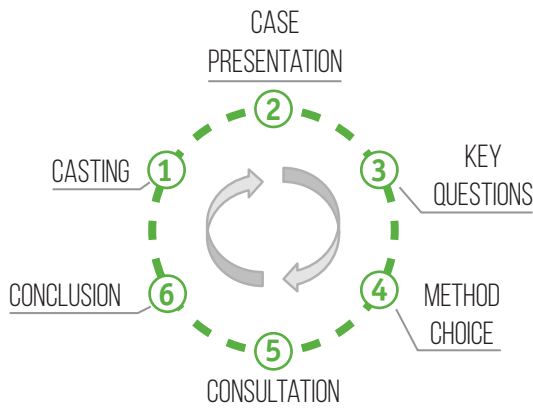
What is a PEER REVIEW ?

Peer reviews are increasingly used between managers but also within public administrations. It helps taking decisions out of the hierarchy of decision makers. For practitioners, like those active in UCLG Committees, a peer review is a tool that fosters personal relations between "critical friends"¹.

¹ Words of Amos Masondo said in Lilongwe during the Mentorship Program Brazil-Mozambique.

STEPS OF A PEER REVIEW

(feedback between colleagues)



There is no best teacher than colleagues facing similar challenges and looking for practical solutions. The peer review method enables the participants to learn from each other, be opened to new perspectives, and seek a solution by sharing opinions.

1-The first step is the **casting** in which a moderator and the presenter of the case are appointed. The rest of the peers (participants) volunteer as consultants.

2-Then comes the **case presentation** regarding the current situation and challenges.

3-**Key questions** have to be selected by the case in order to get advice from the consultants on expected

and specific points. In this sense, the problem has to be clearly identified.

4-Each case will have a tailored **method** for the consultation that has to be explained to the participants.

5-During the **consultation**, the participants will share their ideas, suggestions and contributions regarding the selected consultation. The presenter of the case becomes a listener while others consult.

6-As a **conclusion**, it is important to report the reflection and the lessons learned from the case presented including the consultants' comments. The presenter of the case gives feedback at the end about the general usefulness of the lessons.

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Jenning, Charles. *70:20:10: Framework Explained*, 70:20:10 Forum, 2013.

Tietze, Kim-Oliver. "Peer Group Supervision". <<http://www.peer-supervision.com/Ebene2/6phasen.html>>. 2 May 2016.

An increasing number of UCLG members and partners is engaged in learning and is even running learning institutes. Please contact us for more information and find more on our website : www.uclg-learning.org.

