



# INSPIRED: Where policy meets dialogue

INSPIRED

INSPIRED is **a method for policy dialogue** developed by the European Partnership for Democracy (EPD) and co-financed by the European Union. It has been successfully implemented in over a dozen countries, providing the structure and the tools to conduct results-oriented, multi-stakeholder dialogue processes around key policy issues. The process facilitation is put into the hands of domestic stakeholders, who are then supported by EPD and its specialised member organisations.

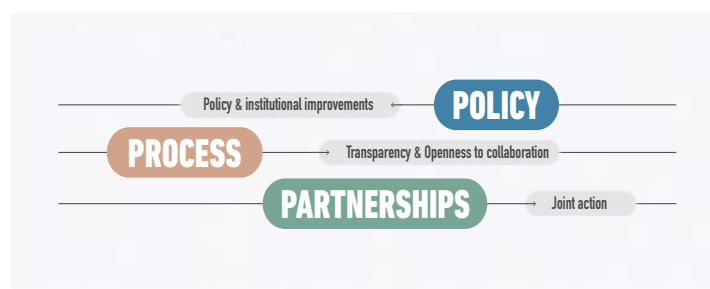
In the last decade, policy dialogue has become the key means for international cooperation to broker partnerships in developing countries. The INSPIRED method aims at making policy dialogue more inclusive and participatory by engaging actors that are often side-lined in government-led consultations. INSPIRED improves the potential impact and political sustainability of the policies supported by international donors by reconfiguring the relationships between stakeholders, who progressively recognise each other as valid interlocutors and begin to understand each other's interests and incentives for change.

## Why does INSPIRED make a difference?

The INSPIRED approach builds on the **democratic principles of inclusiveness and participation**, guiding multi-stakeholder dialogue processes that focus on evidence-based policy-making and promote the principles of transparency and accountability – key prerequisites for a functioning democracy.

## A three-tiered approach

The INSPIRED approach is **simultaneously policy-oriented, process-oriented and partnership-oriented**.



**Policy** acts as a middle ground and allows otherwise confronted stakeholders to structure their discussions along commonly shared concepts, methods and evidence to develop a common understanding of the challenges at stake and jointly propose concrete solutions that build on their respective strengths.

In any dialogue, the means are as important as the end, and compromises or consensus can only be achieved progressively, as a **process** that paves the way for mutual recognition among otherwise confronted stakeholders. Moreover, such involvement leads to long-term engagement, which in turns provides the foundation for real ownership over policy reform.

One of the most effective ways of building fruitful **partnerships** is to focus on both the specificities of a given policy (policy orientation) and the inner dynamics of the dialogue process (process orientation). Managed through open dialogue, relationships between actors specialised in different but strongly

## How does INSPIRED work in practice?

1. The INSPIRED approach is structured around three interrelated phases. Each phase – (1) Collective Assessment, (2) Consensus Building and (3) Monitoring and Alignment – is oriented towards delivering different results and structuring the joint work of the stakeholders involved: a Participatory Policy Assessment (1), a Roadmap for Reform (2) and a Policy Network Strategy (3).

### 1. Collective Assessment Phase

The Collective Assessment Phase maps the political context in the target country in order to validate, adjust, or change the policy area initially selected. In doing so, it contributes to:

- Building trust through focus groups, collective mappings, participatory assessments and other forms of joint research on both the policy landscape and the policy players that have either a say or a stake in the policy area under discussion.
- Promoting a culture of evidence-based policy making by assisting the key stakeholders in jointly producing a **Participatory Policy Assessment (PPA)**.

### 2. Consensus Building Phase

The final phase builds on the Roadmap for Reform in order to translate the consensus achieved by the stakeholders into concrete actions and to ensure its impact on the policy or policies at stake, which is to be assessed in terms of the influence exerted through:

- Monitoring the recommendations of the Roadmap for Reform
- Ensuring the alignment of donor support to the priorities outlined in the Roadmap
- Developing a Policy Network Strategy to maintain the levels of trust and cooperation achieved during the dialogue

## What change can INSPIRED bring?



### POLICY AND INSTITUTIONAL IMPROVEMENTS

Improved policy framing to include diverse views

Strengthened spaces for policy dialogue and evaluation

Strengthened policy networks between key formal and informal actors

Improved policy knowledge and access to information

Improved policy implementation through multi-stakeholder coordination



### TRANSPARENCY AND OPENNESS TO COLLABORATION

Cooperation or willingness to work with others

Reform or willingness to improve policy/implementation

Transparency or willingness to produce and share information

Monitoring or willingness (and ability) to monitor policy implementation



### JOINT ACTIONS

Policy networks identified, mapped and strengthened

Joint projects developed

Joint advocacy initiatives collectively conceived and implemented

Improved access to decision-makers by CSOs and other actors

CSOs securing funds due to INSPIRED support

## Track record

The approach has been used to structure **21** different policy dialogue processes in **14** different countries since 2012. Themes that were addressed range from women's political participation (Ghana) to social security reform (Bolivia) and economic rights of people with disabilities (Mongolia). Most recently...

- In [Kyrgyzstan](#), from 2019 to 2022, EPD's Media Policy Dialogue engaged government officials, parliamentary deputies, non-governmental and civil society organisations as well as members of the Central Electoral Commission to create a more conducive media environment during the electoral and post-electoral period.
- In [Cabo Verde](#), from 2020 to 2022, EPD and Associação Cabo-Verdiana de Luta Contra a Violência Baseada no Género (ACLCVBG) jointly conducted a policy dialogue building on the results of participatory audits of gender-based violence policy. Dialogues were held on each island involving government entities, civil society organizations, trade unions, GBV victims, and other stakeholders.
- In [Morocco](#), from 2021 to 2023, EPD's policy dialogue centred on transparency and accountability and created mechanisms to systematically involve social groups that do not often participate in public affairs, including young women and women from remote areas. It also strengthened cooperation between civil society, citizens' initiatives and public authorities, including Parliament.