

**Summary of Capacity Building Indicators
On Public Participation**

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General Capacity Building Indicators

Summary of findings

The presentation of values in the findings charts uses colour coding to show the values given in response to each indicator as following:

very good
good
intermediate
poor
very bad
not applicable

General Capacity Building	
Scope and quality of effort	
144	How well does the government provide training or curriculum resources on access rights to public school teachers?
145	How well does the government provide opportunities and incentives for public school teachers' professional development in environmental education?
146	How equitably does the government implement rules and regulations for registration and operation of CSOs?
147	How equitably does the government implement rules and regulations for registration and operation of media organizations?
148	To what extent does the government provide free legal aid?

Comments and Recommendations

Indicator 144: How well does the government provide training or curriculum resources on access rights to public school teachers?

There are presently no plans for preparatory schemes to equip teachers to effectively teach access rights.

Recommendations: Access rights should be made an integral part of the Civics, Social and Political Education (CSPE) curriculum. Teachers should be provided with the necessary training for effective curriculum delivery.

Indicator 145: How well does the government provide opportunities and incentives for public school teachers' professional development in environmental education?

There is moderate effort to provide teachers with opportunities and incentives with much room for improvement.

Recommendations: More opportunities and incentives such as orientation workshops and seminars geared towards continuous professional development should be put in place for teachers of environmental education.

Indicator 146: How equitably does the government implement rules and regulations for registration and operation of CSOs?

There is currently no legal framework for the registration and operation of CSOs in Ireland.

Recommendations: The Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs in December 2003 published a consultation document on 'Establishing a Modern Statutory Framework for Charities'. The aim is to facilitate and put in place an appropriate regulatory framework for registered

charities. It should be transformed into a legal instrument, to provide the legal framework for the registration and operation of CSOs.

Indicator 147: How equitably does the government implement rules and regulations for registration and operation of media organizations?

The media space in Ireland includes public sector broadcasting, independent broadcasting, and print media. There are fairly equitable legal and administrative frameworks for registration and operation of media organisations

Recommendations: Licensing decisions made by the Broadcasting Commission of Ireland should provide detailed information especially when licenses are denied.

Indicator 148: To what extent does the government provide free legal aid?

In Ireland, legal aid is available for both civil and criminal cases, but not generally in environmental cases. The fact that civil legal aid is not available to (a.) a group or (b.) an individual member of a group, where that member is acting on behalf of the group is clearly a problem for environmental activists. Civil legal aid is also not available in respect of proceedings before an administrative tribunal such as An Bord Pleanála (Planning Board) or Environmental Protection Agency oral hearings. This situation has profound and palpable impact in the particular context of planning and environment.

Recommendations: Free legal aid should be provided both for groups and for individuals acting in the public interest as well as for administrative tribunals involved in environmental issues. The earnings threshold for

access to legal aid in public interest cases should be raised to the index-linked level of the average industrial wage.