

A BRIEF ON METHODOLOGICAL GUIDANCE IN THE ORGANIZATION AND ANALYSIS OF OUTCOMES OF TJ CONSULTATIONS



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As the consultations on the 'Policy Options for Transitional Justice in Ethiopia' is about to be finalized, the next important step in the transitional justice (TJ) policy preparation process is to determine on how to systematically organize the outcomes of dozens of nation-wide consultations in a way that are usable to the drafting of the TJ policy. This brief proposes a methodological guide on how to pursue the task of the organization and analysis of the outcomes of the consultation process. Four steps can be followed in that regard.

Step 1: Structuring data files in folders

Before starting to work on the data, there is a need to check whether the available files (voice, transcriptions, minutes) are properly organized in folders. Each file should be named consistently, indicating the geographic location and composition of the participants of the consultation. This is important not only for easy access to and efficient use of the files but also forms part of the historical records of the TJ process.

Step 2: Designing the organization of data

In this step, it is imperative to identify the most important pieces of information that need to be captured for analysis and reporting. While different formats can be used to organize the data for analysis, spreadsheet or table format seems to be more feasible in our case. The data can be organized along with the eight questions that informed the Focus Group Discussion (FGD) in each consultation. However, for an easier use of the table, the TJWGE may consider merging some of these questions taking the consultation process into account. In the process of organizing the data along the questions, we need to ensure that some of the unique experiences and concerns of participants are properly captured. There is a need to pay particular attention to the voices of victims and women. Perspectives from the latter participants could be instrumental in developing gender-sensitive policy.

Step 3: Qualitative data

Once the format for organizing the data is developed, the next step is to drill down relevant through the raw transcribed data to identify relevant information that would feed into the TJ Policy. In doing so, it may be necessary to summarize the opinions of the participants in a manner that responds to the questions while maintaining quotes and descriptive examples for better explanation. Although the data will be dominantly qualitative, it is important for the TJWGE to identify issues that require quantitative data. Some of the options forwarded for the FGD, for instance, in relation to the institutions that should lead prosecution, truth and reconciliation and reparation indeed require quantitative data to clearly highlight which options receive dominant support. The quantitative data can serve as important consideration while drafting the policy.

Step 4: analysis and reporting

Given the bulky nature of the organized data, it will be a bit difficult for the TJWGE to rely on it for the drafting of the policy. More so in the context of the limited time that the working group has to prepare the draft. A separate analysis of the organized data is therefore crucial for immediate use to the drafting of the policy. The analysis is expected to highlight key outcomes of the consultation, the dominant themes that featured throughout the consultation, and interesting perspectives that emerged from the consultation. Such analysis should be supported by infographics for better understanding and visual representation.