

# Community Water Assembly Guide for Democratic Water Governance

## Building People Power for Water Justice

### Overview

This guide provides step-by-step instructions for establishing and operating Community Water Assemblies—democratic bodies that give communities direct control over water decisions affecting their lives. Based on successful participatory governance models worldwide, these assemblies transform water management from top-down service delivery to community-controlled stewardship.

**Core Purpose:** Create ongoing democratic forums where community members make decisions about water resource management, infrastructure development, service delivery, and advocacy priorities while building collective power for water justice.

### Assembly Structure and Organization

#### Membership and Representation

##### Open Membership Model:

- Any community member can participate in assembly meetings
- Voting rights for all residents over 16 years old
- Guest participation for affected non-residents (workers, downstream communities)
- Formal recognition of diverse community definitions and boundaries

##### Guaranteed Representation:

- **Women's Caucus:** Minimum 50% women in leadership positions
- **Youth Council:** Representatives under 25 with full voting rights
- **Elder Advisory:** Traditional knowledge holders and community elders
- **Indigenous Leadership:** Sovereign representation where applicable
- **Accessibility Advocates:** People with disabilities and accessibility experts

##### Geographic Representation:

- Neighborhood delegates for large communities
- Rural-urban coordination for mixed communities
- Watershed representation crossing political boundaries
- Representation for informal settlements and marginalized areas

#### Governance Structure

##### Assembly Plenary (All Members):

- **Monthly Meetings:** Regular decision-making sessions open to all
- **Quarterly Planning:** Strategic planning and budget allocation
- **Annual Assembly:** Major policy decisions and leadership selection
- **Emergency Sessions:** Crisis response and urgent decision-making

##### Coordinating Council (Elected Leadership):

- **7-11 Members:** Manageable size with diverse representation
- **2-Year Terms:** Staggered terms to maintain continuity
- **Recall Procedures:** Democratic accountability for leadership

- **Facilitation Rotation:** Shared meeting leadership responsibilities

#### **Working Committees** (Issue-Focused Groups):

- **Infrastructure Committee:** Technical planning and project oversight
- **Finance Committee:** Budget development and financial oversight
- **Advocacy Committee:** Policy advocacy and external representation
- **Conflict Resolution Committee:** Mediation and dispute resolution
- **Cultural Committee:** Traditional knowledge and ceremony integration

#### **Technical Advisory** (Expert Support):

- **Community Technicians:** Local technical expertise and training
- **External Advisors:** Engineering, legal, and policy expertise
- **Traditional Knowledge Keepers:** Indigenous and elder wisdom
- **Youth Innovation Team:** Technology and creative solutions

### **Decision-Making Processes**

#### **Consensus-Building Approach:**

1. **Information Sharing:** Present issue background and options
2. **Small Group Discussion:** Break into diverse small groups for discussion
3. **Report Back:** Each group shares key points and concerns
4. **Proposal Development:** Working group develops proposal based on input
5. **Community Review:** Community reviews and suggests modifications
6. **Final Decision:** Consensus preferred, super-majority vote (75%) as backup

#### **Meeting Facilitation:**

- **Rotating Facilitators:** Different community members lead meetings
- **Structured Agenda:** Clear time limits and process agreements
- **Multiple Languages:** Interpretation for linguistic diversity
- **Accessibility:** Sign language, visual aids, and physical accessibility
- **Cultural Protocols:** Integration of traditional meeting practices

#### **Conflict Resolution:**

- **Community Mediation:** Trained community mediators for disputes
- **Restorative Circles:** Traditional conflict resolution approaches
- **External Mediation:** Independent mediators for complex conflicts
- **Appeal Processes:** Democratic review of controversial decisions

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## **Step-by-Step Assembly Formation**

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### **Phase 1: Foundation Building (Months 1-3)**

#### **Step 1: Initial Organizing Team Formation**

##### **Convening Core Group** (Week 1-2):

- Identify 5-8 committed community members representing diverse perspectives
- Include women, youth, elders, and different community areas/groups
- Ensure Indigenous leadership where applicable
- Schedule initial planning meeting

##### **Core Group Planning** (Week 3-4):

- Assess community readiness and capacity for assembly formation
- Map existing community organizations and leadership structures
- Identify potential allies and opposition
- Develop outreach strategy for broader community engagement

**Community Mapping** (Week 3-6):

- Document current water governance (who makes decisions and how)
- Identify water challenges and community priorities
- Map community assets including organizations, leaders, and knowledge
- Assess community demographics and representation needs

**Step 2: Community Education and Engagement****Educational Campaign** (Month 2):

- Host community forums explaining assembly concept and benefits
- Share examples of successful assemblies from other communities
- Address concerns and answer questions about democracy and power
- Integrate with existing community events and gatherings

**Door-to-Door Outreach** (Month 2-3):

- Visit households to discuss assembly concept and gather input
- Listen to water concerns and priorities from different community members
- Invite participation and identify potential leaders
- Build support and address resistance through dialogue

**Cultural Integration** (Month 2-3):

- Consult with traditional leaders about governance approaches
- Integrate assembly planning with cultural events and ceremonies
- Respect existing governance structures while building new capacity
- Honor traditional knowledge and cultural protocols

**Step 3: Founding Assembly Process****Preparatory Meetings** (Month 3):

- Hold neighborhood meetings to discuss assembly structure and priorities
- Gather input on meeting schedules, locations, and accessibility needs
- Discuss representation and leadership selection processes
- Address concerns and build consensus around assembly formation

**Founding Assembly** (End Month 3):

- Large community gathering to formally establish assembly
- Adopt assembly charter or constitution through democratic process
- Select initial coordinating council and committee leaders
- Celebrate assembly formation and community power building

**Phase 2: Structure Development (Months 4-6)****Step 4: Governance Structure Implementation****Leadership Development** (Month 4):

- Train coordinating council in facilitation and democratic leadership
- Establish committee structures and working group formation
- Develop conflict resolution and decision-making procedures

- Create communication systems and meeting logistics

**Charter and Bylaws Development** (Month 4-5):

- Draft governing documents through community participation
- Define membership, voting procedures, and leadership responsibilities
- Establish meeting schedules, quorum requirements, and amendment processes
- Include accessibility, cultural protocols, and accountability mechanisms

**Legal Recognition** (Month 5-6):

- Research legal recognition options (incorporation, government recognition)
- Develop legal entity structure that maintains community control
- Establish bank accounts and financial management systems
- Create legal standing for contracts and advocacy

**Step 5: Capacity Building and Training****Democratic Skills Training** (Month 5-6):

- Facilitation training for multiple community members
- Conflict resolution and consensus-building workshops
- Financial literacy and budget development training
- Public speaking and advocacy skills development

**Technical Knowledge Building** (Month 5-6):

- Water system basics and community monitoring training
- Policy analysis and advocacy strategy workshops
- Project planning and management skill development
- Grant writing and fundraising capacity building

**Cultural and Spiritual Integration** (Month 6):

- Traditional knowledge workshops and elder teaching
- Ceremony and cultural protocol integration
- Intergenerational dialogue and knowledge sharing
- Cultural celebration of assembly achievements

**Phase 3: Operations and Action (Months 7-12)****Step 6: First Priority Projects****Community Water Assessment** (Month 7-8):

- Comprehensive community-controlled assessment of water needs and assets
- Technical analysis combined with community knowledge and priorities
- Identification of priority improvement projects and advocacy goals
- Development of community action plan and implementation timeline

**Quick Win Projects** (Month 8-10):

- Small-scale projects that demonstrate assembly effectiveness
- Community infrastructure improvements or service advocacy
- Policy advocacy victories that benefit community
- Celebration of achievements and community power building

**Budget Development** (Month 9-10):

- First community budget through participatory budgeting process
- Fundraising strategy and resource mobilization planning

- Transparent financial management and accountability systems
- Integration of community contributions with external resources

### Step 7: Advocacy and External Engagement

#### Government Relationship Building (Month 10-11):

- Formal introduction of assembly to local government officials
- Advocacy for assembly recognition and decision-making authority
- Policy advocacy on priority community water issues
- Coalition building with other communities and organizations

#### Service Provider Engagement (Month 11-12):

- Relationship building with water utilities and service providers
- Advocacy for improved service delivery and community oversight
- Negotiation of community participation in service decisions
- Development of community oversight and accountability mechanisms

#### Network Building (Month 12):

- Connection with other community assemblies and water advocates
- Participation in regional and national water justice networks
- Sharing of assembly model and lessons learned
- Solidarity building with other communities and movements

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## Practical Tools and Templates

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### Assembly Charter Template

**Preamble:** *"We, the people of [Community Name], recognizing that water is essential for life and that democratic participation is essential for justice, hereby establish this Community Water Assembly to exercise collective control over water decisions affecting our community."*

#### Article I: Purpose and Principles

- Ensure universal access to safe, affordable water and sanitation
- Exercise democratic control over community water resources and services
- Protect water sources and promote sustainable water management
- Build community power and advocate for water justice
- Honor traditional knowledge and cultural water practices

#### Article II: Membership and Participation

- Open membership for all community residents over 16
- Voting rights for all members in good standing
- Special representation for marginalized groups
- Accessibility and inclusion requirements
- Guest participation procedures for non-residents

#### Article III: Structure and Leadership

- Assembly plenary as highest decision-making body
- Coordinating council composition and election procedures
- Committee structure and working group formation
- Leadership terms, responsibilities, and accountability
- Recall and removal procedures for leadership

## Article IV: Decision-Making and Meetings

- Monthly assembly meetings with public notice requirements
- Consensus-building procedures and voting thresholds
- Quorum requirements and accessibility standards
- Meeting facilitation and participation procedures
- Conflict resolution and appeal processes

## Article V: Financial Management

- Community control over assembly budget and resources
- Transparent financial management and reporting
- Fundraising and resource mobilization authority
- Community oversight of financial decisions
- Audit and accountability procedures

## Meeting Agenda Template

**Community Water Assembly - [Date] Time:** [Start] - [End] | **Location:** [Address] | **Interpretation:** [Languages Available]

### 1. Opening and Welcome (10 minutes)

- Land acknowledgment and community recognition
- Introductions for new participants
- Review of meeting agreements and accessibility

### 2. Community Announcements (15 minutes)

- Water-related community news and updates
- Upcoming events and opportunities
- Recognition and celebrations

### 3. Reports and Updates (20 minutes)

- Coordinating council report
- Committee updates and recommendations
- Financial report and budget status
- Project implementation updates

### 4. Main Discussion Topic (45 minutes)

- Background presentation and information sharing
- Small group discussion (15 minutes)
- Report back and full group discussion (20 minutes)
- Proposal development and refinement (10 minutes)

### 5. Decision Items (30 minutes)

- Present proposals for community decision
- Questions, discussion, and clarification
- Consensus building or voting process
- Implementation planning and responsibility assignment

### 6. Planning and Coordination (15 minutes)

- Next meeting planning and agenda setting
- Task assignments and volunteer coordination
- Calendar review and event planning



## 7. Closing (5 minutes)

- Meeting evaluation and feedback
- Appreciation and closing ceremony

### Accessibility Features:

- Interpretation provided for [languages]
- Materials available in large print and braille
- Childcare provided in [location]
- Transportation assistance available
- Virtual participation option: [platform/phone]

## Facilitation Guide

### Pre-Meeting Preparation:

- **Agenda Development:** Work with coordinating council to prepare agenda
- **Material Preparation:** Gather background information and visual aids
- **Space Setup:** Arrange seating for accessibility and participation
- **Technology Check:** Test interpretation equipment and virtual participation
- **Childcare Coordination:** Ensure childcare providers and space ready

### Opening Facilitation:

- **Welcome Everyone:** Create inclusive and welcoming atmosphere
- **Land Acknowledgment:** Honor Indigenous peoples and traditional territories
- **Accessibility Check:** Ensure everyone can participate fully
- **Meeting Agreements:** Review community norms for respectful participation
- **Agenda Review:** Confirm agenda and timing with community

### Discussion Facilitation:

- **Multiple Voices:** Ensure diverse participation and representation
- **Time Management:** Keep discussions focused while allowing full participation
- **Conflict Navigation:** Address disagreements constructively and respectfully
- **Visual Recording:** Use flip charts or other tools to track discussion
- **Energy Management:** Monitor group energy and take breaks as needed

### Decision-Making Facilitation:

- **Clear Proposals:** Ensure proposals are well-defined and understood
- **Question Period:** Allow clarification questions before decision process
- **Consensus Testing:** Check for consensus before moving to voting
- **Vote Management:** Conduct clear, fair voting procedures when needed
- **Decision Recording:** Document decisions clearly with implementation details

### Closing Facilitation:

- **Summary:** Review key decisions and next steps
- **Appreciation:** Acknowledge participation and contributions
- **Evaluation:** Gather feedback on meeting process and content
- **Next Steps:** Confirm responsibilities and next meeting planning
- **Cultural Closing:** Honor cultural protocols and community traditions

## Committee Structure Templates

### Infrastructure Committee

- **Purpose:** Plan, oversee, and evaluate community water infrastructure projects
- **Membership:** Community members with technical interest, professional expertise welcome
- **Responsibilities:** Project planning, contractor oversight, community education, maintenance planning
- **Meeting Schedule:** Bi-weekly during project phases, monthly otherwise
- **Decision Authority:** Recommend projects to assembly, manage approved project implementation

### Finance Committee

- **Purpose:** Develop budgets, oversee financial management, and ensure transparency
- **Membership:** Community members with financial interest and skills, external advisors welcome
- **Responsibilities:** Budget development, financial oversight, fundraising, audit coordination
- **Meeting Schedule:** Monthly, additional meetings during budget development
- **Decision Authority:** Recommend budgets to assembly, approve expenditures within approved budget

### Advocacy Committee

- **Purpose:** Represent community interests in policy advocacy and external negotiations
- **Membership:** Community members with interest in policy and external representation
- **Responsibilities:** Policy research, government relations, coalition building, campaign coordination
- **Meeting Schedule:** Monthly, additional meetings during advocacy campaigns
- **Decision Authority:** Develop advocacy positions for assembly approval, represent community in negotiations

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## Success Strategies and Best Practices

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### Building Inclusive Participation

#### Address Participation Barriers:

- **Childcare:** Provide free childcare during all meetings and events
- **Transportation:** Organize carpools or provide transportation assistance
- **Timing:** Hold meetings at times accessible to working families
- **Location:** Meet in accessible, centrally located community spaces
- **Language:** Provide interpretation and multilingual materials
- **Technology:** Offer multiple participation options including virtual and phone

#### Cultural Integration:

- **Traditional Protocols:** Honor existing cultural meeting and decision-making practices
- **Spiritual Dimension:** Include ceremony, prayer, or spiritual practice as appropriate
- **Elder Wisdom:** Create formal roles for elders and traditional knowledge holders
- **Youth Voice:** Ensure meaningful youth participation beyond tokenism
- **Diverse Leadership:** Rotate leadership to build broad community capacity

#### Addressing Power Dynamics:

- **Economic Inclusion:** Ensure low-income community members can participate fully
- **Gender Equity:** Address cultural barriers to women's participation and leadership



- **Educational Diversity:** Value diverse forms of knowledge and educational backgrounds
- **Newcomer Integration:** Welcome and support participation by new community members
- **Conflict Sensitivity:** Address historical conflicts and tensions constructively

## Maintaining Democratic Accountability

### Leadership Accountability:

- **Term Limits:** Prevent power concentration through leadership rotation
- **Recall Procedures:** Enable community to remove leaders who don't serve community
- **Regular Reporting:** Require leaders to report regularly to community
- **Open Finances:** Maintain complete transparency in financial management
- **Conflict of Interest:** Establish clear policies for conflicts of interest

### Decision-Making Transparency:

- **Public Records:** Maintain accessible records of all meetings and decisions
- **Decision Rationale:** Document reasoning behind major decisions
- **Community Input:** Ensure community input on all major decisions
- **Appeal Processes:** Provide mechanisms for challenging decisions
- **External Oversight:** Welcome external observation and evaluation

### Continuous Improvement:

- **Regular Evaluation:** Assess assembly effectiveness and community satisfaction
- **Adaptation:** Modify structures and processes based on experience and feedback
- **Learning Exchange:** Learn from other assemblies and share lessons learned
- **Celebration:** Recognize achievements and build community pride
- **Vision Renewal:** Regularly revisit and update community vision and priorities

## Building External Relationships

### Government Engagement:

- **Formal Recognition:** Seek official recognition of assembly authority
- **Regular Communication:** Establish ongoing communication with government officials
- **Policy Advocacy:** Advocate for policies that support community water control
- **Oversight Role:** Exercise community oversight of government water services
- **Collaboration:** Build collaborative relationships while maintaining independence

### Service Provider Relations:

- **Accountability:** Hold water utilities accountable to community needs
- **Participation:** Ensure community participation in service planning and delivery
- **Quality Monitoring:** Monitor service quality and advocate for improvements
- **Rate Advocacy:** Advocate for affordable and equitable rate structures
- **Emergency Coordination:** Coordinate with providers during water emergencies

### Coalition Building:

- **Other Assemblies:** Connect with assemblies in other communities
- **Water Justice Organizations:** Partner with organizations working on water issues
- **Environmental Groups:** Build alliances with environmental protection organizations
- **Social Justice Networks:** Connect water issues with broader justice movements
- **Technical Support:** Build relationships with supportive technical professionals

## Common Challenges and Solutions

### Low Participation

**Challenge:** Community members don't attend meetings or participate actively

**Solutions:**

- **Door-to-Door Outreach:** Go directly to people rather than expecting them to come
- **Issue Relevance:** Focus on issues people care about most
- **Meeting Accessibility:** Address barriers to participation systematically
- **Relationship Building:** Invest in personal relationships and trust building
- **Celebration:** Make meetings enjoyable and celebratory as well as productive
- **Multiple Formats:** Offer different ways to participate beyond formal meetings

### Conflict and Division

**Challenge:** Community conflicts undermine assembly effectiveness and unity

**Solutions:**

- **Conflict Prevention:** Address potential conflicts before they escalate
- **Mediation Training:** Build community capacity for conflict resolution
- **External Mediation:** Bring in neutral mediators for complex conflicts
- **Focus on Common Ground:** Emphasize shared interests and values
- **Healing Processes:** Use restorative justice and healing approaches
- **Cultural Protocols:** Use traditional conflict resolution practices

### Technical Complexity

**Challenge:** Water issues require technical knowledge that community lacks

**Solutions:**

- **Community Education:** Invest in building community technical knowledge
- **Technical Advisors:** Build relationships with supportive technical professionals
- **Peer Learning:** Learn from other communities with similar experiences
- **Simplified Communication:** Translate technical information into accessible language
- **Gradual Complexity:** Start with simple projects and build capacity over time
- **Community Technicians:** Train community members in technical skills

### Government Resistance

**Challenge:** Government officials resist sharing power with community assemblies

**Solutions:**

- **Legal Strategy:** Use legal advocacy to establish assembly authority
- **Political Pressure:** Build political pressure through organizing and coalitions
- **Demonstration:** Prove assembly effectiveness through successful projects
- **Relationship Building:** Build personal relationships with sympathetic officials
- **Media Strategy:** Use media attention to pressure for government cooperation
- **Alternative Authority:** Build community authority independent of government recognition

### Resource Constraints

**Challenge:** Assembly lacks financial resources for projects and operations

**Solutions:**

- **Diversified Fundraising:** Develop multiple funding sources and strategies
- **Community Contributions:** Build sustainable community funding base
- **Grant Writing:** Develop grant writing capacity for foundation and government funding
- **Volunteer Labor:** Use volunteer community labor to reduce project costs
- **Resource Sharing:** Share resources and costs with other communities and organizations
- **Advocacy:** Advocate for public funding for community-controlled water projects

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## Measuring Success and Impact

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### Assembly Effectiveness Indicators

#### Participation and Representation:

- Percentage of community participating in assembly meetings
- Diversity of participation across demographics and neighborhoods
- Number of community members in leadership roles
- Accessibility of meetings and materials for people with disabilities
- Participation of marginalized groups in decision-making

#### Decision-Making Quality:

- Percentage of decisions made through consensus vs. voting
- Community satisfaction with decision-making processes
- Time from problem identification to decision implementation
- Number of decisions successfully implemented
- Community ownership and support for decisions made

#### Accountability and Transparency:

- Public availability of meeting minutes and financial records
- Frequency of leadership reporting to community
- Number of community oversight activities and evaluations
- Response rate to community complaints and concerns
- Implementation of community feedback and recommendations

### Water Governance Impact

#### Service Delivery Improvements:

- Improved water access, quality, and reliability
- Reduced water costs and improved affordability
- Faster response to service problems and complaints
- Community satisfaction with water and sanitation services
- Integration of community priorities in service planning

#### Policy and Advocacy Victories:

- Policy changes benefiting community water interests
- Increased community representation in government water decisions
- Successful advocacy campaigns and coalition building
- Legal victories establishing community water rights
- Influence on regional and national water policy

#### Infrastructure and Projects:

- Number and scale of community-controlled water projects
- Community ownership and control of water infrastructure
- Integration of traditional knowledge and innovative technologies
- Environmental benefits and ecosystem restoration
- Economic benefits and local job creation

## Community Empowerment Outcomes

### Leadership Development:

- Number of community members developing leadership skills
- Diversity of community leadership across demographics
- Community members taking leadership in other issues beyond water
- Intergenerational leadership development and knowledge transfer
- Leadership accountability and democratic rotation

### Collective Efficacy:

- Community confidence in ability to solve collective problems
- Community cooperation and mutual support
- Conflict resolution capacity and community healing
- Community pride and cultural strengthening
- Resilience and adaptation capacity during crises

### Movement Building:

- Connection with other communities and water justice organizations
- Contribution to broader social justice and environmental movements
- Sharing of assembly model and lessons learned
- Solidarity and mutual aid with other communities
- Advocacy for systemic change beyond community level

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## Getting Started: Your First 30 Days

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### Week 1: Vision and Team Building

#### Day 1-2: Personal Reflection

- Reflect on your community's water challenges and vision for change
- Identify your personal motivations and capacity for assembly building
- Consider cultural protocols and community relationships that matter

#### Day 3-4: Initial Conversations

- Have informal conversations with 3-5 trusted community members
- Share assembly concept and gauge interest and concerns
- Listen to their perspectives on community water priorities

#### Day 5-7: Core Team Formation

- Organize first planning meeting with interested community members
- Discuss assembly concept and local adaptation needs
- Plan initial community outreach and engagement strategy

### Week 2: Community Assessment and Outreach

#### Day 8-10: Community Mapping

- Document current water governance and decision-making processes
- Identify community water challenges and existing assets
- Map community organizations, leaders, and potential allies

#### **Day 11-14: Broad Outreach**

- Visit different community spaces and organizations to share assembly concept
- Listen to water concerns and gather input on assembly approach
- Invite participation in community forum or information meeting

### **Week 3: Community Education and Engagement**

#### **Day 15-17: Information Meeting Planning**

- Plan accessible community meeting to introduce assembly concept
- Prepare materials, interpretation, childcare, and accessibility accommodations
- Invite broad community participation through multiple outreach methods

#### **Day 18-21: Community Forum**

- Host community forum explaining assembly concept and benefits
- Facilitate discussion of community water priorities and concerns
- Gather input on assembly structure and begin building support

### **Week 4: Foundation and Next Steps**

#### **Day 22-24: Process Evaluation**

- Evaluate community response and support for assembly formation
- Identify key supporters, concerns, and next steps needed
- Adapt assembly approach based on community feedback

#### **Day 25-28: Action Planning**

- Develop 3-month action plan for assembly formation
- Identify specific next steps, responsibilities, and timeline
- Plan follow-up meetings and continued community engagement

#### **Day 29-30: Commitment and Launch**

- Confirm core team commitment to assembly formation process
- Announce next steps to broader community
- Celebrate beginning of community water governance transformation

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## **Resources and Support**

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### **Training and Capacity Building**

#### **Democratic Facilitation:**

- National Training Institute facilitation skills training
- Highlander Folk School popular education methods
- Training for Change consensus and conflict resolution
- Local organizing institutes and leadership development programs

#### **Water Technical Knowledge:**

- Extension programs through universities and community colleges
- Water operator certification programs and community training
- Environmental health and water quality testing training

- Traditional knowledge workshops with Indigenous communities

### **Legal and Policy:**

- Community legal education workshops on water rights
- Policy advocacy training through environmental justice organizations
- Know-your-rights training for water shutoffs and utility issues
- Legal clinic partnerships for assembly incorporation and contracts

## **Networking and Peer Learning**

### **Assembly Networks:**

- Participatory budgeting networks in your region
- Environmental justice organizations with democratic governance experience
- Indigenous governance networks and traditional council connections
- International networks of community assemblies and participatory democracy

### **Water Justice Organizations:**

- Environmental Justice Coalition for Water (California)
- US Water Alliance community engagement and equity initiatives
- Food & Water Watch public ownership and democratic control advocacy
- Indigenous Environmental Network water sovereignty and rights work

### **Online Resources:**

- Participedia database of participatory governance innovations
- Global Water Partnership community participation resources
- Community Tool Box organizing and facilitation guides
- Beautiful Trouble creative resistance and organizing tactics

## **Funding and Resources**

### **Assembly Operations:**

- Community foundation grants for civic engagement and democracy
- Environmental justice grants for community organizing
- Water utility community partnership funds
- Crowdfunding and community fundraising for assembly operations

### **Water Projects:**

- EPA environmental justice grants for community-led projects
- State drinking water revolving loan funds with community ownership options
- Foundation grants for water access and infrastructure
- Federal community development block grants and rural water programs

### **Technical Assistance:**

- University extension programs and student project partnerships
- Engineers Without Borders community partnership programs
- AmeriCorps and service learning programs for capacity building
- Retired professional volunteer programs for technical mentorship

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**Remember:** Building a Community Water Assembly is not a one-time event but an ongoing process of deepening democracy and community power. Start where you are, use what you have, and adapt the process to serve your community's unique needs, culture, and priorities.



**Your Community's Water Democracy Starts Now:** Every community has the wisdom, creativity, and power needed to govern their water democratically. Trust your community's capacity, start with small steps, and build the water future your community deserves through collective action and shared power.

**Connect and Support:** For additional resources, peer connections, and implementation support, visit [globalgovernanceframework.org/assemblies](https://globalgovernanceframework.org/assemblies) or contact [assemblies@globalgovernanceframework.org](mailto:assemblies@globalgovernanceframework.org) to connect with the global network of communities building water democracy.