

Chapter 1 : Public participation - Wikipedia

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Local economy Communicating with Stakeholders All public participation requires effective communication with stakeholders. Communication is much more than creating fact sheets or web sites. Three key elements of effective communication include: Use every opportunity to build and strengthen those relationships as you move through your public participation program. Evaluate if there are other spoken languages in the community and possible cultural differences. Think about how to create sustainable vehicles for communicating with your stakeholders and durable locations for maintaining and sharing information. Train staff to become better communicators, producing accessible and understandable materials. Create the kind of foundational information about your programs that can be reused consistently over time. Sponsoring agencies need to model the behavior they wish to see in their stakeholders and create the kind of spaces where people can interact successfully. In this way communities will understand what makes a process successful or not.

Identify specific stakeholders By matching specific groups and individuals to the identified interests, you will ensure that your process will engage the full range of perspectives needed to conduct meaningful public participation. Careful consideration should be given to stakeholders that have a disproportionate burden regarding the decision you are making, to assure they are aware of the project and how they can provide input if applicable. You can identify additional information about the range of interests to be engaged by asking specific questions about your stakeholder community, such as: Who will be directly affected by the decision? Are there parts of the community that might be disproportionately burdened by the project? Who will be indirectly affected by the decision? Who wants to be involved? Who is already engaged or has contacted us in this issue? Who will be upset if they have no input to this decision? Who can affect the decision? Who can claim a legal standing legal rights to Who has real or perceived moral claims that could affect the decision process or outcome? Who has the political clout to draw elected and appointed officials into the dispute? Who is committed to the various interest groups, such as community groups or business groups, and will be responsible for acting as liaison and leader? Who will be responsible for implementing the decision? Whose support is needed to implement and enforce the decision? Who could take legal action to block implementation of the decision? Who could undermine the decision? Who is committed to resolving this issue? Who will be committed to following the process, including attending meetings, gathering information, and other practical, logistical, and tactical requirements of the process? Who is affected by the decision? Is there a part of the community that is already suffering from health impacts of other project? Will this project create a greater burden on that part of the community? At the end of this assessment, you should have built a comprehensive stakeholder list. This forms the foundation for your outreach and ensures that you are reaching the full range of community interests throughout the project. This list should grow throughout the process as more stakeholders are identified and become interested. It is important to identify reliable means for communicating with each stakeholder.

Build relationships Once you have identified the full range of interests that need to be engaged and have specific groups and individuals that are representative of those interests, it is important to begin the process of understanding your stakeholders and relationship-building. No effective participation process can be designed without first learning about and developing some level of relationship with the stakeholders that will be engaged. Meeting with stakeholders at the beginning of a project will help you to know your public, make them more accepting of you and the information you provide, and help you to design a public participation program that responds to their needs and concerns.

Conduct stakeholder interviews The most direct and effective process is to engage in extensive stakeholder interviews during the project planning stage. Try to reach a diverse set of stakeholders representing all of the interests that you have identified. The interview process involves going directly to your stakeholders and asking them about their concerns, interests, and values. Get to know them as people and let them get to know you as well. It is important to understand how your stakeholders view your project and why. A guide to designing these

interviews can be seen in the situation assessment section. Identify and plan possible cultural and language differences in the community before conducting stakeholder interviews. As a rule of thumb, it is a good idea to try to meet the participation needs and desires of key stakeholders. Stakeholders who are shut out of a process that is important to them will not simply go away. Rather, they will look for other venues – such as legal, political, or media – in which to influence the decision. However, in no circumstance should an agency ever commit to participation at a level higher than the decision-makers are willing or able to engage stakeholders. The following flowchart can be useful in understanding your intent and matching that to an appropriate level of public participation. You can also think about additional questions to ask yourself at each stage. View and print a larger, accessible version of this flowchart. Once you identify the right level of public participation for your project, remember that you must develop a clear goal statement for public participation so that everyone on the team has the same understanding of the role of the public. You must also prepare a clear promise to the public, so that all stakeholders understand their potential for influence on the decision and what they can expect from you as the process progresses. Top of Page Step 4. In order to have clear and meaningful public participation, it is important for all stakeholders to fully understand the decision process being used. Creating a visual representation of this process is helpful. Both internal and external stakeholders must have the same understanding and expectations regarding the decision process and how and when public input will be obtained. Key points to consider in describing the decision process include: What are the key steps and timing in the process? At which points will public input be obtained and used? How will the public be kept informed throughout the process? How will decision criteria be established? How will alternatives be developed? Who will make the final decision? Meaningful participation requires that public participation activities be integrated directly into the steps in the decision process. It is essential to start public participation early so that stakeholders and staff are on the same learning curve about issues and development of alternatives and solutions. Most important, it is essential that stakeholders have a common understanding of the problem to be addressed and the criteria that will be used to arrive at a decision. These early activities are critical to getting meaningful input and an overall understanding of the final decision. Top of Page Step 5. Match Public Participation Tools to Objectives Throughout the Process Once the decision process is mapped out, it will become clear where and how the public is to be engaged. At each point that the public is to be informed or provide input, it is important to identify a clear objective for that interaction in order to design an effective process and to maintain clear expectations among all stakeholders. Only after clear goals and objectives are established can appropriate tools be selected and customized to the circumstances and audience in order to best meet the established objectives. In any given process, a variety of tools will likely be required including:

Chapter 2 : Public participation -- governor to ensure guidelines adopted, MCA

Step 1. Organize for Participation Ensure that public input is possible. The first step in planning for public participation is to ensure that you are seeking to obtain and use public input and not merely seeking public buy-in to an already determined outcome.

The Theory of Citizen Participation Introduction Citizen participation is a process which provides private individuals an opportunity to influence public decisions and has long been a component of the democratic decision-making process. The roots of citizen participation can be traced to ancient Greece and Colonial New England. Before the s, governmental processes and procedures were designed to facilitate "external" participation. Public involvement is means to ensure that citizens have a direct voice in public decisions. The terms "citizen" and "public," and "involvement" and "participation" are often used interchangeably. While both are generally used to indicate a process through which citizens have a voice in public policy decisions, both have distinctively different meanings and convey little insight into the process they seek to describe. Many agencies or individuals choose to exclude or minimize public participation in planning efforts claiming citizen participation is too expensive and time consuming. Yet, many citizen participation programs are initiated in response to public reaction to a proposed project or action. However, there are tangible benefits that can be derived from an effective citizen involvement program. Cogan and Sharpe , p. Information and ideas on public issues; Public Support for planning decisions; Avoidance of protracted conflicts and costly delays; Reservoir of good will which can carry over to future decisions; and Spirit of cooperation and trust between the agency and the public. All of these benefits are important to the Forest Service in its planning efforts, particularly the last three. Recent forest management decisions have led to prolonged court cases and a general lack of trust among many people with respect to the Forest Service. Decision-making Structures In discussing the theory of public participation, it is useful to review broad theories of decision-making structures. They conclude that public decisions are increasingly being influenced by technology. Two broad decision-making structures are defined and analyzed: Technocracy or the technocratic approach is defined as the application of technical knowledge, expertise, techniques, and methods to problem solving. Democracy, as defined by DeSario and Langton, refers to citizen involvement activities in relation to government planning and policy making DeSario and Langton, p. These approaches are described in more detail below. Technocratic Decision Making The technocratic approach to decision-making has historically been applied in most Forest Service decisions. Strong arguments can be made in favor of a technocratic decision approach. A key argument is that trained staff "experts" are best suited to make complex technical decisions. Experts are increasingly becoming a part of our decision-making structures in both the public and private sectors DeSario and Langton, However, Nelkin concluded that scientific and technocratic approaches "not only failed to solve social problems but often contributed to them" Nelkin, The notion that the "cure is often worse than the disease" becomes increasingly important as the technology provides alternative solutions to public policy issues. Techniques and methods applied by experts are most effective when considering technical decisions as opposed to value or mixed, decisions. Kantrowitz identified three separate types of policy decisions: Technical decisions rely on scientific techniques and extrapolations to determine the potential of "what is". Value issues involve normative determinations of "what should be". Although scientific information can provide guidance with respect to value decisions, it is rarely the sole determinant DeSario and Langton, Natural resource management decisions frequently affect social values. The technocratic approach to decision making is difficult to apply successfully to social problems because social goals are often complex, conflicting and unclear DeSario and Langton, p. A growing number of Americans are becoming more skeptical of technology and its experts. One result of this skepticism is a heightened demand for greater citizen participation with respect to technological decisions DeSario and Langton, p. As a result, technological progress will face increased public scrutiny as the deficiencies of technology and experts become more apparent. The integration of the technocratic and democratic approaches, particularly in natural resource management, has led to an increasing sense of frustration and futility for both the public and the government agencies involved Kaplan

and Kaplan, Democratic Decision Making Democratic decision-making, in contrast to bureaucratic or technocratic decision making, is based on the assumption that all who are affected by a given decision have the right to participate in the making of that decision. Participation can be direct in the classical democratic sense, or can be through representatives for their point of view in a pluralist-republican model Kweit and Kweit, p. Public Participation In Rational Policy Making Many "rational" policy decisions are made using the policy analysis process. According to Lang, a decision is rational to the extent that it is shown empirically to match the best available means of achieving a given end Lang, Traditional rational planning and policy analysis processes typically have five or six steps. Patton and Sawicki outline six steps in the policy analysis process: Kweit and Kweit suggest that policy analysis tends concentrate power in the hands of a few experts and that policy analysis is most compatible with bureaucratic decision-making which is "antithetical to citizen participation" Kweit and Kweit, p. Because the policy analysis process relies on specialized techniques, expertise is an inherent component of policy analysis. As such, the role of citizen participation in the traditional policy analysis process is minimized. Citizens often lack technical expertise and can be emotionally involved in issues of concern rather than being detached and rational Kweit and Kweit, p. For a number of reasons, a purely rational decision-making process is difficult. One major limitation inherent in the process is the lack of comprehensive information. However, input from citizen groups outside organizational boundaries can help provide more comprehensive information on all aspects of the policy analysis process. Kweit and Kweit state: In a democracy, it is the public that determines where it wants to go, and the role of its representatives and bureaucratic staff is to get them there. In other words, ends should be chosen democratically even though the means are chosen technocratically Kweit and Kweit, p. The existing policy structure within the agency mandates that targets or the ends, which are tied directly to funding, are set by Congress. This would imply that the ends are chosen democratically. The targets are implemented on the Forest and District level. Thus, traditionally the means are developed and chosen technocratically. Congress, as elected representatives, theoretically represents the public interest in setting targets. Recent issues with respect to forest management i. On its face, this may seem to imply that the Forest Service should apply a purely technocratic decision-making process. However, it is unlikely that a purely technocratic top-down approach will continue to be appropriate given the number and diversity of public interests who have a stake in forest management decisions. Lang, suggests that traditional comprehensive and strategic planning processes are insufficient for current resource management planning and advocates a more interactive approach to planning. An integrated approach to resource planning must provide for interaction with the stakeholders in the search for relevant information, shared values, consensus, and ultimately, proposed action that is both feasible and acceptable Lang, p The emphasis is on data collection and analysis as the means for finding the best solutions to problems and developing a technically sound plan. The implicit assumption is that better information leads to better decisions. Success in conventional planning is measured by the extent to which the objectives of the plan are achieved Lang, p According to Lang, interactive planning is based on the assumption that open, participative processes lead to better decisions. The planner engages directly with stakeholders to gain support, build consensus, identify acceptable solutions, and secure implementation. Success in interactive planning is measured by the extent to which balance can be achieved among competing interests and consensus is reached on appropriate actions Lang, p Table provides a comparison of interactive versus conventional planning. These are organizational, political, and personal Lang, p Lang notes that "multiple perspectives comprise an essential feature of integrated resource planning. This increased level of scrutiny suggests that the agency will be held more accountable for decisions by interested publics. Further, the conflicts inherent in resource management decisions make an interactive approach to planning and decision-making an attractive alternative to the existing decision-making structure. Principles Of Citizen Participation A great deal of literature exists on the subject of citizen participation. A review of this literature indicates there are some commonly accepted principles that can be applied in the development and implementation of a citizen participation program. Cogan, Sharpe and Hertberg, in the book *The Practice of State and Regional Planning* provide a concise overview of citizen participation in the planning process So, et al, p. Following is a summary of their discussion. Perceptions of Stakeholders and Planners The perceptions of

stakeholders and planners is an important consideration in the development and implementation of any public participation program. Public participation is often a requirement for planners, however, it is always optional for citizens. Citizens choose to participate because they expect a satisfying experience and hope to influence the planning process. These can be intrinsic to the involvement through the very act of participation or instrumental resulting from the opportunity to contribute to public policy. Well-planned citizen involvement programs relate the expectations of both the citizens and the planner. If expectations are different, conflict is probable. The Ladder of Citizen Participation Clearly, citizen participation programs can increase costs and the amount of time a project takes. Further, as discussed above, there is a certain level of risk associated with citizen participation programs. However, Cogan suggests that citizen participation programs can make the planning process and planners more effective by: Reducing isolation of the planner from the public; Generating a spirit of cooperation and trust; Providing opportunities to disseminate information; Identifying additional dimensions of inquiry and research; Assisting in identifying alternative solutions; Providing legitimacy to the planning effort and political credibility of the agency; and Increasing public support. Further, in certain polarized issues an effective public participation program may actually save time and money by insuring that the proposed solution is acceptable to all of the interested stakeholders. Techniques of Citizen Participation There are a variety of techniques available to planners to solicit public input in the planning process. These range from basic open meetings to more sophisticated techniques such as the Delphi and Nominal Group techniques see Appendix B for a more detailed description of these techniques. Cogan states "with few exceptions, a successful public involvement program incorporates several techniques" Cogan, et al. These techniques can be graphically presented as a continuum that ranges from passive involvement to active involvement Figure A Cogan provides the following description of each of the forms of public involvement follows Cogan, et al. They are most effective when combined with feedback mechanisms which inform participants of the extent to which their input has influenced ultimate decisions. When these techniques are effectively utilized, each participant has the opportunity to express his or her views, respond to the ideas of others, and work toward consensus. Not all techniques fit exclusively into one category. For example, a public meeting may provide opportunities for education and interaction. A key point Cogan makes is that the number of citizens who can be involved is inversely related to the level of active involvement. For example, public relations efforts can reach a larger number of citizens, while public partnership limits participation to a few Cogan, et al.

Chapter 3 : Macau government vows to ensure public participation in urban planning | Macau News

Public participation (citizen participation) is a political principle or practice, and may also be recognised as a right. The terms public participation, often called P2 by practitioners, is sometimes used interchangeably with the concept or practice of stakeholder engagement and/or popular participation.

Accountability for the process and result; Acknowledgement and feedback; Evaluation, etc. The values that these principles aim to promote have been summarized well by the International Association for Public Participation as Core Values for Public Participation: Public participation is based on the belief that those who are affected by a decision have a right to be involved in the decision-making process. Public participation promotes sustainable decisions by recognizing and communicating the needs and interests of all participants, including decision makers. Public participation seeks out and facilitates the involvement of those potentially affected by or interested in a decision. Public participation seeks input from participants in designing how they participate. Public participation provides participants with the information they need to participate in a meaningful way. Public participation communicates to participants how their input affected the decision. In addition to flagging the benefits it should be noted that ensuring participatory law making processes has own challenges too. Governments may be pressed by deadlines to adopt certain legislation. It may not be clear who to consult or engage; or how to do it. The political context may not be supportive of public involvement. Those who participate may not have enough understanding of the issues at stake. The standards enshrined in the documents adopted on level of EU and in different countries aim to minimize the effect of those challenges and to pave the way for more effective participatory law making processes. Therefore, when developing the appropriate standards for participation in one country it is important to consider not only the opportunities, but also the challenges that surround it so that appropriate mechanisms are adopted to address and circumvent them. European level The participatory approach of making policies and laws on level of EU and its member states is enshrined in the Lisbon Treaty. Specifically, article 10 prescribes that: Decisions shall be taken as openly and as closely as possible to the citizen. The institutions shall maintain an open, transparent and regular dialogue with representative associations and civil society. Not less than one million citizens who are nationals of a significant number of Member States may take the initiative of inviting the European Commission, within the framework of its powers, to submit any appropriate proposal on matters where citizens consider that a legal act of the Union is required for the purpose of implementing the Treaties. What are the different levels of participation? Participation can be viewed as a continuum of interaction between government and the public which ranges from informing and listening at one end, to implementing jointly agreed solutions at the other; and in between there is dialogue, debate and analysis. All stages of the process preparation, drafting, adoption, implementation, evaluation should be subject to public participation to ensure better laws. Since there are different stages in of law-making processes the intensity and form of participation will vary depending on the stage of the process. International documents and country specific regulation recognize the following levels of participation: Access to information is the first, basic and important right which is underlying the whole process of participation. The access to information is a right regulated in specific laws. While at this level there is no need for intensive interaction between the government and the public, the government should not apply measures which would prevent the public from receiving the information crucial for the process. Consultation is a form of participation where the government invites the public to provide its opinion, comments, views and feed-back on a specific document. Whilst the issues on which the public is consulted are defined by the government, this process should also allow for the public to express opinion on other issues contained in the draft. Consultation can be organized with a broader group of participants from the public. It is a reactive way of participation – the public becomes involved because the government requests this. However, this is not to say that the public cannot request to be consulted. Indeed, it should act and remind the governmental bodies about the need to be asked to comment on laws which will affect them. Active involvement partnership in law making means collaboration and jointly undertaken responsibilities at all stages of the decision-making process agenda setting, issue identification, drafting, decision and

implementation. It is the highest form of participation; it may be described as a situation where the representatives of the public share a seat at the table with the government representatives. The initiative can come from both the sides. Whilst there should be an agreement about the common goals of the process, those involved from the public should be able to retain their independence, and to advocate and campaign for the solutions which they want to see adopted. Dialogue is as an active form of participation. Indeed, dialogue is prerequisite for collaborative relationship. Framework for public participation To ensure that the essential contributions of CSOs are enshrined in the political decision-making process without discrimination, an enabling environment is required. Conditions of an enabling environment include:

Chapter 4 : Ensure public participation. - CORE

Comprehensive plans shall ensure public participation. Each county and city that is required or chooses to plan under RCW A shall establish and broadly disseminate to the public a public participation program identifying procedures providing for early and continuous public participation in the development and amendment of comprehensive.

Public participation can be any process that directly engages the public in decision-making and gives full consideration to public input in making that decision. Public participation is a process, not a single event. It consists of a series of activities and actions by a sponsor agency over the full lifespan of a project to both inform the public and obtain input from them. Public participation affords stakeholders those that have an interest or stake in an issue, such as individuals, interest groups, communities the opportunity to influence decisions that affect their lives. Rather, the public consists of a range of stakeholders holding an array of views and concerns on an issue. Not all public participation is the same. Conducting meaningful public participation involves seeking public input at the specific points in the decision process and on the specific issues where such input has a real potential to help shape the decision or action. Sometimes the opportunity for influence is quite small, while at other times the public can have a great deal of influence. The amount of this potential influence is the main consideration in designing a successful public participation program. Students consider input to environmental issues in China. The section of this guide titled Selecting the Right Level of Public Participation discusses the different forms that public participation might take depending on the potential for public influence on a decision. Depending of the form of participation sought, public participation makes use of a variety of tools and techniques to inform the public , generate public input , and, in some cases, build consensus and reach agreement. Top of Page What are the benefits of public participation? Public participation is not simply a nice or necessary thing to do; it actually results in better outcomes and better governance. When done in a meaningful way, public participation will result in two significant benefits: Sponsor agencies will make better and more easily implementable decisions that reflect public interests and values and are better understood by the public. Communities develop long-term capacity to solve and manage challenging social issues, often overcoming longstanding differences and misunderstandings. Top of Page How does public participation result in better decisions? Public participation contributes to better decisions because decision-makers have more complete information in the form of additional facts, values, and perspectives obtained through public input to bring to bear on the decision process. As a result, decisions that are informed by public participation processes are seen as more legitimate and are less subject to challenge. Top of Page How does public participation develop community capacity? Another major result of sustained stakeholder participation in decisions and their implementation is the development of capacity for managing difficult social problems. This capacity includes improved relationships and trust between decision-makers and the public, and among different stakeholders themselves. Also, when done well, public participation helps to teach stakeholders meaningful and collaborative ways to approach each other, manage difficult decisions, and resolve disputes. Stakeholders and communities do not generally achieve this on their own. Sponsoring agencies must recognize their responsibility to help communities build their capacity for collaborative problem solving. This promise represents what the public can expect from the sponsoring agency with regard to access to and potential influence on the decision. The promise also defines the level of information and communication that can be expected. Sponsoring agencies that make clear, explicit promises will set clear expectations with their stakeholders and will be held appropriately accountable. Without clear promises, the public will interpret a wide range of expectations, most of which are not intended and cannot be met. When making promises, it is important to follow through and consider these three factors: Promise only what you believe you can deliver Deliver what you have promised Demonstrate what you deliver by communicating effectively. While it is critical that sponsor agencies develop the skills to think through, plan for, and implement a public participation process, it is no less important that the public develop the capacity to participate effectively in decision processes. A well-designed and sincere participation process will not fulfill its potential if the public lacks the necessary participation skills. Building participation capacity can be

achieved in several ways: Ongoing interest in public participation, however, will depend on the extent to which public participation processes result in the opportunity for meaningful public input and influence on projects, and the degree to which sponsoring agencies are accountable to these results. What are the necessary conditions for successful public participation? Successful public participation requires the following conditions: Meaningful public participation helps to build the capacity of any community to work together constructively and solve problems. No one benefits when agencies promise more in the way of public participation than they are willing to commit to and deliver. In fact, making promises that cannot be kept will undermine public confidence in the public participation process Clear structure and process – well-defined rules about how public participation will be conducted and how the decision will be made Actual opportunity for influence – the real opportunity for public input to be considered in making the decision Commitment to the process – managers and staff alike must be committed to the full range of activities required to make public participation work and be willing to obtain and consider public input in making the decision Inclusive and effective representation – reaching out to representatives of the full range of relevant stakeholder interests regardless of race, color, national origin, sexual orientation or income. What are some additional considerations for successful public participation? The Importance of Transparency Transparency represents the willingness of agencies to fully share the information, criteria, and deliberations of decision-making with the public. Without transparency, public input will not be based on the same considerations that decision-makers are actually using to make decisions. As a result, the public is unlikely to understand why decisions are made or how those decisions will impact them. Much public outrage is a result of not being provided complete and timely information, or being excluded from the process. In order to establish and maintain effective public participation, sponsoring agencies and decision makers should give careful consideration to how they are supporting the process. Some important elements to successful public participation can include the following: Sufficient resources to conduct the process – provide the funding and staff to support all aspects of the process, including a situation assessment, outreach activities, and obtaining and incorporating public input, with resources dedicated to involving vulnerable populations and overburdened parts of the community Participative capacity among staff and participants – conduct training in communication, outreach, and collaborative problem solving skills A climate of integrity – trust and credibility of government are essential for public participation. Public participation will not flourish where government agencies or decision makers are corrupt or disingenuous about considering public input A belief in the value of public input – the knowledge that public input will result in better decision-making and that public participation results in better governance Capacity to engage - ensuring that agencies know how to design and implement public participation processes, and that agencies and the public alike have the knowledge and communication skills to participate effectively in the process Complete transparency – the timely sharing of easily understandable and accessible information to educate the public about the issues and options. Although the conditions and responsibilities for public participation are significant, you should not feel daunted. Rather, public participation should be viewed as an opportunity to make a powerful decision – one that resolves issues to the broadest possible satisfaction and benefit of interested parties. When done well, the time and effort invested in public participation pay dividends by resulting in a more broadly acceptable, implementable, and sustainable decision.

Chapter 5 : The Theory of Citizen Involvement

Public participation can be any process that directly engages the public in decision-making and gives full consideration to public input in making that decision. Public participation is a process, not a single event. It consists of a series of activities and actions by a sponsor agency over the full.

Local opinions are sought. Outsiders analyze data and decide on course of action. Responsibility remains with outsiders for directing the process. Taking responsibility includes identifying the problems, developing actions, putting them into place, and following through. Community participation has many direct beneficiaries when carried out with a high degree of community input and responsibility. Everyone benefits when participating in the activities. For example, adults and youth might participate in village committees to improve services. Everyone might watch a play or video and learn from presentations about local programs. A truly participatory program involves and benefits the entire community, including youth, young children, parents, teachers and schools, community leaders, health care providers, local government officials, and agency administrators. Programs also benefit because trends in many nations towards decentralization and democratization also require increased decision making at the community level. Above all, those promoting community participation need to be able to facilitate a process, rather than to direct it. A facilitator should be willing to seek out local expertise and build on it while bolstering knowledge and skills as needed. Key characteristics and skills important to facilitating community participation include: Community participation also poses important challenges. Two are highlighted here. Evaluating Participation One challenge for program planners is how to evaluate community participation. In particular, what should be evaluated—health outcomes, participation levels, improved capacities, or some combination of these—and how will they be evaluated? While measuring health outcomes—such as birth rates or sexual health knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors in a particular age group—may be fairly straight forward, it will be important for community participation programs also to identify and measure indicators of participation. One of the goals is to achieve participation. Whether planners want to measure changes in community self-efficacy or changes in local capacity to identify and solve problems, it is important to define these objectives clearly and to develop appropriate tools for measuring progress toward the objectives. Qualitative tools or some combination of qualitative and quantitative may be most appropriate to assess the subjective quality of "participation," but indicators of participation and ways of assessing it should be defined by the community, and community members should decide and carry out the evaluation. Scaling Up Participatory Models Increasingly, funding sources express interest in programs that have potential for "scaling up. As a program develops and matures, program planners may face the challenge of "scaling down" the intensity of community participation in order to "scale up" the project without compromising its participatory nature and results. Conclusion Community participation is a vitally important strategy in efforts to work with youth to improve their sexual and reproductive health. Community participation is a strategy that respects the rights and ability of youth and other community members to design and implement programs within their community. Community participation opens the way for community members—including youth—to act responsibly. Whether a participatory approach is the primary strategy or a complementary one, it will greatly enrich and strengthen programs and help achieve more sustainable, appropriate, and effective programs in the field. Bhatnagar B et al. Participatory Development and the World Bank. The World Bank, MacQueen KM et al. An evidence-based definition for participatory public health. Am J Pub Health ; Unpublished data from the Burkina Project. National Institutes of Health. Theory at a Glance: A Guide for Health Promotion Practice. Howard-Grabman L, Snetro G.

Chapter 6 : RCW A Comprehensive plansâ€”Ensure public participation.

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Public policy[edit] In some countries public participation has become a central principle of public policy making. In the UK it has been observed that all levels of government have started to build citizen and stakeholder engagement into their policy-making processes. There are many different public participation mechanisms, although these often share common features for a list over , and a typology of mechanisms, see Rowe and Frewer, Public participation may also be used to measure attainable objectives, evaluate impact, and identify lessons for future practice. Public participation is typically mandatory for rules promulgated by executive agencies of the US government. Statutes or agency policies may mandate public hearings during this period. Participatory budgeting Participatory budgeting is a process of democratic deliberation and decision-making, in which ordinary city residents decide how to allocate part of a municipal or public budget. Participatory budgeting is usually characterized by several basic design features: Participatory budgeting may be used by towns and cities around the world, and has been widely publicised in Porto Alegre , Brazil , were the first full participatory budgeting process was developed starting in Public trust[edit] In recent years loss of public trust in authorities and politicians has become a widespread concern in many democratic societies. Public participation is a regarded as one potential solution to the crisis in public trust and governance, particularly in the UK, Europe, and other democracies. The idea is that public should be involved more fully in the policy process in that authorities seek public views and participation, instead of treating the public as simply passive recipients of policy decisions. The underlying assumption by political theorists, social commentators, and even politicians is that public participation increase public trust in authorities, improving citizen political efficacy, enhancing democratic ideals and even improving the quality of policy decisions. However, the assumed benefits of public participation in restoring public trust are yet to be confirmed. Radical transparency Public participation may also be viewed as accountability enhancing. The argument being that public participation can be a means for the participating communities to hold public authorities accountable for implementation. Volunteers comprise the Independent Monitoring Board that reports on the fair and humane detention of prisoners and detainees. The desire to increase public participation in humanitarian aid and development has led to the establishment of a numerous context-specific, formal methodologies, matrices, pedagogies and ad hoc approaches. In this context the limits of solely relying on technocratic bureaucratic monopoly of decision making, and it is argued that public participation allows governments to adopt policies and enact laws that are relevant to communities and take into account their needs. Public participation in environmental governance[edit] With growing complexities of the environmental issues, public participation has come to the fore in academic analysis concerning the contemporary debates about environmental governance. There have emerged a number of arguments in favour of a more participatory approach, which stress that public participation is a crucial element in environmental governance that contributes to better decision making. It is recognised that environmental problems cannot be solved by government alone. By involving the public, who are at the root of both causes and solutions of environmental problems, in environmental discussions, transparency and accountability are more likely to be achieved, thus secures the democratic legitimacy of decision-making that good environmental governance depends on. In addition, some opponents argue that the right to participate in environmental decision-making is a procedural right that "can be seen as part of the fundamental right to environmental protection". Although broad agreements exist, the notion of public participation in environmental decision-making has been subject to a sustained critique concerning the real outcome of participatory environmental governance. Critics argue that public participation tends to focus on reaching a consensus between actors who share the same values and seek the same outcomes. However, the uncertain nature of many of the environmental issues would undermine the validity of public participation, given that in many cases the actors come to the table of discussion hold very different

perceptions of the problem and solution which are unlikely to be welded into a consensus due to the incommensurability of different positions. This raises the further question of whether consensus should be the measure of a successful outcome of participation. She notes that the biggest disadvantage of citizen science is the reliance on using citizens as only contributing members of the scientific endeavors and pushes for a more community-based participatory research method which would include laypeople in the entirety of the research process while emphasizing the scientific method popularized by citizen science. They identified several barriers to applying citizen science to policy development including a lack of suitability between the data collected and the policy in question and skepticism regarding the data collected by non-experts. The right to public participation may also be conceived of as human right , or as manifestation of the right to freedom of association and freedom of assembly. As such the Netherlands , Germany, Denmark and Sweden, have public participation and freedom of information provisions in their legal systems since before the Middle Ages. For example, in the US the right to petition has been part of the first Amendment of the US constitution since Effective public participation depends on the public having accessing to accurate and comprehensive information. Hence laws regarding public participation often deal with the issue of the right to know , access of information and freedom of information. For example, in the context of disabled people. Rio Declaration on Environment and Development[edit] Main article: Rio Declaration on Environment and Development The Rio Declaration of enshrines public participation in its 27 principles. Principle 10 states that "environmental issues are best handled with participation of all concerned citizens, at the relevant level". The Rio Declaration continues, drawing a close link between access to information and public participation: At the national level, each individual shall have appropriate access to information concerning the environment that is held by public authorities, including information on hazardous materials and activities in their communities, and the opportunity to participate in decision-making processes. States shall facilitate and encourage public awareness and participation by making information widely available. Effective access to judicial and administrative proceedings, including redress and remedy, shall be provided. Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities recognised that "disability results from the interaction between persons with impairments and attitudinal and environmental barriers that hinders their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others" and that "persons with disabilities continue to face barriers in their participation as equal members of society. Full and effective participation and inclusion in society;", subsequently enshrining the right of disabled to participate fully and equally in the community, education, all aspect of life in the context of habilitation and rehabilitation , political and public life, cultural life, leisure and sports.

Governor P. Sathasivam formally inaugurated the International Olympic Day Celebrations here on Saturday. He also flagged off a mass-run, which was organised by the Trivandrum District Olympic.

Public participation in democratic society is both vital and problematic. Some public meetings are so dysfunctional that observers end up wishing someone in charge would bring an end to the chaos and misery. Sometimes extensive public input is sought in numerous forums, only to have all that input ignored. Two groups -- The International Association for Public Participation and The Community Development Society -- have proposed excellent guidelines for public participation. Both, however, fail to deal with the collective intelligence and co-stupidity dimensions of public participation. The three lists together provide very powerful criteria for evaluating or improving the status of public participation in any community or project. All three lists are current as of May 23, 2003. Public participation is based on the belief that those who are affected by a decision have a right to be involved in the decision-making process. Public participation promotes sustainable decisions by recognizing and communicating the needs and interests of all participants, including decision makers. Public participation seeks out and facilitates the involvement of those potentially affected by or interested in a decision. Public participation seeks input from participants in designing how they participate. Public participation provides participants with the information they need to participate in a meaningful way. Public participation communicates to participants how their input affected the decision. Promote active and representative participation toward enabling all community members to meaningfully influence the decisions that affect their lives. Engage community members in learning about and understanding community issues, and the economic, social, environmental, political, psychological, and other impacts associated with alternative courses of action. Incorporate the diverse interests and cultures of the community in the community development process; and disengage from support of any effort that is likely to adversely affect the disadvantaged members of a community. Work actively to enhance the leadership capacity of community members, leaders, and groups within the community. Be open to using the full range of action strategies to work toward the long term sustainability and well being of the community. Not all public participation serves this purpose. Public participation can either enhance or degrade the collective intelligence and wisdom involved in democratic processes such as making collective decisions, solving social problems, and creating shared visions. The principles below offer some guidance for designing wise democratic processes. The diversity of perspectives engaged in a wise democratic process will approximate the diversity of the community of people affected by the outcome. In addition, community wisdom and buy-in come from the fair and creative inclusion of all relevant perspectives -- all related viewpoints, cultures, information, experiences, needs, interests, values, contributions and dreams. Furthermore, those who are centrally involved, peripherally involved or not involved in a situation each have -- by virtue of their unique perspectives -- uniquely valuable contributions to make toward the wise resolution of that situation. Creative inclusion of perspectives generates more wisdom than mechanical inclusion of people. To the extent people feel involved in the creation or ratification of democratic decisions -- either directly or by recognized representatives -- they will support the implementation of those decisions. This is especially true to the extent they feel their agency and power in the process -- i.e., they are not on top of -- the decision-making processes of "We, the People" and anyone democratically mandated by the people to care for the common welfare. Community wisdom arises from the interplay of stories with their full emotional content, facts, principles, reason, intuition, imagination, inspiration, and compassion or empathy. To the extent any one of these dominates or is missing, the outcome will be less wise. The supreme test of dialogue is its ability to use commonality and diversity including conflict creatively. There are three tests for the quality of dialogue towards desirable outcomes: Is it deepening understanding? Is it building relationships? Is it expanding possibilities? Most public forums need good facilitation to ensure high quality dialogue. For approaches to dialogue see "A toolbox of co-intelligent processes for community work. Since intelligence is the capacity to learn, and learning is an ongoing process, collective intelligence can

manifest most powerfully in democratic processes that are ongoing, iterative, and officially recognized by the whole community or society. One-time events such as public hearings and conferences that are not part of a larger ongoing democratic process are limited in their capacity to generate collective intelligence for a whole community or society. The institutionalization of official periodic citizen deliberations according to these principles maximizes collective intelligence. Early focus on positions and proposals can prevent the emergence of the best possible outcomes. In general, collective intelligence is supported by beginning with an exploratory approach which notes existing positions, proposals and solutions as grist for exploring the situations they were created to handle. Exploring the assumptions, interests, needs, values, visions, experiences, etc. To the extent people feel fully heard, they will be able to hear others and, ultimately, join in collaborative deliberation and co-creative problem-solving. Among the approaches to helping people feel fully heard are Active Listening , Nonviolent Communication , and Dynamic Facilitation.

Chapter 8 : Community Participation: What Is It?

The Environmental Justice Public Participation Policy is a critical part of DEP's environmental justice work, providing guidelines for DEP's approach to permit applications and outlining our permit review process in Environmental Justice Areas.

J Public Health Res. Published online Sep 5. Received May 13; Accepted Jul Abstract Significance for public health Risk-based decision making is a core feature of government actions aimed at protecting public health from the adverse effects of environmental hazards. In the past, it has often been an expert-driven, mostly obscure process used by federal agencies to justify and defend regulatory decisions made outside the public arena. But the nature of decision making has changed as it has become apparent that environmental health problems are more complicated, controversial, and costly to solve than originally thought. Meaningful public engagement is now an inherent component of all phases of the risk assessment “ risk management paradigm because it promotes stakeholder buy in, taps into unique stakeholder knowledge, and promotes the concept of environmental democracy. In the United States, the risk assessment “ risk management paradigm that underpins federal decisions about environmental health risks was first established in In the beginning, the importance of public participation was not explicitly recognized within the paradigm. Over time, however, it has become evident that not only must risk-based decisions be founded on the best available scientific knowledge and understanding, but also that they must take account of the knowledge, values, and preferences of interested and affected parties, including community members, business people, and environmental advocates. This article examines the gradually expanding role of public participation in risk-based decision making in the United States, and traces its evolution from a peripheral issue labeled as an external pressure to an integral element of the 21st century risk assessment “ risk management paradigm. Today, and into the foreseeable future, public participation and stakeholder involvement are intrinsic features of the emerging American regulatory landscape, which emphasizes collaborative approaches for achieving cooperative and cost-effective solutions to complicated and often controversial environmental health problems. The conceptual framework underpinning these decisions is often referred to as the risk assessment “ risk management RA-RM paradigm. A fourth component, risk communication, is often considered part of the RA-RM paradigm, and refers to efforts aimed at explaining risks and risk-related decisions to stakeholders and responding to their questions and concerns. Managing the Process, usually referred to as the Red Book. Congress in , which calls on this society of distinguished scholars to provide advice to the U. Since it was first enunciated, the RA-RM paradigm has evolved considerably as new research methods and better scientific data became available, and it became obvious that environmental health risks were more complicated and expensive to solve than initially supposed. At the outset, the process of risk-based decision making was seen as an expert-driven, largely opaque method for justifying decisions by regulatory agencies. Over time, however, it has become apparent that regulatory decisions need to be based on more than just technical expertise “ they need to be informed by input from stakeholders and the public in order to improve the quality, legitimacy, and capacity of risk-based decisions. The goal is to highlight key changes to the RA-RM process and examine important lessons learned. Public participation in federal environmental decisions The impetus for public participation and the challenges encountered during implementation occur within the context of risk-based decision making by EPA and its sister regulatory agencies. Although scientific analysis is a necessary component of these decisions, it is not sufficient, by itself, to ensure proper consideration of tradeoffs among risks, costs, and benefits or their appropriate distribution across human populations. There is broad consensus as well as statutory requirements that i risk-based decisions be founded on the best available scientific evidence and technical judgments, and ii that they also take into account the knowledge, values, and preferences of interested and affected parties. According to the NRC, it is critical, therefore, to acknowledge that decision making about environmental health risks is inherently a political process, which depends not only on factual information, but also on values and preferences and on interpretation of factual information. Those favoring public participation typically base their arguments on normative theories of democracy and collective

action or on substantive and instrumental justifications related to improving quality, enhancing legitimacy, and building capacity. The reality is that decisions about the desirability of public involvement and the design of appropriate participation processes are value judgments that reflect the political power of certain stakeholders to influence those choices. The APA recognized the right of the public to know about, contribute to, and monitor the actions of federal agencies, and it established the Federal Register as an official mechanism for information dissemination and solicitation. Although the APA did not call for public involvement in the actual decision-making itself, it did create requirements and procedures for public participation in the information gathering and feedback phases of the process. Whereas the APA required agencies to make relevant documents available to the public, the NEPA guaranteed access to public information and the right to be heard before the final decision was made. In , President Richard M. Nixon issued Executive Order March 7, , 35 F. The Federal Advisory Committee Act FACA of mandated standards and procedures to assure that federal advisory committees served public rather than private interests, and required that committee composition fairly balance competing viewpoints and biases. In , the Council on Environmental Quality CEQ expanded NEPA requirements by compelling federal agencies to ascertain which issues the public believed were important as part of the initial scoping process for environmental impact assessments. Officially sanctioned processes and procedures for public participation typically aim to achieve one or more of six main objectives: Criticisms generally fall into four main categories: First, a consensus has emerged that it is important at the outset to develop a shared understanding of the context, formulation, and scope of the problem being addressed, including concurrence among participants about a suitable risk management approach. The report deemed public concern to be an external pressure and recommended that detailed guidelines setting forth the scientific and policy bases of risk assessment could improve public understanding and help dispel the impression that government actions are based on tenuous and inadequate reasoning. The NRC noted that public perceptions of risk and risk-based decisions could be inaccurate and inappropriate if government agencies do not provide suitable and timely information to the interested parties. The NRC further recommended that before an agency decides whether a substance should or should not be regulated as a health hazard, a detailed and comprehensive written risk assessment should be prepared and made publicly available. They went on to say that the written assessment should be made accessible to the public at a time and in a form that facilitates public participation in any attendant risk management decision.

Chapter 9 : Ensure public participation - Indiana State Library

Public participation -- governor to ensure guidelines adopted. (1) (a) Each agency shall develop procedures for permitting and encouraging the public to participate in agency decisions that are of significant interest to the public.