

Addressing Environmental Challenges through Participation: A Global Overview

Strengthening Public Participation in Environmental Decision-Making

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Outline

- Citizen Participation in Environmental Management
 - Why involve citizens?
 - Overview of approaches and tools
- Addressing Environmental Challenges
 - Participation and stakeholder engagement in SWM
 - Participation for improved environmental health
 - Participation for climate change preparedness
 - Participation for natural resource management (access and protection)
 - Stakeholder involvement in Environmental Policy Development
- Lessons from International Experience

Citizen Participation in Environmental Management

Why involve citizens

- **Citizens are impacted by environmental issues:**
 - Access to resources
 - Livelihood
 - Health
 - Quality of life
- **Citizen involvement is important to project & policy success:**
 - Awareness/Behavior
 - Advocacy/monitoring
- **If citizens are not with you... they maybe against you**
- **Environmental Management involves conflict**
- **Participation builds social capital, a key ingredient to community resilience**

Key approaches and Tools to participation

- **Raising Awareness (inform)**
 - Goals: Ensure stakeholder support (passive); Avert resistance
 - Tools: multi media awareness campaigns
- **Incorporating local perspectives in data collection & planning (consult)**
 - Goals: Better understanding local needs and views; Learn from local knowledge
 - Tools: Surveys, PRA, public hearings, focus groups

- **Participation in design and implementation (involve-collaborate)**
 - Goals: Promoting ownership; Influence decision making; Obtain sweat equity.
 - Tools: stakeholder consultations, public forums, strategic planning
- **Community Empowerment**
 - Goals: community makes decisions and controls allocation of resources
 - Tools: advocacy methodologies; CSO capacity strengthening; facilitation and conflict resolution; community based planning

Addressing Environmental Challenges Through Participation

Solid Waste Collection

- **The Challenge:** rapid urbanization leads to an equally rapid increase in the amount of waste that needs to be collected and disposed of. Local governments are overwhelmed by this challenge and often call on the private sector to do the job.
- **How Cairo** addressed the challenge
 - Need to modernize Cairo SWM system characterized by informal sector (zabbaleen)
 - New system preserves role of zabbaleen but leads to modernization
 - Recycling industry introduced to zabbaleen settlement helps increase income
 - Remaining challenge: covering all of the city.

Environmental Health Management

- **The Challenge:** A key rationale for improving the environment is the impact of pollution and contamination on public health. Communities have some level of control over how the environment affects them and government authorities need to involve them to achieve maximum impact.
- **How CIMEP Tunisia addressed the challenge**
 - Phases: community assessment, skill building, community mapping, policy maker roundtables, micro projects
 - Participatory mechanisms: neighborhood committees, Enlarged Municipal Team
 - Results: lower rates of disease, better responses to disease, improved community infrastructure and awareness.

Participation for climate change preparedness

- **The challenge:** Climate change affects communities in many ways: natural resources become scarce, droughts are more severe, and disasters are more frequent. Climate change poses the problems of community resilience in the face of severe threats to life and livelihood
- **Community based adaptation to Climate change in Colombia**
 - UN program in south west Colombia hit hard by the consequences of extreme weather
 - Program targets farmers and indigenous communities.
 - Consultative process to develop partnership with local populations and CSO strengthening
 - Strategy focuses on: “knowledge dialogues”
 - Experts and community learn from each other to develop effective approaches to address climate change

Stakeholder involvement in Environmental Policy Development

- **The challenge:** Involve the public in the policy development is particularly challenging because of the scale. Participatory mechanisms work best at the local community level and are difficult to replicate at the scale of large metropolis or of a city.
- **PlaNYC: an ambitious plan for a Greener NYC**
 - PLNYC's objective was to tie together all NYC all sustainability activities to achieve 10 sustainability goals across sectors. Deputy Mayor's office leads the process.
 - Assessment: 13 city agencies involved in assessing how growth will impact the city infrastructure & how it can be proactively addressed.
 - Establishing the Office of Long-term Planning and Sustainability. All agencies report on their research and findings: sustainability becomes the common theme
 - Creating an Advisory Board comprised of experts and stakeholders (external facilitator to build trust, all participants sworn to secrecy).

Stakeholder involvement in Environmental Policy Development

- Advisory committee develops the goals
- Plan is released and shared with public through an aggressive outreach program to sell the program (website, public forum, stakeholders meetings..)
- Outreach program helps identify the priorities and build support
- **Results:**
 - 319,000 trees planted
 - Creation of office of environmental remediation
 - 86 energy efficiency programs completed
 - 25% of taxis are hybrids
 - 200 miles of bicycle lanes created
 - Greener building plans enacted

Participatory Natural Resource Management

- **The Challenge:** population growth and economic development put pressure on the use of natural resources that are often critical for the survival of communities. Illicit exploitation of the resources further deprive countries and communities of access to the resources. International experience shows that sustainable management is not possible without citizen support.
- **Example:** Community forest management (CFM) in Vietnam
 - 2004 law recognizes CFM in Vietnam
 - Communities are given legal title to local forests
 - Some of the communities use the rights to develop forest management regulations and forest development plans (though results are mixed)

Lessons from International Practice

Key lessons

- Empowerment, equity and trust are necessary for participation to be successful
- Begin early: if key decisions are made before citizens are involved they will not have an incentive to participate
- Include all stakeholders, not just the more vocal or prominent
- Clarify expectations and set clear goals
- Capitalize on existing governance structure (but make sure they are inclusive)
- Adapt tools and approaches to local context
- Institutionalization is key to sustainability

THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION