

MODULE – 4 (DM)

Stakeholder Participation

Stakeholder ‘participation’, stakeholder ‘engagement’ and stakeholder ‘involvement’ are often used interchangeably in relation to the interactions between two or more stakeholders in policy making, development projects, organizational management and decision making in disaster risk reduction (DRR) education.

In brief, ‘stakeholder participation’ is the involvement of interest groups (i.e. representatives of locally affected communities, national or local government authorities, politicians, civil society based organizations and businesses) in a planning or decision-making process

Meaning of Stakeholder Participation

In the operational context, ‘stakeholder participation’ is the process through which people with common interest (stakeholders) influence and share control over development initiatives, decisions and resources that affect them.

Participatory development is defined as a process in which people are proactively and significantly involved in all decision-making processes that affect their lives

Meaning and Forms of Stakeholder Participation

Stakeholders are people/communities who may be directly or indirectly, positively or negatively affected by the outcome of projects, programmes or new initiatives such as DRR education. The three basic forms of stakeholders are:

Primary stakeholders:

They are the beneficiaries of a development intervention or those directly affected (positively or negatively) by it. They include local populations (individuals and community-based organisations) in the project/programme area, in particular, as well as poor and marginalised groups who have traditionally been excluded from participating in development efforts.

In disaster risk reduction, these stakeholders include: homeowners, renters, homeless persons and community-based small-scale businesses.

Secondary stakeholders:

These refer to those who influence a development intervention or are indirectly affected by it. They include

the government, line ministry and project staff, implementing agencies, local governments, civil society based organisations, private sector firms, and other development agencies.

Police Service, National Fire Service, National Disaster Management Organisation, Ghana Education Service (GES), Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development (MLGRD), Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), etc. are all part of this group

Key stakeholders:

This group can significantly influence, or are important to the success of the project through financial resources or power. In the context of DRR in the local, regional or national scale, key stakeholders could include National Disaster Management Organisation (NADMO), Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development (MLGRD), Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assemblies (MMDAs), etc. and they could be financiers of DRR efforts.

A key element in stakeholder participation is the ability to identify stakeholders, their needs, interests, relative power and potential impact on the intended endeavour in a people-centred fashion

Effective Ways of Promoting Stakeholder Participation in DRR

In stakeholder participation initiatives some groups - such as the very poor, women, nomadic groups or ethnic minorities – may lack the organisational, social or financial means to make their voices heard and participate effectively.

These are often the exact stakeholders whose needs and interests are critical to the success and sustainability of development interventions.

Special efforts are needed to address the disequilibrium of power, knowledge and influence among stakeholder groups and to allow weaker, less organised groups to interact effectively with stronger, more established stakeholders.

These include:

Capacity building – Providing training, coaching, funds or other resources to marginalised groups to assist them in organising, mobilising support, identifying and articulating their interests

Mandated representation – Where there is a danger of exclusion, it may be useful to establish targets of

representation, for example, agreeing that all village committees will include an established number of women or that all ethnic groups in a given community will be represented on a decision-making body

Separate events – In some cases, it may be valuable to meet with specific population groups separately, for example, to hold a separate women’s meeting to discuss their particular concerns;

Levelling techniques – Power differentials between stakeholders can be reduced through the use of participatory methods. A skilled facilitator can use a number of techniques to ensure that all participants have equal opportunity to make their voices heard. Negotiating systems may need to be developed for handling conflicting interests between different groups of local stakeholders

Use of intermediaries

In circumstances where the direct participation of marginalised individuals themselves is not feasible, intermediaries or surrogates may be identified to represent their views and defend their interests. For example, if it is not possible for women farmers from isolated areas to participate directly in a national forum on agricultural development, female extension workers might be selected to represent their interests (Adopted from World Bank, 2000)

Benefits and Cost of Stakeholder Participation in DRR

Benefits TO DRR

Improved programme/project design by drawing on local knowledge and expertise to ensure that designs accurately reflect stakeholder priorities and needs
Improved means of verifying the relevance and appropriateness of proposed interventions
Strengthened stakeholder commitment to, and ownership of, policies and projects, leading to increased uptake of project services and greater willingness to share costs
Enhanced sustainability as a result of increased stakeholder ownership
Opportunity to foresee and/or resolve potential obstacles, constraints and conflicts;
Emphasized means to identify and address potential negative social and environmental impacts;

Opportunity to generate social learning and innovations based on field experience;
Capacity-building of stakeholders and local institutions (including their capacity to analyse problems and initiate other development activities)
Improved means of ensuring that project benefits are distributed equitably; and
Strengthened working relations between stakeholders, government and civil society organizations and development partners.

Costs and Risks to DRR

The principal cost is the absence of stakeholder participation in programmes and projects. Lack of stakeholder participation can lead to:
A sense of indifference, resentment, or deliberate obstruction on the part of intended beneficiaries;
Higher up-front costs in terms of time and resources
Danger of undertaking poorly planned or merely token participatory activities due to limited time, capacity, commitment or resources
Lack of political will on the part of governments to allow wide stakeholder participation because they fear loss of power or influence;
Difficulty in reaching out to marginalised groups and ensuring that the true priorities and needs of poor and vulnerable groups are represented;
Difficulty in identifying genuine representative non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and civil society organisations (CSOs);
Co-optation of the stakeholder participation process by more powerful or articulate stakeholders, and the exclusion of the poor and disadvantaged;
Creation of unrealistic expectations;
Aggravating conflicts between stakeholder groups with different priorities/interests;
Weak capacity of beneficiary and intermediary organizations
Challenge of coordinating efforts with other on-going consultation/participation processes in order to avoid ‘consultation fatigue’

Basic Steps in Participatory Stakeholder Engagement

Participatory stakeholder engagement:
Stakeholder engagement is the identification of a project's key stakeholders, an assessment of their

interests, and the ways in which these interests affect project riskiness and viability (Clayton, 1997).

According to Oakley (1995), stakeholder analysis is a methodology for identifying and analysing the key stakeholders in a project and planning for their participation.

It is, therefore, the starting point of most participatory processes and provides the foundation for the design of subsequent stakeholder activities throughout the project cycle.

A thorough stakeholder analysis should be carried out in the early planning stages of all endeavours such as DRR, and reviewed and refined from time to time as the details of programme or project design become more detailed and definite

fundamental steps in stakeholder analysis can be enumerated as follows:

Step 1: Identify key stakeholders;

Step 2: Assess stakeholder interest and the potential impact of the new initiative or subject of interests;

Step 3: Assess stakeholder influences and importance; and

Step 4: Outline a stakeholder participation strategy.

Methods and Tools for Participatory Stakeholder Engagement

- Participatory Meetings and Workshops
- Panel Discussions
- Pyramid Schemes
- Debates
- Round Table
- Participatory Research/Data Collection
- Semi-Structured Interviewing
- Ranking
- Trend and Time Analysis

Levels of Stakeholder Participation

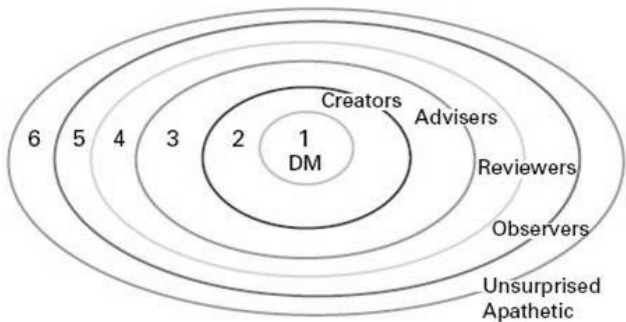
In designing the participatory process, the level of involvement of each stakeholder, depending on the given institutional framework, differs and should be defined.

Different levels would require the involvement of different stakeholders.

Experience shows that involving all stakeholders to participate fully in all decision-making stages is neither realistic nor useful in a given situation.

Each stakeholder category has a specific role to play and can be said to have an orbit of influence with respect to a

particular activity.



The decision-makers are at the centre of the orbit of influence on the decision-making process.

Orbit 1 contains the stakeholders who are partners in decision-making. Final decisions must be made with their concurrence.

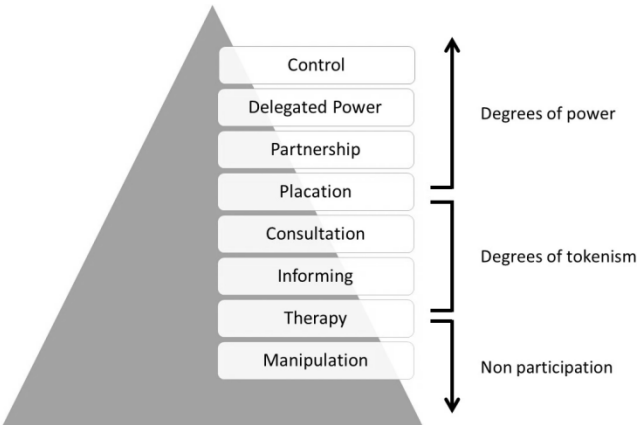
Orbit 2 features the creators, who are deeply involved in the decision being made and in developing alternatives and are therefore constantly involved.

Orbit 3 consists of the advisors, who are active but not constantly involved and are called upon periodically for advice.

Orbit 4 features the reviewers, those who wish to be kept informed before a decision becomes a policy, rule, law or fait accompli. However, they do not feel the need to be active throughout the process.

Orbit 5 contains the observers. These are people who do not want to be surprised. They watch and react only if an issue concerns them. However, they could be party to the process, but not entirely involved.

The outer orbit holds those who are not seen in the process, but who will react if they are suddenly surprised and feel threatened.



Basic Steps in Communication

- Forming of communicative intent
- Message composition
- Message encoding

- Transmission of signals
- Reception of signals
- Message decoding
- Interpretation

Effective Communication

Effective communication includes non-verbal communication, engaged listening, managing stress in the moment, the ability to communicate assertively, and the capacity to recognise and understand your own emotions and those of the person you are communicating with.

It enhances the provision of difficult messaging without creating conflict

Steps to Effective Communication

Use standard terminologies when communicating-risks, disaster, coping, resilience, vulnerable, etc.

Request and provide clarifications when needed-allow/encourage the beneficiaries to respond to issues they are not sure of.

The communicator should also be well informed about the situation of things within the community where the information is to be disseminated.

Ensure statements are direct and unambiguous.

Inform appropriate individuals when the mission or the plan changes.

Communicate all information needed by those individual or teams external to the team.

Use non-verbal communication appropriately.

Barriers to Effective Communication

Non-Focus on the issue at hand, not being attentive

Avoid interruption, show interest in what is being said

Avoid being judgmental but make provision for feedbacks

Pay attention to non-verbal communication

Be conscious of individual differences

Keep stress in check but be assertive

Importance of Communication in Disaster Risk Reducing

Communication promote preparedness for disasters

Communications provide early warnings signals of disasters

Communication facilitates proper response to disasters

Communication during and immediately after a disaster situation is an important

component of response and recovery.

Effective communication connects affected people, families, and communities with first responders, support systems, and other family members.

Reliable and accessible communication and information systems also are key to a community’s resilience

Disaster risk communication helps to provide the public with information about the effects of disaster, and how actions may affect the outcome of the disaster

In other words it helps to inform the public about a potential disaster situation to enable people make informed choices.

Disaster risk communication may take place through many different channels including face-to face conversations

telephone calls

group meetings

mass media such as television, radio, Internet and interactive social media such as Twitter and Facebook.

Before disasters strike, telecommunications can be used as a conduit for disseminating information about the impending danger thus, making it possible for people to take the necessary precautions to mitigate the impact of these hazards.

Other telecommunication applications, including remote sensing and global positioning system (GPS), have critical roles to play in tracking approaching hazards, alerting authorities, warning

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Effective Disaster Communication

Some specific principles related to effective risk communication include:

An understanding of the characteristics of an audience is essential to developing effective risk communication efforts

The how, when, and by whom a message is delivered impacts its effectiveness

Communicators must continually adapt to changing situations

Using the preparedness approach like games, interactive discussion groups or teaching make a proposal of how you can effectively increase knowledge or preparedness behaviour of the target group on disaster management Promotion of discussion group approach to general disaster preparedness is more effective than the simple provision of written information

Crisis Counselling

Crisis is how an individual reacts to a stressful life experience that affects his/her stability and ability to cope or function.

Counselling is a personal, face to face, relationship between two people in which the counsellor, by means of the relationship and his special competencies, provides a learning situation in which the counselee, a normal sort of person, is helped to know himself and his present and possible future situations so that he can make use of characteristics and potentialities in a way that is both satisfying to himself and beneficial to society, and further, can learn how to solve future problems and meet future needs

What is Crisis Counselling?

Crisis counselling occurs when a client who is destabilised engages the services of a counsellor. The person is unable to cope with events in his/her life and, consequently, may be wracked by destructive feelings of self-doubt, anxiety, or guilt and may be engaging in hurtful behaviours. This crisis needs immediate attention otherwise there is the risk of further personality or behavioural deterioration.

Goals of Crisis Counselling

The primary goal of crisis counselling is to attain the quickest possible relief of the internal and external symptoms of the crisis and a return to that particular person’s usual level of functioning

Summary of Goals of Counselling The goals of crisis counselling can be summarised as, to:

- help the person return to his usual level of functioning;
- decrease anxiety; help people who are in crisis recognise and correct behaviours and cognitive distortions.
- teach crisis-solving techniques; and,

- give more assistance after immediate help is received.
- safety: ensures the individual is safe, any risk has been reduced and resources, if available, have been provided.
- stability: ensures the individual is stable and has a short-term plan which includes mastery of self and the emergency or disaster situation.
- connection: helps connect the individual to formal and informal resources and support. If resources are supports are not readily available, crisis counselling helps the individual pursue potential natural supports/resources.

Characteristics of an Effective Crisis Counsellor

- Self - Awareness : knows him/her self and empathise with clients without becoming personally involved or emotional when people who have gone personal experiences come to them.
- Non - judgemental : willing to listen all through to the client without casting judgement on those in crisis.
- Non - Reactive : does not react to client’s outbursts or threats but be completely supportive when client shows strong emotions.
- High Tolerance : remain calm when placed in tense and stressful situations
- Specific Training : receive specific skills and techniques in crisis counselling that are quite different from normal counseling