

## **Session Four: PARTICIPATORY DEVELOPMENT**

### **4.1 Objectives**

By the end of this lecture, you should be able to:

- i. Define participatory development
- ii. Explain approaches to participatory development
- iii. Identify advantages of participatory development
- iv. Explain types of economies

### **4.2 Lecture Overview**

In the last thirty or so years, participatory methodologies have come as an idea, sweeping across Africa, with power to reckon with. Soon after the post-independence euphoria of 1960s, it was realized that time had come for people to take greater control of their own lives, including in the realm of social development. The aura of political independence started losing momentum in the late 1960s and early 1970s as people became more disillusioned with the economic decay and widespread exploitation, leading to social impoverishment that led to further deterioration of the standards of living of the masses. A different kind of liberation was becoming necessary.

According to Julius Nyerere (1973), people will only develop themselves “by what they do, they develop themselves by making their own decisions, by increasing their own knowledge and ability, and by their own full participation as equals.” Participatory community development is therefore perceived as a process by which a community or a group of people strives to make it possible for all its members to satisfy their fundamental human needs and to enhance the quality of their lives. It is about people and the way they live, work and relate. It is not about objects, things or services given to them. People should of necessity, participate in decisions that affect their lives. This serves to instill local responsibility as well as enhancing their own sense of dignity and worth. It is believed that people will give their total support to initiatives that they help to create. Development is thus about expanding the choices people have, to lead lives that they value. Thus, the most basic capabilities for human development are to lead long and healthy lives, to be knowledgeable, to have access to the resources needed for a decent standard of living, and to be able to participate in the life of the community. Without these, many choices are simply not available and many opportunities in life remain inaccessible (UNDP, 2001).

### **4.3 Approaches to participatory development**

i. Passive participation

People participate by being told what is going to happen or has already happened. It is a unilateral announcement by an administration or project management without any listening to people's responses.

ii. Participation in information giving

The information being shared belongs only to external professionals. People participate by answering questions posed by extractive researchers using questionnaire surveys or such similar approaches. People do not have the opportunity to influence proceedings as the findings of the research are neither shared nor checked for accuracy.

iii. Participation by consultation

People participate by being consulted, and external agents listen to views. These external agents define both problems and solutions, and may modify these in the light of people's responses. Such a consultative process does not concede any share in decision making, and professionals are under no obligation to take on board people's views.

iv. Participation for material benefits

People participate by providing resources such as labour, in return for food, cash or other material incentives. Much on farm research falls in this category, as farmers provide the fields but are not involved in experimentation or the process of learning. It is very common to see this called participation, yet people have no stake in prolonging activities when incentives end.

v. Functional participation

People participate by forming groups to meet predetermined objectives related to the project, which can involve the development or promotion of externally initiated social organization. Such involvement tends not to be at early stages of the project cycle or planning, but rather after major decisions have been made. These institutions tend to be dependent on external initiators and facilitators, but may become self-dependent.

vi. Interactive participation

People participate in joint analysis, which leads to action plans and the formation of new local institutions or the strengthening of existing ones. It tends to involve interdisciplinary methodologies that seek multiple objectives and processes. These groups take control/ownership over local decisions, and so people have a stake in maintaining structures or practices.

vii. Self-mobilization

People participate by taking initiatives independent of external institutions to change systems. Such self-initiated mobilization and collective action may or may not challenge existing inequitable distribution of wealth and power.

#### **4.4 Advantages of participatory development**

- i. Ownership of projects for sustainability
- ii. Better utilization of local resources
- iii. Skills development through participation
- iv. Faster development
- v. Promote cohesion among community members
- vi. Attracts investors to the area

#### **4.5 Types of economies**

##### **Capitalism**

Capitalism means an economic system in which all or most of the means of production are privately owned and operated, and the production, distribution and prices of commodities (goods and services) are determined mainly in a free market, rather than by the state. In capitalism, the means of production are generally operated for profit.

In a purely capitalist economy, there would be no public schools, no state owned or maintained roads or highways, public works, welfare, unemployment insurance, workers compensation, social security benefits, etc.

##### **Communism**

This refers to community ownership of property, with the end goal being complete social equality via economic equality. Communism is generally seen by communist countries as an idealized

utopian economic and social state that the country as a whole is working toward. That is to say that pure communism is the ideal that the People's Republic of China is (was) working toward. Such an ideal often justifies means (such as authoritarianism or totalitarianism) that are not themselves communist ideals.

Fundamentally, communism argues that all labour belongs to the individual labourer, no man can own another man's body, and therefore each man owns his own labour. In this model all profit actually belongs in part, to the labourer, not or not just those who control the means of production, such as the business or factory owner. Profit that is not shared with the labourer, therefore, is considered inherently exploitive.

### **Socialism**

This refers to state ownership of common property or state ownership of the means of production. A purely socialist state owns and operates the means of production. However, nearly all modern capitalist countries combine socialism and capitalism.

## **4.6 Summary**

In summary, the lecture aimed at defining participatory development, approaches to participatory development, advantages of participatory development and types of economies

## **4.7 Self-Assessment Questions**

1. Explain the sources of ideas for projects
2. Explain the stages of participatory development?

## **4.8 Further Reading**

- i. Desai, V. & Potter, R. (2014). The Companion to Development Studies. (3<sup>rd</sup> Ed.). London: Routledge. ISBN-13:978-1444167245.
- ii. Byrd, M. & Edwards, S. (2014). Leadership Development Studies: A Humanities Approach. (5<sup>th</sup> Ed.). Plymouth, USA: Hayden-Mc Publishing. ISBN-13: 978-0738066042.