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PGD IN PROJECT PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT

ASSIGNMENT EIGHT ADM NO AIPMS/288/2019

**Question 1**. In your own opinion, is it important to involve the community in project management? Substantiate your answer

Yes, it is important to involve the community in project management because of the following reasons;

**Your opinion is important**

Community engagement is a vital part of many projects and the benefits are well documented, such as better outcomes for all stakeholders, community ownership and lower project costs but more importantly, decision makers genuinely want to hear ideas and feedback.

Most community engagement these days is no longer about spreading information and telling people what is being done, but is a two-way street between decision makers and stakeholders. Regardless of your qualifications, everyone knows what they like or dislike and has an opinion about what needs to be done and where priorities should lay.

**More perspectives**

Community engagement is often heavily one-sided, and engagement projects can be inundated with input from only those community members who have a strong opinion. Without other perspectives being aired, decision makers might not make the best decision for the community as a whole simply because of a minority of loud voice.

If your opinion differs from the more popular opinions, decision makers want to hear from you so they get a balanced understanding of the community's views and enhance the value of the final decision. The more views gathered in the process of making a decision, the more likely the final product will meet the needs and address the most concerns possible and If you fear repercussions of going against a vocal group, engagement can often be done anonymously.

**New information**

Decision makers recognise that the community that uses the space that it's planning for have an intimate and unique relationship to the area that they don't. Because of this knowledge, community members can provide new information on a project that has yet to be considered.

Public involvement brings more information to the decision, including scientific or technical knowledge, knowledge about the context where decisions are implemented, history and personalities. More information can make the difference between a good and poor decision.

**Community ownership**

When the community is involved in a project, they have ownership of it and the decision making process, which is key to a successful project outcome, even if not all individuals necessarily agree with the outcome.

**It feels good**

When a project is finalised and you can see the fruits of your labour, it feels good knowing that you were involved in something that benefits the community.

**A numbers game**

For public agencies with political leaders, the total number of people engaged is important. Engaging higher numbers gives the elected representatives confidence in their decision. *Bates, O. (August, 2014)*

**Question 2**.Is development synonymous to growth

**‘Growth and Development’** are often used as synonymous terms. Nevertheless, growth is different from development. But both are correlated and one is dependent on other. We can say that growth is a part of development, which is limited in physical changes.

Growth means an increase in size, height, weight, length etc. that can be measured. Development, on the other hand, implies change in shape, form or structure resulting in improved working or in functioning. Improved functioning implies certain qualitative changes leading to maturity.

Growth and development can be distinguished in the following ways;

**Growth is cellular; development is organizational**

Frank j distinguishes between growth and development by saying that growth may be looked upon as the cellular (of the cells) multiplication, and development as an organization of all the parts which growth and differentiation have produced. In other words, growth refers to changes in the particular aspects of the body, and development may imply the organization as a whole.

**Growth discontinues: development is progressive**

Another difference between growth and development lies in the fact that growth does not continue throughout life. Human beings grow up to a certain age; say twenty to twenty-five. Development, on the other hand, means a progressive series of changes throughout one’s life. Growth stops when maturity has been attained, but development goes on continuously.

**Growth involves body changes; development involves changes from origin to maturity**

To designate body changes, the term growth is used. In the words of L.H. Scott, “Since the rate of growth in the various parts of the body is not the same, in either an absolute or a relative sense, growth necessarily involves changes in body proportions as well as overall stature and weight.” Development represents “changes in an organism from its origin to its death, but more particularly the progressive or non-deteriorative changes from origin to maturity.”

That is why, Robert Watson has observed, “…development does not sit and with for precise measurement of any kind to be made; the organism is constantly changing, and prior conditions can never be duplicated.” Thus, development is “a progressive series of changes of an orderly, coherent type tending towards the goal of maturity.”

**Joint product of Heredity and Environment**

Growth and development is the joint product of heredity and environment. A child at any stage of his development is carrying certain heredity and he is also being influenced by his environment. What the child receives from his parents and what he shares with his environment conjointly shape his personality. His growth and development in dimension, at any time, is directly or indirectly, influenced by the forces of heredity and environment.

**Growth and development go hand in hand**

Generally, growth and development go hand in hand. Growth without development is meaningless. For example, when body grows in structure, it also develops in function. That means growth helps in development. But, this is not always so; child may grow fat, but this may not be accompanied by any functional improvement or development, growth in size, height or weight may not indicate any improvement in physical or sensory motor activity. The intellectual, emotional and social development continues after the growth in general has ceased. Development constitutes a progressive series of changes : progressive because they are directional, leading forward rather than backward, leading to greater differentiation and complexity of the system, resulting in more efficient functioning of the human organism.

Though the terms growth and development have been differentiated, in a wider sense, growth and development may be used as synonymous terms, as is often done in the field of education. *Dushi, G. (2015)*

**Question 3**.Explain the key elements/ingredients for successful projects in community development

The key elements or ingredients for successful community development are:

• A slight level of dissatisfaction – motivation and enthusiasm based on a feeling that “things could be better”,

• Belief and expectation of self-help – a belief in the future of the community and a conviction that realizing that future depends on the action of community members,

• Local Leadership – committed formal and informal leaders that can enthuse and support others, foster “shared leadership”, accept criticism, and act as local champions for community development efforts,

• Collaboration – a strong culture of cooperation and participation,

• Willingness to experiment and take advantage of opportunities,

• Cultivate Allies – actively seek, inform, and network with outside supporters,

• Work hard and stay with the process, especially when there is a setback,

• Focus on specific actions without losing sight of the “weird and wonderful”.

(Shaffer, 1989)

**Question 4**. With aid of a diagram, explain the community development process

The key to community development is facilitating a community in applying the principles to guide a flexible series of actions that are appropriate for the situation of the community. There are many “models” and frameworks for community development processes. There is a trade-off between communities having clear future plans for steps in the process and retaining flexibility and versatility. Considerable skill, confidence and judgement is needed to maintain an adaptable community-led process guided by the principles of community development.

While the application of principles in a flexible process is the key, figure 1 describes a sequence of key steps in a community development process. These steps are not prescriptive, but they rather describe the usual stages that most communities go through during a versatile process of community development. Communities may not progress through all the steps and some may occur concurrently.

**THE GENERAL STAGES IN A COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROCESS**

Reinvestment Planning and action Interpretation & prioritization

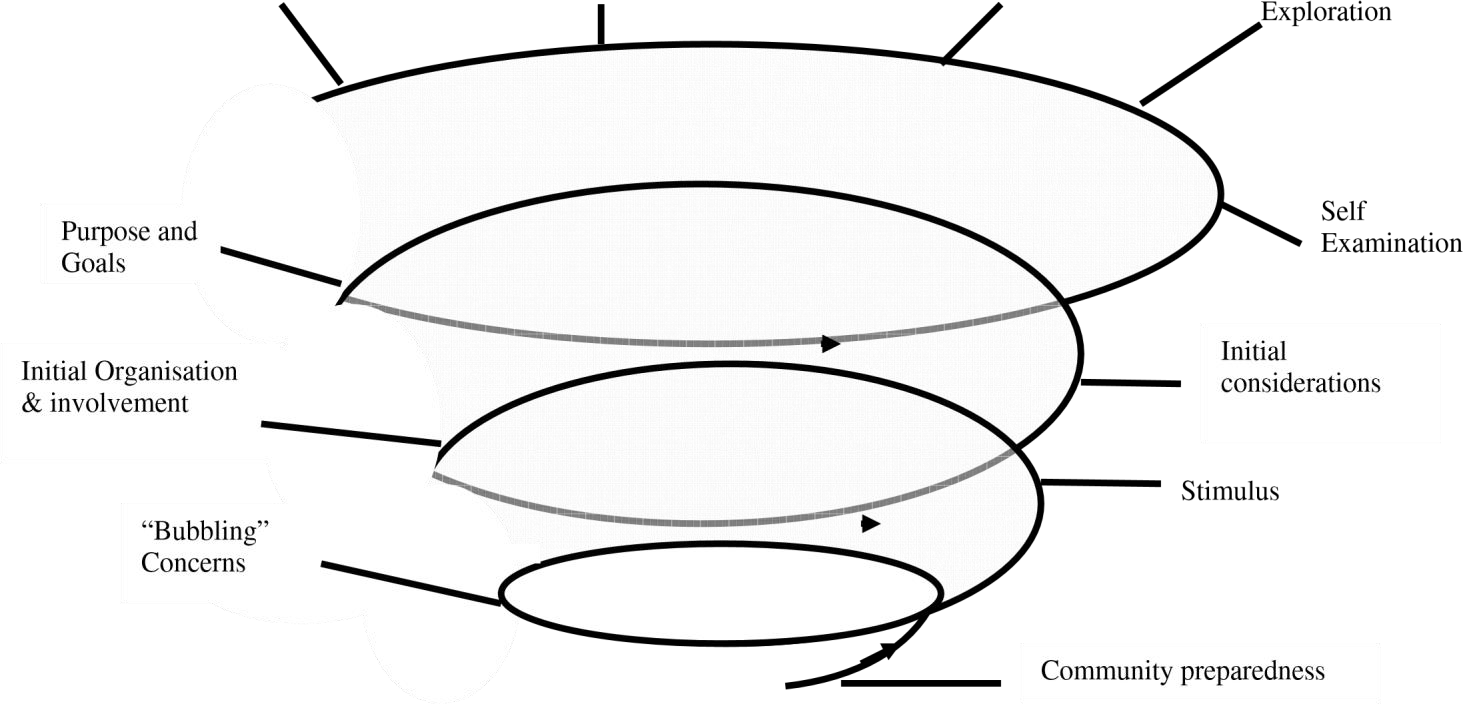


Fig 1

## Community Preparedness

Communities need to have some of the key ingredients for a development process – motivation, local leadership, a sense of ownership. Not all communities are interested in, or prepared for, undertaking a process of community development. At any one time, only a few communities may see the need, or have people motivated to organize and lead the community in development activities. Communities may have only a couple of the ingredients for success.

## “Bubbling” Concerns

Community development processes develop from a situation where issues and concerns are “bubbling” around. People are concerned, enthusiastic, motivated, frustrated. Private “troubles” become public concerns as people share issues that matter to them individually. People may begin to see some advantage for them in community improvement. They also may have altruistic feelings of contributing to the welfare of the whole community.

## Stimulus

Often, a stimulus brings the “bubbling” situation to a head. A local crisis, such as a mine closing or business leaving town sparks community action. A local leader, a local community group or several concerned citizens may galvanize community action. “Outside” input such as a visit by a community facilitator, hearing what another community has done, or a visit by local people to a conference may stimulate action. In “prepared” communities, even an impassioned speech may turn concern to action.

## Initial Organization and Involvement

After a stimulus often the first step is an event that brings the community together – usually at a public meeting or forum. At this point, community representatives may invite a facilitator or resource person into the community to help with suggestions, information and the process itself. Some community members may have a clear idea of what is needed or what they want to do. Others may simply want to do

“something” to improve their community but are not sure what.

## Engagement and Issues Identification

After some initial organization, a key step is activities to engage local people and give as diverse range of citizens the opportunity to be involved. Engagement of people occurs throughout a community development process, but it is crucial to actively foster involvement early in the process.

There are several important aspects of engagement. First, it involves understanding the existing concerns of community members. This means identifying what people have passion for, what they feel community issues are, and how interested they are in being involved. Basic questions here are "What are your concerns?", "How would you like your community to be?", “Would you like to be involved?”

Second, it is important to ask citizens how they would like to participate. In many community efforts local leaders overlook this. They often choose participation opportunities that they are familiar with, often opting for traditional meetings and committees by default. Asking people how they would like to be involved and actively seeking alternative organizational arrangements and events that are fun and social will help people participate. Often this leads to a judgement about how prepared the community is to conduct a development effort, and how people would like to plan the process. It also generates trust, involvement and identifies local “champions”.

Third, some community members may wish to pursue a particular idea they have passion for, such as a new business, streetscape or a shop local campaign. The process needs to allow these people to get started on acting on the idea even though not everyone may agree or it may not seem to be a priority. Passion drives community development and a balance must be struck between supporting passionate people and longer-term self-examination and prioritization.

There are many techniques for engagement and issues identification. They include one on one discussion, surveys, focus groups, public meetings, charrettes, community “conversations” and many more.

## Initial Considerations

As a community begins to organize, some questions are crucial for the community to answer:

* Where are we at?
* How do we want our community to be?
* How do we get there?
* Who can help us? (Shaffer, 1989; Kenyon, 1994):

These questions provide the framework of a community development process. They are difficult to answer because the responses are largely value statements about what people see as worthwhile or significant in their community. Opinions will vary markedly. Yet answering these questions is the cornerstone of the process.

Another vital question for community members is “what are your concerns?”. People’s concerns drive motivation and action. It is important for people to elect community development activities that address their concerns – to help people take action themselves on what they are motivated about.

## Purpose and Goals

From initial engagement and considerations, communities need to develop a purpose and goals for a development effort. It’s best if these are achievable and can be clearly defined and articulated. The purpose may be a broad vision statement or a more specific intention to improve a particular aspect of the community. Goals need to be specific, measurable, and achievable and may include achieving other stages in the process.

It is also useful for people to raise their hopes for the process of development itself. For example, that a broad range of people will be involved, that we can really improve employment. People need to also raise any concerns they have for the process. For example, that conflict may be difficult to manage or that people may not wish to be involved.

## Self-Examination

A period of self-examination and community analysis helps people to appreciate their community’s situation and existing capacity, to rethink problems and issues, and to identify new options. The purpose is not just data-gathering, but awareness-raising, involvement and “reframing”. Hence, the involvement of the community in self-examination is critical. An outside consultant can examine a community and recommend options. However, the extent of rethinking, ownership and contacts built in the community are usually far less than if the community itself conducts self-examination. It can be done using existing “assets” such as a local historical society, high school or TAFE classes, local community groups or interested citizens.

Self-examination can take many forms:

* Study of past achievements and projects, or reflection on ways the community has coped with change in the past,
* Listing of community assets and mapping relationships between different aspects of the community such as youth, elderly, community groups or local government.
* Audit or inventory of “capitals” – this may be a simple list or an analysis based on for example on “pressure, state, response” (Commonwealth Government, 1996). This means describing current pressures, such as reduced farm returns or decreased infrastructure. Second, what state has been created by pressures, such as people leaving agriculture. Third, what is occurring to respond to the current state of the community, such as diversification of agriculture or investigation of new industries.
* Community surveys and skills audits,
* Community economic analysis – calculation of several indicators such as population/employment ratios and location quotients, that can identify gaps in the local economy,
* SWOT analysis – listing community strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats,
* Photographs taken by community members of how they want their community to be, and not to be.
* Trends – information gathering on factors affecting the community such as trends in agricultural markets or demographic changes,

## Exploration:

A period of exploration often accompanies or follows self-examination. This involves gathering new information and ideas. Again, there are several ways of exploring issues.

* Environmental scan – a forward looking view of what outside influences are affecting the community, or potentially could influence the community, such as changes to legislation, or economic shifts. This has been used in community “future search” workshops held across Queensland.
* Community swaps – members of similar towns or districts visit each other’s community and compare their impressions and ideas for development. This brings new perspectives, helping local people rethink problems and identify new options,
* What others have done – by building contacts, reading, attending conferences, and visiting other communities, local people can learn from what other communities have done,
* Expert advice and consultancy,
* “Brainstorming” – raising ideas with only clarification. This has been used in community “idea generation” workshops.
* Rethinking and creativity exercises.

## Interpretation and Prioritization:

Data gathered and ideas developed during the engagement, self-examination and exploration phases needs to be “analyzed” and debated. This leads to clear priorities for action. This analysis phase may involve looking for patterns and gaps in community data, recognizing new ideas, perceiving common issues of interest, and identifying local “champions”.

There are at least two forms of prioritization. First, “rational” prioritization involves a relatively reasoned process weighing up pros and cons and importance. For example, people may “vote” or ascribe fictitious “dollars” to a particular issue from a list developed at a public meeting. Often people identify priorities for others, such as

“local government should….”.

Second, “prioritization by motivation” involves people expressing personal motivation and passion for an issue, regardless of its perceived importance by the community at large. It is something they are keen about and want to take action on. People nominate themselves to take action rather than someone else. Both forms of setting priorities are important.

At this point, it’s timely for citizens to consider what they can influence and what they cannot. Communities can easily focus on issues they may little control over, such as government policy, corporate decisions or trade. They should influence these where they can, but not lose sight of the issues they can substantially influence such as business development or the local environment.

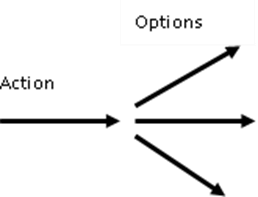
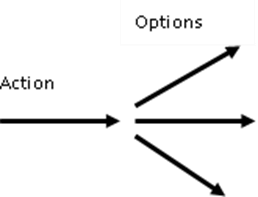
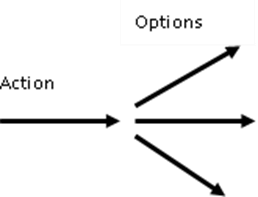
Community members need to also ask “of all the things that we ***could*** do, what are the few things we ***can*** do.”

* Considering the feasibility of ideas and proposals is also important during priority setting. Communities need to ask themselves whether a proposal is:
* Politically feasible – is it consistent with state and local government policy? Will it be too risky for local politicians to champion?
* Financially feasible – does it make business sense? Will it turn a profit and how quickly? How much risk is involved?
* Logistically feasible – does the community have the resources to fulfil the proposal? Are resources and markets close enough? Is there appropriate infrastructure?
* Able to be implemented – do community members have the skills, money and time to implement the proposal?

## Planning and Action on Priorities:

Plenty of action has occurred so far. Local people have examined their community, explored ideas and options and selected some key issues to work on. Some community members may have been taking action on a particular issue from the very start. Yet, at this point community members will be prepared to create some outcomes on the issues they have prioritized.

This involves the development of a strategy to progress particular issues. Strategies are a plan of action - patterns of actions, decisions and resource allocations to achieve an outcome. This range of action may include networking, feasibility studies, reporting progress, data gathering, raising funds, conducting trials, publicity, working bees, negotiating funding and so on. Strategies often involve a choice between a series of options then action, followed by more options (figure 2).



**Figure 2.** Community strategies involve selecting alternative actions.

Key issues for communities in this planning and action phase are:

* Organization – communities need to be well organized to follow through on action. Often a steering committee will delegate specific issues to working groups. An existing community group may work on particular issues.

Maintaining community interest – informal networks, media output, newsletters, and updates for community leaders help people stay informed and motivated.

* Celebrating success – success, no matter how small, needs to be recognized and celebrated. Citizen awards, publicity, appreciation days and community functions allow local people to recognize their achievements and progress towards goals (Kenyon, 1994).

## Reinvestment:

Community development never ends. Particular development initiatives have a lifecycle of initiation, expansion, maturity and conclusion. However, the close of a particular effort doesn’t mean that the job of community vitality is “done”. Development, as a process of organization, rethinking, decision-making and enhancing community capitals is ongoing. Communities need to constantly be seeking to expand their resource base and their ability to manage change. This means ongoing reinvestment of time and effort in the community and the fostering of new leaders and community motivation.

**Question 5**.In your own view, what are the challenges faced by project development officials in emergency situations.

**Undefined Goals** – When goals are not clearly identified, the whole project and team can suffer. When upper management cannot agree to or support undefined goals, the project in question typically has little chance of succeeding. The project manager must ask the right questions to establish and communicate clear goals from the outset.

**Scope Changes** – Also known as scope creep, this occurs when project management allows the project’s scope to extend beyond its original objectives. Clients and supervisors may ask for changes to a project, and it takes a strong project manager to evaluate each request and decide how and if to implement it, while communicating the effects on budget and deadlines to all stakeholders.

**Inadequate Skills for the Project** – A project sometimes requires skills that the project’s contributors do not possess. Project management training can help a project leader determine the needed competencies, assess the available workers and recommend training, outsourcing or hiring additional staff.

**Lack of Accountability** – A project manager’s leadership qualities can shine when each member of the team takes responsibility for his or her role in achieving project success. Conversely, a lack of accountability can bring a project to a complete halt. Finger-pointing and avoiding blame are unproductive, but all-too-common features of flawed project management. Learning to direct teams toward a common goal is an important aspect of project management training.

**Improper Risk Management** – Learning to deal with and plan for risk is another important piece of project management training. Risk management is typically a desirable project manager trait because projects rarely go exactly to plan. Gathering input, developing trust and knowing which parts of a project are most likely to veer off course are aspects of the project manager’s job.

**Ambiguous Contingency Plans** – It’s important for project managers to know what direction to take in pre-defined “what-if” scenarios. If contingencies are not identified, the entire project can become mired in an unexpected set of problems. Asking others to identify potential problem areas can lead to a smooth and successful project.

**Poor Communication** – Project managers provide direction at every step of the project, so each team leader knows what’s expected. Effective communication to everyone involved in the project is crucial to its successful completion.

Project management training includes an emphasis on written and oral communication skills

Proper communication can help increase morale by establishing clear expectations

Good project managers keep communication and feedback flowing between upper management and team leaders.

**Impossible Deadlines** – A successful project manager knows that repeatedly asking a team for the impossible can quickly result in declining morale and productivity. The odds of successfully completing a project under unreasonable deadlines are generally not feasible expectations.

**Resource Deprivation** – In order for a project to be run efficiently and effectively, management must provide sufficient resources. Project management training shows how to define needs and obtain approval up front, and helps project managers assign and prioritize resources throughout the duration of a project.

**Lack of Stakeholder Engagement** – A disinterested team member, client, CEO or vendor can destroy a project. A skilled project manager communicates openly and encourages feedback at every step to create greater engagement among participants. *Wilson, F. ( September 26, 2018)*