

## POST GRADUATE DIPLOMA IN PROJECT PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT

## **ASSIGNMENT: COMMUNITY DEVELOMENT MODULE 8**

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**QUESTION ONE**

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

# **6 reasons why participation is important [community engagement]**

#### Working so closely on community engagement projects with clients from around the world I have seen first-hand the positive impact public participation can have on the changes to a community, however, often I hear from friends and family 'why should I engage', 'no-one will listen' or 'they will just do what they want!'.

### Contributing to community engagement efforts is not a waste of time and there are many reasons everyone should get involved.

### **1. 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**.**

### **2. 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.

### 3. **New information**

Decision makers recognize 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.

**4. 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.

### **5. It feels good**

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

### **6. 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](https://www.socialpinpoint.com/blog/author/oliver-bates/" \o "Posts by Oliver Bates) Oliver) retrieved from **<https://www.socialpinpoint.com/blog/6-reasons-to-participate-community-engagement/>**

**QUESTION TWO**

**Is development synonymous to growth**

Development in its simplest definition and perhaps in its common usage can be

considered as the objective of moving to a state relatively better than what previously

existed: “good change” as defined by Chambers (1997). As change is a process, this

definition of development tends to denote a process towards a desirable state in society.

Whether this state is achieved in the short or long term, change has several implications

for society. Disruption may occur in the established patterns of living within the society

as it moves towards good change, and thus reflect a contradiction to its intended

meaning, and generate a discourse on what constitutes this „good change‟ (Thomas,

2000: 23). As a result, the term development in both academic and non-academic fields

has enjoyed an ambiguous position of being alluded to a diversity of meanings defining

or evaluating *what* „good change‟ is, and *who* this *good change* belongs to. Much of the

debate and controversy, as Potter (2002) attests, has focused on how development may be defined and pursued in theory and “real world efforts” which tend to be exhibited in practice. From the 1940s when the multi- and inter-disciplinary field of development studies was established, through the mid-1980s and 1990s to date there has been a proliferation of literature on development theory and practice (Polanyi, 1957; Preston, 1987, 1996; Lesson and Minogue, 1988; Escobar, 1995a, 1995b; Hettne, 1995; Cowen and Shenton, 1996; Potter, 2002).

In addressing these gaps, Amartya Sen‟s work on capabilities and functioning has been

the major influence since the human perspective of development began in the mid-

1980s. Sen argued that in defining *good change* what really mattered to both the poor

and non-poor person was the “capability to function” (Sen, 1999: 75), and “that poverty cannot be properly measured by income or even by utility as conventionally understood; what matters is not the things a person has – or the feelings these provide – but what a person *is* or can be and does or *can do*. What matters for well-being is not just the characteristics of commodities consumed, as in the utility approach, but what use the consumer can and does make of commodities” (Todaro and Smith, 2003: 17- 18).

By this argument, Sen urges the development discourse into considering that the concept of achieving *good change* or human well-being goes beyond just providing commodities and their use to considering their functioning s; that is, “what a person does with the commodities of given characteristics that they come to possess or control (or can do with them)” (Todaro and Smith, 2003: 18). The ability to carry out this functioning is defined by the capabilities of the person. Since one may have different abilities - capabilities in Sen‟s perspective - what characterizes development is “the freedom that a person has in terms of the choice of functioning s, given his personal features (conversion of characteristics into functioning s) and his command over commodities….” (Sen, 1985: 10-11). Hence, if what really matters in achieving *good change* centres on the “capability to function”, then development within this perspective is about “enabling”, particularly, “the enlargement of people choices” of functioning in

society (Nederveen Pieterse, 2001: 6).

**Development, not just growth;**

Regardless of the definition, community development is not just “growth”. Growth means more jobs and more investment but implies “more of the same”. It does not necessarily increase choices, networks or ability to manage change. Development can also sometimes mean “less”, fewer people in a community, or the loss of a manufacturing plant for example could improve the circumstances of what people value in the community. Development can occur without growth and growth can occur without development.

**QUESTION THREE**

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

* Ingredients 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”. (adapted from Shaffer, 1989) Given these principles and “ingredients”, what would a process of community development look like?

**QUESTION FOUR**

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

Economic development is part of community development. Local industry development involves facilitation of relatively small groups of industry people addressing specific issues, such as discussion groups or market alliances. This is part of economic development.

Economic development involves many of the elements of community development, such as participation, rethinking, action learning etc. However, it specifically aims to improve the relative economic position of the community. Flora et. al. (1992) argues that it does not necessarily lead to improved quality of life nor involve “collective agency”. Economic development largely aims to improve employment, income and the economic base of the community.

Economic development is part of community development, which seeks to build all five community capitals, not only enhancing the community’s economy but its environment, social structures, attitudes and assets

The relationship between industry development, economic development and community development. Practitioners debate whether community development or economic development comes first. Some argue that communities need jobs and income before broader social and human development can occur. Others maintain that new attitudes and knowledge, together with greater organization and wider relationships in the community, underpin economic development. Many community development practitioners describe their work as community economic development.

**QUESTION FIVE**

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

### **The Plethora of Project Management Problems**

Techniques in administration and training, if they are to be effective, must be based on a realistic understanding of the complex problems facing developing nations. In 1974 and 1975, interviews by the author with more than 50 officials — high level administrators, loan and financial officers, project and program staff, evaluation and operations personnel, programmers and geographical area division chiefs — in three of the largest international assistance agencies and a content analysis of selected internal evaluation documents, revealed a host of serious problems. Political, economic, operational, social and physical difficulties either seriously delay projects of cause them to fail. The following problems are those that occur most frequently. This check list can provide insights for technical assistance experts, educators or corporate project managers dealing with projects or project personnel in developing countries.

### **1. Ineffective project planning and preparation**

* Inappropriate or ineffective identification and preparation procedures within national planning agencies and operating ministries
* Adverse distortion of development patterns through imposition of funding agency priorities on recipient governments
* Inability of national governments to commit available resources to feasible projects due to antiquated or inadequate capital planning and budgeting systems
* Inadequate exchange between organizations setting project investment goals and those responsible for establishing overall development policies
* Inadequate analysis of the absorptive capacity of developing countries to finance, execute and operate specific types of projects in each sector
* Inaccurate assessment of the market or needs for project outputs leading to poor distribution of investment resources and over investment in specific types of projects
* Insufficient preparatory analysis, sectoral assessment, feasibility studies and technical appraisal to provide required information for subsequent design.

### **2. Faulty appraisal and selection processes**

* Objectives and expected outputs of projects not clearly defined
* Overemphasis on financial targets in project appraisal and selection; projects selected on the basis of total amounts available for investment rather than on the productive outputs of the project proposals
* Overemphasis on economic and technical criteria in project appraisal and selection; neglect of administrative, social, cultural and environmental impacts
* Promotion of “pet projects” by individuals, groups and government agencies within developing nations and by funding units within international assistance agencies
* Long lag periods in the processing and approval of projects by international funding agencies
* Perpetuation of previously initiated projects through follow-on and piggy-back funding; inadequate assessment of requests for continuation or second-phase funding
* Difficulty of estimating true costs of capital in the appraisal of individual projects or in comparing sets of alternative projects

### **3. Defective project design**

* Project design inappropriate to local conditions, needs and capacities
* Underestimation of resource needs, amortization obligations, insufficient allowance for resource demands of other on-going projects, leading to heavy additional unplanned borrowing
* Inadequate or inappropriate specifications, poor sitting, use of defective or improper materials causing inferior construction of capital facilities
* Insufficiently detailed designs creating the need for frequent design changes in subsequent stages of project planning and to unplanned additions to or expansions of the project
* Failure to integrate capital construction and physical infrastructure projects into larger and related systems or networks
* Lack of contingency planning to meet emergencies or unanticipated delays
* Failure to select adequate baseline data and developmental indicators during design to allow monitoring, control and post-evaluation
* Failure to plan for policy changes necessary for adequate project support, such as tax incentives, land reforms, and subsidies or other benefits to encourage related private investment
* Lack of interaction between project planners and ultimate users, clients and beneficiaries during design
* Failure to account adequately in financial plans for inflation, price increases, and rises in salary levels affecting overall cost of the project

### **4. Problems in start-up and activation**

* Delays in granting necessary national and international approval for project activation; procedural and bureaucratic delays within assistance agencies and national governments
* Corruption, inter-ministerial rivalries, and lack of cooperation in allocating and disbursing resources required for project activation
* Difficulty in obtaining local resources during construction of the project leading to delay and cost-overruns
* Failure to define the relationship of the project organization to broader institutional *and* administrative structures
* Insufficient analysis and comparison of alternative methods available for attaining project objectives during start-up and organizational phases
* Inadequate organizational planning leading to creation of inappropriate or ineffective project implementation unit
* International assistance agency field capacity too low to provide technical assistance during project activation
* Failure to redesign the project upon discovery of unanticipated obstacles during organization and operation

### **5. Inadequate project execution, operation and supervision**

* Cost over-runs due to delays in project construction, completion and implementation
* Failure to maintain adequate information flows to indicate achievement of detailed performance targets
* Lack of continuity, supervision and problem-solving assistance from international funding agencies
* Insufficient capacity or incompetence of local contractors
* Lack of adequately trained and competent project managers
* Excessive fragmentation of responsibility for implementation among government organizations and agencies.
* Inadequate resource and work scheduling systems
* Inadequate equipment specifications
* Delays in delivery and inability to procure required resources, materials and supplies
* Outdated accounting procedures, ineffective methods of budgeting
* High turnover in personnel, poor personnel training, inadequate salary structures
* Conflict among project staff or between project administrators and professional staff
* Overly complex or ineffective bidding and contracting procedures
* Over extension of national government organizational and financial resources in project execution
* Inability to attract foreign consultants and contractors to supplement local consultant and contractor capability
* Failure to develop indigenous management skill by using projects as training operations; excessive use of expatriates in project planning and operation; failure to develop counterpart administrators

### **6. Inadequate or ineffective external coordination of project activities**

* Insufficient supporting facilities, infrastructure and services
* Insufficient coordination among organizations operating projects and programs in related development sectors
* Poor coordination of internal project funding with external aid instruments
* Completion of projects sponsored by one ministry prior to completion of projects sponsored by another ministry which supplies the needed raw materials for other projects
* Failure of one government agency to train personnel needed for completion and operation of projects undertaken by another government agency
* Delays in receiving disbursement from donor agencies
* Political interference in construction or internal operation of project
* Insufficient use of foreign technology; excessive investment in local technology as opposed to technology transfer and adaptation.

### **7. Deficiencies in diffusion and evaluation of project results and follow-up action**

* Project outputs and benefits restricted to a narrower group of recipients than intended by project design; demonstration and spread effects of projects limited except where special efforts are made to amplify them
* Inadequate or inappropriate utilization of complete projects
* Faulty supervision and control on the part of international lending agencies
* Poor internal reporting and monitoring procedures
* Inadequate monitoring and control by central government ministries responsible for project implementation
* Failure to adapt appropriate project outputs and techniques to other developmental activities
* Failure to train and retain personnel following project completion and the transfer of project operations to routine production activities
* Failure to anticipate, plan for or adjust to the political and social impact of projects on local populations
* Long delays in submitting project completion reports
* Failure to terminate projects at appropriate time or to transfer project activities to established governmental organizations
* Inadequate or ineffective project post-evaluation methods and procedures

If this formidable list of problems is to be reduced in the future, international assistance agencies, multinational corporations, and governments of developing nations must cooperate in bringing about major policy and procedural changes. Knowledge of major problems in project implementation already exists within aid organizations and planning ministries, but the difficulties of finding means to increase organizational learning and utilizing lessons from past experience preclude its effective use. This study found a number of strategic problems that have a fundamental impact on the progress of a project through each stage of the cycle. Remedial actions in these dominant problem areas can substantially improve project planning and implementation.

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