

Participatory Local Development and Planning Workshop

Finding right balances:
Methodological principles

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Talking/Making

- Risk of vision not concretized vs. risk of project dependency and lack of coherence and implication
- Time line needed for concrete implementation
- Prioritization (with core resources)
- Interactions: data gathering, analysis, actions...
- Clear concept notes/road map widely shared

Involving selected groups/broader communities

- Distinguish between consultation and implementation
- End users and jury mechanisms
- Use surveys (quantitative) and facilitation practices (qualitative)

Elected representatives/direct representation

- Problems of competence and/or legitimacy on both sides
- Find the right mix (including administrative cadres)
- Training (learning by doing)
- Need for accountability mechanisms (see below)

Involvement/commitment

- Not every one can be committed
- Need for incentives in order to get commitment
- Committed participation leads to project sustainability
- Success stories consolidate engagement

Local resources (limited)/large centrally devolved funds

- Depend on administrative and political context
- Make best use of indigenous resources (existing even in very poor areas); mobilize potential entrepreneurs
- Have asset oriented approaches not need-oriented ones
- Use local resource-based achievements to trigger central funding and stimulate decentralization process

Domestic assets/ foreign support

- Tendency to neglect indigenous strengths and traditions vs risk of inward orientation
- Respect local governance mechanisms (when those are working relatively well)
- Develop international twinning of cities and sharing of experiences
- Stimulate corporate social responsibility (for MNC investing in local development)

Technical skills/negotiation spaces

- Capacity building is not only a matter of acquiring technical skills (of management, facilitation, etc)...
- Need for creating adequate spaces of negotiation for mediating conflicting interests, involving appropriate groups, etc
- Need for upgrading NGOs capabilities (NGO parliament in Central Europe)

Information/knowledge

- Importance of good communication
- Emotional commitment and active engagement are the basis of knowledge acquisition as opposed to simple information delivery (learning by doing).
- Think 20 years ahead: invest in education of children for learning participation, understanding critical thinking and democratic debates..

National strategies/Local achievements

- Need for both: how to ensure that local achievements lead to effective national strategies?
- Three level approach: micro/meso/macro; importance of the meso level
- Grouping of municipalities
- Dissemination campaigns

Free experimentation/public accountability

- Navigate between risk of corruption and excess of bureaucracy
- Reporting and monitoring systems (mid term evaluation)
- Public surveys (CRC)
- Role of (free) media as source of information and control (check and balance)
- Involve elected representation