Learn to Connect, Collaborate, and Co-create (L3C) Webinar Series
Stakeholder Engagement in Urban Projects – Perceptions, Challenges, and Limitations
25th August 2020 | Hosted by National Institute of Urban Affairs

A critical component of the CITIIS mandate is the continued focus on engaging stakeholders across the 12 projects. This webinar focused on discussing what ‘effective’ and ‘meaningful’ stakeholder engagement entails. Development practitioners from around the world reflected on their experiences of engaging citizens and mobilizing communities in projects. All of them reinstated the fact that meaningful end-user engagement brings greater transparency, accountability, and social inclusion in development projects.

For More details https://primetime.bluejeans.com/a2m/events/playback/c4d71967-d053-4de4-8a05-e790d86e5f70

Citizen Engagement

- A top-down approach, often initiated by Government authorities.
- A formal process as the government provides the tools and platforms to citizens for participation.
- Many a times in citizen engagement, the focus on behavioral change amongst citizens is through coercion.

Citizen Participation

- A bottom-up approach, facilitated by citizens or civil society groups.
- Citizens employ innovative tools and strategies to engage and participate among themselves.
- In participation, behavior change among citizens is through practicing, interacting and learning.

Technology as a Tool to Engage Citizens

Leveraging technology provides a conducive tool to engage youth, women, and children in urban development projects. The Block by Block Programme uses Minecraft game as a tool for actively engaging neighborhood residents and turn neglected vibrant places to improve quality of life for all (Read more at https://www.blockbyblock.org/). Such engagement enables co-creation and gives a sense of ownership. (Pontus Westerberg, @50:25)

Exploring Creative Ways of Citizen Engagement through a Bottom-up Approach

- In order to break down barriers to citizen participation, the aim should be to open up collaborations and opinions on the basis of various technical skills, values of various stakeholders. The project implementing agency must be open to accepting failure.
- Project Mapaton CDMX in Mexico entailed mapping the city’s bus routes through civic collaboration and technology, by designing a citywide game that residents could play while travelling by bus. The project focuses on importance of open dialogue among city government officials, researchers, academicians, tech startups, NGOs and users, as a mechanism to design and explore creative ways for citizen participation. (Diego Emilio, @31:07)
- Project Decide San Pedro is a successful example of participatory budgeting, where citizen decide on how to invest public funds to create quality of life in public space. The 246 projects implemented in the programme included an open-source platform “Consul” to register proposals from citizens including elderly. (Diego Emilio, @38:40)

The most of the urban development projects, public participation remains generally till involve stage. The focus should be to further collaborate and empower citizens.

Five stages in Public Participation Spectrum

- Inform
- Consult
- Involve
- Collaborate
- Empower

Citizen Participation as a Continuous Effort for Building Trust

Citizen participation is a continuous process and the effort should be to create a culture of dialogue and culture of trust with citizens. The focus should be to make communities more resilient, ideal, and sustainable.

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