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**Erasmus+**  
**KA220-HED - Cooperation partnerships**  
**in higher education**  
**(KA220-HED)**

**PROJECT NUMBER: 2023-1-EL01-KA220-HED-000164728**

Project acronym: **DEMo4PPL**

Project full title: **Digital Education Modules 4 Participatory Planning**

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**OPT-G4: MANAGEMENT SKILLS AND TECHNIQUES FOR  
PARTICIPATORY PLANNING A: COMMUNITY  
DEVELOPMENT AND ENGAGEMENT**

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### **1. Short description**

The participatory planning process is based on the cooperation of various stakeholder groups, such as residents, representatives of authorities, or nongovernmental organizations. Each of these groups often has unique needs, priorities, and perspectives, which can sometimes be in conflict. Balancing these diverse interests is essential to achieve equitable and sustainable outcomes. Contemporary challenges, such as lack of interest from stakeholders or difficulties in building dialogue between different groups, emphasize the importance of effective human capital management and the use of engagement techniques. Successfully conducting a participatory planning process requires advanced skills in human capital management and employing effective techniques to actively engage diverse stakeholders in the decision-making process. These efforts help ensure that the planning process is inclusive, collaborative, and impactful.

The current Module focuses on developing the skills and knowledge necessary to effectively conduct participatory decision-making processes, in particular the community development and methods of engaging various groups of stakeholders.

The main goals of the module are:

- Introduce students to the strategies of community development,
- Explore the role of social and human capital in social participation processes,
- Equip students with social leadership skills, establish cooperation, and create social networks,
- Introduce students how to use ICT tools to enhance community development and participation.

## 2. Keywords

Community Development; Community Engagement; Social Leadership; Management; Social Capital; Human Capital; Cooperation

## 3. Content

### 3.1. Defining community development

The deteriorating conditions in inner cities, rural areas, and countries around the world have sparked a renewed interest in community development. This resurgence is driven by evolving interactions among various interconnected groups of different scales over the years (Walzer, 2010).

Communities are complex entities made up of various interconnected components that shape their structure or function. These components can be divided into three main categories:

- **Human resources** - include individuals and groups who contribute to the development of society and the economy with their knowledge, skills, experience and creativity. In the context of participatory planning, it is important to take into account social diversity (age, gender, culture, education, profession) and the potential for group cooperation.
- **Physical resources** - include material elements of space, both man-made and natural, which affect the quality of life and development of the community. It is important to effectively manage and plan them in the context of sustainable development. Key elements: technical infrastructure, social infrastructure, natural environment, and sustainable development.
- **Economic resources** - refer to the value of goods and services generated through the interaction of human and physical resources. They include both tangible financial values and intangible benefits for society.

The community development process refers to the mechanism through which local human, physical, and economic resources are integrated.

**Figure 1:** Mechanism of the community development process (source: own elaboration)

The concept of community development is inherently complex and multifaceted, which leads to definitional challenges. Community development encompasses a wide range of practices, goals, and contexts, making it difficult to access a single definition. Instead, can be understood as a method of organizing for social and political change, as an approach or philosophy, and as a job or profession (Kenny & Connors, 2016).

The International Association for Community Development define community development as a practise-based profession and an academic discipline that promotes participatory democracy, sustainable development, rights, economic opportunity, equality, and social justice, through the organization, education, and empowerment of people within their communities, whether these be of locality, identity, or interest, in urban and rural settings.

Community development can also be defined as the process of organizing, facilitating, and taking action that allows people to work together to create a community that meets their needs and aspirations. This process provides vision, planning, direction, and coordinated action to achieve desired goals, supporting initiatives to improve the conditions in which local resources operate. In effect, community developers use local economic, human and physical resources to meet daily needs and respond flexibly to changing circumstances and needs (Matarrita-Cascante & Brennan, 2023).

In general, community development is a process focused on improving the quality of life of individuals and communities by addressing a wide range of interrelated factors. Unlike approaches that emphasize physical infrastructure alone, community development takes a comprehensive perspective, integrating social, economic, and physical dimensions as equally critical to supporting sustainable growth and resilience.

The typology of community development encompasses different approaches to implementing development initiatives, distinguished by the level of local community involvement and control over the process. The three primary types are:

I. Imposed development (top-down development)

In this approach, decisions and actions are made by external entities, such as governments, international organizations, or investors. The local community has little influence on the process, which is often driven by external goals rather than local needs.

II. Directed development

This approach involves external organizations (e.g., NGOs, governmental agencies) working with the local community, but they retain the primary role in decision-making. The community participates, but its role is often limited to the consultation or execution of tasks.

III. Grassroot development (bottom-up development)

A fully bottom-up approach, where the community initiates and leads the development process. External support, if present, is auxiliary rather than directive. This approach best reflects the needs and aspirations of local residents.

Recognizing the needs and potential of each community member, traditional top-down approaches to early development have been significantly reduced. Instead, there is now a strong focus on a bottom-up approach, emphasizing the role of community members as central players in the community development process. This method, which involves identifying, nurturing, and expanding human capabilities, is known as community empowerment. When individuals or community members possess the necessary skills and abilities, they can directly influence and enhance the empowerment of the entire community (Riswan, 2018).

Community Development Society<sup>1</sup> has established and embraces the following principles of community development:

- **Community-based practice:** Focusing on those most directly affected by planning activities and programs.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://cdsociety.org/about/#aboutprinciples> [11.12.2024]

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- **Community strength:** Honoring the ability of community members to develop and maintain a strong identity, create collective power, and act for themselves.
  - **Social justice:** Identifying, challenging, and deconstructing systems of oppression experienced by both historically marginalized groups and emerging social identities.
  - **Sustainability:** Practicing and supporting careful consideration of the impacts of actions and inactions on culture, society, the economy, and the environment over time.
  - **Collaboration:** Bringing together different sectors, disciplines, identities, and interests to integrate diverse perspectives and resources in collaborative decision-making and co-creation.
  - **Economic autonomy:** Strengthening local ownership and care of community assets and opportunities for development.
  - **Dignity in diversity:** Practicing and cultivating cultural humility, impartial listening, and accountability for harm.
  - **Co-learning:** Engaging and building capacity across communities through reflective practice, experiential learning, and professional development.
  - **Resilience:** Supporting communities to build adaptive capacity to respond to challenges, disruptions and change, while supporting long-term well-being, sustainability and empowerment.

**Table 1:** Compares the key differences between community development approaches (source: own elaboration based on (Higgins et al., 2024; Kelly & Caputo, 2006; Matarrita-Cascante & Brennan, 2023))

Aspect	IMPOSED DEVELOPMENT	DIRECTED DEVELOPMENT	GRASSROOT DEVELOPMENT
<b>PRINCIPAL STAKEHOLDERS</b>	Private / Government	Government and NGOs, with the involvement of local representatives	Local community
<b>DECISION-MAKING</b>	Fully controlled by external entities	Joint decision-making, with external entities dominating	Fully controlled by the community
<b>COMMUNITY ROLE</b>	Passive; acts mainly as beneficiaries	Consultative; Provides input and implements decisions	Active and participatory at every stage
<b>FOCUS</b>	External goals and priorities	Balancing external expertise with local needs	Addressing local needs and aspirations
<b>TIME OF IMPLEMENTATION</b>	Fast; suitable for emergencies	Moderate; slower due to consultations	Slow; emphasizes long-term solutions and inclusivity
<b>STRENGTHS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provides assets that residents would not otherwise have.</li> <li>Provides access to resources, services, knowledge, and external networks</li> <li>Quick program change or implementation.</li> <li>Have the funds to guarantee project implementation.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Acknowledges the need for democratic processes within the community.</li> <li>Can provide a mix of administrative structure and grassroots organization.</li> <li>Sometimes leads to the creation of a 'community'.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provides opportunities for residents to develop the ability to be independent and controllable in community decision-making.</li> <li>Can lead to innovation.</li> <li>Can lead to long-term and sustainable development efforts.</li> <li>Builds 'community'.</li> <li>Often leads to a sense of ownership and attachment.</li> </ul>
<b>WEAKNESSES</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tends to ignore democratic processes.</li> <li>Tends to remove local citizens from decision-making.</li> <li>Fails to empower residents and create a sense of ownership and attachment</li> <li>Tends not to build 'community'.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Can create resentment toward community leaders if local issues and ideas are not taken seriously.</li> <li>More of a managerial mindset, which leads to limited innovation.</li> <li>Does not give residents the opportunity to act.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Can be unnecessary (and expensive) for some specific types of projects.</li> <li>Can take a long time to build local capacity and structure to operate.</li> <li>Relying on local volunteers can lead to an unhappy outcome - frequent turnover, loss of activists, and threaten the longevity of the project.</li> </ul>

Community development, as a dynamic and multifaceted process, requires the involvement of various stakeholder groups. A key role in initiating and implementing these activities is played by **community development practitioners** - specialists, organisations and local leaders who operate at various levels. Community development practitioners collaborate with communities to identify their collective needs and priorities, build on existing assets, talents and resources, and secure access to new opportunities. The foundation of community development lies in the belief that every community possesses strengths and capabilities that can be harnessed for its growth. However, it also recognizes the key role that external facilitation by governments, statutory bodies, and private institutions can play in enhancing community efforts and achieving sustainable development (Kenny & Connors, 2016).

Community development practitioners (also known as community development workers) include a variety of individuals who play different roles within the community development process (Kenny et al., 2017). They can be categorised into three groups:

**a) Paid workers in specific community development roles**

These individuals are specifically employed to manage and implement community development strategies. They may come from within the community or outside it. Paid workers bring specialized skills and knowledge to the development process and often work with community members to address local challenges.

Examples: social workers, community organisers, urban planners, government agencies, local government officials, or program coordinators working for NGOs

**b) Unpaid 'organic' workers (grassroots volunteers)**

These are community members who contribute significantly to community development without formal compensation. They are embedded within the community, and their work is driven by personal commitment and a desire to improve the well-being of their peers. These individuals are typically seen as informal leaders and play a vital role in mobilizing the community.

Examples: local activists, informal leaders, volunteers, and members of community-based organizations

**c) Professionals in other fields engaged in community development activities**

Many individuals employed in other professional fields incorporate community development into their job responsibilities. These workers apply their expertise in areas such as education, healthcare, or public administration to support or lead community-driven initiatives. Their professional work often intersects with community development efforts, helping to integrate specialized knowledge into local development strategies.

Examples: teachers, healthcare professionals, urban planners, and public administration staff



In summary, community development is based on the collaboration of various components (resources), which, through specific actions, conduct processes aimed at "improving the community." Community development programs and strategies can significantly depend on the available resources, and their nature often reflects the goals and level of training of those involved in their implementation.

### **3.2. Techniques and strategies for community development and empowerment**

Community development is a comprehensive concept aimed at improving the well-being of individuals and creating sustainable progress within communities. It uses various strategies to improve empowerment, collaboration, and transformation the communities. Each strategy should be tailored to the unique context of the community, providing a holistic approach to development. Combining these efforts, community development provides an essential foundation for participatory planning (Ahmad & Islam, 2024).

There are increasing calls for governments at various levels to pursue greater community involvement in community life, including participatory planning. At the societal level, it is recognized that the relationship between government and residents needs to change to enable greater participation in decision-making and reduce the exclusion of problem groups (Moore et al., 2016).

**Capacity building** refers to the enhancement of individuals' skills and the institutional capacity for resource management, achieved primarily through education and training (Simmons et al., 2011). Strengthening institutional capacity requires a more integrated approach that combines experiential learning, context-specific training, and long-term engagement with institutions. This involves fostering organizational structures, leadership capabilities, and systemic support mechanisms that enable sustained and adaptive resource management. By addressing these aspects holistically, capacity building becomes a transformative process rather than a singular event, emphasizing the interplay between individual skill development and institutional growth.

**Social capital** plays a key role in participatory processes, encouraging cooperation, respect and shared responsibility for results. It also refers to the networks, trust, and norms that enable collective action within a community. Higher levels of social capital are associated with greater community resilience and more effective problem-solving (more in section: Social capital development - building relationships, collaboration and social networks for social participation)

**Community engagement** involve actively engaging residents in decision-making and planning processes to ensure that initiatives reflect their needs and aspirations. This is a collaborative approach that fosters trust, inclusiveness and understanding between community members and stakeholders such as local authorities, organisations and planners. Effective community engagement recognises the different perspectives, values and experiences of residents, emphasising the importance of their input into shaping projects and policies. This process not only empowers



individuals by giving them a voice in the issues that affect their lives, but also strengthens social cohesion and builds a sense of ownership over outcomes.

**Community based organizations (CBO)** are grassroots organizations that work for local communities to solve specific problems and support development. These organizations are typically founded by community members, for community members, ensuring that initiatives and solutions are tailored to the needs and priorities of the group they serve. Through local resources, leadership development, and change advocacy, CBOs play a key role in improving the overall quality of life in their communities, as well as influencing the development of new community leaders, monitoring government actions that are important to them, and being allies to marginalized groups (Ife, 2016).

**Collaboration and partnerships** - when local governments, businesses, nonprofits, and residents work together, they create a system that increases the effectiveness and reach of initiatives. Each partner brings unique resources, knowledge, and perspectives that, when combined, can lead to better solutions. Partnerships enable communities to address complex issues in an inclusive way. Joint efforts also foster shared ownership, ensuring that all stakeholders have a stake in the success and development of initiatives.

Key benefits of collaboration include:

diverse stakeholders bring resources to the table, creating a stronger foundation for action and shared knowledge,

partnerships ensure that all parties are held accountable for the success of initiatives, which promotes greater transparency and shared responsibility

successful collaborations help strengthen trust between diverse groups, creating a foundation for future collaboration (Huxham & Vangen, 2013).

**Place-Based Development** focuses on the unique assets, characteristics, and needs of a particular area to create tailored strategies for development.

Rather than using a one-size-fits-all model, this approach emphasizes local context, drawing on community strengths, traditions, resources, and local knowledge to develop solutions that are more tailored. By building on what already exists in a given location, place-based development fosters deeper community connection, promotes local ownership, and ensures that the benefits of development are widely shared. The importance of this approach lies in its ability to: tailor solutions to the specific needs and opportunities of the area, engage local residents in the planning and decision-making processes, and encourage the creation of local economic development opportunities.

**Advocacy** is the act of influencing public policy, decision-making, and the allocation of resources to address systemic issues that affect communities. This includes efforts to create positive change through coalition building, lobbying, and engaging the media to draw attention to issues and needs. Advocacy empowers residents to actively participate in shaping policies and laws that affect their daily lives, ensuring that their voices are heard when laws are made.



### 3.3. Social capital development - building relationships, collaboration and social networks for social participation

Social capital, studied across social, economic, and political sciences, refers to the resources embedded within social networks and relationships (van Oorschot & Finsveen, 2010). Defined broadly by Bourdieu (1986), it represents an “aggregate of actual or potential resources” linked to enduring networks of mutual recognition, providing members with collective characteristics. Social capital includes the economic, cultural, and symbolic resources available through these relationships. Its value depends on the social context, the structure of the network, and the individual’s position within it, enabling greater resource exchange, cooperation, and development for both individuals and communities

The connections within a social network serve as the framework through which social capital flows, with these relationships varying in their formality, closeness, and strength. This variability enables the classification of social capital into two primary types of ties: bonding social capital and bridging social capital (Sánchez-Arrieta et al., 2021):

- **Bonding social capital** arises from strong, close-knit ties within homogeneous groups, fostering trust, intimacy, and mutual support. These dense and cohesive networks promote internal resource exchange and solidarity but may limit access to external opportunities.
- **Bridging social capital** flows through weak ties that connect individuals across different groups. These connections provide access to diverse resources and facilitate broader social cohesion. Bridging ties, often spanning structural holes in networks, enable the flow of novel resources and prevent fragmentation.

Both types of ties play complementary roles, with bonding enhancing internal trust and bridging driving innovation and connectivity.

Social capital is a key driver in community development, as well as in social participation, facilitating cooperation, collaboration, and resource mobilization to meet local needs. Efforts to enhance social capital include fostering inclusivity, organizing community events, supporting social participation, and creating spaces for dialogue and collaboration. Policies that prioritize transparency, participatory decision-making, and equitable resource distribution also play a significant role in nurturing social capital.

Social capital emphasizes the importance of relationships, trust, and networks in fostering collaboration and participation within communities. Building relationships, strengthening collaboration, and expanding social networks enhance the capacity for social participation in the following ways:

#### 1) Strengthening the trust

Trust is the foundation of social capital and is essential for cooperation. Building relationships based on mutual respect and shared goals encourages reciprocity, in which members feel obligated to support each other in achieving shared goals (Putnam, 2000).

## **2) Facilitating collaboration by connecting and strengthening ties**

Linking social capital strengthens the links within closely related groups, increasing solidarity and the ability to mobilise internal resources. On the other hand, Linking social capital creates links between different groups, supporting inclusiveness and enabling access to wider resources and perspectives (Granovetter, 1973; Putnam, 2000).

## **3) Expanding social networks for resource flow**

Collaborative social networks works as channels for the exchange of knowledge, skills, and material resources. These networks amplify individual contributions, create learning opportunities, and encourage innovation by leveraging the collective potential of the group (Burt, 2000).

## **4) Promoting active citizenship and participation**

Strong social networks and collaborative relationships encourage community members to actively participate in decision-making and planning processes. This participation leads to more democratic and equitable outcomes because diverse voices are heard and taken into account

## **5) Supporting development through collective action**

By cultivating relationships and collaboration, communities can collectively address complex challenges. Mobilising resources and building trust ensures that initiatives are sustainable over time (Woolcock, 1998).

In practical terms, fostering social capital for social participation involves creating opportunities for interaction (e.g., community events, workshops), promoting transparency and trust in governance, and supporting institutions that encourage collaboration and inclusivity.

### **3.4. Human capital - leadership roles and skills in managing social participation**

Leadership is defined as the strategic use of influence to inspire participation and achieve collective goals (Yukl, 2013). It involves the interplay between a leader's personality and behaviours, followers' perceptions, and the broader context of their interaction (Day & Antonakis, 2012)

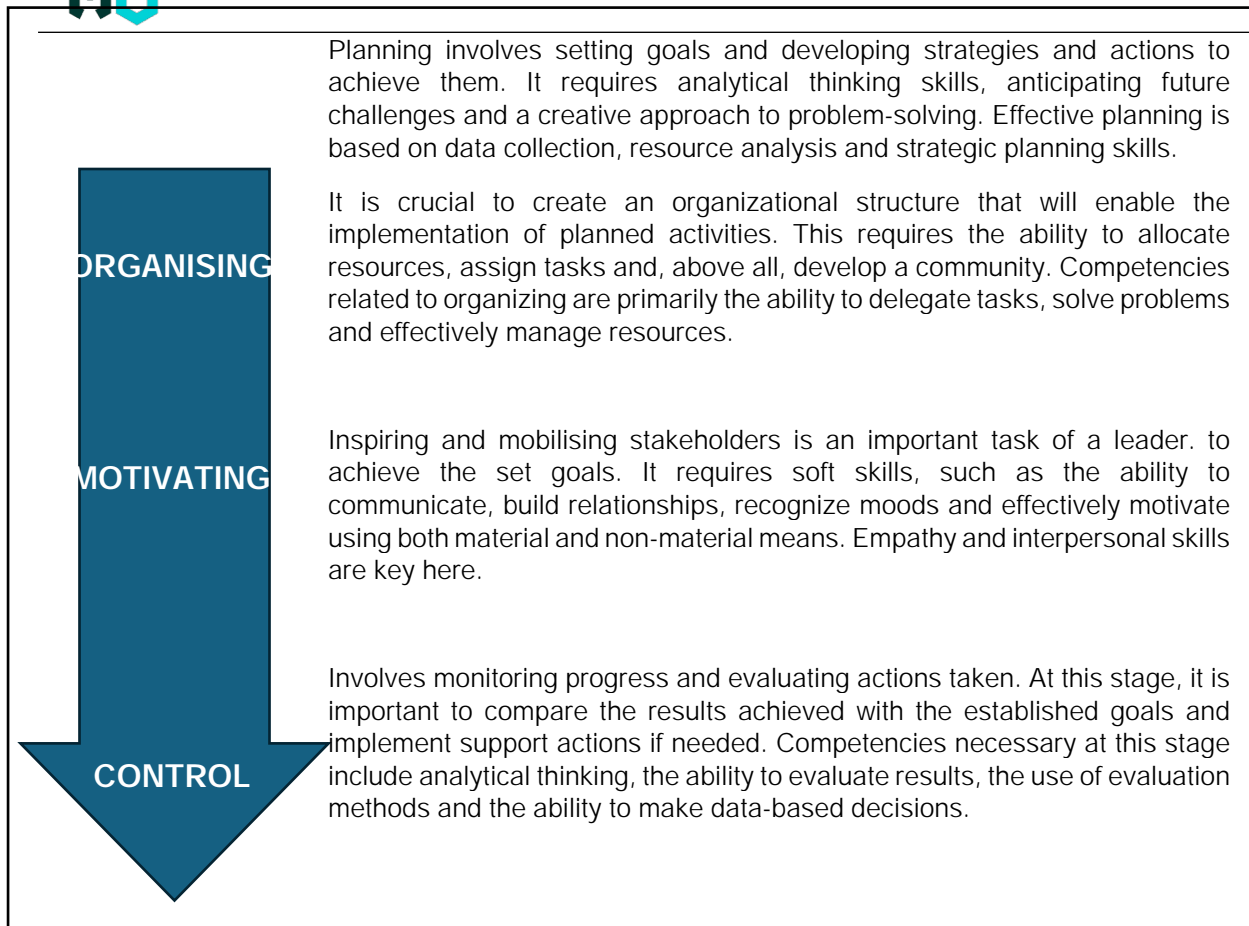
In managing social participation, human capital - the skills, knowledge, and abilities of individuals - is crucial. Leaders in this space must foster engagement, encourage collaboration, and support shared decision-making processes that address community challenges and advance collective objectives. This requires a combination of strategic insight, interpersonal acumen, and adaptability to strengthen social capital and enable meaningful participation (McCallum & O'Connell, 2009).

McCauley (2001) identifies three critical components of leadership development:

- 1) Developmental experiences - opportunities for learning through practice and exposure.
- 2) Personal orientation to learning - including the leader's ability, skills, and intrinsic motivation to grow.
- 3) Organization support - structures and rewards that reinforce and sustain development progress.

**Figure 2:** Skills of leadership (source: own elaboration based on (McCallum & O'Connell, 2009))

Management is a complex process that requires a variety of competencies adapted to its individual stages. Each stage plays a different role in achieving the goals and requires specific skills (Figure 3).



**Figure 3:** Stages of management (source: own elaboration)

With this comprehensive approach, leaders are well-equipped to navigate the complexities of effectively supporting social participation. Both the indicated skills and management stages require fulfilling specific leadership roles in the participation management process.

**Table 2:** Leadership roles in managing social participation (source: own elaboration based on Leadership Science Institute [accessed online by <https://www.leadershipscienceinstitute.com/empowering-transformation-leadership-development-for-social-impact/> on 14-12-2024])

<b>FACILITATORS OF COLLABORATION</b>	<b>VISIONARIES</b>	<b>CAPACITY BUILDERS</b>	<b>AGENTS</b>
Leaders must create inclusive spaces for dialogue and ensure diverse voices are heard. They act as mediators, bridging gaps between stakeholders and encouraging shared understanding and consensus-building.	Visionary leaders articulate a clear and inspiring direction for the group, aligning individual contributions with collective goals. This ensures that participation is purposeful and outcomes-focused.	By investing in the development of followers' skills and knowledge, leaders enhance the group's ability to engage meaningfully in participatory processes. This may involve organizing training, workshops, and mentorship opportunities.	Leaders must motivate individuals to embrace innovation and adapt to new ways of working together. This includes navigating resistance to change and fostering a culture of continuous improvement.

Managing social participation requires leaders to empower individuals and groups to take ownership of their roles within the community. By fostering trust, leveraging resources, and encouraging active engagement, leaders strengthen the social fabric and ensure the sustainability of participatory initiatives. In this way, leadership becomes a vital mechanism for converting human capital into tangible social outcomes, enhancing both individual and collective well-being (Chemers, 2002; Yukl, 2006).

The complex and dynamic processes of participatory planning require significant leadership skills to effectively navigate diverse stakeholder needs and diverse external factors. While human capital development - focusing on individual leadership skills and abilities - has led to many successful participatory initiatives, the full realization of planning's potential depends on fostering social capital. Building strong relationships, building trust, promoting community, and encouraging reciprocity are essential to ensuring that collective efforts thrive.

### **Tools and methods for facilitating community participation in planning processes**

Facilitating community participation in planning processes requires intentional methods that promote inclusivity, collaboration, and empowerment. To encourage residents to participate in community activities and increase civic engagement, there are several strategies that can be implemented.

#### **1) Outreach and communication**

- **Effective communication** - using clear, consistent messaging through various channels (flyers, social media, local events, community meetings) to reach a broad audience. Tailoring the message to the interests and needs of the community can help individuals feel personally invested in the process. Communication between stakeholders plays a key role in monitoring progress, anticipating risks, identifying needs and improving interpersonal relationships throughout the project (Galli, 2022).
- **Storytelling** can help in efforts to change the way communities are improved. Story itself is an opportunity to explore ways to engage people in meaningful and lasting change. Storytelling as an approach and method can help community leaders connect people and each other, for example by creating a common purpose, considering the past and present, building relationships, and listening to different voices (Prasetyo, 2017).

#### **2) Building trust and relationships**

- **Transparency** - is a shared task that requires a communication process between as many stakeholders as possible, based on widely available information. Increasing transparency is one of the important factors that strengthen the acceptance of development and planning projects in the eyes of the public. New communication technologies and digitalization have different impacts on the spread of participatory processes and the transparency of planning. Digitalization is seen as a trend that improves access to information and changes the flow of information in urban spaces (Polívka & Reicher, 2019).

- **Active listening** is a key part of making sure residents feel heard. By taking the time to truly understand the concerns and needs of the community, leaders can demonstrate their commitment to engaging community members in decision-making. This can include holding regular meetings, surveys, and one-on-one discussions to gather feedback and respond appropriately (Rowe & Frewer, 2000).

### 3) Inclusive and accessible platforms

- **Diverse forms of participation:** Offering a variety of participation options (online surveys, focus groups, workshops) to accommodate different preferences and schedules. Making participation more flexible increases inclusivity and ensures greater engagement (Fung, 2015).
- **Accessibility** - Make sure communications and materials are accessible to all members (Cardinal et al., 2021).

### 4) Empowerment and capacity building

- **Skill development** - offering training or workshops to develop skills that will enable stakeholders to make meaningful contributions to planning and decision-making.
- **Peer leadership** - encouraging residents to take leadership roles in the process. Peer leadership fosters a sense of ownership and encourages others to get involved.

### 5) Incentives

Offering incentives can be a practical and effective way to encourage community participation, especially for those who have time or resource constraints. Incentives signal recognition of participants' contributions and can reduce barriers to engagement. Examples of incentives include:

1. financial incentives (honorariums), gift cards or travel reimbursements for attending workshops or focus groups
2. public recognition of participants' efforts, e.g. by presenting certificates, awards or recognizing their contribution at community events
3. providing rewards such as free access to training, resources or community services
4. highlighting opportunities to network, collaborate, or build relationships within the community

## 3.5. Evaluation of participation processes and strengthening social engagement

The matter of measuring impact is complex and can be misconstrued and misunderstood. Standard measurement tools are uncommon in community development (Ardle & Murray, 2021). Process and outcome dimensions are important, assessing both can be challenging, and different approaches and indicators will be needed to evaluate each. Evaluation in community development suggests there is a limited culture of evaluating programmes in the community development sphere (Whelan et al., 2019).

Indicators of community participation include the capacity and level of decision-making, the amount of and time devoted to goal-related activities, the degree of local



ownership felt and/or achieved, the representativeness of membership and leadership groups, satisfaction with the participation process, and the achievement of long-term goals (Butterfoss, 2006).

The OECD (2013) identifies five main evaluation criteria group: (1) relevance, (2) efficiency, (3) effectiveness, (4) impact and (5) sustainability. While these criteria are helpful, they can be problematic for community development depending on how they are interpreted, how questions around them are framed, and how the assessment is used.

Effective community development evaluations often involve a combination of qualitative and quantitative data collection methods. In assessing community development, models were designed, developed over the years and then implemented (Ardle & Murray, 2021). Main features, advantages and limitations are presented in Table 2.

Evaluation in community development can pose challenges for community workers, communities, and funders, each with their own perspectives. Despite these differing starting points, finding common ground in agreeing on and implementing models to measure impact can benefit all parties. Successful evaluation depends on a shared clarity of purpose and processes, ensuring that there is a mutual understanding of how interventions are expected to contribute to the intended outcomes. This requires clearly defined assumptions about the intervention's role in fostering positive change and demonstrating its effectiveness in achieving those outcomes (ibid.).

**Table 3:** Methods of evaluating the community development (Source: own elaboration based on (Ardle & Murray, 2021))

Method	Approach	Focus	Data collection	Strengths	Challenges
<b>RESULTS-BASED MANAGEMENT (RBM)</b>	A systematic approach focusing on achieving measurable outcomes through setting clear goals, monitoring, and assessing performance.	Measurable outcomes	Quantitative data, progress reports, indicators	Provides clear accountability, easy to measure results, focuses on tangible outcomes	Overemphasis on quantitative data can miss qualitative aspects
<b>OUTCOME MAPPING</b>	A framework that links interventions to outputs and outcomes based on a theory of change approach. It identifies relationships between activities and their outcomes.	Long-term outcomes and changes	Interviews, documentation, reflection	Focuses on program-specific outcomes, adaptable, tracks changes in participants' behaviour	Hard to generalise outcomes due to diverse factors
<b>OUTCOME HARVESTING</b>	Instead of predetermined outcomes, this method works backward from observed changes to assess the contribution of interventions.	Impact-based, retrospective	Collects evidence from various sources	Allows for flexible evaluation, captures unanticipated outcomes	Can be complex and time-consuming to collect data
<b>MOST SIGNIFICANT CHANGE (MSC)</b>	A participatory method where community members share stories of change, deciding what is most significant. Stories are analysed to identify themes.	Participant-driven change	Stories and narratives from participants	Empowers community members, provides deep insights into perceived changes	Subjectivity in analysing and categorizing stories
<b>PHOTOVOICE</b>	Uses photography to enable participants to document changes they perceive in their community, followed by discussions about the photos.	Visual change documentation	Photography, group discussions	Gives participants a visual voice, highlights diverse perspectives	May not capture all dimensions of change clearly
<b>PARTICIPATORY VIDEO</b>	Community members create their own videos to document and discuss community changes and challenges, facilitating dialogue about these changes.	Visual representation of change	Video production, group discussions	Promotes active community engagement, visualizes complex issues	Requires technical skills and equipment
<b>ACHIEVING BETTER COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT</b>	A comprehensive framework for planning and evaluating community development based on self-evaluation and participatory methods.	Empowerment and community change	Self-assessment, focus groups	Supports community ownership, emphasizes empowerment and sustainability	Limited by predefined funding and geographic focus



(ABCD)					
<b>LEARNING, EVALUATION, AND PLANNING (LEAP)</b>	A participatory planning and evaluation framework that focuses on self-evaluation and learning from community development efforts. It is designed to support local initiatives in assessing both outcomes and processes.	Process and outcome evaluation	Focus groups, self-assessment, participatory discussions	Promotes community ownership, adapts well to local contexts, focuses on continuous learning and improvement	May face limitations when applied in rigid funding structures with predetermined outcomes or external expectations

## 4. Workshop

Role-playing: Key Leadership Situations

The main goal of the workshop is to develop the ability to recognize and assume key leadership roles in various situations.

Materials to prepare before workshop:

- role-play scenarios tailored to participation and spatial planning
- flip charts, markers, and sticky notes

1. **Introduction** - the role of leadership in spatial planning
2. **Defining leadership in situations** - group discussion about leadership roles and characteristics for them

Students prepare in groups (3-5 members) leaders' profiles on boards - each group for a different role, what in their opinion are the most important skills

3. **Role-playing leadership situation** - participants familiarised themselves with the prepared scenario by teacher

Examples of problems:

- Overcoming opposition to changes in spatial planning
  - Balancing competing spatial priorities
  - Building trust between stakeholders, especially in contentious environments
  - Increasing community participation
  - Resolving conflicts between stakeholders
4. **Discussion in groups** - what are the main problems that a community leader has to face in a given situation, who are the stakeholders, what can stakeholders expect, how to engage different stakeholder groups, what actions should be taken, what resources are available and what resources need to be acquired, what roll to assign community members, what mechanism can help in achieving the goal, what will the evaluation of the implementation of activities look like
  5. **Action plan** - participants work in teams to solve real-world scenarios after discussion
  6. **Presentations (collected ideas are written down on boards/flipcharts)** - participants present their key takeaways and commitments
  7. **Wrap-up and feedback** - summarise the workshop, closing remarks

## 5. Assignments

Students will work in groups to develop a project proposal aimed at enhancing community development. This proposal will focus on a specific community issue, and incorporate the principles and methodologies discussed in lectures.

The main aim of project is to apply theoretical knowledge to real-case problem-solving skills.

**Step 1.** Forming groups (3-5 members).

**Step 2.** Identification a community issue - choose a real-life problem that your chosen community is facing (e.g. low levels of community participation in decision-making processes, limited understanding of community planning processes, historical distrust between the community and local authorities, balancing short-term community needs with long-term sustainable development goals).

**Step 3.** Discuss roles and responsibilities within the group, appointing a team leader and individuals responsible for specific tasks (e.g. research resources, planning, presentation).

**Step 4.** Understanding the context and problem - identify key stakeholders by the issue (e.g. stakeholders mapping).

**Step 5.** Planning the proposals with applying theoretical knowledge - at each part of planning, consider management issues (what leadership skills are needed, what actions are taken, and what role the leader should play)

- **Introduction:** Define the community issue and provide background information.
- **Goals:** Clearly state the objectives of the project.
- **Methodology:** Describe the principles and methods.
- **Action Plan:** Include a step-by-step plan detailing tasks, timelines, and responsibilities.
- **Resources:** Specify the financial, human, and material resources required.
- **Expected Outcomes:** Explain the anticipated impact on the community.
- **Evaluation Plan:** Outline methods for measuring project success.

**Step 6.** Preparing a presentation.

**Step 7.** Presentation of each group and how it addresses the issue.

**Step 8.** Class debate on the inter-relation between activities of different groups (complementarities, overlaps, effectiveness and applicability) to achieve consensus and finalize a common set of activities. If no consensus is achieved, highlight the incompatibilities and reasoning and propose ways forward.

## 6. Summary of Learning

**Q1:** What is the community development?

**A:** Community development is the process of organising, facilitating, and taking action that enables people to work together to create a community that meets their needs

and aspirations. This process provides vision, planning, direction, and coordinated action to achieve desired goals, supporting initiatives to improve the conditions in which local resources operate. In effect, community developers use local economic, human and physical resources to meet daily needs and respond flexibly to changing circumstances and needs.

**Q2:** What community development strategies can be identified?

**A:** The planner should incorporate public participation as an integral part in all stages of the transport planning process, i.e., setting the vision and objectives, assessing scenarios, developing solutions, monitoring the implementation, and evaluating the impacts.

**Q3:** What roles does a leader take in managing social participation?

**A:** Leader takes on roles: facilitator of collaboration, visioner, capacity builder, agent.

**Q4:** What are the types of social capital and what are their characteristics?

**A:** Social capital refers to the networks, relationships, and norms that facilitate collective action and cooperation within a society. It is generally categorized into two main type:

- **Bonding social capital comes** from strong, close-knit ties within homogeneous groups, fostering trust, intimacy, and mutual support. These dense and cohesive networks promote internal resource exchange and solidarity but may limit access to external opportunities.
- **Bridging social capital** flows through weak ties that connect individuals across different groups. These connections provide access to diverse resources and facilitate greater social cohesion. Bridging ties, often spanning structural holes in networks, enable the flow of novel resources and prevent fragmentation.

**Q5:** What methods and techniques are used to facilitate community participation in planning processes?

**A:**

- Effective communication
- Storytelling
- Transparency
- Active listening
- Diverse forms of participation
- Accessibility
- Skill development
- Peer leadership
- Incentives

**Q6:** How can the Most Significant Change methodology be used to assess community development?

**A:** MSC is a qualitative method used to assess the impact of projects, which involves collecting and analysing information about the most important changes that have occurred in communities as a result of project activities.



It allows identification of the most important changes, allows understanding of the subjective experiences of participants and the impact of activities from their community perspective, and provides rich data that can reveal changes that were unforeseen or difficult to measure quantitatively.

MSC is ideal for environments with high diversity and for projects where traditional quantitative indicators may not fully capture the impact.

### Quiz

**Q1:** Single choice: Who are the primary stakeholders in community development?

- a) Only government authorities
- b) Residents, NGOs, businesses, and government authorities
- c) External investors only
- d) Academics and researchers

**A:** b

**Q2:** True or false: Empowerment in community development refers to enhancing the decision-making capacity and autonomy of individuals and groups.

**A:** True

**Q3:** True or false: Community engagement in spatial planning aims to exclude stakeholders who are not directly affected by the issue.

**A:** False

**Q4:** True or false: Grassroot development is a fully bottom-up approach, where the community initiates and leads the development process.

**A:** True

**Q5:** Multiple choice: What are common challenges in community development?

- a) Conflicting stakeholder priorities
- b) Lack of financial resources
- c) Uniform community interests
- d) High participation rates

**A:** a, b

**Q6:** Single choice: What type of leadership is most effective in community development?

- a) Centralized and authoritarian
- b) Collaborative and inclusive
- c) Passive and reactive
- d) Profit-driven and exclusive

**A:** b

**Q7:** Single choice: Which typology of community development emphasizes top-down planning and external control?

- a) Grassroots development
- b) Directed development
- c) Imposed development
- d) Participatory development

**A:** c

**Q8:** Single choice: In community development, who typically has the primary responsibility for driving the process in a 'grassroots' approach?

- a) Government officials
- b) NGOs
- c) Members of the local community
- d) International organizations

**A:** c

**Q9:** True or False: In a directed community development approach, decision-making primarily lies with external actors, such as government.

**A:** True

**Q10:** True or False: Management is a process that requires a variety of competencies adapted to its individual stages: planning, organising, motivating and control.

**A:** True

**Q11:** True or False: Leaders do not need communication skills because their main task is management.

**A:** False

**Q12:** Multiple choice: What are the characteristics of bonding social capital?

- a) Promotes inclusivity across groups
- b) Strengthens internal group ties
- c) Provides emotional support
- d) Focuses on external collaborations

**A:** b, c

**Q12:** Multiple choice: What are the essential skills of leaders who manage social participation?

- a) Strategic thinking
- b) Account balance

- c) Conflict resolution
- d) Communication skills

**A:** a, c, d

**Q13:** True or false: The MSC method involves stakeholders analysing and selecting thematic categories from stories of change.

**A:** True

**Q14:** True or false: Capacity building refers to the enhancement of individuals' skills and the institutional capacity for resource management

**A:** True

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## 8. Glossary

**Community development:** a process where people come together to take action on what's important to them

**Empowerment:** people have their dignity and self-respect restored through empowerment, which is the consequence of critical consciousness: the understanding that life chance

**Human Capital:** the skills, knowledge, abilities, experience, and qualifications possessed by individuals that can contribute to community development

**Leader:** a person who influences and directs a group or community toward achieving goals, often involving vision, communication, and strategic thinking. Leadership is a relational process that requires both interpersonal and adaptive skills

**Social capital:** the networks, trust, and norms that enable people to work together effectively for mutual benefit