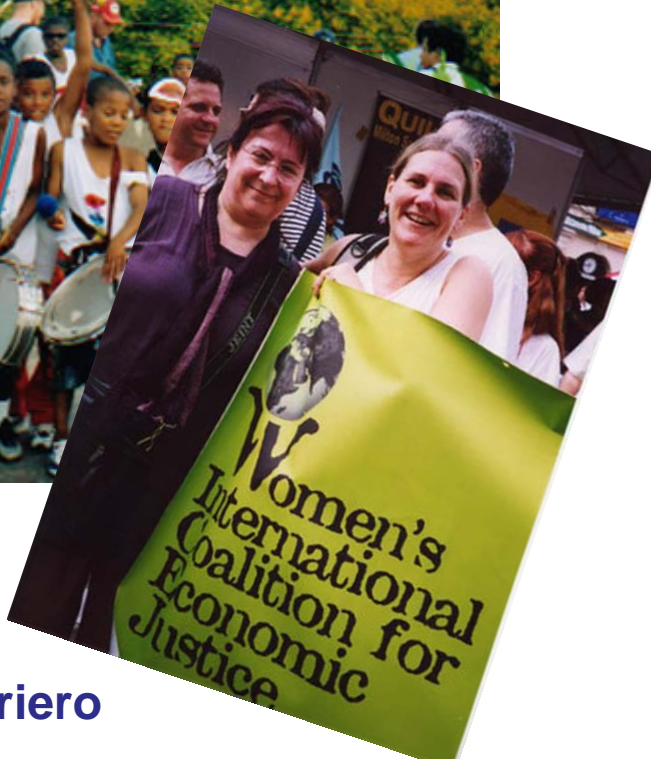


Community Engagement
for
Sustainability and
Wellbeing

Community Participation



Frank Tesoriero

Healthy cities and participation

If a Healthy City aims to create a healthier population through improving the physical and social environment and providing supports which enable people to live healthy lives

And if improvements and supports are to be sustainable

Then they must be owned by the community and embedded in ongoing community life and processes

This demands community participation

**My view of *participation*
is from a
community development
perspective**

“Community development must always seek to **maximise participation**, with the aim being for everyone in the community to be **actively involved in community processes and activities**, and to recreate community and personal futures.

It is therefore an important part of **empowerment** and **consciousness raising**.

The more people who are active participants, the more the ideals of **community ownership** and **inclusive processes** will be realised.”

**This presentation will simply
pose questions for reflection**

What is Participation?



(Arntstein, 1969)









(UK Health For All Network, 1991)




Why participate and who benefits?

- ✚ it is a right and is basic to democracy
- ✚ better decisions are made
- ✚ creates change
- ✚ provides opportunities for people to learn skills
- ✚ can lead to increased levels of self confidence
- ✚ can challenge the alienation of bureaucracy of organisations

Why participate and who benefits?

-  can give a sense of contribution
-  can contribute to changes unintended by the system
-  provides a feeling of power or place in the system
-  can redistribute resources
-  can change power balances between citizens and decision makers
-  can ensure accountability

Why participate and who benefits?

-  can build a political constituency for new programs
-  can legitimate the activities of professionals and organisations
-  can head off opposition
-  can lessen professions' and technical experts' dominance
-  can provide advice and diverse views can ensure compliance

Who participates?

Is it only the **loudest and strongest voices?**
what about the elders, the young, the disabled, women,
the isolated, other minority groups, the poor...

Most mechanisms for participation are likely to be skewed towards white middle class styles of communication which require articulate, rational, non-emotive and logical argument and a preparedness to enter into reasonable, direct and frank discussions about relevant practices and policies.

Can everybody participate easily in such mechanisms?

Or do just 'policy communities' participate?

Questions to consider



Group/social action

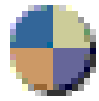
Were there opportunities for people to form new relationships, deepen and extend existing relationships and networks?

Did people get feedback on their involvement?

What effect did the group size and composition have on people's level of participation?

Were there flexible and diverse group and collective work opportunities?

Questions to consider



Flexibility

Was it easy and non-threatening for people to become involved?

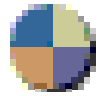
Was their contributions accepted, welcomed, sought-after? Did they feel valued and needed?

How was this communicated?

How were the potential barriers of time, language, distance, duration of involvement, childcare, financial and so on, overcome?

Was each person's level of responsibility and involvement flexible and negotiated?

Questions to consider



Types of involvement

Did people feel they had some power amongst their peers and leaders?

Were people doing what they were interested in?

Were people doing things they felt they were competent in?

Were people's existing skills being utilised?

Were there opportunities for people to achieve successes and feel successful?

Questions to consider



Decision making

Were people involved in management and/or policy decision making?

Were people involved with day to day decisions?

Were their decisions implemented?

Who implemented their decisions?

Did the people see their decisions being put into action?

Did the people see the outcomes and effects of their implemented decisions?