

第Ⅳ部門 A review of participatory techniques/mechanisms and proposal for evaluation
procedure in the context of disaster preparedness

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Introduction

The aim of this paper is to review the participatory techniques/mechanisms in terms their usefulness in context of disaster management. The present approaches to evaluation of participatory processes are presented and criticized for their inability to answer to the needs and the specificity of the context of disaster management. The participatory techniques/mechanisms are seen as platforms for knowledge exchange between different actors. The Mental Models approach based procedure for mapping and measuring preparedness is proposed to be evaluated.

A Review of participatory techniques and proposal for evaluation of procedure in the context of disaster management.

Participation means different things to different people. We define participation as an expectation that citizens have a voice in policy choices (Bishop, Davis, 2002).

Knowledge is a key variable in coping with many problems, but the paradox of present situation is that most problems exist in spite of better knowledge. The difficulty with these problems is that they are defy any mono-casual scheme of explanation. All these problems are caused by many factors, but they have one characteristic in common: they demonstrate the inability of present administrative and governing systems to cope with pressing challenges. They are reactive but they do not anticipate (Renn, Diemel, 1995). The participatory techniques enable the indigenous knowledge to influence the governance.

The context of disaster management calls for good tool for evaluation the participatory processes. The overall criterion of evaluation is: better disaster preparedness defined in terms of behavioral change or increase of knowledge etc.

The previous approaches for evaluation of participatory mechanisms are focusing very often on the process itself not so many researches has been done on how the “in process” variables are related to the outcomes. “In process” variable is for example “scope of deliberation” given to participants.

Webler (Webler, 1995) building on Jürgen Habermas theory of communicative act, proposed the

normative criteria of fairness and competence. He writes that if process is fair and competent the output is good.

Beierle (1998) created another framework for evaluation of environmental decisions. He proposed that every process should achieve 5 social goals: 1) educating and informing the public 2) Incorporating public values into decision-making. 3) Increasing trust in institutions 4) Reducing conflict 5) Achieving cost-effectiveness.

Webler (2001) studying a forest planning process interviewed participants asking them what constitutes good process. He classified answer into five discourses, process should be: legitimate, promote search for common values, enhance fairness and equity, promote equal power among all viewpoints and foster responsible leadership.

Applying these evaluation procedures to participatory disaster management we need to add better preparedness as a most important criterion of evaluation. The tools for evaluation we propose are Mental Model approach (Morgan, Fischhoff, Bostrom, Atman 2002), and the correlation between “in process” variables (as scope of deliberation given to participants) whether they are, or not affecting the outcomes of the process (in our case: better preparedness).

It is important to mention that originally the Mental Model approach assumes the adjustment of laypeople’s risk perceptions to the risk perceptions of the expert’s (Local government leaders, NPO’s etc.). In our approach we would like to observe and evaluate also how the indigenous knowledge held by laypeople, is released thanks to participatory processes and affects expert’s risk perceptions.