Abstract

Community Engagement in a Dynamic Society – Time and Timing

Community Engagement is a fashionable outreach tool to facilitate decision making. It is a participative and interactive process in which new projects are explained, and views of stakeholders are assessed and evaluated before decisions are made. The ingredients of effective community engagement include preparation (envisioning of options, identification of stakeholders), use of skills befitting circumstances, compassion and corrective actions, transparency, resources input (time, human capital and finance), right choice of venues, plus feedback and following-through. Even so, it is not a panacea nor a one-size-fits-all tool. Effectiveness of the tool varies.

Community engagement practises accountability. Having gone through the process, the time and costs expended should be gainful as the risks of opposition and delays may be reduced. However, constraints cannot be mitigated. Those of time and timing are particularly relevant.

The speaker will share his experience in community engagement using local examples.