

**2013 CIMC NEW GUINEA ISLANDS
REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FORUM**

**KOKOPO, EAST NEW BRITAIN
PROVINCE**

18TH TO 19TH APRIL 2013

**THEME: ACHIEVING EFFECTIVE
COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION FOR
QUALITY AND SUSTAINABLE PUBLIC
SERVICE DELIVERY IN THE DISTRICTS.**

VIEWS ON EFFECTIVE COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN DEVELOPMENT

OVERVIEW

- DEFINING COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION
- WHAT CONSTITUTES COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN DEVELOPMENT
- WHY COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN DEVELOPMENT
- VIEWS ON EFFECTIVE COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN DEVELOPMENT
- CONCLUSION

WHAT IS COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION?

- Community participation defined can depend on the context in which it occurs. For our purposes, we will look at it from the context that it is a vehicle to enable our people to be part of the process of planning for and the implementation of development projects that will facilitate the efficient and effective delivery of services to their levels in the District communities.
- Through community participation in development, citizens act in response to public concerns, voice their opinions about decisions that affect them and take responsibility for changes to their community. That is empowerment at the community level.

WHY COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN DEVELOPMENT

- Active community participation we know by now is the key to building an empowered community.
- It should not only be seen as a pre-requisite but it should also be accepted as critical to the success of the development project.
- Community participation safeguards local commitment and is crucial for effective development projects. Experience also shows that communities with high credit ratings of participation apply for and receive more funding.

COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN CONTEXT OF DEVELOPMENT

- In posing the question about what is effective community participation, one needs to pose additional questions viz;
 1. Who participates?
 2. What do people participate in?
 3. Why do people participate?
 4. As beneficiaries of development projects, are communities in a position to influence the direction and implementation of development projects?

WHAT CONSTITUTES COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

- Community participation to be meaningful must involve control over decisions, priorities, plans and implementation and for this to be realistic, Actors at the fore front of the management and administration of District Planning must re-define their approaches to a more inclusive one so that communities take ownership over the development process and risks associated with project stoppages are avoided or minimised.
- We have moved on from the era where development projects were carried out as a result of a decision made from the top and was accepted at the community level as Bible from Government.

CONTINUED

- An equally important factor to allow for is effective practical community participation by involving communities is to ensure the project achieves its objectives and that benefits go to community groups.

VIEWS ON EFFECTIVE COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

- Application in District Context?

Community participation and local commitment we all agree is crucial for the success of implementation of projects at the district level. It is also important to engage with community leaders at LLG level at the planning stage of a development project right through to the implementation stage so that issue of ownership is not questioned.

VIEWS CONTINUED

- Structures & Systems of government in place at the Districts are good. It's the people who man the systems who must re-define their approaches to doing business at administering service delivery in the districts.
- Partnering with community stakeholders is one such approach to be considered to overcome the issue of capacity constraints. District Administrators & Managers should fund the conduct of community skills audit to establish their database of technical & administrative skills capacity at community levels and tap into those when required for development projects. There are members of the community out there who are more qualified & experienced in project management than some of us public servants. This is a resource to be tapped into.

CONCLUSION

- Effective community participation in my view is all about engaging with communities, tapping into social capital available in the community, engaging with other stakeholders such as churches, NGO's & Civil Society Groups to participate in development projects that will benefit them not just in service delivery but some of the development funds utilized goes back into their hands for them to utilise to improve themselves.

CONCLUSION CONT'D

- Effective community participation ensures local commitment is harnessed and that development projects are implemented without fear of being stopped even before it starts.
- Effective community participation involves groups within communities so responsibilities can be divided to ensure engagements of special talents and interests. Participating communities have many centres of activity and community action engages the natural talents and the enthusiasm of community youths. This way community involvement is more meaningful and everyone offers their best knowing it is for the common good.

CONCLUSION

- For social development projects promoting “public private partnership approaches must be pursued and strengthened where these are already taking place. Churches have been in the business for so long and live in the communities and therefore their knowledge about communities is second to none. Strengthen them as partners in development. EM TASOL.