



First steps of the participatory approach

According to the above mentioned sources (UNDP/Prodere, CERFE, etc.) a real participatory approach starts from recognizing how people already participate or try to participate (it is rare that such participation is completely absent while often public officials and technicians sometimes try to "teach" people what is "participation" without recognizing the participatory processes already active among societal actors) and understanding how to facilitate, to orient, to strengthen this process, adopting, in this way, a real bottom-up approach. Some features could be the following: sharing in decision making with all community's groups being represented (especially women, disabled, elderly, minorities, etc.), cross-disciplinary collaboration, regular consultations, public hearings, transparency of decisions and actions, getting to know the opinion of people before, during and after actions have been implemented, discarding of coercion in human relations, sharing management of the project with beneficiaries (FAO 2003; WMO 2006). Thanks to a real participatory approach, in the civil defence realm, people can play a key role in the success of measures such as awareness generation, popular knowledge valorisation, information dissemination, organizing people, warning, and evacuation (UNISDR 2009a). Empowerment meets disaster/risk management It is in this context that the notion of empowerment gains saliency and therefore empowerment meets disaster/risk management. People/communities, indeed, may have a major role to play in the community risk/disaster management programmes and being involved in a more effective way, as critical stakeholders, if they are fully conscious, empowered and trained. Thanks to citizens' empowerment, people can be provided an opportunity to play a more active role, and this aspect is crucial given that many of the disaster management programmes have failed to be sustainable at the local level after their completion and a critical element of sustainable disaster management has been communities' participation in these activities.

Note: See source document for full reference.

Applicable to:

Stakeholders: [Power relations](#), [Local knowledge](#)

Disaster Phases: [Prevention](#), [Preparedness](#), [Response](#), [Recovery](#), [All disaster phases](#)

Types of Actors Concerned: [Active citizens](#)

Hazards: [Natural hazards](#), [Man-made non-intentional hazards or emergency situations](#), [Man-made intentional hazards](#)

Recommendations:

- [Improve disaster management processes through better networking and cooperation between public and private actors and a better understanding of the role which each of these actors plays in the different disaster management stages](#)
- [Foster the adoption of a culture of disaster prevention and resilience by informing and motivating citizens to take action](#)

Source

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