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The School of Public Leadership (SPL)

Stellenbosch University

Public Participation

in Local Government

-5 Days-

Introduction

Accreditation:

This 12-credit HEQF (2007) level eight short course covers knowledge of a formal postgraduate programme, approved and quality controlled as required by the South African Qualification Authority (SAQA) and the Higher Education Qualification Committee (HEQC).

Aim and premise of the course:

This course is aimed at instilling the value and principle that authentic and comprehensive public participation in development and service delivery is a nonnegotiable condition for good governance and sustainable development. This hypothesis is explored in a participatory and inter-active manner with participants with regards to how such participation should be planned and facilitated in general as well as in their particular areas of responsibility. In this regard the **Manila Declaration's** statement on *Public Participation* is of particular value, i.e.

> *"Public participation, within the context of people-centred development, is an essential part of human growth, i.e. the development of self-confidence, pride, initiative, responsibility and cooperation. Without such a development within the people themselves all efforts to alleviate their poverty will be difficult, if not impossible. This process, whereby people learn to take charge of their own lives and solve their own problems, is the essence of development"* (Theron 2009: 211-214) [**see:** Note pack].

This course is committed to the international *principles*, *theory, models* and *practice* of public participation as a foundation for human development; good governance; developmental local government (DLG) and the implementation of integrated development planning (IDP), but accept, as stated by Van Donk et al. (2008), that a *dramatic shift* in orientation towards development thinking and enablement is required to reach authentic people-centred development; good governance; a developmental local government and a capacitated IDP (Theron 2009:104-111; 112-134; 135-151 and Theron & Ceasar 2008:100-123) [**see:** Note pack].

Target Participants:

This course deals with the knowledge and skills requirements of all levels of management in local government, but also in provincial and national government and public entities as well as non-government and community based organisations and any other change agents involved in development and service delivery in a developmental setting. The content was designed in adherence to contemporary South African legal and policy requirements as well as globally recognised best practices.

Course objective and outcomes:

The overarching objective of the course is to equip participants with knowledge and skills for facilitating appropriate public participation in development and service delivery to ensure that social capital of communities is invested to its full potential. Based, inter alia, on pre-course experience of the participants and in-course dynamic interaction and mutual social learning among participants, this **Public Participation in Local Government** course *could* ideally result in the following mutually reinforcing and empowering learning outcomes:

Outcome 1: To understand the context of participatory democracy and good governance and the most relevant principles and theories (to later integrate with appropriate participatory democracy models and strategy) underlying authentic and empowering public participation

Outcome 2: To become familiar with the legal and regulatory frameworks of public participation in local government and good government contexts (more so DLG and IDP) (to later integrate with appropriate participatory democracy models and strategy)

Outcome 3: To be able to identify and assess an "appropriate mix" of relevant public participation strategies through which to implement the building blocks of development (i.e. public participation; mutual social learning; capacity-building; empowerment and sustainable development)

Outcome 4*:* To be able to provide assistance to local government change agents and their municipalities, as well as beneficiary communities during the planning of a public participation initiative (programme or project) [Post-course capacity-building initiatives and communication]

Assessment and credits:

After attending this course, participants should be able to fulfil the following assessment criteria through the indicated methods of assessment:

Assessment criteria:

Each participant must, through the assessments, provide proof that he / she has acquired a satisfactory level of knowledge and that he / she has mastered the practical applications to the extent that it can be applied to relevant work-related challenges and responsibilities.

Assessment methods:

Performance of participants wishing to gain five NQF level-seven credits will be assessed by means of an in-course *group* assignments and a more detailed post-course *individual* assignment:

- **In-course group assignment:** Overnight Assignment (see Day Two): Assessing the context and challenge of public participation based on a selected newspaper article analysis of the **Hangberg** (Kommetjie, Cape Town) incident. Participants must allow for time at the end of Day Two to consider strategy and planning for feedback the next morning. Day Three will start with group feedback based on this in-course *group* assignment. Participants will be asked (working as teams consisting of 6-8 individuals (maximum) to critically reflect upon the newspaper article(s) supplied to each team. Having assessed the newspaper article(s), critically consider appropriate issues which has a bearing on public participation as understood by your team. Try to do the following as if you were "summoned" by a Municipal Manager to do "crisis management" after hours:

    1. Analyze the article(s) by indicating the appropriate **terminology** used and how it relates to public participation, or rather the lack of public participation, at **Hangberg**
    2. Analyze the article(s) by indicating appropriate and related **issues**, i.e. a holistic approach to public participation (understanding the "big picture" in relation to public participation?) at **Hangberg**
    3. Within the context of public participation, specifically consider issues with regard to **project management**; **stakeholder analysis** and **conflict management** at **Hangberg**

4. Indicate the appropriate **legal/constitutional/policy** issues and how these are related (i.e. the institutional context of public participation) at **Hangberg** and

5. Indicate appropriate **strategic/planning/project management** issues and how these are related (how do we put plans into action with our beneficiaries as active and empowered participants?) at **Hangberg**

6. You are encouraged, in addition to the newspaper articles, to use any means to your disposal to do this activity

7. Each group has to submit a 3-5 (written) page memorandum to the Project Manger *before* your group spokesperson presents your group's case

8. Be original and practical in planning and presenting your groups case

9. A group mark is appointed for the quality of the written memorandum and the presentation of your group

- **Post-course individual assignment:** You are welcome to use the assignment topics below as point of departure, or, alternatively formulate your *own topic* under the following conditions: (1) it must relate to public participation principles and theory, (2) address the institutional and regulatory contexts for public participation and, lastly (3) analyze the outcome of public participation strategies base on a DLG/IDP case study of your choice. Format: 6-8 *typed* pages, with title page (name/topic etc.); table of contents; a body with relevant sub-headings; conclusions and recommendations, as well as a reference list (You are welcome to add attachments, i.e. relevant newspaper articles etc. On request, the Project Manager can suggest a technical format for the assignment at the end of the course).

- **Suggested assignment topics:**

1. A Public Participation meeting at a municipality: You are instructed by your municipal manager to explain newly announced tax increases (or a planned new re-allocation of land project; land invasion issue or a similar topic of your choice) to your community at a well attended public meeting in the local Town Hall. Compile a checklist of activities to be addressed in order to ensure a successful public participation meeting. Explain your strategic points of departure and planning steps; aims and expected outcomes for the meeting of which your act as the chairperson.

2. Draw from your own working environment and **recent experiences regarding public participation** and evaluate it on the basis of the below-mentioned aspects:

o   Issues discussed
o   Strategies used (what worked well and what not and why?)
o   What would you do to improve public participation in the future?

3. You have been appointed as an advisor / consultant to inform your mayor and municipal manager about **public participation issues in a future planned low - cost housing project** (or other project/issue of your choice). Outline your strategic and operational plan and advice to the mayor and municipal manager by using strategic planning and project management principles.

4. You have been appointed to **manage a public participation process** in a recent flood disaster area where 200 households are left homeless. Your task is to facilitate dialogue with the homeless regarding alternative accommodation. Compile a project team and draw up a work breakdown structure as well as your public participation strategy with/for the affected community. Explain your options and strategies in detail.

5. Critically evaluate, in a case study format, the **principles of IDP**; what it is supposed to achieve; how it will influence a budget etc., by assessing the role of public participation in this regard. During this process, inter alia identify the benefits of strategic planning in IDP, the cycle of planning and the role of Key Performance Indicators in strategic planning. Conclude by indicating the potential pitfalls to public participation.

6. Argue the following statement by integrating theoretical and practical points of departure, if possible by using a case study and applying your skills and experience in public participation in development projects: **"Through their participation in development, communities, as the intended beneficiaries, will determine the process whereby a development project should be attained".**

7. There are numerous reports in Local Government about **lack of public participation**. Critically assess the reasons and suggest more appropriate strategies, specifically the role which Ward Committees or Community Development Workers can/should play in this regard.

8. Reflecting upon **public participation theory**, critically consider the following "public participation strategies" for local government. Which of these strategies, based on your experience, can be viewed as "a form of **consultation**"; "a form of **involvement**"; and lastly, "a form of **authentic and empowering public participation**"? Motivate in each case through practical application and experience:

- o legal notices and community newspapers/radio's
- o field trips
- o Imbizo's or Indaba's
- o a public meeting
- o role play/drama
- o Ward Committees
- o public hearings
- o a complaint register
- o action research (PAR/PLA)
- o multi-purpose community centers

Course structure and daily programme of activities:

The course structure and programme is as follows:

Times	Day 1 Public Participation principles, context and concepts for development, DLG and IDP	Day 2 The national policy and regulatory framework for Public Participation in development, DLG and IDP – a critical reflection by participants	Day 3 Public Participation strategies for development, DLG and IDP – from principles, through models towards appropriate strategies	Day 4 Establishing Public Participation capacity through local government-community planning partnerships – Public Participation as Community Development	Day 5 Integrating the Public Participation debate: from theory towards practical policy and strategic considerations
08:00	Registration/tea/coffee	Tea/coffee and reflection	Tea/coffee and reflection	Tea/coffee and reflection	
08:30 to 10:30	**Welcome and Introduction to course: 1** *SPL programmes and capacity-building networks; 2* Course objectives and points of departure; 3. Learning outcomes; 4. Teaching and learning methodology to be used; 5. Time management; 6. Course assessments and evaluation; 7. Course material and networks; 8. Post-course "hotline" and capacity-building networks and 9.Informal "ice break" activity and introduction by participants and facilitator	**Reflecting on the policy and regulatory context for Public Participation** – group work and informal group feedback to assess and evaluate the understanding by the participants of the national and local policy and regulatory framework with regards to Public Participation in South Africa - **what works? What fails and why?**	**Group work feedback** based on in-course overnight assignment: The **Hangberg** incident and related public participation issues - a comprehensive and critical reflection within group context: **What went wrong? Why? How should have the Hangberg incident be accommodated in the first place?**	**Linking with Day's One to Three: a summary of the main learning points and strategic considerations for action – a critical-analytical interactive round table discussion** 1. **Learning and doing** – Public Participation **Philosophy** and **Theory** and **Principles** 2. **Learning and doing** – Public Participation **Models** 3. **Learning and doing** – Public Participation **Strategies** 4. **Learning and doing 1-3** – the regulatory framework for **facilitating** Public Participation	**Summary of Day's One to Three: a participatory action-reflection round-table discussion linking to key challenges:** 1. Why do Public Participation activities often fail? 2. A radical re-consideration of more appropriate Public Participation planning; facilitation and implementation 3. Group activity towards planning an appropriate mix of more appropriate and empowering Public Participation strategies
	Break	**Break**	**Break**	**Break**	
11:00 to 13:00	**Principles, context and concepts for Public Participation: Part One: Round-table interactive workshop:** The realities	**Conceptualizing and contextualizing (from theory to practice) related public participation issues and challenges within the**	**Public Participation strategies: the IAP2 Toolbox – a context specific appropriate "mix" of 59 strategies to facilitate**	**Assessing the role of local government officials as facilitators of Public Participation** 1. From **"official"** to **"change**	**Group feedback based on no. 3 above**

	and expectations of Public Participation in the context of DLG and IDP: open group discussion by participants based on their individual and group experience and capacity	**Community Development debate: the building blocks of development as micro-level facilitation and enabling strategies**	**participatory facilitation and enablement through public participation by change agents, in partnership with community beneficiaries: a strategic planning and project management approach**	**agent"** – enabling and facilitating instead of service delivery 2. Establishing **local government-community planning partnerships** 3. Establishing **local government-community social research capacity**	
	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	
13:45 to 15:45	**Principles, contexts and concepts for Public Participation: Part Two: An overview and linkage:** 1.The Public Participation "maze" as clarification; 2. Public Participation *principles* (International & local); 3. Public Participation *models* (International) **General discussion and conclusion for Day One**	**Orientation and expectation regarding overnight assignment (see in-course overnight assignment): i.e. allocation of groups, etc.**	**A framework for action**: **Drafting a Public Participation model – a benchmark for public participation?** **Summary and Conclusion of Day Three**	**Reflections:** 1. Main points of learning 2. Strategic options to consider via facilitation and enablement **3.** Establishing networks and extending capacity-building with Public Participation Course Project Manager **4.** Conclusion and recommendations	**Conclusion to programme:** 1. Interactive and reflective Public Participation Internet workshop (Bellville Park multi-media centre) – establishing networks and building linkages **2.** Facilitators conclusion: aims and outcomes of programme and future options
15:45 to late	**Individual and small group reflections and work in own time**	**Overnight group assignment – plan strategy and work in groups**	**Individual and small group reflections and work in own time**	**Critical reflections on learning outcomes; future options and course assessment**	

Glossary:

1. ***Public Participation:*** The collective efforts of the beneficiaries of development (ordinary people) to organize themselves and pool their social capital to attain set grassroots objectives through *influencing*, *directing* and eventually *owning* the development process (See Rahman 1993:150 and the International Association for Public Participation, i.e. IAP2).

2. ***Defining public participation:*** The social learning and empowering participatory planning process through which the efforts of the people themselves [bottom-up approach] are united with those of government and officials [top-down approach] to improve the political, economic, social, cultural, environmental and psychological contexts of people and beneficiary communities to build self-reliance and capacity through enabling and empowering them to contribute to sustainable development (Adapted from UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs 1963:4 in Theron 2009:115).

3. ***The building blocks of development:*** The functional, mutually reinforcing relationship and logical sequence of participatory planning through which government (officials) as change agents (See Theron 2008:1-22) and local community beneficiaries (based on their social capital and ingenious knowledge systems) engage in and facilitate (1) public participation; (2) engage in and facilitate a mutual social learning participatory planning process; (3) build capacity among each other; (4) empower each other and eventually experience mutual beneficiary sustainable community development (See Theron 2008:229-232 and Theron 2009:121-125).

4. ***Public participation principles:*** Principles regarding authentic and empowering public participation inter alia based on [International context] the (1) Manila Declaration on People's Participation and Sustainable Development (1998); (2) The African Charter for Popular Participation in Development and Transformation (1990); (3) The United Nations Agenda 21 for Sustainable Development into the 21st Century (1992) and [National context] the (4) South African Constitution (1996), (5) White Paper on Transforming Public Service Delivery (Batho Pele) (1997); (6) White Paper on Local Government (1998); the (6) Municipal Systems Act (2000), and other.

5. ***Public participation models:*** Public participation models constructed by public participation experts and institutions, i.e. (1) Pretty et al.'s (1995) seven typologies of participation; (2) Oakley & Marsden's (1991) modes of participation; (3) Arnstein's (1996) "ladder of participation" and (4) IAP2's Spectrum of Public Participation (See Meyer & Theron 2000; Theron 2009:125-131 and IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation on Internet).

6. ***Public participation strategies:*** A diversity of [some less effective and some very effective] strategies constructed by public participation experts and institutions (See IAP2's Toolbox for Public Participation and the World Bank 1996 Participation Source Book) ranging from *level 1*: informing beneficiaries, to *level 2:* consulting beneficiaries and, eventually, *level 3:* empowering beneficiaries (See Theron 2009:125-13).

7. **Development change agent:** Based on humanist thinking and people-centered development approaches, the principle that government officials should ideally act as participatory (grassroots) *facilitators* and *enablers* of development. This entails departing from "power over beneficiaries" (ala Chambers 2005 and Theron's 2008:222-238 "development themes") towards local settings and arenas in which "power with" and "power charring" takes place. This is a social learning process through which both officials and beneficiaries are empowered [as equal planning partners] to engage in participatory planning regimes. This process entails radical "shifts in thinking" in our understanding of development planning, DLG and IDP and our approach towards both (See Theron 2008:1-22).

8. **Development beneficiaries:** The local people, community members at grassroots (micro-level) who, often lack power to negotiate (i.e. to *influence*, *direct* and *own* development "service delivery" which is often still "top-down" and "prescriptive" in nature), but who mostly, "know what they want", and who possess local social capital and indigenous knowledge which is crucial for the ideal development context, i.e. participatory and empowering development planning partnerships (Theron 2008:41-75).

9. **A holistic and interdisciplinary approach:** Due to its complex nature, *holistic* development thinking, planning and implementation (Kotze & Kotze in Theron 2008:76-99 and Theron 2008:226-228) entails a *"big picture"-* understanding of the mutual influences among economic, political, environmental, social, cultural and psychological development contexts. To enable change agents to grasp this "meaning giving context" and multi-dimensional reality, development facilitation and enablement requires an *interdisciplinary approach* (we need to "marry" the hard [i.e. engineering] and soft [social development] planning disciplines in reaching towards participatory planning partnerships).

10. **Appropriate social research methodology:** Those engaging in development grassroots facilitation can only do well (see Theron 2008:17-20; 238 and Theron 2009:155-171) if we expose ourselves to "alternative" *qualitative* social research methodology (See Babbie & Mouton 2008:313-323) like *Participatory Action Research* (PAR) and *Participatory Learning and Action* (PLA). Through this radically different approach to social research, the social research process is "democratized" – the researcher (outsider) forms a research partnership with the "researched" (insider) through which (1) we get closer to local (grassroots) realities and solutions; (2) the empowerment of both parties (outsider and insider) and (3) the integration of two knowledge systems, that is:. outsider (technical in nature) and insider (social capital and indigenous knowledge) knowledge systems.

11. **Good governance:** A process by which public institutions conduct public affairs, manage public resources and guarantee the realisation of human rights; a process which inter alia incorporates predictable, open and enlightened policy-making, a professional ethos and acting in furtherance of the public good, the rule of law, transparency and a strong civil society participating in public affairs [10 core values can be identified: participation; transparency; effectiveness and efficiency; responsiveness, accountability; consensus orientation; equity; inclusiveness and the rule of law]

References:

1. **Centre for Public Participation (CPP)** 2007. **Public participation and local governance**. Durban, RSA. (pp.1-27) *[Copy supplied in course pack]*

2. Davids, I, Theron, F & Maphunye, K 2009 (2nd Ed.). **Participatory development in South Africa – a Development Management perspective**. J.L. van Schaik, Hatfield (see Chapter 10: *Public participation as a micro-level development strategy: the principles and context for authentic and empowering development*, pp.112-134) *[Copy supplied in course pack]*

3. Davids, I. 2005. **Voices from below. Reflecting on ten years of public participation: the case of local government in the Western Cape Province.** Cape Town: FCR

4. **International Association for Public Participation 2 (IAP2)** 2009. IAP2's Web page, re. **(1)** *Public Participation Core values*; **(2)** their *Spectrum of Public Participation* and **(3)** *Toolbox of Public Participation Strategies [Copy supplied in course pack]*

5. Theron, F & Ceasar, N & Davids, I 2007. **Participation according to IAP2 principles: Opportunity of challenge for IDP in South Africa**. Volume 1, issue 1, International Journal of Public Participation) *[Copy supplied in course pack]*

6. Theron, F (Ed.) 2008. **The development change agent. A micro-level approach to development.** J.L. van Schaik, Hatfield (see Chapter 1: *The development change agent – a micro-level approach to development*, pp. 1-22) *[Copy supplied in course pack]*

7. Van Donk, M et al. 2009. **Consolidating developmental local government. Lessons from the South African experience.** Cape Town: UCT Press

Facilitator:

Francois Theron is an Anthropologist and Social Development consultant. As a senior lecturer he teaches Development Studies/Management at the School of Public Leadership, Stellenbosch University. He holds a BA (Social Sciences), BA. Honours (Social Anthropology) (*cum laude*); BA Honours (Development Studies) (*cum laude*) and MA (Social Anthropology) (*cum laude*) from Stellenbosch University. He is a member of professional organisations and has contact with national/international development related organisations; acts as an external examiner/moderator in Development Studies/Management for different universities in and outside South Africa; sits on the editorial advisory board for Africanus (Journal of Development Studies, UNISA) and coordinates a major faculty based academic orientation programme for new students at Stellenbosch University. Theron participates in numerous workshops/conferences regarding development planning/management and related fields, specifically the International Winelands Conferences in Public Management and Planning; delivered 9 papers/posters at national/international conferences and on the request of scientific journals, wrote 25 book reviews.

As a participant in development planning and management interventions, Theron's fields of interest/research/teaching/consultation/publications relate to grassroots community development issues, specifically development theory and planning; poverty analysis; social housing; integrated urban/rural development strategies and social forestry. In this regard, he currently specifically focuses on public participation; social learning processes; capacity-building; empowerment; indigenous knowledge systems/social capital and sustainability. He has a strong interest in action research methodology and co-facilitates one nationally accredited training short course programme on public participation and capacity-building for local government officials.

Theron has extensive scientific publications to his name in development management and related fields. In this regard he has published 27 articles in accredited scientific journals and edited/co edited 13 academic books, himself contributing 22 chapters. He supports interdisciplinary research which leads to community capacity-building projects; training short courses; consultation and supervision of master's students, of whom he has supervised 62 students and acted as internal supervisor/examiner for 53 students.

Theron has been involved in numerous community capacity- building programmes over many years, inter alia the Forum for Community Development. His main involvement in the latter regard currently is the multi-cultural community centre, the Breytenbach Centre, Wellington.

Theron's latest work is *The Development Change agent. A micro-level approach to development* (2008) (Van Schaik). His previous co-published book, Participatory *Development in South Africa. A Development Management perspective* (2005) (Van Schaik), is now republished as a 2nd and reworked edition (2009). Both these publications are widely prescribed at South African and Namibian universities.

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