

The participatory planning paradigm shift: Comparing disciplines and methods

Jan-Hendrik LE ROUX, Elizelle Juaneé CILLIERS, North West University, South Africa

ID Number: 167

Public participation is a process where the public is involved in decision-making, regarding planning aspects that interests and affects them. There are various benefits for Town Planners and other professions when increasing the inclusion of the public in the decision-making process, especially in terms of development issues and creative thinking. Advantages include the improvement of the effectiveness of plans, the resolving of conflict by enhancing consensus between stakeholders and the building of social capital. Along with the advantages are also certain challenges and limitations, regarding public participation, Town Planners have to deal with the choice of participants, practical implementation of theoretical ideas and in certain cases dealing with the unrealistic expectations of the communities.

This study firstly focuses on the paradigm shift public participation has experienced over time and the contrasting approaches that emerged from it. This study further focussed on how public participation is defined and executed in different professions and disciplines. The opinions, methods and problems, regarding public participation, as used in Planning, Health Sciences and Geography in South Africa, was evaluated and compared.

The research concluded with recommendations to enhance the successfulness and effectiveness with regards to the current public participation approaches in South Africa, based on the collective results and findings from the various perspectives and disciplines, as well as the findings regarding the effect of computerised methods on participatory processes.

Introduction

South Africa is a very unique country due to its history and heritage and as a result requires a unique approach to planning, accommodating the different cultures in the country, whilst still improving the country as a unit in terms of its economic, environmental and social status. This poses a huge challenge to unite all the citizens of the country, regardless of the differences in race, culture or belief system.

Public participation is one method which, if implemented correctly, can provide valuable assistance in the search of unity in South Africa, whilst simultaneously enhancing the success of future urban and rural planning. Public participation has many benefits, which will be mentioned later in the paper. It has the ability to help citizens reach a consensus regarding a certain matter, improve decision-making processes and ultimately to help a country move forward and improving its structures. This is exactly what a country, such as South Africa needs in order to experience progression and improvement.

Public participation in South Africa therefore needs to be critically evaluated to generate best-practice methods. In this study the current state of public participation in South Africa will be evaluated. The study will conclude by providing recommendations to enhance the effectiveness with regards to the current public participation approaches in South Africa, based on the results and findings made in this study.

1. Defining public participation

Ordinary citizens, who form part of the general society, want to be informed in detail about decisions that affect them before these decisions are taken (Arbter *et al.*, 2007:6). They want to be able to have a say in potential developments and have direct involvement in current projects and all the development decisions that go with it. Public participation basically comprises all of this. It is a basic principle of democracy. Voting in elections and supporting petitions, are other examples/forms of public participation (Toth, 2010:296).

Public participation can be described as the process where the ideas, opinions and concerns of local communities are collected and analyzed to be used as resources to improve plans and projects that interests and affects them (Ferguson & Low, 2005:7). It is a tool which Town and Regional Planners use to give them a better knowledge of a specific site, as well as an insight to the needs of the community residing in the specific area. This knowledge can then be used by the Planner and other experts (i.e. Developers, Architects and Quantity surveyors) to develop better, more sustainable projects.

Currently in South Africa there is not much emphasis placed on comprehensive public participation. Although policies provide support for participatory processes (i.e. Environmental Impact Assessments (EIA), Integrated Development Plans (IDP), Environmental Management Frameworks (EMF)) these theoretical ideas are not always implemented to their fullest extent.

1.1 Benefit of involving the public

The benefits of public participation include, but are not limited to the following:

- Improve effectiveness (Smith, 2003:25):
 - Decisions can be complex and therefore all relevant information, views, interests and needs should be included and understood;
 - Public participation results in higher quality decisions.
- Meet a growing demand for public participation:
 - The public has a desire to be involved in making decisions that will affect them;
 - There is a need for greater openness of decision-making processes;
 - The public doesn't always trust only expert advice.
- Resolve conflicts:
 - Negotiate tradeoffs;
 - Seek consensus between public and developers.
- Enhance public knowledge, understanding, and awareness (Ferguson & Low, 2005:9):
 - Share information with the public;
 - Opportunities for stakeholders to hear each other and better understand the range of views on an issue.
- Allocate scarce resources (Ferguson & Low, 2005:9).
- Empowerment of the local community (Petermann & Troell, 2007).
- Improving decision-making (Petermann & Troell, 2007):
 - Develop a consensus among key role players to improve performance;
 - Determine the impact of the project in question.
- Understand the needs of the actual users of the space:
 - Build social capital (Cilliers *et al.*, 2012).

Apart from the advantages that public participation has to offer, it is also important to note that the negligence of participatory planning processes as part of any future development plan, may hold many repercussions which are negative for society and also for the remainder

of the specific project. Public participation is however, not a simple and easy task. It has various challenges and limitations as explained accordingly.

1.2 Challenges and limitations of public participation

One of the main challenges when considering public participation is the issue of culture and ethnic differences (Beebeejaun, 2006:4). In South Africa this is especially true, because of the multi-cultural population and segregated urban form.

Petermann and Troell mention the following challenges which Town planners are confronted with:

- The choice of participants: For the best results all possible participants should be included, but due to time and budgetary constraints this is not always possible. Stakeholder identification is thus a crucial issue to ensure successful public participation.
- From theory to practical implementation: Petermann & Troell (2007) states that it is not easy to implement theories during the participatory process. It is easy to be creative and jot a few notes down on paper, but to implement these ideas is very difficult. Creative approaches are needed to facilitate the involvement of stakeholders and ensure comprehensive public participation.
- Life span: One of the key words in Planning is “sustainability.” It is therefore important to sustain the benefits of public participation beyond the life span of a specific project. Public participation should keep the future vision in mind, while addressing current needs.
- Unrealistic expectations of communities: It is extremely important to get communities involved in decision-making processes, but communities should be aware of their role and level of involvement in the process. If expectations can't be met by Planners and other experts in the same field, it may result in an unhappy and rebellious community which in turn can lead to more damage being done (Ferguson & Low, 2005:9).

1.3 Paradigm shift

It is important to mention and discuss the fact that public participation approaches have changed a lot during the past couple of decades. These changes can be seen in South Africa, as well as in the rest of the world. Over time the idea of public participation and its role in development has climbed up and down the “importance ladder.” Through all this shifting two basic paradigms has surfaced namely the top-down approach and the bottom-up planning-approach, as captured in Table 1.

Top-down	Bottom-up
No real public involvement	Public involvement
Special interests	Public interests
Capitalistic	Democratic

Table 1: Two different paradigms in public participation

Source: Own Creation (2012)

Smith (2003:22) refers respectively to these approaches as favouring “special interests” (referring to the top-down approach) and “public interests” (referring to the bottom-up approach).

The top-down approach in terms of public participation basically implies that the public is not the main focus group or decision-maker, but rather the local authorities and policy-makers. The public is mainly “informed” about decisions, and communities don’t have an advisory or co-planning role in the process.

The bottom-up approach with respect to public participation is nearly just the opposite. The public is the main focus group and decision-maker. More detailed procedures are taken to involve the community and more community members are interviewed to get a more holistic view of the current situation (Smith, 2003:22).

This “more sustainable” bottom-up approach is starting to get increasingly important for Planners as well as for other disciplines, in South Africa and the rest of the world. However, from research conducted it was evident that different disciplines approach public participation in different ways, and the bottom-up approaches of participatory planning varies among the disciplines.

2. Comparing participatory processes

In an attempt to create a best-practice approach to comprehensive public participation, various disciplines in South Africa were compared. The empirical investigation of this study focused on three different professions (or disciplines) in South Africa, namely Town and Regional Planning, the Health Science Department and Geography/Environmental Science Department. The goal was to analyse the following form each discipline:

- 1) Views regarding public participation?
- 2) How public participation is executed in the specific profession (methods)?
- 3) In their own opinion, what part of the public participation process needs to be revised and improved?

The results obtained gave an indication of the current state of public participation in South Africa and between the different disciplines.

2.1 South Africa: Town and Regional planning approach

South Africa (2012:7) defines Land use management as “regulating and managing land use and conferring land use rights through the use of schemes and land development procedures.”

Planning in South Africa is regulated by the Municipal Structures Act [\[No. 117 of 1998\]](#). It functions under the authority of the IDP (Integrated Development Plan) and SDF (Spatial Development Framework) of each district in the country. The IDP clearly acknowledges the public participation process. However, there is no legislation guiding the quality or quantity of public participation needed, and public participation is thus (although compulsory for most development applications) not monitored or measured.

2.1.1 Methods

Some of the public participation methods which are used in Town and Regional Planning are guided by specific legislation: The Town-Planning and Townships Ordinance (15 of 1986) mentions the advertising of applications in newspapers {Article 56(b)(i)} and by placing informative notice boards at the site of the applicant {Article 56(b)(ii)}.

The public can respond to these advertisements by objecting to an application. Article 56(2)(a) of the Ordinance states that the local authority may give further notice of an application by “posting a notice in such a form as may be prescribed in a conspicuous place on its notice board...”.

According to Article 59(1) of the Ordinance “An applicant or objector who is aggrieved by a decision of an authorized local authority...may within a period of 28 days from the date of the publication of the notice...appeal by lodging a notice of appeal...” This is also where the public can let their concerns be heard.

Lastly, according to the Town-Planning and Townships Ordinance (15 of 1986), if someone in the public objects a hearing will have to be scheduled according to Article 59(5)(a) of the Ordinance. A Board shall determine when such a hearing will take place. Article 59(6)(b) states that the public can state their case and provide his/her reasons why an application should not go through.

2.1.2 Problems – Needs revision

As stated earlier there are a lot of processes involved in land use management. These processes are all being “guided” by the Town-Planning and Townships Ordinance (15 of 1986).

There are no clear objectives and measurements for successful participation processes. According to the Ordinance, a site notice and two advertisements (one in the local newspaper and one in the provincial paper) are adequate notice and involvement of the public. “An objector may appeal within a period of 28 days from the date of the publication of the notice” – Article 59(1) of the Town-Planning and Townships Ordinance (15 of 1986).

Furthermore the Ordinance does not recognize the adjacent house owners of a specific terrain, and therefore they (the people that will be most affected by a new development or rezoned erf) are not even directly approached.

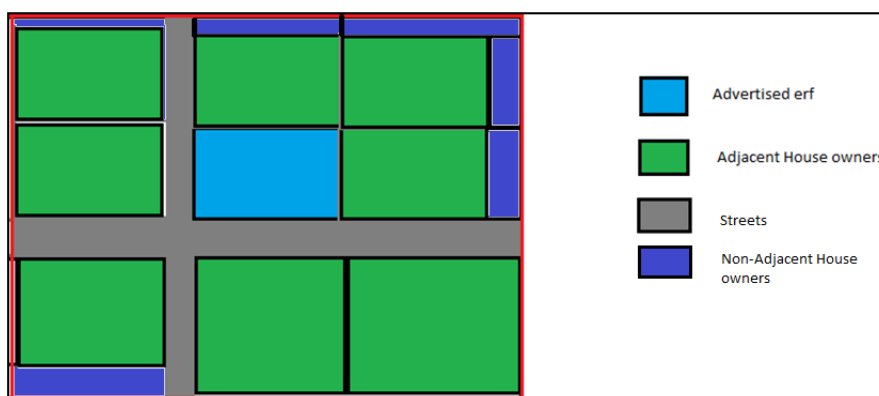


Figure 1: Adjacent land house owners
Source: Own creation (2013)

The level of vocabulary used in the newspaper articles and on the notice boards are extremely high. Excellent vocabulary with difficult terminology is definitely beneficial when working with professionals in the corporate world, but for public participation it is not always necessary. The general citizen (especially in South Africa, with the high levels of poverty and the low levels of education) can't always understand what is being said on the notice boards

and in the advertisements. The ordinance assumes that the public has the necessary knowledge about land use management processes, but in reality it is not true.

2.2 South Africa: Health Sciences approach

"We can do this and that, but what is it that YOU want?" It's a summary of exactly how the Health Sciences discipline approaches public participation. They work using grass roots approach, implying using a bottom-up approach.

Here the focus is on working with the community, not for them. It is viewed as a more sustainable approach – human driven, making sure that the local community understands exactly what it is they are doing at a specific terrain when they are working on a project. The objective is not only to improve the health of the people, as other parties might think, but rather to enhance and equip communities with skills and education.

By working this way in creates a sense of identity and ownership among community members as well as pride and passion.

2.2.1 Methods

The public participation methods used in the Health Science discipline is approached from a bottom-up perspective.

Before a project or initiative is started, a meeting is scheduled for all the relevant stakeholders where the vision of the project is shared. It is important to mention that the stakeholders do not only involve the local community, but according to Sequeira & Warner (2007:10) stakeholders include all the "persons or groups who are directly or indirectly affected by a project, as well as those who may have interests in a project and/or the ability to influence its outcome, either positively or negatively. Stakeholders may include locally affected communities or individuals and their formal and informal representatives, national or local government authorities, politicians, religious leaders, civil society organizations and groups with special interests, the academic community or other businesses." At these meetings each stakeholder can state his/her case and say what problems he/she sees by tackling this project. The aim of the meeting is to reach a consensus between all the stakeholders.

Another method is by doing an ABCD needs assessment. "A growing community-organizing movement, asset-based community development (ABCD), posits that the glass is half full rather than half empty. Rather than focussing on community deficits like crime, vandalism, unemployment or drugs, ABCD aims to identify and mobilize the positive attributes inherent in local government, businesses, nonprofits, voluntary associations and individuals." (Walker, 2006). The ABCD Institute spreads its findings on capacity-building community development in two ways: Firstly through extensive and substantial interactions with community builders, and secondly by producing practical resources and tools for community builders to identify, nurture and mobilize neighbourhood assets (Assessnow, 2009).

2.2.2 Problems – Needs revision

Comprehensive public participation would require the public to also be included in the processes, and not just the selected stakeholders. Another problem that were identified were the issue of different cultures, beliefs and backgrounds, as interacting and communicating with the local community itself is a challenging issue.

2.3 South Africa: Geography & Environmental management approach

Geography- and Environmental management disciplines are probably the disciplines with the most public participation in practice in South Africa. These disciplines are however very

sceptic to use the term “public participation” (DEAT, 2002:6). They say it can be misleading in a number of ways. Every citizen is important, but the term “may be misinterpreted as excluding the private sector and non-decision making authorities.” (DEAT, 2002:6). These groups may perhaps feel excluded from the public participation process. Geography- and Environmental management disciplines therefore prefer to use the term “stakeholder engagement” when talking about participatory processes.

Environmental management defines stakeholders as “a sub-group of the public whose interests may be positively or negatively affected by a proposal or activity and/or who are concerned with a proposal or activity and its consequences. The term therefore includes the proponent, authorities (both the lead authority and other authorities) and all interested and affected parties.” (DEAT, 2002:6).

2.3.1 Methods

The Geography and Environmental management discipline uses a significant variety of methods to get the local communities actively involved in decision-making processes. Some of the methods they use include (DEAT, 2002:15):

1. **Legal Notices** - Notices which informs stakeholders and the rest of the public of a certain project or proposal. These notices are required by law (South Africa, 2010:59).
2. **Advertisements** - Advertisements in newspapers or magazines to inform stakeholders and the rest of the public of a certain project or proposal. It is important that these advertisements should not be hidden in sections in the newspaper where they are generally overlooked.
3. **Websites** - Websites are created that conveys project information as well as announcements regarding the project or proposal. Readers can provide their opinions from their homes via the internet.
4. **Field trips** - Tours to the specific site where stakeholders can see for themselves what’s going on at the site and what the proposed plans are going to look like.
5. **Public meetings** – The proponent meets with the stakeholders in a public place. Anybody can join these meetings. At these meetings the proponent gives a presentation to state the situation, which is then followed by a question and answer session.
6. **Central information contact** – Designated contact persons are chosen to be communicators for stakeholders and the public.
7. **Surveys** – Surveys for collecting information from a percentage of the population. Surveys can be telephonically or through questionnaires.

2.3.2 Problems – Needs revision

A few problems or challenges has been identified in this discipline which needs to be revised in order to make the public participation process, or “stakeholder engagement process”, more significant and sustainable.

According to DEAT (2002:16) the public participation process is only undertaken during the environmental assessment stage. The problem with this is that many planning- and strategic decisions have already been made at this stage, which means that the public could not give any insights or raise concerns of the specific project.

Furthermore, low levels of literacy, low language education and financial constraints are all challenges that are faced. These challenges lead to capacity constraints – it’s difficult to get a mass amount of citizens to engage effectively and equitably in the participation process (DEAT, 2002:17).

When it comes to environmental issues there is generally a lack of interest and concern among local communities. The level of public participation regarding environmental issues thus faces a huge challenge. If the community don't show any interests or express their concerns, environmentalists cannot execute their projects as accurately as they would have wanted to (DEAT, 2002:17).

3. Conclusions

It is evident that public participation is crucial when development decisions have to be made, no matter what type of decision it is or in what discipline or profession it emerges. It forms part of any decision-making process and is necessary for effective and successful decisions to be made in terms of future development options and possibilities.

From the theoretical findings made regarding public participation, it is clear that participatory processes provides various advantages for Planners and communities, but it also comes with various challenges.

A SWOT-analysis of the current state of public participation in South Africa was done showing the following results:

- Strengths:
 - Improve effectiveness - The public can also be creative and innovative.
 - Empower the local community by providing opportunities and information.
 - Conflicts can be resolved by negotiating tradeoffs.
- Weaknesses:
 - It is difficult to implement theoretical ideas in the business-environment.
 - Unrealistic expectations of communities which can't be met.
 - Decisions made through participatory processes are not always sustainable.
- Opportunities:
 - By involving the public, better and more creative plans can be developed.
 - Public can develop a sense of ownership and identity though participation.
 - Public can enhance their knowledge, understanding and awareness.
- Threats:
 - Do not give a community false hope - it could lead to rebellious communities.
 - Make sure that the participatory regulations given in certain policies, such as the EIA, are strictly followed.
 - Always be consistent and fair when working with community members

The main objective of the empirical study was to compare the public participation approaches between different disciplines in South Africa. By comparing these disciplines an accurate picture could be formulated regarding the current state of public participation in South Africa. **Error! Reference source not found.** summarises these approaches between the Town Planning–, Health Sciences– and Geography/Environmental disciplines in South Africa.

Table 2: Comparing approaches towards public participation from different disciplines

	Town and Regional Planning	Health Sciences	Geography
Method	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Town-Planning and Townships Ordinance (15 of 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bottom-up approach • Before project is initiated – 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Combination of Town Planners and Health

	<p>1986) act as a guideline for public participation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It states that the public should be given notice when there is an application (notice boards and newspaper article). • A member of the community can appeal within 28 days from the publication of the notice. • If there are objections, a hearing will take place where community members can state their opinions or feelings. A Board shall then make a final decision. 	<p>meeting is scheduled for all relevant stakeholders to discuss the vision of a proposal of plan. Each stakeholder can state his/her case at this meeting and compromises are made until a consensus is reached.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Involve the public by going into the community and asking exactly what it is they want. • ABCD needs assessment – What are the needs of the community. 	<p>Sciences.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Also a bottom-up approach to public participation, but with necessary legislation in place to guide some aspects of the process (NEMA). • Similarities with Town Planning – Also uses notice boards and newspaper articles. • Public meetings may be held where all stakeholders are informed of proposals and projects.
Positive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Every Planner follows the same guidelines (Ordinance), therefore the format of notices and the application processes stays the same in every part of the country. • Other policies (IDP and SDF) within the Planning discipline support participatory processes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By getting all relevant stakeholders to reach a consensus, a lot of conflict is avoided. • Bottom-up – Follow a grass root approach. Makes the community very optimistic by talking directly to them and making them feel valued – gives ownership and identity. • Sustainable approach – human driven. Not only to improve health, but also equip communities with skills and education. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The public are better informed when there are decisions to be made, while the necessary legislation is still taken into consideration. • Notice to adjacent house owners should be given.
Negative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Ordinance is limited in terms of its approach solely to public participation. It does not accommodate participatory processes as well as it should. • Notice boards and newspaper articles are the only way of notifying community members about applications. • Realistically, most of the community members don't even see the newspaper article, which is published for only 2 consecutive weeks. • Adjacent house owners not taken into consideration. • Level of vocabulary in notices is too high for most normal community members to understand. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Different cultures and ethnic groups in South Africa. Difficult to accommodate and communicate with all the different cultures. • Communities may tend to complain about other "less relevant" issues and if you don't look into those issues they may get demanding. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A lot of legislation to support public participation, but it exists on paper and has not yet been implemented in practice. • Participation process is undertaken during the environmental assessment stage, where many strategic decisions have already been made. Therefore the public can't influence those decisions. • Different cultures and ethnic groups in South Africa. Difficult to accommodate and communicate with all the different cultures.

Source: Own creation (2013)

It can be concluded that in South Africa there are positive and negative aspects regarding public participation. Although basic participatory processes is in place and captured in legislation, the issue of comprehensive and qualitative participation should be evaluated and enhanced.

South African town planning disciplines can learn from other disciplines and thus equip itself with better tools and “formulas” to enhance creative and inclusive participation processes. Table 3 indicates the ideas and initiatives Town Planning in South Africa can “borrow” from other disciplines to enhance its current approach to public participation.

Table 3: *Initiatives from other disciplines to enhance the current approach of public participation in Town Planning*

Health Sciences	Geography	International approaches
<p>1) Bottom-up approach – take the local communities into consideration. Reach them at their level, connect with them, and find out exactly what their needs are (not necessarily money, but perhaps education or ownership).</p> <p>2) Sustainable approach – Human driven, by making the community understand exactly what the mission is of a certain project. Objective is not only to improve health, but also to equip communities with skills and education.</p> <p>3) Balance between legislation and reality – legislation more simple in the sense that community members understand it.</p> <p>4) Before a proposal of project is initiated – meeting is scheduled for all relevant stakeholders. Stakeholders are informed of the proposed project. Compromises are made and a solution is found where and all stakeholders walk away satisfied.</p>	<p>1) “Stakeholder engagement” rather than “public participation” – participatory processes include the public, but also authorities, municipalities and other interested and affected parties.</p> <p>2) Bigger variety of methods to inform the public of proposals and projects e.g. websites and field trips. Through these methods the public can also ask questions, raise their concerns and give their opinions with respect to a certain project.</p> <p>3) Notice to adjacent house owners should be given (South Africa, 2010:60).</p> <p>4) Uses reasonable methods when a person wants to, but can't, participate in the process, because of disability, illiteracy of any other disadvantages.</p>	<p>1) Don't only use traditional methods, but also more creative participatory methods to intrigue and involve community members even further.</p> <p>2) Holistic approach – seeks to improve social capital and to enhance place-making within public spaces through public participation.</p>

Source: Own creation (2013)

These positive contributions of the various disciplines can be used to improve the participatory planning approaches used within the town planning scope.

3.1 Improving public participation in Town Planning in South Africa

The Town-Planning and Townships Ordinance is one of the key documents that guide the participatory process in South Africa. Other policies that play a cardinal role in determining these processes within the Town Planning arena are IDP's and SDF's. These documents all address public participation, but there are still a few problems with these policies which

undermine public participation and should be rectified to improve participatory processes in Town Planning:

- 1) Definition – It is necessary to define public participation in terms of a planning context. The definition should state the importance, scope and measurable of successful participation.
Town Planning can in this situation learn from the Geography department, who rather uses the term “stakeholder engagement” than public participation. Stakeholder engagement is defined in section 2.3 by DEAT (2002:6). If public participation can be redefined and structured as something like the above mentioned definition it will provide more clarity and better goals can be set.
- 2) Vocabulary – The vocabulary of a document is a very accurate reflection of the professionalism of a document. It is however true that the higher the level of vocabulary, the higher level of education you need to understand the language. South Africa has a very low level of education throughout large parts of the population, which means that the general man/woman on the street doesn’t necessarily have the education to fully understand extremely high vocabulary. Therefore the policies and other relevant legislation, which Town Planners use for public participation, cannot fully be understood by local community members. Newspaper articles and notice boards speak a “language” that can’t be understood by the uneducated.
Policy-makers don’t have to lower their standards and decrease the level of vocabulary of the policies itself, but any documentation or advertisement that can be viewed by the public should be composed with a level of vocabulary that is still correct and professional, but which is readable and can be understood by a local community member.
- 3) The IDP and SDF make provision for participatory processes, but current guidelines within these policies should be revised and improved. More guidelines should be added to accommodate public participation even further. There should be some form of measurement to determine successful participation processes, stating outcomes and specific guidelines to conduct inclusive participatory planning processes.

Public participation is extremely important and the benefits one can gain by executing it in practice are incomparable with what would happen if public participation was excluded. There are certain barriers currently prohibiting participatory processes to develop to its fullest extent, but with the correct management and structures in place, participatory processes in South Africa can improve. Best-practice approaches from various disciplines can be used to guide the Town Planning approaches to be more inclusive, creative and successful. This will lead to major improvements in terms of sustainable development and future town planning.

4. Acknowledgements

This research (or parts thereof) was made possible by the financial contribution of the NRF (National Research Foundation) South Africa.

Any opinion, findings and conclusions or recommendations expresses in this material are those of the author(s) and therefore the NRF does not accept any liability in regard thereto.

5. Bibliography

ARBTER, K, HANDLER, M, PURKER, E, TAPPEINER, G & TRATTNIGG, R. 2007. The public participation manual - Shaping the future together. Date of access: 5 May 2013.
<http://www.oegut.at/downloads/pdf/part_publ-part-manual.pdf>

- ASSESSNOW. 2009. Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD) Institute. <http://assessnow.info/resources/etools.2008-07-25.3417509089> Date of access: 03 Sept. 2012.
- BEEBEEJAUN, Y. 2006. The participation trap: The limitations of participation for ethnic and racial groups. *Journal of Planning and Architecture*, 11(3):3-18.
- CILLIERS, E.J., TIMMERMANS, W, VAN DEN GOORBERGH, F & SLIJKHUIS, J.S.A. 2012. The Lively Cities (LICI) background document: LICI theory and planning approaches. Wageningen: Wageningen University of Applied Sciences, Van Hall Larenstein).
- DEAT. 2002. Stakeholder engagement - Integrated environment management. Information series 3. Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism (DEAT), Pretoria.
- FERGUSON, S & LOW, C. 2005. A handbook for public participation in local governance. Date of access: 5 May 2013.
- PETERMANN, T & TROELL, J. 2007. African regional workshop on public participation in international waters management. <http://iwlearn.net/publications/ll/reader-african-regional-workshop-on-public-participation-in-international-waters-management-acwr> Date of access: 5 May 2013.
- SEQUEIRA, D & WARNER, M. 2007. Stakeholder Engagement: A good Practice Handbook for Companies Doing Business in Emerging Markets. 1st ed. Washington, D.C.: International finance corporation.
- SMITH, B.L. 2003. Public policy and public participation: Engaging citizens and community in the development of public policy. Atlanta: Health Canada.
- SOUTH AFRICA. 1986. Town-Planning and Townships Ordinance No. 15 of 1986.
- SOUTH AFRICA. 1998. Municipal Structures Act No. 117 of 1998.
- SOUTH AFRICA. 2010. National Environmental Management act 107 of 1998: environmental impact assessment regulations. http://thornton.co.za/resources/gg33306_nn546a_pg116-145.pdf Date of access: 10 June 2013.
- SOUTH AFRICA. 2012. Spatial planning and Land use management Bill. (Notice 14). Government gazette, 35445:2, 15 Jun.
- TOTH, B. 2010. Public participation and democracy in practice - Aarhus convention principles as democratic institution building in the developing world. *Journal of Land resource & environmental law*, 20(3):295-330.
- WALKER, E. 2006. Building from strength: Asset-Based Community Development. <http://www.bos.frb.org/commdev/c&b/2006/winter/building.pdf> Date of access: 5 May 2013.