

A few points to be considered when we engaging with a local community for research and practice for sustainability

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Local community-based and multi-stakeholder approach are considered as essential in a research and practice for achieving sustainable development. This is because governmental policies and conference declarations can create the frame but local community is the only place where we can actually work on and change the things (Fien and Tilbury 2002). Also, many sustainability challenges root in multiple causes, which even are complexly twined. Diversity is required in search for the solution at local community level. People from different fields, sectors, generations, cultural and socio-economic and educational backgrounds should participate in search for the solution of challenges. They share their knowledges and experiences in that process, so that they co-create a new knowledge for making their community sustainable.

Then, how can be multi-stakeholder participation realised truly –not in a tokenism way but in a really inclusive way where everyone, including, the marginalised, has ownership, is empowered and controls over the decision making process? And what role should we, researchers, take there? In my presentation, I would like to look at a few examples of local community practice and discuss the key factors to make community engagement successful and a potential epistemological pitfall of ‘participatory approach’ when everybody is fully believing that they are taking a participatory approach. Finally, I will propose a framework that can facilitate multi-stakeholder participation effectively for further discussion.

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