



Sharing the City: Community Participation in Urban Management

John Abbott

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While the rate of urbanisation in the developing world has increased dramatically over the past 20 years, governments' capacity to support urban growth has, in many cases, failed to keep up with this trend. Non-governmental organisations working in the field have long advocated community management of the urban environment as the best solution to this problem, and there is now a growing consensus that the answer does, indeed, lie with local communities. Yet there is still little understanding of what constitutes meaningful and effective community participation, or how it may be achieved in such a complex operating environment.

Sharing the City gives a comprehensive account of urban community participation, both in theory and practice. It first presents a wide-ranging analysis of the issues, and develops a participatory framework for urban management. Using case studies and existing examples from around the world, and drawing on lessons learned from previous experience, it then develops the theory into a practical working model.

Effective participatory urban management calls for a fundamental rethink on the part of all the actors involved - from local authorities and development agencies, through local and international NGOs, to the community-based organisations and the communities themselves. In redefining their roles and relationships, Sharing the City presents a new and radically different, yet viable and effective, approach to the concept of urban management.

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