Community-based Budgeting: A Curriculum
Introductory Comments
Introductions

1. Personal introductions
2. Brief explanation of project—Participatory Budgeting
3. Nature of Project—Community-based Project
4. Trainer-of-trainers model
5. Providing a curriculum
6. Result—trainers, handbook, literature
7. Any questions, time, day is good
Prelude

1. Current social reality is difficult
2. Country and many communities are suffering
3. Racism and violence
4. Economic downturn
5. Austerity measures

- Participatory budgeting represents a new imagination, alternatives are possible, a chance for change
What is Participatory Budgeting?

- A process whereby community members
  1. Meet regularly
  2. Discuss the need for funds to address local issues
  3. Develop and debate solutions to these issues
  4. Propose budgets to fund these solutions
  5. Offer alternative budget plans to officials.
Insight into Participatory Budgeting

Here is a brief video that provides a glimpse into the actual process of participatory budgeting:

https://vimeo.com/162743151

Take notice of the commitment, the atmosphere, and the skills that are exhibited in the budget forum.
Personal Reflection

1. Do you believe that this activity can happen in Miami?

2. How do we prepare persons to actively participate?
1. Participatory budgeting represents community-based work
2. This strategy involves a new philosophy of community interventions
3. Many projects strive to become community-based nowadays
4. But a lack of attention to this philosophical change results in a failure to become community-based
Budgets, Values, and Morality

1. Budgets are not simply about money.
2. Budgets are not simply about policies.
3. Budgets are not simply about governments and their operation.
4. Budgets are about philosophy, values, and morality.

Key idea: What is the philosophy and values that guide participatory budgeting and this project?
1. The Project Philosophy
Preliminary Remarks

1. A community-based strategy represents a new philosophy.
2. Every facet of community interventions is changed.
3. Specifically important is “grassroots” involvement.
4. Participation becomes the fundamental tenet of this new approach.

- Philosophy is at the root if an apparent practice task.
Community-based Initiative

1. Persons know their communities
2. Local knowledge should guide interventions
3. Community members should control all aspects of a project
4. Persons can adopt complex strategies to solve problems and create sustainable policies

- Key importance is "authentic participation"
Authentic Participation

1. Goes beyond consultation, stakeholding, and partnership.

2. Is based on a fundamental shift in philosophy.

3. Recognizes a fundamental connection between human action and the nature of social life.

4. Persons construct their lives and their cultural reality.

5. The social world of persons and communities is shaped by their definitions and commitments.
Personal Reflection

1. Have you participated in local initiatives before?

2. What were your experiences?
A Community-based Orientation

Basic Elements of “Authentic” Participation

Key Themes:

a. Local Knowledge
b. Community Entry
c. Community Control
d. Community Autonomy
1. Community is actively created by local persons
2. Consists of multiple and often conflicting viewpoints
3. Organization is fluid and generated through daily interaction and activities
4. *THE* community does not exist. Confluence of perspectives that is created for various purposes.
5. Community is a private and public creation.

❖ **Outcome:** Community is an on-going invention that must be interpreted appropriately
Benefits for Practice

1. Authentic participation leads to:

1. Community members’ direct control over a project
2. Relevant community input
3. Skill and confidence building
4. Project sustainability
5. Community autonomy
Personal Reflection

1. Does your community have an identity?

2. What are the key features of your community?
Community-based Practice and Democracy

1. What is democracy?
   1. Spirit of inclusion
   2. Trusting in-put from all persons
   3. Giving all ideas a chance
   4. Real collaboration
   5. Outcomes reflect the views expressed

- Persons feel comfortable with the views expressed, even dissenters, and results in significant “buy-in”, participation, and inclusion