

An evaluation of the legal provisions for public participation in Sri Lanka

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The importance of public participation in the planning process has been increasingly recognized in Sri Lanka. This recognition however, has had very minimal implications due to the fact that it has not been fully realized in the planning and implementation processes as mandated under the legal provisions of different institutions that are entrusted in the planning and implementation of national, regional and local level plans. A comprehensive analysis on the latter is the objective of this research. The institutional framework and legal provisions ensuring public participation, although seems to be strong enough as they are legally mandate in Sri Lanka, on one hand its effectiveness in terms theories and practices in public representations in general and its direction to Sri Lankan community in particular are in question and on the other, the appropriate stages of its implementation . In this backdrop, various planning laws relating to development are analyzed in the light of public participation in this study. In spite of a range of such laws are in enforcement in Sri Lanka, this paper seeks to highlight and revolve about laws that have direct and immediate influences on human settlement development decisions such as Urban Development Authority Law, Housing and Town Improvement Ordinance, Town and Country Planning Ordinance and Local Authority Laws. A Bottom-Up approach to planning as an alternative for the conventional orthodox approach has been given emphasis at-large in this research.

Key words: Legal provisions, Public participation, National development, Planning, Laws

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