

## Effective Citizen Participation in Local Government Decision-Making and Democracy

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**Abstract :** Citizen participation in local government is an opportunity given to citizens and government to increase communication between them, create public support for local government plans and most important grow public trust in government. Also, the citizens' involvement in the political process is an important part of democracy. This study aims to define the strategies for increasing citizen participation in local governance and concentrated in two important mechanisms such as participatory budget and public policy councils. Three strategies that promote more effective citizen involvement in local governance are understanding and using formal institutions of power, collaboration of citizens' groups and governments officials to jointly formulate programs plans, electing and appointing local officials. A unique aspect of citizen participation to operate effectively is the transparency of government and the inclusion of actors into decision-making. The citizen engagement in local governance enhances accountability and problem solving, promote more inclusive and cohesive communities and enlarge the quality and quantity of initiatives made by communities.

**Keywords :** accountability, citizen participation, democracy, government

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