The Myths of Participatory Action Research

Scientific research is increasingly expected to have social impact. Research for practice is therefore popular. Participatory action research goes one step further; it is research with people whose life or work is at stake, and involves them throughout the research process. The purpose of participatory action research is to give people more personal and mutual insight, resulting in collective action to change their local practice. Co-creating, reflecting, learning and evaluating are inextricably linked. But how to do that, engaging people in a meaningful way in your research? What steps are crucial in the process of learning, doing and changing? And what is (still) the role of the researcher in these processes? In this lecture, Prof. Dr. Tineke Abma (professor Participation & Diversity, VUmc) will give her vision on participatory action research and will discuss the myths concerning this approach. Abma has been actively involved in this theme for years, supervised more than 25 PhD students and wrote the book ‘Zeggenschap in Wetenschap’ for which she received the Crebolder award. Recently she wrote a book with a group of international authors entitled ‘Participatory Research for Health and Social Well-Being’, which will be released next year.