Strengthening Public Participation in Environmental Decision-Making: Building Connections for Africa and the Middle East
This is YOUR Workshop!

- Designed to maximize learning and sharing among all participants
- Your participation will help to shape our results
Our Agreements

• Participate
• Listen
• Be Polite
• Create a Safe Space for Discussion
• Be on Time
• Make Connections

• Chatham House Rules—the information belongs to all of us, use it, but do not assign quotes without permission.
Agenda Format

• **Learning** – Principles from the Toolkit
• **Sharing** – Stories from the region
• **Dialogue** – Exercises to apply learning to your projects, breakout groups by language

• Timing is flexible to ensure we take advantage of the most important elements to
Your Energizers

- After each break, we want your ideas to keep up the energy
- Lead us in a quick exercise, song, or other idea to keep up the energy in the room
- We will look for a volunteer for each break so start thinking now!
Share Your Ideas on The Brain!

• Big ideas that you want to bring home
• Write in your language, we will translate for everyone
• We will use these to outline the final report
Make Connections

• Start from home and then move around
• Talk to people you don’t know
• Explore connections and commonalities and write them on the back of one of your cards
• Hang your card on their place on the map
• Continue this throughout the workshop, leave notes and ideas for each other
Basic Principles of Public Participation and the USEPA Web Toolkit

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USEPA Public Participation Guide

- Developed by USEPA to support environmental agencies and staff
- Uses text and video
- Provides an overview of best practices
- Provides assistance in planning and conducting effective public participation
- Introduces key public participation skills and behaviors
- Case studies, tools, and links to additional resources on the web
What is Public Participation?

Any process that obtains and considers public input in making a decision or taking an action.
Public Participation and Public Relations are not the same

- Public relations does not include the opportunity for the public to influence the decision or outcome

- Public participation must include the opportunity for the public to influence the decision or outcome
Sometimes, We Should Use a Public Relations Approach

- When our goal is limited to informing the public such as in public awareness campaigns, but there is no room for them to affect the decision
- Or when our goal is to change public behavior, such as in social marketing activities
Sometimes, Public Participation is the right Approach

• It is public participation as long as there is a real opportunity for public input to influence the decision or outcome

• Public participation can be very simple or quite complex, it is almost never the same from project to project
Why Should we do Public Participation? For Better, More Sustainable Decisions

• Decision-makers tap into the collective wisdom of the public and have better information to base decision

• Decisions take into account the needs of the full range of stakeholder interests

• Stakeholders better understand decisions and often become invested in them
Elements of Effective Decisions

PROCEDURAL SATISFACTION
How people feel about how things are talked about and dealt with. 
Issues of fairness and transparency.

EMOTIONAL SATISFACTION
How people feel about how they and other are treated. 
Issues of respect and access to decision-making.

SUBSTANTIVE SATISFACTION
How well things are explained, questions answered, topics discussed, and input considered. 
Issues of values, needs, interests.

All 3 are required for a successful decision
UN Model of Sustainability

Public Participation helps us get to here!
Public Participation also Builds Community Capacity

• Stakeholders and communities learn how to solve problems and address issues constructively
• Communities improve their behaviors, knowledge, and communication with each other
Tell me, I forget.
Show me, I remember.
Involve me, I understand.

– Ancient Proverb
Best Practices in the Toolkit: Keys to a Successful Process

1. Clarify the goals for and level of public participation
2. Identify where public input can influence the decision
3. Develop and share meaningful information
4. Engage a broad range of stakeholder interests
5. Design a comprehensive participation process
6. Ensure sponsor commitment
1. Clarify the goals for and level of public participation

- Why do we hope to gain from public participation?
- Is there a real opportunity for the public to influence the decision or outcome?
1. Clarify the goals for and level of public participation

• Identify the appropriate level of public participation, based on:
  – Degree to which public input can make a difference
  – Public desire to participate
  – Our willingness to engage the public
  – Available resources
  – Available time
  – Consequences of not engaging the public
# IAP2’s Public Participation Spectrum

## Inform
- **Public participation goal**: To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions.
- **Promise to the public**: We will keep you informed.
- **Example techniques**: Fact sheets, Web sites, Open houses

## Consult
- **Public participation goal**: To obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions.
- **Promise to the public**: We will keep you informed, listen to and acknowledge concerns and aspirations, and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.
- **Example techniques**: Public comment, Focus groups, Surveys, Public meetings

## Involve
- **Public participation goal**: To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.
- **Promise to the public**: We will work with you to ensure that your concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the alternatives developed and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.
- **Example techniques**: Workshops, Deliberative polling

## Collaborate
- **Public participation goal**: To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution.
- **Promise to the public**: We will look to you for advice and innovation in formulating solutions and incorporate your advice and recommendations into the decisions to the maximum extent possible.
- **Example techniques**: Citizen advisory committees, Consensus-building, Participatory decision-making

## Empower
- **Public participation goal**: To place final decision-making in the hands of the public.
- **Promise to the public**: We will implement what you decide.
- **Example techniques**: Citizen juries, Ballots, Delegated decision

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Levels of Public Participation

- Higher is not necessarily better
- Select the level that best fits the circumstances
- OK to stay at inform as long as expectations are clear
2. Identify where public input can influence the decision

- Identify specific points where public input is important and possible
- Public input early in the process is often most effective
- Ask very specific questions that help to focus public input
- Do not ask the public for input to things they are unable to influence, or after decisions are made
- Avoid asking “what do you want”
Full Range of Stakeholder Issues

Issues Included in This Project

Issues that the Public Will be able to Influence
3. Develop and share meaningful information

- Make sure the public has the information it needs to provide meaningful input.
- In general, stakeholders and decision makers should be looking at the same set of facts for input to be useful.
- Make information accessible and understandable to the public.
4. Engage a broad range of stakeholder interests

• Be careful not to limit your interaction to the loudest voices
• Identify the range of voices that should be involved in the process and reach out to all of them
• Foster relationships with key stakeholders
• Help stakeholders interact with each other
Identify Full Range of Interests

Narrow Agendas and Special Interests — General Public — Narrow Agendas and Special Interests
5. Design a comprehensive participation process

• Start early and think about public participation continuously

• Match up public participation activities with your overall decision process

• Do not rely on single events or limited meetings
6. Ensure sponsor commitment

- Willingness to consider input at places and at level promised
- Make sufficient resources available
  - Money
  - Time
  - Manpower
- Transparency of information appropriate to the level of participation
- Relationship-building with stakeholders
Country Discussions

• Talk with others from your country
• Ask yourself:
  – How does our public participation compare with the model presented here?
  – How do these concepts relate to our circumstances and where can we improve?
What is Public Participation?

- Definition
- Benefits
- Best practices
- Sponsor responsibilities
Situation Assessment

- What is it
- Why do it
- How to do it
- What to do with the results
- Links
Selecting Level

- Introduction to Spectrum
- Inform
- Consult
- Involve
- Collaborate
- Empower
Planning Steps

1. Organize for Participation
2. Identify and Get to Know Your Stakeholders
3. Pick an Appropriate Level of Public Participation
4. Integrate Public Participation Into the Decision Process
5. Match Public Participation to Objectives Throughout
Skills, Knowledge, Behaviors

- Public Participation Principles
- Public Participation Behaviors
- Project Management
- Communications
- Facilitation
Skills Matrix—helps to identify needed skills and training for your overall team.
Tool Sheet Topics

- Tool Description
- Potential Uses
- Challenges to Consider
- Principles for Successful Planning
- Resources Needed
- Cost
- Group Size
- Relevant Participation Levels
- Links
Tools to Inform

- Briefings
- Fact Sheets, Newsletters, Bulletins
- Information Hotline
- Information Repositories
- Information Kiosks
- Press and media
- Public Meetings
- Web sites
Tools for Input

- Appreciative Inquiry Processes
- Charrettes
- Computer-Assisted Processes
- Focus Groups
- Interviews
- Study Circles
- Public Meetings/Hearings
- Public Workshops
- World Café
Tools for Agreement

- Consensus workshops
- Advisory boards and similar groups
- Electronic Democracy
- Citizen Juries
Case Study Format

- Project Name and Sponsoring Agencies
- Background
- Public Participation Goal and Level
- Public Participation Approach
- Result/Outcome
- Specific Public Participation Tools and Techniques Used
- Lessons Learned
- Links
Links

- Reports
- Cases
- Tools
- Resources
- Other sites