

ANNEX IV

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN TEMPLATE

A typical public participation plan generally includes the following sections and information:

Description of the project: overview of the project, and description of the components of the EIA process and how these relate to the public participation component. A schedule of activities should be included to show how the public participation process will fit into the overall EIA. This will also help communicate the boundaries of public participation in planning, program development or decision processes.

Purpose of the public participation process: explanation of what the public participation process aims to achieve, and what level of public participation will be sought. The level of public concern or interest should be assessed to determine the appropriate level of public participation. It is important to assess the degree to which the public considers the issue significant, as the public will become involved according to its perception of the seriousness of the issue. The participation goals, and the way in which they are set, should be justified in the specific context of the project. The “Spectrum of Public Participation” from the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) can assist in defining the public’s role in the EIA process. Once the level of participation has been defined, the goals, objectives, and strategies for the plan are developed. Example Goals could include:

- Inform the public of the project and communications strategy throughout the EIA process.
- Consult with the public to obtain feedback on alternatives/options developed for the scoping process and/or decisions for the final EIA.
- Involve the public in the scoping and draft EIA process to assure that their concerns and ideas are considered during this step in the process.
- Collaborate (perhaps partner) with the public on alternatives development, giving consideration to new alternatives or mitigated alternatives.

Key stakeholders: Identification of key stakeholders, including a stakeholder analysis, and resulting in: a) a preliminary list of stakeholders at local, provincial, national and international levels, and b) classification of stakeholders. Identification of PAP and key stakeholders begins by first identifying the potential environmental and social impacts. This includes direct, indirect, and cumulative and even those that may occur later in time. Impacts may also occur due to “connected actions” (for example, an electrical power grid built to bring the power from a hydropower dam project to the plant is a connected action to a hydropower dam project).

A stakeholder analysis matrix is a useful tool to identify different groups in order to develop appropriate strategies to facilitate their meaningful engagement. Such a matrix can be based on combinations of two factors – interest and influence – as follows:

	Low interest	High interest
High influence	Low interest and high influence	High interest and high influence
Low influence	Low interest and low influence	High interest and low influence

Methodologies, tools, and techniques: appropriate methodologies should be selected to reach the goals described above. This section should give details about the nature of the techniques chosen, who will benefit from them, who will apply them, how long they will take and how much they will cost. This section should be updated regularly as the choice of methodologies is finalized.

Key activities and schedule of events: on the basis of the methodologies chosen, a list of key activities can be identified and a schedule of events drawn up. Public information and input need to be timed early enough to provide adequate opportunity to contribute to planning and/or the decision. At this point, practical considerations such as weather, or public holidays and religious festivals, should be taken into account when planning activities. In addition, it may be necessary to train staff, translate materials, and pre-test activities. These issues may significantly extend the time and budget required to implement the Plan.

Roles and responsibilities: the roles and responsibilities of everyone involved in the public participation process – including the team of practitioners, the developer, government departments and transboundary partners – should be detailed here.

Budget: the budget for implementing the Plan should be included here, giving details of the costs of staffing and materials. An adequate budget, including staff resources, is critical to the successful implementation of the public participation process, including a situation assessment, outreach activities, and obtaining and incorporating public input.

Monitoring and review: Checkpoints for monitoring and review of the process should be built into the Plan (and included in the schedule of activities), to ensure that the Plan is updated and adapted as the project progresses and new information becomes available, and to ensure that the Plan is being implemented properly.

Reporting: a draft outline of the report structure can help to focus the purpose of the public participation process and to ensure that all the necessary information is gathered.

Post-decision: the Plan should provide for informing stakeholders of decisions taken about the project, and for continuing communication throughout the project implementation.

Public Participation Tools and Techniques

A number of tools or techniques can be used to implement the public participation process.

These include in-person tools (those that involve face-to-face interaction – meetings or workshops, for example) and remote tools (those that do not involve face-to-face interaction – written surveys, social media, or websites, for example). Some examples are provided here:

Tools to inform

- Briefings sheets, Newsletters, Bulletins
- Information Hotline
- Information Repositories
- Information Kiosks for Press and media
- Public Meetings
- Web sites

Tools for generating input

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

Tools for consensus-building and agreement seeking

- Advisory Boards