

Guidelines for Public Consultation

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Context

This guideline is part of a package of regulations and guidelines which include:

- The Pakistan Environmental Protection Ordinance 1997
- Policy and Procedures for filing, review and approval of environmental assessments
- Guidelines for the preparation and review of Environmental Reports
- **Guidelines for public consultation**
- Guidelines for sensitive and critical areas
- Pakistan environmental legislation and the National Environmental Quality Standards (NEQS)
- Detailed sectoral guidelines

This guideline should not be read on its own, but in the context of the overall package. In particular, *The Pakistan Environmental Protection Ordinance 1997* requires public participation during the review of an EIA (Section 12(3)). The *“Policy and procedures for the filing, review and approval of environmental assessments”* requires proponents to consult with the affected community and relevant NGO’s during the preparation of an environmental report. The *“Guidelines for the preparation and review of environmental reports”* contain a number of references to the need for public involvement .

1.2 Consultation, Involvement and Participation

There is no consistent set of definitions of the terms “consultation” and “participation” as they apply to public involvement in environmental assessment. Some readers will use the words interchangeably, while to others they will mean quite different things. One common view of the levels of public involvement is summarised below:

- **Informing**
one way flow of information from the proponent to the public
- **Consulting**
two way flow of information between the proponent and the public, providing opportunities for the public to express views on the proposal
- **Participating**
proponent and the public involved in shared analysis, agenda setting and decision making, through reaching consensus on the main elements.

The World Bank Participation Sourcebook makes a sharp distinction between consultation and participation, and offers the following definition: “Participation is a process through which stakeholders influence and share control over development initiatives, and the decisions and resources which affect them.” The case histories cited in the Sourcebook show how, through participation, local ownership of programs and sustainable outcomes are achieved.

True participatory practices require a high level of skills, and are not advocated here as mandatory. In fact, each level of public involvement requires proponents to be committed to be open in dealing with the public: and the public will recognise and respond adversely to

token consultation. What is sought in environmental assessment in Pakistan is that proponents should explain their proposals clearly to affected communities, actively listen to the communities' responses, and make prudent changes to the proposal to avoid or mitigate adverse impacts. Where proponents are able to go beyond this to "participation", they will achieve even greater benefits for themselves and for the stakeholders.

References throughout this Guideline to "public consultation" and "public involvement" do not imply that "participation" is not desired: rather that a two way flow of information between proponents and stakeholders is required, and if that becomes true "participation", so much the better.

1.3 Objectives of consultation

Public involvement is a feature of environmental assessment and can lead to better and more acceptable decision-making. It can be time consuming and demanding, yet without it, proposals are seldom soundly based, and there is likely to be antagonism from affected people. Public involvement, undertaken in a positive manner and supported by a real desire to use the information gained to improve the proposal, will lead to better outcomes, and lay the basis for ongoing positive relationships between the participants.

The objectives of public involvement include:

- informing the stakeholders about what is proposed;
- providing an opportunity for those otherwise unrepresented to present their views and values, therefore allowing more sensitive consideration of mitigation measures and trade-offs;
- providing those involved with planning the proposal with an opportunity to ensure that the benefits of the proposal are maximised and that no major impacts have been overlooked;
- providing an opportunity for the public to influence project design in a positive manner;
- obtaining local and traditional knowledge (corrective and creative), before decision making;
- increasing public confidence in the proponent, reviewers and decision-makers;
- providing better transparency and accountability in decision making;
- reducing conflict through the early identification of contentious issues, and working through these to find acceptable solutions;
- creating a sense of ownership of the proposal in the minds of the stakeholders; and
- developing proposals which are truly sustainable.

More intangible benefits flow from public involvement as participants see that their ideas can help to improve projects. People gain confidence and self-esteem through taking part in the process, and perceptions are expanded by meeting and exchanging views with people who have different values and ideas.

1.4 Stakeholders

The use of the term "the public" has given concern in the past to some participants in environmental assessment, who desire to see a direct causal link between the proposal and

those involved in consultation. For this reason, and for clarity, it is desirable to clearly describe the stakeholders who should be involved in public consultation, and this is done below in the remainder of this section.

People who may be directly or indirectly affected by a proposal will clearly be the focus for public involvement. Those who are directly affected may be project beneficiaries, those likely to be adversely affected, or other stakeholders. The identification of those indirectly affected is more difficult, and to some extent it will be a subjective judgement. For this reason it is good practice to have a very wide definition of who should be involved, and to include any person or group who thinks that they have an interest. Sometimes it may be necessary to consult with a representative from a particular interest group. In such cases the choice of representative should be left to the group itself.

Consultation should include not only those likely to be affected, positively or negatively, by the outcome of a proposal, but should also include those who can affect the outcome of a proposal. The range of stakeholders typically includes:

Local people

Individuals or groups in the local community will want to know what is proposed; what the likely impacts are; that their values are known, understood and taken into account; and that the suggestions they may offer will be carefully considered on their merits. They will want proponents to listen to their concerns and address them. They will also have local knowledge which can be tapped.

Other affected communities

Where a proposal is likely to have indirect impacts at a distance from the proposed works (for example the affect on coastal estuaries and mangroves of a dam project) the communities likely to be affected indirectly should also be involved.

Proponents

Many proponents will share some of the objectives listed above (under the sub-heading Local People), and will have others as well. Proponents will wish to shape the proposal to give it the best chance of success. This often involves achieving increased public understanding and acceptance of the proposal through the open provision of information. The design can also be improved through the use of local knowledge and an understanding of local values.

Government agencies and local councils

The interests of relevant government agencies, utility service providers and local Councils can be best achieved if they are included in the consultation process. Not only will their requirements become known, but they will better understand the needs and concerns of all the other stakeholders if they are involved in the consultation program. For administrators and decision-makers, an effective public involvement program can mean that the project is less likely to become controversial in the later stages of the process.

Non Government Organisations (NGO's)

Involvement of NGO's can often provide a useful broader public perspective on a proposal. Their views can also be very helpful when there are difficulties with involving local people. Care must be taken to clearly define the role of an NGO. Normally NGO's act as an advocate for the environment, but at times they act in other capacities. For instance they may undertake the preparation of Environmental Reports, or may become active in striving to command resources directly. In such cases NGO's may have, or be perceived to have, a conflict of interest, which may mitigate against their effectiveness in the eyes of other stakeholders.

Influential people

Communication with influential people, such as large landholders, local Members of Parliament and Mayors of Local Councils, is most important. If such people are not well briefed about proposals at an early stage, they may learn about the project at second or third hand, and obtain a distorted impression of the project. An early informative briefing to such people by the proponent will minimise the opportunity of them being misinformed, and becoming opponents of the proposal.

Others

Other can also make a significant contribution.

Care is required to ensure that fair and balanced representation of views is sought and that the views of the poor or minority groups are not overwhelmed by those of the more articulate, influential or wealthy.

On a specific study, a good way to identify appropriate stakeholders is to start by asking questions, such as the ones below.

- Who might be affected (positively or negatively) by the development?
- Who are the “voiceless” for whom special efforts may have to be made?
- Who are the representatives of those who are likely to be affected?
- Who is responsible for what is intended?
- Who is likely to mobilise for or against what is intended?
- Who can make what is intended more effective through their participation, or less effective by their non-participation or outright opposition?
- Who can contribute financial and technical resources?
- Whose behaviour has to change for the effort to succeed?

2. Techniques for public consultation

2.1 Principles

There are a number of basic principles that can be followed to help to achieve a successful outcome when using public involvement techniques:

- sufficient relevant information must be provided in a form that is easily understood by non-experts (without being simplistic or insulting);
- sufficient time must be allowed for stakeholders to read, discuss and consider the information and its implications;
- sufficient time must be allowed for stakeholders to present their views;
- responses should be provided to issues and problems raised or comments made by stakeholders. This builds public confidence in the public involvement and provides the conditions for the consultation process to be maintained; and
- the selection of venues and the timing of events should encourage maximum attendance and a free exchange of views by all stakeholders (including those who may feel less confident about expressing their views).

2.2 Levels of involvement

The various methods of communicating with the public have different intrinsic levels of involvement, as indicated in the Table 1. An explanation of the Table is given on page 7.

Table 1. Techniques for communicating with the public

Communication characteristics			Public involvement and communication techniques	Public information and consultation objectives					
Level of public contact achieved	Ability to handle specific interest	Degree of 2-way communication		Inform & educate	Identify problems and values	Get ideas, solve problems	Feed-back	Evaluate	Resolve conflict, reach consensus
2	1	1	Public hearings		✓		✓		
2	1	2	Public meetings	✓	✓		✓		
1	2	3	Small group meetings	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
1	2	2	Presentations to community organisations	✓	✓		✓		
1	3	3	Information seminars	✓			✓		
1	2	1	Operating field offices		✓	✓	✓	✓	
2	1	1	Information brochures and pamphlets	✓					
1	3	3	Field trips and site visits	✓	✓	✓			
3	1	2	Public displays	✓		✓	✓		
2	1	2	Model demonstration projects	✓			✓	✓	✓
3	1	1	Material for mass media	✓					
1	3	2	Response to public inquiries	✓					
3	1	1	Press releases inviting comments	✓		✓	✓		
1	3	1	Letter inviting comments	✓		✓	✓		
1	3	3	Workshops	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
1	3	3	Advisory committees		✓	✓	✓	✓	
1	3	3	Task forces		✓	✓		✓	
1	3	3	Employment of community residents	✓	✓	✓			✓
1	3	3	Community interest advocates		✓	✓		✓	✓
2	3	1	Public review of scope of Environmental Report	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Level of participation: 1=low, 2=medium, 3=high

Explanation of Table 1

One technique listed in Table 1 is “Material for mass media”. Taking this technique to illustrate the use of the table, we might first read the three columns headed “Communication characteristics”. They show that

- the level of public contact achieved is high (3)
- the ability to handle specific interest is low (1)
- degree of 2-way communication is low (1)

Turning now to the six columns on the right headed “Public information and consultation objectives”, those objectives containing a tick (✓) are likely to be achieved—i.e. “Inform and educate” might be achieved, but the other five objectives will not be achieved by this technique.

It should not be inferred that methods with a high level of involvement will always be preferred—a mix of methods is usually desirable. For instance, informal small group meetings may be the best way to discuss an item of specific concern with a small group, whereas a mass media campaign involving public displays and advertising may be the best way to initially launch a public involvement program.

The methods of public involvement used need to suit the social environment. It has been noted for instance that, although people want to be consulted, they may not have the time, resources or ability to locate environmental study information and report their views to the relevant study team member or Responsible Authority. Traditional local decision-making institutions and the use of the mass media (such as TV, radio and newspapers) may be far more appropriate than placing reports in libraries as has been the normal practice in a number of environmental assessment systems.

2.3 Some specific tools

Some specific tools included in the World Bank Participation Sourcebook are described in outline below.

Focus group meetings are relatively low cost, semi-structured, small group (4–12 participants plus a facilitator) consultations used to explore people’s attitudes, feelings or preferences, and for consensus building. Focus group work is a compromise between participant-observation, which is less controlled, lengthier and more in-depth, and pre-set interviews, which are not likely to attend to participant’s own concerns.

Mapping, a generic term for gathering in pictorial form baseline data on a variety of indicators, is an excellent starting point for participatory work because it gets people involved in creating a visual output which can be used immediately to bridge communication gaps and to generate lively discussion. Maps are useful as verification of secondary source tools, for comparison, and for monitoring of change.

Needs assessment is a tool that draws out information about people’s varied needs, raises people’s varied needs, raises participant’s awareness of related issues, and provides a framework for prioritizing needs. This type of tool is an integral part of gender analysis, and to develop an understanding of the particular needs of both men and women, and to do comparative analysis.

Participant observation is a fieldwork technique used by anthropologists and sociologists to collect qualitative and quantitative data which leads to an in-depth understanding of people’s

practices, motivations and attitudes. Participant observation entails investigating the project background, studying the general characteristics of a beneficiary population, and extended residence among beneficiaries during which time interviews, observations, and analyses are recorded and discussed.

Role playing enables people to creatively remove themselves from their usual roles and perspectives to allow them to understand choices and decisions made by other people with other responsibilities. Role playing, which can range from a simple story with only a few characters to an elaborate street theater production, can be used to acclimatise a research team to a project setting, to train trainers, and to encourage community discussions about a particular development intervention.

Seasonal diagrams, or **seasonal calendars**, show the major changes that affect a household, community or region within a year, such as those that are associated with climate, crops, labour availability and demand, livestock, prices and so on. Such diagrams highlight the times of constraint and opportunity, which can be critical information for planning and implementation.

Secondary data review, or **desk review**, is an inexpensive, initial inquiry which provides necessary contextual background. Sources include academic theses and dissertations, annual reports, archival materials, census data, life histories, maps, project documents and so on.

Semi-structured interviews, also called **conversational interviews**, are partially structured by a flexible interview guide which has a limited number of pre-set questions. This type of interview guide ensures that the interview remains focused on the development issue at hand while allowing the interview to be conversational enough so that the participants can introduce and discuss topics which are relevant to them. These tools are a deliberate departure from survey-type interviews with lengthy, pre-determined questionnaires.

Socio-cultural profiles describe in detail the social and cultural dimensions which (in combination with technical, economic and environmental dimensions) serve as a basis for design and preparation of policy and project work. Profiles include data about the type of communities, demographic characteristics, economy and livelihood, land tenure and natural resource control, social organisation, factors affecting access to power and resources, conflict resolution mechanisms and values and perceptions. Together with a participation plan, the socio-cultural profile helps to ensure that proposed projects and policies are culturally and socially appropriate, and potentially sustainable.

Village meetings have many uses in participatory development, including information sharing and group consultation, consensus building, prioritising and sequencing of interventions, and collaborative monitoring and evaluation. When multiple tools such as resource mapping and focus groups have been used, village meetings are important venues for launching activities and gaining feedback on analysis.

Workshops are structured group meetings where a variety of key stakeholder groups, whose activities or influence impact on a development issue or project, share knowledge and work towards a common vision. With the help of a workshop facilitator, participants undertake a series of activities designed to help them progress towards the development objective (consensus building, information sharing, prioritisation of objectives, team building, etc.) In project as well as policy work, from pre-planning to evaluation stages, stakeholder workshops are used to initiate, establish and sustain collaboration.

2.4 Building Trust

Trust cannot be taken as a right, it has to be earned. Behaviour that engenders trust includes being open and positive, sharing information, taking an interest in the problems of others, listening actively and with empathy, being attentive to the suggestions, questions or concerns expressed, following up issues that are raised, and ensuring that feedback is given which details how the study team has responded. Above all, trust will be built if those being involved see that the proposal is being moulded to accommodate their concerns and suggestions.

Often local people have a negative impression of outside experts, whether they come from the private or public sector, which need to be rectified. Engaging stakeholders in repeated interactions, and working through intermediaries who have on-going relationships of trust with poor and vulnerable groups, helps to build trust, and gain the participation of affected stakeholders.

3 Effective public involvement

3.1 Planning a public consultation program

Planning by the proponent for a public consultation program needs to begin very early in the study, preferably before any other work is carried out. Otherwise, once work commences on the technical aspects of the proposal, it can be difficult for the study team to rid themselves of preconceptions, and to be responsive to local information and values. From the perspective of those affected, any delay in consulting with them will be read as evidence that the proponent has already made up his mind, and that their input will not be valued, nor effective in shaping the proposal.

The Terms of Reference for the study should include an outline of the proposed public consultation program, detailing the scope, timing, techniques and resources for interaction.

The plan for public consultation will typically detail means of informing the public, at an early stage, about the study process, objectives and proposals; ways in which the public will be informed about progress with the study and feedback on community concerns; and ways in which the public will be encouraged to become involved in sharing their knowledge, values and concerns. It will also detail the resources (people and money) available to support the plan. In this respect, some money may be allocated specifically to assist the community to contribute to the study (eg. to defray travelling costs, to recompense community representatives for the time spent on their involvement, and to allow representatives to report back to their constituents). Money should also be provided to hold public meetings within the local community.

If there are issues which are simply not open to discussion, these should be clearly set out with reasons. For example, if the decision to carry out a project has already been made, this should be clearly stated at the beginning of the process. It must be stressed that in such circumstances, the potential for the process to effectively address issues of concern will be much reduced, and the willingness of the public to be involved is also likely to be diminished.

The development of a public involvement program would typically involve consideration of the following issues:

- the objectives of the proposal, and the study;
- identification of interested and affected parties (stakeholders);
- budgetary and time constraints and opportunities;
- identification of appropriate techniques to involve or consult with the stakeholders;
- traditional authority structures and decision-making processes;
- identification of approaches to ensure feedback to the involved stakeholders; and
- identification of mechanisms to ensure consideration of stakeholders' knowledge, opinions and suggestions.

**EIA for the ICI Glycol Waste Incineration proposal
at the Gharibwal Cement Limited (GCL) factory**

The public consultation program undertaken by IUCN for this proposal consisted of the following elements:

- discussions to obtain the ICI and GCL management views;
- discussions with workers handling the glycol waste;
- meetings with villagers at each of seven villages adjacent to the GCL plant, to find out the general socio-economic conditions of the people, their perceptions about the present working of the cement factory, and the issue of glycol waste burning as a possible supplementary fuel.

The target group included teachers, elders and other opinion leaders.

The main concern identified was public health. The health care facilities of the GCL Colony (quite good) and of the adjacent villages (very rudimentary) were surveyed. The occupational health of GCL workers was also investigated through examinations by the Medical Officer-in-charge.

The report of the public consultation and health investigation concluded with recommendations to mitigate the health impacts of the GCL factory and the proposed glycol incineration

3.2 Stages of the environmental assessment process where public consultation should occur

Ideally, the public involvement program should commence at the screening stage of a proposal and then continue throughout the whole EIA process. This is represented in Figure 1 below, produced by The World Bank to show how public involvement is incorporated into its procedures.



Figure 1. Incorporating public involvement into the stages of environmental assessment.

The Initial Environmental Examination

The proponent will consult with the Responsible Authority, other Departments and agencies, and with stakeholders including the affected community, in order to ensure that all significant issues are identified, local information about the project area is gathered, and alternative ways of achieving the project objectives are considered.

Assessing impacts, mitigation and impact management

The further involvement of the public in this phase of the preparation of the Environment Report (which are often iterative in nature) can help avoid biases or inaccuracies in the analysis, can reveal local preferences and values, and can help to define the significance of the impacts. Social impacts cannot be considered without the active participation of affected communities. It is essential that proposed mitigating measures be canvassed with those affected, to ensure that they are consistent with their values and preferences.

Reviewing and decision-making

For EIA's, public comment is a vital part of the review and subsequent decision-making. The Environmental Report, and more particularly the Executive Summary, must be written in a way that makes it able to be understood by the non-technical reader. In Section 5.4 of the Guidelines for the preparation and review of Environmental Reports, a number of other forms for the presentation of the findings of an environmental report are listed. Reviewers have a particular responsibility to ensure that the comments provided on Environmental Reports, whether written or oral, are carefully considered on their merits.

Monitoring and auditing

Following Environmental Approval, the detailed design, construction and operating phases proceed. Increasingly it is being realised that the evolution of projects through these phases, and in combination with other changes and developments, can present environmental challenges which require adaptive management. An emphasis on environmental management, and the participation of representatives of the local community in the monitoring process, can assist proponents and Responsible Authorities to respond to problems as they arise. Such interaction with local communities will also promote good relations between a plant management and the plant's neighbours, to the benefit of all.

The public can be involved formally or informally in monitoring activities, and may highlight inadequacies in monitoring programs. They may also have practical suggestions to help solve problems as they arise.

3.3 Factors for effective public consultation

Some basic principles which help to achieve successful outcomes when involving the public are listed in Section 2.1, Principles above. In addition, there are a number of potential constraints to effective public participation, including:

Poverty	involvement means time spent away from income-producing tasks, and favours the wealthy.
Rural settings	increased distances make communication more difficult and expensive.
Illiteracy	(which may be combined with, and exacerbated by, the lack of command of non-local languages) can inhibit representative involvement if written material is relied upon.
Local values and culture	behavioural norms or cultural practices can inhibit involvement of some groups, who may not feel free to disagree publicly with dominant groups
Languages	in some areas a number of different languages are spoken, making communication difficult.
Legal systems	may be in conflict with traditional systems, and may cause conflict about rights and responsibilities for resources, including land tenure.
Interest groups	may have conflicting or divergent views, and vested interests.
Confidentiality	can be important for the proponent, and may mitigate against early public involvement and consideration of alternatives.

No public involvement program will be effective unless the proponent genuinely wishes to engage in a two-way dialogue with the community. The spirit of openness needs to embrace a willingness to listen to the information, values and concerns of the community, to amend the proposal so as to minimise community concerns, and to acknowledge the value of community input.

3.4 Reasons proponents give to avoid public consultation

Most of the risks associated with public involvement can be avoided with sound planning. More importantly, the lack of consultation and participation may pose much greater risks to projects in the long term. Some of the common 'reasons' that are put forward as justification for avoiding public involvement are given below:

It's too early; we haven't yet got a firm proposal.

The early provision of information to the public will minimise the risk of untrue and damaging rumours about the proposals. Even though the proponent may not have a clear idea of project details, communicating the objectives of the proposal will start to build trust with the community, and can allow useful public input on site constraints and alternatives. The trend in environmental assessment is to undertake public involvement in the feasibility stage when options are still being considered, so that the community can help the proponent devise a robust scheme.

It will take too long and it will cost too much.

Public involvement can be expensive and time consuming. If integrated into project planning, excessive timelines can be avoided. The costs of not involving the public are likely to be even greater in terms of costs arising from delays, and projects which do not achieve their aims.

It will stir up opposition, and the process will be taken over by activists.

Those who are likely to oppose a project will not be dissuaded by the lack of a public involvement program. Such a program can, however, ensure that all sides of the debate are heard. Importantly, the issues raised by opponents should be thoroughly examined, and treated on their merits. If the impacts cannot be avoided, and the project is considered necessary for other compelling reasons, the public involvement program should demonstrate to all concerned that the concerns of segments of the community have been fairly treated.

We will only hear from the articulate.

Those who are articulate, knowledgeable and powerful find it easier to use the opportunities provided through public involvement. Those preparing and managing such programs must be aware of this, and incorporate measures to ensure that the views of the 'silent majority' are expressed and understood.

We'll raise expectations that we can't satisfy.

Great care must be taken in the first phases of a public involvement program to ensure that unreasonable expectations are not raised. Decisions which have already been made, and which foreclose options, should be communicated at the earliest possible date. The purpose of the community involvement, the study process, and the decision making process, should all be clearly communicated.

The local community won't understand the issues involved.

Lack of technical education does not negate intelligence and the understanding people have of their own surroundings. Often people's knowledge of their environment and how it will react to change can be more accurate than that predicted by models.

4. Consensus building and dispute resolution

Conflict management and resolution approaches must be consistent with local practices:

“The objective is to define traditional mechanisms for making agreements, for negotiations, and for managing conflict in affected communities. Understanding and working within cultural expectations and practices may enhance consultation and participation processes, especially in projects where there are multiple and competing stakeholders or where disputes or conflict are evident.” (*The World Bank, 1995*)

When a range of stakeholders have an interest in the outcome of a development proposal, particularly one that affects community resources (such as the air we breathe, and the water we drink), it is inevitable that conflicts will arise. The response to that conflict, and how it is managed, can determine the success of the proposal. Where public involvement is only token, the conflicts which can arise are often ignored by proponents and decision makers. This can result in growing discontent, which can emerge as full scale opposition to a proposal, throughout its life cycle.

On the other hand conflict can be managed constructively to listen to the needs and concerns of all stakeholders, to examine the choices which are available, and to work together to create new options which are satisfactory to all. One way of building consensus is through environmental mediation. Mediation has been defined as the introduction into a dispute of an acceptable, neutral third party, who has no authoritative decision making power, but who helps the parties in dispute to find mutually acceptable solutions to their conflict. The parties enter into mediation voluntarily, and may leave at any time if they feel that there is an imbalance of power, or for any other reason. Any agreement that is reached is entirely voluntary, and it may lead to a binding legal agreement if that is the wish of the parties. Mediation has been found to be particularly useful in situation where the parties have different values, as it allows all sides to gain a better understanding of the needs of other parties.

Mediation finds many parallels in traditional methods of dispute resolution and problem solving, which focus on complete understanding of everyone's needs, and collaborative discussions to find acceptable solutions.

Mediation presents an example of full participation, where there is real power sharing. Yet it is done in a way that minimises the threat to individual autonomy, as no party must commit themselves to the outcome unless, at the end, they are satisfied with what has been agreed. And, as in full participation, the parties build trust in each other to the point where they can start to engage in constructive problem solving, which can produce outcomes which serve all the stakeholders better than any compromise achieved by negotiation.

More generally, there are some general principles which, if applied, can minimise the areas of dispute, and focus attention on those key issues that cannot be resolved. Resolution in these areas will then involve 'winners' and 'losers', through a decision-making process which may be political, or may involve arbitration. Principles which will minimise conflict, particularly if applied consistently from the earliest stages of the planning of the proposal, include:

- involving all those likely to be affected, or have a stake in the matter;
- communicating the objectives of the proposal, and how it is planned to achieve them;
- actively listening to the concerns of affected people, and the interests which lie behind those concerns;
- treating people honestly and fairly, establishing trust through a consistency of behaviour;

- being empathetic, seeing the situation through the eyes of the other party, and looking at the area of dispute from their perspective;
- being flexible in the way alternatives are considered, and amending the proposal wherever possible to better suit the interests of other parties;
- where other' interests cannot be accommodated, mitigating impacts to the greatest extent possible, and looking for ways to compensate for detriment;
- establishing and maintaining two-way channels of communication throughout the planning phase, and beyond into implementation; and
- acknowledging the concerns and suggestions of others, and providing feed-back on the way these matters have been followed up and evaluated.

5. Facilitating the involvement of stakeholders

5.1 Project types and issues triggering public participation

As discussed in Section 1.2 above, while consultation and participation are both levels in a continuum of public involvement, there is a significant difference between them. It is increasingly recognised that major decisions about resource allocation can affect the lives of local populations, and that too often in the past those who have been critically affected have had little say in the outcome. The focus of Section 5 is to examine some of the project types, and stakeholder groups, which need special consideration, and show how full participation is desirable when impacts have the ability to disrupt or destroy the lifestyles of local communities.

Participation requires all the information sharing that has been detailed elsewhere in this Guideline, but also has the dimension of stakeholders coming together to share, negotiate and control the decision making process on project design and management, forging creative solutions which will be sustainable, and to which all stakeholders are committed.

Some typical project types containing issues which trigger public participation processes are listed below. The reader should not infer that these are the only types of proposals where participation is desirable. In fact the trend is increasingly towards participation rather than just consultation, in order to achieve sustainable outcomes. Experience worldwide demonstrates the importance of participation in establishing local ownership and achieving positive developmental impact. Environmental assessments are therefore gradually moving toward increased involvement of local people, with some including representatives of affected people directly in the decision making processes.

Projects affecting indigenous peoples. Indigenous peoples are tribal groups that commonly subsist on hunting, gathering and primitive rotation agriculture. They may also reside in areas where sedentary agriculture is dominant, and be engaged in wage labour or small-scale market-oriented activities. Indigenous peoples live in diverse climates, such as in tropical and temperate forest, mountains, deserts, or savannahs. Projects affecting these groups can therefore be of multiple types and locations. When environmental assessment is needed, indigenous peoples should be consulted as part of the environmental assessment process, and special Indigenous Development Plans designed with their participation.

Projects requiring involuntary resettlement. Involuntary resettlement may be necessary in conjunction with virtually any type of major construction works or conversion of land, when people live on the sites to be converted under the project. Public participation in project preparation and resettlement planning is required in such cases. When environmental assessment is required, participation by those to be resettled is needed in the environmental

assessment process (e.g., in planning and implementation of mitigation, management and monitoring).

Projects for specific beneficiary groups. Such targeted groups may be the poor, indigenous people, women's associations, user's associations or cooperatives. Under these circumstances, and when environmental assessment is required, participation by the beneficiary group concerned is essential in project design and implementation.

Projects with community-based development. When projects depend on local responsibility to be successful, participation in decision-making is important. Examples of such projects include rural infrastructure, urban low-income housing and infrastructure, community-oriented natural resource management, biodiversity conservation projects with buffer zone development, community-based forestry, and certain types of small-scale credit operations.

5.2 Participatory development

The normal manner of project development, where proponents, governments or experts diagnose needs, set objectives and develop solutions, is sometimes referred to as "the external expert stance". A different style of project development is associated with true participation, which might be called "the collaborative stance". This places sponsors and designers inside the local social system being addressed. They work collaboratively with the other key stakeholders to diagnose needs, set objectives and develop solutions.

Collaborative processes allow stakeholders themselves to generate, share and analyse information, establish priorities, specify objectives, and develop tactics. The stakeholders contribute their experience and expertise, for instance, the experience of what it is to be poor or female, or the expertise to develop specifications for a new road or educational program. The stakeholders learn and develop purpose together.

This joint learning is followed by joint efforts to create new solutions. The stakeholders invent the new practices and institutional arrangements they are willing to adopt. Examples of participatory practices in are provided in the boxes below.

Does participatory community based development cost more?

The Orangi Pilot Project (OPP) has become one of the best known NGO projects in the provision of sanitation. It is a low cost sanitation program which enables low income families to construct and maintain modern sanitation—pour flush latrines in their homes and underground sewerage pipelines in the lanes—with their own funds and under their own management. In the 16 years since its inception, the Project has directly and indirectly assisted about one million people in Orangi (Karachi) to improved sanitation.

Their intervention has been developed through research into household resources and aspirations in Orangi.

From the beginning, OPP staff have sought to minimise external support in order to assist households to achieve their objectives for local development. Costs were one-eighth of conventional sewerage provide by city authorities. This was due to changes in technical design and the elimination of pay-offs to intermediaries (Khan, 1992).

Working with communities: OPP principles and methods

1. The community has the resources it needs for development: skills, finance and managerial capacity. But it needs support to fully use these resources, to identify further skills that are required and to receive training.
 2. A study is not needed to identify the projects in *katchi abadis*. But a study is required to understand the people, their process and relationships, and to identify the solutions and methods that are appropriate.
 3. The role of the NGO is to be a support organisation and the technicians develop the advice. The social organisers who “extend” the advice into the settlement need to be drawn from the local community.
 4. The package of useful advice is developed through interaction with all levels and groups within the community. There is a need for an attitude of mutual respect and learning.
 5. The role of the activist is critical. Activists are community members who are already aware of the problems, think about them and try to resolve them. The programme needs to identify these activists.
 6. The smaller the level of organisation, the better it will function. In Orangi, a lane of 20 to 40 people is the level of organisation.
 7. The initial process is slow but, after success has been demonstrated, progress rapidly accelerates. The concept and process should not be modified to obtain quick results.
 8. The people and government are partners in development. Neither can solve all the problems of development alone.
- Source: Rahman, Perween and Anwar Rashid (1992), “Working with communities: some principles and methods”, OPP-RTI, Karachi**

5.3 Enabling the poor to participate

The poor face many barriers on a number of different levels that prevent them from having a real stake in development activities. Reaching and engaging the poor requires special arrangements and efforts by proponents and study team members, which go beyond those used to involve government officials and other relatively powerful stakeholders.

The poor include people located in remote and impoverished areas. Women and children make up a large proportion of the very poor, and this group also includes people marginalised by virtue of their race and ethnicity, as well as those disadvantaged by circumstances beyond their control such as disabilities and natural or man-made disasters.

Because the poor are generally less educated and less organised than other more powerful stakeholders, because they are more difficult to reach, and because the institutions which serve them are often weak, interventions targeting the poor must often be small-scale, context-specific, and resource-intensive.

The methods and approaches for engaging and enabling the poor are very different from most of the techniques described in Section 2, which are generally useful for more sophisticated and powerful stakeholders. Forming an understanding about appropriate methods calls for, in part, bottom-up approaches that begin by involving the poor, and learning from them about their needs and priorities. These methods should engage poor people and build their confidence, knowledge base, and capacity for action. Visual methods which are carried out in the local setting, using local materials, and calling upon local knowledge and expertise as inputs into project design, are often used to good effect.

Providing incentives for the poor to participate

The idea of using what are now called Forest Protection Committees (FPC) began in 1972 in West Bengal. At that time the role of the state Forest Department (FD) was mainly to protect the forests from illegal use by unauthorised persons. Foresters spent most of their time on armed patrol, hunting forest product poachers and evicting people encroaching on forest lands. And Foresters behaving like the police were losing the battle to conserve the forests. While the forests continued to degrade rapidly, local people became increasingly aggressive towards the Foresters, whom they generally considered corrupt. In the Arabi Range of West Bengal, the local people had literally thrown the Department out of its territory, threatening any Forester who entered with bodily harm.

One forester had a different idea of how to save the forests. He felt that people living in the forests were not thieves. If they could supplement their incomes through legal forest work and organised extraction of forest products, he believed they would not haphazardly destroy the forests. At some personal risk, he went to the Arabi to talk about a new way of managing the forests—largely by and for the people, and assisted them to come up with a quite new approach.

In a participatory manner, they crafted a new way to halt forest degradation, begin reforestation, and enable the poor people to earn a legitimate living while conserving the forest.

Developing the new forest management approach jointly with local people did not happen overnight. It took about nine months of dialogue and negotiation. The dialogue started with the Foresters being frank about the mistakes they had made in forest management and dealing with their conflicts with people. It was not long before local people reciprocated. They admitted breaking the rules and explained why they felt they had to do so. This led to joint explorations of future arrangements that would take care of the needs of the people while they, in turn, took care of the forests.

An agreement was reached where the members of the FPC took on the duty of keeping the forest free of poachers, and protected shoots thrown up by Sal stumps so that they could become saleable poles. When the poles were harvested, FPC members got the culls, plus 25% of the revenues from the sale of the good poles.

This served as their incentive to cooperate with the government in protecting and regenerating the forests. The cost of regenerating the forests in this manner proved to be remarkably low, about Rs.250 per hectare, or 5% of the cost of creating a hectare of plantation trees.

There are now some 2,350 FPC's covering over 65% of the degraded forest in the State, including the entire Southwest (about 335,000 hectares). From the air you can really notice it as you fly over flourishing green areas that were largely barren just a few years ago.

Participatory poverty assessment in Zambia

The Zambia PPA used wealth ranking techniques to learn how local people characterise poverty. Villagers were asked to sort a stack of cards, each labelled with the name of a head of household, into piles according to the relative wealth of the households, using any criteria of wealth they wished. Wealthy households were identified as those, for example, with the biggest

fields, or enough money to dress well and give to the poor. Those identified as poorest were commonly female-headed households or people living by themselves, dependent on relatives or neighbours for their daily needs. Ranking exercises such as these can lead to frank group discussions on poverty—often a sensitive and difficult topic.

5.4 Facilitating women's involvement

Mobilising community support to primary schools in Baluchistan

The community support program in primary education in Baluchistan provides a remarkable example of what can be achieved in adverse conditions through participatory methods.

Beginning with a pilot project in 1992, the community support program has already succeeded in establishing 198 new community girls schools in remote rural villages which had no government school and no tradition in parental involvement in schools. Enrollment of girls is 100 percent in many of these villages, with very high attendance rates.

To begin the participation process, community workers went from door to door, urging parents to form an association. In each of the villages, education committees have been created, responsible for selecting a site for the school, identifying potential teachers, and monitoring teacher attendance and student enrollment.

A local girl, educated to at least eighth grade, has been identified and trained as teacher for each school. After she demonstrates her commitment by teaching for three months on a voluntary basis, mobile teacher training teams are sent to her home village to provide

intensive three-month teacher training. This home training is needed because of cultural barriers that prevent girls from travelling far. Following the training, the teacher becomes a government employee: government rules, which normally require teachers to have matriculated, have been stretched to accommodate the program.

The pilot project resulted from the initiative of a Pakistani consultant. The Bank task manager, with whom she discussed her plans, recognised the potential of this approach and was able to organise USAID funding for the pilot. The consultant subsequently formed a small NGO in order to be able to qualify for funding from other sources, which now include local and international NGO's, USAID, UNICEF and the government of Baluchistan, through a World Bank loan.

At the project preparation stage, when the pilot was tried, there was no way of knowing whether the approach would work or not. The success of the pilot led to full scale acceptance and ownership of the program by government, and the government itself is now funding the program on a province-wide basis using USAID credit.

Systematic gender biases may exist in a number of forms, which present barriers to women's participation:

- customs, beliefs and attitudes which confine women mostly to the domestic sphere;
- women's economic and domestic workloads which impose severe time burdens on them;
- laws and customs which impede women's access to credit, productive inputs, employment, education, information, or medical care.

These differences affect men's and women's capacity and incentives to participate in economic and social development activities. Additionally, among the poor, women are over-represented. And unless specific steps are taken to ensure that women participate and benefit from development projects, they usually do not. An evaluation of 121 rural water supply projects found that even in a sector where women carried the greater share of responsibility, it was primarily only in the 17% of projects which had been specifically designed to involve them that they benefitted.

In seeking the participation of women in development activities, sensitivity is needed to the social and cultural barriers which may inhibit women's participation. In the Baluchistan education example cited in Section 5.2 above, the acute shortage of female teachers has been due in part, to cultural constraints against girls going away to attend residential teacher training colleges. The lack of female teachers was, in turn, an important factor in the very low enrollments (15%) of girls in primary schools. Most parents find it culturally unacceptable to send their daughters to boys' schools or to have them taught by male teachers brought in from the city and unknown to the community. By adapting to these constraints, the new Baluchistan Primary Education Program has succeeded both in increasing the supply of female teachers and in raising girls' enrollment rates to 80%–100% in villages with new schools.

In addition to cultural constraints, women's work often denies them the time to participate in meetings. As women's domestic responsibilities often require them to stay close to the home, lack of mobility may also be a constraint. Various practical measures, from providing childcare facilities to installing standpipes which reduce the time spent in fetching water, can make it easier for women to attend meetings or training sessions. In particular, the choice of time and place for meetings must take account of women's schedules and the availability of safe transport.

Often the first step towards determining appropriate measures for supporting women's participation is to obtain good information—about gender roles, needs, activities, access to and control over resources, existing institutions, and the constraints operating against women's participation. This can be done through gender analysis, which, if effective, elicits the views of women, and often involves gender awareness training for facilitators or interviewers.

The Cameroon Participatory Poverty Assessment

Some recent poverty assessments have been designed explicitly to solicit women's views on a wide range of questions. In the Cameroon PPA, fifty percent of the interviewers and fifty percent of those interviewed were women. The resulting information on gender issues was fully integrated in the subsequent analysis and recommendations, with strong policy implications. For example, women in

Cameroon were found to be shouldering most of the burden of producing and marketing food. Their average labour hours per week were estimated to be more than double those of men. As a result, urgent action was recommended to give women access to time and labour saving transport and technology, to allow them the opportunity to develop their own skills and participate in community projects.

6 References

This, and other guidelines in the package, rely heavily on existing sources, which include:

- The UNEP *Environmental Impact Assessment Training Resource Manual* June 1996
- *Environmental Assessment Requirements and Environmental Review Procedures* of the Asian Development Bank March 1993
- The World Bank *Environmental Assessment Sourcebook* 1994
- The World Bank *Participation Sourcebook* June 1995
- The NSW Department of Urban Affairs and Planning *EIS Guidelines* October 1996
- Bisset, R (1996) *EIA: Issues, Trends and Practice*. UNEP Environment and Economic Unit, Nairobi