



Mongolia:  
Enhancing Resource  
Management through  
Institutional Transformation

STEPS FOR PUBLIC CONSULTATION  
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# STEPS FOR PUBLIC CONSULTATION

- ❖ Planning is the most important element in the consultation process.
- ❖ The best results come when you pay attention and design a comprehensive plan that will meet your needs and the needs of others.
- ❖ Planning is important but pre-determining or thinking you know the outcome is NOT part of a good process

# Step 1

## Problem identification and Desired Outcome

It is important to understand the problem and proposed solution at the beginning BUT the end result may be different than anticipated.

Consultation objectives need to be set:

- ✓ What is the goal ?
- ✓ What aspects of the proposal are to be consulted on?
- ✓ What change is to be achieved as a result ?

# Step 1 continued

Consultation and stakeholder engagement is not “one size fits all” and you must analyze the context and consider:

- ✓ Identify the context, scope and expected impacts
- ✓ Know what the initiative/project entails
- ✓ Identify the scope of the consultation – how can it influence the decision?
- ✓ Differentiate between subjective views and objective facts

# Type of Consultation: Public Meeting

There are many ways to hold a consultation event but to simplify today, the focus will be the public meeting.

- ✓ A planned event that allows stakeholders and the public to meet with staff/organizers to review, discuss and debate the issues of concern or interest.
- ✓ Provide a good opportunity to consult large numbers of people.
- ✓ Meetings can also be organized to allow for small group discussions and feedback.

# Step 2

## Identification of Stakeholders/Target Audience and Analysis

It is important to get the “full picture” and consult a variety of key stakeholders/target audiences (people affected by the decision being made).

Consider gender and diversity to get multiple perspectives and different views on the issues.

Key elements include:

- ✓ Identifying the stakeholders who are directly or indirectly affected
- ✓ Understand the different stakeholders’ level of interest and influence

## Step 2 continued

### Stakeholder Identification:

- ✓ Who are the key stakeholders ? Who has a vested interest in the process or project you are undertaking?
- ✓ To identify stakeholders look to previous actions involving similar interests or locations.
- ✓ Brainstorm ideas with colleagues and local people with knowledge of key players.

## Step 2 continued

### Stakeholder Analysis:

You need to understand the nature of stakeholders' interests.

- ✓ What are their goals and motivation?
- ✓ What are their concerns?
- ✓ What is their level of influence?
- ✓ By understanding better who the stakeholders are you can help resolve issues and work towards consensus and gain support.



# Step 3

## Timeline Setting

Consultation timeline and duration depends on the reason and the type of consultation. It is important to allow sufficient time to reach out to stakeholders, consult and analyze findings and provide feedback.

Key elements include:

- ✓ Informing stakeholders about expected achievements and timing to get things done
- ✓ Planning before and after consultation periods

## Step 3 continued

Considerations for setting timeline:

- ✓ Deadlines for decisions
- ✓ Development of background materials
- ✓ Coordination with other institutions and agencies (\*development of communications strategy if necessary)
- ✓ Sharing of information with stakeholders to ensure understanding
- ✓ Timing (holidays? harvest season?)
- ✓ Local and logistics (travel time, set-up etc)
- ✓ Time needed for analysis and reporting back

# Step 4

## Message Development

- ✓ An effective message needs to be concise, clear and relevant
- ✓ You must address both the audience and your consultation objectives
- ✓ You might develop one general message and then more detailed specific messages that address key issues relevant to consultative process
- ✓ You must ensure you are clear and that you simplify (if necessary) complex technical information for the general public

## Step 4 continued

### Key Elements:

- ✓ Brainstorm key messages to ensure accuracy
- ✓ Refine key messages to ensure clarity, understandability, conciseness and relevance
- ✓ Routinely update key messages to ensure they address current situation and consultation needs

### Consider:

- ✓ Ensure communication tools (news releases, fact sheets and other documents) provide accurate information and are timely

# Step 5

## Delivering Information and Receiving Comments

Think about the audience, what is the anticipated impact and what is the degree of input you want.

Key elements:

- ✓ Determine the objectives of the consultation – this will influence your approach and methods of engagement
- ✓ Publish/broadcast the planned dates and activities well in advance of the events/meetings and provide timely updates

# Step 5 continued

Considerations:

- ✓ Approach – wide public audience or specific targeted group?
- ✓ Methods – how will you engage?
- ✓ What type of interaction – what is the level of engagement?
- ✓ Language – scientific? technical? user-friendly?
- ✓ Accessibility to events – can everyone who needs/wants to participate?
- ✓ Time Sensitivity – what is the timeframe for input and feedback?
- ✓ Tracking – comments must be noted. People need to know they were heard!

# Step 6

## When further Consultation is needed

For more complex proposals many comments and input will be received. It is important to know if input changes a proposal that more consultation may be required.

Key elements:

- ✓ Identify what constitutes a major change

Consider:

- ✓ The stakeholder's role in process (major or minor)
- ✓ Any missing input or information or changes made
- ✓ Other external factors that may impact the initial proposal or project

# Step 7

## Including Comments in the Final Decision

It is important to understand the input from stakeholders and to provide feedback.

Key Elements:

- ✓ Acknowledge receipt of input (even if not being used)
- ✓ Respond to all comments
- ✓ Publication of responses or summary of comments received



## Step 8

### Communication of Final Decision and Implementation of Schedule/Effective Date

When the final decision has been made it needs to be communicated to all stakeholders.

If the decision is an issuance of a license or local agreement – communication of the decision usually means the completion of the consultation process.

If the consultation process resulted in changes to policy or government approach this may mean the beginning of a new consultative process.

## Step 8 continued

### Key Elements:

- ✓ Develop communications products and tools (news releases, fact sheets etc)
- ✓ Communicate final decision to all stakeholders
- ✓ Consider how information will be distributed (on-line, media, paper)
- ✓ Develop any required training materials to assist those affected by the decision or action

# Post-consultation -- Review

Once you have completed your consultation activities and the decision on the action (project, new regulation, etc) has been made .....you are not finished.

You should review the process and look at the strengths and the weaknesses.....what went well ? What did not go well?

Did the outcome of the consultation meet the needs of the community ?

Looking back will help you establish a “best practice” approach to consultation and stakeholder engagement.

# Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E)

Critical to any consultation process is ongoing monitoring and evaluating during the process and once it has been completed.

\*There are usually M&E specialists who do the evaluation.

M&E provides feedback on achievements, unintended outcomes and consequences.

By exploring the results (positive and negative) of the consultation process you can identify what happened and what is further needed to meet the desired goal.

M&E asks – did the action (in this case public consultation) do what it set out to do? If so, how? If not, why not?

# M&E Questions to ask

What is the purpose of the project/action?

Who wants to know what?

Will different individuals and organizations be interested in different parts of the process?

What information was collected and what methods were used to gather information?

What resources (time, money, expertise) are needed to conduct the evaluation?



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# QUESTIONS?

Consultation Checklist handout.