

# Definitions and Descriptions

## Types of contact

Possible approaches to be used to involve the public can be broken down into increasing levels of action:

- **Information disclosure:** Very early in the process, it is recommended to disclose information, in summary form, to stimulate public interest.
- **Consultation:** Prior to every major decision, the public, NGOs and other interested parties should be able to ask questions of those in charge of the project and give their opinion on the different possible orientations.
- **Participation:** In participation, the public is invited to give its opinion before a design decision. This includes considering alternative alignments and determining solutions aimed at limiting or compensating negative impacts.
- **Negotiation:** Negotiation is a form of participation that enables the proponent and the public to arrive, jointly, if possible, at a solution. It is often used to define compensation measures or for land acquisition purposes.

## Techniques

Basic communication techniques that can be used are numerous:

- **Oral communication:** the oldest and most widely-used form of expression.
- **Written communication:** characterized by documents that can be distributed in large quantities.
- **Graphic expression:** cartography and models are indeed widely used to illustrate road alignments, but also changes in the environmental factor.
- **Exhibitions:** these have advantage of being presented to the largest number of persons and allow for concerns and opinions to be recorded.
- **Surveys, polls:** these are particularly useful for sociological and social-economic studies.
- **Meetings:** the characteristic of a meeting is to test ideas, compare viewpoints and provide additional information in a well-defined lapse of time. They are widely used in the various participation phases.
- **On-site tours:** these provide a concrete understanding of the physical realities and the possible impacts of the project, but can only be done for small groups.
- **Internet:** Internet is a new and powerful method of providing information to a wide audience and, through discussion forums, obtaining the opinions of a large amount of people in a very simple way.

The guidance provided by the US FHWA is a good example of what could be done in this matter, observing that in a PPP, it is the operator who is in charge of implementing some of these recommendations.



Roads and the Environment: A Handbook, World Bank, Technical Paper 376 1997, pages 25-33.



US experience of planning public involvement in road projects, Environmental Impact Assessment of Roads, Report prepared by an OCDE group of scientific experts, pages 147-173.

Important aspects within the Consultation process;

- Ensure inclusive participation by all concerned stakeholders, especially traditionally excluded groups;
- Prepare a comprehensive scope of participation in all types of initiatives and from identification and design to monitoring and evaluation; early timing to allow for decisions that are responsive to the views of stakeholders;
- Ensure quality provision of information designed and disseminated in ways that are socio-culturally appropriate to effectively reach stakeholders;
- Ensure appropriate participation strategies that elicit the interest and active participation of stakeholders, and promote equitable access and legitimate outcomes;
- Prepare accountability mechanisms that assure the quality, transparency and legitimacy of the participation process;
- Provide good coordination to optimize costs and benefits to all actors involved.



Building a Framework for Consultation and Public Participation. WB-Sustainable Development Department Washington, D.C., March 7, 2000