



# Involvement in the decision-making process

Local actors want to take part in the decision-making for projects that may affect their quality of life or living environment; public participation is an effective way to achieve this.

## LEVELS OF CITIZEN PARTICIPATION AND SUCCESS FACTORS

### Information

Provides citizens with the input they need to take part in the decision-making process. Information is a prerequisite for enlightened public participation.

### Consultation

Allows interested parties to express their ideas, expectations and concerns about the project, and allows the promoter to better understand the issues raised by the project.

### Active participation

Promotes discussions between key players (local actors and the promoter) in a process of joint project construction and problem-solving.

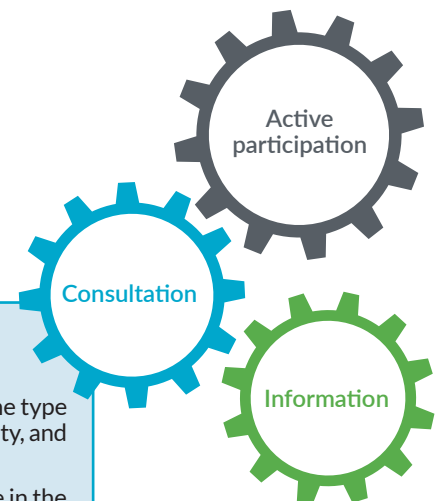
## SUCCESS FACTORS



A public participation process, designed with the community and defined in a plan, constitutes an asset.

- » Be as transparent as possible concerning the availability and sharing of information on the project (for example, planned project phases, potential project impacts in social, economic and environmental terms, studies and analysis connected with the project)
- » Inform participants about the planned public participation process and the role they will be asked to play in it.
- » Ensure that the information is provided in clear, plain language, whatever the level of knowledge of the target public
- » Remain attentive to the concerns and expectations expressed by local actors
- » Use consultation methods that are appropriate for the consultation objectives
- » Combine different consultation methods
- » Identify obstacles to participation and adapt the methods accordingly
- » Design the public participation process with key players from the community, taking advice where possible from people who have experience or are experts in public participation
- » Use a method that promotes interaction and collaboration within the working group
- » Determine the contribution expected from the participants
- » Allow interactions with interested parties at an early point in the decision-making process

- » All levels of participation are important.
- » The choice of public participation methods must match the type of project, the issues raised by the project for the community, and the expectations of the community.
- » A public participation process that begins at an early stage in the project design period can help improve its social acceptability.



## Information

Method	Outline description
Information session	A meeting, moderated by a consultant or by the promoter, to explain the project and its components. All parties interested in or concerned by the project are invited to attend
Local information office	Permanently-staffed office to provide members of the public with information on the project and answer their questions; it is also a place where citizens can submit comments on the project
Press release	Short document forwarded to journalists to provide information on a project, event or news item
Brochure	Information document containing one or two page on information on the project
Website	Website containing information about the project; it may be a corporate website or a website dedicated to the project
Newsletter	Information document containing news about the project, mailed or forwarded electronically to interested parties on a regular basis

## Consultation

Method	Outline description
Discussion group	Small group, generally with 5 to 10 participants, led by a moderator with the task of answering pre-determined questions about the project
Online discussion forum	Website where various parties can discuss the project. A discussion forum may contain several threads on specific topics
Targeted consultation	Consultation of individuals, groups, enterprises or organizations, selected on the basis of their interest, experience, involvement or role in the community
Public consultation	Consultation open to all, to gauge their opinion on a specific topic
Expert committee	Group of experts from various fields, brought together to draft an opinion on a specific aspect of the project
Thematic workshop	Workshop to study or explore a theme or new problem in depth, or to gather and pool specific skills in order to issue an opinion or recommendation
Kitchen meeting	Discussion by a small group of a topic connected with the project, in an informal environment such as a participant's kitchen or a community hall

## Active participation

Method	Outline description
Participatory workshop	Informal workshop for a small number of participants (around fifteen), who take part in a structured discussion led by a moderator. The workshop may also take the form of a forum in which a series of presentations about the project, or issue, is followed by discussions in small groups
Monitoring committee	A concertation body bringing together the promoter and local actors concerned or interested in a project in order to reach consensus solutions on issues defined by the community
World café	Simultaneous discussions in small groups about topics connected with the project; each group moves on to a new topic after a fixed period of time (for example, 20 minutes); at the end of the meeting the proposals made are presented and discussed at a plenary session
Integrated resource management panel	Panel set up when the project planning phase begins to ensure that all the interests and concerns of the individuals and organizations affected by the project are taken into account, in order to harmonize land uses on a joint basis. The panel includes the promoter and all actors in the host community, whether representing a public or private interest. Example: Local Integrated Land and Resource Management Panels set up by the Ministère des Forêts, de la Faune et des Parcs
Charrette	Single, intensive session for professionals, representatives of various interests and citizens, to define a vision or settle a specific project issue