



# UN ESCAP Embassy of Sweden

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Participation for Sustainable Development

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#ActionForTheGoals





Strategies and dimensions of participation

# Operationalizing quality stakeholder engagement

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# In the context of 2030 Agenda implementation we observe . . .

## *Strong points . . .*

- Recognition of the need to engage more meaningfully and live up to the commitments laid out in the 2030 Agenda.
- VNR processes galvanize action and engagement and lay foundation for meaningful engagement at least in follow-up and review of agenda.
- Multi-stakeholder bodies for coordination and technical support.

## *Room for improvement . . .*

- Definition of purpose for engagement.
- Better understanding of resources required.
- ***Institutionalization is extremely critical, but often forgotten.***
- Meaningful partnership and engagement.
- Action stops at the VNR – but should move beyond.



# *Institutionalization of engagement*

1. Organizational level
2. Whole of government and societal level





### *Institutionalized participation requires:*

- Organizational and political leadership, support, and commitment to meaningfully engage;
- Specific mechanisms and channels for communication with stakeholders, as well as a renewal in outreach and understanding of stakeholders through mapping;
- Institutional responsibility and resources to be allocated;
- A common understanding of the purpose for engaging stakeholders and how it links with the institution's or wider government's mandate;
- A common expectation of the standards or quality of engagement;
- A common understanding of what kinds of decisions require stakeholder input, and who are the relevant stakeholders.





# Some tools to help with institutionalization

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- 1) Overall commitment to stakeholder participation and access to information
- 2) Stakeholder engagement policy and guidelines
- 3) IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation
- 4) ESCAP Engagement Planning and Assessment Tool



# Overall commitments : Examples




The Escazú Agreement in Latin America and the Caribbean (UN ECLAC)

The Aarhus Convention, Europe (UN ECE)



Seeks to ensure that all persons have access to timely and **reliable information**, can participate **in an effective way in the decisions** that affect their lives and their environment, and can **access justice** in environmental matters





# Stakeholder Engagement Policy and guidelines

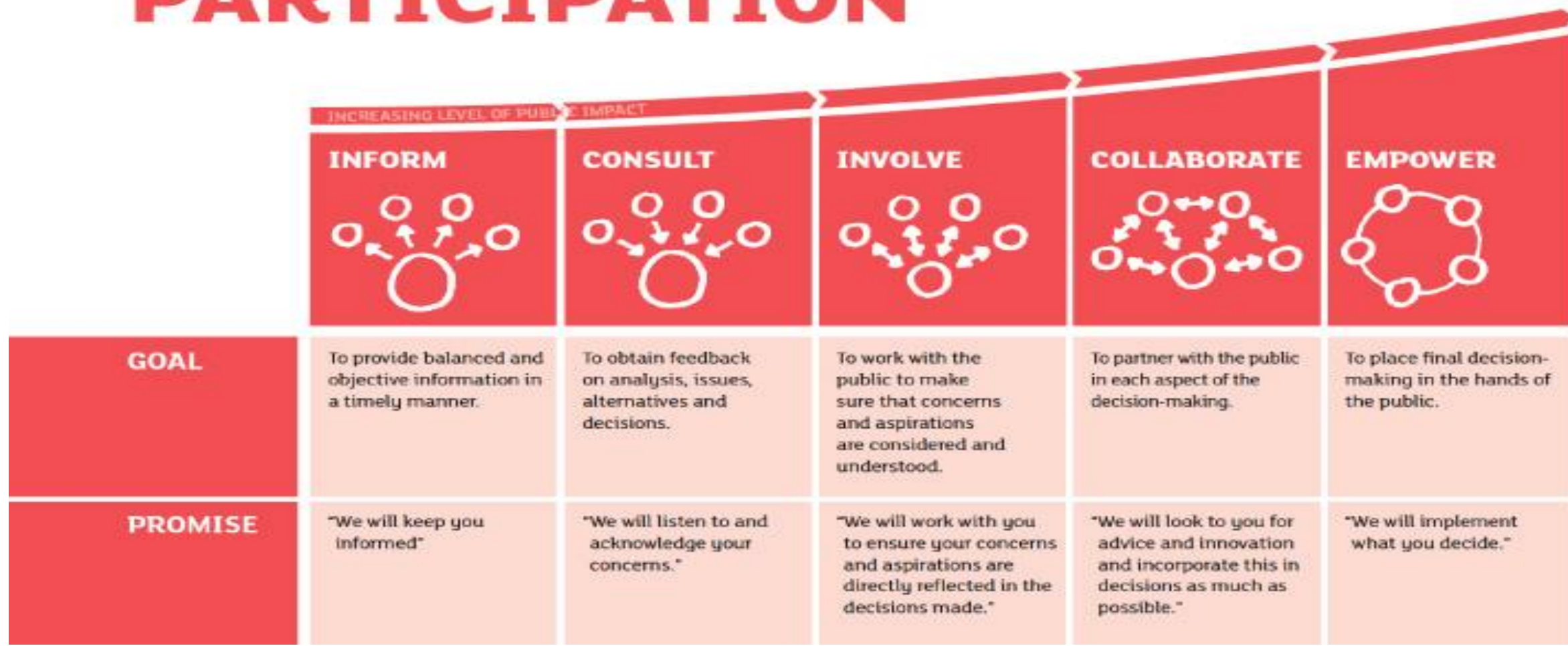
- A good first step towards institutionalized engagement is to develop appropriate policy and guidelines to inform practice and capacity building.
- The policy should set out a vision for engagement, with a description of how it aligns with decision making, and explains the role of the stakeholders.
- It should establish the standards of engagement that institutions are expected to meet, and the issues and decisions on which engagement is needed.
- Policies for engagement can exist at the national or sub-national levels.
- Example : The Aarhus Convention, Implementation Guidelines







# IAP2 SPECTRUM OF PUBLIC PARTICIPATION





# ESCAP Planning and Assessment Tool – Four Dimensions of Quality Engagement



## PURPOSEFUL ENGAGEMENT

- Clear objective, a plan, resources, responsibility & follow up



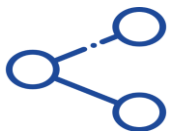
## INCLUSIVE ENGAGEMENT

- Barriers to participation (cultural, ability, geographic, other) removed/recognized, stakeholders mapped and analyzed, ensuring “no one left behind”



## TRANSFORMATIVE ENGAGEMENT

- Facilitates collaboration, empowerment, partnership, cross-sectoral, multi-perspective dialogue to develop shared understanding and build trust



## PROACTIVE ENGAGEMENT

- Outreach, involve stakeholders in designing participation, provide information and feedback needed & institutionalize



# Purposeful Engagement

## PURPOSEFUL ENGAGEMENT



**1.1 Statement of engagement objectives** [Engagement objectives are widely understood and linked to objectives of interventions]

**1.2 Engagement planning** [The detail of engagement planning is consistent with the level of the intervention/risks and recognizes participation as a right]

**1.3 Commitment to improvement** [Previous lessons learnt and history of intervention are considered during engagement planning, evaluation process is defined]

**1.4 The time and budget allocation** [Adequate/appropriate to the objectives of interventions and secured for the duration of the intervention]

**1.5 Coordination, with clear roles and responsibilities** [Well-defined roles are agreed to early in the engagement, both within and outside the organization and coordination between engagement efforts]

**1.6 Engagement & follow-through** [Consultation outputs, recommendations or decisions are given the promised level of consideration]

# Inclusive Engagement

## INCLUSIVE ENGAGEMENT



**3.1 Stakeholder Analysis** [Stakeholder analysis ensures representativeness and understanding of the UN major groups, other stakeholders and respects participation as a right]

**3.2 Diversity of perspectives shared** [The engagement process provides equitable opportunities for a diverse range of perspectives to be shared, including assenting and dissenting views, scientific perspectives, human rights perspectives and others, as appropriate]

**3.3 Dealing with barriers to participation** [Barriers to participation for specific groups are clearly identified and active steps have been taken to reduce them (eg: Accessibility, Technology, Social prejudice, Cultural, "safe space", Language, etc)]

**3.4 Inclusion of disadvantaged groups** ["Leave no one behind" – Disadvantaged groups are clearly identified and specific measures are put in place for engaging them]

**3.5 Appropriateness from cultural and other perspectives** [Engagement method and process demonstrates cultural sensitivity and awareness, seeking to balance power relationships within society]

**3.6 Provision of safe spaces** [Methods, institution, facilitation and physical spaces encourage open participation and provide adequate protection for people from reprisals]





# Transformative Engagement

## TRANSFORMATIVE ENGAGEMENT



**4.1 Building understanding between stakeholders** [Chosen methods foster constructive interactions and dialogue to build understanding and strengthen shared action]

**4.2 Highly Collaborative** [Levels of engagement and influence are clearly defined and seek to move beyond information and consultation, as appropriate and in line with the 2030 Agenda intentions]

**4.3 Integrate economic, social and environmental perspectives** [The methods and process give balanced attention to and integrates the economic, social and environmental perspectives]

**4.4 Stakeholder acceptance, support and involvement** [The engagement process and methods are considered appropriate by participants]

**4.5 Synergize actions across SDGs** [The methods and process bring stakeholders together across SDGs where there are interactions between them (for example between food security and poverty)]

**4.6 Participation used to make meaningful change** [Sustained engagement enables the delivery of substantive changes to complex issues (eg: systems, beliefs, behaviours etc)]



## PROACTIVE ENGAGEMENT



# Proactive Engagement

**2.1 Communicating process and scope of influence** [Scope and process are clearly explained in accessible formats, providing enough time for mutual understanding to develop, including educating stakeholder where appropriate]

**2.2 Communicating engagement content** [Sufficient, accessible information is provided with enough time for people to engage in a meaningful way]

**2.3 Outreach to right people** [The process and methods explicitly raise awareness, encourage and invite participation and actions by relevant stakeholders and the public]

**2.4 Documenting and responding to stakeholder contributions** [Questions, commitments and outcomes are recorded and followed through in a timely way]

**2.5 Openness and adaptable to feedback** [Mechanisms to receive and respond to complaints and feedback with the positive attitude]

**2.6 Ongoing Follow Through** [Attention is paid to ensuring there is consistent follow through and monitoring of the outcomes/output of the consultation process]





# ESCAP support on stakeholder participation to date

- Developing planning and assessment tool
- Technical assistance to VNR countries
- Intensive professional development workshop on stakeholder engagement, tailored to the 2030 Agenda
- Training material, facilitators oriented to the 2030 Agenda
- Orientation/planning workshop for the VNR including stakeholder engagement & integration (for policy coherence)

> Again partnership is critical – ESCAP partners with the International Association for Public Participation



# Takeaways

- Institutionalization of engagement is critical to facilitate effective engagement
- Requires specific mechanisms, resources and tools
- Institutionalizing engagement and participation requires leadership commitment and is supported by agreement on standards re: quality engagement



# Questions for discussion

- What are the common challenges in institutionalizing stakeholder engagement ?
- Any examples of institutionalization of stakeholder engagement ?  
What worked and what didn't work ?
- Do your organization have a common understanding/expectation of the standards or quality of engagement ?