Public Participation in EIA

Introduction

- Public involvement is a fundamental principle of the EIA process.
- Timely, well planned and appropriately implemented public involvement programs will contribute to EIA studies and to the successful design, implementation, operation and management of proposals.
- Specifically public involvement is a valuable source of information on key impacts, potential mitigation measures and the identification and selection of alternatives.
- Nearly all EIA systems make provision for some type of public involvement.
- At a minimum, public involvement must provide an opportunity for those directly affected by a proposal to express their views regarding the proposal and its environmental and social impacts.

Key Objectives

- obtain local and traditional knowledge that may be useful for decision-making;
- facilitate consideration of alternatives, mitigation measures and tradeoffs;
- ensure that important impacts are not overlooked and benefits are maximized;
- reduce conflict through the early identification of contentious issues;
- provide an opportunity for the public to influence project design in a positive manner (thereby creating a sense of ownership of the proposal);
- improve transparency and accountability of decision-making;

Definition of public participation.

Public participation can be defined as a continuous, two way communication process which involves promoting full public understanding of the processes and mechanisms through which environmental problems and needs are investigated and solved by responsible agencies; keeping the public fully informed about the progress of studies or implications of the project

How to Identify Publics?

A "public" is any person, or group of people, that has a distinctive interest or stake in an issue.

One approach is to target those persons who believe themselves to be affected by the study outcome on the following bases:

- Proximity
- Economic
- Use
- Social
- Values

Role and benefits of public participating

Benefits of PP:

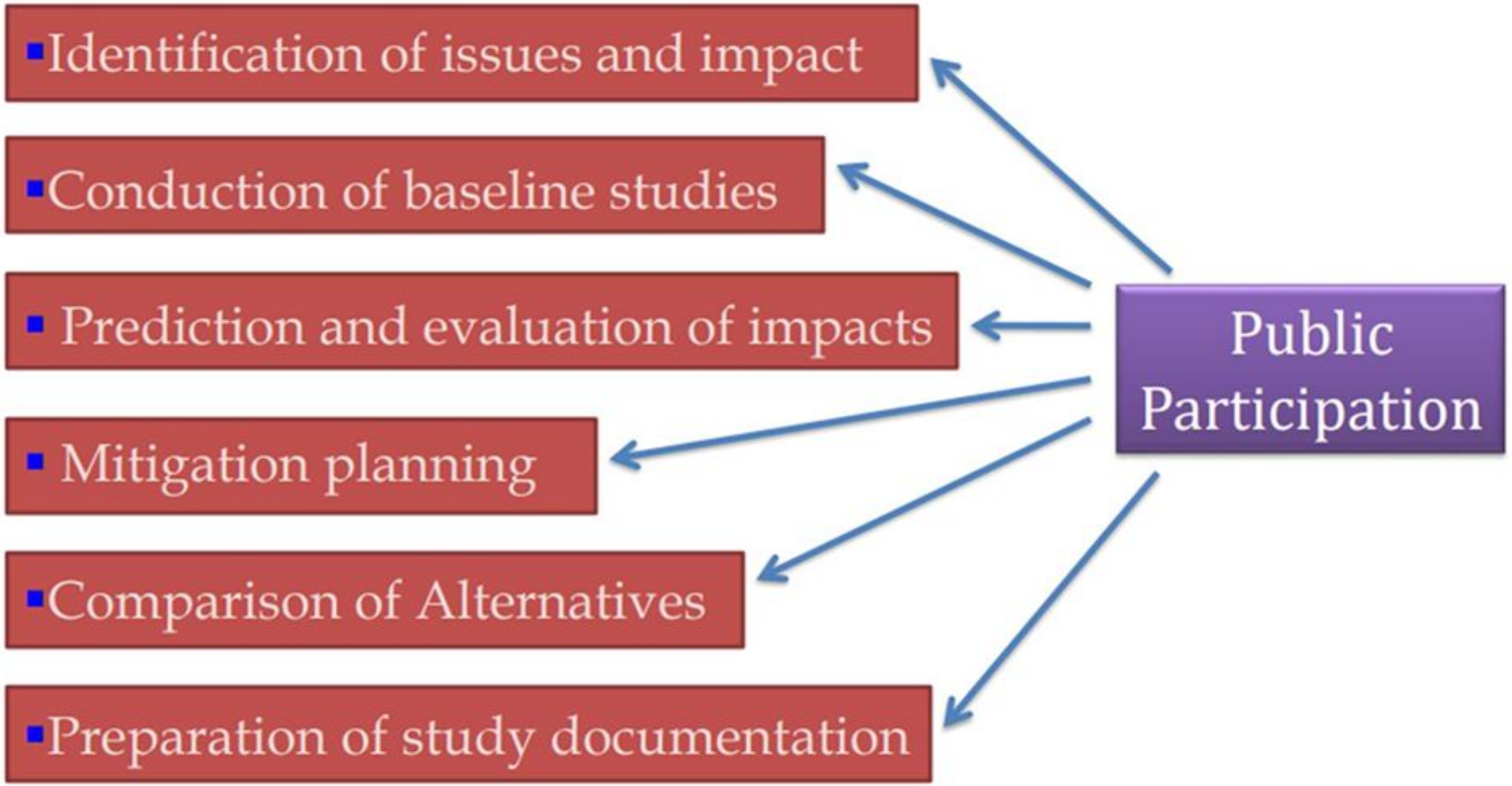
- Social consensus mitigates conflicts
- Process of decision-making and final decisions becomes more transparent and legitimate
- helps prevent or and adverse environmental consequences of the decisions
- PP generate more solutions and opinion to solving problem,
- For government and business costs of possible wrong decision could reducing significantly

PP trying to decide main aim of sustainable development – mitigate conflict between economical growth and environment security.

DISADVANTAGES:

- Potential for confusion of the issues, since many new perspectives may be introduced.
- Possibility of erroneous information resulting from the lack of knowledge from the participant.
- Potential project delay and increased project costs.

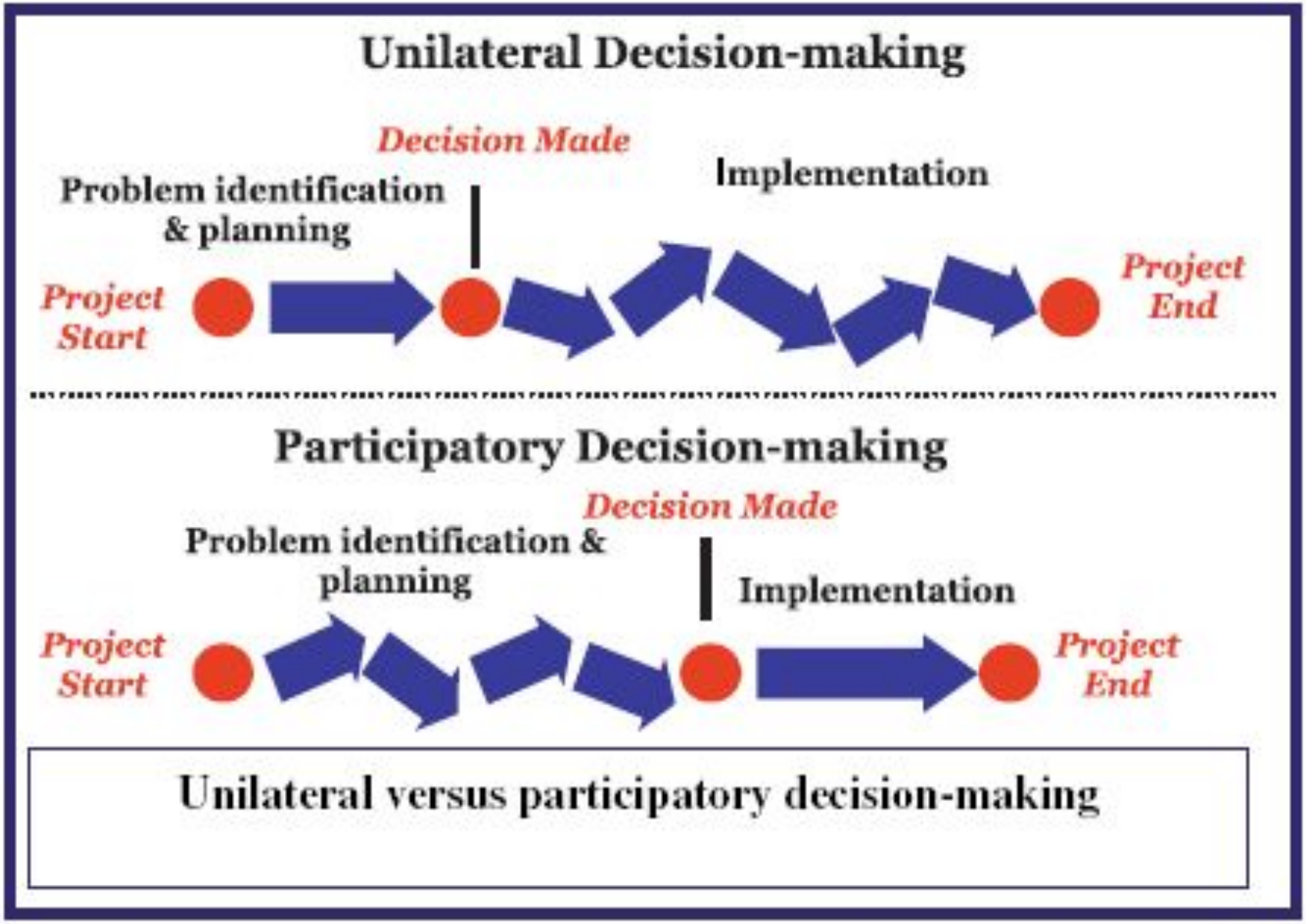
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Stage of EIA process	Objectives of public involvement
Screening	Identification of significant impacts • Identification of public's interest and values
Scoping	• Identification of priorities for assessment • Encouraging public understanding of the proposed project
Assessment	• The public can contribute local knowledge and values to the prediction, evaluation and mitigation of impacts • Improvement in quality and acceptability of EIA report
EIA Report Review	Public contribute to evaluation of quality and acceptability of report
Decision	Public comment on acceptability of project impacts
Monitoring	Public evaluate impacts that occur and support project environmental management process

What is Environmental Decision-Making?

- Any process of decision-making where consequent significant environmental impacts are a possibility.
- Includes law making, policy making, spatial planning, strategic planning, resource management planning, licensing of industry e.g. IPPC, environmental assessment (EIA), budgetary decisions etc.



Unilateral versus participatory decision-making

Selection of Public Participation Techniques

- *Public hearings*
- *Public meetings*
- *Informal, small group meetings*
- *Information and coordination seminars*
- *Forum of other agencies or groups*
- *Operating field offices*
- *Local planning visits*
- *Field trips and site visits*
- *Public displays and model demonstrations*
- *Workshops*
- *Charettes (mini-workshop aimed to resolve conflict)*
- *Special committees*

Choosing the Tools for the Job

Level 1 Education and Information Provision.

- Printed Materials
  - Advertisements
  - Press Releases
  - Newspaper Inserts
  - Newsletters
- Public Displays
- Information Repositories
- Site Visits
- Video
- Independent Technical Documents and Expertise

Level 2. Information Feedback

- Public Meetings
- Public Hearings
- The Internet
- Free-phone Telephone Lines
- Interviews
- Surveys
- Response Sheets
- Random Postal/Telephone/Web Surveys

Level 2. Information Feedback

- Deliberative Polling
- Teleconferencing
- Presentations to Community Groups
- Expert Panels
- Field Offices
- Informal Small Group Meetings

Level 3. Involvement and Consultation

- Workshops
- Focus Groups
- Open House
- The Delphi Method

Level 4. Extended Involvement

- Citizen Juries
- Advisory Groups
- Task Forces
- Community Visioning

Practical Considerations for Consultation

- Be Concerned about the details
- Carefully plan the meeting agenda
- Keep data presentation simple
- Speaker/Facilitator should possess oratory skill as well as technical expertise
- Be familiar with the area
- Be earnest, sincere and willing to work on problems with individual groups

Consultation and People's participation in EIA

- Developer is responsible for making a draft EIA and its Bangla summary available to the public on its website and concerned DoE office and website.
- Developer must also publish a notice with a date and time of the public hearing in a widely circulated local and national newspaper and the same information must be posted on the websites of DoE and the project proponent.
- Public can comment on draft EIA online within 30 days of its publication.
- Minutes of public hearing must be approved by concerned DoE Office and attached to the EIA report.
- Approved EIA must be uploaded on DoE website for public information.

Steps in a EIA Process

