



Tools for Public Participation

in the Regulation of Urban Water Services

Miharu Hirano and Carolina Latorre

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Tools - Simulation Exercise

This simulation exercise is designed to assist practitioners with the very first step in preparing public participation for decision-making, using the example of tariff-setting. The steps and lenses introduced here will help users of the Tools to notice signposts in real situations that may later determine the effectiveness of participation activities. Considering that this is the initial exercise, try to take a broad perspective; taking out unnecessary components is easier than adding one later. Your ideas written down in the worksheets might become useful, even when you proceed with public participation planning, to check that you have not omitted any important consideration during the planning process. Also consult the Guidelines to deepen your understanding.

How to use the Tool

This exercise can be used both for self-reflection and for a group workshop. Importantly, every user needs to put themselves into the position of a public participation planner. If you are not involved in any participatory process now, the fictitious case below may help you to set the scene.

1. For each Stage, follow the instructions and fill in the accompanying worksheet. This is a brainstorming exercise. Do not think too deeply; write down as much as you can.
2. Share your findings with your colleagues. If you gain any new ideas or get inspirations, you can certainly add or modify your preliminary answers.



Fictitious case

- Imagine that you are working for a drinking water service provider. Your manager asks you to perform public participation for a forthcoming tariff revision. No specific instruction, however, was given to you.
- Until now, your institution has been conducting, on a daily basis, public communications. In the previous tariff-setting process, some 7 years back, the only participatory activity conducted was a rather formalistic public comment.
- The current tariff-setting initiative is motivated to (choose one closer to your working environment):
 - ☐ to recover the current deficit for the operational cost;
 - ☐ to increase the amount of investment in facilities and infrastructure.
- The broader policy goal is to provide better service. There are issues within the area under the responsibility that require additional investment. The question remains whether to link this policy goal with the current tariff revision (choose two closers to your working environment).

X	AREA	CURRENT SITUATION	PURPOSE OF INVESTMENT
	Poor peri-urban	No service delivery at the moment	Extension of piped service
	Low–middle income	Daily interruption of services	Service delivery of 24h/7d
	Wealthy area	Water not suitable for drinking	Meet the quality for drinking
	The old town	Degraded infrastructure	Renewal of facilities and pipes
	Basin	Water resources management issues	Ensure sustainable water extraction

Stage A: Integration of public participation into the tariff-setting process

You, as a public participation planner, understand the perspectives of the relevant bodies within your institution and external institutions (your “counterparts”) on the tariff-setting and their attitudes towards public participation.

	(A) FORMALLY INVOLVED	(B) POTENTIALLY AFFECTED BY NEW TARIFF	(C) COMPETENCY/ KNOWLEDGE
INTERNAL BODIES	Which body: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ collects data and analyses it? ▪ proposes plans of action? ▪ prepares draft tariff? ▪ checks requirements? ▪ makes a final decision? 	Which body: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ will be affected by the newly set tariff? 	Which body: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ can assist in implementing participation activities? ▪ can supply practical information related to public engagement?
EXTERNAL (PUBLIC) INSTITUTIONS	Which institution: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ will provide comments? ▪ will need to approve? 	Which institution: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ will face repercussions of tariff revision? 	Which institution: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ can assist in implementing participation activities? ▪ can share past experiences?

Step 1: Map your potential counterparts within and outside your institution

- List relevant bodies (departments/units or other internal bodies) within your institution (mark as “Int”) as well as external institutions (mark as “Ext”), which
 - (a) have a responsibility in drafting, revising or approving tariffs, or can provide formal advice;
 - (b) are working in the area that could be affected by the newly set tariff;
 - (c) have competencies or knowledge that would be useful or needed when planning or implementing public participation.

Step 2: Verify with the counterparts the purposes of the tariff revision or interests involved

- Ask counterparts who are
 - (a) *formally involved*, views about the current problem that will be solved through the new tariff, and
 - (b) *potentially affected*, views about how their work will be affected by the new tariff.

(a) *formally involved* counterparts: What are the primary interests or requirements of internal bodies and external institutions? Do they consider broader policy goals of the revised tariff?

E.g. Cost-recovery, economic efficiency, environmental sustainability, social concerns

(b) *potentially affected* counterparts: What interests will be affected?

Step 3: Understand what can hold you back from pursuing public participation

- List attitudes of individual staff, institutional culture or other constraints, which can restrain your work as a public participation planner.
- Is there reticence among staff towards public participation? Why do they feel so?
- Is there any tendency among staff to make use of public participation?
- Are there any institutional constraints or culture that prevent collaborative planning and implementation of a public participation programme?

Worksheet A

		STEP 1	STEP 2	STEP 3
		COUNTERPARTS	PURPOSE OF TARIFF-SETTING	HOLD-BACK FACTORS
Int'	(A)			
Ext'	(B)			
	(C)			
Int'	(A)			
Ext'	(B)			
	(C)			
Int'	(A)			
Ext'	(B)			
	(C)			
Int'	(A)			
Ext'	(B)			
	(C)			
Int'	(A)			
Ext'	(B)			
	(C)			
Int'	(A)			
Ext'	(B)			
	(C)			
Int'	(A)			
Ext'	(B)			
	(C)			

Stage B: Identification of the “public”

You, as the public participation planner, need to understand value choices that may affect the interests, needs and concerns of the different groups in the society (“stakeholders”) and their situations that may affect the design of participation activities.

PRAGMATIC LENS <i>Practical benefits</i>	What types of public expectation need to be received to produce a sound tariff structure? Which groups in society can supply such information?
NORMATIVE LENS <i>Social justice</i>	What information is needed to ensure that the tariff is equitable? For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ those in need of a higher-than-average share of water and sanitation services; ▪ those whose voice tends to be marginalised; ▪ those who are often put in the periphery for services provision; ▪ facilities that require specific considerations.
SOCIOLOGICAL LENS <i>Public perception</i>	What is the state of trust on the tariff-setting process? Are there any other issues (e.g. political) with which tariff-setting is linked?

Steps 4 and 5: Identify relevant interests in the tariff revision; and Describe the stakeholders

The analysis of existing issues and identification of stakeholder groups are parallel processes.

- List the interests, needs and concerns that may potentially exist among the public in relation to the tariff-setting. Take different “lenses” to identify them. (circle the lens adopted when answering).
- List the identifiable groups corresponding to Step 4.

Step 6: Take note of any special circumstances that require additional action

- For each stakeholder, consider:
 - who may be left unreached;
 - who may have difficulties to participate;
 - who may be unwilling to participate.
- How can you ensure you will reach all stakeholders? Are stakeholder groups well organised, such as in community groups, or is external assistance needed to coordinate?
- Can stakeholders actually attend participation activities? What could be the constraints?
- Are stakeholders willing to participate?

ACTIVE PARTICIPANTS	Those who will commit the time and energy
COMMENTERS	Those very interested in the issue, but do not devote much time or other resource
OBSERVERS	Those who read relevant documents, but do not raise voice unless they become very concerned
APATHETICS	Those who choose not to participate

Worksheet B

	STEP 4	STEP 5	STEP 6
	VALUE CHOICES	STAKEHOLDER GROUPS	SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES
Pragmatic Normative Sociological			
Pragmatic Normative Sociological			
Pragmatic Normative Sociological			
Pragmatic Normative Sociological			
Pragmatic Normative Sociological			
Pragmatic Normative Sociological			
Pragmatic Normative Sociological			
Pragmatic Normative Sociological			

Stage C: Implementation planning

You, as the public participation planner, put together the findings of Stage A and Stage B to define the **when**, the **why** and the **how** of public participation.

INFORMATION PRODUCTION	Information based on which public opinion, future plans or tariff will be developed
DEFINING VISION/ SERVICE PLANS	Envisioning the future of water services in abstract or concrete manner
CHOOSING FROM ALTERNATIVE PLANS	For example, better service, higher tariff versus moderate service, current tariff
DRAFT / REVISIONS	Questions related to the balancing of values within the structure of tariff
FINAL DRAFT	Whether all the opinions have been considered

Step 7: Identify the key phases in the tariff-setting process

- List the key phases in the tariff-setting process where public opinions should be considered.

Step 8: Define objectives of public participation activities

- For each phase, define what you need to accomplish with the public by the end of each phase in the tariff-setting process.
- What does the public need to know in this phase?
- What do we need to learn from the public in this phase?

PRAGMATIC LENS <i>Practical benefits</i>	Is there any need to receive information related to any type of public expectations?
NORMATIVE LENS <i>Social justice</i>	Is there any concern that the tariff may undermine social equity and rights of some people?
SOCIOLOGICAL LENS <i>Public perception</i>	Is there any concern owned by the some over the tariff-setting process or your institution?

Step 9: Select appropriate participation techniques for each objective

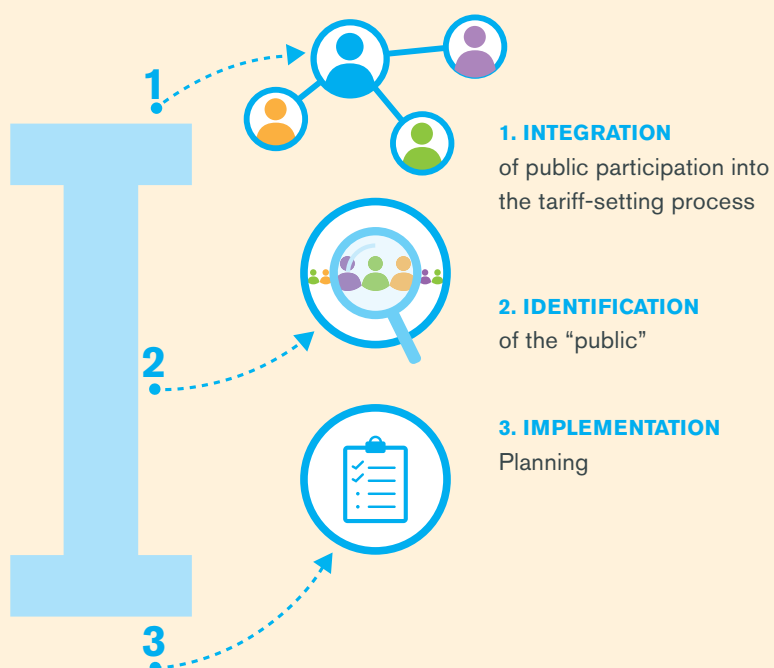
- Brainstorm which participation techniques would best fit the objectives of public participation identified in Step 8.
- Come back to Step 3 and Step 6 to check the feasibility of the techniques.

TECHNIQUES	CHARACTERISTICS	INFORMATION PROVISION	PUBLIC INPUT
SURVEY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Easy to implement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Weak 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Predetermined questions, large data
PUBLIC COMMENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Easy to implement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Weak 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Qualitative data, but hard to follow-up
PUBLIC HEARING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Transparent (inputs are heard by others) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Possible to combine 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Can be controlled by sponsoring agency
OPEN HOUSE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Flexibility in visiting ▪ Less visible by others 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Can be tailored to the interest 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Individual level
WORKSHOPS / FOCUS GROUPS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Small number ▪ Interactive 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Can be tailored to the interest 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Opinions may change
EXPERT COMMENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Concrete opinions and advice can be received ▪ Easy to manage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Extensive provision to experts but weak to the public 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Not direct input from the public
CONSULTATION WITH ADVISORY ENTITIES / COMMUNITY GROUPS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ (Semi) permanent ▪ Represent interest 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Strong 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Carry weight, certain degree of expertise ▪ Representativeness

Worksheet C

STEP 7	STEP 8	STEP 9
PHASES IN THE TARIFF-SETTING PROCESS	OBJECTIVES	PARTICIPATION TECHNIQUES

THE “THREE IS” FRAMEWORK:



About the Tools

These Tools were developed under the IWA project on public participation in the regulation of urban water services – tariff-setting, which was undertaken under the area of work in water policy and regulation at IWA in collaboration with the Graduate School of Advanced Integrated Studies in Human Survivability, Kyoto University (Japan).

This material forms an integral part of the Guidelines prepared under the same project. Refer to the Guidelines for detailed explanations of the terms used and the theoretical backbone of the framework used in these Tools. The Guidelines also contain the description of this project and acknowledgements.

Send us your feedback!

Your feedback is our precious resource. Please share with us your findings by e-mailing your comments to the address below. We would be happy to know how you have applied the Tools and the framework.

MS CAROLINA LATORRE

Water Policy and Regulation IWA

Carolina.Latorre@iwahq.org



Contact information

MS CAROLINA LATORRE

Water Policy and Regulation IWA

Carolina.Latorre@iwahq.org

INTERNATIONAL WATER ASSOCIATION

Alliance House • 12 Caxton Street
London SW1H 0QS United Kingdom

Tel: +44 (0)20 7654 5500

Fax: +44 (0)20 7654 5555

E-mail: water@iwahq.org

Company registered in England

No.3597005

Registered Office as above

Registered Charity (England)

No.1076690

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