

Stakeholder Consultation Checklist

The co-design checklist from Chapter 3, in three phases: pre-consultation planning, session execution, and post-consultation documentation, with the four minimum specifications every plan must meet.

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This checklist supports the co-design process described in Chapter 3. Use it to plan, conduct, and document stakeholder consultation sessions during mechanism design, periodic redesign (Chapter 9), and ad hoc design reviews. It is structured in three phases: pre-consultation planning, session execution, and post-consultation documentation.

STANDARDS REFERENCE

UNGP Principle 31 effectiveness criterion (h) requires that operational-level mechanisms be “based on engagement and dialogue.” IFC Performance Standard 1, para. 30 requires that the consultation process be “free of external manipulation, interference, coercion, or intimidation.” IRMA Standard 1.4.2 requires that the mechanism be designed “in consultation with stakeholders who may wish to use it.” This checklist operationalizes these requirements.

— Minimum Specifications

Whatever else the plan contains, it must meet these four minimums. The three phases below operationalize them.

Minimum Specification		Details / Notes
☐	Minimum three sessions: one general community session, one women-focused session, one worker-focused session.	Add dedicated sessions for any excluded group the stakeholder mapping identifies (youth, minority communities, remote settlements).
☐	Quorum and representation check before any design decision is recorded.	Confirm that those present actually represent the groups affected: gender balance, villages or zones covered, worker categories. Document who is missing.
☐	Documentation minimum: attendance, inputs received, decisions taken.	Record numbers and gender breakdown of attendance, log every input, and make every design decision traceable to a consultation finding.
☐	Feedback loop closed.	Report back to participants within 30 days on what was decided and why, through the channels they identified. Consultation without feedback is extraction.

— Phase 1: Pre-Consultation Planning

Complete all items before scheduling the consultation session.

Action Item	Details / Notes
☐ Stakeholder mapping completed. All affected groups identified, including vulnerable and marginalized populations (women, youth, ethnic minorities, migrant workers, indigenous groups, persons with disabilities).	Reference Chapter 4 for barrier identification. Map groups against the project's area of influence.
☐ Consultation objectives defined. Specific questions to be addressed are documented in writing. Objectives distinguish between design consultations (building a new mechanism) and review consultations (evaluating an existing mechanism).	For new mechanisms: intake channels, language preferences, trusted intermediaries, preferred resolution approaches, confidentiality expectations. For redesign: reach gaps, channel performance, satisfaction data, community trust assessment.
☐ Inclusive participation plan. Separate sessions planned for groups that may not speak freely in mixed settings (e.g., women-only sessions, worker-only sessions, youth-specific sessions). Facilitators matched to the group where possible.	Minimum: one general community session, one women-focused session, one worker-focused session. Add sessions for indigenous groups or ethnic minorities where relevant.
☐ Logistics confirmed. Venue is accessible (location, transport, physical accessibility). Time is appropriate (not during peak agricultural, work, or school hours). Childcare provided if needed. Refreshments and transport reimbursement arranged.	Venue should be a neutral location (not a company facility if trust is low). Duration: 90 to 120 minutes maximum.
☐ Language and communication. Session materials translated into local languages. Interpreter or bilingual facilitator confirmed. Visual aids prepared for low-literacy participants (images, diagrams, role-play scenarios).	Test translated materials with at least one native speaker before the session.
☐ Facilitator briefed. Facilitator is trained in participatory methods, understands the project context and the consultation objectives, and has reviewed the mechanism design or performance data (if redesign).	External facilitator recommended where company-community trust is low.
☐ Informed consent and confidentiality. Participants will be informed at the start that participation is voluntary, that their input will be used to design or improve the mechanism, and that individual comments will not be attributed without consent.	Prepare a brief verbal consent statement. Do not require written signatures in contexts where this creates distrust.
☐ Feedback commitment. A clear plan exists for reporting back to participants on how their input was used. The feedback timeline is defined (e.g., within 30 days of the consultation).	Feedback can be delivered through community meetings, printed summaries, or radio announcements depending on context.

— Phase 2: Consultation Session Execution

Use this checklist during the session itself.

Action Item	Details / Notes
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☐	Welcome and context setting. Explain the purpose of the session, how input will be used, the voluntary nature of participation, and the confidentiality commitment. Introduce the facilitator and any company representatives present.	Keep the introduction to 10 minutes. Avoid jargon. Use visual aids.
☐	Ground rules established. Agree on ground rules with participants: respectful dialogue, one speaker at a time, all views valued, no retaliation for any opinion expressed.	Ask participants to suggest ground rules rather than imposing them.
☐	Key questions addressed. The following consultation questions are covered (adapt to context):	
☐	1. How do you currently raise concerns about the project? What works? What does not?	Identifies existing channels and barriers.
☐	2. If you had a concern, how would you prefer to raise it? (In person, phone, written, through a community representative, anonymously?)	Identifies preferred intake channels. Offer multiple options and let participants rank them.
☐	3. What languages should the mechanism operate in?	Identifies language requirements beyond the project's default.
☐	4. Who in the community do you trust to receive and handle concerns fairly?	Identifies potential community focal points and trusted intermediaries.
☐	5. What would make you confident that your concern would be handled fairly and without retaliation?	Identifies trust requirements and protection expectations.
☐	6. How quickly should you receive a response? What is an acceptable timeline for resolution?	Identifies timeline expectations. Compare with the targets in Chapter 5.
☐	7. If you were not satisfied with the outcome, what should happen next?	Identifies expectations for appeal and recourse options (Chapter 7).
☐	8. How should the company report back on how grievances are handled? (Community meetings, written reports, radio, notice boards?)	Identifies preferred transparency and feedback channels.
☐	Participation documented. Number of participants, gender breakdown, community or group representation, and key themes are recorded by a designated notetaker.	Do not record individual names unless participants consent. Record demographics in aggregate.
☐	Closing and next steps. Thank participants. Confirm the feedback timeline. Explain how they can follow up if they have additional input after the session.	Leave a contact method (phone number, focal point) for post-session input.

— Phase 3: Post-Consultation Documentation

Complete within five business days of each consultation session.

Action Item	Details / Notes
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☐	Consultation report drafted. Summarizes: date, location, number and demographics of participants, key themes and findings, specific design recommendations, and any disagreements or unresolved questions.	Template: one to two pages per session. Store in the mechanism's project file.
☐	Design decisions documented. For each consultation finding, document: the finding, the design decision taken in response, the rationale, and (if the finding was not adopted) the reason.	This creates the audit trail that demonstrates co-design for lender and certification assessments.
☐	Feedback delivered to participants. Within 30 days, communicate back to participants: what was heard, what design decisions resulted, and what will happen next.	Use the channels participants identified in the session (community meeting, printed summary, radio, focal point).
☐	Gaps identified. Note any stakeholder groups that were not adequately represented. Plan targeted follow-up consultations for underrepresented groups.	Common gaps: women who could not attend, remote communities, shift workers, contractor workers, indigenous groups.
☐	Consultation record filed. All documentation (reports, design decisions, feedback records, participant demographics) is filed in the mechanism's management system for future reference and periodic redesign (Chapter 9).	This record is essential for the mechanism redesign described in Chapter 9.

PRACTITIONER TIP

Run this full checklist for the initial mechanism design. For periodic redesigns (Chapter 9), supplement Phase 2 with performance data: share anonymized KPI summaries (Chapter 8) with consultation participants to ground the discussion in evidence. Communities respond more constructively to “18% of grievances took longer than 45 days to resolve” than to “how do you think the mechanism is performing?”

Consultation without feedback is extraction.

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