

Economic Commission for Europe

Meeting of the Parties to the Convention on
Access to Information, Public Participation
in Decision-making and Access to Justice
in Environmental Matters

Task Force on Public Participation in Decision-making

Eleventh meeting

Geneva, 12–13 December 2024

Item 2 of the provisional agenda

Participation of groups in vulnerable situations in decision-making

Survey for Parties to the Aarhus Convention, other interested UN Member States and stakeholders

Background

The Working Group of the Parties at its twenty-seventh meeting (Geneva, 26-28 June 2023) requested the secretariat to carry out a survey on the issue of participation of groups and people in vulnerable situations in decision-making. The Working Group encouraged Parties and interested stakeholders to participate in the survey. The results of the survey will be considered at the [eleventh meeting of the Task Force on Public Participation in Decision-making](#), scheduled to be held in Geneva on 12 and 13 December 2024.

Through the survey the Task Force aims to: collect good practices and challenges in implementing measures that aim to overcome barriers which prevent groups and people in vulnerable situations to participate in decision-making on environmental matters; and identify suggestions for improvements.

Please access the survey through this link <https://forms.office.com/e/ffX7ye19ZH>.

Deadline for submission of survey responses is Friday, 22 November 2024.

*For your information and ease of input coordination a copy of the questions is attached in word format. **Kindly submit your answers only through the online survey form.***

*Please do not hesitate to **contact us at aarhus.survey@un.org for any questions related to this exercise.***

We thank you very much for taking the time to respond to the survey!

SURVEY QUESTIONS

This survey consists of 17 questions and takes approximately 15 minutes to complete. It is divided into two parts. Part I focuses on general efforts to ensure the effective participation of groups and people in vulnerable situations. Part II aims at identifying particular initiatives or projects in this regard.

For this survey it is considered that the following groups and people can be in vulnerable situations:¹

- Women and girls
- Children (between 6 and 14 years)
- Youth (between 15 and 24 years old)
- Older persons
- People with disabilities
- Migrants, Refugees, and Internally Displaced Persons
- People of African Descent
- Rural and Remote Populations
- National, Ethnic, Religious, and Linguistic Minorities
- Roma, Sinti and Travelers
- Indigenous Peoples
- LGBTQI+ Persons
- People living in extreme poverty
- People living with HIV/AIDS

0. Contact information

Please provide information about yourself *by checking all boxes that apply*.

I am responding to this survey on behalf of [*Checkbox, multiple answers possible*]

- Government (name of Party or other UN Member State)
- NGO
- Business/private sector
- University/academia
- Other (*Please specify*)

Please provide your professional contacts (name; title, address; phone; email) [*Open text field*]

I. General Measures

A.1. From below list of groups and people in vulnerable situations, please check all that are recognized in your country as vulnerable through legislation or policy documents. *Please check all boxes that apply. [Checklist, multiple answers possible]*

- Women and girls
- Children (between 6 and 14 years)
- Youth (between 15 and 24 years old)
- Older persons
- People with disabilities
- Migrants, Refugees, and Internally Displaced Persons
- People of African Descent
- Rural and Remote Populations
- National, Ethnic, Religious, and Linguistic Minorities

¹ See <https://www.ohchr.org/en/special-procedures/sr-health/non-discrimination-groups-vulnerable-situations> and <https://www.un.org/en/fight-racism/vulnerable-groups>.

- Roma, Sinti and Travelers
- Indigenous Peoples
- LGBTQI+ Persons
- People living in extreme poverty
- People living with HIV/AIDS

A.2 Please select all efforts your Government/ Organization makes to ensure effective participation of groups and people in vulnerable situations to participate in decision-making on environmental matters. *Please check all boxes that apply. [Checklist, multiple answers possible]*

- Legislative (e.g., legislation; sub laws were adopted)
- Policy (e.g., strategy, guidelines)
- Institutional (e.g., units/structure/focal points were established)
- Capacity building (e.g., trainings were organized)
- Awareness raising material (e.g., brochures, websites, posters, broadcast emails)
- Others (*please specify*)

A.3 Please **describe briefly the efforts** made by your Government/ Organization mentioned above to ensure effective participation of groups and people in vulnerable situations to participate in decision-making on environmental matters [*Open text field*]

A.4 Has your Government / Organization used or is planning to use one (or several) of the following **modalities/communication channels** for engaging groups and people in vulnerable situations?

(i) Use of the **media communication** channels at all stages of the preparation for the public participation, also promoting inclusive participation.

If yes, please specify what type of the media channel is / was used, e.g. Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, YouTube or other.

(ii) **Web-based application** (online forum, social network), also promoting inclusive participation.

Please provide additional information or an online link, if available.

(iii) **Mobile-phone app**, also promoting inclusive participation.

Please provide additional information or an online link, if available.

(iv) **Seeking feedback** from persons or groups in vulnerable situations about challenges and good practices examples of engaging them in decision-making.

If yes, please specify in which form the feedback is requested.

(v) **Other** [*Please specify*]

A.5 What are **systemic barriers** you are facing when trying to engage groups and people in vulnerable situations in decision-making? *Please check all options that apply.*

- Awareness
- Communication (e.g. style, language, literacy)
- Physical (e.g. inadequate infrastructure, digital access to computer/internet, suitable times, locations)
- Attitude, perceptions, culture, values, beliefs
- Political influence, political tensions
- Policies, procedures
- Access (e.g. lack of contact information, poorly organized community associations)
- Limited resources (e.g. funding, time, personnel) from side of initiative/project
- Lack of human capacity (e.g. appropriately trained personnel)
- Economic resources of persons/group(s) in vulnerable situations
- Determination of representation of/ affiliation with group in vulnerable situations
- Trust, relationship, confidence in process
- Other (please specify)

A.6 Do you have any **general suggestions for improving** the engagement of groups and people in vulnerable situations in decision-making? *[Open text field]*

II. Practical examples

B. Can you **give a practical example** of involving groups and people in vulnerable situations in decision-making on environmental matters? **Please provide information about the initiative.**

B.1 What is/was the main objective of this initiative? *Please provide brief description. [Open text field]*

B.2 What method/approach was used for this initiative? *Please briefly describe. [Open text field]*

B.3 What were the results of the initiative? *Please provide a brief description. [Open text field]*

Please provide information about the involved persons or groups in vulnerable situations.

B.4 Which groups and people in vulnerable situations were involved in decision-making?
Please check all boxes that apply. [Checkbox, multiple answers possible]

- Women and girls
- Children (between 6 and 14 years)
- Youth (between 15 and 24 years old)
- Older persons
- People with disabilities
- Migrants, Refugees, and Internally Displaced Persons
- People of African Descent
- Rural and Remote Populations
- National, Ethnic, Religious, and Linguistic Minorities
- Roma, Sinti and Travelers
- Indigenous Peoples

- LGBTQI+ Persons
- People living in extreme poverty
- People living with HIV/AIDS

B.5 What **type of barriers** needed to be overcome to ensure the participation of this/these specific particular groups and people in vulnerable situations in the decision-making process of that initiative? *Please check all boxes that apply. [Checkbox, multiple answers possible]*

- Awareness
- Communication (e.g. style, language, literacy)
- Physical (e.g. inadequate infrastructure, digital access to computer/internet, suitable times, locations)
- Attitude, perceptions, culture, values, beliefs
- Political influence, political tensions
- Policies, procedures
- Access (e.g. lack of contact information, poorly organized community associations)
- Limited resources (e.g. funding, time, personnel) from side of initiative/project
- Lack of human capacity (e.g. appropriately trained personnel)
- Economic resources of persons/group(s) in vulnerable situations
- Determination of representation of/ affiliation with group in vulnerable situations
- Trust, relationship, confidence in process,
- Other (please specify)

B.6 How were these barriers overcome? *Please provide a brief description. [Open text field]*

B.7 Have there been any activities/trainings for staff/colleagues involved in that initiative to raise their awareness of particular groups and people in vulnerable situations or competence/capacity to engage them? *[closed question, yes/no]*

If yes, please specify the type of awareness raising training. *[open text field]*

B.8 What were strengths, good practices and lessons learned of this initiative? *Please provide a brief description. [Open text field]*

B.9 Which weaknesses and risks were observed? *Please provide a brief description. [Open text field]*

B.10 What are unresolved issues? *Please provide a brief description. [Open text field]*

[You would like to share another initiative? Please complete this survey and then submit another response by clicking on the survey link again. Thank you.]

Thank you very much for taking the time to respond to these survey questions. We encourage you to participate in the eleventh meeting of the Task Force on Public Participation in Decision-making and invite to consult this [web page for more information](#).