

Chapter 5

Conclusion and Recommendations

The case study transportation project in Thailand, Distribution Road Project of the Second Stage Expressway System Project, has faced conflict with the local community and the Bankrua community. Comparing the case of the Eastern Freeway Extension Project provides a good example of the public participation process. It shows in effect how the public or local people can participate in the project parallel with the project implementation. The community consultation has come at a significant cost to the project in addition to delaying certain project decisions. Community consultation, however, is an extremely important aspect of any infrastructure development, both in terms of addressing the community's needs and allowing the community to feel ownership over the project.

Power Plant Projects in Thailand should set up a public participation process as the key part in project development. From this study, it is clear that the government and project proponents should set up a public participation process that parallels a designing project, exploring alternatives, identifying potential environmental impacts, designing mitigation measures and monitoring the implementation of the environmental management program.

The public participation should be started in the earliest stage of planning to help in the wide context of planning and to enhance trust, a good relationship and cooperation between the project and local community (e.g. Portland Wind Energy Project). This should be a community program to measure people's feelings, and their way of life after the project is operated.

The techniques for the participation program should be flexible and dependent on local community conditions and the social-political situation (e.g. Hin Krut Power Plant Project). The Thai Tripartite Monitoring Committee is the first important step, acting as key participants in the decision-making to set up in all projects that may cause a significant impact to the environmental and local community.

The other interesting point is the building of public confidence (e.g. Tarong North Project). This has a high potential to distribute some expenditure to the local community. Environmental management of this project has also been intensive.

In addition, governmental agencies should provide the regulations and guidelines of public participation in the development of projects for providing more public participation and better development in the future.

The public participation program should be established to recognize the needs of community from the views and advice of the public. The effectiveness of the public participation program can be measured from the clearly provided, complete information, time period for public notice and public access to the decision. It is important to give the opportunity to public to participate early on and continuously.

Public participation should start in the earliest stage of planning to help in the wide context of planning and enhance trust and a good relationship in corporation between the planner and public. Most important, is good communication between the project proponent and community, or between communities. The information should be exchanged in two-ways. People or communities should receive enough information, local knowledge and understanding regarding the development projects. The Model of Public participation Program is set out in the Fig. 5.1.

Preparation Phase

First, the government should set the initial plan and provide the overview and present situation of the project to obtain a clearer picture. This is to educate the community before the public is involved in the project. An adequate education and training program, and techniques and skills for involving the community should be set prior to the establishment of the participation group.

Second, a 'public participation team' including state transportation planning staff, local government officials, local community, and interested citizens should be set. This team should be established to work with the community as a key participating force in decision-making to review the possible impact of the project and provide the possible alternatives, option and site selection, including an alternative for not building the project and alternative modes. The team can better determine the needs of the social, economic and environmental impact throughout the planning of transportation projects including system planning, location, and design through the comments and criticism. This is obtained through public consultation, workshops and public meetings.

The public participation team will give guidelines for environmental and economical/social impact assessment. These guidelines would have to meet both the engineering criteria and the communities' involvement standards. After the study of environmental and economical/social impact assessment is finished, the public hearing is established to make sure no issues are overlooked and to set the mediation and compensation procedure for the affected people.

Construction Phase and Operation Phase

The public participation team can be representative of the local community and monitor and examine the construction phase, especially environmental management. Moreover this team can examine and check the result of environmental, economical and social impacts during project implementation.

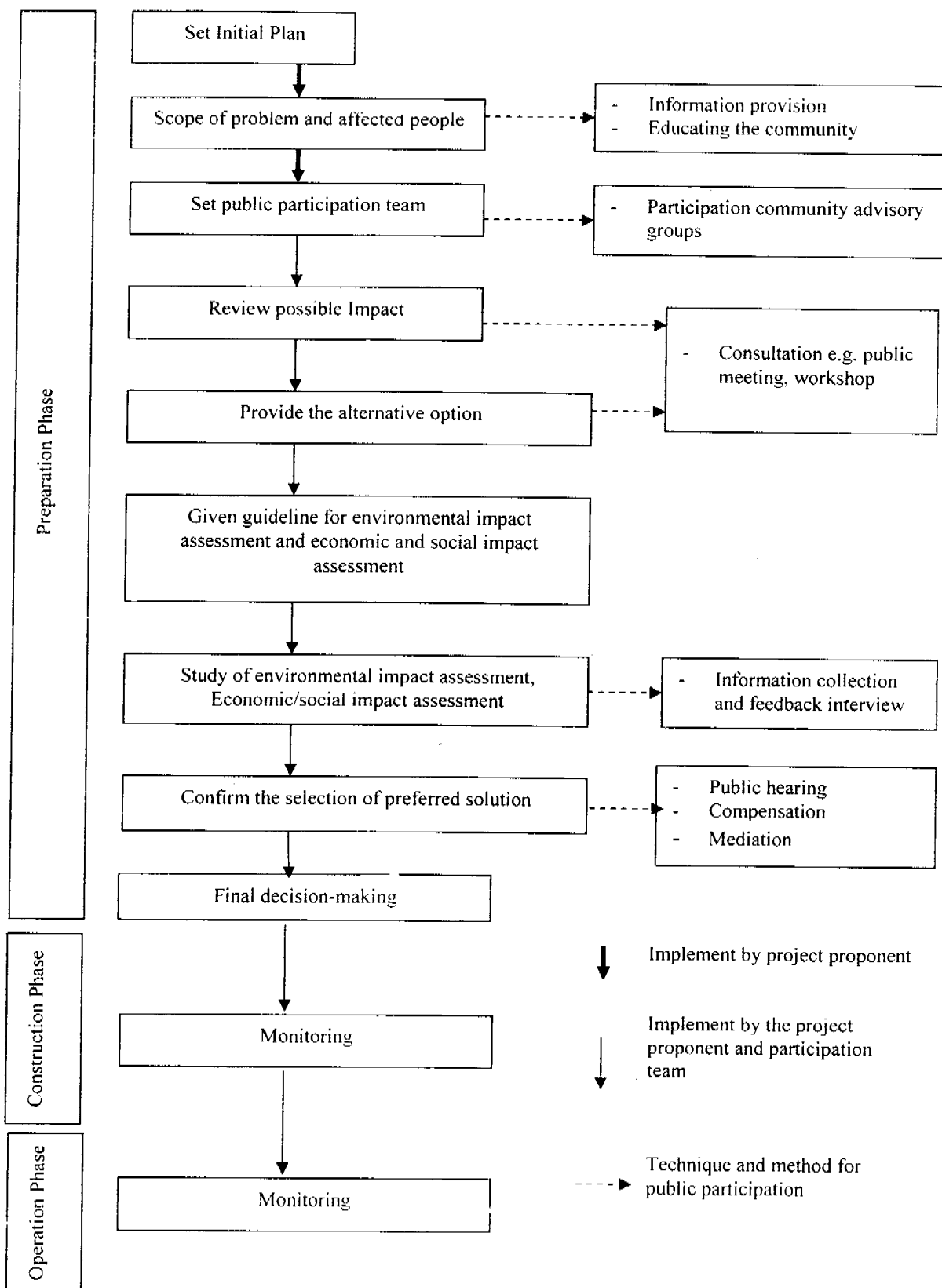


Figure 5.1 Model of public participation process