



The Regional Organization for the Conservation of the Environment
of the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden

PERSGA

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN ICZM: Case Studies from JORDAN AND YEMEN



2005



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PERSGA – “The Regional Organization for the Conservation of the Environment of the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden” is an intergovernmental organization dedicated to the conservation of the coastal and marine environments in the region.

The Regional Convention for the Conservation of the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden Environment (Jeddah Convention), 1982 provides the legal foundation for PERSGA. The Secretariat of the Organization was formally established in Jeddah following the Cairo Declaration of September 1995. The PERSGA member states are: Djibouti, Egypt, Jordan, Palestine, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, Sudan, and Yemen.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

List of acronyms	5
Abstract	6
Introduction	6
Research Methodology:	6
Selection of Study Areas - Jordan and Yemen	6
Fieldwork Methodology	8
Selected Models for ICZM in Aqaba and Yemen	10
Results– ICZM for Good Governance and Participation:	10
Overview	11
Case Study of ASEZA	11
a. Institutional and legislative framework	11
b. Understanding ICZM	12
c. Public participation in practice	12
d. Is public participation important?	15
e. What are the roadblocks to public participation?	16
f. The best tools for public participation	
Case Study of Aden-Yemen	16
a. Institutional and legislative framework	16
b. Understanding ICZM	17
c. Public participation in practice	17
d. Is public participation important?	18
e. What are the roadblocks to public participation?	18
f. The best tools for public participation	18
Analysis and Recommendation:	20
Discussions	20
The effectiveness of the ICZM plans in promoting good governance process and public participation.	21
Best practice model for Public Participation in ICZM for the RSGA region	23
ICZM Plan and Poverty Alleviation	24
Annexes:	26
Annex 1 – Models for Public Participation in ICZM	
Annex 2 – Best Practice Model for Public Participation in Aqaba and Yemen	
Annex 3 - References	27
	31
	35

List of Acronyms

- ARA** : Aqaba Regional Authority
- ASEZ** : Aqaba Special Economic Zone
- ASEZA** : Aqaba Special Economic Zone Authority
- EC** : European Community
- EIA** : Environmental Impact Assessment
- EU** : European Union
- ICZM** : Integrated Coastal Zone Management
- MDB** : Murray-Darling Basin
- NGO** : Non Governmental Organization
- PERSGA** : Regional Organization for the Conservation of the Environment of the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden
- SAP** : Strategic Action Programme

Abstract

The aim of Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) is to protect the environment while at the same time improving livelihoods of coastal residents. Good governance and public participation are crucial elements of successful ICZM. The PERSGA Project commissioned a field study to review public participation in ICZM in the coastal areas of Aqaba (Jordan) and Yemen (Aden). The study analyzes current levels of public participation and its effect on the livelihood of residents of these areas. A best practice model of public participation for ICZM in Aqaba and Aden is also developed.

Introduction

In order to ensure successful Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) in the PERSGA region, it is necessary to better understand the dynamics of public participation under local circumstances. To this end, a study was commissioned to analyze the situation of Jordan and Yemen in respect to public participation in ICZM. The main aims of this study are to use field studies and a review of public participation examples to:

1. Investigate the effectiveness of the ICZM plans in promoting good governance process and public participation. In particular, review how the system is working horizontally among different organisations, and vertically in each related organisation (decentralisation and bureaucracy) and whether there are laws and policies that supports the public participation.
2. Prepare recommendations for a best practice model for public participation in ICZM for the Red Sea Gulf of Aden Region. This will be made based on the assessment of the public participation activities, or examine the best tool to implement public participation. In this regard two models will be examined: the Australian "Murray Darling Basin Model" and the EU "Mechanisms and Procedures Needed for Public Participation in the ICZM Process"
3. Examine how the ICZM plans could support poverty alleviation and economic growth and global partnership by studying how current practice is improving the livelihood of the selected stakeholders: the fishing community, the tourism sector, and the industrial sector.

The Study aims to answer these questions using background materials provided by PERSGA and field studies conducted by researchers in Aqaba and Aden.

A detailed explanation of the methodology follows this introduction. Models of public participation as a basis for determining a best practice model for Jordan and Yemen were then reviewed. This is followed by case study descriptions of public participation in the two countries. The questions posed above are analyzed in light of the information obtained through the case studies. The final chapter, Provides recommendations on a best practice model for public participation in the ICZM in Jordan (Aqaba) and Yemen (Aden).

Research methodology

By using the case study approach, the field research has been conducted in both Jordan and Yemen.

Selection of Study Areas – Jordan and Yemen

Jordan and Yemen share the same region, as noted in the map (Figure 1).

Jordan's Gulf of Aqaba coastline is 26.5 kilometers long, and includes the country's only port, industrial facilities vital to the national economy (including electricity generation), a growing tourism industry, and a delicate marine ecosystem. The ecosystem is under increasing threat, due to the four percent population growth rate, and rapid development of industry and tourism as part of the newly formed Aqaba Special Economic Zone (ASEZ). For the remainder of this report, this study area will be referred to as ASEZ, or Aqaba, since this is the only area in Jordan which is on the coast.

The town of Aqaba is at the northeastern tip of the Gulf of Aqaba with a population of 90,000, which is expected to increase to about 150,000 by the year 2020. Aqaba is the residential and commercial centre of the area and it is here that the hotels and tourist accommodations are located. In early 2001, the Aqaba region was declared a duty-free Special Economic Zone. The three important economic sectors in the Zone are manufacturing and power generation, port-related activities (including maritime shipping and the correlate land transportation facilities), and tourism. Tourism is a growing sector with tremendous economic potential. Tourism has proven to be a substantial component of the Aqaba economy; the coast attracts 66 per cent of all tourists entering Jordan.

The Republic of Yemen coastline is about 2000 km long, extending from the borders with Saudi Arabia along the southern part of the Red Sea to the Bab El Mandab Straits, and then extending northeast along the Gulf of Aden to the borders with Oman. Over and above port-related activities, fisheries, maritime traffic and oil and gas exploration constitute the important economic resources of the coastal zone.

Tourism still plays a very minor role in coastal economies in Yemen. Fishing is considered a traditionally important profession for thousands of Yemenis. Aden is the largest and most important port in Yemen. Prior to the closure of the Suez Canal in 1967, it was the third largest bunkering port in the world. Historically, the coastal ports of Yemen were famous for transit trade, boat building, ship repairs and bunkering. Many of these ports have since expanded, and efforts are currently underway to further improve the facilities at Aden which has the potential to regain its world-class status.

The ICZM process was initiated in Jordan in the early eighties; hence, the national capacity enhanced in several related fields. In Yemen, ICZM is a new process that was initiated through Strategic Action Plan of PERSGA under the ICZM model activity in Aden.

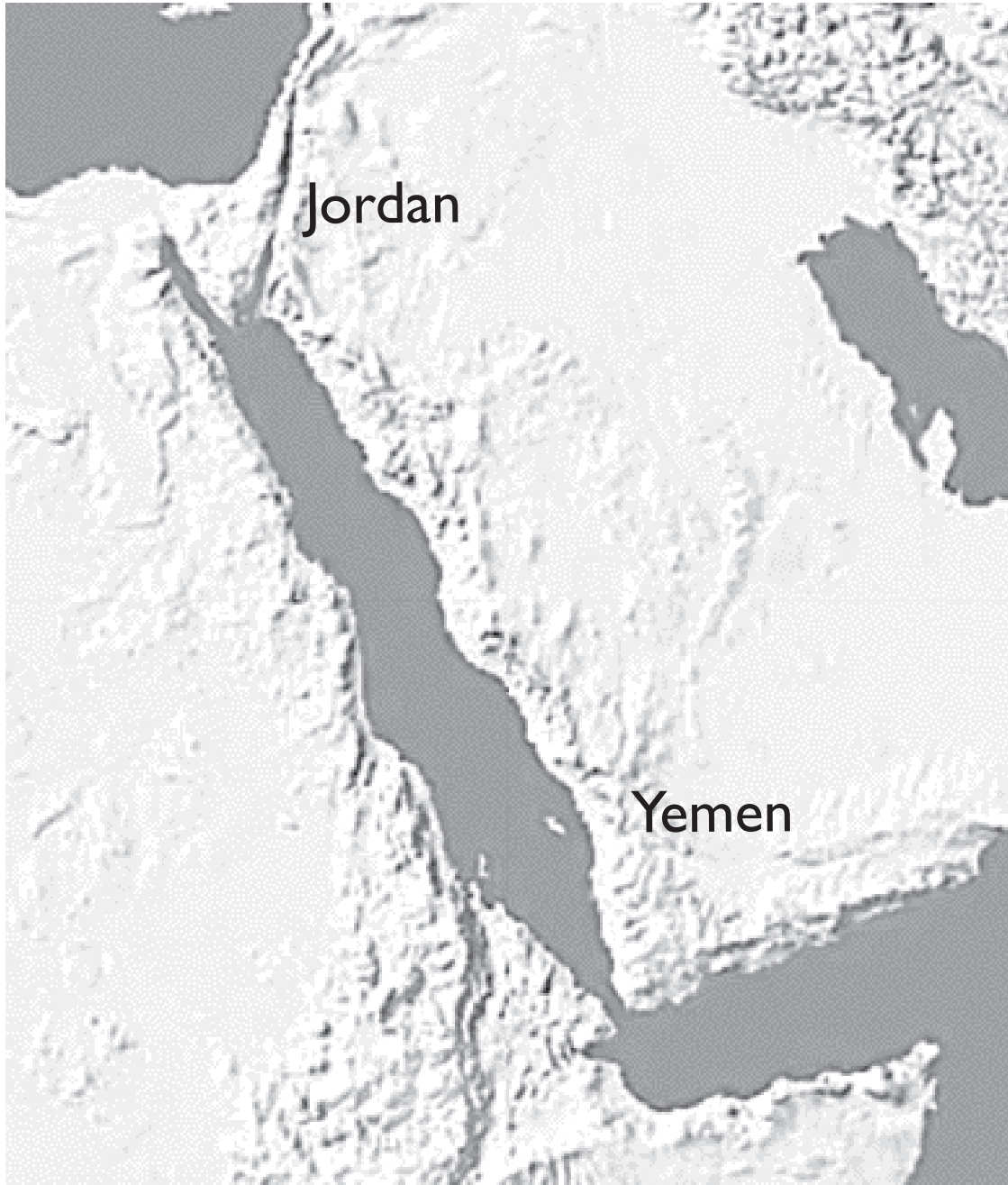


Figure 1: Map of the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden Region

Fieldwork Methodology

The ICZM plan for Aden was recently prepared and is currently in the official adoption process. The different level of the capacity and experience between the two countries was acknowledged in the Strategic Action Planning document of PERSGA. Consequently, regional exchange of experience was among the most important objectives of the project. Regional exchange is most valuable when one understands the differences and similarities between countries.

Jordan-Aqaba - Field studies for Aqaba took place during the period to August 1- 12, 2004. The researcher was advised by government staff and other interviewees that the subjects of the investment climate, satisfaction with management of the Special Economic Zone and public participation were extremely sensitive topics. Interviewees were only willing to discuss these topics individually in private or in very small groups of their close colleagues. For this reason, it was decided that it was premature to convene a workshop to publicly discuss this topic.

Even through individual discussion, it took time to persuade informants to discuss openly their concerns about public participation and ASEZA development. It was only after the promise of strict confidentiality by the researcher, who was already known to many of the interviewees, that they eventually opened up and provided very useful information to the researcher. Gaining trust (Bakir, 1998) is the basis of public participation and the first contact, through obtaining information and keeping promised confidentiality, is crucial towards gaining that trust. Therefore, within this report,

there is no attribution of specific comments to specific individuals or groups of individuals. In all, 32 people were interviewed; most on an individual basis (see Box 1). Most people were asked the same broad questions, with some questions added or altered for specific individuals. A sample questionnaire can be found in Annex

Yemen - Aden - The questionnaires were tailored to each individual, and also revised to require only short, relatively simple answers, therefore becoming less open-ended. It was not possible to verify inconsistencies in answers received, which may have been due to the inability of those filling them out to ask for clarification if they could not understand a question. There were inconsistencies in numerous questions, which limited the ability to analyze them. Despite these constraints, general patterns were perceived which can be used to provide some analysis of the questions posed.

In all, 24 people filled out questionnaire the majority of who were government officials. This provided a more limited range of stakeholders than those interviewed for Aqaba. The rest of the questionnaires were filled out by stakeholders from NGOs, marine research centers and one from a news agency. Questionnaires were individually tailored, although many of the questions were in fact similar for each interviewee.

Box 1 – Aqaba interviews (32)

- Government officials
- NGOs
- The tourism sector – hotel operators, restaurant owners, tourist operators
- Environmental interests – divers, researchers
- Industry and investors
- Investors
- Fishermen
- Residents of Al Shalalah, disadvantaged section of Aqaba

Box 2 - Yemen interviews (24):

- Government officials
- Scientists, researchers
- Consultants
- Local councils
- NGOs
- Journalists

Selected models for ICZM in Aqaba and Yemen

For successful ICZM, the various stakeholders who will be positively or adversely affected must be consulted and, as much as possible, directly and actively involved in managing coastal zones. A study of 17 ICZM projects in Europe, funded by the European Commission, lists the key aims of public participation (King, 1999):

- Better coordination and cooperation
- Multi-sectoral partnerships
- Pooled resources
- Improved definition of issues
- Common goals
- Shared expertise
- Raised awareness
- Commitment to sustainable development
- Access to donor funding
- Fostering local democratic processes
- Transnational cooperation

With successful public participation comes a greater commitment to integrated, sustainable strategies for ICZM, stronger institutions and improved planning capabilities of both governmental and non-governmental organizations, and improved accountability. Public participation as a general concept is still greatly misunderstood by many development planners – often it is equated with “public awareness” or with “public hearings”, which are both tools of public participation, but infer a more passive role for stakeholders.

Many models, analyses and examples of public participation are readily available. The basic themes of establishing trust, good communication channels, and full partnership with stakeholders are common to all. There is no “one correct answer” for public participation, nor is there one “correct model”. There are overall strategies which can be employed, and the goal of this study was to look at what is the best strategy for public participation in Aqaba and the coast of Yemen.

For the purposes of this study, two models were pre-selected for review :

1. The “Australian MDB Model” – this model is derived from a specific project, the Murray-Darling Basin project
2. The “EC model” - which is a study of the role of participation in 17 ICZM projects with recommendations of suitable procedures and mechanisms for PP
Best practices derived from these models are described in Annex 1, and will be used as the basis for establishing a best practice model for ICZM in Jordan Aqaba and Yemen-Aden as models for the PERSGA Region.

Results – ICZM for good governance and participation

Overview:

Objective 1 of the research was to: “Investigate the effectiveness of the ICZM plans in promoting good governance process and public participation.” Results in this section cover the results of research in Aqaba and Yemen in the following areas:

- a. Institutional and legislative framework
- b. Understanding ICZM;
- c. Public participation in practice
- d. Is public participation important?
- e. What are the roadblocks to public participation?
- f. The best tools for public participation

As noted above, attribution of specific comments or statements will not be given to specific individuals or groups of individuals in order to protect confidentiality.

Case Study of ASEZA:

a. Institutional and Legislative Framework:

The Aqaba Special Economic Zone is the management body for Aqaba City and the region (see Box 3). A review was conducted by PERSGA of the status of ICZM in Aqaba, which does not yet have an official ICZM program. According to this review, despite the lack of an approved ICZM plan, progress was made through public awareness and participation even before ASEZA was established in improving coastal resources management

A Coastal Zone and Marine Resources Committee was previously encouraged to participate in decision-making, goal setting and conflict resolution in the coastal zone and became vital. Upon the establishment of ASEZA, however, this committee is no longer active.

The Community Development Directorate, under the supervision of Commissioner for Investment and Eco-

nomics Development, is the only ASEZA division with a mandate to work directly with the community.

In ASEZA, there is no legal mandate for public participation beyond a requirement for public participation in EIA, and in some cases requirements from external donors for some specific projects.

There are a number of NGOs active in ASEZ, focusing on poverty alleviation, health, environment and business issues. Active environmental NGOs in Aqaba itself are the Jordan Royal Ecological Diving Society, the Red Crescent Society. The Royal Society for Conservation of Nature coordinates closely with the Authority in its work in the newly established Wadi Rum Nature Reserve, an inland desert region.

Box 3 - Aqaba Special Economic Zone Authority (ASEZA)

Aqaba, as the only coastal town in Jordan, has always had a prominent role in the Jordanian economy. Before 2001, Aqaba Municipality managed most activities in Aqaba, in cooperation with the semi-autonomous Aqaba Regional Authority (ARA).

Since its establishment as a duty-free Special Economic Zone in early 2001, with high profile support His Majesty King Abdullah, ASEZ has received attention and assistance in order to develop its role as a hub of economic importance for Jordan. The promotional materials of the Aqaba Special Economic Zone Authority (ASEZA) describe its management as “a governance model for all of Jordan”, with the mandate to regulate all activities within the zone (ASEZA, 2004).

Theoretically, ASEZA operates financially and administratively autonomously, although in fact all line ministries of the Government of Jordan still operate in the Zone. The Authority is still working out agreements with ministries and other government bodies as to roles and responsibilities. ASEZA describes itself as “dynamic, responsive and driven by accountability” and the “single point of contact for ALL investor permitting needs (ASEZA, 2004)”

ASEZA is also the first area in Jordan where a comprehensive Master Plan has been adopted, and where a Model Environmental Protection framework is enforced. These are both essential elements of successful Integrated Coastal Zone Management.

b. Understanding ICZM:

A comprehensive Master Plan has been developed for ASEZ, but there is no formal plan for ICZM. Although only ASEZA staff recognizes the acronym “ICZM”, almost all interviewees understood the concept when it was described to them by the field researcher. Most said “it’s just a concept” or “it’s just a fancy term”, but it needs action and implementation. In actual fact, almost all informants were aware of the need for ICZM and that ASEZA has some sort of plans, but no one knew what they were. None had seen the Master Plan – except of course, ASEZA staff themselves.

All stakeholders were well aware of the value of the coast and need to preserve it for different needs and to balance the needs fairly between different stakeholders. People were willing and felt the need to be involved, but most did not know how they could get more involved in ICZM.

There was also resentment that the one beach previously available within Aqaba town was no longer available for the general public. The only public beach was only accessible by car, as it was a few kilometers away from the town on the South Coast.

There is no formal mechanism within ASEZA for dealing with conflicts between competing needs, or for developing stronger consensus of all stakeholders in support of master plans and other development activities. Although it is a small town and everyone knows about the conflicts, they are dealt with behind the scenes. Some informants say they are dealt with openly, but most said they were hidden below the surface. This increases the perception of lack of openness and transparency. There is considerable discussion by different stakeholder groups between themselves about needs, but little between stakeholders and ASEZA.

c. Public Participation in Practice:

According to the review on ICZM in Aqaba, the decentralized management system of ASEZA successfully helps to streamline the process of investment in Aqaba. In addition, community leaders and the private sector are described as being fully involved in ASEZA’s process of policy formulation and manage-

ment. However, public participation in these examples refers only to scoping sessions for Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) in preliminary planning of the master plan. According to the field study, many people had been invited to these sessions and their views heard. However, several mentioned that when they asked for the results of the scoping sessions, they were not able to obtain them unless they had connections (*wasta*). Therefore, it was difficult for them to tell whether their views had in fact been taken into account in final plans.

Even ASEZ officials were open in pointing out that public participation is still an abstract concept which must be operationalized, that ASEZA needs to give the public a greater role in reaching consensus on plans for the future development of Aqaba. One official said “ASEZA cannot achieve its goals and objectives without the support of the local community, especially in environmental matters.”

One factor affecting the level of contact and confidence between ASEZA officials and Aqaba residents is that most ASEZA officials come from Amman. They do not bring their families to Aqaba, preferring instead to return to Amman on weekends. They therefore have not become a full part of the local community themselves and are seen as outsiders by Aqaba residents. These views were expressed both by residents of Aqaba and ASEZA and private sector staff “imported” from Amman. Some interviewees expressed their feeling that the former management authority, Aqaba Municipality, had a stronger connection to the needs of the people than does ASEZA.

ASEZA’s focus, as perceived by those interviewed, has been mainly to promote large-scale investment by people from outside Aqaba – either from Amman or from outside Jordan. Although the ASEZA law does emphasize social and economic development, it is felt that ASEZA’s door to the community, the Community Development Directorate has no strategy for poverty alleviation and social development. Nor does it seem as having the technical capacity or rapport with the community to implement such a strategy. The Environment Directorate has had more

direct contact with people and was seen as a good example of staff and programs which take the needs of stakeholders into account.

Generally, the perception among interviewees is that ASEZ has no socioeconomic data on Aqaba residents, and what it does have comes from local NGOs. Information is seen as only available to the privileged. There is no formal process for sharing of information, although being a small town, information does usually pass around quickly.

ASEZA has no communication plan for promoting itself among Aqaba residents, although it has worked hard at promoting investment in the Zone. The various strategic planning documents do not include communication, outreach or participation components.

Interviewees felt that there was still a limited commitment to public participation, even in its simplest form of "consultation", as termed by the EU model described above. Most informants agreed that resources (human and financial) were needed for successful public participation. However, most pointed out that there would be much improvement with a more open and transparent attitude on the part of ASEZA staff, which would result in improved communication and rapport. As one person said "Calling for a general discussion of a meeting does not need much money, only some staff time and effort". Public participation is seen as being only for the elite, those with wasta.

Through the interviewees, a few examples of successful public participation (Box 4) were found. Interviewees pointed out to several examples where lack of public participation has caused at best disappointment in ASEZA as a governing body, or at worst, economic harm to citizens and investors (see Box 5).

Box 4 - Examples of Public Participation in ASEZA

Public participation in environmental impact assessment (EIA): This has been limited to obtaining information from the public, but not reporting the results back to them, nor involving them further in planning and decision making.

Glass boat operators - establishment of safety regulations: In this ASEZ initiative funded by USAID, glass boat operators were invited to discuss the content of new regulations to bring boats up to an approved standard. Operators who were both for and against this regulation were invited to a series of meetings, and all given the chance to express their opinion. Through a process of negotiation and discussion, all eventually agreed to regulation, which resulted in USAID assistance being given to the Jordan Royal Diving Society to provide technical assistance, capacity building and channeling grants to the Aqaba Marine Tourism Cooperative. The glass boat operators are very proud of their role in negotiating realistic and attainable regulations. In general, they abide by these regulations since they had a large part in formulating them. In exchange for following these regulations, they are finding they are now competitive with other boat operators and are able to improve their business opportunities.

Wadi Rum Nature Reserve: In the Zone as a whole, although not in the coastal area, ASEZA has been involved in information collection and developing support for a new system of management in the Wadi Rum (desert area) reserve. This has helped to develop some expertise within ASEZA, but it is still not institutionalized.

The “Environmental Damage Committee”, based at the Marine Park has members from different stakeholder groups. This Committee plays an effective role in environmental issues. Its success is attributed in part to the dedication of the committee members themselves, but also to the leadership of the Environment Directorate, which is open to hearing the views of all committee members.

Monitoring marine population – The Jordan Royal Ecological Diving Society cooperates with the ASEZA Environment and Health Directorate for monitoring of the crown of thorns starfish. Foreign tourists are also involved in a similar project managed by the diving centers and NGOs for monitoring of clown fish.

Public awareness programs sponsored by the Environment Directorate focus on marine life and reef protection.

All of the above programs involve government, through ASEZA. There are two innovative examples where participation and cooperation takes place without government intervention:

Cooperation of divers and Marine Park in monitoring the coral reef, the marine park, and making sure all divers anchor in approved sites. It is in the interest of all divers to preserve the reef; therefore, many of them willingly cooperate with such programs.

Public participation in project planning- Red Crescent Society. The RCS invites beneficiaries to listen and discuss with them their needs. Beneficiaries are forthcoming and even volunteer to organize meetings themselves as long as they feel their voice is being heard and their point of view respected.

Box 5 - Lack of public consultation or participation in ASEZA

The fishing community appears to feel the most disadvantaged with recent changes in the Zone. Their entire fishing area and fishing times have been reduced, with no corresponding development of employment opportunities. In the early 1970s, a fishermen's cooperative was established. One of two projects to be implemented by the cooperative, with no prior consultation with fishermen, was in cooperation with the Jordan Hashemite Fund, providing revolving loans to the fishermen to upgrade their boats. This project ended early due to management changes in the board of the cooperative and is considered "a good project". However, it was felt by several people that if the fishermen had actually been consulted before establishing the project, they would have asked for something else such as a fish packaging factory. There is a sense that the project was forced on them.

Fishermen do not think they are considered key players in "the new ASEZA" and their resentment is felt and sympathized with by the entire community. It is perceived that all the support is provided to the "major stakeholders" such as private beach operators, hotels, Marine Park, and industry. Fishermen also resent that they have been "studied and studied" but nothing good for them has come of it, and they have not even seen the results of these studies.

Al Shalaleh is another area where there appears to be a sense of not being a part of the "new ASEZA" or receiving the benefits of recent developments. This is an undeveloped area on previously government-owned land where some basic development projects were initiated in early 1970. About 15-20,000 people live there, and most lack basic health and education services. It occupies a strategic location on prime real estate. Various surveys have been conducted in recent months, leading residents to the suspicion that they will be removed in favor of investors. ASEZA officials say that the future of Al Shalaleh is under discussion, but there is as yet no plan. In the absence of clear information, rumors abound. There were also rumors of a casino being established in Aqaba, which would go against the morals of the community, but all interviewees who mentioned this subject agreed that in the end it was an untrue rumor.

d. Is public participation important?

Interviewees were asked the question "Is public participation important?". Their answers, in quotes below, are enlightening:

"It might help a bit, but the most important thing is JOBS and business opportunities."

"Jobs are the most important thing, if public participation helps us to communicate our needs with ASEZA then it's good".

"We have to have public participation; otherwise stakeholders can sabotage the best laid plans of ASEZ decision makers."

"Public participation is only for the elite". One ASEZA staff member admitted that most of the above comments were in fact true, and public participation needs to be institutionalized within the framework of all ASEZA activities (not just the Environment Directorate). It should be clearly established within ASEZ policies, not left to decision makers who do not understand its importance. He also emphasized that community education and awareness was needed so that people can participate more effectively.

e. What are road blocks to public participation?

Some people interviewed felt ASEZA did not have means (financial or staffing) for conducting public participation programs; others felt that beyond the Environment Directorate no one in ASEZA had the will or interest in public participation. There is also a perceived lack of coordination between divisions of ASEZA. A recent statement by HM King Abdullah advocating public participation may help to change that opinion (Box 6).

Box 6 - His Majesty King Abdullah, 23/8/2004:

"[Development in Aqaba] is an issue of top priority and Aqaba will see a number of vital investment projects in the coming years that could contribute to improving quality of for citizens in Aqaba...Our vision of complete development in Aqaba can't be materialized in few years. It is a process that takes time and sincere efforts, and it is necessary to get local citizens involved in this process."

f. What are the best tools for PP?

It has been said many times throughout the literature that tools and techniques for participation depend on the specific circumstances, time and goals of a project. There is no prescription for figuring out the best tool, and it varies from one area to the next and from one stage of a project to the next. Many guides are available to work through the best tools, and it is clear from discussions with interviewees in Aqaba that they could benefit from guidance in this area. The interviewees did have some insight into what are the best tools for public participation, as described below, more innovative than the usual tools of public meetings, focus groups, individual contact, etc.

There is no newspaper printed in Aqaba. There is no Aqaba radio station. There is no official or unofficial source of local news. Several people suggested that there should be a local TV station and or newspaper focusing on Aqaba activities and issues. Others suggested the usual techniques such as meetings, round-tables discussions, newsletters, etc. Many understood the value of as much human contact as possible, not relying on media; and one person did suggest site visits to enable people to have better input through discussing a specific site.

Case Study of Aden-Yemen

a. Institutional and Legislative Framework

In Yemen, local councils work alongside executive councils in the governorates and are seen by some as a good vehicle for implementation of ICZM. The PERSGA Strategic Action Plan and ICZM plan for Aden were developed through a consultation process with government, local councils and NGOs. One interviewee pointed out that these councils are active and effective, but not fully representative of the people since they are appointed, not elected. However, they are a step towards having public involvement.

Government and NGOs work closely together in Yemen and promotion of public participation is sometimes carried out through joint activities. In general, however, all those interviewed (including government officials themselves) commented on the common themes of micro-management, bureaucratic procedures, lack of coordination and long procedures for tourism development.

The legal framework in which some laws are ambiguous or contradictory, make it difficult to differentiate between the roles of local and national authorities. Regulations and laws are not always clear and there is sometimes a conflict of interest between government agencies.

b. Understanding of ICZM

According to questionnaire results, most people were aware of ICZM as a term and the concept was fully understood by them. This is due to the fact that several Yemeni people questioned had had been directly involved in preparation or public hearings on the approved ICZM plan. Those who were involved in the preparation of the ICZM plan pointed out that its implementation will promote economically sustainable development.

Areas of conflict were considered to be coastal pollution, over fishing, and private land ownership on the coast. The last area was mentioned by several people.

c. Public Participation in Practice in Yemen

As noted earlier, despite inconsistencies in some of the data from Yemen, some broad conclusions can be drawn about public participation in ICZM. Detailed assessment requires more in-depth personal interviews which were not possible.

Most informants agreed on the following principles:

- Public participation needs to be effectively implemented and enhanced.
- To achieve public participation, the following criteria must be met:
 - sincere political will
 - sufficient financial and technical resources allocated
 - awareness needed of the concept, purpose and benefits of public participation.
- Integrated coastal zone management is important in order to preserve the environment.
- Tourism development must be accelerated.

Overall, people thought they understood the aims of public participation. However, it appeared that many understood it as “public awareness”. Most people said that public participation was not widespread.

Several people said that many ongoing projects are self-sustainable and sufficient due to monitoring and evaluation and effective participation of the local councils. One person commented “Now people are being consulted, they weren’t before.” It was explained by another that the move was towards more power for local councils and “if decision makers stick to their commitment it will succeed”. Another person said, “The participation process is done only between the implementer and the concerned authority, there is no coordination with all stakeholders.” A few successful examples of public participation were given (see Box 7).

One informant who said there was a lack of public participation said, “We still suffer from the lack of law enforcement in what’s related to protect the environment.” No specific examples were given of lack of public participation.

In general, one can conclude that public participation has been limited partly due to the lack of understanding of the benefits of participation. There is no real commitment by government to public participation. There is some hope that participation will expand, but also some cynicism that this will in fact happen.

The concept of ICZM was fully understood by most informants, who also were aware and had even had input into the approved ICZM plan.

Box 7 - Examples of public participation in Yemen

- **ICZM Plan** prepared with participation of 40 organizations, including government, NGOs
- The local community was involved in the project on Swan Lake in Khhor Baker; through an Aden-based NGO
- Local residents report violations of water well rules to the water authority
- There is promotion of water use efficiency through mosques
- The Aden City Development Project in Aden Governorate – this project was mentioned by some as being “very effective”
- A tree planting project, which also provided income generation
- A shrimp project in al Lhya, in Al Hodyda governorate
- The water authority routinely consults stakeholders, according to its water authority staff

d. Is public participation important?

Most people expressed their view that public participation was important. However, one would expect that people would answer this way, given they knew the focus of the survey was on public participation. One person gave perhaps a more “honest” answer; he said “if we consult the local community, it will delay the process of project implementation.” When then asked, “Are some stakeholders excluded?” he said that in fact they were not excluded and should be involved. He said “we should have environmental awareness so that they will be involved.” These statements reflect an ambiguous view commonly found towards public participation, as well as a misperception of what it means – i.e., more than “public awareness”.

Other informants clearly understood and supported the process of public participation. One person expressed his view that “we need to think of the common interest instead of the personal interests.”

Informants wrote about key stakeholders, and mainly focused on the community itself, local councils and government agencies. It was not clear from the questionnaires what role NGOs played, except that they were mentioned when successful participatory activities were described.

e. What are the roadblocks to public participation?

Those surveyed listed the following roadblocks to effective public participation:

- Lack of financial resources
- Limited time of the local community to contribute
- Unclear government mandate – it is not clear if public participation is in fact acceptable to the government
- Ineffective management, which needs to be supported by capacity building
- Competition between stakeholders
- Lack of information on stakeholders
- Lack of law enforcement

f. What are the best tools for public participation?

Yemenis interviewed provided a number of suggestions of their favored techniques for public participation:

- Visual interactive lectures, videos, PP presentations, media
- Constant communication
- Field visits
- General discussion
- Participation in decision making
- Founding community committees
- Establishing a center to manage the local communities
- Form committees to monitor damage and establish a plan to clean up the coast
- Continued discussion with stakeholders
- Avoid bureaucracy
- Invite stakeholders to submit project proposals then award them based on their areas of specialization so they can do them well

Analysis and Recommendations

I-Discussions

In both countries, there are only a few examples of successful public participation in ICZM at various levels, from simply obtaining the public's opinion, to involvement in decision making.

In Aqaba, the Environment Directorate was mentioned by many as the Directorate which listens to the various stakeholders, and its involvement in public participation in EIA was noted by many as a positive role. Although there is no legal mandate for public participation, clearly some staff are committed to the concept. However, the understanding of "what is public participation" and "how do we do it" is still very limited and capacity building is needed in addition to overall financial resources in order to assist ASEZA with developing mechanisms and tools for successful public participation.

In Yemen, the legal base is there as the ICZM plan includes a special clause on public participation; however, there is lack of capacity in both human resources as well as financial resources. The limited public participation initiatives were very encouraging.

In Yemen and Jordan, full public participation, or "engagement" as in the Australian model is still a relatively new concept, and even causes some nervousness among some citizens and government officials. ICZM is in fact an excellent mechanism with which to promote good governance and public participation. Several interviewees expressed their view that promoting public participation is more successful when it comes along with the potential for improvement to the natural environment, and even when it brings improved incomes and livelihood.

Box 8 - Examples of responses:

Most informants agreed on the following principles:

"Officially, the government supports public participation; however, this support is not translated into the working documents and procedures of government."

One informant who said there was a lack of public participation said, "We still suffer from the lack of law enforcement in what's related to protect the environment."

Another person said, "The participation process is done only between the implementer and the concerned authority, there is no coordination with all stakeholders."

2-The effectiveness of the ICZM plans in promoting good governance process and public participation.

Institutional and legislative frame work

Although “PP makes sense” (Bruch et al., 2004, p. 19), it cant be implemented in vacuum (Desai, 2002). Hence, you need a will. A study of the UNDP on participatory development concluded that the most important precondition for participatory projects is political will (SURF-AS, 1999). If there is no will, it must be generated (McGlashan, 2000). On a closer reading of the results, it is possible to see that there is a will, which is a positive sign. The Government of Yemen approved the ICZM Plan including the PP clause and King Abdullah of Jordan made this clear when he recently stressed the necessity to get local citizens involved in ASEZA’s operations (Royal H. Court, 2004).

Recommendation:

It is very important to have the political will, it is a powerful energy to push the PP process. It should be fully utilised, especially in the case of Jordan. In Yemen, the political will has been generated in the preparation of the ICZM plan. Work should continue, we should not lose the momentum.

Institutional and legislative frame work

In Jordan the Community Development Directorate, under the supervision of Commissioner for Investment and Economic Development, is the only ASEZA division with a mandate to work directly with the community.

In ASEZA, there is no legal mandate for public participation beyond a requirement for public participation in EIA, and in some cases requirements from external donors for some specific projects.

Whilst in Yemen, as noted earlier, there is a legal status under a clause in the ICZM National Plan exclusively for PP. However, there is no implementation plan to

activate the law. Of the 24 surveyed, 67 % agreed that an implementation plan is crucial to move ahead with PP process, as having the law alone is not enough. This is confirmed by Bruch (2002) as he noted that constitutions and laws offer broad and powerful tools for ensuring peoples voice is heard in sustainable development (SD). However, to date these tools are under utilised. A recent IUCN study (ADB & IUCN , 2003) showed that the lack of legal framework to support effective PP of all stakeholders is one the main obstacles facing ICZM.

Recommendation:

In Jordan work should start to include PP in the framework of ASEZA. There are many initiatives in the country working on the ‘new reform’ (WEF, 2004) they should be utilised to move this process forward. In Yemen, it should be done in an effective participatory approach that includes all stakeholders including marginal groups. This could be used as a case to build on and develop PP best practice model

Understanding the role of PP in ICZM

The PP concept is clear in Jordan. However, although there is knowledge, people do not act on that knowledge. Hence, more work should be done to explore the best way to generate act. This lack of will could be due to two reasons: people are frustrated due to weak economic performance, as they linked it to ‘jobs’, or that they are not used to it.

In Yemen it is only partially clear. In general, informants were confused; when asked what is PP, one of them said “what is PP?! It is PP, with a big laugh”. PP is not a charity work, neither it is a one day activity (Parfitt, 2004). It is a process. It is about the ‘right to know’ (Stiglitz, 2002). As one of the interviewees in Jordan noted “even if stakeholders were not asked to participate, they should impose themselves and find a way, it is their right”

Recommendation:

In both countries, public awareness programmes should be conducted to educate people about PP and their right to participate and its relationship to their well being and dignity. A person can be rich, healthy and well educated; yet with out the ability to participate in the decisions affecting his life and to enjoy the respect of others in the community, human development is impeded. Knowing the political situation in the region, initiatives in this regard should be locally generated, remembering that gaining trust is rule number one in PP. Moreover, PP cannot be imposed; change has to come from within (Stiglitz, 2002). Regional co-operation programmes could be established in this regards

Human Resources

Hence you need qualified people with special charisma who are capable of dealing with such complexities .As one of the informants said “you need to have qualified people with a positive attitude”.

In ASEZA, the Environment Directorate was mentioned as the Directorate which listens to the various stakeholders. Its involvement in public participation in EIA was noted by many as a positive role. Although there is no legal mandate for public participation, clearly some staff are committed to the concept. However, the understanding of “what is public participation” and “how do we do it” is still very limited and capacity building is needed. However, as acknowledged by the SAP document, Jordan as a country has human resources in this field. ASEZA need to utilize the national capacity to strengthen this point.

Yemen, on the other hand, could exchange experience with Jordan. Integration on national and regional levels is a corner stone of ICZM (French, 2004; McGlashan, 2000). In the same vein, both countries have established ‘PP for ICZM’ centres, i.e. they are equipped in terms of machines and basic needs for PP. Both centres include multimedia equipment, public library, hotline, computer centre, etc.

The role of champions/opponents

It is important to identify those individuals who have the trust and respect of certain groups of the stakeholders and to build their support for ICZM (Jones et al., 2001). In Jordan, it was clear that having a senior official in ASEZA whose door is always open for all stakeholders minimised the effect of the weakness of PP practices.

Recommendation:

Training needs assessment should be conducted for the staff in charge of PP, and training programmes should be designed accordingly. Several training institutions are available in Jordan and are able to customise special training courses upon the required needs. Prices are affordable and ASEZA could fund such programmes. ASEZA might be interested in initiating a regional training programme. This will enhance the regional exchange of experience.

Stakeholder analysis

ICZM by default is a participation approach. For it to be successful it has involve all interested parties. The national ICZM team, as I noted earlier, includes representatives of 44 organisations. It is easy to say that every one should be involved, however, it is also crucial to conduct stakeholder analysis (Johnson & Dagg, 2003).

Recommendation:

Professional stakeholder analysis should be conducted in both countries. This issue is currently of particular important for Yemen as they need to initiate this process before the preparation of the implementation plan.

“PP causes delay”

It was mentioned that one of the main roadblocks for PP is that it causes delay in the implementation process. However, it was not proved that less participation yields results more quickly (Stiglitz, 2002).

Recommendation:

The best recommendation on this issue is what Simon et al. (2002, p25) said based on their experience in a PP project "...we experienced the many complexities and delays inherent in participatory projects; nevertheless, we believed this goal to be worth pursuing" (Simon et al., 2002, p 25).

Exchange of information

Opportunity for feedback to the participants on their input is a vital for PP. In ASEZA-Jordan, even with the only PP practice (the EIA scoping sessions) there was no feed back. However, in Yemen, the national ICZM secretariat has already started in training their administrative staff to ensure feedback mechanism.

Moreover, although both countries have state-of-the-art GIS units, neither have social profiles of stakeholders.

Recommendation:

The state-of-the-art units for ICZM are an advantage that both countries have. These units should be utilised.. This should not be a difficult task as qualified human resources are also available.

3- Best practice model for Public Participation in ICZM for the RSGA region

As noted earlier in this report, there is not one perfect blueprint which will give us successful public participation. There is not a "right" and a "wrong" answer to the question "How do we use public participation to promote ICZM in Aqaba and coastal Yemen".

The main task facing planners who wish to promote public participation is gain the trust of all stakeholders. In both Yemen and Aqaba, there is some skepticism about "what the authority is doing for me", and this needs to be overcome in order to ensure full public participation. Public participation cannot be implemented in a vacuum. The first and foremost requirement for successful public participation is to ensure that the agency promoting public participation is already providing and fulfilling its promise services to the stakeholder. For example, ASEZA can work to involve businessmen more in planning for future ASEZ development; but as long as registration for their business takes longer than they feel is necessary, ASEZA is not likely to gain the trust of some members of the business community. Transparency and accountability are also crucial elements to gaining trust.

Development of a participation strategy for the coastal areas of Jordan and Yemen is a necessity and it should include the following steps, all of which should include participation of the stakeholders themselves:

- Stakeholder assessment
- Creating a **communication and participation strategy** with stakeholder participation
- Obtaining acceptance and "buy-in" from all stakeholders to the strategy

The most important task facing planners for integrated coastal zone management in these areas is to develop a **participation strategy** which is an integral part of the resource management and communication strategy. It is highly recommended that there be one comprehensive communication and participation strategy. Deciding on the degree of participation for

the specific circumstances will be one of the main challenges in developing this strategy.

The best practice models reviewed earlier in have been used as the basis for a tailored best practice model for public participation in ICZM in Aqaba and Yemen (see Annex B). Most of the principles are the same for both countries; where they are more applicable to one or the other, they are noted.

4-ICZM Plan and Poverty Alleviation

Aqaba Tourism Sector

Tourism is fully recognized as an extremely important sector in Aqaba. Tourist operators, especially smaller operators, expressed their feeling that they were not fully consulted in formulation of development plans for Aqaba.

They also complained that tourism promotion was taking a back seat to investment promotion, and that besides businessmen coming to Aqaba, the tourism industry was going towards “cheap package tourism”. They felt this brought in undesirable tourists, who did not care for the environment, nor respected local culture and heritage. In addition, people on package tours tend to spend little additional money; their room and board is covered in hotel costs.

The military beach previously open to Jordanians had been allocated, according to several informants, for “Hungarians”. Some felt that this actually discouraged internal Jordanian tourism. Tourism has increased in Aqaba, and the development of large tourist centers such as the Tala Bay complex will no doubt provide jobs for Aqaba. However, little is known about these plans, as they are not shared with the “average Aqaba resident”.

In Aqaba, several people said “visually, the town has improved, Aqaba looks nicer, but really there’s no difference in the lives of most citizens.” ASEZA promotional materials (2004) point to a variety of indicators of growth in the Zone, including an 800%

cumulative increase in licensed construction, average annual growth in flights of 65%, and average annual growth of 72% in cargo entering the Zone. It is not known if a detailed socioeconomic study has been conducted to measure the impact on Aqaba residents of the Zone; however, the increased growth would have had some impact, at least, on income levels. At the same time, however, people complain about increased prices and limited housing opportunities.

For purposes of this study, we are relying on people’s perceptions of improved livelihood as a result of ICZM. The fishermen would argue that “if ICZM means reducing the fishing area and time, then it certainly isn’t improving my livelihood”. An environmentalist may argue that ASEZA master planning is not, in fact, ICZM. Nevertheless, semantics aside, fishermen definitely do not feel that they have benefited from the developments in ASEZA. The Marine Park, in the view of the fishermen, view, simply took prime fishing land, without any consultation. They feel they should at the very least be given the opportunity to find alternative jobs, such as craftsmen or maintenance men for the Marine Park itself.

When asked if they thought that public participation could in fact help to improve their livelihood, some people said they thought it could, others said “well, public participation is OK, but the most important thing should be increasing job opportunities.” All participants were much more comfortable with promoting public participation in activities which brought income generating opportunities. Some felt the benefits were more indirect, that by engaging people we will get more information and be better able to meet their needs.

Glass boat operators, on the other hand, were very supportive of the concept of using public participation to increase livelihood. They feel their project is a direct example of this effect. The hotel owners see a side benefit to them of this project, as it has limited the previously great numbers of glass bottom boats dominating their beaches.

In the investment sector overall, people felt that many employment and income-generating opportunities

may have been missed due to lack of support for investors, especially local investors.

In conclusion, no socioeconomic data was made available, and may not even exist, which quantifies whether or not livelihoods in Aqaba have improved. Certainly, since there is not an Integrated Coastal Zone Management Plan, one cannot say that ICZM has had an effect on economic development. Some fishermen see locations such as the Marine Park as having a negative effect on their livelihoods. However, one positive example is that of the glass bottom boat operators, where improving coastal zone management (in effect, ICZM) also improved their livelihoods.

Yemen Tourism Sector

Tourism is considered an underdeveloped sector in Yemen with great potential for the future. Therefore, a good portion of the questionnaire focused on tourism, its importance to the community, ideas for future development, and eco-tourism. One informant described the purpose of tourism as “providing all of the required circumstances and environment for tourism to develop which will affect the economy positively.”

All agreed that tourism should be beneficial to local community without harming the environment. Many agreed that ecotourism should be promoted, especially marine tourism and expressed the desire to avoid random and ad hoc planning. To date, there is a lack of government and NGO plans and project or awareness of citizens of importance of tourism. There are excellent sites, both marine sites and archaeological sites, but no development of them for tourism. Yemenis do not want tourism that will bring negative influences such as night clubs and bars. They want to be sure that tourism will fully protect the rights of all stakeholders.

There were several specific suggestions for future tourism development which do involve some level of public participation (or at the very least, communication and consultation):

- Ensure that full EIAs are conducted for tourism projects
- Involve public by launching tourism benefits awareness campaign
- Unify efforts between all relevant government agencies and link them with NGOs and communities
- Involve local councils and inform them of tourism development plans

Reportedly, more recent ICZM projects in Yemen have a poverty alleviation component; an attempt was made through the Strategic Action Plan to implement this. All people questioned on this subject were highly enthusiastic about the potential for public participation in ICZM to contribute to the livelihood of the public. However, there was no data available to quantify whether this in fact was happening in practice.

Annex I: Selected Models of Public Participation

The European Commission Model

This study, titled “Participation in the ICZM Processes: Mechanisms and Procedures Needed” (King, 1999), describes criteria and principles which were found most necessary to ensure successful public participation leading to sustainable ICZM activities and programs in EC countries (1999). The overarching conclusion of the study was that participation is an essential ingredient of ICZM. The study describes public participation as a continuum, starting from simple cooperation of stakeholders to full participation, where stakeholders are full partners in the process of identifying, planning, managing and evaluating projects.

There is no ideal model, nor one blueprint for participation. Even in EC countries, most of which have a well established PP process, few projects had a participation strategy which fully integrated with the ICZM process, with explicit targeted aims and review. Most projects focused more on having an extensive consultation process, with a smaller degree of sharing responsibility for activities with stakeholders. The range of mechanisms and techniques for participation vary according to the local circumstances and stages of the project, and the level of participation. The six various levels of participation are described in the report as follows:

At one end of the continuum, **consultation**:

1. Minimum legal requirements – public notification, right of information, etc.
2. Information-giving – newsletters, media, etc.
3. Information gathering – surveys, public meetings, etc.

At the other end of the continuum, participation:

4. Joint working – networking, community mapping, topic groups, etc.
5. Shared decisions – partnerships, consensus building, etc.
6. Empowerment – conflict resolution, delegation, capacity building, etc.

The ideal would be to aim for No. 6, “empowerment”, in all activities, but in reality, local circumstances and the overall aims of the project activity will dictate which level of participation is chosen.

The EC reports describes a series of principles and criteria which will bring one to a successful PP model. These have been combined into “best practices” and are summarized below:

- **An open-minded learning and communication style**, with stakeholders and project managers open to creative resolution of differences, and establishment of trust between them (through effective leadership using extensive personal contact) i.e., effective leadership)
- **A participation strategy** is developed, which presents a clear process for enabling participation, moves forward in incremental steps each designed to allow the maximum opportunity for input, comment, debate and revision
- **Representation of all stakeholders**, including outreach to those who might initially oppose the project
Recognizing *value of non-technical knowledge or local wisdom*

- **Utilizing multidisciplinary approach**
- The process is open and transparent
- **Adaptation to local circumstances** of mechanisms and techniques
- **Measurable indicators** are included and monitored
- **Adequate resource allocation** – human, financial, and time
- **Integration** with the overall planning process
- **Political and financial commitment** of national and regional government departments and agencies
- **Information management** – accuracy and distribution - nourishes the participatory process
- **Capacity building** is included - Individual training and institutional strengthening are needed for all stakeholders to participate to their full potential
- **Multi-disciplinary staff and stakeholders** working together

Participation is not a panacea; it cannot solve all problems on its own. The need for support at all levels of government is crucial to successful public participation. For example, for successful ICZM in EC countries, the following institutional supported is listed as necessary for participation:

- From the EC clear guidance and funding support is needed to national governments to support role of participation and access to information
- From governments of Member States through national strategies and guidelines and funding support for regional and local levels
- From NGOs and their international bodies and partnerships by stimulating concern, awareness, involvement and collective action
- The report also points out that participation is difficult to sustain in the long-term and it should not be seen as a replacement for strong regulatory bodies which will exercise their statutory functions to ensure
- appropriate integrated coastal management.

Some additional aspects which, according to the EC report, should be considered are:

- PP at community level needs special scrutiny and careful planning, using special mechanisms – should be kept as simple as possible
- Conventional techniques are sound and useful, but participation staff should be open to more innovative practices
- Links with universities and colleges can be helpful to the participatory process

According to the report, development of a participation strategy will include the following steps:

- Scoping
- Involving the stakeholders
- Deciding on the degree of participation
- Defining the wider process
- Creating the participation strategy
- Choosing the right mechanism
- Publicizing the program

These steps should all take place with full participation of the stakeholders.

The exact mechanisms used in a public participation activity will depend on a variety of factors, including the overall purpose of the activity, resources available (time, staffing, finances) and target group characteristics.

The “Australia model”

The Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry Australian commissioned consultants to develop a toolkit for public participation entitled: “Terms of Engagement: A toolkit for community engagement for the Murray-Darling Basin” (Aislin and Brown, 2003). This is designed for a specific project, but is an excellent guide for anyone working in the area of public participation. In addition to a description of principles of participation and participatory tools, it includes a useful annotated reference to participatory development sources.

The key to this model is the word “engagement”. “Engagement” is used instead of “participation”. Participation is considered to be simple “involvement” in activities such as attending events, writing letters, speaking up at public hearings, etc. “Engagement” goes further than participation and involvement, and implies that “people’s attention is occupied and their efforts are focused on the matter at hand”.

For purposes of this paper, we will use the term “engagement” only within this section describing the Australia model. We will continue to use the word “participation” to mean “full involvement, including engagement” of stakeholders in the planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation process.

According to the Australia model, “good practice community engagement” includes a “wide range of practices suited to different situations or purposes guided by a common set of values, principles and criteria”. It focuses on processes – not just one step, one decision. This is similar to the EU description, in which it advocates constant evaluation and adjustment of programs and processes.

A set of principles, criteria and values have been developed for the MDB and have been summarized below into best practices which can be used as a basis for a model for public participation in Jordan and Yemen:

- **Act for change** – aim to make a difference
- **Have realistic and practical goals** – be sure all partners have capacity to play their agreed part
- **Inclusiveness and full representation** – don’t leave out important stakeholders, actively seek new people to be involved, not just the usual “up-front” people, or the elite
- **Base processes on negotiation, cooperation and collaboration** – do not come with prescribed solution
- **Accept that mutual learning is needed** – no one has all the answers – listen and learn, show respect for others
- **Role model** Commission values in all engagement apply the values and set an example for others
- **Develop, commit to a shared vision** – establish common ground and try to get others to commit to it – government, NGOs, citizens, and other stakeholders
- **Commit to working toward long-term goals** – it may take time – do not get discouraged by slow process
- **Equity, equality and trust** – treat people fairly and without discrimination – build trust by behaving in an ethical and respectful way, and sticking to the values and principles.
- **Openness and transparency**
- **Tailor scale and scope of involvement** - on stakeholders assess who really needs to act on outcomes to make a difference
- **Personalized** – use face-to-face process where possible – don’t rely on indirect communication or just written word – tailor communication to suit different people and knowledge cultures
- **Strategic, outcomes focus** – work to an agreed vision and clear goals and objectives
- **Supported by good information and communication** – aim for a common basis of knowledge and understanding provide information early and clearly, and accurately
- **Opportunity for involvement throughout** – involve people as early as possible and keep them involved
- **Commitment from players and ownership of the process** – ensure participants are listened to and have real decision making responsibility wherever possible
- **Sufficient time and resources for the purpose** – do a realistic assessment of time and resources needed

In the Australia model, as in the EU model, a wide range of tools and techniques is described, all of which are useful under specific circumstances. There is no “correct answer” for which tool should be used for which occasion. The only “rule” is that tools and techniques must be tailored to the specific requirements of the program, depending on the purpose of the engagement process, nature of people you want to engage, constraints you face, history of issues you are dealing with, who has decision-making power or responsibility and how much they can devolve or assign to others. Tools will also vary according to stages of the engagement process. Tools described in detail in this document include:

- General public involvement and participation
- Negotiation and conflict resolution
- Information, education and extension
- Rapid and Participatory Rural Appraisal
- Stakeholder analysis and social profiling
- Survey and interview
- Planning and visioning
- Team building and leadership
- Participatory Action Research
- Deliberative democracy
- Lobbying and campaigning
- Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation

In sum, according to the MDB toolkit, for good practice community engagement, in sum, you need to:

1. Apply the best practices throughout your project
2. Match tools to purposes
3. Match tools to decision making stages
4. Work around the decision making cycle

Annex 2: Best Practice Model for Jordan and Yemen

Focus on one or two main goals:

Two possible ones for both Aqaba and Yemen would be:

- **Income generating activities.** The need for this was expressed in both countries, and it is one of the best ways to gain trust of the stakeholders for future activities.

- **Bring the decision makers on board** – Most decision makers see public participation as, at best, an impediment to efficient planning and implementation, and, at worst, as a threat to their own power. In Aqaba, one of the main stumbling blocks to full public participation is the indifference of ASEZA officials. Innovative means are needed to convince decision makers of the need for funding and implementation of public participation. Any communication and participation strategy should consider decision makers as one of the most important target groups.

Know your stakeholders.

Study them carefully. Listen to them—all of them, including those against your project, and those who don't usually speak up. Select key stakeholders and target groups early on. Don't avoid the difficult groups; embrace them. In Aqaba, consider focusing on the residents of Al Shalaleh and the fishermen, who appear to be the most disenchanted of the Aqaba residents. If you can win them to your side, you will bring on much of the rest of the city.

Increase communication and cooperation between “outsiders” and Aqaba residents.

This is crucial in ASEZA. Mechanisms used could even include certain occasions which promote better social contact; perhaps including incentives for “outsiders” to bring their families to Aqaba more often and become a more integral part of the community. The proposed establishment of a private school may also be a small step towards encouraging some families to move to Aqaba.

Be realistic and start small, but at the same time be bold.

It is tempting in both countries to say “well, public participation is not common here; we have to start with public awareness then gradually work up to participation.” This has already been proven false through the success of the glass bottom boat operators' project in Aqaba and the lobster conservation project in Yemen. To win and sustain the trust of stakeholders, one must not raise expectations higher than one can deliver. Be careful with people's time and money.

Respect your counterparts, your stakeholders.

It sounds obvious, but many a program has bogged down due to the program staff considering themselves more knowledgeable than other stakeholders, and being unwilling to listen to them. **Do not patronize them.** The fishermen, for example, in Aqaba, are tired of being “informed” and “questioned” They don't want more general discussions to obtain their views. They want direct involvement in establishment of policies affecting their livelihood.

Document and promote your successes.

In Aqaba, word of mouth helps to quickly disseminate information. However, many people pointed to a lack of written information on ASEZA activities and plans. Rumors abound in the absence of clear and definite information.

Identify and use good “change agents”

In Yemen, His Excellency, **Ali Abdallah Saleh**, The President of the Republic of Yemen has publicly supported the ICZM Plans. In Aqaba, the Environment Commissioner, according to many interviewees, is highly respected by the community and at the forefront of change. Use people like this to promote and implement public participation.

Start early and never stop.

A communication and participation strategy should be developed at the same time as any new activity is planned – not once funding has been received and the project has started. Donor agencies make this same mistake over and over, and are followed by governments in this error. For example, the public participation component of the Strategic Action Plan was the last component to be developed and implemented, causing delays in successful implementation of other components. Public participation should continue through the monitoring and evaluation process.

Do not raise expectations higher than what you can deliver.

Make it clear what you are asking of stakeholders. Are you merely informing them? That's fine, just make sure they know that, and you keep them informed. Are you asking for their input/involvement? If so, what's in it for them? Are you asking for their full participation/“engagement”? Again, if so, what's in it for them?

Keep the information flow going.

Stakeholders cannot participate responsibly if they do not have information. They do not trust the agency asking for participation if they do not have information about what that agency is doing. In both Yemen and ASEZA, greater transparency of plans and decision making will go a long way to bringing the people on board. For example, in Aqaba, everyone knows there is a Master Plan, but hardly anyone has actually seen it. Could the map outlining the Master Plan be posted in a public building for all to view?

Do not wait for governments.

NGOs have historically been at the forefront of public participation and often have the reputation for being “closer to the people” with a better understanding of their needs. Aqaba is no exception to this concept. Beyond NGOs, private sector groups can share information, start projects together, cooperate in presenting their needs and views to ASEZA or the Government of Yemen.

Integrate with other activities.

A participation and communication strategy must take into account other demands on people’s attention and time, and other behavioral changes stakeholders are being encouraged to make. Ideally, an overall participation and communication strategy for all activities within ASEZA/Yemen coastal zone should be developed which ensures consistency and continuity throughout all activities. The strategy should also be consistent with other strategies, such as natural resources management.

Ensure adequate resource allocation, including capacity building and institutional strengthening.

Budgets and staffing were not studied in depth for this report. It is clear that many people do understand the concept of public participation and are familiar with many of the tools. However, implementing “real” public participation, not “public awareness” is a challenge which requires certain expertise. By the same token, it does not always require communication and/or social science specialists. Many engineers, scientists and others, by nature of their personal rapport with people, are naturally able to bring others on board with their plans and activities.

Gain loyalty.

This is slightly different from gaining credibility and trust. Loyalty can be gained through simple means. For example, Aqaba residents are not happy they no longer have easy access to beaches. ASEZA could look into way to encourage/subsidize bus service to the public beaches on the South Coast. It would be a simple, possibly relatively inexpensive gesture, which would show “We care about you”. One interviewee suggested that small incentives such as giving t-shirts could help to bring people on board with participatory activities.

Understand and avoid bureaucracy and politics.

We can never totally avoid bureaucracy or politics. However, the point here is not to get bogged down in either. This seems to be a particularly important issue to Yemeni government officials.

Institutionalize public participation.

In both Yemen and Jordan, public participation is not historically a common development tool, nor is it legally required except in some cases of environmental impact assessment. The more it becomes a legal and moral requirement, the closer it comes to being the norm, not the exception to the rule.

Outline clear roles and responsibilities.

This suggestion came from several people in Yemen, and must be considered. It is closely tied to the issue of avoiding bureaucracy.

Monitor, evaluate, redesign, monitor, evaluate, redesign - again and again.

These are repeated twice for a reason. Monitoring and evaluation is a continuous process, with constant adjustment. A program based on clear baseline indicators should be established in the earliest stages of a project.

Be flexible.

Adapt mechanisms and techniques to local circumstances. Tailor scale and scope of involvement. Assess who really needs to act on outcomes to make a difference and target that group or groups.

Develop, commit to a shared vision

and goals with strategic outcome and focus. Establish common ground and try to get others to commit to it – government, NGOs, citizens, and other stakeholders. Political and financial commitment of national and regional government departments and agencies is crucial.

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