

HOW-TO-NOTE: HOW DO WE ORGANIZE A PUBLIC HEARING?

Short summary of proposed steps to be taken:

1. Plan the organization of the Public Hearing
2. Organize the Public Hearing
3. Follow-up activities

1. Steps for planning the Public Hearing

Identify the target audience

Taking into account the goal and main issue of the Public Hearing, this event may serve as a platform for drawing the interest of all the members of the community, but especially of those who will be directly influenced (affected) by the decisions that should follow after the Public Hearing.

It is important to involve all the members of the community, regardless of gender, ethnicity, wealth, etc. The wider participation of the public at the event, including of persons with special needs should allow the collection of relevant information for all the categories of population and correspondingly better informed decisions / identified solutions; this would also influence positively the potential involvement of people in the implementation process of the taken decisions. In this respect, it is very important to ensure access including for people with disabilities, single mothers, etc.

Simultaneously, complementary tools that will help diminish some limitations of organizing school public hearings is applying "Stakeholder Engagement Sheets" and present the results directly in the event.

Welcome the exchange of experience with educational institutions which have held public events; their lessons learned are extremely valuable and can provide a good basis for organizing a successful event that will bring you the desired results. Many of the case studies can be found on the official website of the 'My School': <http://scoalamea.md/category/istorii-de-succes> either by taking direct link with educational institutions concerned, beneficiaries of this project.

Determine the date, hour and place for holding the event

The Public Hearing should take place on a day and at an hour convenient for all the invited participants. It should be considered the fact that the event usually lasts about 1,5 - 2,5 hours and it is important to ensure a wide participation.

It should be noted that organizing the school public hearing on the draft budget of the school should be linked to the budget calendar set, which was officially adopted for the corresponding year. Thus, usually the School Public hearings are planned to take place in the first half of October.

Select and create the Organizational Council

The Organizational Council of the Public Hearing usually involves the members of the Local Council, representatives of the school administration who are in charge of developing and implementing the budget of the institution and the representatives of the City Hall.

It is important to actively involve each member of the Organizational Council at all the stages of preparing the event. A critical role is given to the effective and operative communication process; also to the clear and well-defined tasks to be performed by each member and clearly set deadlines. In this sense, it is important to develop a detailed action plan (please see a template in Annex 1).

The Organizational Council is directly responsible for planning and organizing the Public Hearings, sets the format of the event, the rules of holding the event (which are publicly mentioned including at the beginning of the event). Those who will want to speak during the event should timely register and they should be given floor according to the set order. The Secretary in charge of making the Minutes of the event will note exactly 'who and what' was proposed. In this case a recorder would be recommended.

Prepare the agenda and the rules for holding the event

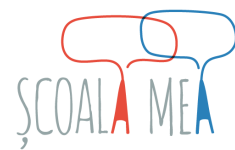
The Organizational Council develops the agenda of the Public Hearing, which should contain

information on the issues to be discussed, the moderator of the event, presenters and time given for each presentation (on average about 5 - 10 minutes for each intervention); plan sufficient time to present the key results of the "Stakeholder Engagement Sheets" and graphical visualization of key results; moreover, it should be planned sufficient time for the suggestions and recommendations or comments from the public.

Active engagement of all stakeholders requires invitation and participation in the planned public hearing of the district Chairman and the Head of the District Directorate of Education. In this respect, enough time will be allocated in the agenda of the event (at least 10-15 minutes) for a presentation by both the district Chairman and the Head of the District Directorate of Education on the situation of general primary education institutions at the district level, what is the share of the local educational institution in relation to other institutions in the district, what are the institution's development prospects and how the institution can benefit from the funds of the administrative-territorial unit, including presenting concrete examples in this respect.

The parties will be invited at least one month before holding the public hearing so that they can plan their participation in advance, after learning about the importance of participation and having sufficient time to prepare the necessary presentations for the event. Subsequently, at least 3 days before the date of the event a repeated notification will be sent asking for confirmation of attendance.

It is considered a best practice, whenever possible to invite for participation in this event representatives of educational institutions which already have experience in organizing public hearings and giving them floor for a short intervention (about 5 minutes) to talk about their lessons learned; including offering the opportunity



to participate in the event for representatives of other educational institutions who would like to set up such practices in their communities.

At the end, it should be allocated time for the summary of results of the Public Hearing and informing the participants on the follow-up actions. At the same time it should be mentioned the additional period of time given for any additional comments or suggestions especially for those members of the community who were not able to attend the event on the set date, as well as where they should be submitted.

The Organizational Council should establish well in advance clear rules for holding the Public Hearing. The named rules (together with the prepared leaflets and other distributive materials) should be distributed in advance (at least a week) as well as be available during the event. The participants should be given possibility to register for holding an intervention also during the whole event.

Announcing the public

Usually the Organizational Council announces the organization of the Public Hearing at least a week in advance by making a public note that should be placed on the web-sites, as well as on the information panel of the City Hall, the school, the local press agency, etc. At the same time the note should be published and distributed in the local mass media (newspapers, TV posts, radio, etc.). In this respect it would be welcome the involvement of local CSOs, initiative groups and youth.

Moreover, it is important to distribute the named note to all the parents of children who are enrolled in the named school.

The note should contain information on the date, hour, place, the subject of the Public Hearing and the contact persons as well as their contact details. A positive practice is to include a quote from an

official who will be present at the event about the importance of organizing School public hearings. Key successes achieved to mention at this stage, with brief elucidation of concrete cases.

The Organizational Council will prepare informational sets easy to understand by any community member (leaflets containing the brief draft school budget, other distributive materials). The named informational sets should be distributed well in advance as well made available at the beginning of the event. The public note should also contain information on where may be obtained the informational sets.

It should be noted that the organization of the Public Hearing on the draft school budget should be correlated with the set budgetary calendar officially adopted for the corresponding year.

Before the Public hearings, officials should ensure that all aspects of the matter were openly discussed. Also, it is recommended to hold a meeting prior the event, organized by the organizing committee, including administration of the educational institution to analyze and discuss the preliminary results of applying the "Stakeholder Engagement Sheets" and determine the key results to be presented during the public hearing, including appointment of responsible persons for the preparation and presentation of visual materials. Public hearings provide valuable information on the extent to which the named issues enjoy public support and the necessary changes to make them more acceptable to the public.

2. Steps for holding the Public Hearing

There are mainly 3 important steps:

1. Prepare the room, the necessary equipment and verify that it works well, the lighting and the registration table, etc.
2. Set and make clear the roles of each member of the Organizational Council

during the event, including the Moderator's role, the Secretary's role, etc.

3. Prepare and announce the clear rules of conduct for the participants during the event, as well as the process of registration for taking the floor and the given time limit (maximum 3 - 5 minutes) for the intervention.

It should be mentioned that the current opportunities offered by the IT developments should not be neglected and the event might be broadcasted on-line, as well as suggestions and comments might be received remotely, including through social networks, etc.

3. Follow-up actions

The detailed Minutes of the Public Hearing that should include the summary of all suggestions and comments made during the event, it should be submitted to each member of the Organizational Council and the responsible persons for the development and implementation of the school budget.

The comments and suggestions that will be collected during the set and announced deadline after the event should also be summarized and submitted to the members of the Organizational Council and the responsible persons for developing the school budget.

The Organizational Council should convene in a follow-up meeting in order to discuss all the received suggestions and take decisions on developing the final version of the school budget.

The results and the final decisions should be communicated publically through media channels (e.g., through a press-conference where should be invited the representatives of local CSOs), including place on the official web sites the information on the final decisions.

For more details on the organization and conduct of School public hearings please consult the "Guide for organizing public hearings to discuss the school budget," which you can access including online at the following address: [http: //scoalamea.md/implica-te/](http://scoalamea.md/implica-te/)

ANNEX 1

TEMPLATE OF THE DETAILED ACTION PLAN FOR ORGANIZING THE EVENT

	Necessary actions	Done / in course	Dead-line	First Name, Last Name, position, contact details of the person in charge
1.	Appointment of members of the Organising Committee and the division of their responsibilities			
2.	Election of Chairman of the Organising Committee, also responsible for monitoring the adequate and tiely implementation of the planned activities			
3.	Establishing the work program of the Organising Committee			
4.	Organizing the meeting on the preliminary results of applying the „Stakeholder Engagement Sheets”			
5.	Preparing the agenda of the public hearing and potential guests / presenters at the event			
6.	Prepare invitations and notify speakers on the agenda and the time allotted for presentations			
7.	Preparing presentations and visual materials, including their coordination with the moderator of the Public Hearing			
8.	Preparation of necessary distributive materials: public hearing agenda, information material / brochures and rules of order / procedure			
9.	Reserving a space for holding the public hearing			
10.	Checking the premises and planning			
11.	Checking the lighting and the possibility of making audio-visual presentations			
12.	Providing audio-visual equipment, including microphones			
13.	If organizing an online event - checking the technical possibilities and Internet connection and necessary equipment			
14.	When providing the possibility to get suggestions from the public in real time via various means of ICT, including social networks - checking technique for viewing suggestions on a panel specially designed			
15.	Distribution and availability in various public places, including on the Internet, of the necessary distributing materials			
16.	Preparation of a registration system, including permanent marker pens and paper for notes			
17.	Designating a place for participants’ registration (which will work throughout the hearing)			
18.	Preparing badges for presenters and public officials			
19.	Installing signs to guide participants towards the right building / room			
20.	Prepare visual materials			
21.	Explain the rules / Training of the Organizer Council members, including civil servants who will attend			
22.	Drawing announcement / press release regarding the organization of public hearing			
23.	Develop invitations for participants and rules of conduct			
24.	Ad Distribution / press release to local media agencies			
25.	Distributing invitations to participants, participation rules and distributing materials			
26.	Publication / placing of your ads on billboards and in the press, other local media, Internet			
27.	Drawing up the list of public organizations, civic groups, NGOs, etc. to be notified / involved and informing them directly			
28.	Preparation of lists of participants, recording, including information on rules of conduct and registering participants who want to take the floor			
29.	Determining and setting the deadline for subsequent submissions / suggestions additional to the event			
30.	Hold the meeting to analyze the proposals and suggestions received during public hearings and the outcome of finalizing the development plan of the institution and the proposed budget			
31.	Determining how public communication of the results of decisions taken subsequently to the public hearings			
32.	Public communication of final decisions			