

Guidance on Convening a Consultative Workshop

Workshop Components	Considerations
Co-sponsors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is ideal to identify local co-sponsors (for example, a private professional organization, or public-private working group, if one exists) to help plan, promote and facilitate the meeting. • Joining forces with key stakeholder groups adds political clout to the event and signals to the private sector that this is not “just another” government workshop. • Including influential organizations as sponsors (e.g. World Bank, United Nations) and securing high-level presenters attracts attention of invited participants as well as the media.
Participants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Choose participants carefully. Identify decision makers and sector leaders, as opposed to individuals who will defer the decision to someone else. • Be sure to have balanced representation from the various sectors. • Limiting the number of participants to a maximum 40 or 50 people keeps the group manageable and helps ensure a productive meeting. • Keep participants engaged through a mix of plenary and small group sessions and discussions. This enables all participants to contribute and offer their insights, opinions and concerns. • Issue invitations to high-level policy makers and influential private sector leaders well in advance -- they have busy schedules.
Venue	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The venue should be appropriate for the level of individuals attending. For ministers and other high ranking government officials as well as important business leaders, a more formal environment is usually required. • While it may increase costs, selecting a venue out-of-town serves multiple purposes: a) participants focus on the work at hand without office distractions and b) participants have more opportunities to socialize – particularly in the evening – which helps build camaraderie between public and private sector stakeholders that may normally interact.
Presenters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ideally local stakeholders will play an active role on the agenda. The assessment team will need to balance local participation with technical and facilitation expertise. • In terms of facilitation, securing a professional meeting facilitator is highly recommended. This allows the assessment team to focus on technical content and pay attention to participant contributions and discussion. • The presenters should have the appropriate credentials and experience to articulate the technical content clearly and authoritatively and at the same time, communicate key messages on private sector engagement and health system strengthening.
Timing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Timing is critical, enabling meeting outputs to be relevant to policy and funding processes. • However, the assessment team needs to gauge optimal timing of the report dissemination, weighing funding and/or policy cycles with sustaining momentum generated during the assessment. • Dissemination workshops are typically held approximately two to three months after the fieldwork, to allow sufficient time for writing and review of the ‘master’ draft report. However, the team that led the recent Botswana assessment convened a successful stakeholder meeting at the conclusion of fieldwork.
Duration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ideally, the meeting is a two-day event held off-site to encourage networking and relationship building between public and private stakeholders. • However, this may not be feasible due to financial and time constraints. If need be, the agenda can be compressed into one full day. • Including a reception or social event, either the evening before or after the meeting, is a good idea. If this is not possible, be sure to reserve adequate time in agenda for coffee breaks, lunch, etc. that encourages networking.