



QUICK GUIDE TO STAKEHOLDER ANALYSIS

Stakeholders (and beneficiaries) are individuals or groups with a direct, significant and specific stake or interest in a given territory or set of resources and, thus, in policies or projects relating to those resources. A “stakeholder” can be defined as: any person, group, or institution that – positively or negatively – affects or is affected by a particular issue, goal, undertaking or outcome.

Stakeholder analysis is a crucial initial step in situation analysis. It identifies all primary and secondary stakeholders who have a vested interest in the issues with which the policy or project is concerned. The goal of stakeholder analysis is to develop a strategic view of the human and institutional landscape, and the relationship between the different stakeholders and the objectives under consideration. Stakeholder analysis is best seen as a continuing process, which should engage different groups, as issues, activities, and agendas evolve.

The full participation of stakeholders in both the design and implementation of policies and projects is a key (but not a guarantee) to their success. Stakeholder participation:

- ✓ gives people some say over how policies or projects may affect their lives
- ✓ is essential for sustainability
- ✓ generates a sense of ownership (if initiated early in the development process)
- ✓ provides opportunities for learning for both the policy or project team and for the stakeholders themselves
- ✓ builds capacity and leads to responsibility.

It is important that stakeholder participation not be exclusive, or controlled by any one group.

Once an initiative has found common ground, and has negotiated its goal with partners including local stakeholders, a stakeholder agreement can be recorded in writing. This may seem overly formal, but it has the advantage of providing clarity, and helping to avoid (or resolve) conflict in the future.

How to Carry Out a Stakeholder Analysis

The table on the following page can be used to structure a stakeholder analysis. This has the advantage of helping you to think through the variety of groups that may be affected by the initiative in question, and then to probe the interests of each group more fully, with an end result of better knowing and understanding the full range of stakeholders who may have an interest in a given initiative, policy or project.

Begin by brainstorming all possible stakeholders. Then research the human environment. Talk to various stakeholders, and ask them who they would see as potential stakeholders for the initiative in question. This list of stakeholders would go in the first column of the stakeholder analysis table. It may grow or shrink as your analysis progresses, and your understanding deepens.

The next step is to learn about each stakeholder group in as much depth as possible. The analysis involves determining:



STAKEHOLDER ANALYSIS TABLE							
Stakeholder	Type ¹	Marg ²	Stake ³	Basis ⁴	Resources ⁵	Role ⁶	Capacity gaps ⁷

¹ Type = Primary (P) or Secondary (S) . Also note here if this group is an Opposition (O) stakeholder
² If the stakeholder is a marginalized group, put an "M" in this column; otherwise leave blank
³ The nature and limits of the stakeholder's stake in the initiative – e.g., livelihoods, profit, lifestyles, cultural values...
⁴ The basis of the stake – e.g., customary rights, ownership, administrative or legal responsibilities, intellectual rights, social obligations...
⁵ Resources that the stakeholder has at their disposal and could bring to the initiative
⁶ The potential role(s) in the initiative, if any, of the stakeholder
⁷ Any capacity gaps that may need to be filled so that the stakeholder can fulfil their role



1. Primary or direct stakeholders – those who, because of power, authority, responsibilities or claims over the resources, are central to the initiative at hand. As the outcome of any action will affect them directly, their participation is critical. Primary stakeholders can include local community-level groups, private sector interests, local and national government agencies, etc. This category also includes powerful individuals or groups who control policies, laws or funding resources, and who have the capacity to influence outcomes. Failure to involve primary stakeholders at the start can lead to subsequent difficulties in achieving desired outcomes.
2. Secondary or indirect stakeholders – those with an indirect interest in the outcome. They may be consumers, donors, national government officials and private enterprises. Secondary stakeholders may need to be periodically involved, but need not be involved in all aspects of planning and/or implementing the initiative.
3. Opposition stakeholders – those who have the capacity to affect outcomes adversely through the resources and influence they command. It is crucial to engage them in open dialogue.
4. Marginalized stakeholders, such as women, indigenous peoples, and other impoverished or disenfranchised groups. They may be primary, secondary or opposition stakeholders, but they lack the recognition or capacity to participate in collaboration efforts on an equal basis. Particular effort must always be made to ensure their participation.
5. The nature and limits of each stakeholder's **stake** in the project – e.g., livelihoods, profit, lifestyles, cultural values, spiritual values...
6. The **basis** of the stake – e.g., customary rights, ownership, administrative or legal responsibilities, intellectual rights, social obligations...
7. Resources that each stakeholder has at their disposal and could bring to the initiative.
8. The potential role(s) in the initiative, if any, of each stakeholder.
9. Any capacity gaps that may need to be filled so that the stakeholder can fulfil their role. This will form the basis of the initiative's capacity-building strategy.

An alternative way of doing stakeholder analysis is to identify all the parties, and then determine what each supplies or delivers to, and receives from the others. This can also be presented in table form.

Determining who needs or wants to be involved, and when and how it can be achieved is the first step in any collaboration effort. It is fundamental that enough time be budgeted to explore stakeholder views, values and perspectives so that a clear understanding of the human and institutional landscape can be established. Once stakeholder views are understood, a decision can be made on whether or not to pursue collaboration.

Using the information gained by the stakeholder analysis, the leader of an initiative will be better able to plan the necessary research required prior to holding a participatory planning workshop.

It may be useful to profile stakeholder groups by gender, socio-economic status, political affiliation or profession. As real situations are dynamic, it will be important to validate and revalidate a stakeholder group profile over time.

The stakeholder assessment phase is also an appropriate time to explore whether or not gender will be a factor in the elaboration and implementation of future efforts.

Gender analysis

It is well documented that discrimination by gender is likely to diminish the impact and effectiveness of policies and projects. Furthermore, the inclusion of women as stakeholders has the potential to achieve both better management of the resource base and improved community welfare.



Gender analysis involves the assessment of:

- the distribution of tasks, activities, and rewards associated with the division of labour at a particular locality or across a region
- the relative positions of women and men in terms of representation and influence
- the benefits and disincentives associated with the allocation of tasks to women and men.

Lessons in Stakeholder Collaboration

The importance of the process in planning and conducting successful collaborations cannot be overemphasized. Good-faith efforts are often derailed because the parties are not skilled in the collaboration process, and because insufficient attention is given to designing and managing it. Using an inclusive, transparent approach during the design phase of a resource use initiative will help build ownership and commitment. If it is not possible or realistic to have all key stakeholders involved from the outset, then a process for gradual involvement might be needed.

The increasing scope and ambition of resource use initiatives, such as Integrated River Basin Management, will require a commitment to dialogue and collaboration with a diverse range of stakeholders. Dialogue that is open and transparent is critical to long-term success. Resource managers have learned a number of lessons in stakeholder collaboration, namely that:

- The goals of any collaboration venture must be clarified before engaging stakeholders. Goals help identify and target those interests that need to be represented in collaboration processes, and those that can be left out.
- All key stakeholders must be involved in the design and implementation of policies and projects if successful results are to be achieved.
- Deciding who is “inside” or “outside” a collaboration process will always be relevant to policy and project outcomes and to their sustainability.
- All stakeholders will come to the process with their own biases.
- Stakeholder collaboration is a process that requires the opportunity and space for participants to listen to and learn from one another. It is important to create spaces for stakeholders to come together to develop and share their visions and agendas.
- Monitoring and evaluating the nature of the *collaboration* is as important as measuring specific policy or project outcomes.