STAKEHOLDER INVOLVEMENT

Stakeholder involvement is not a single process but a series of communication processes that we will run along the stages of our project as we need it.

This means that each stakeholder involvement process should be then tailor-made for each situation and project stage. But by using the same tools and documents to record the processes, you will not be starting from scratch every time.

1 IDENTIFY YOUR STAKEHOLDERS

There is no magic list of stakeholders. This list will change depending on each situation, its impacts, and as stakeholders themselves make decisions or change their opinions.

Brainstorm a list of stakeholders without screening, including everyone who has an interest in your objectives today and who may have one tomorrow. Where possible, identify individuals. Use the following list to help you brainstorm:

- experts within municipal departments and/or municipal services providers responsible for stormwater work
- local residents affected by stormwaters
- elected representatives
- regional authorities responsible for the environment, spatial planning and other related fields
- professional associations related to environment planning
- residents’ associations
- spatial planning experts
- non-governmental organisations
- urban activists

2 ANALYSE YOUR STAKEHOLDERS

You can use the 5.2 “Stakeholder Analysis” worksheet we created. It includes an example based on Turku’s case and the instructions for filling it.

Every time you need to prepare a stakeholder engagement process, look closely at stakeholder issues and decide whether they are material to your engagement objectives at this moment, asking yourself the following questions:

- What are the issues for these key stakeholders?
- Which issues do all stakeholders most frequently express?
- Are those issues relevant to our engagement objectives?
- Cluster the stakeholders by issues and rank your stakeholders into a prioritized engagement list.
3 MAPPING YOUR STAKEHOLDERS

Use a board or a flip chart and sketch a "Stakeholder Matrix"

Write the name of each stakeholder on a post-it note.

Rank the stakeholders on a scale of one to five, according to one of the criteria on the matrix, such as “influence in the project outcomes” or “interest in the subject”.

Keeping this ranking for one of the criteria, plot the stakeholders against the other criteria of the matrix. This is where using post-it notes or removable cards are useful.

Example based on Turku’s case:

- **High Influence, High Interest**:
  - Real Property Development
  - Facility Services
  - Infrastructures Services
  - Politicians
  - General Public
  - Environmental Protection
  - Building Control
  - Design Unit
  - City Planning Unit

- **Low Influence, Low Interest**:
  - Geographical Information and Data Systems
Depending on the scope of your engagement strategy, consider using multiple levels of participation to address different stakeholder groups simultaneously:

We divided the levels of participation in three categories:

- **Engage** describes stakeholders with whom engagement is necessary
- **Communicate** describes stakeholders with a high willingness to engage, or a high level of influence, but who have not yet participated in dialogue with us. Communicating more with these stakeholders will help them value engagement.
- **Inform** describes stakeholders who seek information only instead of a conversation.

Revisit your mapping to identify which quadrants stakeholders fall into.

Rank again your stakeholder list using the engage, communicate, and inform levels of participation quadrant.
Once you have determined which level of participation is appropriate for your current engagement strategy, consider the forms of participation from the following list, or develop a more suitable format ad hoc. Remember that you can simultaneously engage different stakeholders using a range of formats. You are not limited to one engagement method at a time:

**Engage** (high priority):
- Joint venture
- Partnership
- Research collaboration

**Communicate** (medium priority):
- Sponsorship
- Survey, mass email or newsletter
- Social media
- Conference
- Workshops

**Inform** (low priority):
- Sustainability report/Publication
- News coverage
- Marketing campaign

### 5 DOCUMENT THE ENGAGEMENT

You can use the 5.3 “Communication planning and register” template we created. It includes some examples based on Turku’s case.

In order to measure success and build on your efforts for future activities, make sure to capture the following in writing during the engagement:

- number of participants
- summary of noted stakeholder concerns, expectations and perceptions
- summary of discussions
- list of outputs (decisions, actions, proposals, and recommendations)

### 6 TIPS FOR GOOD COMMUNICATION SKILLS

Your audience—especially policy makers—seldom have the time to read through all the literature related to a specific policy question. To make well-informed decisions, they rely on short, tightly written briefs that quickly and cogently relay the important policy facts, questions, and arguments about an issue.

No matter what method you use to communicate with your stakeholders, you can use these tips on how to communicate through engaging briefs.

The following information is a summary of “The Art and Craft of Policy Briefs”:
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R1GpcAoBvnc](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R1GpcAoBvnc)
6.1. What is a Policy Brief?

A concise presentation of:

- a problem
- its context
- and the actions and recommendation for applying this policy or programme

Should be 2 to 4 pages long and easy to understand without specialized knowledge or additional reading—unless that specialized knowledge can be assumed for the particular audience you are writing for.

The emphasis here is in communication which is not the same as information.

The goal is to prompt change (in laws, administrative policies and regulations, funding priorities, organizational practices, etc.). In writing a policy brief you have to be clear about what kind of change might be considered and who is the audience.

6.2. What do you know about the audience?

- Do they have technical knowledge or background?
- What is their political or organizational culture?
- Which constrains are they working in?
- Have they been exposed to the issue before?
- Are they open to change or maybe a little resistant?
- What is the “hook”? The message that is going to be the most engaging for your audience.
- What background information do they need in order to follow your argument?

6.3. Elements of policy brief:

- Aim
- The description of the problem
- Recommendations
- Title

6.3.1. Aim

Write the aim first in just one or two sentences, because every part of the brief should be relevant to the aim.

6.3.2. Problem

- Why is it an important issue for the audience?
- Use data to convey the extent of the problem. And if there are not sufficient data, it is probably because the capacity to collect data is part of the problem.
- What has been tried? What solutions have been already tried and how effective existing policies and programmes have been.
- And finally what are some options for change? You may want to lay out the policies options with pros and cons. And do not forget the option of not changing.

6.3.3. Recommendations

- Good recommendations are backed with evidence and flow from your argument.
- What effects can be anticipated? Keep in mind that concrete ideas are easier to remember than abstract ones. Abstract recommendations may also be open to different interpretations.
- Are your recommendations appropriate for your audience? Take time to get feedback, review and ideas from relevant stakeholders.
6.3.4. Title

Make sure that the title is both engaging and informative.

6.4. Organizing your policy brief

You can organize your policy brief to make it a more powerful communication tool, and make it more likely that your reader can pick out the important information even if they are just skimming it.

- Start with your conclusions. Tell the readers in the first paragraph where you are taking them.
- And then help the reader follow your argument by using visual cues:
  - Use headings to break the text into sections and make it easier to navigate. It helps your reader to digest the argument in chunks.
  - Make important and engaging information stand out with formatting tools (font, colours, etc.).
  - Use a bulleted list for recommendations.

6.5. Writing for clarity and simplicity

In order to make it easier for your reader to understand and remember your message you need to streamline and energize your language.

- Be economical in your word choice - use smaller words, try to cut words and sentences without changing the meaning, or use a word instead of a phrase or clause.
- Use an active voice – for instance, “people do things” is more engaging than “things were done”. When possible, use a verb rather than its noun form – e.g. instead of “The focus of this study is...” it’s better to use “This study focuses on...”
- Create structured sentences:
  - Can you say in one sentence what you just said in two or three?
  - Can you break a long sentence into two clearer ones?
  - Are the subject and verb easily identified? Or are you packing too much into the sentence?

6.6. Making data talk

Your data should speak at your reader as clearly and concisely as your text.

- Choose your data carefully, provide enough information but not too much.
- Choose the most important and compiling data for your aim and your audience.
- Present it simply and clearly. The data should be easy to understand without any training in statistics.
- And it needs to be connected to your text without being duplicative.

6.7. Presenting data visually

- Use graphs to show relationships, and when the shape of the data is important (e.g. patterns, trends).
- Use the table only if the reader needs to look at individual values, or if you really need to show precise values.
- Pie graphs are very common but bar graphs are more effective because it is easier to compare sizes or proportions in a bar graph.
6.8. Minimize visual clutter

- If it does not convey necessary information, leave it out:
  - omit or lighten gridlines
  - avoid legends if you can use simple labels
  - do not duplicate information (e.g. label+ legend)
- Leave 3D effects to the movie theatres
- Do not make the reader turn sideways, all the text in the graph should be horizontal
- Use colours that will copy well in black and white