

Stakeholder Mapping Exercise – Brief for Facilitators

1hr 10mins

This exercise formed part of the [Engaging your policy audiences 1 day course](#) held by the Institute of Development Studies (IDS) in July 2014.

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Introduction

This exercise is designed to take course attendees through the process of a simple stakeholder mapping exercise that will help them identify, analyse and prioritise stakeholders in an imagined scenario.

By going through this exercise we hope that participants will see the value of mapping, analysing and prioritising stakeholders – and see this as a key step in determining their policy engagement and influencing activities. There will also be a feedback session after lunch where we hope participants will gain an insight into mapping in different policy contexts.

The scenarios are as follows (see participants' guidance note for full details):

- **Case Study 1:** UK development policy in fragile states
- **Case Study 2:** The urban dimension in European development policy
- **Case Study 3:** Holding African governments to account on low political commitment to tackling child malnutrition
- **Case study 4:** Comparative global health data
- **Case Study 5:** Assessing the impact of immigration on the UK

Each case study has a description about what you are doing, what you hope to achieve, a policy influencing objective and a range of audiences that are central to achieving this objective. You will have a large flipchart with the lead organisation in the middle and a range of actors listed on the side (categorised in different colours e.g. Media, Government– see key on flipchart). You will also have a spare flipchart to capture any key points from the discussion.

Please read through your case study and make sure you know it well in advance of the session.

Facilitators will need to encourage creative thinking within the group as it is a make believe scenario. Please also stress that the exercise is not about testing their knowledge of the policy environment in their case study area. If people do get stuck, it's important to help them out by making suggestions and asking key questions during each stage. Facilitators also need to be strict with timings for each stage of the process. If you haven't quite finished one stage in the time given, try to speed up the process or get participants to move onto the next stage.

Detailed Process

Explain that you will take them through the following process:

- 1) **Read case study (10mins)**
- 2) **Add to list of policy actors and influencers (10mins)**
- 3) **Map stakeholders in relation to proximity to lead organisation (10mins)**
- 4) **Map links and relationships (10mins)**
- 5) **Rank/Analyse stakeholders (20mins)**
 - (a) **by influence**
 - (b) **by attitude**
- 6) **Prioritise 3 key stakeholders (10mins)**

During the start, assign roles:

Identify one person to be in control of the map (placing cards, drawing links etc). Also identify someone to capture key points from discussion on flipchart and feedback on the mapping session after lunch. Let participants know that capturing the discussion is an important part of any stakeholder mapping exercise.

The flipchart on key points can capture any of the following:

- challenges found during exercise (e.g. in identifying/analysing audiences)
- reflections on using mapping as a tool
- institutional issues of their fictional organisation's profile (e.g. legitimacy, capacity and networks/relationships)
- debates on how change happens within given context
- key audiences chosen and why
- any potential strategies for engaging audiences identified

1) Read case study (10 mins)

Get participants to spend a few minutes reading the case study again, looking at overall policy influencing objective and the list of actors – and ask any clarification questions about the case study.

If needed, reiterate that this exercise is not a test of their knowledge of the political environment in relation to their case study, and the provided audiences are there to help them get started but are not compulsory and they will have a chance to add to them during the exercise.

Questions you can use:

- *Does everyone understand the case study?*
- *Is there anything that needs clarification?*

2) Add to list of policy actors and influencers (10mins)

Ask participants if there are any other influential stakeholders to add to the current list, who are key to achieving your policy influencing objective. These could be individuals, types of people, departments, teams, organisations, groups or networks. Participants should feel free to create imaginary characters that can help achieve your policy influencing/engagement objective.

Questions you can use:

- *Are there any other influential stakeholders you would like to add to this list?*
- *Do you think there is a key decision maker(s)?*
- *Are there any other categories of stakeholders missing?*
- *Are there any other people who might influence the stakeholders already mentioned? (influencers of influencers)*
- *Who needs to change (knowledge, behaviour, attitudes or actions) in order for the objective to happen?*

There may not be any or many to add, in which case move on to the next stage!

3) Map stakeholders in relation to proximity to lead organisation (10mins)

Get participants to map participants around the lead organisation. Explain that:

- Closer to organisation = organisation has excellent access and established links
- Far away to organisation = organisations has little or no access to organisation or established links.

Also make sure stakeholders with close relationships with one another (e.g. stakeholders that are part of the same Government structure or of the same type i.e. media) are also mapped near each other if relevant. How stakeholders are positioned on the map in relation to one another is important as well as their closeness to the core organisation.

4) Map links and relationships (10mins)

Draw arrows to indicate any formal and informal linkages and influencing pathways. Use single-headed arrow for on-way links and double-headed arrows for two-way links. The facilitator may also want to point out that sometimes there is hidden power (invisible or unofficial lines of influence) e.g. the President's wife, which could be indicated with a dotted line.

Questions you can use:

- *Who influences who?*
- *Who advocates to who?*
- *Who is connected to who?*

5) Rank/Analyse stakeholders (20mins)

Look back at each stakeholder and score them against two criteria.

(a) How influential are they in achieving the policy influencing objective?

Use the counters provided and put next to stakeholder cards. Ask: "How strongly can actors influence your objective?"

- No influence - no counter
- Low influence – 1 counter
- Medium influence – 2 counters
- High influence – 3 counters
- Very high influence – 4 counters

(b) What is the stakeholder's attitude towards the objective?

Use the coloured round stickers and stick on the stakeholder's card. Ask: are they an ally or opponent? Are they supportive of your objective, unsupportive or neutral?

- Negative – 1 sticker
- Neutral – 2 stickers
- Positive - 3 stickers

Be sure to ask "why" during the ranking exercise and get scribe to note down anything key – Why is this person influential? Why is this person negative? If participants get stuck and simply feel they do not know enough about an identified stakeholder move on to another.

Examples of scoring:

Key decision maker in a government ministry may score:

- Negative (attitude) due to the ministry's poor track record on informing policy in a particular area with research
- High (influence) because it is influencing the policy making process in A particular government ministry on which your objective is focused.

NGO may score:

- Positive (attitude) as they are very receptive to the type of evidence being produced
- Low (influence) as it does not have the capacity to implement or influence the kind of changes in policy and practice that you are focused on.

6) Prioritise 3 key stakeholders (10mins)

The final stage is prioritising stakeholders. Ask: Who are the 3 key stakeholders who are critical to achieving their policy influencing objective?

You may find different combinations emerge: low influence but positive attitude, high influence but negative attitude, close proximity to organisation and neutral attitude. So what does this mean to participants? Try to explore.

They are most likely to prioritise those with high influence, but may have thoughts on what strategies are needed depending on whether they have a positive, neutral or negative attitude or are close/far away from organisation. For example are they going to have to build new relationships or networks? Try to capture this too.

Star the 3 key priority stakeholders on the map and write a note on why they have been chosen.