Program (re)design

Identifying, describing, and mapping key stakeholders

PATH

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(Re)designing your program

The design and redesign phase can happen anytime, not just at the start of a project or program. When priorities change or when unforeseen challenges are identified, designing solutions that take into account the people you are designing for as well as policy stakeholders is key. An important first step is identifying, describing, and mapping your audience. There are many tools and approaches for stakeholder identification. This handout provides details on how to create stakeholder personas and map stakeholders to ensure appropriate program design and manage stakeholder engagement.

Stakeholder Personas

Understanding who your stakeholders are, the level of buy-in they have for your particular intervention, and the impact they may have on your project is crucial to success. Not engaging key players in the right way at the right time can result in serious delays of a project.

Stakeholder personas are a creative way to segment your stakeholders into broader target audiences based on the data you have about that particular type of stakeholder. Data may come from past experiences and insights with a particular set of stakeholders, previous research and, if possible, stakeholder interviews.

These personas should not necessarily fall along traditional lines, such as policy makers, health personnel, users, etc. Rather, think carefully about what members of these more traditional groups have in common across groups, such as behaviors, perceptions and attitudes, and influence over your particular intervention. A persona can consolidate expansive stakeholder data into a single document that's both easy to reference and easy to understand.

Start by looking at the data you have and identifying trends. Once you've developed some groups that "look alike," create a profile similar to the template provided. Key questions that can help inform your stakeholder persona include:

1. What financial or emotional interest does this person have in the outcome of your work? Is it positive or negative?
2. What motivates this person?
3. What information does this person need, and what is the best way of communicating with them?
4. What is this person's current opinion of the subject at hand? Is it based on good information?
5. Who influences this person's opinions generally, and who influences their opinion of the subject at hand? Do some of these influencers therefore become important stakeholders in their own right?
6. If this person does not have a positive view toward the subject, what will win their support?
7. If you can't win their support, how will you manage their opposition?
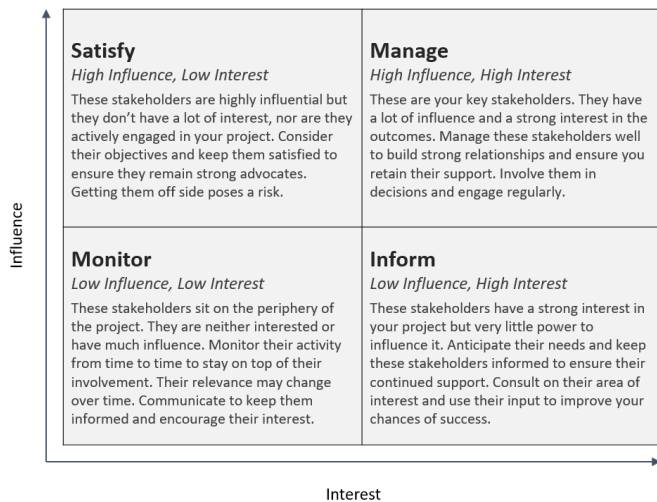
Figure 1. Stakeholder Persona Template

Stakeholder mapping

Once you've identified all stakeholder personas, it can be useful to map those personas accordingly based on a set of dimensions to summarize the support from your stakeholders and manage their engagement in your program or project. One easy way to do this is to use a four quadrant matrix as shown below. Some common dimensions that can be used include:

- Level of interest
- Level of influence
- Level of investment
- Positive/negative commitment
- Level of support

Figure 2. Stakeholder Map

As countries are preparing new initiatives, such as the introduction of self-injection, creating user personas and mapping stakeholders can ensure buy-in and create demand. As an example, below are a few personas who might be useful when (re)designing a self-injection program, each with their own needs in terms of advocacy and operational design[1].

The Newbie: "As a long standing MOH official, I fail to see the value of allowing women to self-inject. I don't understand how someone who is not a trained health professional can be competent in injectable contraceptives. I am looking for facts and evidence that this approach works before applying it to my context."

The Curious: "I have heard a lot about self-injection in my country and I'm curious how this fits into my work as a community health volunteer. I have not yet had the chance to see self-injection in practice, but am very interested in learning more."

The Trialist: "I know self-injection has been used with some success in other countries, but I'm not sure it will work here. What value does it add when we already have injectable available at the community level? I want to see how self-injection can be implemented in a consistent, sustainable manner that can be measured in some way."

The Believer: "I see the value self-injection brings to women's self-care, but I struggle to articulate that to men or cultural leaders in my community. I need to know how to talk about self-injection in a culturally appropriate way that will not reflect negatively on me."

The Pioneer: "I intimately understand the value of self-injection. I am comfortable talking about and advocating on behalf of self-injection and hope to see its application more widespread. I want to talk about the value of self-injection in a way that the health system, women and community members can relate to."

Now what?

Once you've created your set of personas, work with a small group of individuals involved in the program to (re)design and use the profiles to:

- Create a shared understanding of the key people who can impact your success
- Tailor communications, engagement and advocacy strategies based on need
- Identify potential risks from negative stakeholders or those who feel they are not being heard
- Prioritize stakeholders so the appropriate amount of resources can be assigned and the right engagement strategy is applied

The process is especially important in the early stages of development and for projects that:

- Impact the community
- Span across multiple teams or organizations
- Cross cultural boundaries
- Have external investors.

How and when this can be used in the context of DMPA-SC Scale up

Other design activities, tools and resources

Design for Health and IDEO.org have more resources and activities to support user-centered design.

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[1] https://www.designforhealth.org/five-types-of-users