Tool 3: Mapping a WSI’s Key Stakeholders

Effective WSIs need a wide range of stakeholders — both the influential and the affected — to be engaged in appropriate ways. Identifying relevant stakeholders and understanding their perspectives and interests is known as stakeholder mapping. Without proper stakeholder mapping, the WSI may be unable to identify the wide variety of interests and concerns that exist in a particular context, potentially leading to an initiative that serves the more dominant and powerful to the detriment of others. Good stakeholder mapping helps mitigate integrity risks through:

- Identifying affected stakeholders so that they can be directly involved and better understood. This helps ensure that their legitimate interests and knowledge are taken into consideration.

- Identifying relatively more dominant and less powerful or poorly represented interests to balance power relations, representation, and perspectives.

- Identifying the full range of interests in order to broaden the number and diversity of groups and individuals engaged in achieving the WSI objectives.

There is no community representation ... that is the wrong approach and we need to change ... to sit, plan, decide, and act with communities to avoid conflict. [Public Sector]

The weakness was that there was no government involvement and no information from them. This lack of wider involvement affects the validity and impact. [Private Sector]

(Testimony from Field Assessments)

Guidance for implementation

The steps laid out below highlight what WSI initiators and participants need to do in order to successfully complete a stakeholder mapping exercise.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tool</th>
<th>A step-by-step process to identify and engage key stakeholders.</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Related Key Activity</td>
<td>Identify and map stakeholders affected by the WSI.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Questions Addressed</td>
<td>Which organizations should be considered for the WSI? With whom does the WSI need to engage in order to ensure integrity?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purpose</td>
<td>Enable WSI practitioners to understand the major influential groups and interests that should be involved in the design and implementation of the WSI in order to balance different interests toward serving the public good and building credibility and legitimacy:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Possible Users</td>
<td>WSI initiators with input from WSI participants.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level of Effort</td>
<td>Depending on local context, stakeholder mapping can range from a simple to an extensive exercise (such as in areas where there are a diverse number of actors operating in the water resources management space).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WSI Phase</td>
<td>1: Incubation and Initial Analysis.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Example of a framework for stakeholder mapping

Step 1: Establish Relevant Stakeholders
- As many WSI participants as possible should be involved in the mapping process to deepen knowledge and add credibility and ownership to the WSI.
- Utilize the suggested relevance criteria laid out in Table 8 to identify stakeholders. This criteria can be amended depending on their applicability to a local context. This process can be supported and informed by any stakeholder information gathered as part of the context analysis.
- The identification of stakeholders should differentiate between institutions and individuals representing groups of stakeholders.

Step 2: Prioritize Stakeholders
- The list of stakeholders is prioritized according to each stakeholder’s relevance to the WSI. Any groups or individuals that have moderate-to-high relevance in one or more of the analyses in Table 8 should be included in this exercise.
- The importance of each type of analysis used to prioritize the relevance of stakeholders will differ depending on the nature of the WSI. Stakeholders with high relevance in several of these areas, or particularly high relevance in one of them, might be invited into the initiative as a WSI participant.
- In all cases, a high likelihood of being significantly affected by the WSI (especially negatively) should be a key indicator of relevance.
- Prioritization is conducted by multiple WSI participants rather than unilaterally.

Step 3: Disseminate and Validate Results
- WSI participants share their assessment with mapped stakeholders once the initial mapping and prioritization is completed via a workshop format, if possible.
- Stakeholders can then add nuance to the analysis, contest their perceived relevance to the WSI, and identify additional stakeholders that were not captured in the initial analysis. In this way, the stakeholders themselves become a meaningful and integral part of the stakeholder mapping process.
- The Water Integrity Network and cewas (2014) have developed a sector-mapping exercise in which participants use a football pitch drawn on a piece of green paper (see further readings below).

Step 4: Continuous Reassessment
- During development and implementation, WSI participants engage with stakeholders to identify new stakeholders arising from changing basin circumstances or evolving WSI scope and objectives.
- Stakeholder maps should be updated to reflect the ever-changing landscape of stakeholders.
- Stakeholder mapping cannot generate the in-depth information needed to assess the adequacy of whether an organization or individual should be a WSI participant. In cases where a potential participant is identified through the mapping processes, a follow-up due diligence investigation should be undertaken.
The relevance of stakeholders depends on a variety of inter-related variables. Table 6 offers six areas of analysis\(^1\) that can help gauge relevance.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of analysis</th>
<th>Key questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Decision point</strong></td>
<td>Which external parties have a direct influence over, or are required to participate in, any decisions that will be needed to address your water-related challenges?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Opportunity</strong></td>
<td>Which external parties are in a position to directly or indirectly support addressing your water-related challenges?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Expertise</strong></td>
<td>Which external parties can contribute knowledge and advice to improve problem characterization, or expand or refine the understanding of solutions?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Impacts</strong></td>
<td>Which external parties will experience benefits (or costs) associated with addressing your identified water-related challenges?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Expectations</strong></td>
<td>Which external parties have an interest in the collective action process or its outcomes, even if they might not otherwise have a specific role to play in problem solving or a connection to the distribution of costs and benefits?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Conflict</strong></td>
<td>Which external parties currently (or will potentially) experience conflicts with you or other potential parties in the process in a manner that may influence the available options to address your identified water-related challenges?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Further reading and resources:


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\(^1\) These analyses were drawn from the CEO Water Mandate’s *Guide to Water Related Collective Action* (2013). Although they were initially designed to gauge whether external parties might add value as additional WSI participants, they can also be used to better understand the relevance of WSI stakeholders.

