

Principles of Stakeholder Engagement

Overarching

- Engagement is a collaborative process that requires adequate time and resources.
- Systems must be put in place to ensure engagement efforts end when appropriate for stakeholders as well as the research team and not just when funding ends.
- Trust is built and maintained/sustained through relationships over time.
- Co-production necessitates exploration of topics representing stakeholders' priorities and intended uses.
- Authentic engagement ensures two "loop back" processes to ensure (a) that stakeholders are informed of outcomes and project decisions, and (b) that insights of stakeholders are shared with researchers in a timely manner to inform research design and priorities.
- The design of stakeholder engagement efforts must include the stakeholders themselves.
- Successful engagement requires on-going evaluation of the process and of the impact of the outputs and results.

Design

- Equity, diversity, inclusion, and accessibility must be deliberately operationalized. Attention must be paid to histories of marginalization and mistrust. Processes should seek to address historic injustices that make some populations and communities more vulnerable to climate change.
- Stakeholders are heterogeneous in their needs and preferences related to data and influences.
- Data and information should be made available to stakeholders in formats that are transparent, meaningful, accessible, and understandable.
- Transparent decision making, expectation setting, research methods, communications, and result dissemination are critical to trust-building.
- Engagement should provide meaningful benefits to communities. Research results should be shared with communities in a way that is beneficial to them.

Delivery

- Engagement must be intentional to minimize barriers to participation, for example by respecting work schedules and cultural norms.
- Partnerships with trusted local organizations and leaders build support, enhance local capacity, and improve sustainable implementation and ownership of outcomes.
- Efforts to engage stakeholders must be coordinated throughout the Hub, as well as with other projects underway in partner institutions, to avoid stakeholder "fatigue."
- Where appropriate and allowable, compensation should be provided to demonstrate value for stakeholder participation.
- Analysis of stakeholder engagement data must recognize the fact that stakeholders have diverse views and lived experiences and find equitable and productive ways to reconcile divergent opinions.