Identifying and Determining Involvement of Stakeholders

Who are stakeholders?

Stakeholders are individuals and organizations that have an interest in or are affected by your evaluation and/or its results. Stakeholders provide a reality check on the appropriateness and feasibility of your evaluation questions, offer insight on and suggest methods to access the target populations, provide ongoing feedback and recommendations, and help make evaluation results actionable.

Types of Stakeholders	Definition	Examples
Implementers	Those directly involved in the operations of the STD program	• STD director • STD program manager • Staff (field operation manager, front-line supervisor, Disease Intervention Specialist (DIS), service providers, health educations, laboratory technicians, clerical staff, among others) • Volunteers and consultants
Decision Makers	Those in a position to do or decide something about the STD program	• STD director • STD program manager • Health department director
Participants	Those being served or affected by the STD program	• Clients/patients • Community members • Community-based organizations (CBOs) • Health service providers/ STD clinic staff
Partners	Those who actively support and/or have invested in your program or in the population your program serves	• Funders (federal, state, local) • Academic organizations • Coalition partners • Faith-based community • Professional organizations • Advocacy groups, such as your HIV Community Planning Group (CPG) • Government officials and elected representatives • Representatives of correctional systems (adult, juvenile) • Representatives of the school system

For more information and examples, see Step 1 in the Practical Use of Program Evaluation among STD Programs manual. http://www.cdc.gov/std/program/pupestd.htm

➥ TIP: Use the "Stakeholder Information" table found on page 29 of the manual.

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How do you involve stakeholders in the program evaluation process?

1. **Invite stakeholders to a meeting,** or series of meetings, depending on how much time they have available to spend with you.

At this meeting you want to brief stakeholders on your program as well as the program component or activity you want to evaluate.

Major meeting objectives should be to assess stakeholder interests and concerns, identify roles and responsibilities, and share communication plans.

➡ TIP: Review the sample stakeholder meeting agenda on page 32 of the manual.

Questions to ask:

- What do stakeholders perceive as the purpose of your program?
- What do they think about your program?
- What concerns, if any, do they have about the program and the program evaluation?
- What have they heard about the proposed program evaluation?
- What areas do stakeholders think are important to address first in the evaluation?
- What do they hope to learn from the evaluation?
- How available are they to participate in the evaluation process?
- What are the political implications of specific stakeholders' involvement?
- What are the program expectations of stakeholders' involvement in the evaluation?
- How can you meet stakeholders' evaluation and communication needs?

2. **Involve stakeholders in key activities** throughout the planning and implementation of the evaluation. Some of these activities can include:

- Identifying and prioritizing program activities that need to be evaluated.
- Overcoming resistance to evaluation and identifying the benefits.
- Developing evaluation questions that are grounded in the perceptions, experiences, and interests of stakeholders.
- Selecting appropriate and acceptable evaluation methods.
- Reviewing evaluation findings and making program recommendations.
- Disseminating and using evaluation findings for program improvement.

Why is stakeholder involvement important?

- Reduces stakeholders' distrust and fear of evaluation
- Increases stakeholders' awareness of and commitment to the evaluation process
- Increases chances the evaluation findings will be used
- Increases credibility of evaluation findings