

International Survey on the Concept and Practice of Meaningful Stakeholder Engagement

Dear contributors of the Routledge International Handbook on Meaningful Stakeholder Engagement,

As mentioned in our previous communications, we, the editors, want to 'walk the talk' and further engage with you to make sure that we publish a useful, thought-provoking international handbook.

We have prepared a brief online questionnaire about the concept and practice of meaningful stakeholder engagement, which we kindly ask you to fill out. Our main objective is to expand our collective knowledge on the topic to ensure that we publish a content-rich handbook that is conceptually clear and consistent throughout the chapters and practice notes.

When answering this survey, please note take the term 'stakeholder' refers to both directly affected stakeholders (e.g., workers, communities hosting mines or polluting factories, residents in resettlements, etc.) and non-affected stakeholders.

Answers to the following questions (which should consume 10 - 20 minutes of your time) are voluntary and confidential. You will not be named, unless you provide written prior consent.

While we will ask you for your name and e-mail address in the last question, we only do so to be able to follow-up on any responses that are unclear or require additional information. If you do not wish to be contacted, you don't need to provide your name and email.

We would appreciate it if you could submit your questionnaire before April 9th, 2023, so that we have enough time to analyze all the answers and discuss them in our workshop in Odense (Denmark) later in April. If you have any questions, please send an email to the editor that is handling your chapter or practice note.

Best wishes,

Karin, Alberto, Nathan and Giuseppe

Institutional Support



I understand the purpose of this survey, its risks, benefits and context and, hereby, consent * to participate in it:

- Yes
- No

Context and demographics

What is your main background area? *

(Please choose the area that best represents you)

- Political science
- Law
- Economics
- International relations
- Other social science
- Humanities
- Arts
- Engineering
- Math, chemistry or physics
- Biology
- Other: Multiple algorithms

What is your current job tile? *

ChatGPT

For how long have you been researching or working with meaningful stakeholder engagement? *

- Less than 3 years
- Between 3 and 5 years
- Between 5 and 7 years
- More than 7 years

In which countries have you been researching or working with meaningful stakeholder engagement? *

Every country that has information available online

The CONCEPT

How would you best define "Meaningful Stakeholder Engagement"? *

(You are welcome to cite or copy and paste the definition of your choice. If you do so, please be explicit about the source)

What is Meaningful Stakeholder Engagement? Answer from ChatGPT: "Meaningful stakeholder engagement is the process of involving and collaborating with individuals or groups who have a vested interest in a particular project, organization, or issue. It involves active listening, open communication, and genuine efforts to understand and address the needs, concerns, and perspectives of stakeholders.

To ensure meaningful stakeholder engagement, it is important to:

Identify stakeholders: Determine who the stakeholders are, their interests, and how they might be affected by the project or organization.

Engage stakeholders early: Involve stakeholders in the planning stages of a project or initiative to ensure that their voices are heard and their concerns are addressed.

Use a variety of engagement methods: Use a range of engagement methods such as surveys, focus groups, public meetings, and one-on-one conversations to ensure that stakeholders have multiple opportunities to provide input.

Provide timely and accurate information: Provide stakeholders with timely and accurate information about the project or organization and its impacts.

Consider stakeholder input: Actively consider and respond to stakeholder input by incorporating feedback into decision-making processes.

Evaluate engagement efforts: Evaluate the effectiveness of stakeholder engagement efforts to identify areas for improvement and ensure that stakeholders are satisfied with the engagement process.

Overall, meaningful stakeholder engagement is about building trust and working collaboratively to achieve shared goals and outcomes."

What is your preferred acronym for Meaningful Stakeholder Engagement? *

- MSE
- MSHE
- MuSE
- Other:

ChatGPT gave the following answer: "The acronym for meaningful stakeholder engagement is MSE."

What do you understand by MEANINGFUL in the meaningful stakeholder engagement concept? *

(Please explain your notion of meaningful, what this adjective implies in theory and practice)

"In the context of meaningful stakeholder engagement, "meaningful" refers to the quality and depth of the engagement between an organization and its stakeholders. Meaningful stakeholder engagement implies that the organization is actively seeking input and feedback from its stakeholders, listening to their concerns and ideas, and incorporating their perspectives into decision-making processes.

This means that the engagement is not just a checkbox exercise or a token effort, but a genuine effort to build relationships with stakeholders and work collaboratively with them to achieve shared goals. Meaningful stakeholder engagement involves open and honest communication, transparency, and a willingness to listen and learn from stakeholders. Ultimately, the goal of meaningful stakeholder engagement is to create more sustainable, equitable, and effective outcomes for both the organization and its stakeholders."

What do you understand by STAKEHOLDER in the meaningful stakeholder engagement concept? *

(Please explain your notion of stakeholder, what this implies in theory and practice)

"In the context of meaningful stakeholder engagement, "stakeholder" refers to any individual, group, or organization that is affected by or can affect the actions or decisions of the organization. This includes but is not limited to employees, customers, suppliers, shareholders, regulators, community members, and advocacy groups.

Stakeholders have a vested interest in the organization and its activities, and their perspectives and feedback can provide valuable insights that can help the organization make more informed decisions and better serve their needs. Engaging with stakeholders can help build trust, foster relationships, and create a more positive reputation for the organization.

In the context of meaningful stakeholder engagement, stakeholders are not just passive recipients of information, but active participants in the engagement process. The organization must listen to and consider their feedback, concerns, and ideas in order to create more effective and sustainable outcomes for all stakeholders involved."

What do you understand by ENGAGEMENT in the meaningful stakeholder engagement concept? *

(Please explain your notion of engagement, what this implies in theory and practice)

"In the context of meaningful stakeholder engagement, "engagement" refers to the process of actively involving stakeholders in the organization's activities, decisions, and planning processes. This involves a two-way dialogue between the organization and its stakeholders, where both parties listen to each other's perspectives, share information, and work together to achieve common goals.

Engagement can take many different forms, depending on the nature of the organization and the stakeholders involved. It may involve public consultations, focus groups, surveys, meetings, or other methods of communication and collaboration. The goal of engagement is to build trust, foster relationships, and create a sense of shared ownership and responsibility for the outcomes of the organization's activities.

Meaningful stakeholder engagement goes beyond mere consultation or information sharing, and involves a genuine effort to understand the perspectives and concerns of stakeholders, and to incorporate their feedback into decision-making processes. Engagement must be ongoing and responsive, and must demonstrate a commitment to transparency, accountability, and continuous improvement. By engaging with stakeholders in a meaningful way, organizations can build stronger relationships, create more sustainable outcomes, and better serve the needs of their stakeholders."

The PRACTICE

In your opinion, what is DRIVING the practice of meaningful stakeholder engagement? *

"There are several factors that are driving the practice of meaningful stakeholder engagement, including: Increased awareness of social and environmental issues: As the public becomes more aware of social and environmental issues, there is growing pressure on organizations to address these issues and be accountable for their impact on society and the environment. Meaningful stakeholder engagement is seen as a way for organizations to build trust, address concerns, and create more sustainable outcomes. Evolving regulatory landscape: Governments around the world are increasingly mandating that organizations engage with stakeholders in order to obtain social license to operate. For example, some countries require companies to conduct environmental and social impact assessments and engage with affected communities before beginning a new project. Changing expectations of stakeholders: Customers, employees, investors, and other stakeholders are increasingly expecting organizations to be more transparent, accountable, and responsive to their concerns. Meaningful stakeholder engagement is seen as a way for organizations to build trust and create more positive relationships with their stakeholders. Business benefits: Meaningful stakeholder engagement can also provide business benefits such as improved reputation, reduced risk, enhanced innovation, and increased competitiveness. By engaging with stakeholders, organizations can gain valuable insights into emerging trends, customer needs, and market opportunities. In summary, the practice of meaningful stakeholder engagement is being driven by a combination of social, regulatory, and business factors that are shaping the expectations of stakeholders and creating new opportunities for organizations to engage with them in a more meaningful way."

In general, how strong have been the following drivers on the practice of meaningful stakeholder engagement?

(We understand that drivers are context-dependent, but, if possible, we would like to know your perception about the most generic drivers. You can choose and rate more than one option)

	Very strong	Strong	Moderate	Weak	Very weak
Social expectations	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Investor pressure	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Contractual requirements	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Due diligence expectations	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Government guidance	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Intergovernmental guidance	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
International norms	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
ESG standards	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Preemption of legislation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Lawsuits	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

In your opinion, what is the STATE-OF-THE-ART of the practice of meaningful stakeholder engagement? *

(Please try to describe where we are in terms of meaningful stakeholder engagement)

"The state-of-the-art practice of meaningful stakeholder engagement involves actively involving and collaborating with stakeholders throughout a project or initiative's life cycle. This includes identifying and prioritizing stakeholders, engaging in ongoing dialogue with them, and incorporating their feedback into decision-making processes. There are several key principles and best practices that guide meaningful stakeholder engagement, including: Inclusivity: Stakeholder engagement should involve all relevant stakeholders, including those who are traditionally marginalized or underrepresented. Transparency: Stakeholders should have access to information and be informed about the decision-making processes that affect them. Two-way communication: Stakeholders should have the opportunity to provide feedback and input, and their perspectives should be considered in decision-making. Collaboration: Stakeholders should be involved in developing solutions and strategies, and there should be a shared sense of ownership over outcomes. Timeliness: Stakeholder engagement should occur early and often throughout the project or initiative, and stakeholders should be engaged in a timely manner to allow for meaningful input. Overall, the state-of-the-art practice of meaningful stakeholder engagement involves a shift away from viewing stakeholders as passive recipients of information or decisions, and towards viewing them as active partners in creating and implementing solutions."

In your opinion, what are the main BARRIERS to the practice of meaningful stakeholder engagement? *

"Meaningful stakeholder engagement involves involving individuals or groups who are affected by or have an interest in a particular project, decision or initiative. While stakeholder engagement can be crucial to the success of a project, there are several barriers that can hinder the practice of meaningful stakeholder engagement. Some of the main barriers are: Lack of trust: One of the biggest barriers to meaningful stakeholder engagement is a lack of trust between stakeholders and the organization or individuals leading the engagement. If stakeholders do not trust the organization or individuals leading the engagement, they may not be willing to engage or may be skeptical of the engagement process. Limited resources: Limited resources, such as time, money, and personnel, can also be a barrier to meaningful stakeholder engagement. Without adequate resources, it may be difficult to engage stakeholders effectively and sustainably. Power imbalances: Power imbalances between stakeholders and the organization or individuals leading the engagement can also hinder meaningful engagement. When some stakeholders have more power or influence than others, it can be difficult to ensure that all stakeholders are heard and that their input is taken into account. Communication barriers: Communication barriers, such as language barriers, cultural differences, and different communication styles, can also hinder meaningful stakeholder engagement. Effective communication is essential for building relationships and trust between stakeholders, and without effective communication, it can be difficult to engage stakeholders meaningfully. Lack of clarity on roles and responsibilities: When roles and responsibilities are not clearly defined, stakeholders may not know what is expected of them or who is responsible for what. This can lead to confusion and frustration, and may hinder meaningful engagement. Resistance to change: Finally, resistance to change can be a significant barrier to meaningful stakeholder engagement. Some stakeholders may be resistant to change, and may not be willing to engage in the process or support the initiative. Overcoming resistance to change requires a thoughtful and inclusive approach that involves all stakeholders and addresses their concerns and interests."

In general, how strong have been the following barriers to the (good) practice of meaningful stakeholder engagement?

(We understand that barriers are also context-dependent, but, if possible, we would like to know your perception about the most generic barriers. You can choose and rate more than one option.)

	Very strong	Strong	Moderate	Weak	Very weak
Speedy decision-making	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Limited financial resources	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Lack of capacity building	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Poor monitoring and/or follow-ups	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Poor governance	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Lack of genuine concern about stakeholders	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Use of generic tools and/or frameworks	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Lack of hard law legally binding regulations	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Lack of soft-law instruments (e.g., guidelines, principles, etc.)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Too much emphasis on corporate reputation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Lack of appropriate engagement techniques	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Conceptual

confusion

Greenwashing

How high or low is the world demand for CAPACITY-BUILDING on meaningful stakeholder engagement? *

Very low

1

2

3

4

5

Very high

Please cite HARD-LAW REGULATIONS on meaningful stakeholder engagement that you are aware of in any national, regional or local jurisdiction:

(We define 'hard-law regulation' as legal obligations that are binding on the involved parties and must be legally enforced. Please be specific, e.g., copy and paste full URL or reference details, so that we can trace the source)

Please cite HARD-LAW REGULATIONS on meaningful stakeholder engagement: "There are several hard-law regulations that address stakeholder engagement in different contexts, including:

The United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (UNGPs) - The UNGPs set out the responsibilities of states and businesses to respect human rights and engage with stakeholders, including affected communities, in decision-making processes that affect them.

The European Union's Non-Financial Reporting Directive - This directive requires certain companies to disclose information on their environmental, social, and governance (ESG) policies, including their stakeholder engagement processes.

The UK Companies Act 2006 - Section 172 of the UK Companies Act requires directors to act in the best interests of the company's stakeholders, including employees, customers, suppliers, and the community.

The Australian Corporations Act 2001 - Section 181 of the Australian Corporations Act requires directors to act in good faith in the best interests of the company and to consider the interests of stakeholders, including employees, customers, and suppliers.

The Canadian Business Corporations Act - Section 122 of the Canadian Business Corporations Act requires directors to act in the best interests of the corporation and to consider the interests of stakeholders, including employees, customers, suppliers, and the community.

These hard-law regulations demonstrate a growing recognition of the importance of stakeholder engagement and the role it plays in ensuring responsible business practices."

How high or low is the world demand for HARD-LAW REGULATION on meaningful stakeholder engagement? *

(We define 'hard-law regulation' as legal obligations that are binding on the involved parties and must be legally enforced)

Very low

1

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4

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Very high

Please cite SOFT-LAW INSTRUMENTS on meaningful stakeholder engagement that you are aware of:

(We define 'soft-law instruments' as instruments that are not legally binding or have weak binding force, such as international norms and principles, guidelines, codes of conduct, etc. Please be specific, e.g., copy and paste full URL or reference details, so that we can trace the source)

Please cite SOFT-LAW REGULATIONS on meaningful stakeholder engagement: : "Soft-law regulations refer to non-binding instruments that set out principles or guidelines for stakeholder engagement. Some examples of soft-law regulations on meaningful stakeholder engagement are:

The OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises - These guidelines provide voluntary principles and standards for responsible business conduct, including stakeholder engagement.

The UN Global Compact - The UN Global Compact is a voluntary initiative that encourages businesses to adopt sustainable and socially responsible policies and practices, including stakeholder engagement.

The International Finance Corporation (IFC) Performance Standards - The IFC Performance Standards provide guidelines for environmental and social risk management in investment projects, including requirements for stakeholder engagement.

The AA1000 Stakeholder Engagement Standard - The AA1000 Stakeholder Engagement Standard is a voluntary standard that provides guidance on stakeholder engagement strategy, planning, and implementation.

The ISO 26000 Social Responsibility Standard - The ISO 26000 standard provides voluntary guidelines for social responsibility, including guidance on stakeholder engagement.

These soft-law regulations provide guidance and best practices for stakeholder engagement, and can help organizations develop effective stakeholder engagement strategies and practices. While they are non-binding, they can be influential in shaping corporate behavior and promoting responsible business practices."

How high or low is the world demand for SOFT-LAW INSTRUMENTS for meaningful stakeholder engagement? *

(We define 'soft-law instruments' as instruments that are not legally binding or have weak binding force, such as international norms and principles, guidelines, codes of conduct, etc.)

Very low

1

2

3

4

5

Very high

Please cite and describe **EXAMPLES OF NON-MEANINGFUL ENGAGEMENTS**, i.e., examples of engagements that lacks or lacked meaningfulness.

(Please be specific, e.g., copy and paste full URL or reference details, so that we can trace the source)

Please cite and describe **EXAMPLES OF NON-MEANINGFUL STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENTS**: "Examples of non-meaningful stakeholder engagement can include:

Tokenism: Tokenism occurs when stakeholders are included in discussions or decision-making processes simply to give the appearance of involvement, without any real consideration or input being taken into account.

Box-ticking: Box-ticking happens when organizations go through the motions of consulting with stakeholders, but do not actually take their feedback into account or make any meaningful changes based on that feedback.

Limited or selective engagement: This occurs when only certain stakeholders are consulted or involved, often leaving out those who may have the most at stake or the least ability to advocate for themselves.

Ignoring stakeholder feedback: When stakeholders provide feedback, but their input is ultimately ignored, the engagement process becomes meaningless.

Lack of transparency: Stakeholder engagement processes can also become non-meaningful when there is a lack of transparency around decision-making processes or when stakeholders are not kept informed about how their feedback is being used.

It is important for organizations to engage with stakeholders in a meaningful and authentic way, not only to build trust and credibility, but also to gain valuable insights and perspectives that can improve decision-making and ultimately lead to better outcomes for all parties involved."

Please cite BEST PRACTICE cases (e.g., specific projects or initiatives) of meaningful stakeholder engagement that you are aware of:

(Please be specific, e.g., copy and paste full URL or reference details, so that we can trace the source)

Please cite BEST PRACTICE cases (e.g., specific projects or initiatives) of meaningful stakeholder engagement that you are aware of: "Here are some examples of best practice cases of meaningful stakeholder engagement:

The Lego Group: The Lego Group regularly engages with stakeholders to gain insights and feedback on product development, social responsibility initiatives, and sustainability efforts. They use a variety of methods to engage stakeholders, including surveys, focus groups, and social media, and are transparent about how stakeholder feedback is used to inform decision-making.

National Park Service: The National Park Service in the United States has developed a comprehensive stakeholder engagement program that includes ongoing collaboration with local communities, non-governmental organizations, and other stakeholders to ensure that the national parks are managed in a way that balances environmental protection with public use and enjoyment.

The Sustainable Apparel Coalition: The Sustainable Apparel Coalition is a collaborative effort among apparel and footwear companies, non-governmental organizations, and academic institutions to promote sustainable practices in the fashion industry. They engage with stakeholders through multi-stakeholder roundtables, public consultations, and working groups to develop industry-wide sustainability standards.

The City of Vancouver, Canada: The City of Vancouver has developed a comprehensive stakeholder engagement strategy that includes a variety of methods, such as community meetings, online forums, and social media, to engage with residents and other stakeholders on a range of issues, from transportation planning to climate change mitigation.

Procter & Gamble: Procter & Gamble has implemented a stakeholder engagement program that involves ongoing dialogue with customers, suppliers, employees, and other stakeholders to identify areas for improvement and develop more sustainable products and practices. They use a range of methods, such as surveys, focus groups, and in-person meetings, to engage with stakeholders.

These examples demonstrate how organizations can engage with stakeholders in a meaningful way to build trust, gain valuable insights, and improve decision-making processes."

FINAL COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS

Please add additional comments or suggestions about meaningful stakeholder engagement that were not captured in the previous questions.

(You may add comments and suggestions of any nature, about any topic)

This was a non-human answer from ChatGPT on March 20 2023.

As previously mentioned, this is an anonymous survey. Your personal data will not be shared with anyone, unless you give us prior written consent. *

However, for the purpose of following up on your answers (e.g., clarify issues, etc.), we kindly ask you to provide your name, e-mail, and affiliation below.

ChatGPT

Eligibility

Sorry, this survey must be answered by contributors who are fully aware of the survey's objectives, risks, benefits and context.

This form was created inside of Universidade Federal de Ouro Preto.

Google Forms