

Measure – target group-oriented communication

Introduction

In the following, we present a measure that your company can use to communicate corporate due diligence internally and to external stakeholders (NAP Core Element 3). First we explain the essential features of the measure in a profile. We then describe the implementation steps individually or via illustrations.

Brief description of the measure

If you are communicating with employees in the company or external stakeholders such as suppliers or customers, it is important to think about how you will address them in advance. After all, good ideas and initiatives often fail because it is unclear which people are to be involved, which tasks they should take on or why something should be implemented. In order to successfully implement your ideas and initiatives, you need knowledge of the special characteristics and the composition of your stakeholder groups. With this knowledge, you can make a well-founded decision on how best to include them and develop or adapt communication formats and channels that are appropriate to the target group.

Measure at a glance	
Sector	All sectors
Goal	Design of adequate communication formats and channels for the various stakeholders and goals of your company
Target group	Internal and external stakeholders of your company (e.g. employees, suppliers, investors)
Responsibility	Sustainability department, communication department, human resources, purchasing, possibly others
Implementation steps	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify your stakeholders 2. Identify the main characteristics of the various stakeholders 3. Develop suitable communication formats and channels
Success factors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adequate characterisation of the stakeholder groups • Cooperation with the relevant departments in the company and partners • Design of a participatory and continuous process
Challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Different organisational cultures • Unclear or different expectations/scepticism or lack of interest • Transparency regarding trade secrets/internal information

Implementation of the measure step by step

1. Identify your stakeholders

Stakeholder groups include people or groups who are influenced or can be influenced by the activities of a company. Examples of stakeholder groups or those potentially affected are executives and specialists of the company, employee representatives, suppliers, local communities, NGOs, business associations, etc.

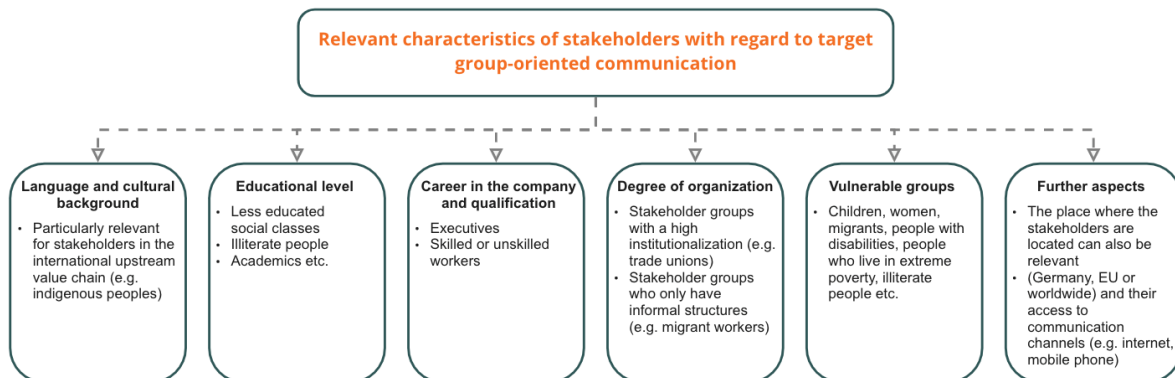
Key questions for identifying stakeholder groups

- ✓ Which professional groups or departments are there within the company?
- ✓ Do these professions or departments have similar interests so that they can be viewed together?
- ✓ Who are your business partners?
- ✓ Which external persons or groups of persons are affected by your business activities along the entire value chain?
- ✓ Are these people organised in initiatives?
- ✓ Are these people represented by certain organisations?

2. Determine the essential characteristics of the various stakeholder groups

The stakeholder groups have various relevant characteristics that are necessary for the development of target group-oriented communication. Relevant characteristics are, for example, the language and cultural background or the level of education. For example, they should not use the same language and channels for communication with the specialists in Germany and for communication with local communities outside of Europe. The following presents the relevant characteristics of stakeholder groups with regard to target group-oriented communication.

Figure: Characteristics of the different stakeholder groups



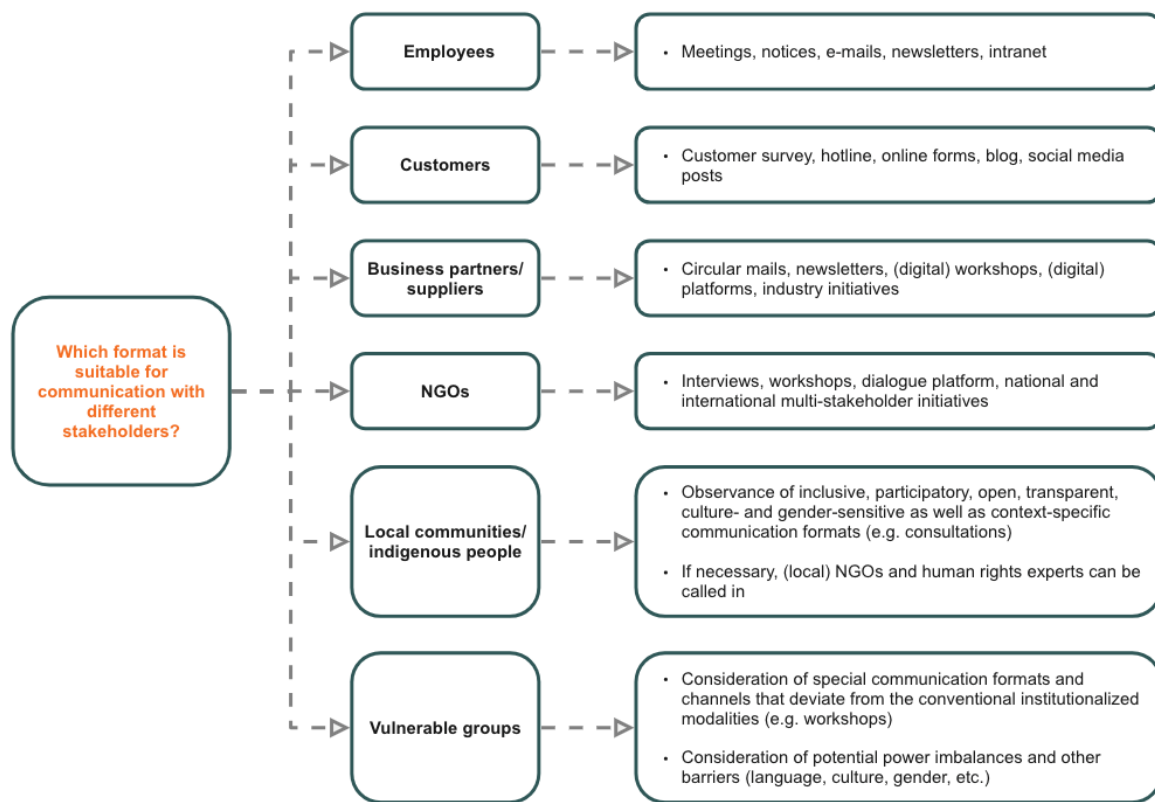
Source: adelphi illustration based on: Guide | Global Compact Network Germany | 2014 | Stakeholder engagement in human rights due diligence. A business guide | p. 17-19 | [Click here](#).

3. Develop suitable communication formats and channels for the different stakeholder groups

Based on the identified characteristics, you should adapt the language and wording in communication with the various stakeholders. For example, not all stakeholders are equally familiar with technical, legal or human rights terms.

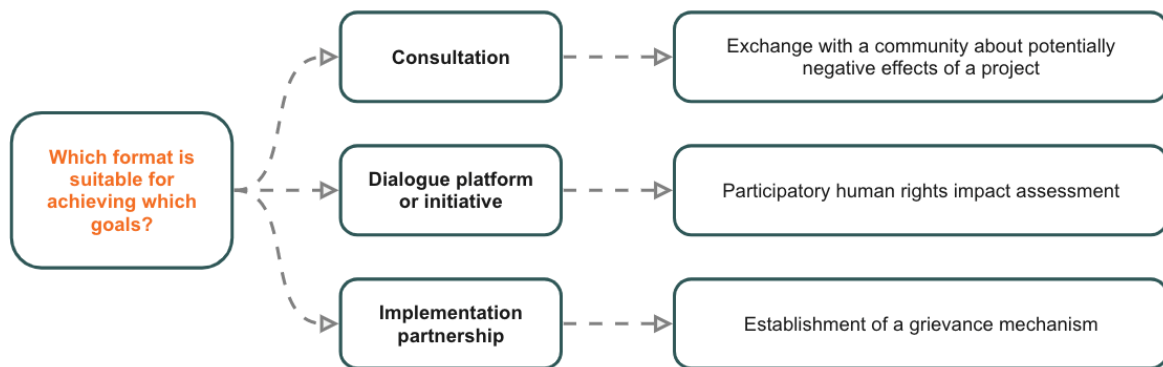
If you select target group-specific communication channels, you should also pay attention to the needs, habits and preferences of the respective target group. However, these can change over time. You should therefore obtain feedback from the stakeholders at regular intervals. In this way you can find out whether they are satisfied with the selected communication formats or whether you need to adapt them.

Figure: Examples of communication formats with stakeholders



Sources: adelphi illustration based on: Guide | German Global Compact Network | 2014 | Stakeholder engagement in human rights due diligence. A business guide | pp. 17-19 | [Click here](#). || Sustainability report | HAKRO | 2019 | pp. 18-19 | [Click here](#). || Sustainability Strategy 2017-2022 | HAKRO | 2017 | pp. 12-13 | [Click here](#).

Figure: Examples of communication formats for specific goals



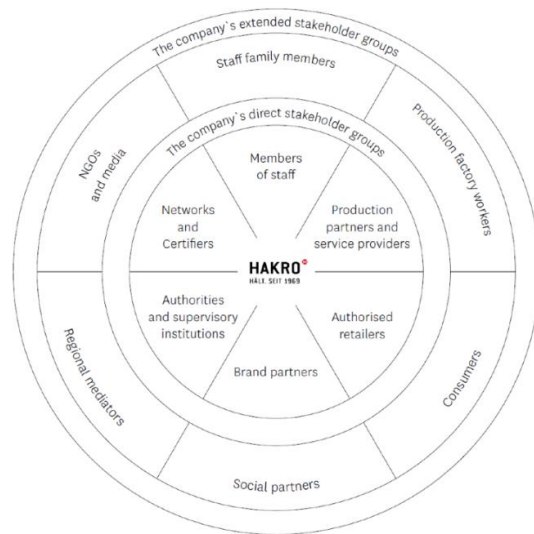
Source: adelphi illustration based on: Guide | German Global Compact Network | 2014 | Stakeholder engagement in human rights due diligence. A business guide | pp. 17-19 | [Click here](#).

Practical example

In 2016, HAKRO carried out an inventory of its network. The identified stakeholders were divided into direct and extended stakeholder groups. Since then, “a constructive dialogue with all of these partners” has been maintained. However, this dialogue has a “different intensity depending on the stakeholder group” and is conducted through different formats and channels.

- Employees: Meetings, meetings, notices, circular emails, employee newspaper
- Production partners: Newsletter with sustainability information, e.g. about HAKRO memberships, changed requirements for certifications, tools, guidelines and other practical aids
- Customers and other external stakeholders: Website blog, social media posts, media information and annual sustainability report
- With other companies: Exchange of experiences via networks and associations
- (e.g. [DGCN](#), [amfori BSCI](#), [Partnership for Sustainable Textiles](#), [WIN-Charta](#)).

Figure: HAKRO stakeholder groups



Source: Sustainability Report | HAKRO | 2019 | [Click here](#).

Sources

[DGCN \(2014\), Stakeholder engagement in human rights due diligence. A business guide](#)

[Helpdesk WiMR, MVO Netherlands, UPJ, CSR risk management steps](#)

[OHCHR \(2011\), The Corporate Responsibility to Respect Human Rights: An Interpretive Guide](#)

[HAKRO \(2020\), Sustainability Report 2019 || HAKRO \(2017\), Sustainability Strategy 2017-2022](#)