

Overview

Facility-level monitoring, reporting, and verification (MRV) programs affect a wide range of stakeholders across many sectors of the economy.

Stakeholder engagement involves informing and consulting relevant parties and interest groups on key issues related to program development and operation. Important topics to address when dealing with stakeholders include:

- Purpose and objectives
- Program design and implementation
- Administration and enforcement
- Technical requirements
- Public disclosure, program assessments and updates
- Engagement processes and plans

For new MRV programs, the amount of time available for the design and development phase will play a major role in determining the extent of stakeholder engagement prior to program commencement. Correspondingly, this will impact interactions between stakeholders and program administrators during program operation.

Stakeholder engagement for facility-level MRV programs usually involves multiple groups, including:

- Program participants covered by the program – i.e., facility owners and operators;
- Personnel employed by program participants (e.g., engineers, compliance officers, environmental managers, lawyers, etc.);
- Service providers and consultants
- Verifiers and other technical experts
- Other branches of Government
- Environmental NGOs and other interest groups
- General public

Program administrators should consider several dynamics when developing an approach to effective interaction with stakeholders, such as the level of

engagement. Options range from workshops consisting of both program administrators and stakeholders, to low-interaction approaches like managing email enquiries from the public.

Methods of Engagement

Several engagement methods exist for program administrators to inform and educate stakeholders about a facility-level MRV program, including:

- Publication of documents and guidance material (websites, print)
- “One-to-many” presentations, such as large gatherings of interested stakeholders
- “One-to-some” presentations, where the group is smaller and potentially more interactive
- One-to-one in-person meetings or telephone calls
- Formal and informal training and capacity building sessions delivered online or in-person
- Emails, letters, submissions
- Call center operations, where scripted responses are provided to common questions
- Webinars, RSS feeds

The method of engagement should suit the audience, the subject matter, and objectives. For instance, formalized training packages are an effective approach to inform and educate stakeholders on technical requirements and procedures. Alternatively, consultation processes involving group discussions, issues papers and one-on-one meetings are useful methods for addressing program design and implementation.

Factors that influence stakeholder engagement include budget availability to cover the cost of meetings, workshops and staff resources. Additionally, the expectations of stakeholders (which are often motivated by past experiences) have a bearing on the method of engagement, as well as the size and coverage of the MRV program, which not only includes the number of program participants but also the types of sectors involved and jurisdictions.

The level of **readiness** of program participants, particularly the readiness of their technical staff, also significantly impacts the method of stakeholder engagement, its effectiveness, and the type of training and capacity building activities. Program administrators could conduct a “needs assessment” to identify groups requiring technical assistance prior to and following the program's launch.

Country Context & Engagement

Stakeholder engagement always depends on the context in which it happens. With such a wide variety of cultures, communities, business practices, government processes, and transparency mechanisms in place across the world, there is no single approach to stakeholder engagement which is suitable for every situation.

The regulatory culture prevailing in the program jurisdiction will impact on levels of transparency and accessibility, how communications with the program administrator are managed, and use of the information which is collected and collated by the program, among other things.

In situations where it is common for new government programs to include a high level of engagement (such as in California), then program administrators would prioritize information sharing meetings and training. In contrast, jurisdictions with a legacy of limited engagement on policy design or implementation will have less experience developing program information packages and training sessions.

For a facility-level MRV program, development of a **stakeholder engagement plan** can provide a structured approach to articulating objectives, defining stakeholder engagement methods, identifying which stakeholders to engage, determining key issues, and delineating indicators of success. There are numerous examples of stakeholder engagement plans and strategies

available on the internet, for example, CSIRO has posted “A framework for stakeholder engagement on climate adaptation” (working paper number #3) – www.csiro.au/files/files/pph1.pdf.

Training & Capacity Building

Training is an important component of the successful implementation of any new program and a tool for stakeholder engagement. Training is also part of the capacity building which is required to ensure that the professionals implementing the MRV program have the necessary knowledge, competency, and ethics to do so effectively.

Given the number of program participants and the complex requirements of MRV programs, training and capacity building can make a valuable contribution to the program's success, ensuring that program participants, verifiers and other service providers understand what the program requires and how it is meant to work.

Many options exist for how training and capacity building can be developed and used to support MRV programs. For example, in-person training, online training, blended approaches, peer-to-peer networks, as well as certificate and degree programs are possible.

Additional Information

See the PMR website for additional information on MRV programs: www.thepmr.org/content/mrv-data-management-and-registries

Furthermore, information on the PMR's workshop on stakeholder engagement and communications (October 2013 in Marrakesh, Morocco) is available at: www.thepmr.org/events/eventlist/workshop/technical-workshop-7-stakeholder-engagement-and-communication