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How to Use the Research Translation Toolkit's Stakeholder Analysis Section

February 23, 2023

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RESEARCH TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE CENTER

ONE TOOLKIT, THREE SECTIONS

The toolkit is divided into three sections:

- Stakeholder Analysis.
- Communication Products.
- Research-to-Action (R2A) Plan.

When used together, these three sections can help you build strategies and craft messages to influence decisions and achieve development impact more effectively throughout the research process.

TODAY'S OBJECTIVES

- Review the contents of the Stakeholder Analysis section.
- Learn why, when, and how to use it.
- Hear real-life experiences using processes from the section.
- Answer your questions.

WHO ARE STAKEHOLDERS?

What are your challenges engaging with influential individuals or groups that might use research, techniques, or innovative products?

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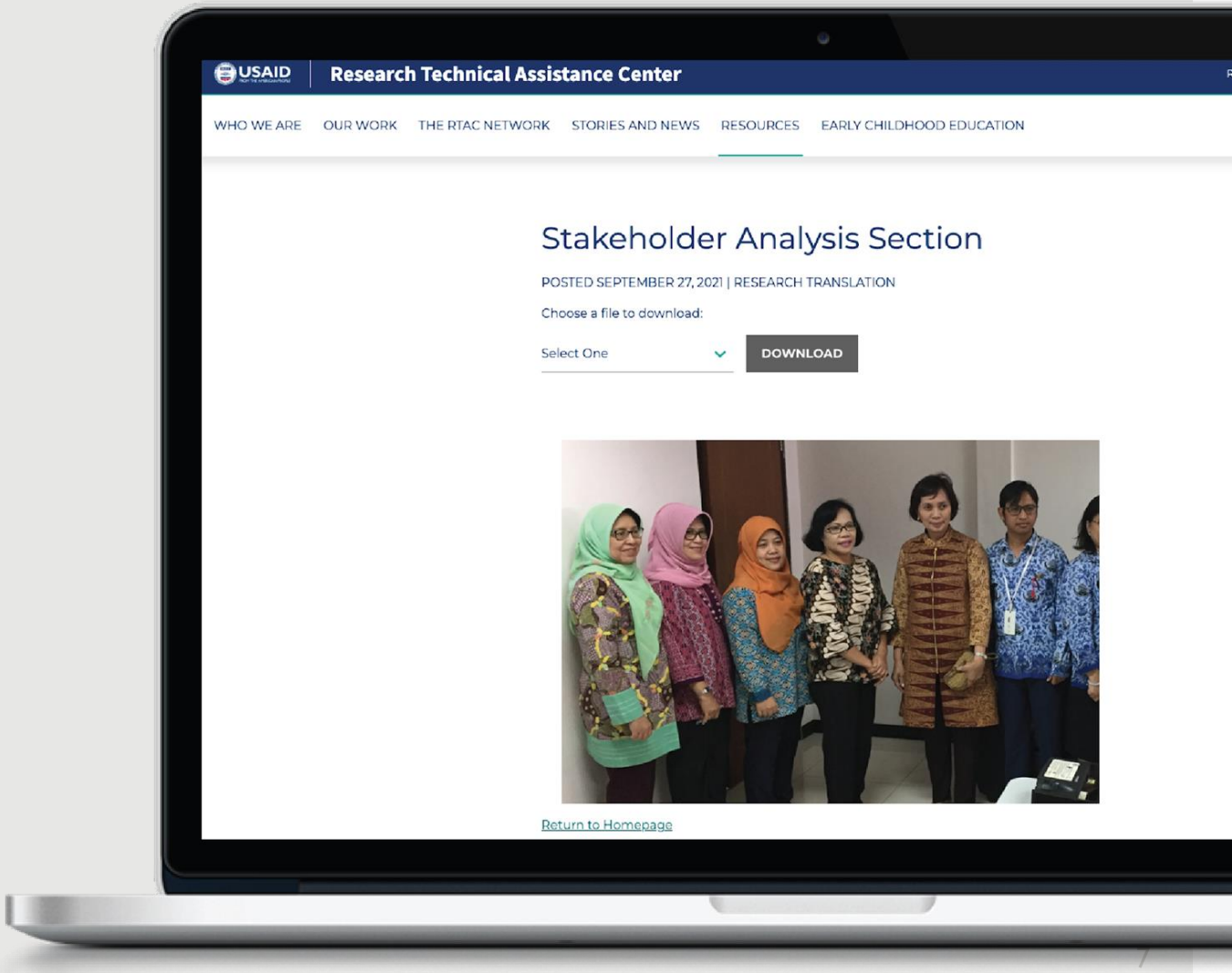
STAKEHOLDER ANALYSIS SECTION

WHAT, WHY, WHEN & HOW

WHAT IS IT?

The Stakeholder Analysis section can help you:

- Identify and prioritize influential individuals or groups who might who might be interested in, benefit from, influence, or use your research.
- Plan effective engagement with these stakeholders.



WHY SHOULD YOU USE IT?

Use the Stakeholder Analysis section when you want to:

- Understand your stakeholders' interests, influence, motivation, and knowledge of the subject matter.
- Determine which stakeholders are most important to engage in the research process, and when and how to engage them.
- Learn tips for how to interview stakeholders.

WHEN SHOULD YOU USE IT IN THE RESEARCH PROCESS?

STAKEHOLDER ANALYSIS

Use this section as early as possible so stakeholders can be engaged to give their input before your research questions and/or approach are finalized.

01	02	03	04	05
Research question development	Concept and proposal write-up	Study implementation	Analysis and write-up	Dissemination and follow-up

Use this section at any stage of your research project because stakeholder roles may vary at each stage; engagement is an ongoing, iterative process that continues throughout the project.

STAKEHOLDER ANALYSIS

ANALYZING STAKEHOLDERS STEP BY STEP

Step 1: Identify Stakeholders.

Step 2: Prioritize Stakeholders.

Step 3: Understand Stakeholders.

Step 4: Plan Stakeholder Engagement.

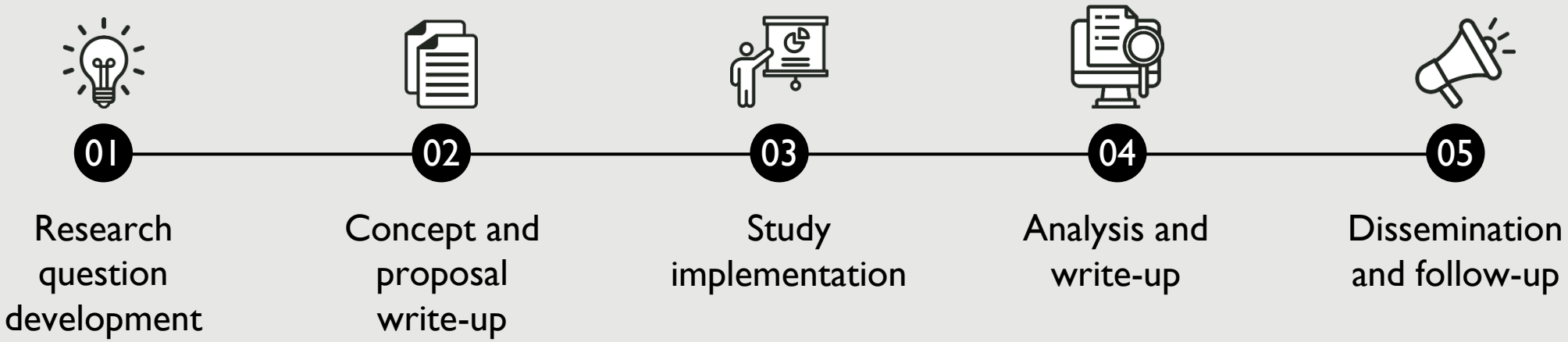
Step 5: Track Stakeholder Engagement.

STEP 1

IDENTIFY STAKEHOLDERS

Goal: Identify a wide and diverse range of stakeholders by asking a set of basic questions.

- Be inclusive—you will narrow down your list in the next step.
- Consider different categories and spheres of influence.
- Think about stakeholder roles at each stage of the research process.



STEP 1A | WORKSHEET

STAKEHOLDER IDENTIFICATION

STAKEHOLDER	STAKEHOLDER TYPE		REASONS FOR ENGAGEMENT	
Group or Individual	**Category** e.g., Government, Donor/funder, NGO, Business	**Sphere of Influence** e.g., Global, Regional, National, Subnational	**Potential Influence on the Project** (Positive or Negative)	**Potential Interest in the Project** (Positive or Negative)
Example: Ministry of Health	*Example: Government*	*Example: National*	*Example: They can make the change to the policy that we want.*	*Example: They can ensure that our research is conducted rigorously and have early access to the latest evidence on the topic as it becomes available from our research.*

STEP 2

PRIORITIZE STAKEHOLDERS

You've got your list of stakeholders…Now what?

Focuses on prioritizing the stakeholders on your list by categorizing them based on their relative interest and influence in your research.

Prioritizing stakeholders is critical to ensuring that you are directing your time and energy to maximizing the impact of your stakeholder engagement efforts.

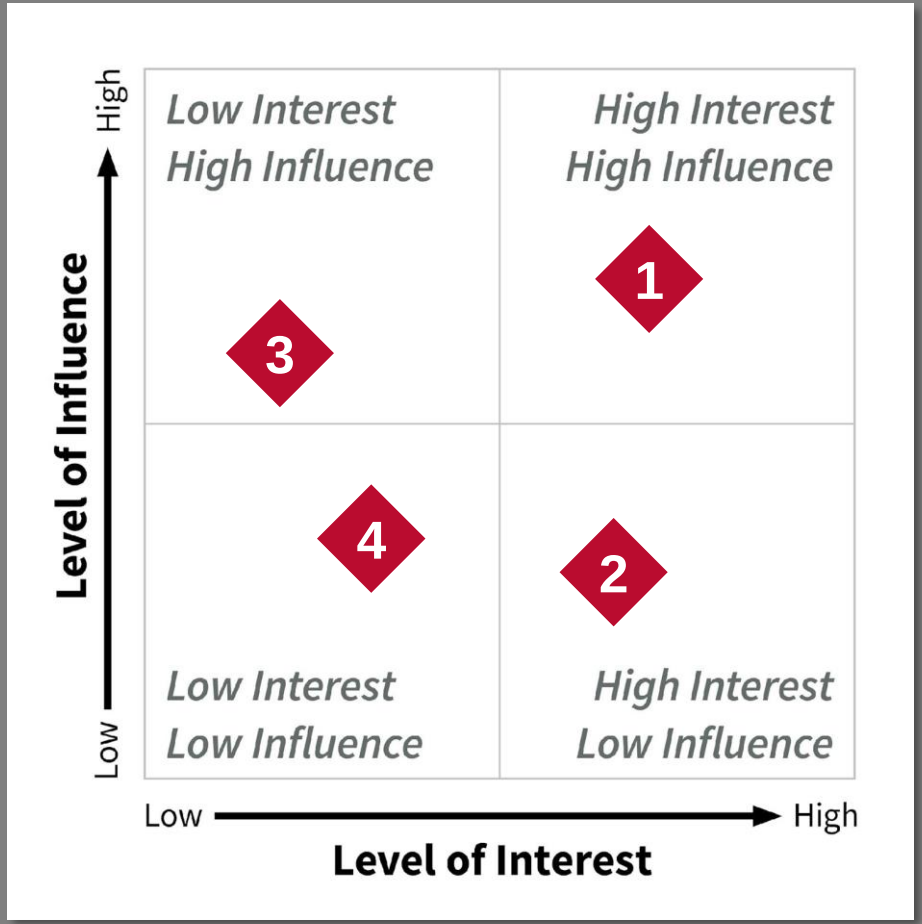
STEP 2A | WORKSHEET

STAKEHOLDER PRIORITIZATION

STAKEHOLDER	STAKEHOLDER TYPE	
Group or Individual	**Level of Influence** High, Low	**Level of Interest** High, Low

STEP 2B | WORKSHEET

STAKEHOLDER MAPPING



STEP 3

UNDERSTAND STAKEHOLDERS

Understanding the individuals and groups you prioritized in Step 2 helps you engage with each stakeholder effectively.

This step outlines important information to gather on each stakeholder.

STEP 3 | WORKSHEET

STAKEHOLDER INFORMATION

STAKEHOLDER	UNDERSTANDING KEY CHARACTERISTICS			
Group or Individual	**Existing Relationship** Existing relationship with the project or other stakeholders?	**Knowledge of the Topic/Project** Uninformed, Familiar, Expert	**Views on the Topic/Project** Negative, Neutral, Positive	**Preferred Communication Method** Phone, Email, In-person
	Motivation to Engage High, Medium, Low	**What Can Be Done to Motivate Them?** Answer if not highly motivated.	**Capacity to Engage** High, Medium, Low	**Possible Constraints / Ways to Increase Capacity?** Answer if not highly capable.

STEP 3 | CONTINUED

STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS

You likely won't already have the information needed to complete the previous worksheets, so interviews are another useful way to build understanding of your stakeholders.

It is strongly recommended to include some interviews in your stakeholder analysis process.

The interviews can be scripted or more unstructured, but we encourage you to ask open-ended questions.

STEP 3 | CONTINUED

STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS

When planning for and conducting interviews, we recommend that you:

- Interview early in your analysis process.
- Prioritize interview questions.
- Focus on listening.
- Follow the conversation.
- Adapt and skip questions as appropriate.

STEP 3 | TIP SHEET

STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEW GUIDE

STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEW GUIDE

Table of Contents

Introduction

This interview guide describes the process a research team can use to interview key stakeholders as a part of the stakeholder analysis. It includes scheduling interviews, preparing interview tools, conducting interviews, and analyzing interview results.

Adapted from the Policy Communication Toolkit by PRB.

A. SCHEDULING INTERVIEWS

(1) Send an Email Introduction.
Once you have identified your key stakeholders, send an email introduction—you may need to attach an official letter if the stakeholder or the organization requires it. Be sure your email message or letter includes information about your project, organization, and any additional information you think the stakeholder may want to know to accept your invitation for the interview. Describe how key stakeholders were identified, and briefly highlight what sort of information you will request during the interview and how the information will be used. Inform them that they will be contacted again by phone to set up the interview.

(2) Call to Schedule the Interview.
After a reasonable amount of time, call each key stakeholder to schedule an interview. Introduce yourself and briefly review the information you included in your email. Make an appointment to interview the stakeholder at a convenient time using the format they prefer—phone, online conferencing platform (e.g., Zoom, Google Meet), or face-to-face. The stakeholder analysis you completed includes information about the stakeholder's preferred method of communication. You can use this information to inform the format you suggest for the meeting, provided it is practical to do so. When scheduling the interview, note the amount of time you expect it will take. Stakeholders often have many demands on their time, and it is generally advised not to request meetings longer than one hour.

(3) Send the Questions in Advance (Optional).
Once the interview has been scheduled, you may choose to send each key stakeholder a copy of the questions in advance. Sharing the questions early allows the respondent time to prepare thoughts and identify relevant materials ahead of time.

Caution: In some organizations, providing questions ahead of time will mean that the respondent must prepare answers in advance and get them approved. Do not send questions in advance to some stakeholders and not others in the same organization.

ANNEX I
SAMPLE SCRIPTS FOR INTRODUCTION AND CONCLUSION

SAMPLE SCRIPTS FOR INTRODUCTION

Introduce yourself.

- **Interviewer 1:**
  Good afternoon, is this (name of stakeholder)? This is (name of interviewer 1). I am a researcher with [your affiliation]. Thank you for joining us today. (Name of interviewer 2) is also here with me and I will let (interviewer 2) introduce himself/herself.
- **Interviewer 2:**
  Introduces self.

Seek informed consent about recording.

Before we start, we want to let you know that we will be recording this interview and it will be transcribed to ensure that all of the information we document is accurate. The results from these interviews will not specifically identify the individuals interviewed or their organizations. They will be reported in aggregate and by the types of stakeholders engaged. Do you have any questions? Is it okay to begin the interview?

SAMPLE SCRIPTS FOR CONCLUSIONS

Recap the interview and thank the stakeholder.

- **Interviewer 1:**
  Thank you very much for your time and for sharing your experiences with us.
  Do you have any additional comments or insight about [topic]?
  Do you have any questions for us?
  Again, thank you very much.
  Have a good day.

ANNEX II
SAMPLE QUESTIONS ON RESEARCH UTILIZATION

From each category below, select one or two questions that are appropriate for your team's purpose.

RESEARCH UPTAKE

1. How will the results (and recommendations) of this research inform your work?
2. To what extent is this topic a priority for your work/for your organization/institution?
3. How does this research advance the field? What's new and important about this research? [This question can be used to gauge the respondent's understanding of the research as well.]
4. What are the practical policy or programmatic applications for this research?
   - What would you like to see changed as a result of this research?
5. What would be required to take this research to scale? What steps need to be taken to take this research to scale in the short term? In the long term?
   - How might the best practices or recommendations from the research be institutionalized?
   - What barriers might stand in the way of taking this research to scale?
6. What, if any, relevant government policy documents, strategies, programmatic guidelines, service protocols or nongovernmental institutional policies could the research results/recommendations be incorporated into?
7. What opportunities are available for private sector interest in this research or innovation (such as through public-private partnerships or bringing the innovation to market)?

AUDIENCES/STAKEHOLDERS

8. Who are the potential end users of the research results?
9. Who are the stakeholders who have the power or influence to achieve the research recommendations?
   - What are their roles and responsibilities?
   - (Who are the stakeholders who know the most about this topic?)
10. Who can help influence the primary audiences or might have a general interest in these findings and recommendations?
11. What action would your organization be able to take given these findings and recommendations?
12. What other institutions (government, private, nongovernmental, civil society, academic) would benefit from the results/recommendations of this research?
    - Why would they be interested?
    - Who is the main point of contact?
    - What barriers might prevent this institution from using this research?

STEP 4

PLAN STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

The level of stakeholder involvement will likely vary at different stages, depending on a stakeholder's expected roles and contributions.

Identify each stakeholder's role and the optimal timing or research stage at which the stakeholder should be engaged. Finally, consider the best way to engage the stakeholder.

STEP 4 | WORKSHEET & TEMPLATE

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT PLAN

STAKE-HOLDER	ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITY BY PROJECT STAGE									
Group or Individual	**Research Question Development**		**Concept and Proposal Write-Up**		**Data Collection/ Implementation**		**Analysis and Write-Up**		**Dissemination and Follow-Up**	
	Activity	**Mode**	**Activity**	**Mode**	**Activity**	**Mode**	**Activity**	**Mode**	**Activity**	**Mode**
Example: Ministry of Health	*Example: Ask to review and provide feedback on research questions before finalizing.*	*Example: Small group, in-person meeting in their office*			*Example: Send bi-weekly updates of the progress.*	*Example: Email*			*Example: Ask for assistance with outreach to end users to nurture the use of findings.*	*Example: Workshops in different locations*

STEP 4 | WORKSHEET & TEMPLATE

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT PLAN

TEMPLATE: SHORT-TERM STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT PLAN

1. STAGES FOR STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

Below are suggested stages of the research process where stakeholder engagement may be helpful.
Please check stages of research for which you will undertake stakeholder engagement over the next 12 months.
Select all that apply.

- ☐ Research Question Development
- ☐ Concept and Proposal Write-Up
- ☐ Study Implementation
- ☐ Analysis and Write-Up
- ☐ Dissemination and Follow-Up
- ☐ _____

2. LIST STAKEHOLDERS AND ROLES

Identify the names of individuals and organizations you plan to engage and their roles during the next 12 months.

Stakeholders	Roles
[INSERT STAKEHOLDER HERE]	[INSERT ROLE HERE]

1 | SHORT-TERM STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT PLAN

3. LIST ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

Identify your planned modes of stakeholder engagement, objectives, and stakeholders to engage.

Modes of Stakeholder Engagement	Dates	Objectives	Stakeholders to Engage
[INSERT MODE HERE]	[INSERT DATE HERE]	[INSERT OBJECTIVE HERE]	[INSERT STAKEHOLDERS HERE]

4. TRACK AND MEASURE SUCCESS

Identify expected outputs or outcomes from the activities above that would allow you to assess the effectiveness of your stakeholder engagement.

2 | SHORT-TERM STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT PLAN

STEP 5

TRACK STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

Tracking and measuring success of stakeholder engagement during a project enables the research team to assess engagement efforts and make improvements as needed.

This section helps you establish a monitoring plan by defining indicators and planning for data collection.

STEP 5 | WORKSHEET

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT TRACKING PLAN

STAKE-HOLDER	ENGAGEMENT TRACKING PLAN						
Group or Individual	**Timeline** When is the engagement planned?	**Activity** What is planned for the engagement?	**Purpose** Why engage the stakeholders in this activity?	**Output** What is the output?	**Short-Term Result** How to measure success in the short term	**Data Collection** How to collect data to measure the short-term result	**Outputs/ Outcomes** What are the actual results?
Example: Representatives from key stakeholder organizations	*Example: 3/1/2021*	*Example: Form a dissemination advisory group and host meetings.*	*Example: To obtain advice on the dissemination strategy for the project*	*Example: Number of representatives who agree to join the group, number participating in each meeting, and number of meetings hosted*	*Example: Whether the advice from the group enabled the team to make any improvements to the dissemination strategy/plan (e.g. new audiences identified, key messages refined).*	*Example: Take notes or record the meetings, and document the changes made to the dissemination strategy/plan following the meetings.*	

EXPERIENCES AND LESSONS LEARNED ENGAGING WITH STAKEHOLDERS IN THE PHILIPPINES

DR. JOSE RODRIGUEZ

EXPERIENCES AND LESSONS LEARNED ENGAGING WITH STAKEHOLDERS IN THE PHILIPPINES

- Researchers are very interested in making a difference, but few are familiar with the research-to-action process and structure.
- Program ownership by the decision makers can never be overestimated. It's important to meaningfully engage stakeholders throughout the research process to get their buy-in at the end.
- In advocating for policy change, researchers need assistance in understanding the policy context and landscape and the critical role that stakeholders play in the policy change process. Sometimes they need help to map important stakeholders.
- In selecting stakeholders, it is important to prioritize those that have the authority to make decisions and who also have demonstrated interest in the subject matter.
- Conducting stakeholder interviews is where the rubber meets the road; when researchers go out into the field and meet the stakeholders, this is where their theoretical plan takes shape in a concrete way.
- Stakeholder interviews are an important way of better understanding your audience so you can create tailored key messages to address the concerns that stakeholder cares about.
- The best policy advocates are oftentimes the program beneficiaries themselves – it's important to engage a diverse range of stakeholders and not just the usual suspects.

QUESTIONS?

ANSWERS!

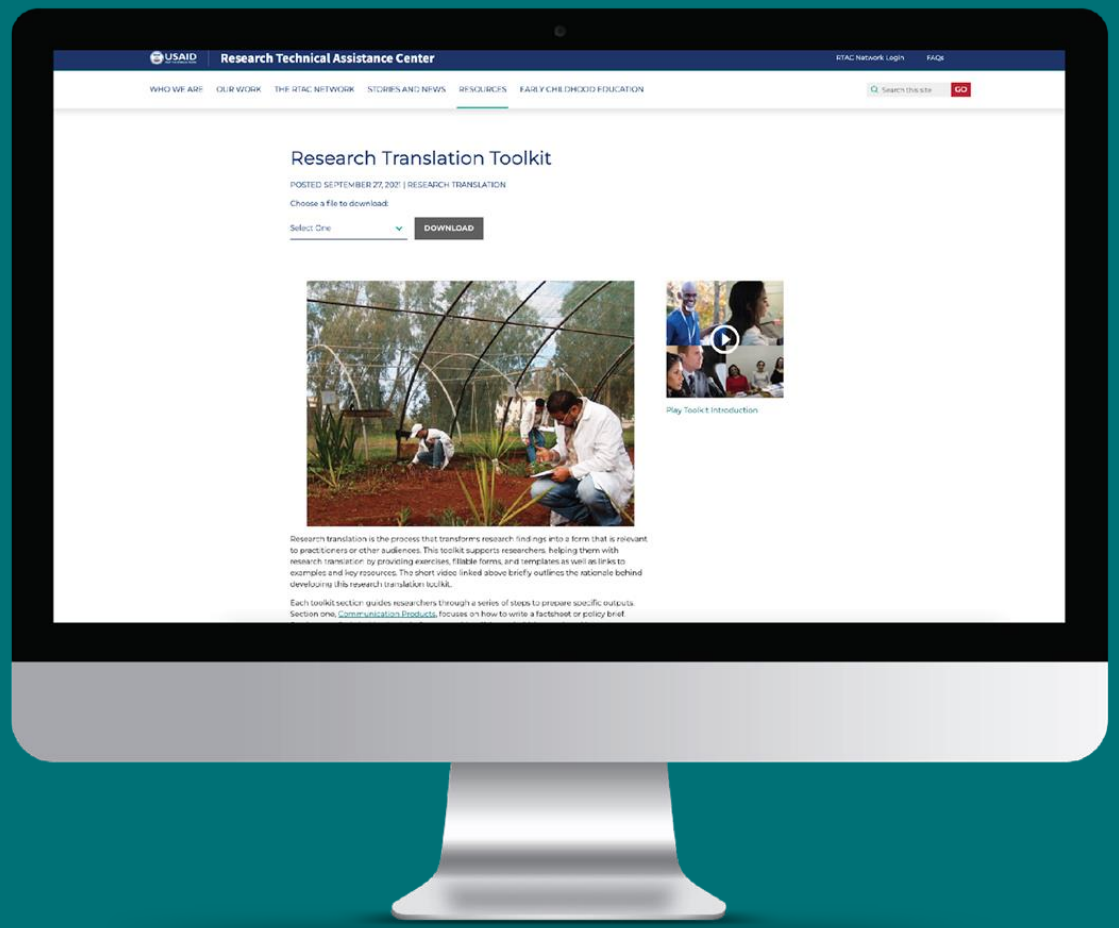
AUDIENCE ACTIVITY RESULTS

HOW WILL YOU USE THIS SECTION IN YOUR OWN WORK?

- To keep beneficiaries at the forefront of what we do.
- Link the stakeholder analysis with the field schools managed by extensionists.
- Making stakeholder analysis and engagement more systematic using the toolkit.
- Understand what stakeholders' goals are (which might be different/conflicting) and how the research findings can help them achieve their goals.
- Create dissemination plans for research activities.
- Form a stakeholder advisory group for projects, even when it isn't required.
- We have used stakeholder mapping, local and national stakeholder engagement, and stakeholder as part of human-centered design. However, I'd like to use these tools to create more comprehensive and intentional plan, especially for including stakeholder voices and feedback throughout the project stages.
- Train our teams and systematic dissemination of information.
- Identify new audiences.
- Map out who is affected by regulatory change, who needs to change the way they work, and figure out who our allies may be in the ministries.
- Training researchers in how to do a stakeholder analysis map for research translation.
- I would like to hold a training for all of our research staff.
- To refine research questions.

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

Share your story about how using the **Research Translation Toolkit** has influenced uptake of your research by emailing us at itr.researchfeedback@usaid.gov.



UPCOMING WEBINARS

March 2: Capturing Attention: How to Use the Communication Products Section

March 9: Transforming Research Into Programs and Policies: How to Use the Research-to-Action Plan Section

Both from 9:30 a.m. to 11 a.m. (EST)

THANK YOU!

Register for the next webinars and access post-event resources via the webinar website:
https://www.rtachesn.org/stories-and-news/research-translation-toolkit-webinars/

Acknowledgments

This presentation was produced by Population Reference Bureau under the Research Technical Assistance Center (RTAC) project. RTAC is made possible by the generous support of the American people through the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) under the terms of contract no. 7200AA18C00057. The contents are the sole responsibility of RTAC and NORC at the University of Chicago and do not necessarily reflect the views of USAID or the United States government.