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WELLBEING ECONOMY ALLIANCE

Stakeholder Mapping and Relationship Building Guidance

Aligning institutions & Stakeholders for Wellbeing

About the Guidance

This document shares some insights and recommendations from a variety of experiences of doing stakeholder mapping and relationship building. These activities are an essential part of a wellbeing economy design process and can be seen as their own steps in the process as well as integrated into other aspects along the journey.

Participation is essential for a wellbeing economy. It is important to map out and understand our community stakeholders and partners early on in the policy design process in order to develop valuable connections and build trust relationships. These relationships are vital as a means to both draw on the knowledge and expertise of a wide range of stakeholders and make sure policies reflect the diversity of the community in which one works. It is also a way to ensure that policies for the wellbeing economy are successful and accepted in the long-term.

To ensure a multi-stakeholder approach throughout, conscious steps need to be taken to identify and build connections with partners to be involved throughout the other steps in the policy design process. This guidance focuses on those steps, rather than how to integrate stakeholders throughout the process. This is elaborated in the Wellbeing Economy Policy Design Guide itself and in other resources available on **Sustainable Prosperity.**
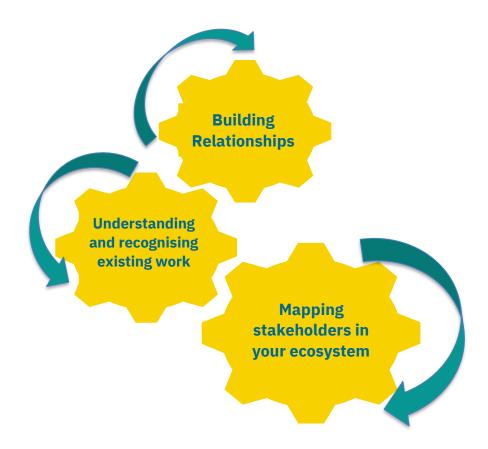
Defining Scope

Stakeholder mapping and relationship building are two different things. Yet, they are associated with each other and can be perceived as complementary. While the goal of stakeholder mapping is to understand the ecosystem within which you operate; relationship building involves creating connections and building trust with those who may be along the way with you.

The scope of these two aspects goes beyond building a network of support, strengthening the ecosystem, and getting buy-in from different aspects of society. It is also about recognising the value, contributions, and history of other actors and how you relate to them and their work.

While separate, both aspects are multidimensional; the purpose influences where and when in the process it should happen.

<u>Considering purpose</u>

What is the reason to do stakeholder mapping and relationship building?

Why is this step important?

1. **Understanding & recognising your ecosystem**

   Stakeholder mapping can be difficult and complex and constantly evolving. With this in mind, it is helpful to see it as a process with an initial step to ground oneself, within continued iterations responsive to the various steps along the way.

   - An important aspect of this is also to recognise and disperse power and recognition across the community for a process that requires a lot of different actors and builds on existing strengths.

   - Understanding who is already active and participating in WBE-type activities and who would feel left out if they are not involved.

2. **Building relationships & trust**

   - Building trust is an important part of embodying the outcome we are trying to achieve while we're doing this work—togetherness and interconnection

   - This also helps to legitimise your work in the area—not just an outside organisation doing an experiment.

3. **Gathering buy-in and support for wellbeing economy policies**

4. **Knowledge sharing**

   - We have knowledge we are bringing, but for the project to be successful, we need others to share their knowledge with us. This requires trust, respect for knowledge, and respect for them. We need to understand what they're hearing when we deliver ours too.

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Stakeholder Mapping:

As an exercise, stakeholder mapping can take a variety of forms: an excel, a whiteboard, a canvas (online or offline). Below some key questions are captured to support that exercise for reflection around what might be important to understand about stakeholders.

What do I need to know about my stakeholders in order to build strong relationships and work well together

Conceptual	What brings them to the work? Why pursue work together on a wellbeing economy, and how can we build off of this entry point? What's their level of understanding of economic system change?
Motivation	Their vision, or purpose statement. Something of their 'story' told in their own words. How does their work relate (negatively or positively) to a wellbeing economy? What are their goals and motivation, personally and in their work? What do they value, and what drives their discontent? (on the assumption that for the work we're doing, people must have something that they want to see changed to build their society)
Community	How do they communicate, what's their thinking process, how do they best work with others? (this feeds into the relationship-building process) Their network and connections. In what area do they work? If they are an organisation, what is their organisation's focus? Who else do they work with and value?

Personal	What would be their motivation for collaborating with us? Who do they feel they represent? What strengths do they bring to the table? Where are they in their learning process? What is their starting point? *A small point, but pronouncing names well can have a big impact
Barriers	Know what the pressure points are for them, i.e., workload-heavy times or difficulties; and respecting these in the work we plan to do together. Doing a physical walkabout in the community, guided by a local Knowing time constraints and being open and honest about limitations in terms of time/capacity is helpful

Deepening understanding of stakeholders along the topics above can be done in a wide range of ways.

Some examples of exercises that can be undertaken for this process are:

- multi-stakeholder dialogues
- multi-stakeholder management toolkit
- stakeholder identification and analysis guidance

Relationship building:

Relationship building can come in many forms, formal and informal. The following is a non-exhaustive list of suggestions that have been sourced from peers undertaking a Wellbeing Economy Policy Design process in line with the guide:

1. **Appreciative inquiry:** a strength-based and positive approach to developing new relationships, partnerships, and projects. This involves not targets and assets but listening to people, being curious about energy, connecting on visions and aspirations, and learning about what are different strengths and reading their needs.

2. Connection: Togetherness and interconnection must be at the heart of a wellbeing economy, so our work towards it should embody these values. Create non-digital methods for outreach and communication. Always allow time for informal, personal connection during discussions, not only asking questions but sharing about yourself too—relationships are two-way. Make the conversation comfortable and not overly formal so people feel a personal connection. Also, go to where they are—their workshop, event, etc.—to see them in their element, rather than asking them to come to you.

3. Understanding impacts: those impacted by potential policy should have a chance to participate in the creation of those policies.

4. Snowball: ask contacts to introduce us to someone they think we should talk to. Begin with identifying allies already working on economic systems change in some way, then work outwards through network to reach wider audiences.

5. Prepare: do some background reading and research, for example about them, their work, their history.

6. Diving into working together: organise something together as a "safe to fail experiment". Collaboration is a great way to build trust and get to know each other.

7. Create Opportunities: Create a value clear offer and immediate opportunity for engagement.

8. Instigate network building: hosting collaboration sessions with small groups to facilitate and support conversation and relationship building among the different stakeholders.

9. Recognise what baggage you may carry: reflect on your own power and privilege in the ecosystem or on the topic. Know your strengths and weaknesses.

10. Include: make sure that community groups who do not normally have access to participate are involved in the process. Think about their main barriers, such as language, and provide mechanisms to support their input and contributions, e.g., bilingual sessions.

Click here to learn more about building relationship and trust, especially in your core team

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