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**Participation  
for Humanitarian  
Innovation**

# Toolkit

## Background paper

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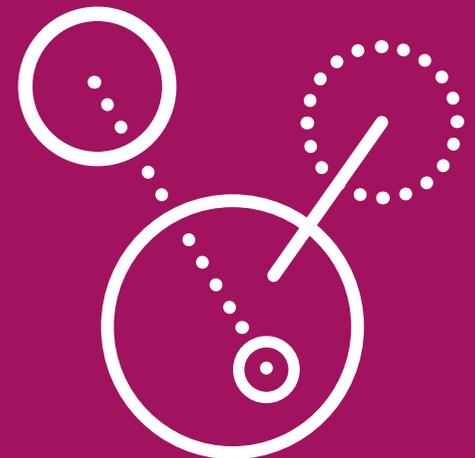
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# Opportunity Adviser

## What benefits of participation will you prioritise?



40–60 minutes



A4 Print



**Focus:**  
Benefits of, and barriers to, participation



**Use with:**  
— Participation Matrix  
— Resource Navigator

Introduction

Understanding the tool

Using the tool

Guidance notes

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# Introduction

Inclusive participation presents numerous benefits for people affected by crises, and different participatory practices yield different outcomes. However, meaningful participation requires conditions and enabling factors that are often difficult to foster in complex humanitarian contexts, and trade-offs are often necessary.

The **Opportunity Adviser** examines the benefits of participation alongside the barriers that may be present. This comparison helps implementing stakeholders to consider the desired outcomes of their intervention, and design the appropriate type of participatory events to engage other stakeholders meaningfully and successfully, and identify better solutions to humanitarian challenges.

**Benefits of participation:** What are our motivations for engaging other stakeholders in our research or innovation journey? What benefits do we seek to gain from their participation? Which of these are critical, ‘must-have’ benefits for the project? And which are less important, ‘nice-to-have’ or less relevant benefits for this particular research or innovation stage?

**Barriers to participation:** What constraints or challenges might we face when engaging other stakeholders in participation during our research and innovation journey? Which of these barriers can be easily minimised or addressed? And which barriers cannot be managed?

## Understanding the tool

**Why:** Researchers and innovators must consider many factors when selecting the appropriate approach to participation for their projects. This frequently requires difficult trade-offs between the desired benefits of participation and the feasibility of effective implementation. While meaningful participation can yield many benefits, it requires several enabling factors for these benefits to materialise. Different approaches to participation (consultation, partnership or leadership) can yield different benefits and require different degrees of investment and enabling conditions.

**What:** The Opportunity Adviser comprises ‘benefit’ cards, ‘barrier’ cards and a canvas (page 5) to capture the suggested participation type and intended actions. By comparing desired benefits and anticipated barriers, this tool helps stakeholders to evaluate the relative importance of outcomes and the effects of context on their participation events. Based on this evaluation, the tool yields a list of top priorities and a suggested participation type that reflects the trade-offs to consider.

**Who:** The tool is intended to be used collaboratively by all project stakeholders who choose to participate. Each stakeholder may also use it individually to prepare for a group discussion or guide their contributions to the project.

**When:** The Opportunity Adviser should be used as early as possible in a research or innovation journey. Before using the tool, stakeholders should understand the various types of participation described in this toolkit and identify other members of their stakeholder network for whom they intend to improve or enhance participation.

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### Understanding the tool

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### Using the tool

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### Canvas

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### Cards

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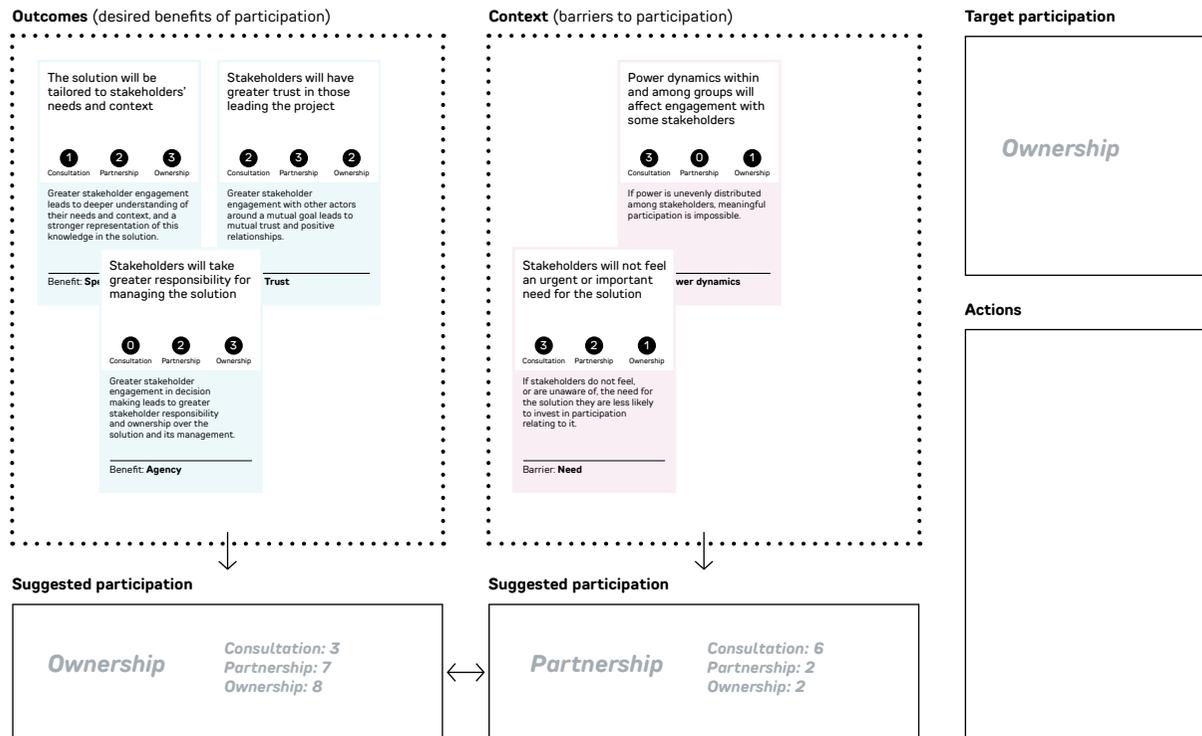


### Toolkit

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# Using the tool

- 1. Start by reading each **benefit card** (see page 6) – aloud if you are working in a team – and place those that align with your desired outcome in the ‘outcomes’ field of the canvas on page 5.
2. Organise the selected cards on the canvas, from the most critical at the top to the least critical at the bottom, by discussing each with your team. Then discard all but the top 3–5 cards.
3. Consult the ‘recommendations’ section of the selected cards. Record the participation type that scores most highly and appears most frequently in the ‘suggested participation’ field on the canvas. Alternatively, you could tally the total score for each participation type across all selected cards.
4. Now, read each **barrier card** – aloud if you are working in a team – and place those that align with your context in the ‘context’ field of the canvas. Repeat steps 2–3, but this time the suggested participation type indicates what may be necessary unless you actively address limitations in your operational context.



5. Compare the results in the ‘suggested participation’ fields. Is the most appropriate participation type clear? Discuss any contradictions and trade-offs between your prioritised benefit cards and barrier cards. As a team, identify the participation type you wish to pursue at this stage of your journey, and record this in the ‘target participation’ field.
6. Reflecting on your discussion in step 5, identify the actions you might take to make the target participation approach possible. Capture those actions in the final column, making sure you assign ownership and set a timeline.

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# Guidance notes

This toolkit uses the term ‘stakeholder’ to mean anyone who might have an interest in an innovation or solution. These individuals, groups and organisations include the innovation’s primary users and implementers, other people affected by the problem or crisis it aims to address, and implementation funders or partners.

The more that stakeholders are engaged in decision making, the more likely their point of view is to be prioritised. Before using this tool, you must define which stakeholder group is the focus. The tool can be used multiple times to consider the appropriate participation approach for different stakeholder groups.

When using or facilitating this tool, be aware that stakeholders are likely to be engaged in multiple activities at once. For example, they may be considering actions at their present stage in an innovation journey while also thinking ahead to future stages. You may also want to consider your approach to participation for all activities in an innovation journey.

The language on the cards in this tool may demand assumptions about stakeholders and their context. You should note these for later testing and validation.

## Using the cards

1. Print pages 6–7, preferably on card rather than paper to make the cards more durable and easier to shuffle.
2. Cut out each card.
3. Collect one pile of benefit cards and one pile of barrier cards (identified by the concept indicator [insert location on card during design phase i.e. bottom left]). Place both piles of cards face up.

## Card layout and features



### Outcome

This statement helps to identify the benefit or barrier of a proposed intervention or project.

### Recommendations

The three participation types are listed, with a number from 0 (not suggested) to 3 (strongly suggested).

### Rationale

Provides context for the recommended participation type.

### Concept

The card title, comprising the card type (benefit or barrier) and the concept that represents the outcome statement.

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**Note:** If you don't have a facilitator, nominate one person in your team to lead the use of this tool.

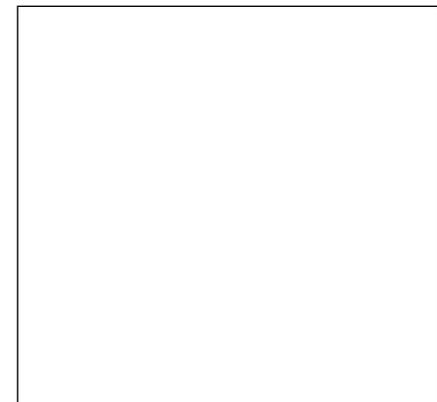
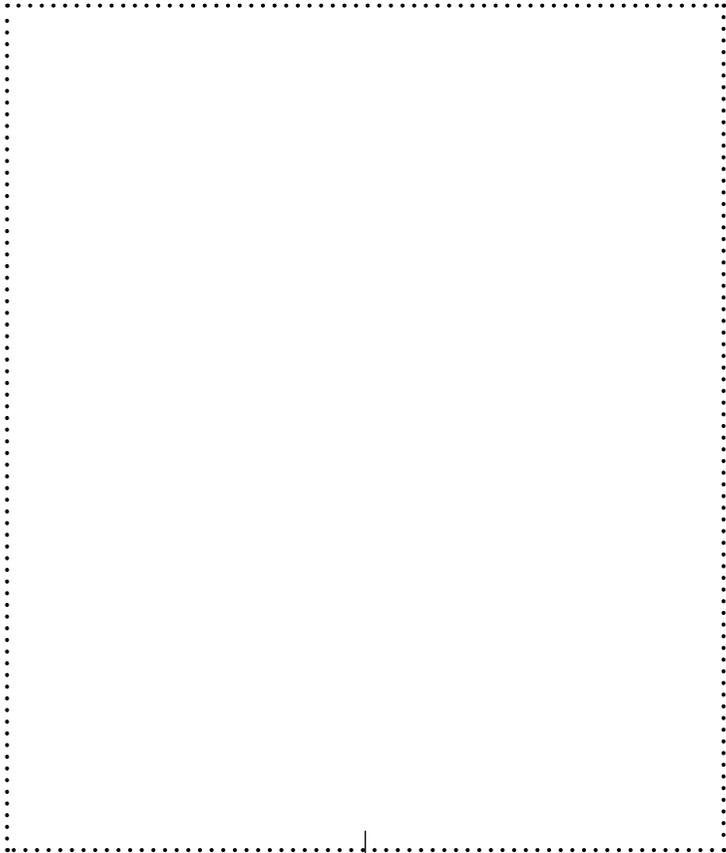
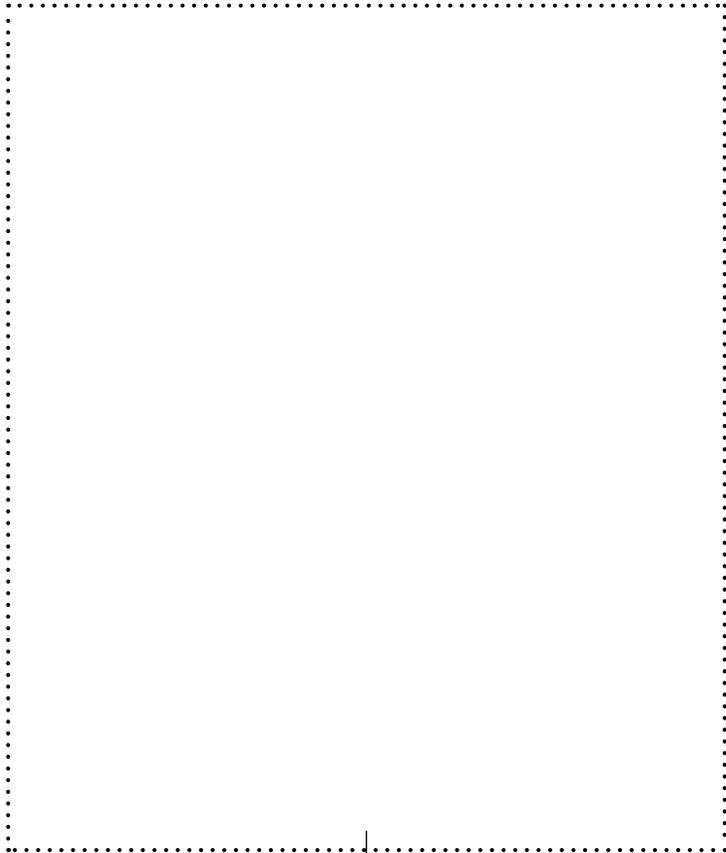


Toolkit

**Outcomes** (desired benefits of participation)

**Context** (barriers to participation)

**Target participation**



**Actions**



**Suggested participation**

**Suggested participation**



<p>The solution will be tailored to stakeholders' needs and context</p> <p>1 Consultation   2 Partnership   3 Ownership</p> <p>Greater stakeholder engagement leads to deeper understanding of their needs and context, and a stronger representation of this knowledge in the solution.</p> <p>Benefit: <b>Specificity</b></p>	<p>The solution will offer an improvement over an existing, under-performing solution</p> <p>2 Consultation   3 Partnership   2 Ownership</p> <p>Greater diversity among decision-makers leads to improved solutions. Homogeneous teams of experts (consultation) or users (ownership) are less likely to generate new perspectives.</p> <p>Benefit: <b>Improvement</b></p>	<p>Stakeholders will adopt the solution into their routines, behaviours, activities or programmes</p> <p>1 Consultation   2 Partnership   3 Ownership</p> <p>Greater stakeholder engagement in solution development leads to a greater chance of identifying and addressing integration barriers.</p> <p>Benefit: <b>Adoption</b></p>	<p>Stakeholders will adopt desired behaviours</p> <p>0 Consultation   2 Partnership   3 Ownership</p> <p>Greater stakeholder engagement leads to stronger support of the solution, and adoption of new attitudes, behaviours and mindsets.</p> <p>Benefit: <b>Behaviour change</b></p>	<p>Stakeholders will feel seen and heard, and people will take accountability within the project</p> <p>1 Consultation   2 Partnership   3 Ownership</p> <p>Greater stakeholder engagement in decision making leads to their perspectives being prioritised.</p> <p>Benefit: <b>Responsiveness</b></p>
<p>Stakeholders will have greater trust in those leading the project</p> <p>2 Consultation   3 Partnership   2 Ownership</p> <p>Greater stakeholder engagement with other actors around a mutual goal leads to mutual trust and positive relationships.</p> <p>Benefit: <b>Trust</b></p>	<p>Previously overlooked stakeholders will have greater presence and active representation in the project</p> <p>1 Consultation   3 Partnership   3 Ownership</p> <p>Greater inclusion of previously overlooked stakeholders leads to stronger motivations for continued engagement, and a more significant impact on the solution.</p> <p>Benefit: <b>Inclusion</b></p>	<p>Stakeholders will develop competencies in innovation approaches to develop new solutions to future challenges</p> <p>0 Consultation   2 Partnership   3 Ownership</p> <p>Greater stakeholder engagement in the innovation journey and solution development leads to the attitudes and ability to set and achieve their own objectives.</p> <p>Benefit: <b>Competency building</b></p>	<p>Stakeholders will take greater responsibility for managing the solution</p> <p>0 Consultation   2 Partnership   3 Ownership</p> <p>Greater stakeholder engagement in decision making leads to greater stakeholder responsibility and ownership over the solution and its management.</p> <p>Benefit: <b>Agency</b></p>	<p>Stakeholders will develop relationships and communities that will continue working together</p> <p>0 Consultation   2 Partnership   3 Ownership</p> <p>Greater engagement between stakeholders leads to a greater chance of developing mutual trust and positive relationships in their community.</p> <p>Benefit: <b>Solidarity</b></p>

<p>Stakeholders will not feel an urgent or important need for the solution</p> <p>3 Consultation 2 Partnership 1 Ownership</p> <p>If stakeholders do not feel, or are unaware of, the need for the solution they are less likely to invest in participation relating to it.</p> <p>Barrier: <b>Need</b></p>	<p>Past or present circumstances will affect stakeholders' ability to trust the solution</p> <p>1 Consultation 2 Partnership 1 Ownership</p> <p>If stakeholders mistrust the solution or related factors, they are less likely to engage in its design or improvement.</p> <p>Barrier: <b>Trust</b></p>	<p>Stakeholders will require specialist skills or knowledge to participate</p> <p>2 Consultation 3 Partnership 1 Ownership</p> <p>If stakeholders lack the necessary skills or knowledge to contribute, they are less likely to engage in a meaningful way.</p> <p>Barrier: <b>Technical expertise</b></p>	<p>Stakeholders will not be able to engage due to competing priorities (technical, political, etc)</p> <p>3 Consultation 0 Partnership 0 Ownership</p> <p>If stakeholder inputs cannot be implemented for technical or political reasons, deeply engaging them in the innovation journey would be misleading.</p> <p>Barrier: <b>Competing priorities</b></p>	<p>Stakeholders will not be able to engage due to lack of resources (time, funding, personnel, etc)</p> <p>3 Consultation 0 Partnership 0 Ownership</p> <p>If stakeholders lack the necessary time, funding or personnel, they are less likely to engage in relatively demanding types of participation that require more facilitation.</p> <p>Barrier: <b>Lack of resources</b></p>
<p>Language barriers will affect engagement with some stakeholders</p> <p>1 Consultation 2 Partnership 3 Ownership</p> <p>If stakeholders are working in different languages, partnership is less likely to be successful, and consultation will only work with adequate language translation.</p> <p>Barrier: <b>Language</b></p>	<p>Cultural barriers will affect engagement with some stakeholders</p> <p>1 Consultation 2 Partnership 3 Ownership</p> <p>If stakeholders are working across different cultures, partnership is less likely to be successful.</p> <p>Barrier: <b>Culture</b></p>	<p>Risks to personal safety will affect engagement with some stakeholders</p> <p>2 Consultation 0 Partnership 0 Ownership</p> <p>If stakeholders are put at risk by engaging, it is not responsible to encourage it. Consultation might only be appropriate if it can be implemented remotely and safely.</p> <p>Barrier: <b>Safety</b></p>	<p>Power dynamics within and among groups will affect engagement with some stakeholders</p> <p>3 Consultation 0 Partnership 1 Ownership</p> <p>If power is unevenly distributed among stakeholders, meaningful participation is impossible.</p> <p>Barrier: <b>Power dynamics</b></p>	<p>Beliefs or mindsets within some groups will affect engagement with some stakeholders</p> <p>3 Consultation 1 Partnership 0 Ownership</p> <p>If building a 'participation mindset' is not possible, it will be more difficult for stakeholders to engage in meaningful participation.</p> <p>Barrier: <b>Beliefs and mindsets</b></p>

# Participation Matrix

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How will you achieve a shared understanding of participation among stakeholders?

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**30–45 minutes**



**A4 Print**



**Focus:**  
Identify participation types



**Use with:**  
— Opportunity Adviser  
— Resource Navigator

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**Toolkit**

# Introduction

The **Participation Matrix** helps to foster a shared understanding of participation among stakeholders, and identify the desired degree of participation for a given project or intervention. It can be used as a reference while using other tools in this toolkit, or as a standalone educational tool. Implementing stakeholders may find it helpful to discuss the matrix with others in their stakeholder group, or simply reflect on it in private to support planning.

The Participation Matrix introduces the types and degrees of participation that underpin all the tools in this toolkit along the four project 'activities' of the MIT D-Lab Design Cycle. The **guidance notes** on page 4 outline the core concepts and definitions of seven degrees of participation. Newcomers should start there to understand the terminology used to describe the different types and degrees of participation, and typical activities during an innovation journey.

## A note on participation:

This toolkit and the language of 'participation' reflects the current structure of the global humanitarian system, whereby large INGOs based in the Global North are more commonly able to mobilise the resources required to run larger innovation projects.

This toolkit aims to enable these INGOs and other international actors to increase and enhance the involvement of people affected by crises in their work. We recognise that innovation within communities, with little or no input from external actors, is common. Both approaches have value in different settings and should be encouraged and improved, even as the system becomes increasingly localised.

## Understanding the tool

**Why:** The number of types and degrees of participation, in combination with different project activities, can be difficult to understand and can make the appropriate participatory approaches unclear. The Participation Matrix helps innovators understand these types and degrees of participation in relation to the stages where they can occur during a project or intervention. This enables stakeholders to work proactively to establish structures and an organisational climate that fosters more meaningful participation.

**What:** The Participation Matrix helps anyone addressing problems faced by people affected by crises to plan for the degree of stakeholder participation in a given project or intervention. It sets out seven 'degrees of participation' that can be employed during an innovation journey, characterised by stakeholder engagement and their decision-making authority. The matrix maps these degrees of participation across four project 'activities', based on the MIT D-Lab Design Cycle. Each activity is further divided into 'divergent' and 'convergent' actions. Divergent actions relate to generating possibilities through information gathering and ideation, and convergent actions are those in which options are prioritised, narrowed down and decisions are made.

**Who:** The Participation Matrix provides a practical framework for anyone conducting research or developing solutions that create value for people affected by crises. It should be used with as many stakeholders, partners, organisational leaders, and decision-makers as possible.

**When:** Participation is best addressed early but should be revisited often during a research or innovation journey. The Participation Matrix should be used at the beginning of an innovation journey to help all stakeholders understand each other's choices or adapt agreed participatory practices based on a shared understanding of underlying concepts. When used immediately after the **Opportunity Adviser**, it can help to contextualise outputs from that tool.

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# Using the tool

- 1. Start by locating the canvas (on page 5, 6 or 7) with the type of partnership you are interested in or that the **Opportunity Adviser** recommended (each canvas is dedicated to one participation type). Put the others aside for now.
2. Next, mark the first activity you are planning. If you are not currently planning an activity, proceed to step 5.
3. Read each field associated with your chosen activity – aloud if you are working in a team. Mark the description that best describes the stakeholders' role you are planning for.

4. Discuss the definition with your team and consider if this degree of participation is appropriate. Mark the degree of participation you agree on.

Before proceeding, ask if you can move beyond this degree to become more inclusive. What would you have to change to facilitate that? You should try to increase participation whenever it is practical to do so.

Consider the following questions:

- **What are the implications of each possible option on your project outcomes?**
- **Which option is most feasible?**
- **Do you have the capacity, resources and time to effectively implement higher degrees of participation?**
- **What would you have to change to adopt this approach?**

5. (Optional)

Try applying the Participation Matrix to a past project (yours or someone else's) to identify the degree of participation used for different project activities. This will allow you to practise using the tool to describe specific participation events, and improve your understanding of the concepts and terminology.

Project activities	1st degree of type of participation	2nd degree of type of participation	<u>Degree</u>
1 Action one ..... Action two			
2 Action one ..... Action two	●	●	
3 Action one ..... Action two			
4 <u>Action one</u> ..... Action two			○

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## Guidance notes

If you are using this tool for the first time, it's essential to understand the core concepts presented in these guidance notes. Once you understand them, review each cell of the Participation Matrix on pages 5–7.

This tool presents three types of participation: 'consultation', 'partnership' and 'ownership' (see table column 1, opposite).

These participation types encompass varying degrees of engagement to distinguish how much decision-making power participating stakeholders have over a project, from no power to total power. The table (opposite) sets out the relationship between types and degrees of participation in more detail.

Whenever practical, innovators should seek to increase the level of participation within each participation type. However, it's never possible – and not always relevant or ethical – to achieve 'perfect' or 'full' participation. Instead, meaningful participation is about considering the best model for your context and problem. Furthermore, the distinction between participation types, degrees and events facilitates a 'mix and match' approach, allowing stakeholders to choose different forms of participation at various times.

### Overview of participation types and degrees

Type	Degree	Description
<b>Consultation</b> less engagement	<b>Input</b> 	This is a one-way transaction in which stakeholders provide information, opinions and/or feedback at the request of researchers and innovators (implementers). There is no opportunity to interact with implementers, and stakeholders do not have any decision-making power or influence over how their input is incorporated into the project.
	<b>Interaction</b> 	This is a two-way transaction in which stakeholders provide information, opinions and/or feedback at the request of researchers and innovators (implementers) in an interactive process. This allows implementers to make refinements. However, stakeholders do not have any decision-making power or influence over how their inputs or refinements are incorporated into the project.
	<b>Iteration</b> 	This is a two-way transaction in which stakeholders provide information, opinions and/or feedback at the request of researchers and innovators (implementers) through an interactive and iterative process throughout the project. This allows stakeholders to influence refinements. However, they do not have any decision-making power over how their inputs or refinements are incorporated into the project.
<b>Partnership</b>	<b>Collaboration</b> 	Stakeholders assist researchers and innovators (implementers) in planning and implementing the solution according to their experience, as determined by implementers. Stakeholders do not have influence over their role in the solution and do not share equal decision-making power with implementers.
	<b>Co-creation</b> 	Stakeholders assist researchers and innovators (implementers) in planning and implementing the solution according to their experience, as determined by both stakeholders and implementers. Stakeholders do have influence over their role in the solution and do share equal decision-making power with implementers.
<b>Ownership</b> more engagement	<b>Empowerment</b> 	Stakeholders lead the planning, development and implementation of the solution, with researchers and innovators (implementers) providing input and support as determined by the implementers. Stakeholders have total decision-making power.
	<b>Leadership</b> 	Stakeholders lead the planning, development and implementation of the solution, with researchers and innovators (implementers) providing input and support at the request of the <b>stakeholders</b> . Stakeholders have total decision-making power.

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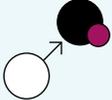
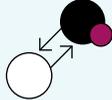
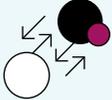
**Guidance notes**

**Note:** If you don't have a facilitator, nominate one person in your team to lead the use of this tool.



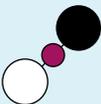
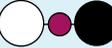
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## Consultation

Project activities and actions	Input 	Interaction 	Iteration 
<b>Defining the problem</b> Providing and/or gathering information	Participating stakeholders provide information to the implementers but do not have the opportunity to interact or discuss	Participating stakeholders provide information to the implementers through an interactive process, eg, dialogue or discussion	Participating stakeholders provide information at multiple points through an interactive and iterative process, validating the information and providing additional information as needed
Deciding which aspect of the problem will be addressed and what the priorities are	Participating stakeholders provide input into the problem framing but do not have the opportunity to discuss or convince	Participating stakeholders provide input into selecting the problem framing through an interactive process, eg, dialogue or discussion	Participating stakeholders provide input into selecting the problem framing through an interactive and iterative process, but are not involved in the final selection
<b>Identifying possible solutions/creating an approach</b> Contributing ideas for possible solutions	Participating stakeholders provide ideas for possible solutions to the implementers but do not have the opportunity to interact or discuss	Participating stakeholders provide ideas for possible solutions through an interactive process, with the opportunity to discuss and explain their ideas	Participating stakeholders provide ideas for possible solutions at multiple points through an interactive and iterative process
Selecting one solution, or narrowing down to a few solutions from the many possibilities generated	Participating stakeholders provide input on selecting the solution/s but do not have the opportunity to discuss or convince	Participating stakeholders provide input on selecting the solution/s through an interactive process, but are not involved in the final selection	Participating stakeholders provide input on selecting the solution/s at multiple points through an interactive and iterative process but are not involved in the final selection
<b>Developing a solution</b> Exploring options for details of the solution	Participating stakeholders provide ideas for details of the solution/s to the implementers but do not have the opportunity to discuss or convince	Participating stakeholders provide ideas for details of the solution/s to the implementers through an interactive process, and have the opportunity to discuss and explain their ideas	Participating stakeholders provide ideas for details of the solution/s and subsequent refinements through an interactive and iterative process
Building the actual solution	Participating stakeholders are not engaged	Participating stakeholders are not engaged	Participating stakeholders are not engaged
<b>Testing the solution</b> Providing and/or getting feedback about the solution	Participating stakeholders provide feedback on the solution/s developed by the implementers but do not have the opportunity to discuss or convince	Participating stakeholders provide feedback on the solution/s developed by the implementers through an interactive session where participants can discuss and explain their feedback	Participating stakeholders provide feedback on the solution/s developed by the implementers at multiple points through an interactive and iterative process
Prioritising and acting on feedback to refine and/or finalise the solution	Participating stakeholders are not engaged	Participating stakeholders are not engaged	Participating stakeholders are not engaged

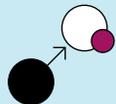
○ Participant ● Implementer ● Project

## Partnership

Project activities and actions	Collaboration 	Co-creation 
<b>Defining the problem</b> Providing and/or gathering information	Participating stakeholders participate with the implementers in information gathering but do not participate in planning, analysis or synthesis	Participating stakeholders participate with the implementers in information gathering as well as planning, analysis and synthesis
Deciding which aspect of the problem will be addressed and what the priorities are	Participating stakeholders participate with the implementers in selecting the problem framing but do not share equal decision-making power	Participating stakeholders participate with the implementers in selecting the problem framing, and share equal decision-making power
<b>Identifying possible solutions/creating an approach</b> Contributing ideas for possible solutions	Participating stakeholders participate with the implementers in collective ideation but do not share equal decision-making power	Participating stakeholders participate with the implementers in collective ideation and share equal decision-making power
Selecting one solution, or narrowing down to a few solutions from the many possibilities generated	Participating stakeholders participate with the implementers in selecting the solution/s but do not share equal decision-making power	Participating stakeholders participate with the implementers in selecting the solution/s and share equal decision-making power
<b>Developing a solution</b> Exploring options for details of the solution	Participating stakeholders participate with the implementers in exploring options for details of the solution/s, according to their fields of expertise	Participating stakeholders participate with the implementers in exploring options for all details of the solution/s
Building the actual solution	Participating stakeholders participate with the implementers in developing/building the solution/s but do not share equal decision-making power	Participating stakeholders participate with the implementers in developing/building the solution/s and have equal decision-making power
<b>Testing the solution</b> Providing and/or getting feedback about the solution	Participating stakeholders participate with the implementers in collecting feedback from the community, but not in planning the feedback collection	Participating stakeholders participate with the implementers in planning how to collect feedback as well as in the actual feedback collection
Prioritising and acting on feedback to refine and/or finalise the solution	Participating stakeholders participate with the implementers in prioritising and acting on feedback but do not share equal decision-making power	Participating stakeholders participate with the implementers in prioritising and acting on the feedback, and share equal decision-making power

○ Participant ● Implementer ● Project

## Ownership

Project activities and actions	<b>Empowerment</b> 	<b>Leadership</b> 
<b>Defining the problem</b> Providing and/or gathering information	Participating stakeholders lead the planning and gathering of information as well as information analysis and synthesis; the implementers provide support as needed	Participating stakeholders independently lead the planning and gathering of information, as well as information analysis and synthesis
Deciding which aspect of the problem will be addressed and what the priorities are	Participating stakeholders select the problem framing with input from the implementers but have final decision-making power	Participating stakeholders independently select the problem framing and have final decision-making power
<b>Identifying possible solutions/creating an approach</b> Contributing ideas for possible solutions	Participating stakeholders lead the planning of the ideation process and the ideation of possible solutions; the innovation team provides support as needed	Participating stakeholders independently lead the planning of the ideation process and the ideation of possible solutions
Selecting one solution, or narrowing down to a few solutions from the many possibilities generated	Participating stakeholders lead the selection of the solution/s with input from the implementers but have final decision-making power	Participating stakeholders independently lead the selection of the solution/s and have final decision-making power
<b>Developing a solution</b> Exploring options for details of the solution	Participating stakeholders lead the exploration of options for details of the solution/s; the implementers provide support as needed	Participating stakeholders independently lead the exploration of options for details of the solution/s
Building the actual solution	Participating stakeholders lead the development/building of the solution/s; the implementers provide support as needed but the stakeholders have final decision-making power	Participating stakeholders independently lead the development/building of the solution/s and have final decision-making power
<b>Testing the solution</b> Providing and/or getting feedback about the solution	Participating stakeholders lead the planning and collection of feedback; the innovation team provides support as needed	Participating stakeholders independently lead the planning and collection of feedback
Prioritising and acting on feedback to refine and/or finalise the solution	Participating stakeholders lead the process of prioritising and acting on feedback; the implementers provide support as needed but the stakeholders have final decision-making power	Participating stakeholders independently lead the process of prioritising and acting on the feedback, and have final decision-making power

○ Participant ● Implementer ● Project

# Resource Navigator

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# Which tools and processes will you use to approach stakeholder participation?

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**45–60 minutes**



**A4 Print**



**Focus:**  
Resource identification



**Use with:**  
— Opportunity Adviser  
— Participation Matrix

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**Toolkit**

# Introduction

Community engagement in humanitarian action has existed for many decades and yielded many helpful tools to support meaningful participation. Similarly, innovation toolkits from various sectors offer creative and varied options for engaging with users and stakeholders. But how do you select the right tools from this seemingly inexhaustible list?

The **Resource Navigator** helps stakeholders to identify the resources that might best support their target participation at a particular stage of their research or innovation journey. It does this by collecting and organising information that can be used as criteria to assess the suitability of different tools and toolkits.

This tool is based on the principle of the Five Ws (Who, What, When, Where and Why) to guard against accidentally omitting essential context. 'Which' is added to provide space for the type and degree of participation. Answering these six questions should help teams evaluate the 'how', which represents the tool or process best suited to the context of the project.

## Understanding the tool

**Why:** The enormous number of tools and processes to support participation can make choosing the right one challenging. To choose the right tools and processes for a participatory approach, it's essential to understand the context of its intended use/application.

**What:** The Resource Navigator helps stakeholders collect information to begin to discover and evaluate the suitability of tools, processes and other resources to enhance their participation strategy.

**Who:** This tool is intended for implementing stakeholders and people facilitating participatory practice in a research or innovation journey.

**When:** After a team has decided which stakeholders to engage and the participation types, degree and activities to focus on, it's time to consider how to deliver this strategy.

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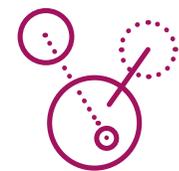
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Canvas

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Resource Navigator v.1.0

# Using the tool

- 1. Start by identifying and recording your stakeholders, one per sticky note. Then arrange them in the 'who' field of the canvas (page 5).
2. Using the definitions in the **Participation Matrix**, identify which project activity/ies you will engage stakeholders in and the format this will take, eg a workshop or survey. Record your answers in the 'what' field.
3. Consider 'when' you will engage stakeholders in the participation events you have previously defined. This might be a specific time and date or a project phase.

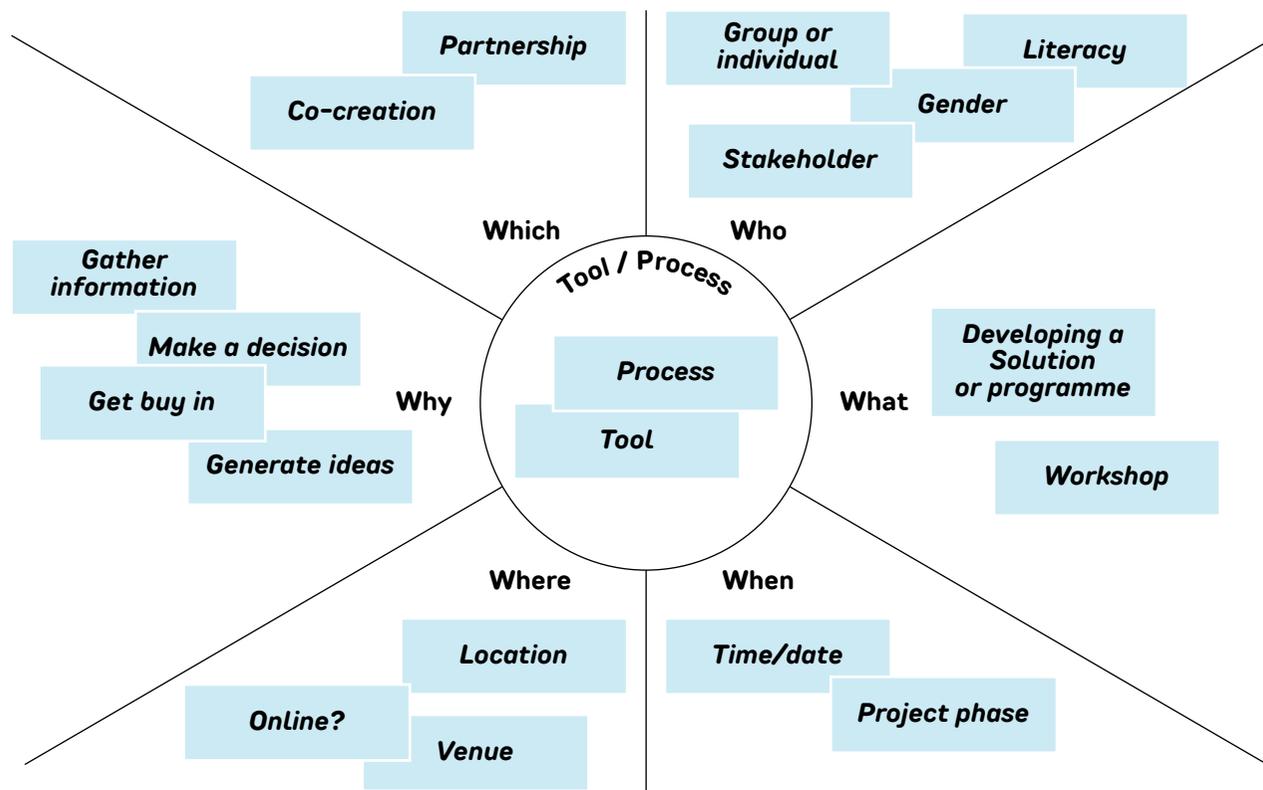
4. In the 'where' section, list where you will use the participation tool/process. Will this be face-to-face or virtual? If face-to-face, will that be in the field, the office or another venue? For virtual events, which platform/s will you use?

5. Why do you want to conduct stakeholder participation? Record each desired outcome on a separate sticky note in the 'why' section.

6. Identify the most appropriate participation type/s and record them in the 'which' field. If you don't know where to start, use the **Opportunity Adviser** and **Participation Matrix**.

7. Assemble a shortlist of tools and processes you might use to achieve your desired outcomes in the centre of the canvas. If you're stuck, review the resources listed on page 4.

8. Compare your shortlist with the information in each section. Does each tool/process meet the requirements of your context? If not, remove it until you are left with just one suggestion.



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It's important to be specific about the context of your project and/or participation events. The more specific you are about your implementing and participation context, and the stakeholders you are working with, the better your outcomes will be. For example, do you want several different stakeholders to participate, and do you want to organise both a physical and virtual event? In such cases, you may see better results by repeating the exercise for each variation.

For step 2, use any framework you like to best describe 'what' you are doing. But the four stages of the MIT D-Lab Design Cycle may be a useful reference:

1. Defining the problem
2. Identifying the possible solution/creating an approach
3. Developing a solution or programme
4. Testing the solution or programme

For step 6, it is advisable to return to the **Participation Matrix** and review the 2–3 degrees of participation within each participation type.

When shortlisting participation tools/processes, consider the time each requires. Is it compatible with the availability of participating stakeholders? How complex is it, and how much interaction is required? Can the tool be self-administered, or does it require facilitation? Does it require preparation, such as gathering data or tone setting?

What about the needs of participants? Does your stakeholder group include people with disabilities or people with a different home language than your own? Have you considered participants' digital and general literacy? How might cultural differences affect the tool's effectiveness?

Once you have identified your desired participation tool/process, review the **Quality Guidance** tool to optimise and enhance your participation practice.

## Suggested tools and processes libraries

Name	Location
Action Aid	<a href="https://www.reflectionaction.org/tools_and_methods/">https://www.reflectionaction.org/tools_and_methods/</a>
Beyond sticky notes	<a href="https://www.beyondstickynotes.com/resources">https://www.beyondstickynotes.com/resources</a>
Danish Design Center	<a href="https://ddc.dk/tools-and-methods/">https://ddc.dk/tools-and-methods/</a>
Humanitarian Innovation Support Library	<a href="https://hisl.elrha.org/">https://hisl.elrha.org/</a>
IDEO's Design Kit	<a href="https://www.designkit.org/methods">https://www.designkit.org/methods</a>
MSP Guide	<a href="https://mspguide.org/msp-tools/">https://mspguide.org/msp-tools/</a>
Nesta	<a href="https://www.nesta.org.uk/toolkit/">https://www.nesta.org.uk/toolkit/</a>
Observatory for Public Sector Innovation (OPSI)	<a href="https://oecd-opsi.org/toolkits/">https://oecd-opsi.org/toolkits/</a>
Participation Research Cluster	<a href="https://www.participatorymethods.org/methods">https://www.participatorymethods.org/methods</a>
States of Change	<a href="https://states-of-change.org/resources">https://states-of-change.org/resources</a>

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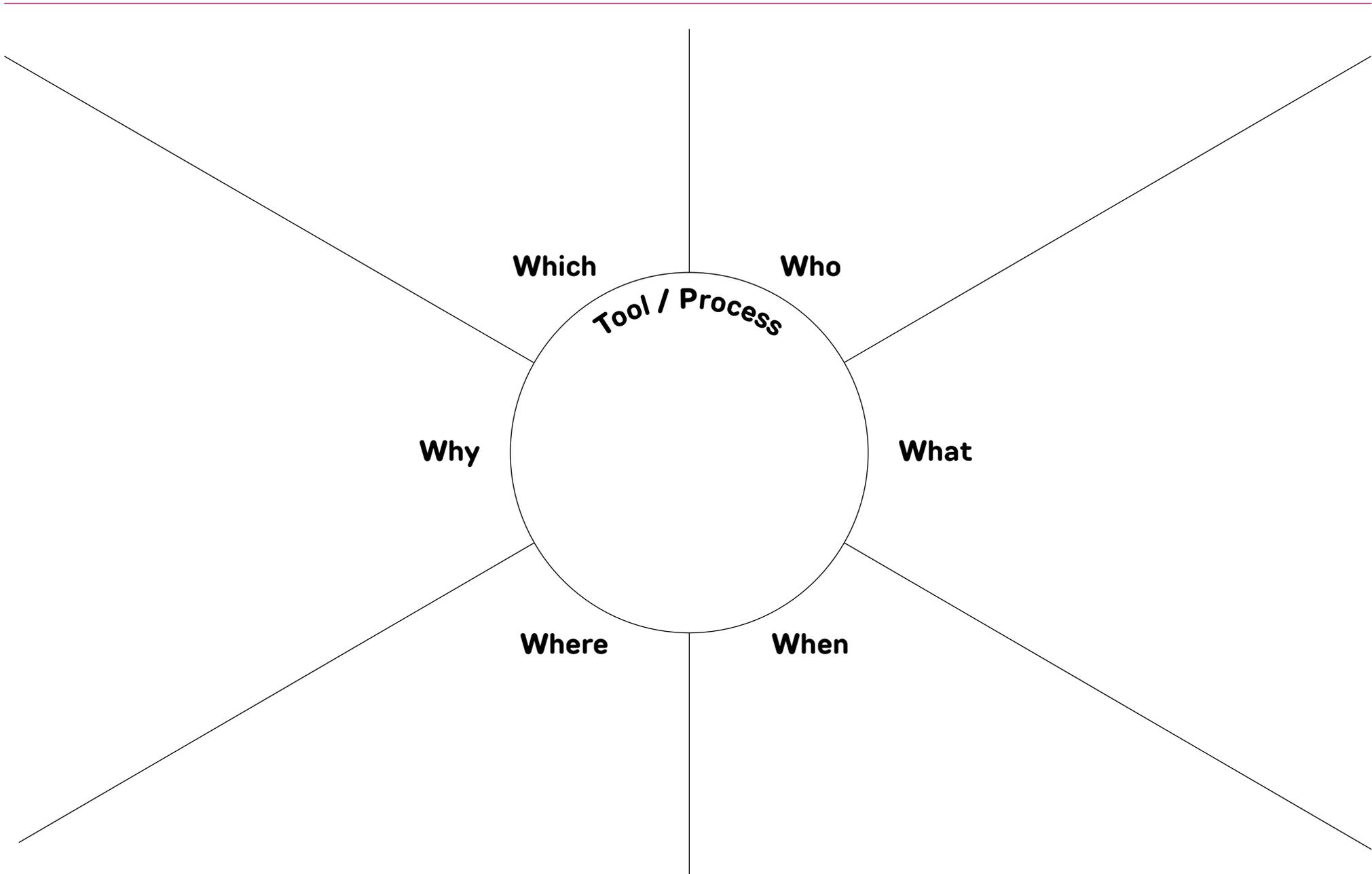
**Guidance notes**

Canvas

**Note:** If you don't have a facilitator, nominate one person in your team to lead the use of this tool.



Toolkit



# Quality Guidance

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## How will you improve the quality of participation?

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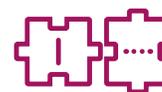
**45–60 minutes**



**A4 Print**



**Focus:**  
Quality assurance



**Use with:**

- Opportunity Adviser
- Resource Navigator
- Participation Matrix

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# Introduction

Engaging stakeholders in participation requires more than involving them in participation events. Facilitators must ensure the quality of those events so they contribute meaningfully to a research or innovation journey. Participation requires the right people taking part, and considering the conditions that support this. Participating stakeholders need to feel comfortable contributing their experience and ideas, and feel that they are heard.

Each participation event has a before, during and after phase. The Quality Guidance tool divides each phase into two parts (see the extended guidance notes on pages 6–11 for more detail).

This tool has two purposes. Firstly, it asks questions for facilitators to reflect on to guide ways to improve the quality of participation in each phase. Secondly, it aims to raise awareness and inspire stakeholders to consider the factors that affect the quality of participation, from tangible issues such as logistics to less tangible ones such as power and ownership.

## Notes on terminology

A participation **‘event’** may comprise many sessions.

A **‘session’** might be a workshop, an interview or any other appropriate participation mechanism.

**Fostering appropriate mindsets** is an integral part of participation. Each phase includes recommended mindsets, which are defined in alphabetical order.

## Understanding the tool

**Why:** Providing stakeholders with the opportunity to participate and clarifying their engagement are the first steps towards including their experience and ideas in a research or innovation journey. A stakeholder’s attendance at an event does not guarantee their participation. Whether stakeholders attend events, feel comfortable contributing, and feel heard and valued, depends on various factors. Paying attention to these factors ensures that participation is meaningful, people’s contributions are valued, and the participation ultimately has a positive influence on the solution.

**What:** The Quality Guidance tool helps facilitators plan an event or session where stakeholder participation is required. It guides implementing stakeholders through the factors that can affect the quality of participation, and offers advice on how to ensure meaningful participation. The canvas on page 5 helps facilitators reflect on their strategy and navigate the extended guidance notes. It can be used to plan any participation event or session in the research or innovation journey.

**Who:** This tool is designed to help humanitarian practitioners, researchers and innovators who have decided to involve stakeholders in any or all project activities in a meaningful way. Event planners/facilitators and any other stakeholders can use it to align understanding about the factors most likely to affect the quality of participation.

**When:** Quality Guidance should be used after appropriate participating stakeholders and participation events have been identified.

### Introduction

### Understanding the tool

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### Toolkit

# Using the tool

- 1. Start by identifying the activity phase you are planning for; before, during or after. Then find the corresponding checklist on the **canvas** on page 5. Take your time and tackle one phase checklist at a time.
2. Read the first question – aloud if you are working in a team.  
If you can answer 'yes' to it, tick the box and move to the next question. If you must answer 'no' to it, note why in the centre field. If you are working in a team, discuss your answer and consider revisiting your decision.
3. If you are uncertain of your answer or require more information about the principles underpinning the question, use the reference column.
4. Repeat step 2 until you have answered all questions in the appropriate checklist.

Phase			Reference
Before	Yes	If not, why not?	Why is it important?
_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	.....	_____
_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	.....	_____
_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	.....	_____
_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	.....	_____
<b>During</b>			
_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	.....	_____
_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	.....	_____
_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	.....	_____
_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	.....	_____
<b>After</b>			
_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	.....	_____
_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	.....	_____
_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	.....	_____

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# Guidance notes

## Before you start

Before using the **Quality Guidance** tool, you must identify your participation approach. Are you applying a single method to one event, or planning a session that involves many methods, tools and resources?

If you have not done so, use the **Opportunity Adviser** to determine which participation type best suits your desired outcomes and existing constraints, then apply the Resource Navigator to identify the appropriate tools and resources for your stage of the innovation journey. It's also a good idea to review the **Participation Matrix** to familiarise yourself with participation types and how they relate to project activities.

## Adjust for specificity

This comprehensive tool unpacks a session or event into 24 elements that can affect the quality of participation. These elements provide important guidance for anyone implementing stakeholder participation in complex, multi-part sessions. However, when appropriately adapted, they are also useful for less complex events.

For example, the 'Building relationships' element under 'Preparation' on page 7 advises taking time to get to know participants and vice versa. But that may not be practical in a one-hour session. Instead, you should embrace the spirit of the guidance, creating a warm atmosphere and enabling participants to share brief introductions. Similarly, in the 'During' phase, the 'Power dynamics' element highlights the importance of being addressing power dynamics. While a feedback session may not allow time to engage in a power dynamics exercise, you can be aware of these dynamics and create an atmosphere where participants will be comfortable sharing critical feedback or minority opinions.

There will inevitably be constraints when addressing all 24 elements, particularly when resources are limited. However, to enhance the quality of participation, most elements should be considered even in short and simple participation sessions.

## Mindsets

Mindset	Characteristics
<b>Achievement</b>	Believing that success is possible and goals can be reached.
<b>Creative confidence</b>	Believing that everyone is creative, and that the creative process will produce successful solutions.
<b>Curiosity</b>	Seeking new information and experiences, challenging assumptions and always looking for opportunities to learn.
<b>Embracing ambiguity</b>	Being comfortable with uncertainty, and appreciating the journey without knowing the destination.
<b>Empathy</b>	Seeking to understand the feelings and experiences of others.
<b>Engagement</b>	Seeking out the active participation of each person.
<b>Enrichment</b>	Creating opportunities and experiences that promote learning, build confidence and lead to personal growth.
<b>Flexibility</b>	Adapting easily to new information and experiences.
<b>Inclusion</b>	Actively trying to involve and include all stakeholders, and their contributions.
<b>Iterative</b>	Constantly seeking feedback and looking for ways to improve and refine an idea.
<b>Learning from failure</b>	Valuing learning from every experience, both successful and unsuccessful.
<b>Open-minded</b>	Trying to eliminate preconceived ideas and biases, and accepting and appreciating alternative points of view.
<b>Optimistic</b>	Believing that positive change is possible, and focusing on maximising what is accessible rather than what is lacking.
<b>Relational</b>	Emphasizing connections between different stakeholder types, first as people and then as collaborators. This is the basis for building trust.
<b>Respect</b>	Honouring other people's opinions, time, resources and culture, regardless of how different they are. It's also essential to respect the planet.
<b>Rich climate</b>	Creating an environment where people have everything they need to succeed and work together effectively.

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**Note:** If you don't have a facilitator, nominate one person in your team to lead the use of this tool.



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## Phase

## Reference

Before your participation event/session: Have you...	Yes	If not, why not?	Why it's important
ensured that relevant stakeholders are represented?	<input type="checkbox"/>		Representation (see page 6)
ensured that relevant stakeholders are representative of all stakeholders?	<input type="checkbox"/>		Representation (see page 6)
provided access to your solution and/or session to all stakeholders?	<input type="checkbox"/>		Inclusion (see page 6)
provided support to stakeholders with different needs?	<input type="checkbox"/>		Inclusion and logistics (see page 6)
established a rapport with participating stakeholders?	<input type="checkbox"/>		Building relationships (see page 7)
ensured that participating stakeholders know what you are asking of them?	<input type="checkbox"/>		Managing expectations (see page 7)
made any promises that will be hard to deliver?	<input type="checkbox"/>		Managing expectations (see page 7)
prepared participants to comfortably and confidently participate?	<input type="checkbox"/>		Building skills, knowledge and understanding (see page 7)
educated yourself about the culture and context of the situation?	<input type="checkbox"/>		Building skills, knowledge and understanding (see page 7)
fostered appropriate mindsets for your event/session?	<input type="checkbox"/>		Mindsets (see page 4)
<b>During your participation event/session: Have you...</b>			
arranged a space that is conducive to participation?	<input type="checkbox"/>		Physical environment (see page 8)
created an environment where everyone feels comfortable contributing?	<input type="checkbox"/>		Enabling environment (see page 8)
identified the power you bring to the event/session?	<input type="checkbox"/>		Power dynamics (see page 8)
identified ways to reduce the impact of power imbalances?	<input type="checkbox"/>		Power dynamics (see page 8)
developed/curated suitable material?	<input type="checkbox"/>		Content (see page 9)
ensured that material is accessible to participants?	<input type="checkbox"/>		Content (page 9)
identified ways to engage all participants in the event/session?	<input type="checkbox"/>		Facilitation (see page 9)
identified ways to capture the results of the event/session?	<input type="checkbox"/>		Documentation (see page 9)
fostered appropriate mindsets for the event/session?	<input type="checkbox"/>		Mindsets (see page 4)
<b>After your participation event/session: Have you...</b>			
thanked participants for their participation?	<input type="checkbox"/>		Appreciation (see page 10)
established way to keep in touch with the stakeholders?	<input type="checkbox"/>		Communication (see page 10)
agreed on clear expectations?	<input type="checkbox"/>		Managing relationships (see page 10)
responded to promises that you might have made?	<input type="checkbox"/>		Managing relationships (see page 10)
identified how results of the event/session will be shared with stakeholders?	<input type="checkbox"/>		Reporting (see page 11)
identified lessons from the event/session?	<input type="checkbox"/>		Reflecting (see page 11)
identified pathways to the next steps?	<input type="checkbox"/>		Transition (see page 11)
fostered appropriate mindsets to leave the stakeholders with?	<input type="checkbox"/>		Mindsets (see page 4)

# Extended guidance notes: Before

## 1) Planning

To enhance the quality of a participation event, all phases ('before', 'during' and 'after') should be planned and prepared for before the event.

### Representation

When planning participation, it's helpful to start with a stakeholder analysis or stakeholder mapping exercise. This will help to ensure that all key stakeholders participate in the event/session. Consider which stakeholder groups are large enough to have a representative cross-section. It may be necessary to repeat the event with different groups so they can participate most effectively. For example, you might have separate sessions with women, youth and community leaders.

### Inclusion

Think about people whose voices are often overlooked, and how you can involve them in the process. Multiple factors affect access, including physical ability, literacy, age, gender, ethnicity, race, economic situation and status in the community. However, being invited is not the same as being included, as there are many potential barriers to participation. You may need to make special accommodations to ensure that everyone can attend the event and feel comfortable participating. This might include providing childcare, organising transport, giving small stipends to make up for lost income, ensuring that a session is translated into all relevant languages, and making the content and location accessible to participating stakeholders of all abilities.

### Logistics

Many factors directly affect stakeholders' participation during an event/session and need considering in advance. It's essential to plan the location, time and duration so the maximum number of desired participants can take part. Consider people's (formal and informal) work schedules. Can people reach the site easily and safely? Who might need transport? Will food or refreshments be necessary? What materials are required? How will you manage translation? At longer sessions, participants should have easy access to water and gender-specific sanitation facilities.

### Mindsets

The following mindsets can be important while planning:

- **respect**
- **empathy**
- **inclusion**
- **flexibility**
- **relational**

For mindsets definitions see page 4

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**Note:** If you don't have a facilitator, nominate one person in your team to lead the use of this tool.



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# Extended guidance notes: Before

## 2) Preparation

### Building relationships

Participation is a way to build relationships with stakeholders rather than a way to extract information from them. If you are running lengthy or multiple events, take time to get to know participants and let them get to know you.

The following can help to build good working relationships:

- treat each other with respect
- communicate often and honestly, and listen actively
- be clear about your needs
- be consistent and trustworthy, and deliver quality work on time
- support each other
- be positive in interactions

### Managing expectations

Participation takes many forms, which require different inputs and produce different outputs. Before an event/session begins, participants should know why their involvement matters and what their role will be (such as sharing opinions, providing information, contributing to decisions or building models). In addition, implementers and participants should be clear about how the outcome of an event will affect the proposed solution. There should also be transparency about how a proposed solution will take shape, and the project's timeline. Finally, it should be very clear if/how participating stakeholders will be compensated for their participation and how will they benefit from the project.

### Building skills, knowledge and understanding

Both implementers and participants need the appropriate skills and knowledge to participate effectively. You must ensure that everyone has the capacity (skills and attitudes) to do so. For longer or more complex events, you may need to run pre-event training on a specific sector, or programme/product design methodologies.

Implementers should also learn about the implementation and participation context, and local socio-cultural issues.

### Mindsets

The following mindsets can be important when preparing for a participatory event:

- inclusion
- relational
- rich climate
- creative confidence
- enrichment
- relational

The following are mindsets to build in participating stakeholders:

- relational
- achievement
- creative confidence

For mindsets definitions see page 4

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Toolkit

# Extended guidance notes: During

## 3) Environment

### Physical environment

To enhance meaningful participation, all participation events – even short sessions – should take place in comfortable and welcoming settings. They should be accessible for people with disabilities, be well-ventilated and have protection from sun or rain. There should be comfortable, culturally appropriate seating, and tables if necessary. If participants will work in groups, there should be enough workspace and materials for each group. Posters or screens should be easily visible to all participants. At longer sessions, participants should have easy access to water and gender-specific sanitation facilities.

### Enabling environment

Aim to create an environment in which everyone feels comfortable participating. How can you assure participants that everyone's input is valued equally? Be aware of how dynamics around gender, age, ethnicity and/or race might affect people's participation. Consider:

- participants' literacy and their level of comfort with activities that include reading and writing
- traditional gender roles around public speaking and participation in sessions/events
- language and translation needs
- how to ensure that one person/group does not dominate the conversation

Where appropriate, try to create an environment that is warm and informal, and can foster playfulness and fun, to enable creativity.

### Power dynamics

Power dynamics are present in all interactions, but they can only be mitigated when people are aware of, and acknowledge, them – having good intentions is not enough. Before participation events, understand how dynamics around gender, age, ethnicity and/or race might affect people's participation. It's especially important to consider how to help participants feel comfortable expressing disagreement or alternative points of view. Implementers and facilitators need to be aware of their own power, and of power dynamics among and between stakeholders, and try to reduce their impact. For longer events, it may be useful to incorporate sessions that specifically address power dynamics.

### Mindsets

The following mindsets can be important when creating the environment for participation:

- inclusion
- respect
- rich climate
- creative confidence
- enrichment

The following are mindsets to seek out or build in participating stakeholders:

- respect
- optimistic
- open-minded
- creative confidence

For mindsets definitions see page 4

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Toolkit

# Extended guidance notes: During

## 4) Engagement

### Content

When creating the content for a session, have clear goals and, when possible, make the session mutually beneficial for both the participating stakeholders and the project. Even when planning a short session, think about what should go into the introductory material (setting the context and expectations, and fun ice-breakers) and the main content. Consider participants languages and literacy levels, and try to incorporate hands-on activities wherever possible. Throughout the session, exercises that promote collaboration can help to build relationships and team spirit among participants.

### Facilitation

The success of a participatory event/session relies heavily on effective facilitation, which includes content delivery, participant engagement and real-time logistics. It may be helpful to clarify what a session involves, how long it will take, what is expected of the participants, and the expected outcome. An introductory exercise can help participants to learn each other's names, roles and motivation for attending. Consider participants' literacy levels and comfort with exercises that involve reading and writing, and conduct them in a way that does not make anyone feel inadequate because of their educational levels.

Throughout the session, keep a positive and appreciative attitude and use strategies to draw out and engage all participants. At the end of the session, thank everyone for their contributions.

### Documentation

Every session produces valuable information, including words, actions and things that are said and not said. Think about the information you need to capture and how you will record it. Try to ensure that the person facilitating the session is not also responsible for capturing the results. Consider using multiple recording methods so you can compare and validate results. The methods you use may affect the results, so try to use the least intrusive methods.

### Mindsets

The following mindsets are important when running participation events:

- inclusion
- respect
- creative confidence
- open-minded
- engagement
- flexibility

The following are mindsets to promote in participating stakeholders:

- respect
- optimistic
- creative confidence
- curiosity
- embracing ambiguity
- achievement

For mindsets definitions see page 4

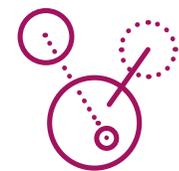
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Toolkit

# Extended guidance notes: After

## 5) Follow-up

### Appreciation

It's important to acknowledge and appreciate participating stakeholders' contributions. This does not necessarily mean giving them financial compensation, but you should be aware of the time and effort they have contributed and let them know how valuable it is.

### Communication

Communication is key to maintaining a relationship with participating stakeholders. Will your relationship with them continue as you progress on your innovation journey? If so, how you will keep in touch? What do you need to communicate, and to whom? What type of communication will reach the most participating stakeholders (written, verbal, digital or visual), and in what languages? How frequently will you communicate with them? How can they communicate with you?

### Managing relationships

Consider whether and how participating stakeholders should be engaged after a participation event. Will you need their participation again? Are there other ways they can be involved? Should other stakeholders take part in future events/sessions?

It's useful to revisit the expectations you laid out at the beginning of your innovation journey with participating stakeholders and refine them if necessary. Be clear about whether or how you will engage stakeholders as the project progresses, what benefits they can expect and those they should not expect. Avoid making commitments that you cannot meet. If you made commitments during a session, make sure that you honour them.

### Mindsets

The following mindsets can be important as you follow up with participating stakeholders:

- respect
- achievement
- iterate

For mindsets definitions see page 4

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**Note:** If you don't have a facilitator, nominate one person in your team to lead the use of this tool.



Toolkit

# Extended guidance notes: After

## 6) Finalising

### Reporting

It's essential to synthesise, analyse and compile the information gathered during the session. This is useful for updating donors and senior managers, and important for reporting back to participating stakeholders when that is practical and relevant to the process. Consider what needs sharing, such as the information was gathered, the decisions made and the steps taken (or planned). It's also important to choose an appropriate way to share information. Will it be verbal, written, visual or digital?

### Reflecting

Take time to reflect on the event or session. Were the outcomes what you expected? What was different? Do not dismiss unexpected outcomes, as they can generate important insights. Think about the participatory process. Did anything go particularly well? Do you think you could improve anything? Use these learnings to refine your future participation practice.

### Transition

Participation frequently happens at multiple stages of a project. It's important to think about how a participatory event could inform and feed into the next participation event or project stage.

### Mindsets

The following mindsets can be important as you wrap up the participatory experience:

- respect
- iterate
- learning from failure

Ideally, participating stakeholders will have gained the following mindsets:

- achievement
- creative confidence

For mindsets definitions see page 4

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Toolkit

# Assessment Matrix

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## How will you measure and reflect on the degree of stakeholder participation?

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**30–45 minutes**



**A4 Print**



**Focus:**  
Assessment or evaluation



**Use with:**  
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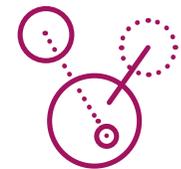
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Guidance notes

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Canvas (2 pages)

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**Toolkit**

# Introduction

The **Assessment Matrix** was designed to help people innovating for or within humanitarian contexts to reflect on the degree of participation achieved during a particular event, or in a project or organisation.

Given the dynamic nature of participation in humanitarian innovation, we cannot assume that we will achieve our desired degree of participation. By collectively reflecting on the degree of participation achieved, we can begin to learn how and why we succeeded or failed. These reflections should inform the design of the next participation event or session. They may also promote accountability among stakeholders.

## Understanding the tool

**Why:** It's essential that stakeholders share their experiences and perceptions of a project or organisation so that implementers can improve future project actions and activities, and participation events. Reflecting on the degree of participation reached is an important learning exercise for all involved, to understand how and why something did or did not work.

**What:** The Assessment Matrix presents all three types and seven degrees of participation on a single canvas (pages 5–6). The version on page 5 is based on the MIT D-Lab Design Cycle. The one on page 6 is blank so that teams can assess/evaluate their own activities and/or actions. Both versions allow participation stakeholders to mark cells that correspond to the degree of participation they feel was achieved in a given activity and/or action.

**Who:** Any stakeholder with experience of the activities and/or actions in question. These might represent vastly different perspectives, which can be acknowledged by assigning each participant an identifiable mark – or ignored by using the tool anonymously.

**When:** Ideally, this tool should be used at project milestones, near enough to the activities and/or actions in question that they can be accurately recalled but after enough time to assess their outcomes. At the very least, this tool can be used as a component of endline project reporting.

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# Using the tool

→ 1. Select either the Design Cycle canvas (page 5) or the blank canvas (page 6).

If you choose the blank canvas, fill in the 'Project activities and/or actions' column with those you wish to assess. Otherwise, go to step 2.

2. Identify the stakeholder that you wish to focus on. Consider writing their name on a sticky note and placing it on the top left of the canvas.

3. If using the tool as a collective reflection, ask each participant to mark the activities and/or actions in which they were involved.

If using the tool as a solitary mapping exercise, mark the activities and/or actions in which the identified stakeholders were involved.

4. Next, mark the cells that best describe the degree of participation you experienced, or feel the identified stakeholders experienced.

5. Once your mapping is completed, reflect on the results.

Ask participants or yourself:

- do the results correspond to your expectations and/or intentions?
- does anything surprise you?
- do you see opportunities to change or improve your participation practice? If so, how?

	Consultation			Partnership		Ownership	
	Input	Interaction	Iteration	Collaboration	Co-creation	Empowerment	Leadership
<u>Activity 1</u>	●	●●	●				
<u>Activity 2</u>		●			●●		
<u>Activity 3</u>							

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# Guidance notes

If you are using this tool for the first time, it's essential to understand the core concepts presented in the table opposite.

There are many ways to use the Assessment Matrix, but the two most common are as a collective reflection or a solitary mapping. You may find it helpful to assess the degree of participation as a team. The more stakeholders you include, the deeper the discussion and your understanding will be.

As a collective reflection, you can capture your own experiences or observe the experience of others as if you were using this tool for solitary mapping.

In either case, it's important to focus on specific stakeholders/stakeholder groups. Then, ask yourself who is currently participating and whose participation you want to assess. When determining the participation of several different stakeholders, do a separate assessment for each.

This matrix allows participating stakeholders to mark cells that correspond to the degree of participation they achieved in a given project activity and/or action.

## Overview of participation types and degrees

Type	Degree	Description
<b>None</b>		
<b>Consultation</b> less engagement	<b>Input</b> 	This is a one-way transaction in which stakeholders provide information, opinions and/or feedback at the request of researchers and innovators (implementers). There is no opportunity to interact with implementers, and stakeholders do not have any decision-making power or influence over how their input is incorporated into the project.
	<b>Interaction</b> 	This is a two-way transaction in which stakeholders provide information, opinions and/or feedback at the request of researchers and innovators (implementers) in an interactive process. This allows implementers to make refinements. However, stakeholders do not have any decision-making power or influence over how their inputs or refinements are incorporated into the project.
	<b>Iteration</b> 	This is a two-way transaction in which stakeholders provide information, opinions and/or feedback at the request of researchers and innovators (implementers) through an interactive and iterative process throughout the project. This allows stakeholders to influence refinements. However, they do not have any decision-making power over how their inputs or refinements are incorporated into the project.
<b>Partnership</b>	<b>Collaboration</b> 	Stakeholders assist researchers and innovators (implementers) in planning and implementing the solution according to their experience, as determined by implementers. Stakeholders do not have influence over their role in the solution and do not share equal decision-making power with implementers.
	<b>Co-creation</b> 	Stakeholders assist researchers and innovators (implementers) in planning and implementing the solution according to their experience, as determined by both stakeholders and implementers. Stakeholders do have influence over their role in the solution and do share equal decision-making power with implementers.
<b>Ownership</b> more engagement	<b>Empowerment</b> 	Stakeholders lead the planning, development and implementation of the solution, with researchers and innovators (implementers) providing input and support as determined by the implementers. Stakeholders have total decision-making power.
	<b>Leadership</b> 	Stakeholders lead the planning, development and implementation of the solution, with researchers and innovators (implementers) providing input and support at the request of the <b>stakeholders</b> . Stakeholders have total decision-making power.

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**Note:** If you don't have a facilitator, nominate one person in your team to lead the use of this tool. When facilitating this tool, discuss each step as you come to it, using the additional information on these pages.



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Project activities and actions	None	Consultation			Partnership		Ownership	
		Input 	Interaction 	Iteration 	Collaboration 	Co-creation 	Empowerment 	Leadership 
<b>Defining the problem</b> Providing and/or gathering information								
Deciding which aspect of the problem will be addressed and what the priorities are								
<b>Identifying possible solutions/ creating an approach</b> Contributing ideas for possible solutions								
Selecting one solution, or narrowing down to a few solutions from the many possibilities generated								
<b>Developing a solution</b> Exploring options for details of the solution								
Building the actual solution								
<b>Testing the solution</b> Providing and/or getting feedback about the solution								
Prioritising and acting on feedback to refine and/or finalise the solution								

