

# Stakeholder Data Informing Better Decisions

21-22 September 2017, Greenpeace Netherlands

## Workshop Outcomes Summary

### In many organisations, stakeholder data informs strategies but does not enrich decisions

Accountability is about responsiveness to your key stakeholders. Many civil society organisations (CSOs) subscribe to this but few have figured out the *why*, *how* and *what* of establishing both mechanisms and a culture of responsiveness to feedback and using stakeholder data (including feedback) to enhance decision making. Many CSOs use data to inform their strategies but getting real-time data to improve global decision making and to have this as part of their daily operations is the real challenge. How to filter data and push-it up the organisational hierarchy is not only a systems issue but a behavioural one too. CSOs have piles of data but their accuracy is questioned; they are under-used and they are in many cases in siloes. The bigger the organisation is, the more difficult the journey will be but some have started to find a way.

Representatives of 16 CSOs – both members and non-members of Accountable Now, met for one and a-half-day at Greenpeace Netherlands to address this challenge and this is a summary of their discussions.

### Figure out the “why” first & then pitch it to leadership, boards and development partners!

Never start with the “what” and “how”, but always start with the “why” - this is what Simon Sinek puts forward as the recipe for organisational success (Check his well-known [TED talk](#) and his [book](#)). This might be obvious but this is not how we always think about stakeholder data informed decision making. We need to pitch that to people such as our leadership teams, boards and development partners, whose buy-in is important. Put yourself in their shoes and think about the problems, solutions and why having decisions driven by stakeholder data is the best solution and how to convince them that it adds value and should be a priority for them.

### Why stakeholder data driven decision making? (rather than some other competing priority)



**For leadership:** This is the right thing to do because it will increase impact and empower communities. Responsiveness to stakeholder feedback is a good practice in the sector. And donors have started to ask CSOs to become more responsive and they believe that it will improve the sustainability and effectiveness of our programmes.

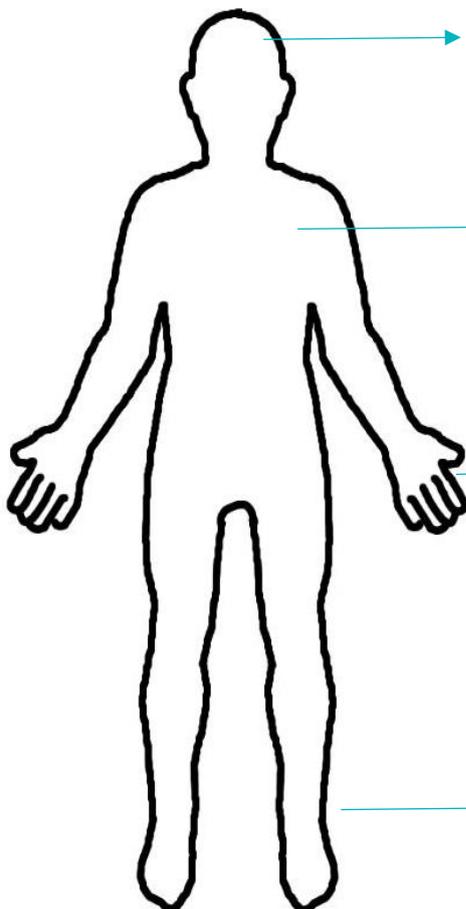


**For boards:** This will bring you closer to our stakeholders' view, as most of the time you are very distant. Since our organisation works for the public good, we need to build trust at a time when it is in question. This is inevitable without us demonstrating whether and how we are responsive to our stakeholders. Eventually, this will help us measure our programme effectiveness in a more timely manner, beyond just numbers. Also, It will help better manage risks and reduce fraud and corruption.



**For development partners/donors:** This will help funded projects and programmes achieve their impact and course-correct along the way. This is evident by the [Beneficiary Feedback Mechanisms pilots](#) funded by DFID and by the [People-Powered Decision Making pilots](#) funded by Oak Foundation and led by Accountable Now and CPC Analytics. Ultimately, this will help you demonstrate “value for money” to your tax payers.

## Get to understand what your stakeholders need to “know, feel, do and access”



### **HEAD: need to know**

What I am asked/expected to do. What happens to my feedback or contributions. Any risks (& confidentiality). Technical knowledge if applicable. Next steps.

### **HEART: need to feel**

Listened to (my feedback or contributions is used). Understood and valued. Empowered and supported. Part of a family /something bigger. Inspired to continue work. Having an impact. Having fun.

### **HAND: need to do**

Set aside time and put into calendar. Ongoing dialogue. Be critical and proactive. Be a good representative of others. Multiply and spread the word. Raise awareness. Overcome language barriers.

### **FEET: need to access**

Internet access. Technology and online platforms. Mobile phone. Tools & know-how. Regular communications. Information on upcoming events. Decision makers within or outside the organisation.



## Ready to go, here is some practical advice and examples!

### Trust is key and will increase through responsiveness

Trust is key in having stakeholder data and feedback at the very first place. The lesson learned from [World Vision's Beneficiary Feedback Mechanisms pilots](#) is that: *there will be no (useful) feedback without trust; and there will be no (real) trust without feedback*. Once you gain trust, you need to keep it and this is what the pilots did by responding to feedback in a number of ways. Changes to programmes included for example increasing access and removing barriers to health services or adjusting budget allocations or [incorporating feedback into organisational strategies which MAMTA-India did](#). All of this was then repeated back and substantially built trust. Government authorities were also then motivated to be more responsive too.

### Build stakeholder data into your DNA

Data can be used to solve a problem, which was the [approach used by Accenture to support a large brewing company](#). The benefit would be much larger if you embed data into your own organisation in a way that would allow everyone to leverage its potential. With the help of Accenture, West Midlands Police (the second largest force in England and Wales) were able to use data to predict and prevent crime much more effectively and efficiently by using mobile devices and a citizen portal. Check out this short [case study](#) or watch this [video](#) to know how they did it.

### Real-time data can be extremely useful

Many CSOs would love to have access to [UNICEF's U-Report](#), with its simplicity and real-time insights. There are currently 3.5 million U-Reporters in 39 countries via five channels (SMS, Facebook Messenger, Twitter, Viber and Telegram). In less than 24 hours, it helped direct resources to where it is needed as part of the Ebola response and helped put child protection and sex4grades on the agenda in Liberia. The good news is that [Rapid PRO](#), the backbone of U-Report and UNICEF's other real-time monitoring tools, is open source and a number of other organisations are building applications based on it.

### Use several tools to solicit stakeholder data and feedback

CARE uses stakeholder data to adapt programming to achieve better impact; learn and improve ways to work with partners; and be regularly alerted on potential risks of fraud, corruption or exploitation. They then clarify the how and what – be it via [community score cards](#) (check this [guide](#) and [learning report](#)), [constituency voice methodology](#), [community-based monitoring](#), [Keystone's Accountability partner surveys](#) or [complaints mechanisms](#).

### Incentivise the use of stakeholder data into decision making via clear processes and organisation-wide teams

The International Rescue Committee (IRC) first developed their [client responsiveness programming framework](#) and are currently, in cooperation with CDA Collaborative Learning, using lessons from behavioural research to identify and develop incentives that could help. The emerging findings is that using stakeholder data and feedback to inform decision is possible if you make it simple and clear; and you let staff identify in advance the obstacles to that and what will be done to overcome them. Having also an organisation-wide team composed from programmes, technology and management significantly increase the possibility of using stakeholder data to inform decision making, as shown by the [People-Powered Decision Making pilots](#) supported by CPC Analytics and implemented under Accountable Now with six CSOs.

Good luck & thank you!