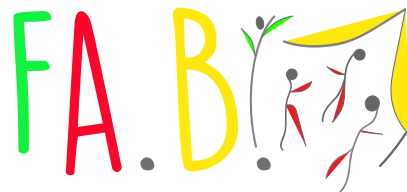


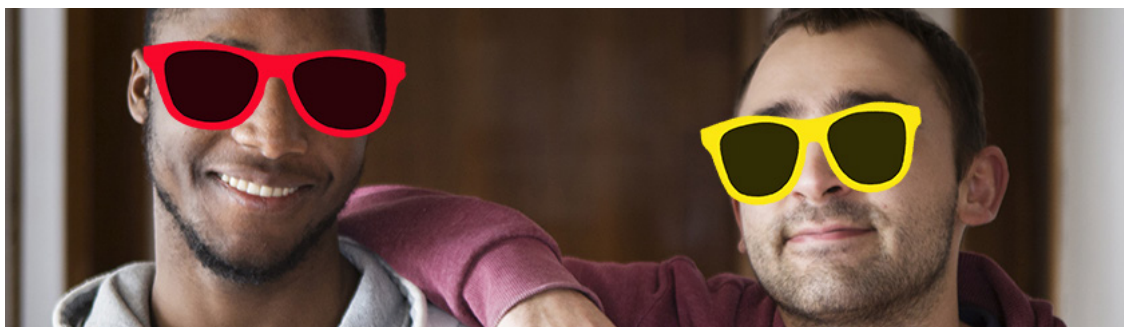


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FAMILY BASED CARE FOR CHILDREN IN MIGRATION

EVERYONE DESERVES AFFECTION AND SUPPORT IN GROWING INTO ADULthood



D2.12

## RECOMMENDATION ON ASSESSING MULTI- STAKEHOLDERS' ENGAGEMENT EFFECTIVENESS



CIDIS



por Causa  
Investigación, periodismo y migraciones



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## INTRODUCTION

As part of the “FA.B! Family Based care for children in migration”, financed by the AMIF - Asylum, Migration and Integration fund and aimed at strengthening the family reception system for unaccompanied foreign minors, a set of guidelines and recommendations has been drawn up regarding the various aspects of the family fostering process, in order to: provide adequate assistance to the needs of lonely minors; equip guardians, curators, social workers and professionals with specific knowledge and skills to understand in depth the vulnerabilities of minors and achieve successful foster care; improve the quality of national and local reception systems for unaccompanied foreign minors.

The recommendations are the result of a multidisciplinary work of maximization and capitalization of skills carried out by the partners of the project - Center for Information Documentation Initiative for Development (CIDIS); Hope For Children Crc Policy Center (HFC); Kentro Merimnas Oikogeneias Kai Paidiou (KMOP); Foundation for Initiatives and the Study of Multi-ethnicity (ISMU); Porcausa De Investigacion Y Periodismo (porCausa); Jesuit Refugee Service Malta Foundation (JRS MALTA) - which operate in the field of reception, assistance and integration of unaccompanied foreign minors in five European countries of the Mediterranean area (Italy, Spain, Cyprus, Malta, Greece).

The guidelines formulated are as follows:

- Guidelines training programs for professionals, foster families and unaccompanied foreign minors;
- Common child communication policy;
- Guidelines on instruments and technique for children’s participation;
- Recommendation on Assessing multi-stakeholders engagement effectiveness;
- Recommendation on methodologies and tailored services for vulnerable groups.

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## INTRODUCTION

The “Recommendation on Assessing multi-stakeholders’ engagement effectiveness” provide guidelines regarding ways to identify, involve and communicate with stakeholders, with special focus on stakeholders in the case of foster care for Unaccompanied Migrant Children (UMC). In addition, the line guides below entailed crucial information regarding how an organisation should communicate with UCM and candidate foster families in order to effectively engage them in foster care.

## ACKNOWLEDGING THE IMPORTANCE OF STAKEHOLDERS FOR SUCCESSFUL IMPLEMENTATION OF A PROJECT

A stakeholder is a subject that can influence or be influenced by an institution, organisation, strategy, project. They may belong to the already established partnership network or not. There are several reasons why they are important: they are bearers of knowledge and competences; they are valuable allies as they can facilitate the achievement of project objectives; they ensure project acceptance by the beneficiaries.

That does not mean that all stakeholders share an equal amount of impact; they are usually categorized as below:

**Key Stakeholders:** people, groups or institutions who can significantly influence or are particularly important to the success of the project (partners, policy makers, government officials, organisation’s employees)

**Primary stakeholders:** people or groups who are directly impacted by the project (beneficiaries)

**Secondary stakeholders:** all other people or groups who have a stake or interest in the proposed project or are indirectly impacted by the project (other NGOs, media)

## PREPARATORY STEPS

The first step in the process of engaging stakeholders is to have a good awareness of your organisation's identity. If you don't know who you are, what are your values, your mission, but also your strengths and weaknesses, it's hard to see who you can collaborate with.

The second step is to develop a strategy: when your organisation works on a project and has important objectives to achieve, it needs to have a precise plan on how it intends to move for reaching the set goals. Having a strategy means organising the actions "step by step", deciding how to use the available resources, enhancing the skills available. Clearly, the program must be flexible, adaptable to the context, because otherwise there is a risk of failure.

The third and final step concerns communication: it's important to keep stakeholders interested and involved. It is essential to share with them the organisation's visions, values and also strategies. In this sense, the "Lasswell Model of Communication" (1948) can contribute in understanding how complex the communicative action can be; it consists of 5 elements: the transmitter, the message, the medium, the receiver and the effects. By communicating the information to our stakeholders, we not only transmit information; we anticipate a response. The receiver's response is linked to the decoding process to the transmitted information. Sometimes the decoded message is not equal to the sending message, which can differentiate the response.

## MAPPING STAKEHOLDERS (IDENTIFICATION, ANALYSIS, PLANNING, ENGAGEMENT)

The term “stakeholders’ mapping” is the way to organise all the people who have an interest in the project; this will allow the organisation to understand who can influence the implementation plan, as well as how stakeholders are connected to each other. The stakeholders’ mapping is also important as it helps the organisation to understand who among the available stakeholders is worth involving, who can provide information, who can help to better define the project’s aims, which resources are valuable to invest on. Stakeholders’ mapping involves the following four steps:

### Identifying the stakeholders

Stakeholders can be identified through personal contacts (i.e., previous projects) or by other resources attained by research; It’s important to understand the role of the people within an organisation that we may want to involve, but also what are their characteristics (collaborative, transparent, reliable etc.).

A few useful questions that the organisation should have in mind are the following:

- Who will be impacted by the project?
- Who can support the project?
- Who can obstruct the project?
- Who has been involved in this type of project in the past?

A typical stakeholder’s list includes the following:

- The beneficiary of a project
- The organisations doing the work
- The project’s managers
- The project’s sponsors, who finance the project
- Influential parties or organisations

Regarding family based foster care, the relevant stakeholders are: UMC, individuals and families interested in foster care, NGOs and authorities working with UMC and foster families, schools, the media and health care services.

## Analysing the stakeholders by understanding their interests

Once the stakeholders have been identified, it's necessary to assess the level of expertise, willingness, influence and necessity of their involvement according to the subject.

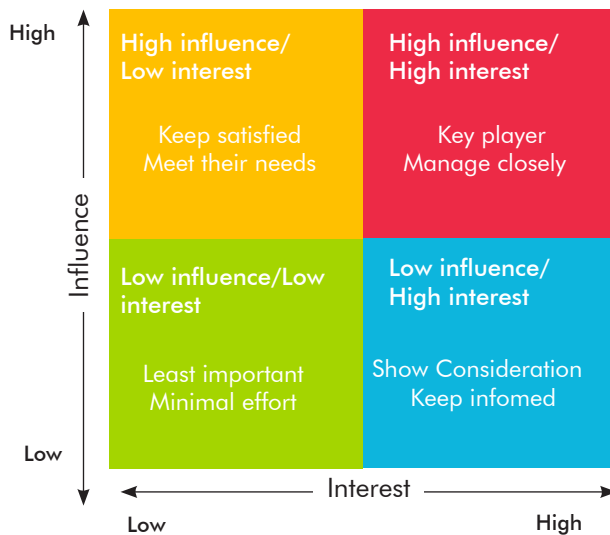
- Contribution/ Expertise: Does the stakeholder have information, counsel or expertise on the issue that could be helpful to the work of the organisation and the project?
- Willingness to engage: How willing is the stakeholder to engage?
- Influence: How much influence does the stakeholder have? (It has to be clarified "who" they influence, e.g., NGOs, consumers, municipalities, politics, etc.)
- Necessity of involvement: Is this someone who could derail or delegitimize the process if they were not included in the engagement?

For each of these four dimensions it's possible to assign a degree: high, medium, low.

## Planning

The planning phase involves giving priorities to each stakeholder: the Mendelow's Model (1991) can be useful. Stakeholders are divided on a Cartesian plane into 4 quadrants. On the abscissa there is the level of interest (high-low), while on the axis of ordinates the level of influence (high-low).





The red dial (key player) represents the optimal one, while the orange one concerns subjects who may have a good influence, but are not very interested in the cause. The green ones are the farthest away as they are not engageable and have little influence.

## Engagement

In terms of engagement, it is necessary to have an engagement communication plan that takes into account the stakeholders' division according to the abovementioned Mendelow's Model. For key players it is necessary to adopt a highly engaging communication style: you need to make them responsible for actions, share information and decision-making processes. For stakeholders with high influence, but low interest, it's advisable to involve them, but not to make them responsible. For those with low influence and high interest, it's better to use a push communication: a one-way engagement using channels, email, letters, podcast, video. For stakeholders with low interest and low influence it could be necessary to use pull communication, that is, to make information

of a different kind available and leave it to stakeholders to decide whether and how to use it.

### **Addressing and communicating with UMC and foster families**

From the abovementioned, it is evident that UMC and foster families are significant stakeholders in projects that aim to promote family based foster care. Therefore, particular emphasis should be given in organising a methodology for communication with them, in order to achieve their engagement and collaboration.

Milestones in the process are considered acknowledging the challenges and providing them with complete and accurate information.

When working on the subject of UMC, an organisation should keep in mind the main challenges: the different cultural context and language barriers; the risks linked with the migration journey, which may have resulted in them developing vulnerabilities and traumas; the fact that even when arriving in the destination country UMC may face lack of specialized support as well as multiple discrimination. For these reasons, when working with UMC, it's necessary to act according to the following principles: be careful to act for the best interest of the child; ensure that we have their informed consent before doing anything; do not discriminate them and be friendly with minors, being careful not to harm them.

With reference to foster care, it is important for minors to know that there is a strong difference between family based foster care and adoption: it is necessary to explain this difference well in order to not scare them. At the same time, minors must be informed about the role and responsibilities of foster families, how foster care works, how long it lasts, what rights and responsibilities they have while in foster care and to ensure continuity of care for them.

At the same time, foster families also need to have important information about minors. First, minors are far from their families, but they are present in their minds; the families must know the social figures and services that revolve around family custody (they

can be important resources for them); it's essential that family must be willing to follow guidance, training by teams of experts. Thirdly, it is important that foster parents are aware of the forms of violence and exploitation that minors may have experienced. Families must be informed about the fact that the legal status of the children can affect the duration of foster care (i.e., family reunification, deportation after 18 in many countries). For all these reasons, the challenges that a foster family has to experience are different: the cultural differences and the age of the child, the presence of different social actors involved and the differences as compared to the adoption path.

The many challenges of foster care make the work of informing and approaching families important. They need to be acquainted with their new obligations and responsibilities as a foster family; the role they will have; the regulatory framework and the existing procedures (including timelines, actors involved in the evaluation process, in the matching process and in the support process during foster care).

Finally, in order to involve other foster families and to increase interest, some hints could be the following:

- enable the exchange among active foster carers with candidate foster carers;
- find accurate qualitative and quantitative data;
- enable organisations that can support foster carers through trainings, capacity building etc.;
- promote stories can be used as successful examples.

# LEARN MORE ABOUT FAMILY BASED CARE FOR YOUNG UNACCOMPANIED MIGRANTS AND FA.B! ACTIONS



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