

Chapter 8

Stakeholders in Engineering and Construction Projects

ABSTRACT

This chapter describes what stakeholders are, how to classify them, how they can affect and be affected by the projects, and then describes how to establish a dialogue with them to achieve success in project implementation. Throughout this chapter a series of specific observations are made for complex projects with the purpose of contextualizing the subject of the chapter for this type of project. What is the relevance of stakeholders for complex projects?

INTRODUCTION

What is the relevance of stakeholders for complex projects? In the third chapter of this book we highlight three characteristics of a complex project:

- Multiple stakeholders
- Ambiguities
- Multinationality

In that chapter we mentioned that different stakeholders may have different expectations, which can compete with each other and create conflicts within the project. We also emphasize that ambiguities and multinationalities have, by themselves, strong relationships with stakeholders regardless of the project being complex or not.

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In the case of ambiguities, different stakeholders may have ambiguous positions regarding a project, which add to the ambiguities of other natures that this project also has.

Taking back an example previously used, many mining projects or hydroelectric power plant projects are characterized by having ambiguous repositions stakeholders. These projects have stakeholders directly related to the enterprise and also indirectly linked. In this second group we highlight:

- Public administration
- Regulatory agencies
- Non-governmental organizations (NGOs)
- Local merchants
- Local workers
- Residents of the community

Some of the ambiguities that may be associated with them are:

- Will public administration and regulatory agencies provide the necessary (environmental and other) licenses for the project to be deployed and operated?
- What is the position of the residents in relation to the project? Local merchants and workers can see some benefit in the implementation of the project, but what about the others?
- Can the conditions imposed by the public administration and regulatory agencies, based on the demands of the community, for the issuance of licenses be able to derail the project or to reduce its profitability significantly?
- Can events occur during the implementation of the project that stresses the relationship between the proprietary organization and the community?

Regarding multinationality, which should be understood as the characteristic of projects whose activities are dispersed in different parts of the globe, we believe that it can make the question of stakeholders more complex, since it adds the ingredient of potentially significant cultural differences between them. These cultural differences can bring new ambiguities to the project.

So, projects (or organizations) must incorporate in their strategies the interests and aspirations of all the stakeholders that directly or indirectly

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