

Example of Stakeholder Engagement and Agreements

(A letter, memorandum of understanding (MOU), or meeting minutes may be appropriate. In some countries, public officials are reluctant to sign letters or MOUs; therefore this format does not require signatures. If signatures are customary, space can be added for them.)

To: [Key Stakeholders]

From: [OPQ/Quality facilitator/team members]

Subject: Summary of Initial Understanding and Next Steps

Purpose: The purpose of this memo or meeting minutes is to summarize our collective agreements about the key performance issues identified by key stakeholders and OPQ team, and to describe what we jointly decided would be useful next steps to further assess the situation. This assessment data and analysis can then be used to help us fully understand the performance issues and their impact so that we can target interventions that will be most likely to improve performance or expand identified strengths. These steps will help move our organization (or district) toward the overall organizational goal of reduced transmission of HIV from mother to child by providing high quality MNCH/PMTCT health services.

Process: For a few weeks we have conducted general discussions about possible solutions related to two issues: the apparent decline of ANC client return rates to clinics in our district and the low percentage of HIV positive pregnant women who are receiving ARV prophylaxis despite the new clinical guidelines.

We have met individually with key managers, several other staff from [the organization], and key stakeholders involved with programs at all levels. At the last meeting with key stakeholders, we summarized what we had learned in the various meetings held, and then had substantive discussions about desired results, possible performance gaps and strengths, and next steps we might take to begin to understand how best to address the problems or replicate the successes.

Results—agreements and next steps: During our meeting, we established consensus on the following points:

1. There is a problem with client satisfaction. These problems may be related to the quality of client-staff interaction. We agreed that, ideally by the end of the year, expected ANC client return rates should be 80% and HIV positive pregnant women receiving ARV prophylaxis should be 70%.
2. Even with current data limitations, we recognize that performance problems extend beyond issues that can be addressed by training alone. Meeting participants expressed different opinions about the causes of performance problems. Many of these opinions were based largely on anecdotal evidence.
3. In order to understand these problems more fully, we need more concrete data, especially from staff and customer/client perspective. This data will guide us in choosing the most effective interventions to help move toward desired acceptance rates.

We agreed on the following steps to conduct an assessment:

1. A team of at least four people from our organization will collect and analyze the data during this phase of the initiative. The team will use concepts and tools associated with OPQ methodology. We estimate it will take one to two weeks of this team's time to complete the assessment.
2. The assessment team will develop a list of performance needs assessment (PNA) questions, many of which were raised in our meeting, and submit them for stakeholder review and approval.
3. The assessment team will collect data using the following methods and sources:
 - We will interview a representative sample of 12–15 managers and staff at all levels.
 - We will interview a representative sample of supervisors.
 - We will observe a sample of staff providing ANC and PMTCT services to clients.
 - We will review clinic processes and workspace set-up.
 - We will conduct focus groups with customers/clients who received services. We will work with you to finalize the schedule. We will conduct interviews upon personal consent.
 - We will also review and analyze existing data and previous evaluation reports.
4. After data collection, will analyze all the data and share results with all the participants who attended our last meeting. We tentatively agreed that the same group of participants would be able to attend the results-sharing meeting. Generally, this kind of assessment produces the following results:
 - A summary of findings, including descriptions of the desired improved or new performance, the gaps/strengths between desired and actual performance, and the causes of the performance gaps or problems.
 - Based on this summary of findings, a description of recommended interventions to close performance gaps or expand strengths. Performance gaps may be prioritized, causes may be described, and interventions may be explored. The report may describe a range of interventions, outlining the strengths and weaknesses of each, and estimating which would be the most effective. Each intervention should be linked closely to a specific cause to clarify how each will eliminate a performance problem.
5. We agreed that we all closely work together. We will conduct periodic consultation meetings with all stakeholders to check progress at key points in the effort.
6. Stakeholders agreed that [the organization] would provide logistical support for the assessment team, including meeting space and travel if needed, etc.

Please let us know whether these engagement and agreements are accurate from your perspective. If you have any questions, corrections or suggestions, we would be most happy to make the necessary changes. Once you have approved the memo or meeting minutes, we will send it to the attendees of our last meeting.