Materiality Assessment Toolkit
Abbreviations index

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CR</td>
<td>Corporate Responsibility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GDD</td>
<td>Global Drug Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HSE</td>
<td>Health, Safety, and Environment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HCP</td>
<td>Healthcare Professionals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HR</td>
<td>Human Resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GRI</td>
<td>Global Reporting Initiative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I&amp;C</td>
<td>Integrity and Compliance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IRRCI</td>
<td>Investor Responsibility Research Center Institute</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MA</td>
<td>Materiality Assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NGO</td>
<td>Nongovernmental-Organizations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NPO</td>
<td>Nonprofit-Organizations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NIBR</td>
<td>Novartis Institute for Biomedical Research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NTO</td>
<td>Novartis Technical Operations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PwC</td>
<td>PricewaterhouseCoopers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEC</td>
<td>US Securities and Exchange Commission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SASB</td>
<td>Sustainable Accounting Standards Board</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Table of contents

1. Materiality definition, background, cycles and objectives
2. Introduction to the toolkit
3. Materiality Assessment process
   3.1. Business buy-in
   3.2. Topic list
   3.3. Internal survey
   3.4. External survey
   3.5. Stakeholder discussion
   3.6. Results analysis
   3.7. Results interpretation
   3.8. Visualization & external reporting
   3.9. External assurance
   3.10. Implementation
4. Resources overview
5. Global CR support
1. Definition of materiality

The underlying concept of CR materiality derives from the fundamental materiality principle of mandated disclosure of financial information as it applies for all stock listed companies. The concept of materiality recognizes that some information is important to investors in making investment decisions. Through CR materiality assessments, we aim to identify topics linked to our core business that influence all types of stakeholders of Novartis.

For the purposes of the Materiality Analysis, we consider social, environmental or economic topics to be material if they have a substantial likelihood to influence the judgment and decisions of key stakeholder groups and a significant impact on Novartis performance and business overall.

This definition was developed, reviewed and approved according to

Materiality definitions of international security commissions:
e.g. US Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC)

Aligned with materiality definitions of relevant international CR standards:
• Sustainable Accounting Standards Board (SASB)
• Global Reporting Initiative (GRI)
• Investor Responsibility Research Center Institute (IRRCI)

Confirmed by Group Assurance:
PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC)
1. Why does Novartis conduct materiality assessments?

It provides a management tool for the Novartis business to better understand our material topics in the context of the different expectations/strategies of key stakeholders to systematically review how they are connected and how they impact our business.

The results help us to further align our strategy and reporting, with present and future societal expectations, business needs and market developments.

The results support the Novartis business beyond the CR team to continue integrating stakeholder perspectives in business processes and daily decision making.
1. MA cycle identifies changes in expectations over time

“The approach Novartis has undertaken for its Materiality Analysis provides the company with a sound basis for better managing and reporting on the issues that matter most to its stakeholders and its business. We hope this approach gives inspiration to other companies to follow.”

Christopher Greenwald, Co-Head Sustainable Investment Research

RobecoSAM
1. Objectives for materiality assessments vary on a global & country level

Objectives in conducting a MA may vary. Objectives are likely to include aspects of the following:

With regards to **business**
- Align business strategy with stakeholder expectations
- Better understand material topics and impact on the business
- Structure CR reporting in local publications

With regards to **stakeholders**
- Deepen understanding of stakeholder topics and concerns
- Strengthen external stakeholder engagement
2. Introduction to the MA toolkit

Novartis’ global Corporate Responsibility team is pleased to share this Materiality Assessment Toolkit to guide companies interested to conduct materiality assessments.

We welcome any feedback from your side about your experiences with this toolkit. We are also open for any suggestions and comments to improve the process and for the exchange of ideas.

You may use the commentary field on our website:

https://www.faz-institut.de/plattformen/verantwortung/novartis-landingpage/

or you may can send your comments to:

cr.materiality@novartis.com

The purpose of this toolkit is to:

1. **Support companies** with a step-by-step process to conduct materiality assessments in a simple and efficient way that will help CR teams to better understand stakeholder concerns and expectations highlighting relevant impact areas.

2. **Best practice exchange** for conducting materiality assessments, including preparation, execution, analysis, communication and disclosure.

3. **Offer easy-to-understand tips, tricks and guidance** on tools and techniques for conducting effective Materiality Assessments.
2. How to use this toolkit?

Explanation of guiding icons

We use the following symbols to clearly indicate particular information: guidance, areas that may be challenging, and where there are preexisting templates to be leveraged.

- **Guidance**: This icon indicates useful tips and guidance.
- **Take notice!**: This icon indicates potential pitfalls to be aware of.
- **Novartis example**: The Novartis logo next to a text box indicates a specific example for the Novartis project that will work in your company but might inspire you to define your own set-up.
3. Overview of the MA process

- Agree objectives and secure business buy-in
  - 3.1.

- Topic list
  - 3.2.

- Internal survey
  - 3.3.

- External survey
  - 3.4.

- Visualization and reporting of results
  - 3.8.

- Results interpretation
  - 3.7.

- Results analysis
  - 3.6.

- Stakeholder discussions
  - 3.5.

- Implementation
  - 3.10.

- External assurance
  - 3.9.

Legend:
- Alignment with key internal stakeholder
- Research/analysis/reporting
- Quantitative Assessment
- Qualitative Assessment
3.1. Business buy-in

Agree objectives and secure business buy-in

Topic list

Internal survey

External survey

Visualization and reporting of results

Results interpretation

Results analysis

Stakeholder discussions

External assurance

Implementation

Legend
- Alignment with key internal stakeholder
- Quantitative Assessment
- Research/analysis/reporting
- Qualitative Assessment
3.1. Secure buy-in with key internal stakeholders

Engaging with key internal stakeholders across all divisions and functions is vitally important to secure their buy-in – or agreement and alignment – and thus the success of your MA and its outcomes. Lack of sufficient buy-in increases the risk that the process will not be aligned with other ongoing internal activities and results will be challenged.

Key steps are:

- Identify key stakeholders
- Engage key stakeholders
- Reflect on findings

The objectives of the business buy-in stage are to:

1. **Inform teams** about the project and its methodology.
2. **Align with other activities/projects/processes** (planned or ongoing), their timelines, and stakeholders for survey and interviews (external/internal).
3. **Secure involvement during the process**, such as for the participation in the internal survey as well as in external interviews and later roundtables/workshops.
4. **Improve understanding of context** and how this relates to the top identified topics.
3.1. Identify your key internal stakeholders for buy-in

It is important to engage a range of internal stakeholders to ensure they are informed and aware of the MA, but also because they will provide diverse inputs and perspectives. Focus on the areas of the business that can stand to benefit most from the assessment.

Individuals from the following functions were included for the Novartis MA, they might be a source of inspiration for you, when you identify internal stakeholders to engage. Be sure to connect with stakeholders from **across all divisions** and not only your own.

- Country Management
- GDD
- HR
- HSE
- I&C
- Market Access
- Medical Affairs
- NIBR
- NTO
- Patient Advocacy
- Procurement
- Public Affairs

This process can take time (and this is often underestimated). Be sure to plan plenty of time and/or resource for this step.
3.1. Things to consider when engaging key stakeholders

A buy-in discussion is an opportunity to gain valuable knowledge on relevant topics, obstacles, and resources in advance of conducting the MA, and to gain insights on colleagues’ views on the MA process and topics.

These discussions are also an important opportunity to understand your colleagues’ connections to external stakeholders. These relationships will be useful when reaching out for external interviews and engagement later – people are much more likely to respond to requests from someone they know!

Discussions can be conducted in one-to-one sessions, workshops, or a mixture of both. The guidance on agenda and talking points for discussions can support all types of engagement.
3.1. Business buy-in: Outcomes and critical success factors

At the end of this process you should expect to have the following **concrete deliverables**: 

- List of engaged key internal stakeholders.
- Minutes and feedback from engagement sessions with key internal stakeholders.
- List of external stakeholders by internal contact owner to be approached in external phase.

And achieved **following outcomes**:

- Key internal stakeholders are aware of and support the upcoming MA – ideally, some will become internal advocates for it.
- You have clarified how best to solicit views throughout the MA process and from which internal stakeholders, and if they have any resources to offer the MA.
- Internal stakeholders understand the added value of engaging their external stakeholders external for the survey and interviews.

**Critical success factors**:

- Prioritize internal stakeholders that stand to gain the most from the MA.
3.2. Topic list

1. Agree objectives and secure business buy-in
2. Topic list
3. Internal survey
4. External survey
5. Stakeholder discussions
6. Results analysis
7. Results interpretation
8. Visualization and reporting of results
9. External assurance
10. Implementation

Legend:
- Alignment with key internal stakeholder
- Quantitative Assessment
- Research/analysis/reporting
- Qualitative Assessment

Corporate Responsibility
Business Use Only
3.2. Create a list of relevant topic for consideration in your MA

Before engaging with external/internal stakeholders a set of key topics need to be defined that will form the basis for your surveys and interviews. Feedback from stakeholders will be too broad and you will not be able to calculate materiality scores if you do not have a predefined list of key CR topics. There are different ways to compile the topic list:
1) Desk research (internal/external sources)
2) Short interviews with internal topic experts
3) External MA databases

The final topic list should not feature too many topics otherwise you might overwhelm external/internal stakeholders who will later be asked to rate the importance of the topics. At Novartis we set our threshold at 30 topics.

Key steps are:

- Define long list of topics
- Priorities the topics to get to a shorter list of key topics
- Carefully define the key topics

The objectives of the global topic list review are to:

1. Get an overview of the relevant CR topics (broad view)
2. Use clear criteria to understand what the key CR topics are
3. Ensure a common language through clear definition of the key topics
3.2. FYI – How the Novartis Key CR topic list was developed

When conducting our global Materiality Assessment, the list of key CR topics from previous years was reviewed in a consistent manner through a thorough desk research. In order to keep stakeholder surveys short and manageable, we decided to focus on the top 30 topics only and to cluster them in 8 topic clusters.

**Methodology (Background information):**

1) **Starting Point:** Topic list of previous Materiality Assessments

2) **Desk Research:** Screening of internal & external sources for topics not yet covered and new (see extensive list of sources on following slides)

3) **Review of Findings:** Systematic check whether new identified topic
   a) can be subsumed under a previously captured topic
   b) needs to be considered as a separate new topic

4) **Consolidation of Topic List:** Qualitative team discussion on aggregation of individual topics to retrieve a tangible number of manageable topics in the context of our online surveys (internal/external)

5) **Clustering of topics:** Qualitative team discussion on clusters in line with former topic clusters reflecting interdependencies

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1) Not relevant if your company conducts an MA for the first time.
## 3.2. Novartis 2017 global CR topic list

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Material Clusters</th>
<th>Topics</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Access To Healthcare</td>
<td>Health system strengthening</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Availability of medicines</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pricing</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Patient assistance programs</td>
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<td>Intellectual property</td>
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<tr>
<td>Patient Health &amp; Safety</td>
<td>Health education &amp; prevention</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Pharmaco3.5., safety profile and quality of drugs</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Counterfeit medicines</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ethical Business Practices</td>
<td>Ethical &amp; compliant behavior</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Respect for human rights</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Responsible supply chain management</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Responsible use of new technologies</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Animal testing</td>
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<tr>
<td>Innovations</td>
<td>Business model innovation</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>R&amp;D for unmet medical needs</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Innovative technologies</td>
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<td></td>
<td>R&amp;D for neglected diseases</td>
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<td>Drug resistance</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Important Clusters</th>
<th>Topics</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Our People</td>
<td>Diversity &amp; inclusion</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fair working conditions</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Health &amp; safety</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic Sustainability</td>
<td>Fair contribution to society</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Financial health &amp; performance</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Recruitment &amp; retention of employees</td>
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<tr>
<td>Good Governance</td>
<td>Transparency</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Corporate governance</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Data privacy and security</td>
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<tr>
<td>Environmental Protection</td>
<td>Sustainable use of resources</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Pollution, waste &amp; effluents</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Pharmaceuticals in the environment</td>
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3.2. Topic List: Outcomes and critical success factors

At the end of this process you should expect to have the following concrete deliverables:

- Define a long list of relevant CR topics
- Prioritize the identified topics to create a concise list if key CR topics
- Define the key CR topics

And achieved following outcomes:

- Created understanding for breath and scope of global CR topics.
- Understand relevant aspects for your circumstances and context.

Critical success factors:

- Topics need to be named in a way so that external stakeholders understand what the names stand for even without reading the definition.
- Overlaps between topics need to be avoided.
3.3. Internal survey

1. Agree objectives and secure business buy-in
2. Topic list
3. Internal survey
4. External survey
5. Stakeholder discussions
6. Results analysis
7. Results interpretation
8. Visualization and reporting of results
9. External assurance
10. Implementation

Legend
- Alignment with key internal stakeholder
- Research/analysis/reporting
- Quantitative Assessment
- Qualitative Assessment
3.3. Gather internal perspectives with an online survey

The internal stakeholder survey is an opportunity to gather a broad range of internal perspectives in a structured, repeatable way. By involving associates you allow them to contribute and strengthen employee engagement.

At Novartis, the internal survey for the global MA had significant traction among employees, showing how interested associates are in CR topics, contributing to strong business buy-in. Often employees know about single CR initiatives a company is conducting but are lacking an understanding of the big picture. The survey can help them to get a better understanding about what CR topics your company is managing.

Key steps are:

1. **Select a survey tool/vendor**
2. **Translate the questionnaire (optional)**
3. **Confirm target stakeholders**
4. **Launch survey and encourage participation**

The objectives of the internal stakeholder survey are to:

1. **Gather internal expert and executive perspectives** on CR topics and their business impacts and your companies performance against those topics
2. **Explore ambitions, expectations and priorities** for future performance
3. **Collect a broad set of data for analysis of topics**
3.3. Possible main questions - internal survey

Demographic questions
- Division / Department / Function
- Country / Tenure / Seniority Level

General questions on Corporate Responsibility
- How familiar are you with the corporate responsibility activities of Novartis?
- Please rate the corporate responsibility performance of Novartis.

Impact of Corporate Responsibility Issues Clusters
- Please rank the Issues Clusters based on Novartis’ overall impact on the society and the environment with regards to the particular Issue Cluster.
- Please rank the Issues Clusters based on your Department/Function’s impact on the society and the environment with regards to the particular Issue Cluster.

Impact and management of Corporate Responsibility Issues.
- Please rate the following aspects for each issue:
  (a) Impact of Novartis
  (b) How well Novartis manages the Issue

Preparation of external survey
- Please let us know if there are any important external stakeholders (e.g. customers, suppliers, authorities) you would like us to consult in the external phase of this materiality assessment.
3.3. High-level overview of stakeholder survey content

To get the most out of the surveys at Novartis, we asked survey participants to rank clusters/topics based on the following dimensions:

- **Expertise**: How would you rate your own level of expertise in the topic?
- **Impact**: How big is the impact of the topic on the business & performance of “Company XYZ”?
- **Performance**: How well does “Company XYZ” manage the topic?

* Scala: Ordinal ranks from 1 (most) to 8 (least)
* Scala: 1 (low/poor) to 4 (high/strong)

* Internal stakeholders usually know your company well, hence you might skip this question in the internal survey.
3.3. Select a survey tool/vendor

There are multiple, even free options available to conduct your survey. Make sure the survey tool works for internal stakeholders and external stakeholders.

At Novartis, we have decided to use an online survey tool called SurveyGizmo, but other tools like SurveyMonkey or Lime will work just as well. In case you do not have the capacity to analyze the data you are collecting, it might also make sense to have an agency set-up and run the survey for you.

Depending on the survey tool you are using, you might be able to identify certain information about a participant e.g. role, department, tenure. While it might be tempting to leverage this option, it might create a trust issue. At Novartis, we asked participants to self-identify their demographics e.g., department.

Apart from setting the survey and analysing the data, external survey companies can also be an important sparing partner when you define the questions you want to ask your stakeholders. It is important not to introduce bias in the survey e.g. by asking in a suggestive way. Otherwise the insights will be flawed.
3.3. Translation can be important and has some common pitfalls

Depending on the structure of your company and the location of your key external stakeholders it might be necessary to offer the questionnaire, interview guides and related materials in different languages. It is extremely important that translation is handled carefully so that the accurate and intended meaning of the survey questions – as opposed to the individual words – is reflected.

Ensure:

✓ Translate the meaning of the question and predefined answers.
✓ Be aware that the subject matter may not always translate well. Nuances in language matter!
✓ High quality translation is a skill. Translation via free services (e.g. Google Translate) will not suffice.
✓ Make sure that exactly the same question structure and question IDs are used.

Question translation can often be done directly in the survey tool you have chosen e.g. SurveyGizmo (see screenshot below)
3.3. Guidance on targeting internal stakeholders

A successful survey requires a **strong sample size** to ensure meaningful analysis of results.

**Rule of thumb:** For a robust analysis and the ability to draw comparisons across stakeholder categories, responses from 15-20 associates per stakeholder level or division would be required.

Without a similar level of participation, high-level insights will still be achieved, but comparisons across stakeholder categories will not be conducted as they will not be statistically significant.

Ensure a spread of representation from all important departments/functions and management levels.
3.3. Launching and managing the internal stakeholder survey

After launching the survey and encouraging participation, keep the survey open for responses for a minimum of two-weeks. Send out email reminders regarding the request at least once mid-way through the survey window.

Encourage participation: Publicize survey widely on internal channels and across departments. A communication plan from survey launch to survey deadline and after will maintain momentum and remind users of key dates in the process.

Communication plan used by Novartis

- 1 month: Advertise forthcoming survey on NVS intranet
- 3 weeks: Targeted email to NVS stakeholders alerting them of survey opening
- 2 weeks: Survey launch! Promote on NVS.com and via email
- 1 week: Email reminder approx 10 weeks mid-way through the process
- Email reminder: Final day to submit responses!
- Optional: Survey extension (if low response rate)
3.3. Internal stakeholder survey: Outcomes and critical success factors

At the end of this process you should expect to have the following **concrete deliverables**: 

- Finalized the questionnaire incl. necessary translation in the survey tool.
- Communications plan for managing and encouraging engagement.
- Internal survey results.

And achieved **following outcomes**:

- Gathered a range of internal perspectives on CR topics and intelligence on business impacts of these topics as well as internal perception of your company’s performance.

**Critical success factors**:

- Create an effective communications and engagement plan leading up to, during and after the survey to encourage maximum participation.
- If a translation is necessary: Take care to translate meaning of the questions and answers – rather than individual words. It may be worth getting professional support.
3.4. External survey

Agree objectives and secure business buy-in 3.1.

Topic list 3.2.

Internal survey 3.3.

External survey 3.4.

Visualization and reporting of results 3.8.

Results interpretation 3.7.

Results analysis 3.6.

Stakeholder discussions 3.5.

External assurance 3.9.

Implementation 3.10.

Legend
- Alignment with key internal stakeholder
- Quantitative Assessment
- Research/analysis/reporting
- Qualitative Assessment

Corporate Responsibility
3.4. Gather external perspectives with an online survey

The external survey provides an opportunity to gather external perspectives from a variety of key external stakeholders across a broad range of interested groups. In order to understand the particular stakeholder perspectives, people responding to this survey need to identify their stakeholder category and if willing disclose their organization as well as personal details.

A successful survey requires a strong sample size to ensure meaningful analysis of results. This means high external engagement is necessary to retrieve statistically significant results!

Key steps are:

1. Create survey in your survey tool
2. Translate survey questions
3. Confirm target stakeholders
4. Launch survey and encourage participation

The objectives of the external stakeholder survey are:

1. **Gather external stakeholder perspectives** on CR topics and their impacts on the business and your company’s performance against those topics.
2. **Explore ambitions, expectations and priorities** for future performance.
3. **Collect a broad set of data for analysis of topics.**
4. **Identify trends** and learn about our peers.
### 3.4. Possible main questions - external survey

**Demographic questions**
- Organization / Geographic scope of activities / Contact details of representative (voluntary)
- Stakeholder category / role / status

**General questions on Corporate Responsibility**
- How familiar are you with (a) the pharma industry (b) Novartis (c) Novartis' CR activities?
- Please rate the corporate responsibility performance of Novartis.

**Impact of Corporate Responsibility Issues Clusters**
- Please rank the Issues Clusters based on Novartis’ overall impact on the society and the environment with regards to the particular Issue Cluster.

**Impact and management of Corporate Responsibility Issues.**
- Please rate the following aspects for each issue:
  (a) Your level of expertise (b) Impact of Novartis (c) How well Novartis manages the Issue

**Invitation to participate in an interview**
- Following the survey we will conduct interviews with selected participants in which you can share your perspective in greater detail, ask questions and explain the rationale behind your ratings. Do you want to be considered for an interview?
3.4. Creating your external survey

Setting up your external survey should be just as straightforward as the internal survey especially because the survey will look very similar. Depending on the tool you are using, you might even be able to duplicate the questionnaire used for the internal survey.

To be able to track participation in the different stakeholder groups and to understand differences in the ratings provided by different stakeholders, it is important to ask participants to provide their name, organization and stakeholder type. Experience from our projects have shown that external participants have generally been very willing to share this information.

In case you expect your stakeholders to be more critical, you might leave out the participants name and organization name. However, the stakeholder group as well as the geographical focus of the participants' work should always be asked.

In order to conduct sub-analysis of a particular stakeholder category around 15-20 individual responses are required to retrieve statistically significant results!
3.4. Ensure a strong sample when targeting stakeholders

The list of external stakeholders should be as inclusive as possible and feature participants from all relevant stakeholder groups even if your company is not yet in contact with them. This is a chance to engage with new stakeholders!

A successful survey requires a strong sample size to ensure meaningful analysis of results. For a robust analysis and the ability to draw comparisons across stakeholder groups, responses from around 15-20 stakeholders per stakeholder category would be required. Without a similar level of participation, high-level insights will still be achieved, but comparisons across stakeholder categories will not be conducted as they will not be statistically significant.

- An agency can support you mapping a relevant stakeholder landscape and identify key opinion leaders you might want to include in your outreach.
- Some companies open up their survey not only to key stakeholders but to the public at large. This might be a good strategy to involve as many stakeholders as possible and to compare the opinion of your key stakeholders with the public.
- Depending on the type of key stakeholders for your company a translation of the questionnaire might be necessary.
3.4. Stakeholders can be sorted by category, status and role

**Stakeholder Category**
- Healthcare Providers / Industry
  - Patient Groups
  - Pharmaceuticals
  - Healthcare Organizations (HCOs)
- Other Companies
  - Non-Pharma Companies
  - Advisors
- NGO/NPOs & Charitable Organizations
- Governments and Regulatory, Political, Economic Stakeholders
- Patient Representatives
- Media
- Academia and Scientific Community
- Financial Market Participants

**Stakeholder Status**
- Active: business relationship within the past year
- Inactive: no business relationship in the past year
- Passive: organizations that are interested in “Your Company” that have no business partnership e.g. analysts, peers, competitors...
- No Relationship

**Stakeholder Roles**
- Authorities
- Suppliers
- Logistics/Distribution
- Customers/Point of Sale
- Funders/Payors
- Healthcare Professionals
- Beneficiaries (Patients)
- Other Partners
- Key Opinion Leaders
- Community Representative
3.4. Launching and managing the external stakeholder survey

After launching the survey and encouraging participation, keep the survey open for responses for a minimum of four-weeks (ideally longer). Based on experience, reaching a solid sample size in the external survey uses significantly more time than for the internal survey.

**Encourage participation:** A comms plan from survey launch to survey deadline and after will maintain momentum and remind users of key dates in the process.

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**Communication plan used by Novartis**

- 6 weeks: Consider letting stakeholders know you are issuing a survey
- 6 weeks: Targeted email to stakeholders alerting them of survey
- 4 weeks: Survey launch! Email and consider whether there are other local comms tools
- 2 weeks: Email reminder half way through the process
- 1 week: Email to remind partial completions the survey will be closing soon
- Email reminder: Final day!
- Optional: Survey extension (if low response rate)
3.4. External stakeholder survey: Outcomes and critical success factors

At the end of this process you should expect to have the following concrete deliverables:

- Set up the survey in your survey tool.
- Communications plan for managing and encouraging engagement.
- External survey results.

And achieved following outcomes:

- Gathered a range of external perspectives on CR topics and intelligence on business impacts of these topics as well as external perception of your company’s performance.

Critical success factors:

- Keep survey open for a number of weeks to ensure an adequate sample size.
- Create an effective communications and engagement plan leading up to, during and after the survey to encourage maximum participation building on existing external relationships of internal colleagues.
- If a translation is necessary: Take care to translate meaning of the questions and answers – rather than individual words. It may be worth getting professional support.
3.5. Stakeholder discussions

**Agree objectives and secure business buy-in**

**Topic list**

**Internal survey**

**External survey**

**Visualization and reporting of results**

**Results interpretation**

**Results analysis**

**Implementation**

**External assurance**

Legend:
- **Alignment with key internal stakeholder**
- **Research/analysis/reporting**
- **Quantitative Assessment**
- **Qualitative Assessment**
3.5. Stakeholder discussions provide deeper insights

Quantitative results alone only tell part of the story; it is important to talk to stakeholders to learn why they rated your company the way they did. Engagement can be effective in many ways, such as one-to-one interviews (via phone or in-person) or in a workshop setting.

Consider a neutral facilitation of the stakeholder discussions by an independent party, it might lead to freer discussions and deeper insights.

Key steps are:

1. Finalize questions and inputs
2. Confirm target stakeholders
3. Engage stakeholders

The objectives of the stakeholder discussions are to:

1. Gain deeper insights from key stakeholders to improve the interpretation and understanding of the quantitative results.
2. Explore ambitions, expectations and priorities for future performance.
3. Improve relationships with candidates that can be invited to external feedback sessions.
3.5. Guidance in conducting stakeholder discussions

Conducting formal interviews is the preferred approach because it is more suitable for structured feedback across topics and stakeholder groups. Interviews generally provide more granular insights than workshops.

As the internal stakeholder survey responses are anonymous, consider pursuing interviews with internal topic experts. Those interviews should be focused or informed by the overall internal survey results for that particular topic. For stakeholder discussions with externals draw on their individual survey results. This allows deeper insights into their respective ranking rationale of topics they are most familiar with.

Conducting one or a series of workshops can be another approach to getting qualitative insights from your stakeholders and might supplement the interviews. When conducting workshops at this stage, be aware you may need to focus on fewer topics or selected stakeholder groups as it can be challenging to provide an opportunity for a diverse set of stakeholders to have an opportunity to weigh in on all topics.

Encourage internal owners of external contacts to participate in sessions with externals. This allows internal contact owners to receive perspectives from external parties they may not normally get – including critical feedback.

Using a third party to conduct the interviews or/and facilitate the workshop(s) is recommended. They provide neutral convening, detailed minutes, new external contacts and can enable more frank and open discussion.
3.5. Stakeholder discussion: Prepare material for interviews

To ensure that interviews with stakeholders are as meaningful and effective as possible, a good preparation is necessary. This is even more important as most stakeholders will not invest more than 20 – 30 min for an interview. At Novartis, we used the results of the online survey to prepare a “Survey Result Scorecard” that showed which topics a particular stakeholder rates highly (impact) or poorly (performance). This scorecard formed the basis of our interviews.

We recommend to build the scorecard in a way so that you can easily feed it with new survey data from your survey tool. Some important interviewees may complete the survey only shortly before the interview. Hence, you need a solution that is flexible and quick.

In addition to the template, you should develop a detailed interview guide featuring the questions you are planning to ask. The questions should focus on seeking an understanding of the rationale behind interviewee’s scoring.

Make sure to take detailed minutes of discussions, so you know which stakeholder said what with regards to what topic. Where necessary consider getting approval of the minutes (i.e. from critical external stakeholders.)
3.5. External stakeholder engagement: Outcomes and critical success factors

At the end of this process you should expect to have the following **concrete deliverables**:

- Finalized interviewer and interviewee guides (if conducting interviews).
- Finalized workshop agenda (if conducting a workshop).
- Detailed meeting minutes linked to topics. Helps navigating afterwards!
- Approved meeting minutes for critical external stakeholders (where necessary).

And achieved **following outcomes**:

- Gained deeper insights from key external stakeholders on the topics to understand their views, expectations and rationales, providing qualitative insights.
- Improved connections with external stakeholders that you may want to engage in the future.

**Critical success factors**:

- Neutral facilitation of interviews or/and workshops.
- Tailor the sample/template documents provided here to suit your needs and local context.
- Share materials such as interviewee guide and/or workshop agenda ahead of arranged sessions with everyone involved.
- Include internal contact owner in interviews/workshop sessions with external contacts.
3.6. Result analysis

- Agree objectives and secure business buy-in
- Topic list
- Internal survey
- External survey
- Visualization and reporting of results
- Results interpretation
- Results analysis
- Stakeholder discussions
- External assurance
- Implementation

Legend:
- Alignment with key internal stakeholder
- Quantitative Assessment
- Research/analysis/reporting
- Qualitative Assessment
3.6. Results analysis

Now that data has been collected from the various surveys, interviews and/or workshops, it is time to make sense of your results. A robust analysis will inform you of the most significant topics and trends that have been observed across stakeholder groups.

Leverage the expertise of a 3rd party to ensure that the outcomes are reliable and unbiased.

Key steps are:

Quantitative analysis → Qualitative analysis

The objectives of the results analysis are:

1. **To clean, categorize and aggregate** the data that has been collected in various forms so that it is ready for analysis and can be revisited and understood at any later date.

2. **To determine the most statistically significant** topics raised by external and internal stakeholders who participated in the materiality assessment.

3. **Extract examples and insights from qualitative data** that adds color and has explanatory power that can supplement the quantitative insights.
3.6. Quantitative results analysis

At Novartis, we believe that both the quantitative analysis as well as the qualitative analysis play an important role to gain actionable insights from the Materiality Assessment. We also believe that both should not be mixed in the sense that the qualitative data forms the basis of the materiality matrix whereas the qualitative research helps to explain the matrix and to define concrete action steps.
### 3.6. Quantitative results analysis

Below are a few examples of the charts the Novartis team has produced as a result of the analysis of the quantitative data.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Result reports (external/internal)</th>
<th>Result reports (external only)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Distribution of participants including location and focus of work</td>
<td>General familiarity with Novartis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Familiarity (CR activities/ performance)</td>
<td>Comparison of stakeholder groups (familiarity with CR activities; impact/performance ratings)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Topic clusters impact ranking</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impact and performance ratings for all topics</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Criteria filtering</td>
<td>Level of experience of internal stakeholders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Comparison of departments (familiarity with CR activities; impact/performance ratings)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3.6. Why do we conduct a qualitative analysis?

The surveys and the interviews/workshops that have been conducted offer rich qualitative insights that should be leveraged as part of the overall analysis. These can bring the quantitative results from survey(s) to life, particularly through direct quotes (which you should anonymize if you will use) that explain views in stakeholders' own words. Qualitative results are also helpful to explain the outcomes of the statistical analysis of the quantitative data.

The most efficient and effective way to get the most out of your unstructured data is to apply a consistent, structured methodology to it.
3.6. How to use the qualitative analysis template

Structure your raw qualitative data by using the available excel template:

- **Categorize** the comment or text according to the **topic** (from the topic list). If the comment does not fit any of the pre-defined topics, but you feel that it is important, categorize it as “miscellaneous” – you may realize later that it fits a particular topic, or that it may genuinely stand apart from the rest. It should still be captured!

- **Materiality**: Any comments that refer to the importance – whether major, minor, significant, insignificant or otherwise – of the topic.

- **Perceived performance**: Does the comment reference your company’s performance – being behind compared to peers, or negative legal or media stories/developments? Does the comment express concern about your company with respect to the topic or are they comfortable, happy or even proud?

- **Opportunities**: Look out for suggestions or mentions that refer to ways your company can improve – even where comments may appear negative, they may have good insights about the root cause of a problem and how to address it.

- **Risk**: Look out for comments that refer to any risk your company may face – whether that is reputational, legal, or financial in the short, medium or long time horizons.

- **Best practice**: Valuable examples that illustrate how others – peers or companies in other industries – have faced the same topic and done well, and how.
3.6. Results analysis: Outcomes and critical success factors

At the end of this process you should expect to have the following concrete deliverables:

- A robust quantitative analysis of the topics and their significance incl. sample size overview.
- A summary in excel of relevant qualitative data, categorized by topic, materiality, performance, opportunities, risks, and best practice.

And achieved following outcomes:

- A statistical insight into the topics that matter most to internal and external stakeholders that can provide a scientific basis for discussion and action.
- A stock of qualitative insights that provide color and explanation to the quantitative analysis.

Critical success factors:

- Use suggested 3rd party for statistical analysis to guarantee scientific robustness and global comparability.
- A structured and methodical approach to tackling the qualitative insights using the excel template provided.
3.7. Result interpretation

- Agree objectives and secure business buy-in
- Topic list
- Internal survey
- External survey
- Visualization and reporting of results
- Results interpretation
- Results analysis
- Stakeholder discussions
- External assurance
- Implementation

Legend:
- Alignment with key internal stakeholder
- Quantitative Assessment
- Research/analysis/reporting
- Qualitative Assessment

Corporate Responsibility
3.7. Interpretation of results

Following the analysis, it is essential to interpret the results – to better understand what they mean for the business, what actions may be required as a result, and using this to explore next steps in implementing the results.

Key steps are:

1. Apply criteria filters to identify priority topics
2. Identify gaps, opportunities & potential responses
3. Align internally & define responses
4. Refine responses

This is where your leadership and ambitions play an important role. The more you support and initiate the discussions, the greater the concrete actions and outcomes.

The objectives of the interpretation of results are to:

1. **Review findings with internal stakeholders** and explore gaps and opportunities to address. Define potential responses and identify next steps forward.
2. **Share results with external stakeholders** and gather additional feedback.
3. **Agree and finalize next steps** confirming approach to gap analysis and development of further recommendations, opportunities for using the results, and immediate next steps.
3.7. Identify gaps/opportunities for priority topics and set responses

In order to address shortcomings but at the same time maintain areas with high performance, we recommend to use a set of selecting criteria to identify priority topics. You can then focus your effort and resources on these priority topics, knowing you are covering the most relevant from an impact and performance perspective. All three criteria are outlined in the next slide.

**Finalize priority topics**
Consider the findings from applying the previous three filters and finalize the gaps to address or opportunities to take advantage. Also understand where there might be ongoing activities that will improve performance in the future.

**Define potential responses**
Identify the range of responses to the topics identified. Potential responses may include process alignments, reviews of standard practice, adjustments to positions of your company on a topic, commitment/target setting, identifying indicators, expectation management, perception management, etc.

**Align on gaps/opportunities and responses with stakeholders**
Engage as much as possible internally – and as feasible, externally – to confirm if these responses will satisfy the needs.
3.7. Suggested selection process to identify priority topics

**Selection criteria**

- **High impact and low performance**
  
  This initial filter helps to narrow down the list of topics by focusing on the high impact topics with low performance. This is the standard MA approach.
  
  **High impact and low performance**

- **Very high impact or very low performance**
  
  This filter helps identify where your company is performing very well or very poorly—where it needs to maintain performance as well as where improvements are most needed.
  
  **Very high impact or very low performance**

- **Significant differences external vs. internal**
  
  Understanding the reasons for significant statistical differences between external and internal perceptions of impact and performance on a topic can provide valuable insights on how your company sees itself versus how it is seen by your stakeholders.
  
  **Significant differences external vs. internal**

**Preliminary priority topics**

- **Evaluation of ongoing activities per priority topic**

- **Focus on topics with large gaps or high opportunities**

**Final priority topics**

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Corporate Responsibility

Business Use Only
3.7. Carry out internal discussions on MA results. Why?

Aim to discuss MA results, identified gaps and opportunities as well as potential responses with internal stakeholders that contributed to the MA and also others that you think can benefit from the insights.

There are different options for conducting these internal discussions – they can be on a 1:1 basis only or in combination with workshops. If progressing with workshops, it is recommended to keep a balance of 1:1 sessions as these are better for structured feedback and provide a level of granularity that you might not get from a workshop.

Internal discussions are valuable for sharing data, but the focus should be on making them a base for action! Encourage participants to discuss effective and pragmatic responses.

Breakout group discussions should focus on a specific topic cluster – make sure relevant stakeholders for that topic are attending the workshop. Specialized groups enable more focused and richer discussion of the topics.

The objectives of the internal discussion are to:

1. Share results of the MA, tailored to their particular interest.
2. Explore and align on the implications of the results. Reflect on the gaps in performance and possible opportunities.
3. Agree potential strategic responses and concrete actions steps.
3.7. Guidance for conducting breakout group discussions

An excellent way to generate a discussion from which you can get structured outputs on more than one topic is to arrange breakout sessions, or working groups, splitting the participants to cover one topic per group. To supplement each breakout session, prepare a snapshot of the insights from the MA and ask a set of predefined questions.

Consider a neutral facilitation of the engagement by an independent party, it might lead to freer discussions and deeper insights.

See example questions below, which worked well in the past.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Analysis</th>
<th>Do you agree with the diagnosis of the topic?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>How do we manage the topic at the moment? Do we have a perception or performance gap?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategic Response</th>
<th>How should we manage the topic to leverage opportunities and mitigate risks?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>What are potential next steps?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>External Stakeholder</th>
<th>How do you see external stakeholders perceiving our performance?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>How might key external stakeholder adjust to our strategic responses?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3.7. Interpretation of results: Evaluation of next steps

Following your internal and external exploration of the results, take time to distill the actions and next steps you can take.

Consider:
- Was there consensus – amongst internal stakeholders, external stakeholders or across both? Are internal and external understandings of the results aligned or were there major differences in internal and external reactions to the results or views on priorities, gaps and next steps?
- Do any external stakeholder views impact the steps that your company discussed taking in the internal discussion?

Where there is clarity and alignment proceed!

Consider:
- Consolidate next steps and prioritize, if needed (based on limited time/resources).
- Determine who needs to be involved to deliver on them.
- Communicate and align on this plan.
- Monitor and execute, supporting where necessary.
- Consider whether and how to communicate externally on any of your next steps.
3.7. Interpretation of results: Outcomes and critical success factors

At the end of this process you should expect to have the following **concrete deliverables**:

- List of priority topics.
- Overview of ongoing activities for identified priority topics.
- Pre-reads and workshop materials for stakeholder discussions.
- Detailed minutes covering the key discussion points from stakeholder discussions.
- A set of recommendations and next steps to progress findings from the MA.

And achieved **following outcomes**:

- Key internal stakeholders have reviewed results, explored the next steps in implementing them and provided additional feedback.
- A clear sense of the priorities and gaps emerging from the results.
- Agreement on potential strategic responses to address gaps and opportunities and a clear course of action for next steps.

**Critical success factors**:

- Attendance from senior stakeholders who contributed to the MA, and also those who may have wanted to but had other constraints at the time.
- Preparation for discussions is key – as is good facilitation and note taking to reflect back on.
- **Neutral facilitation and detailed minutes** which reflect the conversation as closely as possible. This will ensure that the meaning of what was said is fully captured.
3.8. Reporting

Agree objectives and secure business buy-in

3.1.

Topic list

3.2.

Internal survey

3.3.

External survey

3.4.

Visualization and reporting of results

3.8.

Results interpretation

3.7.

Results analysis

3.6.

Stakeholder discussions

3.5.

External assurance

3.9.

Implementation

3.10.

Legend

- Alignment with key internal stakeholder
- Research/analysis/reporting
- Quantitative Assessment
- Qualitative Assessment
3.8. External reporting of results

It is important to ensure that your stakeholders are informed about the company’s progress and challenges in the areas they identified as having most impact. This helps them understand how they have contributed to the journey and signals your appreciation for their engagement. There are numerous ways to report back and it is up to you to decide how to best do this. Depending on the size of your company and the reporting standards you follow e.g. GRI, you might be obliged to report on the Materiality Assessment in a certain way.

We recommend to not only use the CR Report, your annual report or your website to report on your MA but to also share the insights you gained with the stakeholders who helped you in the process.

At Novartis we publicly reported on the top four CR material clusters in the Novartis CR Performance Report. The top four clusters not only framed our CR reporting and disclosure efforts, but it also served as the structure of the report. For each of the top four material clusters, all topics were covered irrespective of impact, with topics of greater impact covered in more depth. Remaining topics that scored high in terms of impact but in clusters that received a lower ranking are either covered in our 2017 Annual Report or on our website. Cross-references to the relevant sections can be found in the GRI Content Index.

In addition, we conducted several webinars on the material clusters where we discussed our findings with the stakeholders who participated in the MA process.
3.8. MA results report and visualization

In addition to the publication on our website the CR Performance Report and the webinars, in 2017 Novartis decided to be even more transparent and published a standalone report summarizing the findings of the MA. This report was of great help for internal and external communication to explain the broad range of topic Novartis has to deal with but also where we set our management focus and why.

Most MA reports feature a matrix that shows the results of the MA. The advantage of the matrix is that it clearly shows where the priorities are and how the internal view and the external view differ. Some companies even go a step further and produce these matrix for different stakeholder groups.
3.9. External assurance

- Agree objectives and secure business buy-in
- Topic list
- Internal survey
- External survey
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- Results analysis
- Stakeholder discussions
- Implementation

Legend:
- Alignment with key internal stakeholder
- Quantitative Assessment
- Research/analysis/reporting
- Qualitative Assessment
3.9. External assurance

The use of external, independent reviewers of corporate responsibility and sustainability management processes, data and final disclosures is intended to increase the robustness, accuracy and trustworthiness of disclosed information. The terms used to describe this process vary and include assurance, external assurance, verification, and certification (assurance).

Stakeholder views on assurance can vary widely – whether it is necessary at all or is integral to accountability and building trust.

Should you pursue assurance, you can expect to meet and share information with assurers, typically as follows:

- You need to explain your methodology and share documents underpinning the MA.
- Assurers review information and submit questions for you to clarify.
- Present the final results to the assurers, answer questions and submit any final documents.
- Sometimes assurers may ask, to be present in stakeholder interviews. At Novartis we did not find this to be necessary, especially because we already had engaged a 3rd party to guarantee an unbiased and trustworthy process.
3.10. Implementation

- Agree objectives and secure business buy-in
- Topic list
- Internal survey
- External survey
- Visualization and reporting of results
- Results interpretation
- Results analysis
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- Implementation

Legend:
- Alignment with key internal stakeholder
- Quantitative Assessment
- Research/analysis/reporting
- Qualitative Assessment
3.10. Implementation

Follow up on outcomes to ensure that your company implements the agreed plans and next steps. Champion this process and help ensure you stay on track.

In particular, it is essential to continue engaging with local internal and external stakeholders to show your progress and feature milestones. The means of engagement may vary depending on your local context but consider:

- Checking in with stakeholders individually on a regular basis
- Leveraging social media
- Conducting public webinars
- Facilitating Q&A sessions

Get in touch with other companies to understand what worked best for them.
4. Resources overview (1 von 2)

The below table summarizes all the activities to conduct a Materiality Assessment.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Phase</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Time effort</th>
<th>Support type</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3.1.</td>
<td>Business buy-in</td>
<td>Identify stakeholders</td>
<td>++</td>
<td>Admin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Engage stakeholders</td>
<td>++</td>
<td>Admin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2.</td>
<td>Topics list</td>
<td>Define topics list (long list)</td>
<td>+</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3.</td>
<td>Internal survey</td>
<td>Define survey questions</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>Admin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Translation and create survey</td>
<td>+++</td>
<td>Translator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Select stakeholders, launch survey and encourage participation</td>
<td>++</td>
<td>Admin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Data cleaning and preparation for analysis</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>Admin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.4.</td>
<td>External survey</td>
<td>Define survey questions</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>Admin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Translation and create survey</td>
<td>+++</td>
<td>Translator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Select stakeholders, launch survey and encourage participation</td>
<td>+++</td>
<td>Admin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Data cleaning and preparation for analysis</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>Admin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.5.</td>
<td>Stakeholder</td>
<td>Select stakeholders and schedule engagement</td>
<td>++</td>
<td>Facilitator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>discussions</td>
<td>Prepare questions, inputs and materials for engagement</td>
<td>++</td>
<td>Facilitator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Engagement follow up (debriefings, meeting minutes, reports)</td>
<td>++</td>
<td>Facilitator</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## 4. Resources overview (2 von 2)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Phase</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Time effort</th>
<th>Support type</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>Results analysis</td>
<td>Quantitative analysis</td>
<td>+++</td>
<td>Statistician</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Qualitative analysis</td>
<td>++</td>
<td>Admin</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>Results interpretation</td>
<td>Select stakeholders and schedule engagement</td>
<td>++</td>
<td>Admin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Prepare questions, inputs and</td>
<td>++</td>
<td>Admin</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>materials for engagement</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Engagement follow up (debriefings, meeting minutes, reports)</td>
<td>+++</td>
<td>Admin</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>Visualization and external</td>
<td>Preparing report for publication</td>
<td>++</td>
<td>Communicator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>reporting</td>
<td>Visually representing results</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>Admin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>External assurance (Optional)</td>
<td>Preparation materials, responding to queries, discussions with auditors</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>Assurer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.10</td>
<td>Implementation</td>
<td>Drive and follow up on outcomes</td>
<td>++</td>
<td>Admin</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5. Meet the Novartis CR team members supporting the MA

Denise Weger
Global CR team member, organizational talent and persistent spirited: Denise lead to the execution of the global MA 2017.

Michael Fürst
Global CR team member, passionate thinker and innovative challenger: Michael contributed extensively to the design of the global MA.

Steffen Rufenach
External CR team member, survey geek and number cruncher: Steffen and his team supported the full global MA process.

In case of questions or feedback, please do not hesitate to reach out to us:
cr.materiality@novartis.com