WORKING MATERIAL 3.8 · CHAPTER 3 — THE INTERNAL AUDITOR'S LENS · SETTING: DIANI, KENYA

Listening Beyond the Fence: Stakeholders and Community

Source: Francesco Dore, The Helm and the Lens, Volume 7b — GSTC Hotel Standard v4.0, subchapter 3.8 (book page 99)

GUIDING QUESTION

A hotel can document meetings with every tourism board, association and conservation group in its destination and still never have spoken to the people who live behind its wall. How does an internal auditor test whether the hotel's stakeholder engagement reaches the people its operations actually affect?

1 · Verification Pact: market claims against the standard

Copied from the book. The last column is for your property: what holds here, and how you know it.

What is claimed	Binding?	What actually holds	In our property
Engagement with the tourism board and hoteliers' association satisfies A9	Only partially true	A9.1 names these bodies, but also community leaders and cooperatives; the guideline asks for mutually agreed outcomes	
Consultation is needed only for new hotels	No	A10.2 applies to new developments, expansions and major renovations	
A building permit shows the community was consulted	No	A permit records an authority's approval; A10.2 asks for consultation with affected residents	
A generous donation satisfies community support	Only partially true	B1.1 asks for ongoing support; the guideline prefers sustained programmes to one-time donations, aligned with needs identified by the community	
Complaints at the gate are handled informally, which is enough	No	B4.4 and B4.5 require a system, documented issues, prompt action and shared outcomes	
Security needs override access concerns	No	B4.2 asks that operations do not impede access to rights-of-way; security and access must both be addressed	

2 · Common mistakes — a self-check

Tick each mistake you recognise in your own property, and note where it shows.

☐ Auditing the stakeholder file without walking the boundary.

☐ Defining stakeholders as organisations with letterheads and forgetting the people next door.

☐ Treating a building permit as evidence of community consultation.

☐ Letting complaints stop at the gate, with security staff as the only channel.

☐ Choosing community support on the community's behalf and recording a one-time gift as engagement.

☐ Forming a liaison committee with no resident members.

☐ Promising outcomes to the community that the auditor has no authority to deliver.

☐ Expecting consultation to produce agreement, rather than a record that people were heard and answered.

3 · A Checklist for Listening Beyond the Fence

The book's checklist, with a column for your own answer.

Question	Why it matters	Our answer
Have I walked the boundary, shore and access routes, and noted every path that stops at the property?	B4.1 to B4.3 concern physical access that only observation reveals	
Does the stakeholder record include the people affected, not only the institutions the hotel deals with?	A9.1 names community leaders and cooperatives alongside authorities	
For the last major renovation or expansion, is there a record of consulting affected residents?	A10.2 applies to major renovations, not only to new hotels	
Can a neighbour raise a concern without passing through security, and is it logged?	B4.4, B4.5 and A10.4 require a channel and a record	
Was the last community contribution chosen with the community, and is it part of a sustained programme?	The guidelines to B1 prefer sustained support aligned with identified needs	
Did I hear the community in its own language, at a time and place it chose?	The conditions of the conversation decide what can be said	

4 · What would show this is working

Questions drawn from the subchapter's reading of the standard and its practical application. Indicator references point to the GSTC Hotel Standard v4.0; where the evidence lives is this book's practice, not a requirement of the standard.

Question	Where the evidence lives	Seen?
Does the stakeholder record include community members, not only institutions, and show agreed outcomes (A9.1)?	Stakeholder record; meeting minutes	☐
Is there a well-publicised channel for community concerns, with each issue logged, addressed and the outcome shared (B4.4, B4.5)?	Community grievance log	☐
Has physical access to shore, paths and routes around the property been observed and discussed (B4.1 to B4.3)?	Boundary-walk observation notes, dated	☐
For recent works, is consultation with affected residents recorded (A10.2)?	Consultation records for new works or renovations	☐
Are community contributions ongoing, recorded and linked to needs identified with the community (B1.1, B1.2)?	Contribution record and monitoring notes	☐

> *What this sheet is not: the GSTC Hotel Standard does not prescribe this form. It is a working aid drawn from the book; the standard's criteria, indicators and guidelines govern the real case. Independent material; not affiliated with or endorsed by the GSTC. The standard's own text at www.gstc.org prevails.*