

Student Name: Alhaji Ardy Dumbuya

Student ID: 2439867

Module: Understanding and Engaging Stakeholders

Module code: LCLM5001

Module Leader: Dr Muhammad Hasan Tariq

Title: Understanding the importance of Stakeholder Engagement in the successful commencement and completion of a project

Executive Summary

This report examined stakeholder engagement and management within Lidl UK's proposed Connect-plus Project, an AI-enabled customer loyalty platform designed to strengthen customer relationships, improve personalized services and support data-driven decision-making. The project had been considered in the context of Lidl UK's continued growth and the increasing importance of digital technology within the retail sector.

First, the report identified and analysed the key stakeholders involved in the Connect Plus Project. These included Lidl UK's senior management, employees, customers, IT and technology teams, suppliers, data-protection specialists and external technology partners.

Second, the report had evaluated the importance of effective communication and stakeholder engagement. A structured communication approach had been considered necessary to ensure that relevant information had been provided to stakeholders at the appropriate time and through suitable communication channels.

Third, the report had considered the 4C's model, stakeholder salience model and RACI matrix as useful approaches for managing engagement within Connect-plus. These frameworks had helped clarify stakeholder responsibilities, levels of influence and appropriate engagement strategies.

Fourth, the report had examined the potential impact of sustainable stakeholder engagement. Effective engagement had been expected to contribute to greater employee participation, improved customer trust, better decision-making and stronger long-term relationships.

Fifth, the report had recommended that Lidl UK should have maintained continuous stakeholder consultation throughout the implementation of Connect Plus. Employees should have received appropriate training, while customers should have been given clear information about how their data would have been collected and used. Regular feedback mechanisms and performance reviews should also have been introduced to identify concerns and make improvements.

Finally, the report had concluded that the success of the ConnectPlus Project would have depended not only on the effectiveness of the technology but also on Lidl UK's ability to manage its stakeholders responsibly. A well-planned engagement strategy had therefore been considered essential for building trust, reducing resistance and supporting successful project implementation. Overall, effective stakeholder engagement had provided Lidl UK with a stronger foundation for achieving the strategic, operational and customer-related objectives of ConnectPlus.

Table of Contents

Executive Summary.....	2
1.Introduction.....	4
1. SMART Objectives	5
3. Identification of the Key Stakeholders	7
3.1 Identification of Internal and External Stakeholders of Lidl UK ConnectPlus Project.....	7
3.2 Benefits and challenges	9
3.3 Stakeholder Analysis Tools.....	9
3.3.1 Mapping (Power–Interest Matrix – Mendelow's Matrix)	9
3.3.2 Application of the Salience Model (Lidl UK ConnectPlus Project)	10
3.3.3 Ethical Considerations for ConnectPlus Project at Lidl UK	11
3.3.4 Critical Evaluation.....	12
3.3.5 Stakeholder Conflict	12
3.3.6 Stakeholder Collaboration	13
4. Roles of the Manager in Engaging Stakeholders	14
4.1 Communication Plan.....	14
4.2 Level of Engagement	16
4.3 RACI Framework	17
5. Importance of Stakeholder Engagement.....	19
5.1 Justification of the Statement	19
5.2 Impact of sustainable stakeholder engagement on organisational performance	20
6. Recommendations.....	23
Conclusion	24
Harvard References	25

1.Introduction

1.0 Introduction to the Chosen Organisation – Lidl UK and ConnectPlus Project

Lidl Great Britain (Lidl GB) is a major discount supermarket retailer that has operated in the UK since 1994. It is part of the Schwarz Group, one of the world's largest retail groups. Over the years, Lidl has expanded significantly and now operates more than 1,000 stores and 13–14 regional distribution centres, employing over 35,000 people across England, Scotland and Wales. Lidl has established a strong position within the highly competitive UK grocery market by providing quality products at competitive prices. Its business model focuses on cost leadership, operational efficiency, customer value and sustainable business practices.

Digital technology has become increasingly important to Lidl's customer experience and business operations. The Lidl Plus application provides customers with personalised coupons, rewards, offers and digital payment facilities. In 2026, Lidl also continued expanding Lidl & Go, which enables customers to scan products using smartphones, monitor spending and savings, and complete purchases through self-service facilities. These developments demonstrate Lidl's continued investment in digital transformation and customer convenience.

Within this context, the ConnectPlus Project is proposed as a digital customer-engagement initiative designed to strengthen Lidl UK's relationship with customers and improve communication among key stakeholders. The proposed platform would build on Lidl's existing digital capabilities by providing personalised recommendations, digital rewards, mobile discounts, shopping insights and targeted promotional offers based on customer purchasing patterns.

The successful implementation of ConnectPlus would require effective stakeholder engagement throughout the project lifecycle. Key stakeholders would include senior management, customers, store employees, IT and data teams, marketing departments, suppliers and technology partners. Their different interests, expectations and levels of influence could affect project outcomes. Therefore, effective communication, employee training, stakeholder collaboration and responsible data management would be essential.

Overall, ConnectPlus could support Lidl UK's customer loyalty, digital innovation, operational performance and competitive advantage, while contributing to long-term organisational value.

1. SMART Objectives

The implementation of the ConnectPlus digital customer loyalty platform at Lidl UK is guided by the SMART framework to ensure that the project objectives are clear, measurable, and achievable.

Objectives of the Project (SMART) – Increase Sales by 5% Within the Next Six Months Using the Connect Plus Platform

Objective	Specific	Measurable	Achievable	Relevant	Time-bound
Improve Stakeholder Engagement	To increase stakeholder involvement through individualised awards, digital coupons, and customised buying recommendations, implement the Connect Plus AI-powered consumer loyalty platform throughout all Lidl UK stores and online platforms.	Achieve a 20% increase in repeat business, a 25% increase in active loyalty program participation, a 15% improvement in customer retention, and a 10% increase in customer satisfaction.	Collaborate with senior management, IT experts, marketing department, retail staff, vendors, and technology partners. Before launch, conduct customer awareness marketing and staff training.	Helps Lidl UK achieve its strategic goals of enhancing stakeholder involvement, boosting brand loyalty, and improving consumer experience.	Within six months, finish platform development, testing, staff training, and nationwide rollout. For the first twelve months following launch, there will be ongoing monitoring.
Enhance Communication	Create an integrated	Before the complete	Utilise digital tools,	Facilitate successful	Start the communication

ion Strategies	communicatio n plan to inform stakeholders, staff, and consumers about the Connect Plus platform using email, social media, in-store promotions, and digital platforms.	rollout, use promotional communicat ion to reach 90% staff awareness, 80% consumer awareness, and at least 70% customer engagement .	communicat ion experts, and Lidl UK's marketing team to train staff members and convey consistent messaging.	implementati on, guarantee efficient stakeholder communicati on, and promote client involvement in the loyalty program.	on campaign three months before implementati on, and keep up the communicati on efforts for the first twelve months following the launch.
Increase Sustainabilit y	Utilise Connect Plus to increase operational efficiency and decrease paper vouchers by implementing digital coupons and electronic receipts.	Within the first 6 months, decrease the use of paper coupons by 80%, boost the redemption of digital coupons by 30%, and cut operating printing expenses by 20%.	Use Lidl UK's current systems to implement digital technologie s with assistance from trained staff members and technology partners.	Reduce paper waste, boost operational effectiveness , and encourage environment al responsibility in line with Lidl UK's sustainability goal.	Reach sustainability goals within 6 months of ConnectPlus' s debut, and evaluate results every three months.

3. Identification of the Key Stakeholders

3.1 Identification of Internal and External Stakeholders of Lidl UK ConnectPlus Project

Internal Stakeholders

Stakeholder Type	Stakeholder Group	Roles and Responsibilities
Internal	Employees	Participate in training, use the ConnectPlus system in their daily job, offer performance comments, and assist with its successful deployment.
Internal	Management	Plan and oversee ConnectPlus's implementation, assign resources, keep an eye on the project's advancement, control hazards, and guarantee that its goals are met.
Internal	Board of Directors	Assure alignment with Lidl UK's business objectives, monitor project performance, approve the project strategy and budget, and provide corporate governance.
Internal	Shareholders	Invest money to support the project, keep an eye on business performance, demand value for the money, and make sure it promotes profitability and long-term growth.
Internal	Finance and Procurement	Create and oversee the project budget, keep expenses under control, acquire the required resources, and guarantee effective financial management.
Internal	Human Resources (HR) and Training	Plan staff training programs, assist employees during deployment, and cultivate the abilities needed to successfully use the ConnectPlus platform.
Internal	Marketing and Communications	Highlight the advantages of Connect. Additionally, oversee marketing initiatives, raise consumer

		awareness, and promote loyalty program membership.
Internal	IT and Product Development	Ensure system security and dependability when designing, developing, testing, implementing, and maintaining the ConnectPlus platform.

External Stakeholders

Stakeholder Type	Stakeholder Group	Roles and Responsibilities
External	Lidl UK Customers	Utilise ConnectPlus services, offer comments, take part in reward programs, and use their experiences to shape future developments.
External	Technology Partners	Provide the hardware, software, cloud services, cybersecurity solutions, and technical assistance needed for the ConnectPlus platform.
External	Suppliers and Brand Partners	Offer goods and services, work together on supply chain integration, stock availability, and marketing initiatives.
External	Regulators	Make sure Lidl UK abides by all applicable UK laws, including the GDPR, consumer rights laws, competition laws, and health and safety standards.
External	Local Communities	Encourage community involvement, sustainability projects, job opportunities, and environmental responsibility efforts to enhance Lidl UK's reputation.
External	Competitors	To keep its competitive edge, urge Lidl UK to enhance innovation, price policies, digital services, and customer satisfaction.

3.2 Benefits and challenges

Benefits:

- Dependable system functionality.
- Enhanced operational efficacy and efficiency.

Challenges:

- Problems with system integration.
- Software bugs.
- Cybersecurity risks and preserving the functionality of infrastructure systems.

It is clear from the advantages and difficulties that cooperation amongst all parties involved is necessary for the ConnectPlus initiative to successfully accomplish its goals. The ConnectPlus initiative can successfully accomplish its goals by comprehending the advantages and difficulties faced by stakeholders.

3.3 Stakeholder Analysis Tools

3.3.1 Mapping (Power–Interest Matrix – Mendelow's Matrix)

Stakeholder mapping is used to identify, evaluate, and rank people or organisations that may have an influence on or be affected by the project initiative. It is also used to determine how power and interest are related.

Category	Stakeholders	Engagement Strategy
High Power – High Interest	Senior Management, Project Manager, Board of Directors	Participate on a frequent basis through strategic reviews, decision-making sessions, progress updates, and project meetings.
High Power – Low Interest	Investors, Government Authorities, Regulators	Give regular reports on the status of the project, legal requirements, financial performance, and compliance.

Low Power – High Interest	Customers, Employees, Marketing Team, Sales Team, Customer Service Staff	To promote involvement and acceptance of ConnectPlus, communicate often via training sessions, newsletters, emails, customer surveys, team meetings, and feedback channels.
Low Power – Low Interest	Local Communities, General Public	Provide sporadic updates via social media, the Lidl UK website, local events, and sustainability reports. Keep an eye on public sentiment and address issues when needed without needing extensive involvement.

3.3.2 Application of the Salience Model (Lidl UK ConnectPlus Project)

Power, legitimacy, and urgency are the three main characteristics used by the Stakeholder Salience Model to identify stakeholders. These characteristics assist project managers in ranking stakeholders based on their significance and degree of impact inside the project.

The purpose of the Salience Model is to identify and prioritise stakeholders based on three key attributes:

- Power
- Legitimacy
- Urgency

Attribute	Brief Explanation	Example (Lidl UK ConnectPlus Project)
Power	The capacity of stakeholders to affect project choices and results.	Senior management at Lidl UK has considerable authority since they authorise project funding, assign resources, and make strategic choices. The ConnectPlus initiative cannot be carried out properly without their assistance.
Legitimacy	The stakeholder has the right to participate in project	Because ConnectPlus is intended to enhance customers' purchasing experiences through

	choices since they have a legitimate and acknowledged relationship with the organization.	tailored offers, digital loyalty incentives, and simpler access to services, customers have legitimate interests. To make sure the platform satisfies user expectations, their input is crucial.
Urgency	The extent to which stakeholder issues need to be addressed right away.	Because ConnectPlus handles customer data, regulatory agencies have urgent claims. To avoid fines and financial repercussions, adherence to UK GDPR and data protection laws is crucial.

Application of the Salience Model (Lidl Connect Plus Project)

Within the Connect Plus project:

- Due to its substantial decision-making power, control over project finance, and provision of strategic guidance, senior management is regarded as a high-priority stakeholder.
- Since they are the platform's main users, customers are equally significant. They have considerable validity because their satisfaction ultimately determines if the project succeeds in achieving its goals.
- Because they guarantee adherence to UK data protection laws and information security regulations, regulatory bodies want ongoing involvement.

Because they have the biggest impact on project success, stakeholders that simultaneously possess Power, Legitimacy, and Urgency should be given the highest level of engagement throughout the project lifecycle.

3.3.3 Ethical Considerations for ConnectPlus Project at Lidl UK

- The involvement of ethical stakeholders guarantees that businesses adhere to legal and ethical requirements, secure consumer data, and maintain openness in AI-driven decision-making.

- Managers are responsible for ensuring that employee data is gathered and processed in accordance with the Data Protection Act of 2018 and the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR).

3.3.4 Critical Evaluation

A well-managed stakeholder engagement plan is crucial for Lidl UK's ConnectPlus Project because it facilitates the identification and resolution of communication gaps, enhances teamwork, and guarantees project delivery success.

Lidl UK should take a proactive approach to stakeholder management in order to maximise the efficacy of stakeholder interaction. This strategy should include:

- Mapping stakeholders
- Consistent communication
- Well-defined governance frameworks
- Monitoring and ongoing feedback

Lidl UK can successfully implement the ConnectPlus project, improve operational performance, sustain consumer satisfaction, guarantee regulatory compliance, and promote long-term corporate success by optimising stakeholder participation.

3.3.5 Stakeholder Conflict

When organizational or individual aims diverge within a project, stakeholder conflict arises. These variations could result in:

- Delays in projects
- Competition for resources
- Dissatisfaction and performance
- Giving planning precedence over operational priorities
- Project and business objectives at odds

When individual or organizational goals in a project diverge due to the priorities, expectations, and ambitions of several parties, stakeholder conflict arises. This could have an impact on scheduling, decision-making, and project performance.

Many stakeholders, including senior management, project managers, staff, clients, suppliers, and regulators, may have conflicting goals and interests during the planning and execution stages.

Conflicts between stakeholders result from their diverse goals and interests:

- Through efficient stakeholder analysis, frequent communication, consultation, cooperative decision-making, and coordination, project managers can reduce risks by detecting these possible conflicts early.
- To successfully provide the ConnectPlus platform while fulfilling business objectives and stakeholder expectations, it is important to understand stakeholder priorities.

3.3.6 Stakeholder Collaboration

To properly accomplish its goals, the ConnectPlus Project needs cooperation from all parties involved.

Lidl UK may enhance stakeholder engagement, lower project risks, and raise the possibility of a successful project implementation by comprehending each stakeholder's roles, advantages, and difficulties. (Freeman, 2010; Bourne, 2020)

4. Roles of the Manager in Engaging Stakeholders

Key Stakeholders, Roles and Responsibilities

Key Stakeholders	Roles and Responsibilities
Senior Management	• Give strategic guidance. • Give project finances your approval. • Distribute resources. • Keep an eye on the project's progress and make sure ConnectPlus supports Lidl UK's corporate goals.
Project Manager	• Plan, coordinate, and arrange the project's activities. • Control project hazards and keep an eye on developments. Interact with interested parties. • Make that the project is finished to the necessary quality standards, on schedule, and within budget.
Employees (Store and Head Office Staff)	• Take part in the training. • Make use of ConnectPlus. • Adhere to new procedures. • Offer suggestions to enhance execution.
Customers	• Make use of the services that ConnectPlus offers. • Comment on the customer's experience. Please report any problems with the service.

4.1 Communication Plan

Stakeholder	Weekly Meeting	Monthly Meeting	Weekly Project Status	Monthly Highlight Report	Monthly Newsletter	Exception Reports
Employees	F2F	F2F	PIP	E	E	TC
Senior Management	VC	F2F	PIP	VC	E	F2F
Project Manager	F2F	F2F	PIP	VC	E	TC

Board of Directors	—	F2F	E	VC	E	F2F
IT Team & Technology Suppliers	VC	F2F	PIP	VC	E	TC
Customers	—	—	E	E	E	—
Suppliers	VC	F2F	E	VC	E	TC
Regulatory Bodies	—	—	E	E	—	F2F
Communities	—	—	—	E	E	—

Communication Method Key

- F2F – Face-to-Face Meeting
- TC – Teleconference
- VC – Video Conference
- E – Email
- PIP – Project Intranet Page

Using suitable communication techniques, the communication plan guarantees that all parties participating in the Lidl UK ConnectPlus project receive the necessary information at the appropriate time. Good communication facilitates informed decision-making, enhances coordination, and keeps the project on budget and on schedule. Weekly in-person meetings and weekly updates via the Project Intranet Page (PIP) are used to notify staff members of new assignments, system modifications, and implementation status. Additionally, they receive newsletters and emails every month, and teleconferences are used to discuss critical matters.

To assess overall project performance and make sure the project is in line with Lidl UK's strategic objectives, the Board of Directors receives emails, monthly highlight reports, and in-person meetings every month.

Lidl UK's corporate social responsibility (CSR) efforts, environmental initiatives, and the broader advantages of the ConnectPlus project are communicated to the community through monthly newsletters and emails.

All things considered, this communication strategy encourages openness, stakeholder participation, productive teamwork, and the successful completion of the Lidl UK ConnectPlus project.

4.2 Level of Engagement

Key stakeholders' present and intended involvement in the Lidl UK ConnectPlus Project is evaluated by the level of engagement analysis. It assists in determining ways to increase stakeholder involvement in order to facilitate productive teamwork, successful project completion, and the accomplishment of Lidl UK's strategic goals.

Stakeholder	Unaware	Resistant	Neutral	Supportive	Leading
Employees			C		D
Senior Management				C	D
Board of Directors					C / D
Shareholders			C		D
Customers				C	D
Technology Suppliers		C		D	
Regulatory Bodies			C		D
IT Team				C	D
Local Communities			C		D

Key:

- **C = Current Level of Engagement**
- **D = Desired Level of Engagement**

In summary, raising stakeholder participation from the present level to the intended level will improve decision-making, cooperation, and communication throughout the Connect Plus Project. Successful project implementation, enhanced organisational performance, and long-term business sustainability are all facilitated by effective stakeholder interaction.

4.3 RACI Framework

RACI Definition

- R – Responsible
- A – Accountable
- C – Consulted
- I – Informed

RACI Framework Matrix

Task / Activity	Senior Management	Employees	Project Manager	Board of Directors	Customers	Suppliers	Communities	Regulatory Bodies
Project approval and budget	R	A	C	I	I	I	I	I
System implementation	R	A	C	I	C	I	I	I
Strategic decision-making	I	R/A	C	C	I	I	I	I
Financial performance review	I	R	A	C	I	I	I	I
Customer feedback and improvement	R	A	I	I	C	I	I	I
Compliance and	I	R	I	I	I	I	I	A

regulatory reporting								
CSR activities						I		
Marketing and branding	I	R						

4.4 . The 4 C's Model- Stakeholder Engagement Framework

The 4 C's Model is a stakeholder engagement framework built around four pillars — Communication, Consultation, Collaboration and Commitment — that guide how a project team interacts with, informs and involves its stakeholders throughout the project lifecycle.

The Four Pillars

Pillar	Brief Explanation	Example (Lidl WKT-Connect Project)
Communication	Sharing information with stakeholders about the project objectives, progress and updates.	Information is shared with customers, media and regulatory bodies through project updates delivered via digital and social media platforms, keeping stakeholders informed of progress and objectives.
Consultation	Seeking stakeholder opinions, concerns and suggestions before making project decisions.	Senior managers, project managers, store teams, suppliers and customers provide feedback through surveys and workshops before changes are implemented, ensuring their input shapes decisions ahead of rollout.
Collaboration	Working together with stakeholders to plan, solve problems and achieve shared project objectives.	The Lidl UK senior management team, project managers and store managers work together to solve problems and jointly achieve project objectives.

Pillar	Brief Explanation	Example (Lidl WKT-Connect Project)
Commitment	Building stakeholder trust and support, and ensuring long-term involvement in the project.	Lidl UK senior management demonstrates commitment by supporting and providing funding, continuously engaging employees, and continuously improving the Connect platform.

Together, the four pillars ensure that stakeholders are kept informed (Communication), their views are heard before decisions are made (Consultation), they are actively involved in delivering solutions (Collaboration), and their long-term trust and support are maintained throughout the project (Commitment).

5. Importance of Stakeholder Engagement

5.1 Justification of the Statement

Effective stakeholder engagement, according to Gable and Shireman (2005), necessitates that businesses integrate stakeholder connections into their broader business strategy rather than relying just on separate communication initiatives. Stakeholder involvement is incorporated into all phases of planning, execution, and assessment in Lidl UK's ConnectPlus initiative, demonstrating this systems approach. In order to support Lidl UK's long-term goals of digital transformation, operational efficiency, and sustainable business growth, ConnectPlus promotes collaboration between employees, suppliers, customers, technology partners, regulators, and local communities rather than treating engagement as a one-time consultation exercise.

Systems Approach to Stakeholder Engagement

By combining digital technology, staff involvement, and operational procedures into a single, well-coordinated program, Lidl UK's ConnectPlus project exemplifies a systems approach. The project's goal is to enhance cooperation, data exchange, and communication among Lidl UK's

head office, distribution facilities, and retail locations. ConnectPlus acknowledges that effective digital transformation requires active stakeholder participation, ongoing learning, and organisational commitment rather than concentrating only on technological advancements.

Lidl UK's investment in staff development and digital innovation is an illustration of this systems approach. Employees are trained and assisted in implementing new digital systems that enhance customer service, communication, and stock management through ConnectPlus. Lidl UK guarantees that digital transformation yields long-term operational benefits rather than transient technological advancements by investing in staff development in addition to technology (Lidl GB Sustainability Report, 2024). This shows that rather than being restricted to project execution, stakeholder involvement is integrated throughout the entire organization.

Additionally, the ConnectPlus project improves cooperation with outside parties, such as local communities, suppliers, technology companies, and regulatory agencies. Lidl UK maintains compliance with UK food safety and environmental regulations while working collaboratively with suppliers to enhance supply chain transparency, product availability, and sustainability. Through these collaborations, the company can find mutually beneficial solutions that promote ethical sourcing and lessen environmental effects (Lidl GB, 2024; Institute for Project Management, 2021).

Additionally, ConnectPlus encourages accountability and transparency through stakeholder feedback systems, performance tracking, and frequent contact. While client experiences are tracked through surveys and service data to enable ongoing improvement, employees are encouraged to offer input on system performance. This continuous information sharing improves relationships, fosters trust, and helps Lidl UK react swiftly to shifting stakeholder expectations. As a result, Gable and Shireman's (2005) claim that stakeholder involvement is transformational because it becomes a part of the organization's culture, decision-making procedures, and long-term strategic direction is reflected in the ConnectPlus initiative.

5.2 Impact of sustainable stakeholder engagement on organisational performance

This assessment looks at the relationship between organisational success and sustainable stakeholder involvement in the Lidl UK ConnectPlus Project. Financial performance,

operational effectiveness, brand reputation, employee engagement, environmental sustainability, community relations, innovation and growth, and regulatory compliance are among the important organisational areas where it evaluates the effects of stakeholder involvement. In order to gauge the project's effectiveness, the evaluation also determines pertinent Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) programs, and sustainability objectives.

Area	Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)	Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)	Sustainability Goals
Financial Performance	• An increase in ConnectPlus subscribers • Increased revenue from customised promos • ROI, or return on investment • CLV, or customer lifetime value	• Reasonable prices and ethical advertising • Funding regional community initiatives	• Use digital interaction to boost client retention while promoting sustainable consumption and cutting back on paper-based promotions.
Operational Efficiency	• The rate of app adoption • Rate of redemption for digital coupons • A shorter wait time at checkout • Quicker provision of services	• Ethical procurement from sustainable vendors • Partnerships with ethical suppliers	• Reduce waste in all Lidl UK stores while increasing operational efficiency with AI-driven procedures.
Brand Reputation	• NPS, or Net Promoter Score • A rating of customer satisfaction • Online	• Open and honest communication • Privacy of customer data • Artificial	• Increase consumer trust by managing data securely, being transparent, and

	- client testimonials - Index of Brand Trust	intelligence (AI) applied ethically	using digital innovation responsibly.
Employee Engagement	- Findings from an employee engagement survey - Completion rate of staff training - The rate of employee retention	- Ongoing improvement of digital abilities - Equal chances - Programs for employee well-being	Promote an inclusive workplace culture by providing employees with the digital tools they need to use ConnectPlus efficiently.
Environmental Impact	- A decrease in paper vouchers - Reduction of food waste - Emissions of carbon linked to marketing initiatives	Campaigns for environmental awareness and sustainable packaging	Encourage digital loyalty services, cut back on paper use, and promote sustainable purchasing practices to help Lidl UK achieve its Net Zero goals.
Community Relations	- Projects involving community partnerships - Scores from customer feedback - Activities for local engagement	- Give to local charity and food banks - Programs for community investment	By encouraging sustainable projects and healthy choices, ConnectPlus can improve ties with nearby communities.
Innovation and Growth	- The quantity of newly added digital features - Adoption of AI suggestions by customers - Growth in market share	- Cooperation with academic institutions and technology suppliers - Putting money into digital innovation	Continue to improve ConnectPlus through sustainable retail innovation, tailored customer experiences, and responsible AI.
Regulatory Compliance	Rate of GDPR compliance	- Internal audit findings - Training on GDPR compliance	While safeguarding consumer data, maintain complete compliance with

	Incidents involving data security	Internal compliance audits and data security awareness	GDPR, consumer protection laws, cybersecurity specifications, and environmental standards.
--	-----------------------------------	--	--

For the Lidl UK ConnectPlus Project to be successful, sustained stakeholder engagement is essential. According to the evaluation, financial performance, operational efficiency, customer happiness, employee engagement, innovation, environmental sustainability, community ties, and regulatory compliance are all improved by good communication, collaboration, and stakeholder participation. Lidl UK can effectively accomplish the ConnectPlus project's goals while generating long-term value for all stakeholders and promoting sustainable business growth by keeping an eye on pertinent KPIs and putting CSR and sustainability measures into practice.

6. Recommendations

The Connect Plus Project should be implemented through a phased and stakeholder-centered approach. Lidl UK should first provide employees and managers with appropriate training so they understand the purpose of Connect Plus, how it will affect their roles, and how to support customers during implementation. Effective communication is also important because

employees are more likely to support organisational change when they understand the reasons behind it and have opportunities to provide feedback (Kotter, 1996).

Lidl should also make use of its existing digital capabilities, particularly Lidl Plus, rather than developing ConnectPlus in isolation. This could improve efficiency and provide a more consistent customer experience. However, customer data must be handled responsibly, with clear information about how personal information is collected and used. Lidl's existing privacy arrangements demonstrate the importance of responsible data management when delivering personalised digital services (Lidl GB, 2026).

Furthermore, Lidl should involve customers, employees, managers, IT teams and technology partners throughout the project. Surveys, pilot testing and feedback mechanisms can help identify problems early and ensure that ConnectPlus reflects stakeholder needs. This supports Freeman's (1984) argument that organisations should consider the interests of stakeholders who can influence or are affected by organisational decisions.

Conclusion

Overall, Connect Plus should be viewed as more than a technology project; it is an organisational change initiative requiring effective leadership, communication and stakeholder engagement. A clear communication plan and RACI matrix can establish accountability and ensure that the right stakeholders are involved at the appropriate stages.

If Lidl combines employee training, customer involvement, responsible data management and continuous monitoring, Connect Plus has the potential to improve customer engagement and strengthen stakeholder relationships. Ultimately, successful implementation will depend on Lidl balancing technology, people and customer needs, enabling the organization to achieve sustainable improvements while maintaining customer trust.

Reference list:

- Bourne, L. (2016) Stakeholder Relationship Management: A Maturity Model for Organisational Implementation. London: Routledge.
- Carroll, A.B. and Brown, J.A. (2018) Corporate Responsibility: The American Experience. 2nd edn. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Freeman, R.E. (1984) Strategic Management: A Stakeholder Approach. Boston: Pitman.
- Freeman, R.E., Harrison, J.S., Wicks, A.C., Parmar, B. and de Colle, S. (2010) Stakeholder Theory: The State of the Art. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Freeman, R.E., Harrison, J.S. and Zyglidopoulos, S. (2018) Stakeholder Theory: Concepts and Strategies. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Institute of Directors (IoD) (2023) Good Governance Guide. London: Institute of Directors.

- International Organization for Standardization (ISO) (2018) ISO 26000: Guidance on Social Responsibility. Geneva: ISO.
- Kaplan, R.S. and Norton, D.P. (1996) The Balanced Scorecard: Translating Strategy into Action. Boston: Harvard Business School Press.
- Kerzner, H. (2022) Project Management: A Systems Approach to Planning, Scheduling and Controlling. 13th edn. Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons.
- Lidl GB (2024) Beyond the Basket: Sustainability Report FY23/24. London: Lidl Great Britain.
- Lidl GB (2026) Lidl Plus. Available at: <https://www.lidl.co.uk/c/lidl-plus/s10023095> (Accessed: 25 July 2026).
- Mendelow, A.L. (1991) 'Stakeholder Mapping', Proceedings of the Second International Conference on Information Systems, Cambridge, MA, pp. 407–418.
- Mitchell, R.K., Agle, B.R. and Wood, D.J. (1997) 'Toward a Theory of Stakeholder Identification and Salience: Defining the Principle of Who and What Really Counts', Academy of Management Review, 22(4), pp. 853–886.
- Office of the Information Commissioner (ICO) (2024) Guide to the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR). Available at: <https://ico.org.uk> (Accessed: 5 August 2026).
- Project Management Institute (PMI) (2021) A Guide to the Project Management Body of Knowledge (PMBOK® Guide). 7th edn. Newtown Square, PA: Project Management Institute.
- Too, E.G. and Weaver, P. (2014) 'The Management of Project Management: A Conceptual Framework for Project Governance', International Journal of Project Management, 32(8), pp. 1382–1394.