

How to

Incorporate policy engagement into a project

Country-level policy engagement toolkit



How To Do Notes are prepared by IFAD's **Policy and Technical Advisory Division** and aim to provide practical suggestions and guidelines for country programme managers, project design teams and implementing partners to help them design and implement programmes and projects.

They present technical and practical aspects of specific approaches, methodologies, models or project components that have been tested and can be recommended for implementation and scaling up, including best practices and case studies that work and can be used as a model in a particular field.

How To Do Notes provide tools for good practice design based on best practices collected at the field level. They guide teams on how to implement specific recommendations of IFAD's operational policies, standard project requirements or financing tools.

The **How To Do Notes** are "living" documents and will be updated periodically based on new experiences and on feedback. If you have any comments or suggestions, please contact the originators.

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Table of contents

LIST OF ACRONYMS

INTRODUCTION	1
KEY ISSUES.....	1
LESSONS LEARNED	3
GUIDANCE FOR DESIGN	6
SCALING UP	6
APPENDIX 1 PROJECT DESIGN: GENERIC TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR POLICY SPECIALIST	7
APPENDIX 2 ADDITIONAL TOOLS	8
ALIGNMENT, INTEREST AND INFLUENCE MATRIX	8
CONTEXT, EVIDENCE, LINKS FRAMEWORK.....	11
FORCE FIELD ANALYSIS.....	15
K* FRAMEWORK	17
REFERENCES.....	19

List of acronyms

AIIM	Alignment, Interest and Influence Matrix
CLPE	country-level policy engagement
COSOP	country strategic opportunities programme
CPE	country programme evaluation
CPM	country programme manager
M&E	monitoring and evaluation
ODI	Overseas Development Institute
PMU	project management unit
PTA	Policy and Technical Advisory Division

Introduction

Increasingly, IFAD-financed projects are including specific components or subcomponents with policy objectives, whose outputs and outcomes are reflected in the project logical framework. Of the projects approved by IFAD's Executive Board between 2013 and 2015, more than 40 per cent contained a component or subcomponent focusing on policy.¹

These projects spanned all regions and were focused on the range of different subsectors in which IFAD works. Additionally, the design of the policy aspects of these projects, i.e. the specific activities the policy elements included, was also highly varied, spanning the range of activities defined and detailed in the Teaser to this toolkit on country-level policy engagement (CLPE). Some work on formulating, approving and operationalizing policies, while others work on increasing the participatory nature of policy processes. They reflect the multisectoral and multiphased approach that IFAD takes when engaging in country-level policy and, in most cases, more than one type of activity will have been used to meet the policy-related and project objectives.

Designing the policy component of an IFAD project is therefore a highly context-specific process, which will vary depending on the type of policy the project plans to engage with and the specific strategy likely to be successful for that policy topic and country. This How to Do Note sets out some basic guiding questions to help those designing policy elements of IFAD projects, or contemplating doing so, on how to consider a range of options and ensure that the component is sufficiently embedded in IFAD and national processes.

Key issues

Figure 1 maps the typical project design process followed at IFAD and the opportunities within it for developing a policy engagement strategy. There are various approaches to designing the policy component of a project; in some cases, the team designing the concept note may already have an idea that policy activities would complement the other activities in the project and build in policy from the beginning. This interest in, and commitment to, policy may follow from the country strategic opportunities programme (COSOP) or from the country-specific CLPE strategy when already formulated, and this may be particularly so when the project concept note is attached to a new COSOP. In other cases, a commitment to including policy-related activities will be crafted as the project is designed.

¹ The 2016 review, which looked across the (then) current portfolio, demonstrated that 32 per cent of projects had a component or subcomponent on country-level policy engagement. This suggests that there is a growing emphasis on policy in IFAD's projects.

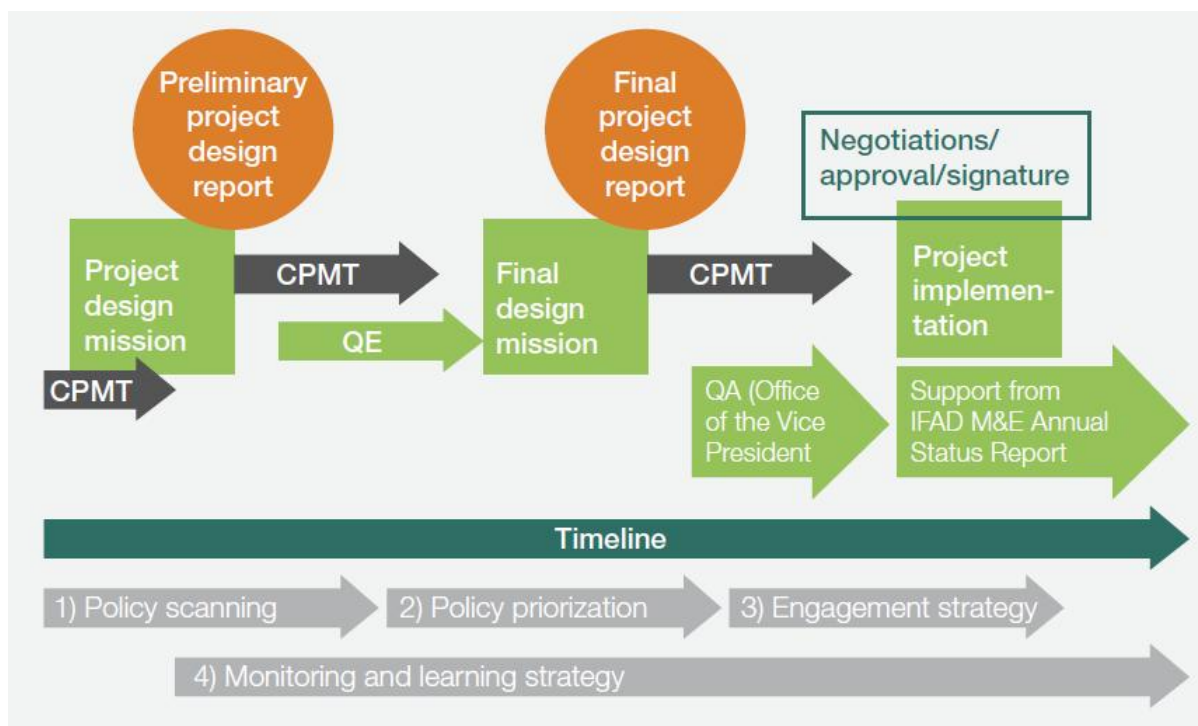


Figure 1. Project design process and development of the policy engagement strategy

In all cases, project activities related to policy should contribute to the project's theory of change,² and they may form the underlying conditions under which a project is likely to succeed. For example, in a project working in a specific value chain, the policy activities may serve to identify the key bottlenecks for smallholder market access, the solutions to which may enable the project to achieve much stronger results. In a project in which institutional weakness at the local level is a core constraint for project implementation, activities related to strengthening the strategic and planning capacity of local implementation agencies enable all other project activities to flow more easily.

Similar to the role in the COSOP, where CLPE needs to fit into the hierarchy of the objectives and contribute to achieving one or more strategic objectives, policy engagement and its related activities within projects need to contribute to the achievement of the project's development objectives and to specific outcomes within the project's results hierarchy.

Again, similarly to COSOPs, knowledge management plays a key role in linking the activities of the project to its policy engagement agenda. Strong M&E systems, for example, provide a base around which knowledge can be generated and transformed into knowledge products. That knowledge can be fed back into policy processes so that governments can learn from IFAD projects and mainstream this knowledge into their broader portfolio of policies.

² A theory of change is the product of a series of critical-thinking exercises that provide a comprehensive picture of the outputs and outcomes that are needed to reach the development objective defined for the project. The theory of change explains the process of change by outlining the causal linkages in the project, and each outcome is mapped in logical relationship to all the others, as well as chronological flow. The links between outcomes are explained by "rationales" or statements of why one outcome is thought to be a prerequisite for another.

Lessons learned

IFAD is interested in working across the full cycle of the policy process and through multiple objectives (enhancing participation, enhancing the use of evidence and strengthening government capacities). Projects are often designed to strengthen participation, e.g. through using the project to support or generate policy dialogue platforms, while also working on strengthening the extent to which government agencies work together.

Figure 2 shows the steps in the process of designing a policy component or subcomponent for a project. The following paragraphs discuss these steps in more depth and show how they may fit into a typical IFAD project cycle. The design process is built on an understanding of the policy context, in terms of both the relevant policies themselves and the policymaking processes.

The first step is to identify the key policy issues – or at least the relevant policy areas – where the project might engage; and this is usually done either during initial consultations with the government and other actors when concept notes are drafted, or as the design progresses through consultations. The second step is to come up with the ideal outcome or what would change between the status quo of the policy setting and the end of the project. The third step is to design a strategy meant to realize the objectives, which will also include, as a fourth step, the design and identification of specific policy activities that would facilitate the achievement of objectives. A key fifth step – frequently overlooked – is to define responsibilities for managing the policy agenda under the project. Finally, design teams need to develop indicators and define the required budgets for policy activities.



Figure 2. Steps in the process of defining policy activities in a project

In the process of designing a project, policy issues can sometimes be easy to identify because they will be mentioned as constraints or areas for possible improvement in a number of consultations. They could be with the private sector, farmer groups and potential beneficiaries, as well as with local implementing agencies and various members of the government. Often, very specific issues are mentioned: for example, taxation levels for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), seed quality, restrictions on agricultural exports and rent-seeking by local officials. In some countries, the government will actively seek IFAD's help in identifying and working on these types of issues, in which case it should be possible to outline a number of specific interventions the project can undertake. In other situations, the specific policy issues may not be immediately identifiable, and here the approach may be to use the project to bring together key stakeholders to identify the policy issues of importance to them and/or to use the project's implementation experience as the evidence basis for informing policies. In countries where the government is not keen to discuss policy or where there appear to be no major policy issues, a project may choose solely to build strong M&E and knowledge management systems in order to enable lesson learning, which might serve the government in identifying policy issues later on.

Once the policy areas have been identified and there is agreement as to the value of looking to respond to them through the project, the next step is to identify what precisely the project should seek to achieve and set about designing a strategy to achieving this. Unlike some other development partners who work exclusively on changing or adopting policy, IFAD's objective may also be related to increasing the number of stakeholders participating in the policy process, helping the government to design mechanisms to implement existing policies and/or monitoring and evaluating the implementation mechanism of existing policies in order to contribute to future phases of policy renegotiation. Some projects may tackle more than one of these ways of working. The Rwanda Dairy Development Project, in Rwanda, for example, will work on different dimensions of the policy process (policy formulation, policy implementation and institutional strengthening, and policy-related analysis and technical assistance), whereas the *Rural Adelante* programme in El Salvador will work exclusively on enhancing the participation of stakeholders in the policy process and helping the government craft implementation strategies for its existing policies. Policy creation or change is not an explicit objective of that project.

While policy activities are usually inexpensive compared with other types of project costs, their benefits are sometimes difficult to visualize and their implementation can be complex (which is why it is difficult, though not impossible, to evaluate policy impacts). Without specific incentives within the design to follow through on policy activities, they may be overlooked. To ensure that policy engagement is an implementable and integral part of a project, it is critical to ensure that policy objectives are reflected in the project's logical framework and/or theory of change and the broader monitoring framework. Table 1 provides an example of the budget for a recent project with a policy component, showing the types of expenditure categories and expenses that are often budgeted.

Table 1. Generalized budget for a policy component of a recent IFAD investment project

Subcomponent and activities	Indicative types of expenditures	Budget (US\$ 000s)
1.1 Policy formulation		
Drafting and consultation for national policy document	International consultant, national consultants, meetings, communication	200
Drafting of five specific laws and regulations to enable national policy	International consultant, national consultants, consultation meetings, communication	150
1.2 Policy implementation and institutional strengthening		
Support for decentralized policy implementation pilot in three districts (25 per cent of country)	Training, equipment, certification scheme, consultancy for implementation strategy	450
Messaging and support for behavioural change among citizens linked to national policy	Communications firm as consultant, and printing and publicity costs	350
Capacity-building for apex organizations and cooperatives to participate in and originate policy discussions	Consultants, training materials, training (room hire, transport, logistics)	350
1.3 Policy-related knowledge management		
Knowledge management for national policy pilot	Staff training, communications, consultancy	250
Other policy-related knowledge management	Staff training, communications, consultancy	100
Total budget <i>As per cent of project total</i>		1 500 5%

Coming up with meaningful output and outcome indicators for policy engagement is known to be difficult; indeed, the value of such indicators is often that of ensuring that a focus on policy engagement activities is maintained rather than being a measure of substantive change. Additionally, it is also challenging to monitor and evaluate policy activities because CLPE work is often beyond the direct sphere of control and influence of IFAD/the project. Thus, while IFAD-supported projects can contribute to qualitative and quantitative change in policy processes, these changes also depend on inputs and on attitude and behaviour change by other actors.

Nevertheless, indicators for policy activities do need to be crafted, and they need to be measurable. Table 2 below offers a series of potential indicators at both outcome and output level, for different sorts of policy activities. In addition, some consideration needs to be given as to the likely number of beneficiaries – direct and indirect – of the policy intervention; even if this is likely to be a somewhat speculative exercise.

Table 2: Working list of output and outcome indicators for CLPE

CLPE strategy	First-level results (output)	Second-level results (outcome)
Scaling up and adoption by government of successful models and initiatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Number of case studies/knowledge products completed ▪ Number of review workshops conducted 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Project lessons reflected in government policies, strategies or programmes ▪ Government budget includes (increased) provision for scaled-up models and initiatives
Creating space for policy dialogue between national stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Number of policy consultations held (national/subnational) ▪ Integration of policy dialogue spaces into national policy processes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Number of policies or policy instruments approved ▪ Policies receive greater visibility or national relevance ▪ Satisfaction of stakeholders with policy framework (rating 1-6) ▪ More participatory/inclusive policy processes ▪ Increased private investment in the relevant sector/subsector
Enhancing capacity of national stakeholders to participate in national policy processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Number of stakeholders trained in policy-related topics ▪ Number of participants on policy-related learning routes ▪ Number of policy briefs prepared 	
Strengthening the capacity of government agencies to formulate national policies and programmes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Number of staff trained in policy-related topics ▪ Number of policy consultations held ▪ Number of policy options papers prepared ▪ Process for policy development defined 	
Policy analysis and short-term technical assistance for policy formulation financed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Number of policy options papers prepared ▪ Number of policy processes that draw on papers prepared 	
Operationalization of a national policy at the local level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ National policy rolled out through project activities ▪ Number of local staff trained on policy-related topics 	

Additionally, policy-related activities require not only a dedicated budget, but also a clear definition of responsibilities for managing and implementing the activities. The responsibility for policy elements will usually be located in the project management unit (PMU). Typically, it will be assigned to the project manager, a dedicated member of the project team on policy or another member of the PMU, such as the M&E specialist. Terms of reference should be drafted (see Appendix 1 for an example of the terms of reference for a policy specialist within a PMU). Alternatively, the lead may be taken by a specific agency within the government (e.g. the Ministry of Planning, or a policy unit within the responsible ministry).

External entities, such as universities or policy research institutes, may also play an important role in facilitating policy processes and/or preparing policy analysis or evidence. The project steering committee, often with high-ranking government officials, can also play a role in defining the policy agenda or endorsing the project's findings. In all cases, it is important to consider implementation arrangements and partners seriously early on in the design process.

Guidance for design

It is suggested that, in projects where policy will be a significant component, a policy specialist participate in the design missions in much the same way as experts handling other components. Consulting on the structure of the component and writing the project design report, appendices and working papers should be given the same amount of time as any other component of the project. Because policy engagement is a relatively new, or at least growing and developing, type of project activity for IFAD, PTA's policy desk can help to prepare terms of reference for those preparing policy components, identify consultants, and also participate in missions. Appendix 1 provides generic terms of reference for a policy specialist taking part in a project design mission.

It is important for the person responsible for designing a policy component or set of activities to be aware of other sources of information. Specific studies undertaken by IFAD or external actors on policies of interest to IFAD may not be available, but the design team should certainly consult IFAD documents, which would help to orient the design team in terms of the policy context. For example, this may include the COSOP, the most recent country programme evaluation (which usually reports on policy engagement outcomes), IFAD projects with similar objectives (whether from the country concerned or others), relevant knowledge products created by IFAD, and country assessments produced by IFAD. Other development partners may have produced papers relevant to the policy engagement IFAD is planning (for that country or other comparable countries); and information may also be available from a variety of other sources, such as national and international policy research institutes, farmers' organizations, or private-sector bodies like a chamber of commerce.

As in the How to Do Note on CLPE in COSOPs, there are some existing tools that project design teams may want to consult when crafting a set of activities, subcomponents or components focused on policy (some, though not all, overlap with the tools analysed before). All are described in more detail in Appendix 2. These workshop exercises are best undertaken, whether formally or informally, by the design team and/or the in-country CPMT. They can help design teams to structure their thinking about the strategies and partners necessary to achieve policy-related project objectives.

Scaling up

Projects alone cannot eradicate rural poverty or generate rural transformation because, inevitably, they reach a limited number of people. However, projects can be a lever for influencing public policies and national-level programmes, as well as a space to innovate and experiment with new possible policy solutions, and so bring about systemic change. This requires projects to be flexible and to adjust as experiments are undertaken. It also requires lessons to be fed back to local, national and international actors and to be structured to make this a reality. In such cases, policy engagement becomes a way to scale up successful approaches developed under IFAD-supported projects and achieve greater impact by shaping the larger policy framework.

Given the interest from many governments to learn from the experiences of IFAD-supported projects, IFAD is well placed to facilitate learning, to adopt lessons into new and existing programmes, and to support scaling up. Within the M&E phase of the policy cycle, IFAD primarily engages in utilizing project experience (and results from grants) to accumulate experience with models that have proven to be successful, to analyse and document those lessons and to feed them back to governments so they can promote further adoption of the policy or increase the resources for the activity (scaling up).

Appendix 1

Project design: generic terms of reference for policy specialist

(To be added to according to the project context)

Working closely with the other mission members, you will design a policy component/subcomponent for the project. This should support the project in, and contribute to, the achievement of its development objective. The project strategy for policy engagement may focus on one or more stages of the project cycle; the activities may include any from the list of ten defined in chapter 2 of the CLPE guide book.

Specifically, you will:

- review the relevant policy and regulatory framework, its specific characteristics, strengths and weaknesses;
- meet with national stakeholders to understand their concerns about the policy and regulatory framework;
- identify/confirm the key policy issues, or at least the relevant policy areas, where the project might engage;
- contextualize the policy dimension in the project's overall theory of change and logical framework, including indicators, at the various levels;
- identify what the policy component should seek to achieve: the ideal outcome or what would change between the status quo of the policy setting and the end of the project;
- design a strategy to realize the objectives, including the identification and design of specific policy activities that would facilitate the achievement of objectives;
- define the responsibilities for managing the policy agenda under the project, the players in the processes defined and the partnerships that would be required;
- identify the unit costs, quantities and required budgets for policy activities.

Each of these aspects is described in more detail in the checklist of issues to be covered when designing a project with policy activities (see CLPE guide book, chapter 3).

In designing the policy component, sources of information may include:

- government officials
- relevant development partners in-country
- farmers' organizations
- private-sector companies and bodies such as industry associations or chambers of commerce
- development policy research institutes, both international and national
- NGOs.

Appendix 2 Additional tools

Alignment, Interest and Influence Matrix

What is it and why should I use it?

The Alignment, Interest and Influence Matrix (AIIM)³ helps you to map and understand the different people or groups that COSOP or project design teams need to be aware of when planning a policy engagement strategy (for example, policymakers you are trying to influence or other organizations doing similar work), and how IFAD needs to work with them to achieve its goals. Using this tool, you think about how aligned these stakeholders are with the policy engagement objectives, how interested they are in the policy issue and how much influence they have upon achieving the desired policy change. By doing this, you will have a better understanding of your stakeholders and how you need to work with them to achieve your goals. This exercise can be a valuable first step to really improving policy engagement.

Expected uses and outcomes

Use the AIIM tool in a workshop or group setting. Having a variety of people in the group will ensure that you do not miss any important stakeholders and you hear different perspectives.

The tool can be useful in the planning stages of the COSOP or projects, to think about the scope of your engagement and where to put your resources. You can use also it during implementation to consolidate thinking about who is involved and how to work together. And you can use it at the end of the COSOP or project, as a monitoring and learning tool to track how stakeholders have been influenced.

The tool

AIIM is a four-dimensional matrix. The first two dimensions are the degree to which stakeholders agree or disagree with your policy position and the degree of their interest in the policy issue (see Figure A2.1). The next two dimensions are the “power” they have to influence the policy issue and the “power” you have to influence them.

³ Research and Policy in Development (RAPID)/Overseas Development Institute (ODI) developed the AIIM tool in 2007, and has used it in over 50 workshops with researchers and research institutions around the world.

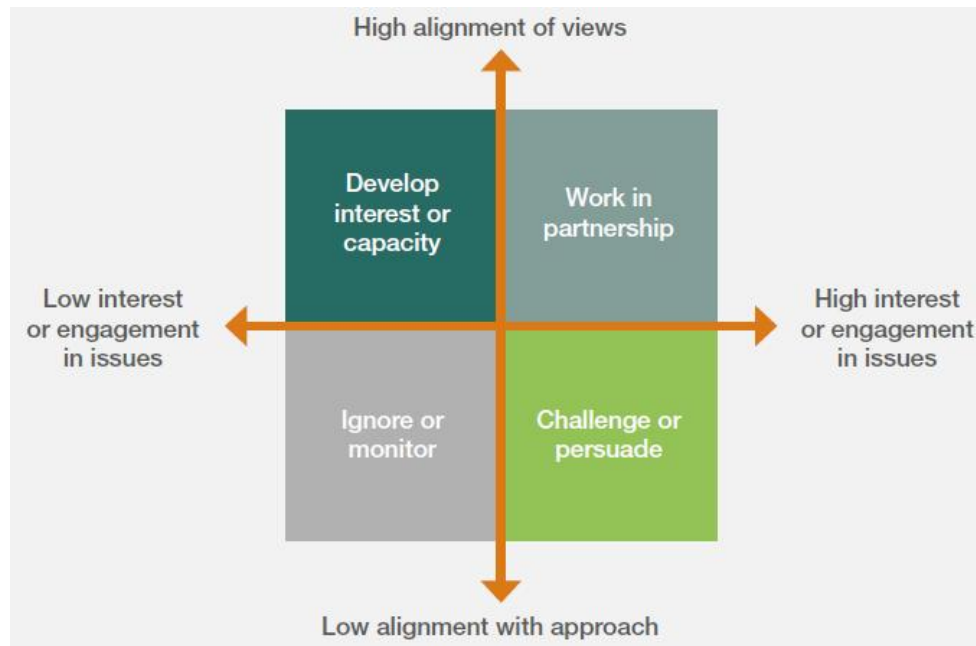


Figure A2.1. The first two dimensions of the Alignment, Interest and Influence Matrix

Source: RAPID Outcome Mapping Approach (ROMA): a guide to policy engagement and policy influence. Overseas Development Institute, 2014. Available at www.roma.odi.org

The steps

1. **Discuss and identify your COSOP or project policy objective (be specific).**
2. **Put a sheet of flipchart paper on the wall and appoint a scribe.**
3. **Draw two axes on the paper.**
 - Horizontal axis for stakeholder level of interest.
 - Vertical axis for stakeholder level of alignment with the objective.
4. **Referring to your policy objective, write down all stakeholders you can think of on post-it notes (one stakeholder per post-it note).**
 - Be as specific as possible, i.e. do not just write “donors”, name them.
 - Do not be limited to one post-it note per organization. If different teams/people have different degrees of alignment, then separate them.
5. **Place the post-it notes on the AIIM one by one.**
 - As people place their post-it note on the AIIM, explain to the group why they are putting it in that position.
 - This may lead to discussion – which is good.
6. **Look at the different matrix groupings.**
 - The top-right quadrant is **working in partnership**: these stakeholders agree with your aims and are interested. You may want to form a “community of practice” with these stakeholders. You could share ideas and contacts. Stakeholders from this group could also become champions to advocate for your project.
 - The top-left quadrant is **develop interest or capacity**: they agree with you, they are simply not that motivated or have greater priorities. You may want to energize or motivate these stakeholders. You could start to engage with them and develop a communications plan, share human-interest stories, reach out via media and advocacy.
 - The bottom-right quadrant is **challenge or persuade**: they are interested in the topic, but do not agree. You may want to try to convince these people of your viewpoint. Evidence works best with these stakeholders. Communicating human-interest stories and engaging them in debate can help. Using “champions” to reach this group can also be useful. Although, in some cases, there may not be much you can do.

- The lower left quadrant is **ignore or monitor**: you may want to forget this group because these people are not interested and they do not agree. If they are not important for your project's success, ignore them and focus resources elsewhere.
-
- 7. Draw arrows to show where you want your stakeholders to move.**
- Start to draw arrows of where you would like stakeholders to move across quadrants. For example, is an important stakeholder currently in the bottom-right quadrant "challenge or persuade" and you want them to be in the top-right quadrant "working in partnership"?
 - Pick those who are most important to your project. Five or six is enough. Each of these arrows represents a potential engagement strategy later, so restricting this to five or six ensures it is manageable.
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- 8. Use the sticker dots to identify power or influence on the post-it notes on the flipchart.**
- If you do not have sticker dots, use coloured pens.
 - The dot symbolizes power or influence. If the stakeholder has a lot of power or influence over your project, place three stickers on the post-it. If it has medium influence, place two. If it has low or limited influence, place one. If it has no influence, place none.
 - Use this to help prioritize on whom and where you focus your energy and resources.
-
- 9. Determine your priorities and outline action points.**
- As you decide where to focus your energy and resources, make a note (on a separate flipchart) of follow-up actions you are going to take to make changes in the directions you have identified.
 - As you assemble a list of actions, decide who will take each one forward and ensure they are clear about how to do so.
 - Keep the final matrix as you may want to use it for other tools, such as progress markers (tool x), force-field analysis (tool x) or outcome mapping (tool x).

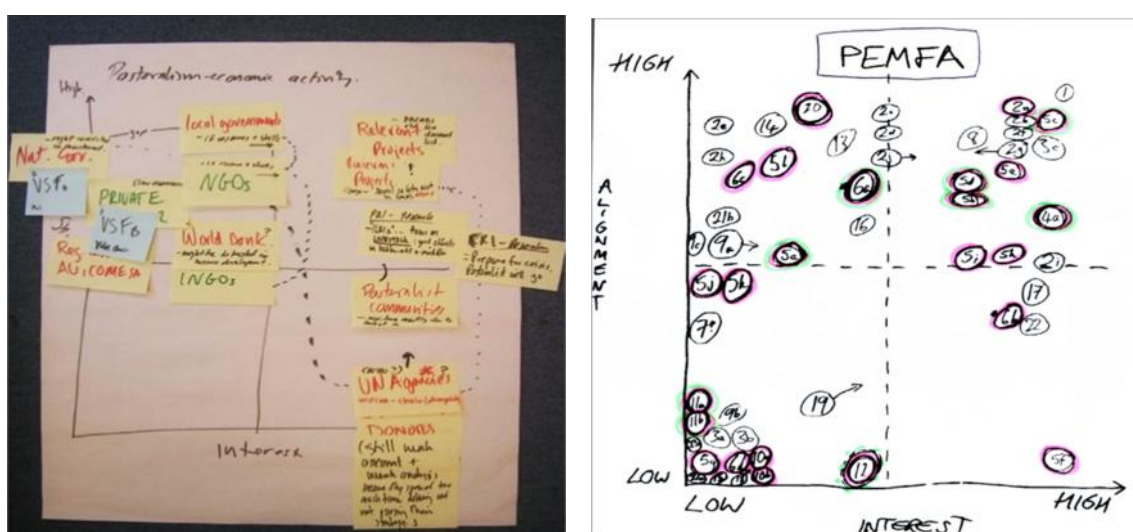


Figure A2.2. Examples of an AIIM map in action

Source: Overseas Development Institute, Research and Policy in Development programme, 2017.

Context, Evidence, Links Framework

What is it and why should I use it?

The Context, Evidence, Links (CEL) Framework is a conceptual tool used to think through the context within which IFAD is working as part of the design and implementation phases of COSOPs and projects. It considers how information has been used, shaped or ignored by policymakers and how evidence could be used more effectively for policymaking. The three components of the framework can provide valuable information about policy windows, key policy actors and networks, gaps in existing evidence, alternative means of communication and trends, and changes in the external environment (Figure A2.3).⁴

Addressing all these issues can prove a daunting task – this tool can help ease the process. If time is limited and you need a lighter version of the tool, eight priority questions have been identified that can be considered instead. Also, it is likely that you know many of the answers to the questions already, but outlining them helps to build a clear contextual picture.

Expected uses and outcomes

The CEL framework should be used when analysing political change and the factors that affect the role of evidence in influencing policy. It should be used when seeking to understand the links between an intervention's tactics, activities and inputs, and the corresponding changes in policy.

The framework is particularly helpful to strategize during design phases. The exercise is likely to draw on strengths and weaknesses of past interventions, and therefore may provide lessons on how you could adjust your work to make your impact greater. Making corresponding changes to your COSOP will help to capture the adjustments or to outline new methods or approaches that need to be made.

The tool

The framework focuses on three areas:

Context: This means considering the larger political arena, for example, the form of government (non-, semi- or fully democratic), type of institutions or level of media and academic freedom. How strong is the demand for policy change? What are the incentives for change? Do civil servants have room to manoeuvre? Do they employ participatory approaches? What are the best windows of opportunity to attempt policy change?

Evidence and communication: It is important when advocating for change to look at the quality of evidence and communication. Policy influence often comes about when messages are packaged and targeted effectively to their audience, and when you engage in dialogue with policymakers rather than talking "at them".

⁴ The CEL Framework was developed by the RAPID team at the ODI in 2002, and has been used by programmes and organizations around the world. See Crewe and Young (2002), *Bridging Research and Policy: Context, Evidence and Links*. ODI Working Paper 173. Available at: www.odi.org/sites/odi.org.uk/files/odi-assets/publications-opinion-files/184.pdf.

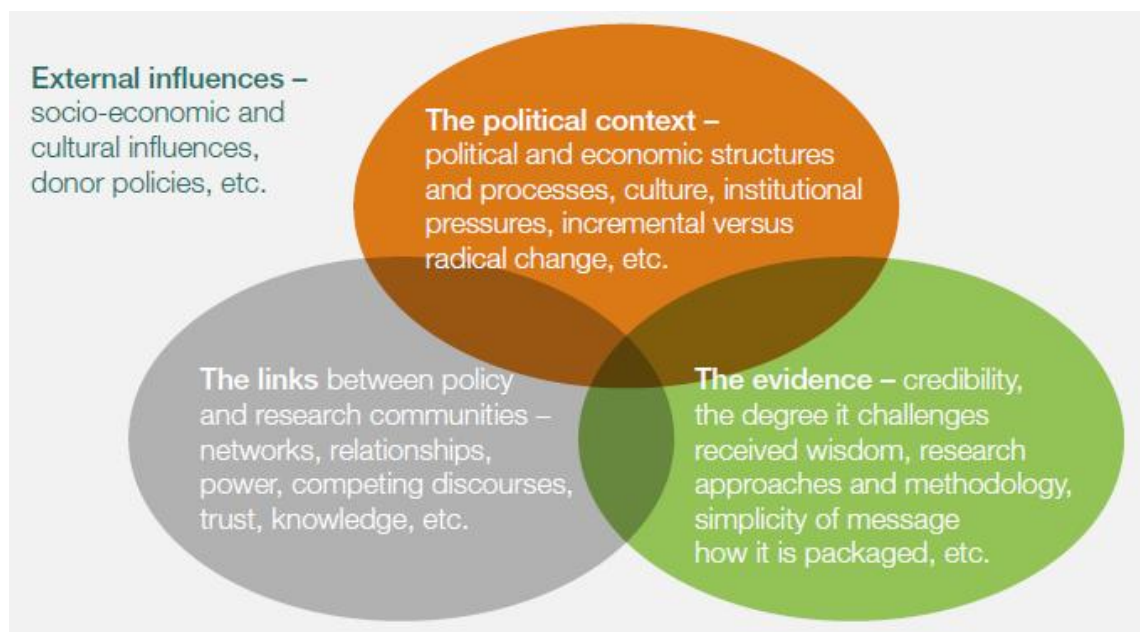


Figure A2.3. The Context, Evidence, Links Framework

Source: RAPID Outcome Mapping Approach (ROMA): a guide to policy engagement and policy influence. Overseas Development Institute, 2014. Available at www.roma.odi.org

Links: The framework emphasizes how networks and relationships can influence policy change. Are there effective feedback processes with policymakers that are based on a foundation of trust? Links demonstrate the level of trust between different communities.

Guide questions (the eight priority questions are highlighted)

CONTEXT	
1	Who are the key policy actors?
2	Is there a demand for research and new ideas among policymakers?
3	What are the sources of resistance to evidence-based policymaking?
4	What is the policy environment? a. What are the policymaking structures? b. What are the policymaking processes? c. What is the relevant legal/policy framework? d. What are the opportunities and timing for input into formal processes?
5	How do global, national and local political, social and economic structures and interests affect the room for manoeuvre of policymakers?
6	Who shapes the aims and outputs of policies?
7	How do assumptions influence policymaking? To what extent are decisions routine, incremental, fundamental or emergent, and who supports or resists change?

EVIDENCE

-
- | | |
|----|---|
| 8 | What are the prevailing narratives? |
| 9 | Is there enough evidence (research-based, experience and statistics) to support them? |
| 10 | What type of evidence exists? What type convinces policymakers? How is evidence presented? |
| 11 | Is the evidence relevant? Is it accurate, material and applicable? |
| 12 | How was the information gathered and by whom? |
| 13 | Are the evidence and the source perceived as credible and trustworthy by policy actors? |
| 14 | Has any information or research been ignored and why? |
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LINKS

Who are the key stakeholders (from AIIM)?

Who are the experts?

What links and networks exist between them?

What roles do they play? Are they intermediaries between research and policy?

Whose evidence do they communicate?

Which individuals or institutions have significant power to influence policy?

Are these policy actors and networks legitimate? Do they have a constituency? If so, who?

Source: Adapted from Start and Hovland (2004: 18).

The steps

CEL can be developed individually and with minimal resources responses to the guide questions can be sketched. Alternatively, CEL can be conducted by a group. If working in a group:

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- | | |
|---|--|
| 1 | Divide participants into groups of around three. |
| 2 | Put three sheets of flipchart paper on the wall and appoint a scribe. <ul style="list-style-type: none">Label one Context, one Evidence and one Links.Place the Links paper below Context and Evidence so that they almost form a circle. |
| 3 | Discuss and determine which area of your work will be analysed. <ul style="list-style-type: none">If sufficiently narrow, this could be all of your work, or you could pick a particular policy area. |
| 4 | Work through the guide questions. <ul style="list-style-type: none">Write the answers to each question on post-it notes and add to the flipchart paper.Be as specific as possible.Explain your answers to the group as you put them up. |
| 5 | Add a new sheet of flipchart paper alongside links titled “recommendations”. <ul style="list-style-type: none">Discuss what you have learned from the exercise and how you might apply it to your work.Write down possible recommendations as you go.If appropriate, add an action and person who will lead the action next to each recommendation. |
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An example of CEL – Poverty reduction strategies

In September 1999, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) adopted a new approach to aid – Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs). How did the idea of the PRSPs come to be adopted? What was the role of research in this process – both “academic research” in general and the “applied policy research” within the World Bank and the IMF? An Overseas Development Institute (ODI) case study traces the various factors that contributed to this far-reaching policy shift.

Political context. The most important contextual factor that shaped the PRSP initiative was the convergence of debates and controversies in the field of international development in the late 1990s. This led to a widespread sense of there being “a problem” within the international development policy field even though policymakers did not agree on the exact nature of the problem. The challenges that needed to be addressed, particularly by the World Bank and IMF, included:

- The questioning of the mandates of the IMF and World Bank – in the light of the 1997 Asia Crisis and the failure of Structural Adjustment Programmes to resolve Africa’s development problems.
- The 1999 Review of the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Initiative and the campaign to make debt relief “broader, deeper, faster, better”.
- The need to operationalize the new conceptual framework for aid put forward by World Bank President James Wolfensohn’s Comprehensive Development Framework.
- The PRSP initiative can be viewed as bringing together all these interlinked concerns, and providing answers or at least partial solutions to the issues that needed to be addressed. It therefore received broad-based support from many different parties.

Evidence. There were three main types of evidence that influenced the emergence of the PRSP initiative. First, academic research contributed, often indirectly, to the major shifts in international development discourse towards poverty reduction, participation and aid effectiveness. Second, there were important pieces of applied policy research undertaken in the late 1990s, in particular the research related to the Enhanced Structural Adjustment Facility (ESAF) reviews, the HIPC review, the Strategic Partnership with Africa Working Groups and NGO research on debt relief. This evidence focused more on providing policy recommendations and operational solutions. This was seen as particularly credible when it was commissioned by the international financial institutions themselves or other donors, demonstrated analytical rigour, and was communicated in a language that was accessible and relevant to World Bank and IMF staff and other donor agencies. Third, an extremely powerful demonstration effect was provided by the positive experience of Uganda in drafting the Poverty Eradication Action Plan. This did much to convince policymakers of the feasibility and merits of the poverty reduction strategy model.

Links. The PRSP story is characterized by a multitude of links between policymakers and researchers in main institutional actors – the World Bank and the IMF, Strategic Partnership with Africa, the governments of the United Kingdom and the United States of America, and the NGO movement. As one interviewee put it, “none of the players is more than two handshakes away from any of the others”. The formal and informal networks contributed to the speed with which the PRSP ideas were spread and accepted in international development policy.

Source: www.odi.org/sites/odi.org.uk/files/odi-assets/publications-opinion-files/198.pdf

Force Field Analysis

What is it and why should I use it?

Force Field Analysis. Force Field Analysis is a flexible tool to identify the forces supporting and opposing a desired outcome and suggest concrete responses. It can be used to inform decision-making and is particularly useful for planning and implementing change management programmes in organizations. It is useful for gaining a comprehensive view of the different influences involved in a policy or in a process of change, where they originate from and how strong they are. As a result, it can help identify the relative priority of strategies to be followed.

Expected uses and outcomes

You can use this tool to map the context (identifying forces for and against change), or you can use it when you have identified broad policy objectives or stakeholder specific outcomes and you want to generate activities to bring about those outcomes (Figure A2.4). The aim is to identify forces that facilitate a specific change or outcome and forces that constrain/block a specific change or outcome. By force, we do not necessarily mean an actor, but a factor or trend (such as limited power, declining budgets, poor relationships and poor technical capacity).

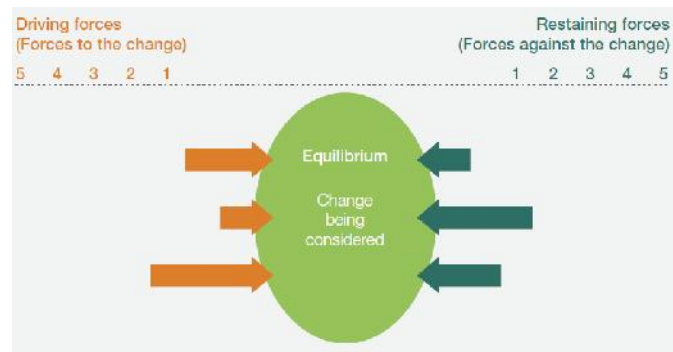


Figure A2.4. Force field analysis – mapping the context

Source: Overseas Development Institute, Research and Policy in Development, 2017.

Once positive and negative forces have been identified, they can be rated in absolute terms, or ranked in order of the degree of influence they have over the change/outcome specified. The aim is then to think of activities that will increase the small positive forces and reduce the large negative forces.

Once the exercise is completed, you should have a list of activities that help you to facilitate the emergence of a specific change or outcome that you would like to see.

The tool

The tool is summarized in Figure A2.5.

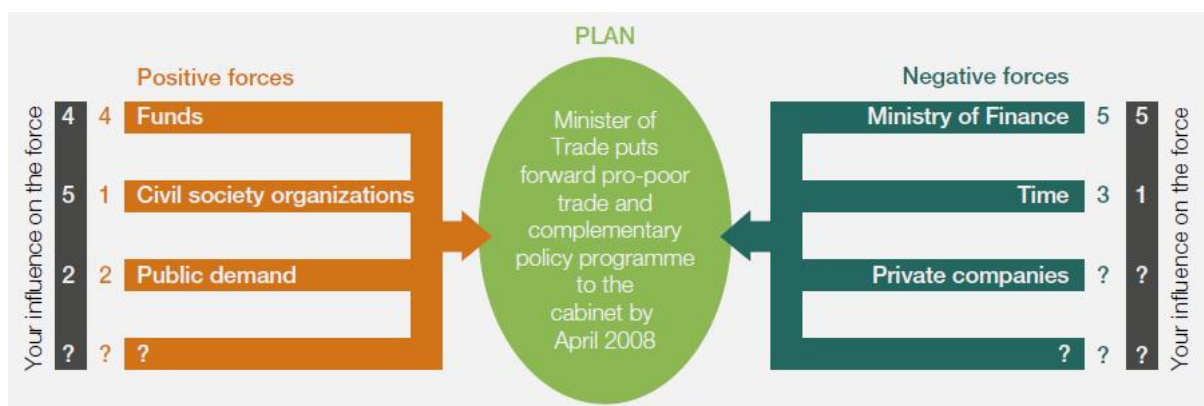


Figure A2.5. Force field analysis tool

Source: RAPID Outcome Mapping Approach (ROMA): a guide to policy engagement and policy influence. Overseas Development Institute, 2014. Available at www.roma.odl.org

The steps

Divide participants into groups of around three.

- 1 **Put the sheet of flipchart paper on the wall and appoint a scribe.**
 - Agree on the area of change or stakeholder specific outcome to be discussed.
 - Write this in the centre of the flipchart.
 - Draw two columns on the far left and right of the paper.
 - Label the one on the left positive forces.
 - Label the one on the right negative forces.
- 2 **Now brainstorm forces for and against change.**
 - List forces in support of the change (driving the change forward) in the column to the left.
 - List forces working against the change (holding it back) in a column to the right.
 - Group these by theme if you find there are too many.
 - Rate each force between 1 (weak) to 5 (strong).
- 3 **Determine what action you can take.**
 - Discuss action to reduce the rating of the high “restraining” forces and to increase the rating of the “driving” forces.
 - There may be a high negative force, which you could feasibly try to reduce.
 - If you find you have no power to influence this, you may want to do something to increase a low positive force over which you have considerable influence.
- 4 **Prioritize forces that you wish to focus on.**
 - If there are too many forces or you feel you do not have enough information to generate relevant activities, you can rate the extent to which you or your organization has power to influence the force identified.
- 5 **Given these priorities, reconsider your actions.**
 - With this additional information, discuss (again) actions you might take to reduce the rating of the high “restraining” forces and to increase the rating of the “driving” forces, especially where you have some influence over the particular force.

What the results might look like and some examples

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) adapted Force Field Analysis, adding an extra element of the organization’s control over a situation. For example, in an attempt to improve success in afforestation and reforestation programmes, the agency might list all the driving forces and restraining forces. It then rates each force by its importance and by the degree of control it exerts over that force. The totals are then calculated and a table developed (Table A2.1). This means that for each force, the higher the total of importance and control, the more impact the agency should have in trying to address that force. In addition, if the agency can find some forces that explain others, the effectiveness of its actions will be greater. For example, suppose that “improved operational planning” can reduce “losses to fires and grazing” as well as “poor procedures for hiring and paying field workers”. In this example, the agency decided to give special attention to “operational planning” because of these cross-impacts.

Table A2.1. Force Field Analysis for success in afforestation and reforestation programmes

	Importance	Agency control	Total
Driving forces			
Rising prices of wood products	2	2	4
Genetically improved planting stock	2	4	6
Improved operational planning	4	5	9
Increasing public support	2	2	4
Restraining forces			
Decreasing agency budget	2	2	4
Irregular annual precipitation	5	1	6
Poor procedures for hiring and paying field workers	4	4	8
Losses to fires and grazing	5	3	8

K* framework

What is it and why should I use it?

The K* framework provides an understanding of what type of knowledge function IFAD will play during the course of the COSOP or the project, and is therefore more related to defining an appropriate knowledge-management strategy (though, as highlighted above, knowledge management is highly linked to policy engagement). It allows IFAD – or projects – to consider how to work together with others. When developing the policy engagement plan or the policy activities and component, the K* framework may be useful to consider how information is used and how to gain the best traction for policy impact (Figure A2.6). By applying the framework, it is possible to decide how to work with knowledge.

Some stakeholders (who may be identified using the Alignment, Interest and Influence Matrix or AIIM), will require information that may be difficult for you to provide. It may be necessary to engage with others who could help you to communicate more effectively. The key use of this framework is to understand that a producer of knowledge may not be in the best position to communicate it to the stakeholder. It may require other stakeholders or organizations that serve a different function to the knowledge.

Expected uses and outcomes

When developing your policy engagement plan, the K* framework may be useful in considering how information is used and how you can gain the best traction for policy impact. This is important when you want to consider your approach to policy engagement. By applying the framework, you can decide how you work with knowledge. Depending on what you find, you may consider that you are unable to do certain types of policy work alone and must establish partnerships with others to do this effectively. This framework should explain to you what type of organization to look for when searching for partners.

This exercise can be done quickly by one person or as a group.

K* framework consists of four concentric circles, each representing a different knowledge function.

- The first circle focuses on the first knowledge function, which is **information intermediary**. This function is focused on enabling access to information from multiple sources. Information intermediaries are often represented as the knowledge producers.
- The second circle represents **knowledge translators**. Knowledge translators take primary sources of information and look at the implications of the information, often looking for the “what now?” question. Translating the knowledge provides an additional function for the knowledge that is useful for the end users.
- The third circle focuses on **knowledge brokers**. Organizations that fulfil this role link up the right information with the right issue. This can be a difficult task if the information is not available.
- The last role is that of **innovation broker**. Organizations that fulfil this function focus on the co-creation by knowledge producers and knowledge users of knowledge, social learning and innovation.

As you travel to the right of the framework, the relationship between the knowledge producer and the knowledge users increases in intensity.

An important implication of the framework is that each project can only occupy one or, at the most, two knowledge functions at a time. It is difficult for projects and/or organizations to operate at different ends of the spectrum together. Most projects fulfil one or two functions at a time. As a result, when considering your policy engagement plan, it should be important to consider what knowledge function your project is serving.

The steps

Before starting, ensure as a group that you agree on the scope of your project.

Looking at either your project’s or your organization’s relationship with knowledge, consider what your knowledge function is.

- Most organizations and projects generally occupy only one function.
- Some organizations may occupy two functions, but the functions overlap.
- Rarely does an organization or project occupy functions that do not overlap.

Next, consider other organizations in the policy arena.

- First, find examples of the extremes. What organizations serve as an information intermediary? What organizations serve as an innovation broker?
- Next, find examples of organizations that serve as knowledge translators and knowledge brokers.

Reflect upon the questions below to help you think through any refinements and possible next steps.

Are there any gaps? Is there a missing function in your policy arena?

- Is it possible to collaborate with other organizations that fulfil other knowledge functions? Often it is best to work in teams to bring about the greatest probability of impact.
 - Separation of state powers: Do you understand the checks and balances between different branches of government, and between central and local governments? How are different branches of government able to source, interpret evidence differently? What checks and balances are in place to ensure the weaker voices are heard? Does this vary between different state types?
 - Formal and informal political relationships: What are the links between formal and informal political relationships? How do opportunities for public debate affect whether non-elites can express their preferences in decisions? Who has the strongest voice in policy debates?
 - External forces: How do international agreements affect what is debated and implemented by governments? How does this have wider implications for wider evidence bases?
 - Capacity of institutions to absorb change: How do policymakers interact with each other and what is their capacity to absorb information? What implications are there for possible “policy windows”?
 - Not all questions and issues here will be relevant but they cover all areas of political analysis and ensure a more systematic analysis.
-

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<http://policyimpacttoolkit.squarespace.com/library/the-alignment-interest-and-influence-matrix-aiim.html>
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- For detailed instructions, a diagram and an example of Force Field Analysis, see <https://www.odi.org/publications/5218-force-field-analysis-decision-maker> and <https://www.odi.org/sites/odi.org.uk/files/odi-assets/publications-opinion-files/194.pdf> (pp. 22-23).
- Simple step-by-step guides to do Force Field Analysis are available at www.mindtools.com/forcefld.html, for examples of the use of force field analysis in management and www.psywww.com/mtsite/forcefld.html, for examples of the use of force field analysis in psychology
- Examples of the application of Force Field Analysis in different areas are available at
Change management: www.accel-team.com/techniques/force_field_analysis.html
Health (MSH and UNICEF): <http://erc.msh.org/quality/example/example5.cfm>.
- For computer software to conduct Force Field Analysis, see: www.skymark.com/resources/tools/force_field_diagram.asp.



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