Activities to Deepen Your Power-Building Analysis

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power-analysis-guide

CHAPTER 2

Landscape Analysis

HIP
HUMAN IMPACT PARTNERS

What is a landscape analysis?

A landscape analysis[1] is a process that allows you to systematically identify the people, communities, agencies, and organizations who could positively or negatively impact the success of your initiative. There are several methods that can be used to perform the analysis; this tool offers two methods.

Why do a landscape analysis?

Whether you want to pass or block a new policy, change internal practices in your organization, or launch a new program, success depends on knowing who has an interest in your issue, who has the power to advance or block your desired outcome, and who could be strong allies to your cause.

Analyzing your potential partners and opponents is particularly useful at the onset of a campaign for change, and can be helpful to prepare for power mapping.

Landscape Analysis Tools

Activity #1: Potential Partners and Opponents Table

1 This process has commonly been referred to as a "stakeholder" analysis. Native American and Indigenous communities have long communicated that this term is inappropriate and rooted in oppressive colonial practices. Naming this process a "landscape analysis" is our attempt to honor this truth and participate in an evolution of language that centers liberatory ways of being.

Why:

The purpose of this activity is to identify key potential partners and opponents who have an interest in or influence over the policy or practice you seek to change.

The activity guides you through steps to gather information about invested parties and their influence, and record the information in a table. The information gathered can be applied again in future initiatives.

Who:

Invite 3-5 people to support filling in the table. We recommend including people with diverse expertise and connections to uncover partners/opponents and information you may otherwise miss. It is particularly fruitful to include partners across government and outside of government, such as community power-building organizations (CPBOs).

If you have a large team working towards the change target, you do not necessarily need to complete this activity with the entire group; you can complete the first pass with a small group and solicit further input at a larger meeting.

What you'll need:

If Virtual:

- A copy of the table below, using screen share, Google Docs, or Jamboard

If In Person:

- A copy of the table below, with a method for ensuring everyone can watch the table be filled in together (such as projecting on a large screen)

Time: The length of this activity depends on how many partners or opponents you are including, the group's breadth and depth of knowledge of them, and the complexity of the landscape. This activity could take between two and three hours.

Instructions

1. **Identify the change target:** Discuss with your group and come to consensus about your goal. Is it a change in policy or practice? The creation of a new program or coalition? The more specific you can be, the better. Record this at the top of the table.
2. **Brainstorm:** Use the following questions to support creating your list of key potential partners and opponents.
   a. Who would be most impacted by the change you seek?
   b. Which organizations or people are already working towards this change?
   c. Who has the decision-making power to approve your change?
   d. Who is responsible for implementing the change, and who holds them accountable?
   e. Which organizations or people could provide relevant data, resources, or other support?

3. **Complete the table:** Use the key on the following page to help you fill in each column for each potential partner or opponent. Use this table as a reference throughout work on your change target.

Potential Partners and Opponents Table

Change Target:

POTENTIAL PARTNER/ OPPONENT	WHAT THEY IMPLEMENT	RELEVANT POWER(S)	ACCOUNTABLE TO	INFLUENCED BY	YOUR RELATIONSHIP
Name of organization / individual and what sector they represent *e.g., Government agency, service provider, community power building org, private sector*	Their specific implementation or action powers as related to your change target or strategy *e.g., They inspect restaurant facilities, approve housing permits, maintain the properties, fund the projects, decide who to contract*	What Arenas of Power do they have influence over? *e.g., Electoral, Legislative, Judicial, Administrative, Cultural, Corporate*	Who do they report to? Who decides their budget? *e.g., Community members, shareholders, mayor, city council, legislature, funders, voters*	Who/what has considerable sway over the organization? *e.g., Elected officials, unions, chamber of commerce, print or social media, election cycle, sales/consumers*	What are the formal and informal relationships of your organization to this stakeholder? *e.g., Member on their task force, they receive contracts from you for community engagement, X's partner is the ED of Y org, A + B go to church with C + D*

Activity #2: Landscape Web

Why:

The purpose of this activity is to create a visual that depicts relationships between your key partners and opponents and generate ideas on how to improve key connections that will advance your change target.

The Landscape Web can be created as a follow up to the previous table activity *or* as a standalone activity. It is also a useful tool to have on hand for the final steps of power mapping.

Who:

A group is ready to conduct this activity once they have a better understanding of their own power and have a clear change target or goal in mind to reduce inequities. Note that you don't need to fill the web out with an entire advisory committee; you can complete the first pass with a small group and solicit further input at a larger meeting. A team of 3-5 people is sufficient. We recommend including people with diverse expertise and connections to uncover people and information you may otherwise miss.

What you'll need:

If Virtual:

- A blank Jamboard or similar platform

If In Person:

- Large butcher paper and colorful markers
- Something to make connections between the circles, like markers or string

Time: The length of this activity depends on whether you have already filled out the table above, how many partners or opponents you are including, and how complex the relationships are. This activity could take between one and three hours.

Instructions

If you are creating the Landscape Web as a follow up to completing the Potential Partners and Opponents Table, skip to step 3.

1. **Identify the change target:** Discuss with your group and come to consensus about your goal. Is it a change in policy or practice? The creation of a new program or coalition? The more specific you can be, the better. Record this at the top of the table.
2. **Brainstorm:** Use the following questions to support creating your list of key potential partners and opponents.
   a. Who would be most impacted by the change you seek?
   b. Which organizations or people are already working towards this change?

c. Who has the decision-making power to approve your change?

d. Who is responsible for implementing the change, and who holds them accountable?

e. Which organizations or people could provide relevant data, resources, or other support?

3. **Create and label circles:** Place your own office/agency/organization/coalition in a circle at the center of the diagram. Draw and label circles for all of the other people or organizations that you named in the table and would like to represent in the map. If completing this activity in person, you can also use cut-out circles that can be shifted to reflect closeness or distance of relationships.

4. **Color code the circles:** This step is optional, but can help to identify patterns in relationships. For example, partners or opponents falling in the following categories would each have their own color:

   a. Government agencies

   b. Community-based organizations

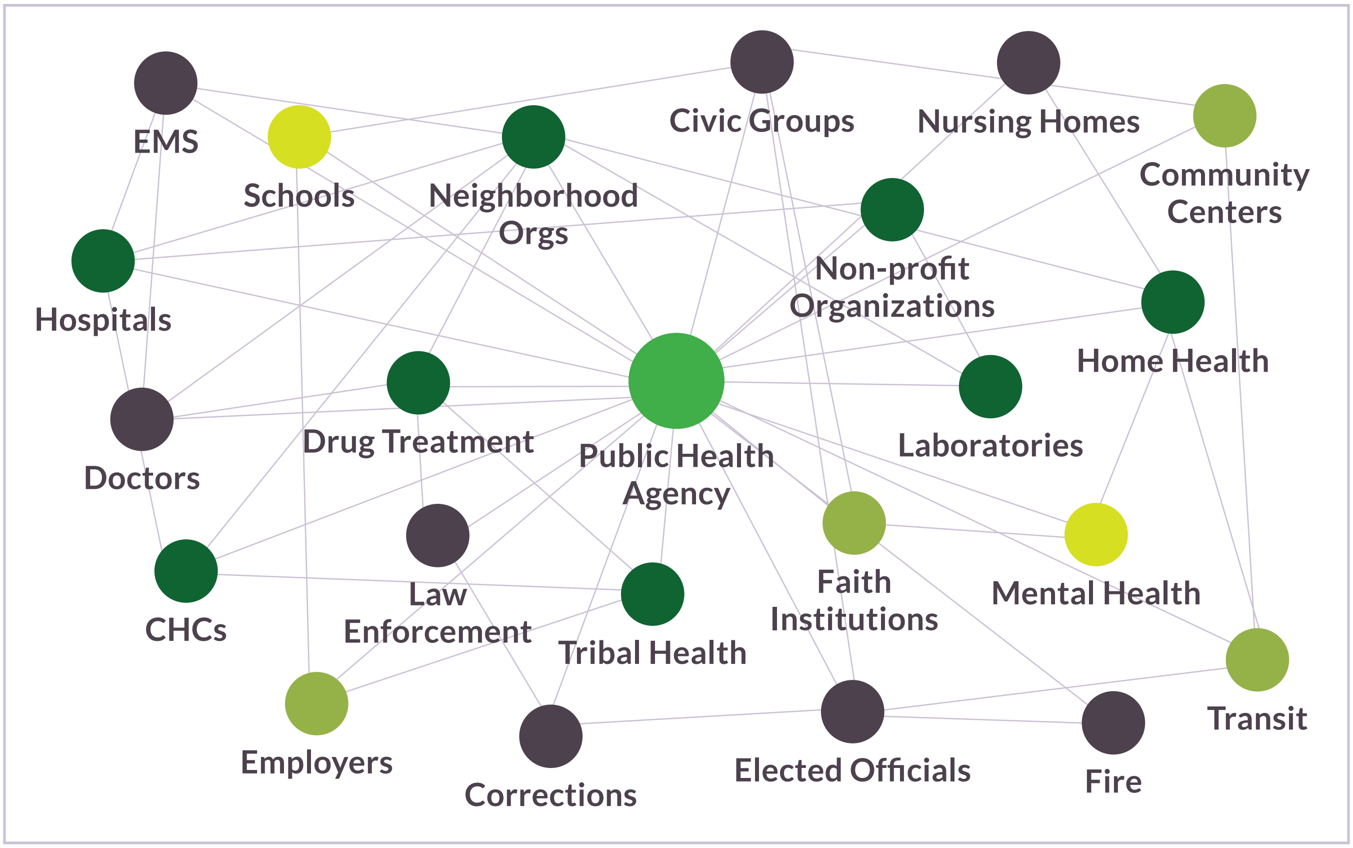
   c. Health care entities

   d. Businesses

   e. Elected officials

   Feel free to create your own categories.

5. **Make connections:** Draw lines between the circles to represent connections or relationships between partners and/or opponents. Relationships can be formal (e.g., X agency funds Y nonprofit) or informal (e.g., the Director of X organization is friends with Y elected official). Optional: use different types of lines to indicate the kind of relationship (e.g., a solid line for formal, a dotted line for informal).



6. **Review the map:** Use the following prompting questions for discussion and take notes.
   a. What patterns do you notice?
   b. What do you notice about formal and informal relationships to the key decision-maker(s) for the change target?
   c. What existing connections could be leveraged to achieve the change target?
   d. Where could your agency improve its relationships to advance the change target?
   e. Where could your agency facilitate connections between partners to increase the likelihood of success for the change target?

About Human Impact Partners

Human Impact Partners transforms the field of public health to center equity and builds collective power with social justice movements. www.humanimpact.org

For more information about this resource, please contact info@humanimpact.org.

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