

Step 1-Worksheet 5.1 Know your issues, goals, supporters and opposition

Working through this worksheet will help your group to more fully understand your issue/problem and start to identify stakeholders.

Issue/Problem: Setting: Population:

1. What is the extent of the issue/problem? (How many people and/or systems does it affect?)	4. How long has it been an issue/problem?
2. Why is it an issue/problem?	5. What has been done to try and resolve the issue/problem in the past? Are there policies that specifically target this issue?
3. What has contributed to the development of the issue/problem?	6. What could happen if this issue/problem is NOT dealt with?

<p>7. What needs to be done about it?</p>	<p>10. Who might support you or have similar perspectives on this issue/problem?</p>
<p>8. What is your goal(s)?</p>	<p>11. Who might oppose, object or have a different perspective on this issue/problem?</p>
<p>9. Who else thinks this is an issue/problem?</p>	<p>In one sentence, describe, in a bit more detail, your issue and how you would like to see things change.</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>

Adapted from The Health Communication Unit at the Centre of Health Promotion, University of Toronto, 2004

Step 2.

Identify and engage stakeholders and develop networks

Once you have an understanding of how policy is made, and who makes policy related to your issues your next move is to “advocate” to get your issue on the agenda of the relevant policy makers.

This is where your research, insight and commitment to your issue pay off. You can have an impact in policy development if you know your issue, present your ideas and evidence clearly, and are prepared with solutions.

Any argument is more persuasive if there are many voices supporting it. Broad support is particularly important when you are trying to get your issue on a politician’s agenda. If you can convince a politician that he or she will please many voters by acting on your issue, you are more likely to win over the politician. Building networks and involving groups and individuals who also have a stake in the issue can bring that “bigger voice” forward.

Politicians may agree to a certain policy action but it may never be implemented. One big voice, including many stakeholders who are working on the same issue and advocating for the same cause, can be a key factor in keeping an issue on the policy agenda. A united, consistent voice can help to make sure the issue remains in the spotlight.

Key Term

Advocacy

A combination of individual and social actions designed to gain political commitment, policy support, social acceptance and systems support for a particular health goal or programme.

World Health Organization, 1995

Step 2- Worksheet 5.2 Identify and engage stakeholders and develop networks

When moving forward on an issue/problem there are certain people or organizations that you may want to involve. Brainstorm, using this worksheet, as to who this might be.

Issue/Problem:

<p>1. Who are your potential partners on the issue/problem?</p>	<p>3. Who is going to benefit from or be affected by this issue/problem (e.g. single parents, those on low incomes, seniors, farmers, etc)?</p>
<p>2. Who has been—or is now— involved in similar issues/problems?</p>	<p>4. Who are the key stakeholders—in government and in the community—for this issue/problem?</p>

Adapted from The Health Communication Unit at the Centre of Health Promotion, University of Toronto, 2004

Step 3.

Know the policy process, policy tools and public policy makers

The policy development process at the government level can be lengthy and complex. It helps to understand how an issue becomes a policy issue and what happens from there.

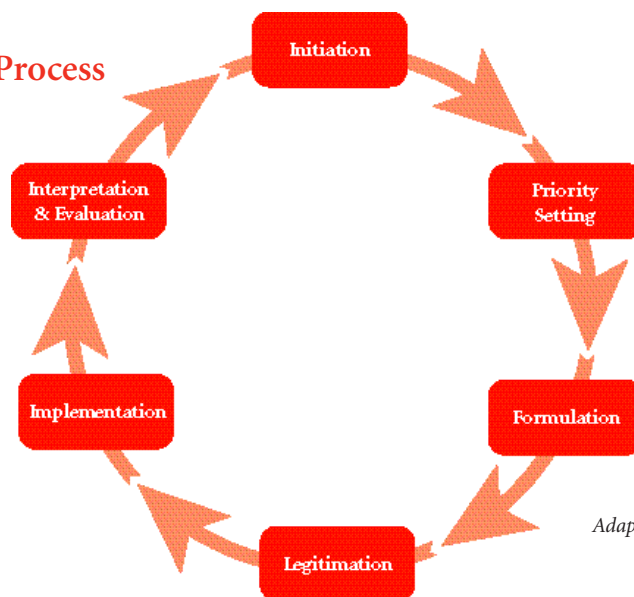
Here is an example process of how public policy is made. It shows how long and complex it can be.

Key Term

Public Policy Process

The process through which legislators or bureaucrats identify an issue and develop a public policy to address it.

The Policy Process



Adapted from: O'Neill

- Initiation** An issue is brought to the attention of policy-makers and possibly put onto the political agenda if it is a public policy issue.
- Priority Setting** The issue is looked at in terms of the many competing issues that need to be acted on.
- Formulation** Policy goals are set and the policy direction is developed.
- Legitimation** Research is done to determine what has been done in the past, what has been successful and what hasn't worked. The policy is written.
- Implementation** The policy is put into action.

Interpretation and Evaluation Under ideal conditions the effectiveness and impact of the policy are monitored and evaluated. However, this is the part of the policy process that often does not occur.

Policy Tools

In *Section 4*, Activity 4.3 helped participants think about various policy tools used to address issues. Refer back to this activity on page 38. You could use this activity again if you get stuck.

Locating Public Policy Makers

Since all levels of government—federal, provincial and local —make public policy, deciding which level of government to approach is a critical step. You need to locate the people who are responsible for developing policy on the issue you are interested in. It helps if he or she is interested in your issue and willing to move it forward on the policy agenda. But even if the policy maker is not initially sympathetic, it's your job to try and change his or her mind!

It's a good idea to establish and maintain good relations with the policy makers you deal with —whether they agree with you or not. Influencing policy can sometimes take a long time, and in the long run you'll be more effective if you make as many friends —and as few enemies —as possible.

Who are the key public policy makers?

Local

Mayor
City Councillors
Members of special committees

Provincial/ Territorial

Elected officials
Premiers
Department
Ministers

Federal

Senators
Prime Minister
Members of Parliament
Department
Ministers

Aboriginal Governance

Chiefs
Councils
Minister of Indian
Affairs

Step 3 - Worksheet 5.3 Know the policy process, policy tools and public policy makers

Knowing the policy process, policy tools and public policy makers is essential when trying to move your issue/problem forward. Use this worksheet to help you brainstorm.

Issue/Problem:

1. Which level of government is involved in the issue/problem?	3. Which elected officials are involved and where do they stand on the issue/problem?	
2. What departments are involved or have something at stake?	4. Who are the key stakeholders—in government and in the community—for this issue/problem?	
	5. What are the possible policy tools you could use to address the issue/problem?	

Adapted from The Health Communication Unit at the Centre of Health Promotion, University of Toronto, 2004

Step 4.

Take action!

At this point, you've identified your issue, done your research, and identified the relevant policy makers, stakeholders and potential partners. The next step is to develop an action plan.

Worksheet 5.4 is a check list to help you think about what strategies you might use in your action plan and make sure you are ready to act. Strategies for action are outlined in *Section 6* on page 61.

You can use Worksheet 5.5 to help you plan. You may have more than one strategy so photocopy this sheet to use for each one.



In 2002, the Healthy Child Committee of Cabinet of Manitoba mandated the establishment of the Northern Food Prices Project. The purpose of the project was to submit a report to the Committee identifying strategic options to address concerns about high food prices in northern Manitoba. Strategic options focused on reducing the retail price of nutritious foods such as milk and milk products (including infant formula and lactose-reduced products), fresh fruits and vegetables, meats, whole grains and other staples to northern citizens.

Northern Food Prices Report, 2003

Step 4 — Worksheet 5.4 Checklist for action planning

Policy change occurs when a number of factors come together at the right time, with the right people. You can set the stage by being aware of these factors and trying to bring as many as possible into play.

Key Factor	Do we have this?	If no, what can we do to get it? <i>See Section 6 for possible strategies</i>
Supporting information		
Important research		
Recent reports and documents		
Examples of successful policies or guidelines		
Timing		
Interest in issue from person with authority		
Political opportunity —election, public hearings, Royal Commission, etc.		
Perception of issue as a crisis		
General consensus that change is needed		
People have started talking about the issue		
Organization		
Links between stakeholders		
Positive connections between interested groups		
Influential group is involved		
Interested groups have sufficient resources		
Interested groups have motivation and energy		
Interested groups are open-minded and flexible		
Advocates are working together and agree on actions to take		
Message		
Agenda for action is clear		
Messages are clear		
Issue can be presented as a story		

Worksheet 5.5 Making an action plan

Action Plan Template			
Issue			
Goal			
Partners			
First Step			
Action planned			
Tasks	Who will do each task?	Resources and supports needed	Completion date
What's next?			
Action planned			
Tasks	Who will do each task?	Resources and supports needed	Completion date