

Target Audiences: Identifying Support and Opposition

Background Notes

To increase the chances of success, advocacy networks must identify and study all of the individuals and groups that may support the network's issue and goal as well as those that may oppose the issue and goal. The advocacy campaign's target audiences are determined for each advocacy objective and include the primary target audience—persons and/or institutional bodies that themselves have decision-making authority—as well as the secondary target audience—persons and institutional bodies that can influence the decision makers. Documenting information on these audiences helps the network target its advocacy activities, develop effective messages, and select appropriate channels of communication.

While the categories of people in the target audience are not identical in every setting, the FP/RH policy target audience is likely to include political leaders, national and local government officials, private and public sector service providers, the media, religious and traditional leaders, NGOs, women's organizations, professional associations, and business and civic groups. In some places and for some issues, the range of audiences is even wider and may encompass groups that are unlikely ever to meet each other, such as foreign donors or traditional healers.

Once the target audiences are identified, the network must determine the level of support or opposition to be expected from those representing the primary and secondary target audiences. For many reasons—religious, cultural, and historical—family planning/reproductive health issues are often controversial. People on both sides of the issue feel strongly that their position is the right one; therefore, they are willing to devote considerable resources to supporting that position.

Whether opposition is mild or strong, advocacy networks should be prepared to address it in ways that are most beneficial to their own efforts. The best advice is to be as informed as possible about the opposition's specific issues and base of support and to preempt oppositional efforts with messages that anticipate and refute the opposition's arguments.

On the other side of the coin, advocacy networks often dedicate themselves to broadening their base of support. The larger the number of persons or groups working to achieve the advocacy objective, the greater are the chances of success. Networks can create coalitions with other networks or formal groups, expand their own membership, create alliances with commercial or private sector entities, and/or generate public and community support to enlarge their support base.

OBJECTIVES

TIME

MATERIALS HANDOUTS

PREPARATION

ACTIVITY 1

Finally, advocacy networks cannot afford to forget the “undecideds” or neutral parties. In some cases, the best investment of time and energy is to appeal to the neutral public. Public opinion can exert powerful pressure on decision makers. In other cases, the network may find policy makers and public officials who appear neutral but in fact hesitate to voice an opinion due to the controversial nature of the FP/RH issue; they may support the advocacy efforts in private but prefer to appear neutral. The network may direct its efforts to convincing these influential “neutrals” to join and publicly support the campaign.

Several decisions are based on a thorough and sound analysis of the advocacy campaign’s target audience. This unit provides an opportunity for participants to identify both primary and secondary audiences for their specific advocacy objectives and to begin assessing the audiences’ level of knowledge and support before turning to the task of message development.

By the end of this unit, participants will be able to

- Use a power map to identify support and opposition around a particular advocacy issue; and
- Identify primary and secondary target audiences and analyze their interest in an advocacy issue.

2 hours and 45 minutes

- Newsprint, markers, and tape
- Three to four pairs of scissors, glue, colored paper, and old magazines that can be cut up for making the power map
- Copies of handouts
 - III.3.1 Background Notes
 - III.3.2 Power Map for Audience Analysis
 - III.3.3 Primary and Secondary Audience Analysis Form

- For Activity 1, copy Handout III.3.2 on overhead transparency or draw it on newsprint.
- For Activity 1, write the task on newsprint.
- Place the scissors, tape, colored paper, or magazines on a centrally located table.

Identifying Support and Opposition

Time: 1 hour and 30 minutes

Introduction (15 minutes)

1. Give a brief introduction to Unit 3 by reviewing the objectives and covering the following major points:
 - To increase the chances of success, advocacy networks must identify and study all the individuals and groups that may support the network’s issue and goal as well as those that may oppose it. These people constitute the target audience.

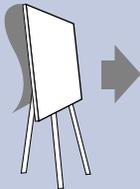
- A target audience is determined for each advocacy objective. The audience includes the primary target audience—persons and/or institutional bodies that themselves have decision-making authority—as well as the secondary target audience—persons and/or institutional bodies that can influence the decision makers.
- The network should document information on these audiences as a means of targeting advocacy activities, developing effective messages, and selecting appropriate channels of communication.
- The categories of people in the target audience are not identical in every setting. In the FP/RH policy context, however, the target audience is likely to include political leaders, national and local government officials, private and public sector service providers, the media, religious and traditional leaders, NGOs, women’s organizations, professional associations, and business and civic groups.
- Once these persons/bodies are identified, the network assesses the level of support or opposition to be expected from those in the primary and secondary target audiences.
- For many reasons—religious, cultural, and historical—FP/RH issues are often controversial. People on both sides of the issue feel strongly that their position is the right one; therefore, they are willing to devote considerable resources to supporting that position. Identifying potential opposition is as important as identifying potential allies.
- The network can address the opposition by becoming as informed as possible about the opposition’s specific issues and base of support. It can preempt opponents’ efforts with messages that anticipate and address their arguments.
- On the other hand, advocacy networks often dedicate themselves to broadening their base of support. The larger the number of persons or groups working to achieve the advocacy objective, the greater are the chances of success.
- Creating broad-based support can be achieved through coalitions with other networks or formal groups, membership expansion, alliances with the commercial or private sector, or public awareness.
- Advocates cannot afford to forget the “undecideds” or neutral parties. In some cases, the best investment of time and energy is to appeal to the neutral public. Public opinion can exert powerful pressure on a decision maker.
- In other cases, the network may find policymakers and public officials who appear neutral but in fact hesitate to voice an opinion due to the controversial nature of the FP/RH issue; they may support the advocacy efforts in private but prefer to appear neutral. The network may direct its efforts to convincing these influential “neutrals” to join and publicly support the campaign.
- There are many decisions that are based on a thorough analysis of the target audience. In this unit, participants identify primary and secondary audiences for their specific advocacy objectives and begin to assess the audiences’ level of knowledge and support for the issue and objective.

Transition

In this unit, participants continue to develop the advocacy strategy around their issue, goal, and objectives. The participants create power maps to identify members of the target audience as sources of support or opposition for each advocacy objective.

Power Maps (1 hour and 15 minutes)

1. Present the blank power map that you drew on the flipchart or overhead transparency.
2. Explain that participants will work in the same groups as for the advocacy goals and objectives.
3. The task for each group is to create a “power map” that visually depicts the target audience—support, opposition, and neutral actors—for its own advocacy objective.
4. Distribute newsprint and markers to the groups and show them the scissors, colored paper, magazines, glue, etc., that they can use to create their power maps.
5. Review the task that you have written on newsprint by using the blank map as a model.



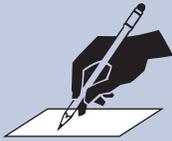
Task for Power Maps

- a. Prepare the newsprint. Write your group’s advocacy objective on the top and divide the newsprint into two sides, one labeled support and the other opposition. The middle line depicts neutrality.
- b. Brainstorm a list of all institutions and individuals with interest in your issue/objective—supporters, opposition, undecided, or unknown.
- c. For each institution or individual, cut a symbol or picture out of paper/magazine and label it.
- d. Tape the symbols on the map in the appropriate place—support, opposition, neutral.

6. As you review the task, elaborate on several steps as follows:
 - **Step b.** Participants should think of traditional as well as nontraditional “actors” in the policy process, including community leaders, celebrities, business leaders, relatives of the target audience, etc.
 - **Step c.** Groups should be as creative as possible in selecting a symbol or magazine image to depict the different actors. If the actor has broad power or influence over the issue, groups should create a large symbol. If the actor is interested in the issue but has little influence over the target audience or general public, groups should use a small symbol.
 - **Step d.** If the actor is highly supportive of the issue/objective, the symbol should be placed on the left side of the map. If the actor represents strong opposition, the symbol should be placed

on the right side. The line of neutrality is in the center of the map, and those actors who are undecided or whose opinion is unknown should be placed closer to the center line. If any actor is closely linked to another actor, their symbols can overlap or touch to reflect the interrelationship.

7. Use the following example to review the steps in the mapping process:
 - **Advocacy objective.** Within the next year, persuade the chief of police to institute a domestic violence training program for all current and incoming officers.
 - **Target audience.** Allies might include a women’s group, human rights NGO, lawyers’ association, etc. These would be placed on the left of the map in proper relation to one another. Opposition might include a police union official, some officers worried about losing human resources while police are in training, individuals worried about funding for the new project. These would be placed on the right side of the map.
8. Allow the groups 45 minutes to complete their power maps.



Note to Facilitator: If you have a camera or photographer at the workshop, this exercise offers a good photo opportunity. Following the presentations, you can take photos of each group with its power map.

9. Ask each group to present its map. Moderate a discussion of each map with the full group. Use the following questions:
 - Are there any additional allies that belong on the map? Who are they?
 - Are there any additional opponents? Who are they?
 - Does the map capture the interrelationships or connections between and among different “actors”?
 - Where on the map do most of the power and influence reside?

ACTIVITY 2

Analyzing the Target Audience

Time: 1 hour and 15 minutes

1. Ask participants to continue working in the same groups as for the power map activity.
2. Distribute and review Handout III.3.3: Target Audience Analysis.
3. Explain that the form is a planning tool that will help the advocacy campaign assess the positions of various actors in the target audience in order to design effective advocacy activities and messages.
4. Ask each group to refer to the actors they identified on their power map. Identify which of those actors are the Primary Audience, the person(s) and/or bodies with the power to achieve the advocacy objective directly; and the Secondary Audience, the person(s) and/or bodies that can influence the Primary Audience. The groups should transfer these names to the appropriate box on the form and complete the remaining columns as follows:

- **Level of Knowledge about the Advocacy Issue.** Is the audience well informed or does it lack accurate information? How much does the audience know about the issue?
 - **Level of Demonstrated Support for the Issue.** Has the audience actively and/or publicly supported the issue? Rank and describe evidence of support.
 - **Level of Demonstrated Opposition toward the Issue.** Has the audience actively and/or publicly opposed the issue? Rank and describe evidence of opposition.
 - **Undecided or Unknown.** Has the audience failed to declare its position on the issue, or are you uncertain of its position at this time?
 - **Potential Benefits to the Audience.** How might the audience benefit from supporting the network’s issue and objective? Might the audience realize political, personal, or professional benefits? Describe any benefits.
5. Remind participants to think broadly when identifying the secondary audience.
Influential persons often extend beyond professional circles and include personal relationships. For example, a relative, spouse, or friend of a high-level decision maker can be a great intermediary.
 6. Allow 45 minutes for the groups to complete their Target Audience Analysis forms.
 7. When the groups have completed the forms, invite each group to summarize its work. Moderate a discussion with the full group. Sample questions follow:
 - What are the general observations about the audience analysis, e.g., need more information on actors, the opposition is more vocal/public than supporters, etc.?
 - Overall, do the target audiences evidence more support or opposition?
 - Based on the analysis, how might you focus your advocacy effort? Would you build on the support, neutralize the opposition, or try to convert the “undecideds”?
 - Why is it important to identify potential benefits? How might these be used to the network’s advantage?
 - What, if any, additional information is needed for an accurate assessment of the target audience? Where will you get the information?
 8. Conclude the activity by reminding participants that the network should continue to collect information on its target audiences and add it to the form. Information on the various audiences will help define the overall strategy and tailor messages.

SUMMARY

Knowing the target audience or actors for each of the advocacy objectives is a critical component of a successful advocacy strategy. The completed power maps and audience analysis forms are road maps for future actions and should be updated as more information about particular individuals is acquired. **Distribute handouts for Unit 3.**

MOVING AHEAD

The next step in designing the advocacy strategy is message development. Each advocacy message is crafted with its audience and purpose clearly articulated.

Handout III.3.1

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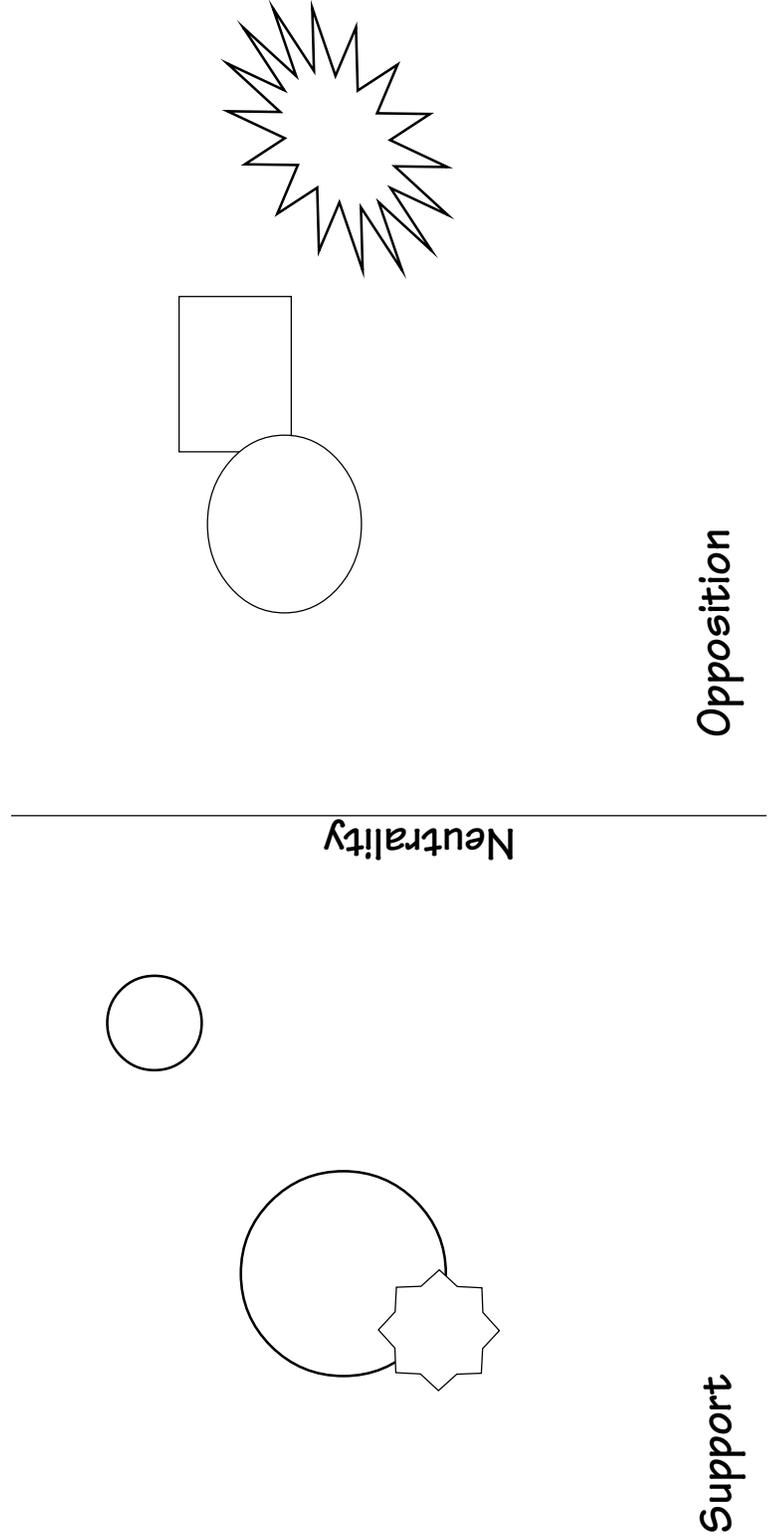
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Handout III.3.2

Power Map for Audience Analysis

Advocacy Objective:



Handout III.3.3

Primary and Secondary Audience Analysis Form

Advocacy Objective: _____

PRIMARY AUDIENCE. The individuals and/or body with decision-making authority (re: advocacy objective)	Level of Knowledge about the Issue (Rank 1-5) 1 - low; 5 - high	Level of Previous Support Demonstrated 1 - low; 5- high	Level of Previous Opposition Demonstrated 1 - low; 5- high	Undecided or Position Unknown	Potential Benefits to Audience Related to the Issue
SECONDARY AUDIENCE. The individuals and/or bodies that can influence the primary audience.					