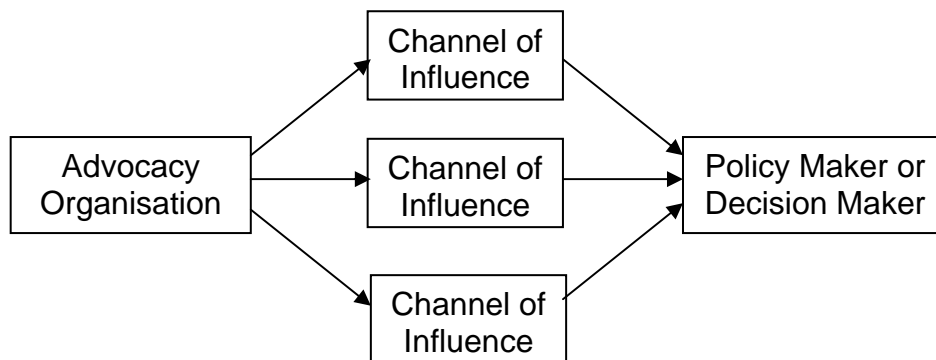


## Stakeholder Analysis

### What is a Stakeholder Analysis for?

When we have clearly identified an institutional advocacy or campaigning objective, then we can also identify the policy maker or decision maker for that objective. That person is our ultimate advocacy or campaigning target.

For any contested issue, it is unlikely that the target will be persuaded by our argument alone. Therefore we need to identify suitable channels of influence for us to engage with, to persuade and mobilise, so that their resulting attitudes and actions will put pressure on the target to take the course of action we are advocating.



We need to identify who will be the most effective channels of influence for us, and therefore become our target audiences. Given that we have limited resources and that it takes considerable effort to change someone's position on an issue, we have to be very selective so that we can focus on a few stakeholder groups with whom we can make some real impact. This is much more effective than spreading our efforts thinly across a wide range of audiences and making impact with none of them.

This version of a Stakeholder Analysis has been developed by Ian Chandler for use in advocacy and campaign planning to help us to make these choices of target audiences on a rational and systematic basis.

### Who are stakeholders?

Stakeholders are people and organisations who are affected by a particular issue, or who can influence the issue.

For the purposes of the analysis, stakeholders can be individual people and organisations, or they can be groups or categories of people and organisations who share a broadly common position and interest on the issue.

## How do we do the Stakeholder Analysis?

The analysis is best done with a small group of people. To facilitate maximum participation, all writing should be done on wall charts or flip charts. The participants should be familiar with the stakeholder analysis technique, the advocacy/campaigning issue being addressed and the advocacy/campaigning context around the decision maker (through having previously used other situation analysis tools such as SWOT, PESTLE, Decision Flowcharting, Target Mapping, etc).

There are five stages to go through:

1. Ensure there is clarity on the objective and decision maker
2. Brainstorm all the stakeholders
3. Analyse the stakeholder
4. Sort the results of the analysis
5. Select your target audiences and influencing approaches

### **Stage 1 – Ensure there is clarity on the objective and decision maker**

The analysis is not possible if the objective is not clear and specific, and if the relevant decision maker or policy maker has not been identified.

### **Stage 2 – Brainstorm all the stakeholders for the issue.**

The aim here is to get a long and comprehensive list. Participants should be encouraged to be creative in their suggestions, so the rules of brainstorming should be strictly applied (all suggestions accepted and written down, no discussion or criticism of ideas until the brainstorm is over, keep the pace quick and the mood light-hearted).

When the brainstorming is over, you may need to clarify how some of the stakeholders are defined so that their description is specific. You may also need to divide some stakeholders into smaller groups (or perhaps combine stakeholders into larger groups) so that each group can be said to share a broadly common position and interest on the issue.

### **Stage 3 – Analyse the stakeholders**

To do this, you are going to assess the stakeholders against three basic questions using simple categories for the answers:

- How influential, relative to the others, can the stakeholder be over the decision maker?
  - High
  - Medium
  - Low
- To what extent does the stakeholder agree or disagree with your objective or position on the issue?
  - Strongly in favour

- In favour
- Neutral
- Against
- Strongly against

- How importantly, relative to the others, does the stakeholder view the issue?
  - High
  - Medium
  - Low

The results can be recorded by drawing a table on your wall chart:

Stakeholder	Influence of stakeholder over DM	Attitude of stakeholder to our objective	Importance of Issue to the stakeholder
Stakeholder 1	H	AA	M
Stakeholder 2	M	N	L
Stakeholder 3	L	P	H
Stakeholder 4	L	PP	H
Stakeholder 5	M	AA	L
Etc			

(AA = Very Anti; A = Anti; N = Neutral; P = Pro; PP = Very Pro;  
L = Low; M = Medium; H = High)

Hopefully, you and your colleagues will be able to make informed judgements to answer these questions without further research, based on your existing knowledge of their attitudes and professional interests. Disagreement in your team about the answers may indicate that the category of stakeholder needs to be divided into more specific groups. If you still can't decide, then further research may be needed.

Although these three questions are quite simple, the combination of the answers gives us a deep and powerful tool to prioritise and select our target audiences.

#### Stage 4 – Sort the results of the analysis

It is hard to interpret the results when they are displayed on a table, so to make it easier we transfer the results onto the **Allies & Opponents Matrix**:

The Matrix should be written on large wall charts, and the names of all the stakeholders written in the appropriate boxes according to the analysis set out in the table. The vertical axis represents the influence of the stakeholder and the horizontal axis shows their attitude to your position. The 3<sup>rd</sup> dimension – how important is the issue to the stakeholder, relative to the other issues they face – is represented by the use of a particular colour or symbol.

### Allies & Opponents Matrix

Influence of the stakeholder over the decision maker	High		S/H B✓✓✓ S/H C✓	S/H E✓✓	S/H I✓	
	Medium	S/H A✓✓✓		S/H F✓✓✓ S/H G✓	S/H J✓	S/H K✓✓✓ S/H L✓✓
	Low		S/H D✓✓	S/H H✓		S/H M✓✓✓ S/H N✓
		Very Anti	Anti	Neutral	Pro	Very Pro

**Attitude of the stakeholder to your objective**

**Importance of the issue to the stakeholder:**

- ✓✓✓ High
- ✓✓ Medium
- ✓ Low

**Stage 5 – Select your target audiences**

From the Allies & Opponents matrix, you can easily identify who are your most significant allies, opponents and neutrals (who we might call “the battleground”).

Influence of the stakeholder over the Decision Maker	High		<i>Main opponents</i>		<i>Battle-ground</i>		<i>Main allies</i>
	Medium						
	Low						
		Very Anti	Anti	Neutral	Pro	Very Pro	

**Attitude of the stakeholder to your objective**

However, the stakeholder groups are not fixed in their positions and you can try to influence them. You want to shift the balance of power and ideas in your favour, so that there are more stakeholders in the top right corner who see the issue as important.

Using this graph, you can identify suitable target audiences whom you think you can access and influence in order to achieve that shift in the balance of power and ideas.

From the matrices, you can also identify which of the following five influencing strategies would be most appropriate for those selected target audiences:

- Persuading the stakeholder to agree with your position (*mainly for influential neutrals and soft opponents*)
- Persuading the stakeholder that the issue is important (*mainly for potential allies with high influence but low interest*)
- Build alliances (*with allies*)
- Helping to increase the influence of the stakeholder (*mainly for allies with low influence*)
- Reducing the influence of the stakeholder (*mainly for opponents with high influence*)

Overall, you need to identify how many stakeholder groups you can realistically target as audiences, given your level of resources and recognising that some strategies are more resource-intensive than others.