

Tool 9: Force field analysis tool

Phase	Phase 1: Getting organized and situation analysis
Sub-phase	Sub-phase 1.5: Situation analysis
Name of tool	Force Field Analysis (FFA)
Objective	FFA helps planners and decision-makers to obtain a comprehensive overview of the overall planning context by identifying forces for change (driving forces) and forces against change (restraining forces) in relation to a plan or proposal.
When to use the tool	Use FFA: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ To systematically analyze complex problems. ✓ To identify those factors that must be monitored and addressed if change is to be successful.
Main actor(s) responsible	Planners and decision-makers (within government and at community level)
Target / beneficiary	Implementing agencies; planners; communities
Description of tool	<p>In a FFA, the facilitators ask participants to anticipate and analyse the situation impacting on a plan or proposal (defined as a “change”) by identifying likely driving forces and restraining forces. While any force contains multiple inter-related elements, participants should try to separate each force into specific, individual components.</p> <p>Driving forces are those that are likely to favour change and will therefore help to implement the plan or proposal. <u>Restraining forces</u>, in contrast, are those that are likely to oppose change and represent obstacles to plan or proposal implementation.</p> <p>There are many different ways in which to carry out a FFA. The analysis can be done in a participatory way, in groups, or on an individual basis (where individual results are later compared with one another), depending on what is required. The diagram illustrates one way in which the exercise can be organized, with forces arranged on either side of a plan or proposal depicted in the middle of a sheet of paper, with scores assigned to each force.</p> <p>The FFA procedure can usefully be broken down into the following 6 steps.</p> <p><u>Step 1:</u> Define the specific plan or proposal being discussed and note this down in the middle of a large sheet of paper (see diagram as example).</p> <p>Distribute coloured cards to the participants, with one colour for driving forces and another colour for restraining forces.</p> <p><u>Step 2:</u> Ask participants to identify driving forces, by asking: What are the factors or pressures that support change in the desired direction in the form of the plan or proposal? Participants should assign weights to each of the forces they identify (for example, on a scale of 1 to 5), corresponding to the importance of the force: the higher the</p>

	<p>number, the more important the force favoring change.</p> <p><u>Step 3:</u> Ask participants to identify restraining forces, by asking: What are the factors or pressures that present obstacles to the implementation of the plan or proposal? Participants should assign weights to each of the forces they identify (for example, on a scale of 1 to 5), corresponding to the importance of the force: the higher the number, the more important the obstacle.</p> <p><u>Step 4:</u> Facilitators of the exercise consider the results of steps 2 and 3 and the total scores achieved, and check whether the participants are satisfied with the outcome. If not, a discussion takes place to evaluate and (if necessary) adapt the forces or the weights assigned to each force.</p> <p><u>Step 5:</u> When step 4 is completed and all participants agree on the forces identified and the weights assigned, the facilitators ask the participants to discuss how they can change the situation they have identified. Which of the driving forces can be reinforced and which restraining forces can be diminished (Kumar, 1999).</p> <p><u>Step 6:</u> In the final step, the discussion turns to interventions to support or mitigate the forces identified. The total scores identified act as a guideline to assess whether driving or restraining forces are anticipated to be more powerful impacts on the plan or proposal. If necessary, participants can use smaller cards of a different colour than the driving or restraining forces to identify interventions required to increase or reduce the magnitude of each force. Interventions should be based on actual resources available to the planners (Kumar, 1999), i.e. time, funds available, and institutional capacities, etc. Finally, the completed diagram (with the driving and restraining factors, and the interventions identified) should be reproduced and/or summarized on a new sheet of paper as a basis for subsequent planning steps.</p>
<p>Advantages and disadvantages of this tool</p>	<p>Advantages (+)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Provides a useful basis for planners and decision-makers to plan a course of action in a complex situation. + Identification of key driving and restraining forces can help decision-makers to focus their efforts and prioritise their actions. <p>Disadvantages (—)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — If analysis is not thorough, a FFA can result in over-simplification of complex realities.
<p>Related tools</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ PESTLE analysis ▪ SWOT analysis
<p>References and further resources</p>	<p>Generally accessible documents:</p> <p>Kumar, S. (1999) Force field analysis: applications in PRA. (PLA notes ; 36), pp. 17-23, London, International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED).</p> <p>Ramalingam, B. (2006) Tools for knowledge and learning : a guide for development and humanitarian organizations. London: Overseas Development Institute (ODI).</p>

	<p>Academic documents (access may be limited):</p> <p>Schwering, R. E. (2003) Focusing leadership through force field analysis: new variations on a venerable planning tool. <i>Leadership and Organization Development Journal</i>, vol. 24, no. 7, pp. 361-370.</p>
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