

# Force Field Analysis PRNA Tool #5

## Introduction

Force Field Analysis was devised by Kurt Lewin (1951) as a tool to manage change. This approach is based on the assumption that for any issue, there are two sets of forces: the ones that bring you up (helping forces or enablers), and the ones that pull you down (restraining forces or barriers). This exercise was very useful to CARE staff as it allowed them to analyze gender and sexuality integration into reproductive health programs, and identify both existing and potential barriers and enablers to gender and sexuality integration. Force Field Analysis allows participants not only to examine a problem, but also to brainstorm possible solutions, which should then be reflected in the organization's actions and activity plans.

## Objectives

- To help staff understand the nature of an issue by identifying factors that contribute to the problem and the factors that can improve the situation.
- To help staff explore potential solutions to a problem.

**Timeframe:** 2 hours

**Materials Needed:** markers; flipchart paper; single, regular-sized sheets of paper; pens/pencils

**Number of participants:** 4-25

**Ideal Workspace:** All participants must be able to see the flip charts

## STEP 1

Introduce the exercise by explaining the objectives, and how much time you expect it will take.

Distribute pens/pencils and individual sheets of paper to each participant.

## STEP 2

Introduce the issue to be examined (i.e. integrating gender and sexuality into reproductive health programming). Post the flipchart paper on the wall and write the issue at the top. Next, divide the page into 2 columns: one column is titled 'restraining forces/barriers' and the second column is titled 'helping forces/enablers'.

Give the participants some time to think about the issue. Ask them to identify 5-7 restraining forces/barriers to the issue, and 5-7 helping forces/enablers to the issue. Participants should make lists on their individual sheets of paper.

Once everyone is done making their individual lists, go around the room and ask each participant to read one helping force and one restraining force. Repeat this process until each participant's list has been exhausted. As the participants call out their enablers and barriers, write them on the flipchart in their respective columns.

Once the lists have been finalized, ask participants to rank the barriers and enablers by level of significance. This is not necessarily a structured process; it is likely that the participants will engage in some debate and discussion before the group comes to a consensus about rank.

### STEP 3

After the enablers and barriers have been ranked, initiate a group discussion around potential strategies to address the issue. List strategies on a separate piece of flipchart paper. Facilitate a group discussion using the following guiding questions:

- Based on the list we just made, what are some of the more significant barriers/enablers to the issue?
- Are any of the barriers/enablers listed different in nature and/or significance in the context of the work that is done in your respective organizations?
- How can some of the enablers listed be used to address the issue?
- How can these barriers and enablers be developed into action plans/strategies?

### Notes to the Facilitator

It is a good idea to begin by talking through one example for each column as a group. This is one way to gauge how well participants understand what is meant by enablers and barriers.



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