

Tool 5: Stakeholder identification

Aim of the tool

To help make an 'initial sweep' of stakeholders and their characteristics, and to identify roles of stakeholders.

When to use it?

This tool can be used when initiating an MSP, but also to review a situation with an established MSP. Roles of stakeholders may change over time, requiring an update of previous stakeholder analysis.

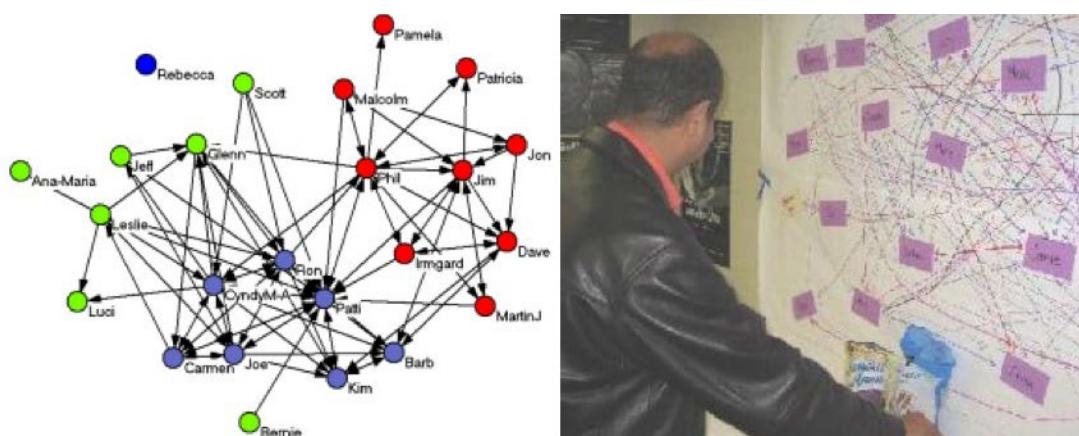
What is stakeholder identification?

This tool allows you to quickly visualise actors in a MSP and their interrelations. It can be done on a whiteboard or wallpaper with the help of yellow notes and markers.

Eventually the diagram will show which stakeholders are well connected to each other, and what sub-coalitions are present in the MSP configuration. Participants have to agree on a legend for the arrows, such as intermittent arrows for weak connections and thick arrows for strong connections. Arrows can point both ways. You can always choose different colours to signify different types of relationships.

A spider diagram can even be extended to an inner and outer circle. Those stakeholders who are present and active in the inner circle, and those who are not (but should be) are located in the outer circle.

Social Network Analysis does have some limitations in terms of explaining power dynamics in networks, it is therefore recommendable to combine SNA with power mapping.



If you wish you can use special software to present the social network data you have gathered, or do further analysis on your data using Social Network Analysis (SNA). There are many packages available, which are often free. We don't recommend one in particular but we do have a good experience with Social Network Visualizer that is basic but free (<http://socnetv.sourceforge.net/>).

Learn more

Tools on power mapping developed by IFPRI can be found here:
www.ifpri.org/publication/tracing— power-and-influence-networks

SNA, if performed well, can greatly help to understand patterns of influence in networks or MSPs. For lessons and applications see:
<https://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0169634> and
<https://www.nature.com/articles/s41599-024-02958-x> .

See http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Social_network_analysis_software for an overview of free and commercial packages.