STAKEHOLDERS ANALYSIS

Analyzing the stakeholders around your issue is another critical component to reach a viable advocacy strategy plan. As with almost all other analytical tools, there is no one point in time when we exclusively do this exercise. Nevertheless, we need to make sure to go through this exercise after setting our campaign objectives to help us anticipate the response of different people and groups to the objectives we announce.

Before we go into the details of analyzing the stakeholders, we need to highlight the following principles:

- Earlier, we established the linkage between advocacy and social justice on one side and politics and power on the other. Analyzing stakeholders brings these linkages to reality. The fact that you are engaged in the political process and changing the power dynamics is crucial in your calculations.

- In playing politics, it is important to remember that there are no permanent friends and no permanent enemies. Your best supporters in one issue could be your worst enemy in another. You always need to test this principle. You cannot take people for granted unless you approach them on each issue every time. You may be surprised at finding unlikely allies, and disappointed at failing friends.

- Always remember that you are dealing with individuals, and not groups. One of the very common mistakes is that we assume that institutions have one position. The reality is that within any institution you can find contradicting opinions. The official position of an institution may be against you. But if you dig deep enough you may find supporters within this institution whose voices are not heard. It is important to seek such individuals and work with them.

The following stakeholder categories (adapted from the Midwest Academy, http://www.midwestacademy.com) are useful in giving us a way to analyze the stakeholders we are going to see in advocating for our cause(s):

Constituents
Wikipedia, the Free Encyclopedia, defines *Constituency* as[1]

*"A **constituency** is any cohesive corporate unit or body bound by shared structures, goals or loyalty. It can be used to describe a business's customer base and shareholders, or a charity's donors or those it serves. The most common meaning of constituency occurs in politics and means either the group of people from whom an individual or organization hopes to attract support, or the group of people or geographical area that a particular elected representative or*

group of elected representatives represents. The rest of this article deals with this sense of constituency."

Constituents are those who support the advocacy cause and work together to achieve justice in regards to this cause. The use of the word *constituents*, which is a political term meaning those who have the right to cast votes, serves a specific purpose in the context of advocacy. In traditional social development, this category is referred to as the *target group*. The use of the word, *constituents* carries a meaning that the advocacy leaders are really the representatives of those people, and are also accountable to those people. In this context, however, it is important to indicate that, unlike political constituency in which the "delegate" represents all the people in the district or area she or he represents, the advocacy constituency is those who give their explicit support and proxy for some advocacy leaders to represent their position towards a specific issue.

Advocacy constituents come from two different groups, the *affected* (those who are affected by the problem/issue), and the *concerned* (who are not affected, but care much about the problem/issue and are heavily involved in addressing it.) It is important to have the support of the *concerned* as an indicator that this cause is a just one. Nevertheless, those *concerned* should be careful not to fall in the trap of stealing the power from the affected

Building a constituency and being accountable to it is an integral part of the advocacy model that we promote. In other words, if these efforts depend only on benevolent people who like to do good, even to the extent of risking their own lives for a cause, without building such a constituency, we do not view it as people-centered advocacy.

Allies

Your advocacy campaign **allies** are individuals, institutions and associations that are willing to provide you with limited support when asked. It is advisable to ration, and be strategic about your use of these allies as you are not sure when you will need them most.
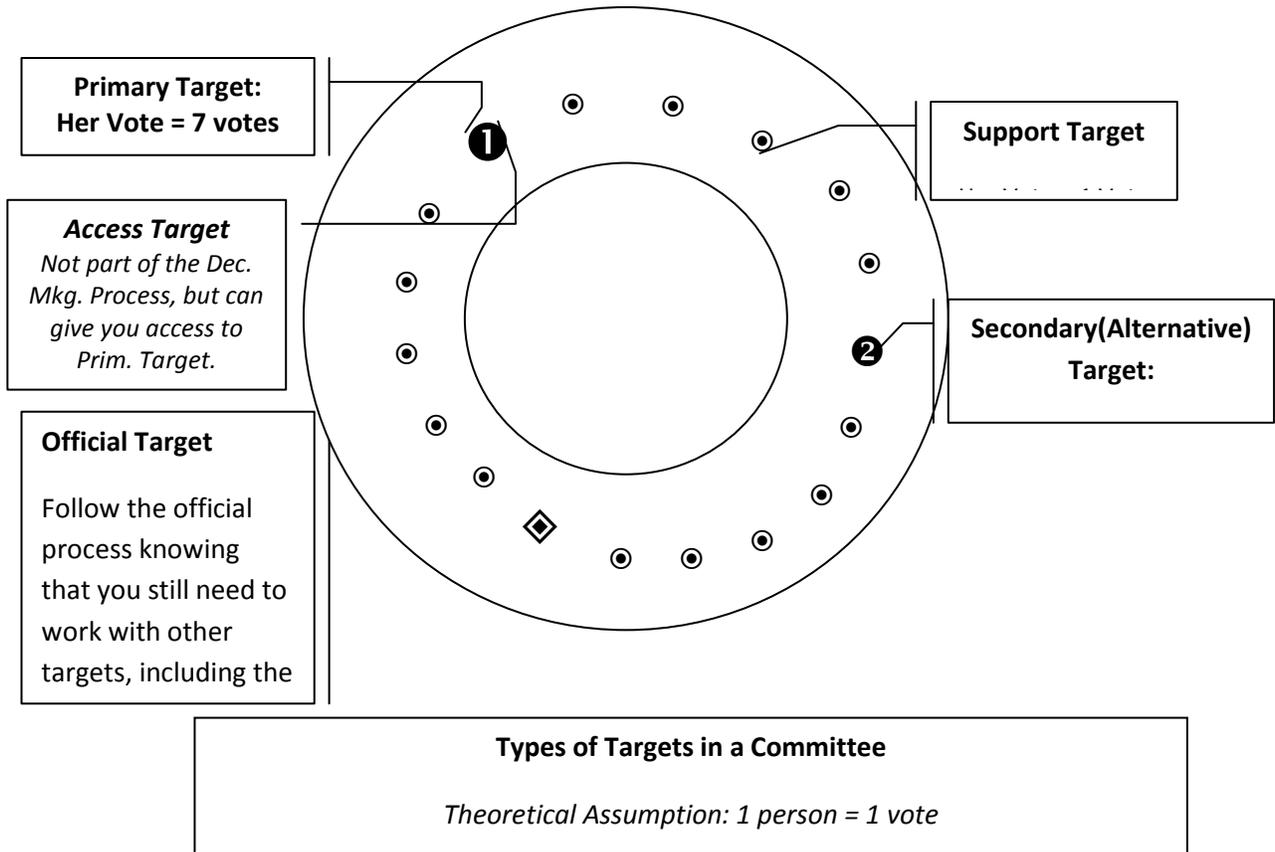
Targets

In the context of advocacy, targets are the decision-makers whom you want to influence. Identifying the decision makers is a very tricky exercise and there is not formula for it. Before we go into this discussion, we need to draw a distinction between a decision-*taker* and a decision-*maker*. A decision-taker is the person who ultimately signs off on the policy or the decision. The higher the rank of the decision-taker, the more remote she/he is from *making* the decision. Being a person with several responsibilities, she/he would rather delegate much of the decision-making power to one of her/his subordinates. The decision-*maker* is actually the person who prepares the decision for the signature of the official person. Our advocacy efforts should be directed toward the decision-maker with less advocacy effort directed at the decision-taker. Finding the real decision-maker is the tricky part as she/he is not necessarily the person officially responsible.

To further complicate the task, many decisions are officially made by a committee and not by a person. If we go back to the principle of dealing with individuals and not solid groups, we will find out that in the case of a collective decision-making, such as in committees, there are individuals who are the 'movers and shakers' in a committee. It is hard to go against these leaders, but it is not impossible. This also brings us back to the point of politics and how the idea of equal votes is not really *equal* in application. Some committee members' votes carry more weight than others. In working with committees, it is important to do our research and homework in identifying whom the real decision-maker(s) are in the committee.

This leads us to identifying the following *target sub*-categories:

- The **Primary Target** is the person who is the most influential in making the decision. We need to know who that person is and how to influence her/his decision. We put much emphasis on analyzing the position of the *Primary Target* as she/he plays a crucial role in addressing our issue. The following is a tool to analyze the *Primary Target*'s position.

Primary Target:
Her Vote = 7 votes

Support Target

Access Target
Not part of the Dec. Mkg. Process, but can give you access to Prim. Target.

Secondary(Alternative) Target:

Official Target

Follow the official process knowing that you still need to work with other targets, including the

Types of Targets in a Committee

Theoretical Assumption: 1 person = 1 vote

- **Secondary (Alternative) Targets** are those who are competitors to the Primary Targets, but not as powerful. In case you encounter a serious problem with the Primary Target, you

need to build up alternative block with the support of the Secondary (or Alternative) Target to secure a decision in your favor.

- **Official Target**: Many times, the official target, or the person who we should *officially* address is not the person who really *makes* the decision. Even if the official target is not the decision maker, it is critically important to learn about and follow the official process, and to show due respect to the official target. This should shield your campaign from any subbotage or hard feelings that you to be correct in

- *Support Targets* are those who also play a role in the decision-making process, but are not the most influential. They are the other committee members who could show some support (or resistance) to the *primary target*. Reach out to those targets to reduce any resistance that they might show if they hear about your requests for the first time.

- *Access Targets* are those who can give us access to the *primary target*. This person could be the driver, the administrative staff, the spouse, or even distant family members of the primary target.

Opponents
Opponents are those who will not support your position and efforts in dealing with the issue. They are in a continuum between those who trust you, and agree with the need to address the issue, but do not agree with your approach, to the other end of the continuum that are people who simply do not trust you nor agree with you on the issue.

Opponents come in different shapes and with different levels motivations to be against you or against the issue itself. The *Social Barometer* and the *Strategic Influence Grid* provide you with some of these shades.

Fence Sitters
It is often not easy for people to take sides. Unless feeling strongly about something, people will tend to be neutral, at least in how they express their opinions. In your advocacy campaign, think of ways to move these fence sitters on your side and avoid losing them to your opponents.

Relationships as a Point of Our Strength
In analyzing the stakeholders, it is very important to emphasize the importance of relationships and relationship building. The relationships we have with others are one of the key points of collective strengths the group has. The more the group brings these relationships to the process the better chance they have in reaching out to and influencing all of the stakeholders.

SOCIAL BAROMETER

* WHERE DO OTHERS STAND ON YOUR ISSUE? Identify Individuals and Groups
* WHAT ARE YOUR AIMS WITH EACH?   ARE YOUR TACTICS CONSISTENT WITH THESE AIMS?

- INFORM
- WIN OVER
- BUILD RELATIONSHIP

- DON'T PROVOKE THEM INTO ACTION
- GIVE THEM OPPORTUNITIES TO CHANGE THEIR POSITION
- RECOGNIZE ACTUAL NEEDS and FEARS
- AROUSE DOUBTS
- BUILD RELATIONSHIP
- SOFT ON PERSON — HARD ON PROBLEM
- REVEAL MOTIVES

- ENCOURAGE PARTICIPATION
- PROVIDE OPPORTUNITIES TO SUPPORT YOU
- EMPOWER
- INCREASE COHESION
- IDENTIFY and CONTACT
- PROVIDE FEEDBACK
- ENCOURAGE
- ACTIVELY SUPPORT AND NURTURE

PASSIVE ALLIES
ACTIVE ALLIES
OBLIVIOUS NEUTRALS
PASSIVE OPPONENTS
ACTIVE OPPONENTS

LEADING ACTIVISTS

LEADING OPPONENTS

AIMS

AIMS

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Analysis of Advocacy Target(s) Tool

The following tool is used after the advocacy group has performed a full strategic analysis of the issue using a few strategic analysis tools, setting advocacy campaign objectives and conducted a stakeholder analysis in the light of the set objectives. As part of the stakeholder analysis, the advocacy group should identify primary and support targets (decision makers) whom should the group seeks to influence their decision. This tool helps the group to analyze the target(s) they need to influence.

<center>*Analysis of Advocacy Target[1]*</center>

Statement explaining your advocacy position:

_____
_____
_____

Target's Name:

After doing your research, rank your target on each of the following (1 is low, 5 is high):

1. Level of knowledge of your organization		1	2	3	4	5
2. Level of knowledge of your cause		1	2	3	4	5
3. Level of agreement with your cause	1	2	3	4	5	
4. Level of previous support for your cause		1	2	3	4	5
(if totally opposed, mark 0)						
5. Level of your communication to date	1	2	3	4	5	
6. Level of mutual trust	1	2	3	4	5	

Describe your previous contacts with the target:

_____
_____
_____
_____

Other considerations (for example, declared or undeclared interest that your target has in the issue):

_____
_____
_____
_____

Level of influence you may have over your target suggested by the responses to the previous questions:

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

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[1] Adapted by Nader Tadros from an unknown source, 2000

The Strategic Influence Grid

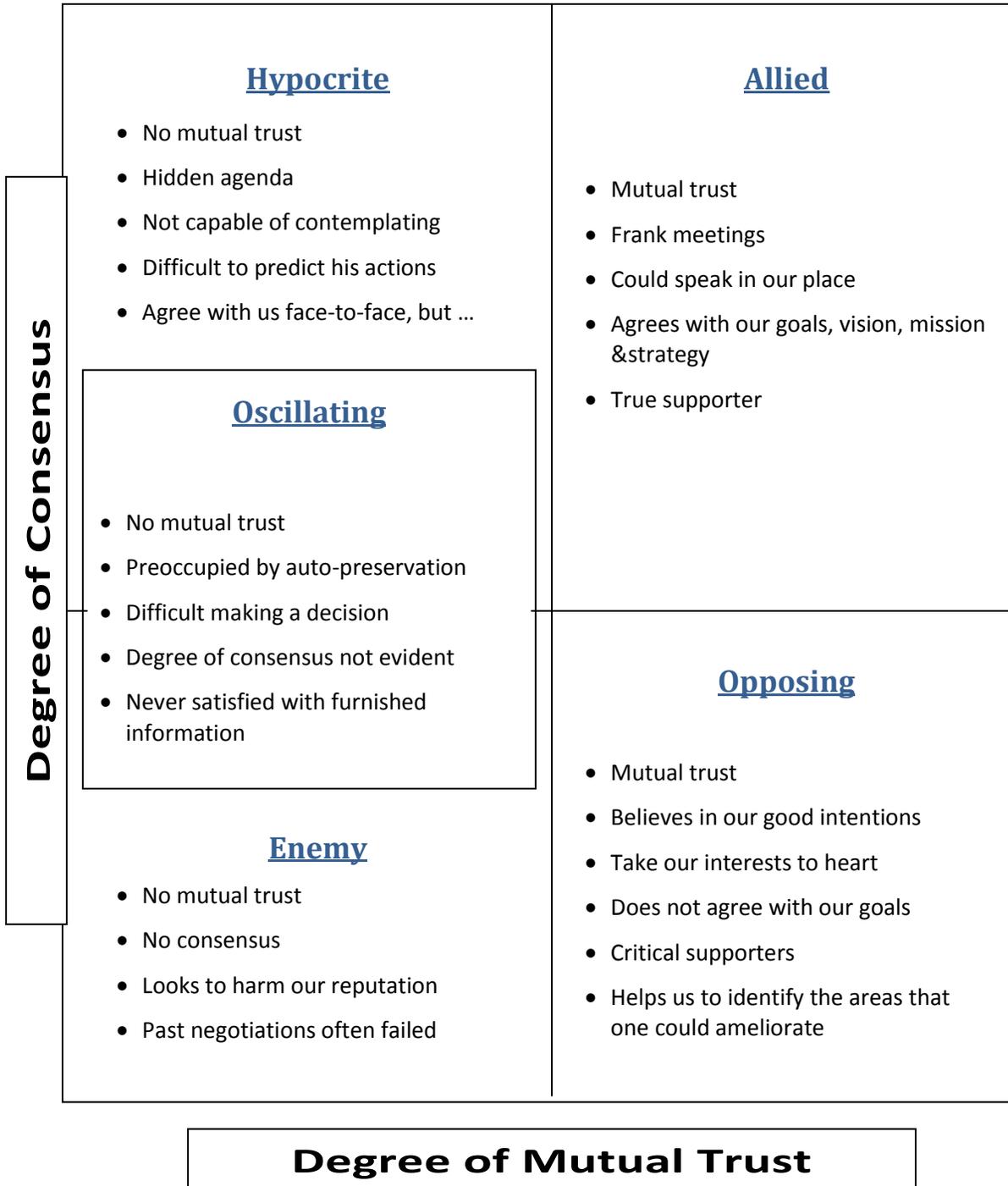The following grid (adapted by Nader Tadros from an unknown source, 1998) is a tool to help us analyze the different stakeholders (individuals) according to two factors, the level of trust with us, and the level of consensus or agreement on the issue itself.

Exercise

Applying the stakeholder analysis to your issue, identify the different stakeholders with a description of the position of each one of them.

Strategic Influence Grid

(Adapted by Nader Tadros from an Unknown Source, 1998)

Degree of Consensus

Hypocrite

- No mutual trust
- Hidden agenda
- Not capable of contemplating
- Difficult to predict his actions
- Agree with us face-to-face, but …

Allied

- Mutual trust
- Frank meetings
- Could speak in our place
- Agrees with our goals, vision, mission &strategy
- True supporter

Oscillating

- No mutual trust
- Preoccupied by auto-preservation
- Difficult making a decision
- Degree of consensus not evident
- Never satisfied with furnished information

Opposing

- Mutual trust
- Believes in our good intentions
- Take our interests to heart
- Does not agree with our goals
- Critical supporters
- Helps us to identify the areas that one could ameliorate

Enemy

- No mutual trust
- No consensus
- Looks to harm our reputation
- Past negotiations often failed

Degree of Mutual Trust

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[1] Constituency. (2007, December 28). In *Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia*. Retrieved 18:53, January 16, 2008, from http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Constituency&oldid=180616968