



Online training course by the NCCHPP: A framework for analyzing public policies How and where does one find the information needed to analyze a public policy?

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Listed here are possible methods or approaches:

- Individual reflection;
- Group brainstorming;
- Consultation with an expert;
- Deliberative process;
- Literature review;
- Method for synthesizing knowledge including deliberative processes.

Here, we invite you to consult a table (see next page) that indicates the following for each method:

- the time required: from preparing for data collection, to collecting and analyzing data;
- if the method requires specific competencies;
- the scientific robustness of the analysis produced, defined here by the extent to which bias is minimized and a variety of sources is used to ensure the information presented is as complete as possible;
- the relevance, given the proposed implementation context of the public policy being analyzed: to what extent does the analysis rely on local data, rather than on data produced elsewhere?

The aim is to guide you: this table will help you choose a method based on the circumstances in which the analysis is being produced.

Further down, we also suggest several resources under the heading "To learn more" for methods that require a specific procedure. You can refer to these resources for more information on how to proceed.

Table – Data collection methods

	DESCRIPTION	TIME REQUIRED	SPECIFIC COMPETENCIES	ROBUSTNESS (1 minimal to 5 maximal)	CONTEXTUAL RELEVANCE
Individual reflection	Attempt to answer the questions in the summary list (see page 4).	A few hours	No	1 (Informal knowledge derived from professional experience, a single source)	Yes
Group brainstorming	Together, attempt to answer the questions in the summary list.	From a few hours to a few days	No	2 (Informal knowledge derived from professional experience, but the interaction of several sources enriches reflection)	Yes
Consultation with an expert	Use the summary list as an interview guide or as a grid to fill out.	A few days	No	3 (Expert knowledge, but only one source)	Depends on whether the expert understands your context well.
Deliberative process	Bring together representatives from among the relevant stakeholders (for example: experts, decision makers, civil society actors). Use the summary list to facilitate the meeting. After the meeting, classify the statements gathered under the various dimensions of the analytical framework.	A few weeks	Facilitation; Analysis / synthesis of a significant amount of data	4 (Several types of expertise, interaction between several perspectives)	Yes
Literature review	Attempt to answer the questions in the summary list by referring to published data. Since peer-reviewed scientific literature tends to focus on the evaluation of effects, it is advisable to also explore the grey literature to document the other dimensions (for example: research reports with more detail than scientific articles; government documents; opinion polls or public statements of stakeholders to document acceptability, etc.).	A few months	Documentary search; Analysis / synthesis of a significant amount of data	5 (Numerous sources, credibility of scientific publications, methodical process)	Yes if the data is drawn from your context. Otherwise, see to what extent it is possible to extrapolate the data gathered elsewhere (for example, in another country that has implemented the public policy under study).
Method for synthesizing knowledge including deliberative processes (for example: the NCCHPP's method)	This approach combines a literature review and the organization of deliberative processes.	A few months	Documentary search; Facilitation; Analysis / synthesis of a significant amount of data	5 (Numerous sources and perspectives, expert knowledge, credibility of scientific publications, methodical process)	Yes, due to deliberative processes



To learn more

- **On deliberative processes and how to organize them:**

Gauvin, F.P. (2009). *What is a deliberative process? Fact sheet*. Montréal, Québec: National Collaborating Centre for Healthy Public Policy. Retrieved from: <https://ccnpps-ncchpp.ca/deliberative-processes/>

Gauvin, F.P. (2010). *Deliberative processes and knowledge translation - Fact sheet*. Montréal, Québec: National Collaborating Centre for Healthy Public Policy. Retrieved from: <https://ccnpps-ncchpp.ca/deliberative-processes/>

Lavis, J. N., Boyko, J. A., Oxman, A. D., Lewin, S., & Fretheim, A. (2009). SUPPORT Tools for evidence-informed health Policymaking (STP) 14: Organising and using policy dialogues to support evidence-informed policymaking. *Health Research Policy and Systems*, 7(Suppl 1)(S14). doi:10.1186/1478-4505-7-S1-S14
<http://www.health-policy-systems.com/content/7/S1/S14>

- **On producing reviews of the literature on public policies:**

Morestin, F., Gauvin, F.-P., Hogue, M.-C., & Benoit, F. (2010). *Method for synthesizing knowledge about public policies (Section 3.3)*. Montréal, Québec: National Collaborating Centre for Healthy Public Policy. Retrieved from: <https://ccnpps-ncchpp.ca/method-for-synthesizing-knowledge-about-public-policies/>

Bergeron, K. & Niedra, N. (2014). *Understanding municipal decision-makers and influencers*. Webinar presentation made on March 5, 2014 [PowerPoint slides]. Retrieved from: <https://ccnpps-ncchpp.ca/docs/BergeronNiedraMunicipalDecisionMakersMarch2014wdisclaimer.pdf>

[Outlines a method for reviewing municipal council meeting minutes (a kind of grey literature)]

- **On the NCCHPP's knowledge synthesis method:**

Detailed version:

Morestin, F., Gauvin, F.-P., Hogue, M.-C., & Benoit, F. (2010). *Method for synthesizing knowledge about public policies*. Montréal, Québec: National Collaborating Centre for Healthy Public Policy. Retrieved from: <https://ccnpps-ncchpp.ca/method-for-synthesizing-knowledge-about-public-policies/>

Summary version:

Morestin, F. (2011). *Summary – Method for synthesizing knowledge about public policies*. Montréal, Québec: National Collaborating Centre for Healthy Public Policy. Retrieved from: <https://ccnpps-ncchpp.ca/summary-method-for-synthesizing-knowledge-about-public-policies/>

Summary list – Dimensions for analyzing public policies

Reminder: For each dimension, consider the associated durability.

EFFECTIVENESS

- What are the effects of the public policy being analyzed (positive, neutral, negative) on the targeted health problem?
- How effective is this policy in terms of its intermediate effects?
- Is the intervention logic of this policy plausible?
- What impact does the implementation context have on the policy's effectiveness?
- How much time is needed before effects can be observed? Do the effects persist over time?

UNINTENDED EFFECTS

- Does the public policy under study produce unintended effects, whether positive or negative?
- How can the negative unintended effects be mitigated?

EQUITY

- What effects (intended or unintended) do the policy being analyzed have upon different groups? (Criteria to examine: age, gender, socio-economic status, ethnicity and race, religion, language, place of residence, sexual orientation, physical or intellectual functional limitation, etc.)
- Does this policy create, reinforce or correct social inequalities in health?

COSTS

- What are the financial costs and gains for the government? For other actors (industry, community organizations, consumers, taxpayers, etc.)?
- How are the costs distributed over time?
- To what extent are the costs apparent?
- How do the costs of the policy being analyzed compare with those of other potential policies, including that of inaction? What is the cost-effectiveness (from the perspective of the government, from the perspective of society as a whole) of the policy being analyzed?

FEASIBILITY

- Are the required human, material, and technological resources available?
- Does the public policy being analyzed fall under the legal jurisdiction of the authority that wishes to adopt it? Is it in conformity with existing legislation?
- Is the policy a follow-up to a pilot program?
- Can the policy be administered by pre-existing mechanisms?
- Is the authority promoting this policy also the one that will implement it?
- If not, how many different actors are involved in implementing this policy? Are they effectively guided by the policy's promoters? Do they cooperate well?
- Do the opponents of this policy have the ability to interfere with its adoption or implementation?

ACCEPTABILITY

- Which actors are (or would be) affected by the public policy under consideration?
- Is the problem targeted by this policy considered a social issue that requires intervention? What are stakeholders' reactions to the idea of intervening to address this problem?
- How do stakeholders think the issue should be addressed?

- What do stakeholders think of the proposed policy? Of its effectiveness, its unintended effects, its effects on equity, its cost, its feasibility? Of the degree of coercion it involves?
- What do stakeholders think of the conditions surrounding adoption and implementation of this policy?
- Can this policy's acceptability evolve during the period in which it is being implemented?

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Author: Florence Morestin, National Collaborating Centre for Healthy Public Policy.

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