

A Tool to Reflect on Organizational Capacities for Healthy Public Policies



4. ANALYSIS BY DIMENSION: WORKFORCE

2026

TOOL OVERVIEW

To support public health organizations, the NCCHPP has developed a tool to help structure reflection and identify concrete levers for action for advancing healthy public policies (HPPs).

This document is the fourth in a series of six documents that together make up the tool:

1. Overview of your situation
2. Analysis by dimension: Partnerships
3. Analysis by dimension: Organizational structures and resources
- 4. Analysis by dimension: Workforce**
5. Analysis by dimension: Knowledge development
6. Analysis by dimension: Leadership and governance

What you will find in this document

This document provides a structure for reflecting on concrete ways to strengthen organizational capacities for HPPs, using the **workforce** as a lever for action.

This document is organized around three strategies linked to this dimension:

1. Knowledge of the actors in your organization

2. Boundary spanning within organizations

3. Training professionals

For each of these strategies, reflection questions are provided to help you describe the actions implemented within your organization, place them in a broader reflection, and explore potential avenues for improvement. Additional resources are offered for each strategy to deepen your reflection and identify approaches suited to your objectives.



HOW TO USE THIS DOCUMENT

Similar to the *Overview of your situation* document, this document may be completed individually or collectively, depending on preferences and the context of use.

Before you begin, we recommend saving a copy of the document to preserve your responses and allow you to return to them as needed.

Step 1: Answer the questions provided for each strategy to describe and clarify the initiatives currently in place within your organization.

Step 2: Based on your responses from Step 1, answer the reflection questions to better contextualize your organization's work and consider potential avenues to strengthen organizational capacity for advancing HPPs.

Step 3: Explore the resources provided to further develop the reflections initiated in Steps 1 and 2. These resources can help to identify strategies aligned with your organization's objectives.

The resources also include tools and concrete examples that can support the implementation of strategies deemed relevant for your organization. Note that references to specific sections of the report [*What Can Organizations Do to Enhance Their Capacity to Promote Healthy Public Policies?*](#) are included, along with a list of additional resources available online.

Workforce: Human resources with sufficient skills and knowledge to promote and implement HPPs.

1 KNOWLEDGE OF THE ACTORS IN YOUR ORGANIZATION

Step 1 – Description of initiatives taken by your organization

- Do you use or have you used tools to identify and analyze the actors (professionals, teams, managers, etc.) involved in promoting HPPs within your organization? If so, briefly describe these tools.
- Do these tools lead to a better understanding of the networks and interactions linking these actors?

Step 2 – Reflection questions

- Do you feel that you have sufficient knowledge about the actors who do or could contribute to the promotion of HPPs within your organization?
- How would you describe your level of understanding of the dynamics and interactions between these individuals and teams?

Step 3 – Resources

Section 3.3.1 "Mapping Actors Within Organizations" on page 27 of the report [*What Can Organizations Do to Enhance Their Capacity to Promote Healthy Public Policies?*](#) explores the use of network analysis and focus groups to better identify the actors who can be mobilized to promote HPPs. It also presents two concrete examples: one illustrating the use of network analysis to improve understanding of the networking dynamics within a public health organization, and the other showing how focus groups conducted within a public health organization helped map the actors involved, or likely to be involved, in climate change-related actions.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- Bay Area Regional Health Inequities Initiative. (2010). *Local Health Department Organizational Self-Assessment for Addressing Health Inequities. Toolkit and Guide to Implementation*. <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/647f6cbb489b5b79d0952c3f/t/6494015506cb273f8a06271d/1687421270442/LHD+Assessment.pdf>
- Health In Partnership. (2022). *Activities to Deepen Your Power-Building Analysis. Chapter 1: Assessing Your Power*. <https://humanimpact.org/hipprojects/activities-to-deepen-your-power-building-analysis/?strategy=>
- Moran, J.W. and Duffy, G. L. (2010). *Team Chartering*. Quality Texas Foundation. <https://www.naccho.org/resource-hub-articles/tools-templates-team-chartering-article>

2 BOUNDARY SPANNING WITHIN ORGANIZATIONS

Step 1 – Description of initiatives taken by your organization

- What means are used to overcome barriers to HPP-related collaboration between your organization's teams, departments or divisions?
- Are there persons who are mandated to foster boundary spanning among the actors involved in HPP-related initiatives? If so, what are their roles and main responsibilities?
- Do the professionals likely to help advance HPPs have spaces for exchanging and collaborating on these issues? If so, describe these spaces.

Step 2 – Reflection questions

- To what extent do silos separating the actors involved in or able to contribute to HPPs within your organization represent a barrier to acting on HPPs?
- Can you think of any opportunities to support boundary spanning that could foster collaboration between teams and professionals on HPPs?

Step 3 – Resources

To further reflect on the strategies you can adopt to encourage boundary spanning among the actors who can help advance HPPs, consult Section 3.3.2 "Supporting Boundary Spanning Initiatives Within Organizations" on page 29 of the report [*What Can Organizations Do to Enhance Their Capacity to Promote Healthy Public Policies?*](#) This section presents strategies for local coordination and for creating spaces for discussion to facilitate collaboration and dialogue, with the aim of improving work on HPPs. This section also presents an example of creating spaces for discussion and exchange to strengthen evidence-informed decision-making.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- Association of State and Territorial Health Officials. (n.d.). *Boundary Spanning Leadership Preparation Worksheet*. <https://www.astho.org/topic/leadership-and-workforce-development/boundary-spanning-leadership/resources/>
- Association of State and Territorial Health Officials. (n.d.). *Five Types of Boundaries*. <https://www.astho.org/490095/globalassets/pdf/bsl-content-guide-infographic.pdf>
- Australia and New Zealand School of Government. (2020). *Becoming a Boundary Spanning Public Servant*. <https://anzsog.edu.au/research-insights-and-resources/research/becoming-a-boundary-spanning-public-servant/>
- Fick-Cooper, L., Williams, A., Moffatt, S., and Baker, E. L. (2019). "Boundary Spanning Leadership: Promising Practices for Public Health". *Journal of Public Health Management and Practice*. 25(3), 288-290. <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/30933007/>
- Lee, L., Magellan Horth, D. and Ernst, C. (2014). *Boundary Spanning in Action Tactics for Transforming Today's Borders into Tomorrow's Frontiers*. Center for Creative Leadership. <https://cclinnovation.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/boundaryspanningaction.pdf>

3 TRAINING PROFESSIONALS

Step 1 – Description of initiatives taken by your organization

- What steps have been taken to improve the HPP-related competencies of your organization's professionals?
- How does your organization determine the competencies required to act on HPPs?
- How do these competencies influence recruitment, as well as the training available for professionals?

Step 2 – Reflection questions

- Do you feel that the members of your organization have access to a wide range of relevant training courses allowing them to develop their HPP-related competencies?
- Do they have the time and support they need to participate in these training opportunities?
- How could this access be improved to better meet the needs of your organization's professionals?

Step 3 – Resources

Section 3.3.3 "Training Professionals to Improve Their Core Competencies Related to HPP Promotion" on page 31 of the report [*What Can Organizations Do to Enhance Their Capacity to Promote Healthy Public Policies?*](#) underlines the importance of developing the HPP-related competencies of professionals. It covers strategies for acquiring public policy competencies, as well as initiatives targeting theme-specific HPP training. This section includes examples of training focused on advocacy, training intended for the public health and built environment sectors focused on fostering HPP-related collaboration, and training designed by public health professionals but aimed at other sectors.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- Canada School of Public Service. (n.d.). *Evidence-Informed Decision-Making: Evaluating Scientific Evidence* [Online course]. Government of Canada. https://catalogue.cspss-efpc.gc.ca/product?catalog=TRN503&cm_locale=en
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and Association for Prevention Teaching and Research. (2008). *Competency-To-Curriculum Toolkit*. [https://archive.phf.org/resourcestools/Documents/Competency to Curriculum Toolkit08.pdf](https://archive.phf.org/resourcestools/Documents/Competency_to_Curriculum_Toolkit08.pdf)
- Dalla Lana School of Public Health – University of Toronto (n.d.). *Indigenous Health Equity* [Online course]. Public Health Training for Equitable Systems Change. <https://phesc.ca-central.catalog.canvaslms.com/browse/he/courses/indigenous-health-equity>
- National Collaborating Centre for Methods and Tools. (n.d.). *Resources to Build Capacity for the Core Competencies for Public Health in Canada: Release 2.0*. <https://www.nccmt.ca/tools/core-competency-tool>
- National Collaborating Centre for Healthy Public Policy. (2017). *A Framework for Analyzing Public Policies* [Online course]. <https://ccnpps-ncchpp.ca/online-course-a-framework-for-analyzing-public-policies/>
- National Collaborating Centre for Methods and Tools (n.d.). *How the National Collaborating Centre for Methods and Tools' Learning Centre Supports Evidence-Informed Decision Making in Public Health* [Online learning modules]. <https://www.nccmt.ca/learning-modules>
- Public Health Ontario. (n.d.). *Health Promotion Essentials* [Online learning]. <https://www.publichealthontario.ca/en/Education-and-Events/Online-Learning/Health-Promotion-Courses>

Click here to access any of the tool's six documents:

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4. Analysis by dimension: Workforce

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