

Road Safety Advocacy Toolkit

POLITICAL MAPPING: HOW-TO GUIDE



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save millions
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Acknowledgement



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Getting started

Why is it important?

Preparing for an advocacy campaign can feel overwhelming. But conducting a political mapping during the early planning stages can provide clarity by helping you understand the complex policy-making process through which your draft bill or regulation must pass before becoming law or policy. It will also help you identify opportunities to engage with and influence decision-makers. This is knowledge that will be critical to your campaign's success.

Political mapping serves as the foundation for your campaign plan and can help guide decision-making throughout. The following mapping techniques can be applied whether your campaign is focused on passing legislation, reforming a regulation, issuing an executive order, amending a budget, or calling for improved implementation.

What needs to be done?

A political mapping exercise generally outlines the following:

- Government bodies and agencies with the power to approve, amend or reject your proposal;
- Steps and timelines for moving your proposal through these bodies and agencies, including opportunities for civil society input into the process;
- Important decision-makers during each step of the process, including their positions on your proposal and broader interests;
- Individuals and organizations able to influence the process and what might motivate them to champion or support your efforts; and,
- Potential opponents, motivations and tactics.

Once you have completed your political mapping, you can use this information to help you design advocacy strategies, activities and messages, as well as decide how to direct your outreach efforts. You'll also have the information you need to track the positions of your target decision-makers as they evolve.

HELPFUL HINT: Complete the political mapping process as early as possible, ideally prior to developing your campaign plan. Once you've completed the mapping, regularly update it throughout the course of the campaign. Remember that the political map is a living document that reflects your current understanding of the political environment. As the political environment changes— as a result of an election or your advocacy efforts—your political map should, too.



Imagine you are going on a journey. What features would you look for in a useful road map? Many of these will be shared by a good political map.

The right type of map. A map of Mumbai won't help you to navigate New York. Similarly, a political map should be tailored toward your policy objective and the specific processes required for it to pass. If your initiative is focused on an administrative regulation, for example, a map that tracks the process for a law will not be useful.

Directions. A useful map tracks your start point, endpoint, and a way to connect the two. A political map should also track the political process from beginning to end, laying out all the steps in between.

Up-to-date information. A map of ancient Rome will not help you drive across the city today. Likewise, a political map must contain current information. Years can pass from the start of a campaign to the end. Decision-makers can change. Events may shift political priorities. Regularly refresh the political map.

The right amount of information. A World Atlas may contain all the maps of the world, but you probably only need a few of those pages for your journey. In a similar way, your political map does not need to include every single government body or department - only those details relevant to your policy objective.

At the same time, you need enough information to guide your way. Note where you have large gaps in information that might hinder your efforts, and make an effort to fill those.

Easy-to-read. Road maps cluttered with confusing icons and technical jargon may become unreadable. Likewise, your political map should be easy to read and understand. It is not intended to be a published, academic paper, but rather a tool for advocates.

Alternative Routes. A good road map shows you multiple routes so you can easily adjust your travel if an unexpected obstacle presents itself. A political map should also outline alternative avenues for reaching your policy objective.



Getting started

1. Gather your team

Developing a political map is usually a collaborative effort, and you should assemble a small team of dedicated, knowledgeable colleagues and partners to help you populate your map. The size of the group will depend on the level of skill, knowledge, and trust existing between you and your partners. You'll definitely want to ensure that your political mapping team represents your campaign's core leadership. You may also want to engage a consultant, such as a policy/legal expert or a political insider, to conduct research or help you complete specific sections of your map. Journalists and friendly government officials can also be useful sources of information.

2. Define your policy objective(s)

Before you begin, your team must reach a consensus on your campaign's policy objective(s), as that objective will set the direction for your political mapping. Political mapping should not be undertaken without a clear policy objective identified first. The objective should address a gap or weakness in the existing policy environment and provide an evidence-based solution that your advocacy campaign can achieve.

Your policy objective should be Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound or SMART. It should also contain the following three items:

- A policy "actor" or decision-maker - the person(s) or decision-making body with the power to make your desired change a reality.
- A policy "action" or decision - the specific action you want them to take or decision you want them to make.

- Timeline for change - The date by when you want them to act or decide.

The GRSP tool Setting Policy Priorities: A 3-Step Process can help you and your partners to define your campaign's policy objective.

Your team should also agree on the overall purpose of the political map, including how it will be used and who will have access to it. Your political map will likely contain sensitive information that you may not want to become public. You will probably want to share the mapping with the team that is responsible for developing and implementing your overarching campaign plan, but be selective. Ultimately, the entire group will share responsibility for ensuring that sensitive information remains confidential.

3. Determine roles and responsibilities

Once you have agreed on your policy objective, it's time to determine the roles and responsibilities for completing the mapping process. Appointing a "point person" or "map administrator" who holds overall responsibility for developing and maintaining the political map is a good first step. That person is usually central to the campaign and can then assign team members or outside experts to collect the variety of information required.

Political mapping can be costly. Early on, the team should discuss what financial support and other resources will be necessary to complete the project. If you choose to hire outside policy or legal experts to help, ensure that you have adequate resources in place before you begin.



Completing the political map

It's now time to complete your political map. Ideally, after conducting research, you'll complete the map together during a team exercise or workshop setting. During this process, team members can debate, discuss, and develop consensus, which will lead to a shared understanding and a more complete map. If

such an exercise is not possible, an alternate option is for one person to compile the map using information gathered by the team members.

Use additional sheets of paper as needed to complete your political map.

Political Map

1. DEFINE THE POLICY OBJECTIVE

The policy objective(s) addresses a gap or weakness in the existing road safety policy environment and provides an evidence-based solution that your advocacy campaign can achieve. Your objective will set the direction for both your political map and overall campaign plan.

Write your SMART policy objective at the beginning of your political map.

Policy Objective(s)

2. DETERMINE THE POLICY-MAKING PROCESS

No matter what your policy objective is - passing or amending a law, issuing a ministerial regulation, establishing or strengthening a standard, reforming a budget, or some combination - you need to know and understand the appropriate legal and policy process that can make it a reality.

A general understanding of the political system in your country will allow you to identify the most relevant process. If you're unsure, then you may need to make your policy objective more specific or engage the help of an expert on the political system, like a policy expert or lawyer, in order to complete this section of your political map.

In some countries, the policy-making process is formal and straightforward. In those cases, writing down the policy-making process will be fairly simple. In other countries, policy-making can often involve a number of informal or unofficial steps. As you put together your political mapping team, consider including members who have knowledge of any informal or unofficial steps in the policy-making process as these steps can often be difficult to understand.

Relevant Policy-Making Processes

4. OUTLINE RULES AND PROCEDURES	
<p>Each government body will have its own set of rules – both formal and informal – for approving, rejecting or amending any policy matter it considers. While there's no need for you to know every detail of policy-making procedure, a basic understanding will help you determine where and how your campaign can provide input into the process.</p> <p>For each government body previously identified, answer the guiding questions below. Remember to include specific roles and responsibilities of departments or committees.</p>	
Government body:	
Agenda-Setting and Approvals	
How is a policy proposal introduced, prioritized and placed on their agenda?	
How do they approve your policy objective? <i>Example: Majority vote, consensus, multiple individuals signing off</i>	
What type of documentation must accompany your policy proposal <i>Example: supporting evidence, letters of support, economic analysis</i>	
What happens after the government body approves the policy proposal?	
What happens if they do not approve the policy? Is there another body that can override their decision?	
Channels for Input	
In what ways are their meeting processes open and transparent (e.g. notice of meetings provided, open to members of the public, public records available)? <i>Example: notice of meetings provided, open to members of public, public records available</i>	
Who has the right or privilege to provide input into the government body? How is this input provided? <i>Example: topical experts</i> <i>Example: oral or written testimony, informal meetings or hearings</i>	
Is there a public comment period before decisions are taken? When does this occur? What form do comments take?	
Who must be notified once a decision is made? How are they notified?	

5. OUTLINE THE GOVERNMENT CALENDAR

The policy-making process is often characterized by intense activity followed by long periods of little movement, and it's easy for policy advocacy campaigns to underestimate how slowly government bureaucracies move. While you may not be able to accurately estimate the timeline for most policy-making processes, mapping the annual government calendar can provide helpful clues for timing advocacy activities. It can also prepare you for times when events are likely to move quickly and when they might stall.

Calendar items to consider include the beginning and end of government sessions, timing of the annual budgetary cycle, elections, holidays and recesses. Enter those here.

January	February	March
April	May	June
July	August	September
October	November	December

6. IDENTIFY DECISION-MAKERS

The individual policymakers with formal decision-making power during the policy-making process are likely to become the primary targets of your advocacy outreach. These could include heads of state, ministers, permanent secretaries, and parliamentarians. In bodies where there are many decision-makers, such as a parliament, it is helpful to focus on specific members who sit on key committees, hold leadership positions, or are known as highly influential among their colleagues.

When identifying decision-makers, be as specific as possible. Note down names in addition to titles or positions.

Government Body:

Decision-makers

Government Body:

Decision-makers

Government Body:

Decision-makers

Government Body:

Decision-makers

8. DETERMINE DECISION-MAKERS' POSITIONS

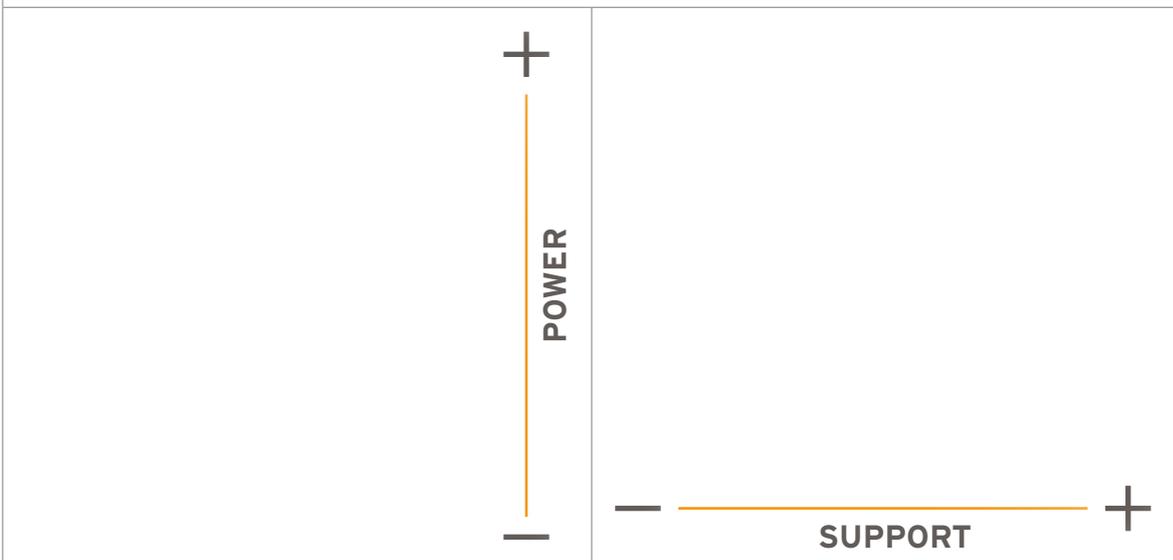
While identifying your decision-makers is important, you also need to understand their background and constituency, as well as their position on your policy objective and why they hold that stance.

To gather this information, you may need to meet with the decision-maker or their staff. Try to gather the following:

- Voting records
- Positions on comparable issues
- Public statements they have made
- Personal background and history
- Their base of support, including constituents, benefactors, stakeholders or interest groups
- Past and current relationship with the affected industry and its allies
- Self-interest with regard to your policy objective
- Superior's or staff's stance on your policy objective
- Potential political risk for taking a particular position

Once you have determined the position of a decision maker, plot them on the "power map," which is a visual representation of both a policymaker's level of power and his or her support for your issue. The vertical line represents how powerful the decision-maker is; the more powerful they are, the higher they should be plotted along the vertical line. The horizontal line represents their level of support for your issue; the more supportive they are, the further to the right they should be plotted. You can use this map to determine which individuals will be more receptive to your campaign, which will in turn help you decide where to direct outreach efforts. Try to ensure that you don't have too many decision-makers in the top left box, which would indicate high levels of power but strong opposition to your objective.

Revisit this section of your map often, in order to track how key decision-makers positions' shift over the course of your advocacy campaign.



9. IDENTIFY POLICY CHAMPIONS

Now that you have classified your key decision-makers' positions on your objective, you can use this information to identify potential policy champions. A policy champion is a decision-maker who will take a lead role in pushing a policy through the necessary steps to reach your objective. Picking the right policy champion(s) is important. Ideally you will work closely together to advance your shared policy goal. In addition to being a strong supporter who is willing to actively and vocally support the objective, your champion should also sit in a key position and be well respected and influential.

As you consider your power map, ask yourself who would be your preferred champions. Decision-makers in the upper-right corner tend to provide a good starting point because they are both supportive and influential.

Policy Champions

10. TRACK PARLIAMENT VOTES

If your policy objective requires approval by a parliament, it's critical that you know how much support there is for your objective at any given time. While you have already identified the key decision-makers and policy champions who will be your campaign's main targets, you should still track the positions of other members since you will need their support to achieve your goal.

In an excel spreadsheet, type the names and contact details of each member of parliament (MP) and categorize their level of support: supportive, neutral, or opposed. This is a quick-and-easy technique for coding and referencing large numbers of decision makers. You can use filters to sort as needed and organize mail merge emails at key moments. You will want to update this section often.

This list will likely be long, but you can concentrate your efforts by working with your policy champions to convert neutrals to supporters. By using this system you may also be able to advise your champion on when it is time to push for a vote and when to wait until there is sufficient support for your proposal.

11. UNDERSTAND THE OPPOSITION

No matter how noble your cause, you can expect some form of opposition. Your political map should identify any groups or individuals that are likely to intervene against your policy objective. It should also detail the arguments that objectors are likely to use, and the decision-makers with whom they have influence.

You can find information on opposition in the media and online. If you have strong relationships with key government staff, they may also be able to provide talking points, proposed language changes, and policy papers that can help you understand opposing voices. These staff relationships can be invaluable in keeping this section of your map updated.

Opponent	Arguments	Decision-maker Influence
Opponent	Arguments	Decision-maker Influence
Opponent	Arguments	Decision-maker Influence
Opponent	Arguments	Decision-maker Influence
Opponent	Arguments	Decision-maker Influence

12. PUT IT ALL TOGETHER

Now that you have completed the necessary research, it's time to prepare a flowchart that shows each step in the political process that is necessary to achieve your policy objective. This simple diagram will provide guidance throughout your campaign planning and implementation.

When developing your flowchart, try picturing your policy proposal being passed from desk to desk within the government. When it leaves one desk, where does it go next? Perhaps, a minister needs to approve your bill before it is submitted to parliament, but within the ministry several desks need to approve the bill before it reaches the minister. Your flowchart should show the progression from policy idea to final approval with every desk in between. It should also clearly delineate when and how you plan to exert influence during the process.

You can use the template provided as a guide for mapping the policy-making process. However, you may need to use additional sheets of paper to ensure that all steps are represented.

Flow Chart

13. IDENTIFY BACK-UP PATHS TO SUCCESS

Now that you have mapped the step-by-step process for approving your policy objective and your path of influence, it's important to critically examine your map for any alternate pathways so you can create a back-up plan. If the obvious path becomes stalled or blocked during your campaign, being able to deploy an alternate plan will be a major advantage. For example, consider that the key minister you were persuading to champion your policy objective as a government bill decides not to act. Is there a member of parliament who can introduce the legislation as a private members' bill? Answering this question and others like it before it happens will allow you to act quickly if and when circumstances change.

Use the template provided to map out alternative paths of influence throughout the policy-making process. If you only see a single path for success at this point in time, consider whether another policy-making process can be leveraged to make your desired change. For example, can a ministerial decree take the place of legislation? Can the budget process be used to move forward a topic that would not be supported as stand-alone legislation? While there's no need to map these secondary processes in extensive detail, it's important to consider them now.

Flow Chart

Using your Map

It's almost time to start developing your campaign plan. First, review your political map for any major gaps in information. While you don't need to know every detail of the policy-making process before you begin planning, it is important to identify where you have missing or incomplete knowledge so you can determine how to fill those gaps.

You will also want to develop a plan to continuously update your political map. You have just invested

immense time, energy, and possibly resources, so you'll want to get the most out of it. Assign a team member to maintain your political map and present updates as part of regular meetings.

With the knowledge gained from your political mapping, you are now ready to develop a powerful campaign action plan!





Global Road Safety Partnership

PO Box 303
17 chemin des Crêts
CH-1211 Geneva 19
Switzerland

Tel: +41 22 730 4249

Fax: +41 22 733 0395



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Safety Partnership please
visit our website

www.grsproadsafety.org



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