

WORKSHEET

Mapping Foodscape Actors

What is the objective?

To determine the people and organisations who might be consulted (for various reasons) in a Foodscape Assessment. For example, neighbourhood residents might provide local knowledge about opportunities and challenges, community organisations could partner in creating an intervention to improve food access, or government entities could create or influence public policy to generate systemic change.

Why is this important?

People are what power local food systems. Making sure the right people are engaged at the right time, and in the right way, is essential to making a foodscape project successful.

How do I do it?

It's helpful to think about relevant groups in terms of categories and roles that they play in a local foodscape. Broad types of groups who might be engaged include **food providers, regulators, advocates,** and **community members.** The specific actors in these groups vary by context and should be adapted to best fit the community you are working in.

The guiding questions, organisation categories, and worksheet on the following pages can help you organise and categorise these groups.

Start by mapping the relevant parties you already know, then use the internet and your network to identify groups new or unknown to you.

CATEGORIES OF FOODSCAPE ACTORS

There are many actors in the neighbourhood-level food system that a Foodscape Assessment should be aware of and engage in different ways.

PROVIDERS

Food providers are those who sell or otherwise provide food to users. This includes local entities like corner grocers as well as corporations like chain supermarkets and food producers. Local food providers can reveal insights like perceived neighbourhood demand for a variety of food options, why some foods are sold (or not), permitting or other regulatory barriers (or incentives!) to providing healthy food, and more. Alternatively, large food corporations can also influence policy and what kind of food is sold in stores.

Guiding Questions:

- **Who are the trusted food purveyors?** Where are food places acting as more than just food places, but also social spaces?
- **How is food being distributed in this neighbourhood?** Are there bike or scooter delivery workers, truckers, mom 'n pop workers to consider?

Example food providers:

- Supermarkets
- Food kiosks or mobile vendors
- Permanent or periodic farmers markets
- Independent speciality food stores
- Green grocers
- Food production companies or large-scale farming operations
- Food banks or other nonprofit food providers

REGULATORS

Various government entities influence how public space and food intersects in a neighbourhood. These actors are key gatekeepers for long-term systemic change in a neighbourhood's foodscape. Getting regulators involved in a Foodscape Assessment increases the likelihood that recommendations will achieve greater impact. Government structure, processes, and culture vary, so become familiar with how the government plays a role in food locally.

Guiding Questions:

- **Who is writing food policy? Consider both departments and individuals.** Is food access being considered by departments like health, urban planning, social welfare, etc.?
- **What government programmes enable healthy food access in this community?** Do people use government or other social programmes to buy the food they want and need?

Example regulatory groups:

- Health Department
- Urban Planning Department
- Transportation Department
- Social Welfare Department
- Sustainability Department
- Mayor
- City Council
- Neighbourhood council

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COMMUNITY MEMBERS AND ADVOCATES

Local people are the single best source for insights about how the built environment promotes or discourages healthy food consumption. Speaking with locals can help you gain key perspectives on food access, habits and patterns of activity related to food, and how locals' lived experience intersects with the ability to purchase and consume nutritious food. Advocates are another group of community members that can provide local intel and could be potential implementation partners. For example, there may be local formal or informal advocacy organisations promoting healthy food access, community health measures, and social justice.

Guiding Questions:

- **Who are connected to key social networks?** What trusted civic, social, or other organisations can help connect you with members of the target population?
- **Who is working to promote community health?** What groups share the goals of the Foodscape Assessment?
- **What social justice organisations are advocating for the needs of marginalised populations?**

Example groups:

- Non-affiliated residents and visitors
- Community Gardens
- Food festivals
- Social Justice Organisations
- Hospitals
- Health Advocates
- Homeless Shelters

MAP OF FOODSCAPE ACTORS

Use this template to map out foodscape actors in your study area

