

What are Factors?

Factors are reasons that inhibit or support a person’s practice of a behavior. Factors are examined from the **primary actor’s point of view**. Factors describe “why” a person does or does not practice the behavior or carry out a step needed to practice the behavior. A factor can be a barrier (B) or a motivator (M). A factor can be **structural** such as a physical constraint, **social** such as a supportive family, or **internal** to the person practicing the behavior such as a religious belief.

Note that the list of factors and possible aspects of those factors provided in the Behavior Integration approach and tools are only meant to help guide the user’s thinking. It is not a comprehensive list, nor based on any specific theory of change. Users can adapt the factor name, definition and aspects to meet their needs. The most important takeaway from the list of factors is to use research and experience to identify **why** a person does or does not practice a behavior.

Here is a formula that can help you write a factor:

PRIMARY ACTORS + DO/DO NOT or CAN/CANNOT (or similar) + SPECIFICS (what they do/cannot do) + BECAUSE (or similar) + SPECIFICS (why) + ADD (B) or (M)

Even if you don’t follow the formula exactly, be sure to write **WHY** the primary actor can or cannot/does or does not perform the behavior, rather than what the situation is.

Factors	Definition	Possible Aspects	Examples
Structural			
Accessibility	The primary actor’s opportunity to practice the behavior given external constraints, including physical, economic, political, and policy constraints	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Cost ✓ Time ✓ Distance ✓ Transport ✓ Availability-general, occasional, seasonal ✓ Physical access ✓ Language barriers ✓ Weather ✓ Climate ✓ Land tenure and rights ✓ Political climate ✓ Economic environment ✓ Legal considerations ✓ Policy environment ✓ Power dynamics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pregnant women with young children do not have time to attend antenatal care visits (B) • Farmers do not have money to purchase certified seeds (B) • Traditional leaders hold the land rights to build village health posts (M) • Business owners face an unstable or uncertain political or economic environment to grow their business (B) • Entrepreneurs face unfavorable policy or legal environment to launch community pharmacies (B) • District health managers are in a position of power to allocate funds for primary health care (M)
Experience with Provider or Other Supporting Actor	The primary actor’s perception of the experience with a person associated with a product, service, group, company, institution or a supervisor or other supporting actor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Perceived technical proficiency or skills of provider ✓ Communication ✓ Interpersonal relations-supervisory, peer-to-peer, third party ✓ Respect ✓ Trust 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Farmers adopt solar irrigation methods because they feel extension workers have the skills to train them properly (M) • Caregivers do not use health services for their children because they feel disrespected by those who provide them (B) • Parents do not send their children to school beyond grade 2 because they

Factors	Definition	Possible Aspects	Examples
			feel head teachers poorly communicate education goals (B)
Experience with Product, Service, Group, Company or Institution	The primary actor's perception of their experience with a product, service, group, company or institution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Equipment ✓ Infrastructure ✓ Wait times ✓ Service hours ✓ Quality ✓ Desirability ✓ Convenience ✓ Brand image ✓ Corporate values ✓ Economic benefit ✓ Health benefit ✓ Economic incentive ✓ Profitability ✓ Market demand 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Youth do not use community centers because infrastructure is crumbling and without internet (B) • Parents send their children to school because they see young graduates get jobs (M) • Mothers buy local baby products because they perceive these products to be safer (M) • Business owners pay taxes because local government has proven that it operates with transparency and accountability (M) • Farmers do not provide shelter for livestock because in the past it did not provide an economic benefit (B) • Business owners do not invest in warehouses because it is not profitable (B) • Food retailers do not sell nutritious snacks because there is little to no market demand (B)
Social			
Family, Peer and Community Support	Proactive or passive help, encouragement, or attitudes toward a behavior by family members, peers, colleagues, or others in the community at large	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Monetary or material support ✓ Moral support ✓ Acceptance and approval ✓ Task support ✓ Collective agency ✓ Decision-making input/authority ✓ Supporter knowledge ✓ Community models, representations of behavior ✓ Political will 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Caregivers feed babies food starting at 4 months of age because it is what their family thinks is best and has done with their other babies (B) • Health providers take time to counsel patients because they receive regular mentoring and peer support to do so (M) • Farmers cannot build dams to control water run-off because they do not have authority to make these decisions on their own (B) • Youth attend farmer field schools because they see young farmers making money (M) • Municipal leaders do not provide plastics waste collection because there is no political will to do so (B)
Gender	The social rules and expectations around gender that influence the practice of a behavior	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Gendered decision-making input/authority ✓ Gendered task sharing ✓ Gendered power relations ✓ Gendered control of assets/income ✓ Status and value of girls and women 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women cannot make decisions because they are not allowed to do so by their spouse (B) • Women cannot farm on a plot of land because their spouse owns and controls the land (B) • Husbands accompany their wives to health services because they want to support their family (M)

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Gender socialization and roles ✓ Dominant norms of masculinity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pregnant women do not get needed rest because they are required to carry out all household duties (B) • Women do not make financial decisions because they have been socialized to behave according to traditional gender roles (B) • Fathers do not share in household tasks because of expectations of men to work only outside the home (B)
Norms	The acceptability and standards for practice of a behavior determined by religious, cultural, or other social rules and expectations, including workplace norms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Standard practices ✓ Expected practices ✓ Social sanctions ✓ Historical influences ✓ Generational experiences ✓ Ancestral knowledge ✓ Religious rules and expectations ✓ Cultural rules and expectations ✓ Socio-cultural values ✓ Social rules and expectations ✓ Social networks ✓ Reputational incentives ✓ Stigma ✓ Discrimination 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Families do not use clean cookstoves because it is not the way they have cooked food for generations in their village (B) • Government workers do not enforce food safety because they are expected to just execute their normal daily tasks (B) • Parents send their children to school because almost all families in the community do it (M) • Farmers plan to harvest early during heavy rainy seasons because of knowledge that is passed down from previous generations (M) • Business owners invest in training youth because it helps them look good in front of urban clients (M)
Internal			
Attitudes and Beliefs	The primary actor's personal judgment, feeling, or emotion toward a behavior	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Perceived value of the behavior ✓ Perceived value of behavior compared to other priorities ✓ Perceived threat, fear, or negative consequences of the behavior ✓ Perceived convenience ✓ Perceived identity with the behavior ✓ Perceived quality ✓ Emotional response to the behavior ✓ Prejudices ✓ Biases ✓ Preferences ✓ Opportunity costs ✓ Intrinsic motivation ✓ Aspirations ✓ Interests ✓ Outlook on life-optimistic, fatalistic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Farmers use certified seeds because they believe they are much better quality (M) • Pregnant women do not attend antenatal care because they have more urgent priorities, including the need for food and shelter (B) • Farmers do not put money in village savings and loans because they feel that it will reduce their ability to save for their family (B) • Teachers do not take time to work with students who are behind in reading because they do not think things will change for these students (B) • Farmers adopt climate-smart practices because they feel it will be worth it in the long term (M) • Business owners do not supply nutritious snacks outside of urban areas because they feel it is too much work for little benefit (B) • Health care workers do not provide services in distant villages because they

Factors	Definition	Possible Aspects	Examples
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Adaptability-open to change, resistant to change ✓ Job satisfaction ✓ Moral incentives ✓ Recognition 	are not satisfied with their low pay and long working hours (B)
Self-Efficacy	The primary actor's personal confidence, agency, and conviction in their ability to practice a behavior	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Confidence in ability ✓ Intrinsic agency/empowerment ✓ Conviction ✓ Perseverance ✓ Personal resilience 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mothers breastfeed their babies exclusively for the first six months because they have confidence that they can do it (M) • Health care workers do not adhere to guidelines because they do not feel they can influence other health workers required to support the guidelines (B) • Farmers are determined to adopt new practices to improve climate resilience (M)
Knowledge	The primary actor's current information required to practice a behavior	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Awareness ✓ Understanding ✓ Quality of information-accuracy, misinformation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Farmers know they will get higher market prices for following crop safety regulations (M) • Parents do not complete the full course of antibiotics because they do not understand how important it is to their child's health to do so (B)
Skills and Capacity	The primary actor's ability to perform a set of tasks required to practice a behavior	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Opportunity to try ✓ Ability to practice ✓ Technical literacy ✓ Social literacy ✓ Interpersonal skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Couples plan for their family's future because they talk about it; are open to each other's views (M) • Citizens do not have data skills to hold government accountable for public education (B) • Families do not separate plastics waste because they do not have a practical way to try it at home (B)