

What are Factors?

Factors are things that inhibit or facilitate behaviors. Factors are examined from the **primary actor's point of view**. Factors describe “why” they are able or unable to practice the behavior or carry out a step needed to practice the behavior. A Factor can be a barrier (B) or a motivator (M), and it can be structural, social, or internal.

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 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, usually physical constraints	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Cost ✓ Time ✓ Distance and transport ✓ Availability ✓ Physical access ✓ Opportunity costs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Primary actor does not have time to practice a new behavior (B) • Primary actor or institution does not have the funds required to practice behavior (B) • Primary actor cannot use the desired equipment because it costs too much or they cannot afford it (B)
Service Provider Competencies	<p>The primary actor's perception of the competency of those providing the service</p> <p>Note: This is only applicable if the primary actor uses a service. If the service provider (e.g. a health worker, a government employee, a business) is the primary actor, their actual competencies should be considered under "Skills".</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Communication ✓ Technical proficiency or skills ✓ Respect 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Primary actor does not practice the steps or behavior because they do not feel the extension workers have the skills to train them properly (B) • Primary actor chooses not to utilize services as they feel disrespected by those who provide them (B) • User of the services does not buy local products because they perceive the system of quality control to be dysfunctional (B) • Parents do not send their children to school beyond grade 6 because they find that teachers are unable to maintain classroom discipline (B)
Service Experience	The primary actor's perception of their overall experience with structural aspects such as infrastructure, equipment, and response time when receiving the service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Equipment ✓ Infrastructure ✓ Waiting times ✓ Service hours ✓ Supportive policies ✓ Quality 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Primary actor does not use the equipment required to practice the behavior because they do not feel the machine works as it should (B) • Parents do not send children to school because teachers are frequently absent (B) • Individuals do not buy local products because they are of poor quality (B)

Social			
Family 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 action ✓ Supporter knowledge 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Primary actor does not carry out the steps needed to practice the behavior because their family thinks they should stick to what they normally do and know (B) • Primary actor does not perform the behavior because they lack regular supervision, mentoring, and peer support (B)
Gender	The specific influence of gender dynamics or relationships on the practice of a behavior	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Decision-making ✓ Control of income ✓ Status and value of girls and women 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Primary actor cannot work the needed plot of land because they do not own/control the land their spouse/partner does (B) • Primary actor cannot carry out the behavior because burdens of traditionally female household duties and chores prevent her from doing so (B)
Norms	The acceptability and standards for practice of a behavior dictated by religious, cultural, or other social networks, including workplace norms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Standard practice ✓ Expected practices ✓ Sanctions and enforcement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Primary actor does not adopt a new practice because it is not the way they have done it for generations in their village (B) • Government employees do not implement a new practice because they are not able to question the status quo; they just execute their daily tasks (B) • Parents want to send their children to school because almost all families in their community send their children to primary school (M)
Internal			
Attitudes and Beliefs	The primary actor's personal judgment, feeling, or emotion towards a behavior	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Perceived value of the behavior ✓ Perceived threat, fear, or consequences of the behavior ✓ Perceived convenience ✓ Perceived identity with the behavior ✓ Perceived quality ✓ Emotional response to the behavior 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Primary actor does not try the new method because they believe that the new practice is much more work than the old one (B) • Primary actor does not use two of the steps required to practice the behavior because they feel that it will reduce their ability to save for their family (B) • Primary actor carries out the first two steps of the behavior because they believe it will benefit them (M) • Primary actor does not adopt a new practice because they feel it adds too much additional work to their day (B) • Primary actor does not send their child to school because they do not prioritize basic education (B)

Self-Efficacy	The primary actor's personal confidence in their ability to exert control over successfully practicing a behavior	✓ Confidence in ability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Primary actor does not practice the steps or behaviors because they do not believe they can operate the equipment as needed (B) • Primary actor does not practice the behavior because they do not feel they can manage or influence others required to support a new behavior (B)
Knowledge	The required information the primary actor's needs to complete a set of actions or practice a behavior completely and competently	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Awareness ✓ Understanding ✓ Information 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Primary actor does not use the steps suggested because they do not know the benefits of the modern practices (B) • Primary actor does not follow the steps suggested because they do not understand how important it is to the outcome to follow them as suggested (B)
Skills	The primary actor's ability to perform a set of tasks required to practice the behavior	✓ Learned ability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Primary actor does not use the steps or practice the behavior because they do not have the skills needed to operate the equipment (B)