



ADVOCACY MANUAL



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INTRODUCTION: WELCOME TO THE WORLD OF ADVOCACY!

The purpose of advocacy work is to identify those structures in societies that maintain poverty and inequality, and to exert influence towards the dismantling of these structures and for the fulfilment of justice. This manual is designed to help you and provide tips and guidance, as you plan, study, and carry out advocacy as part of your everyday work. You can use this manual alone or in a group as well as you prepare for cooperation with other actors. This manual introduces the foundations of advocacy and provides practical ways to plan, implement, and evaluate advocacy work.

The manual also considers the human rights foundations for advocacy, explaining why it is important to influence our surrounding society. Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) have the possibility to influence decision-makers and people in their own region as they know the culture of their own area and, therefore, can be ambassadors for the positive change. Civil society actors form a network that covers an extensive geographical area, reaching to the most remote places. They are able to affect changes in attitudes as they meet with people regularly and over a long-time frame.

The most effective change comes when local civil society actors are empowered to become advocates for the fulfilment of rights of persons in most vulnerable situations. Fida International works globally with local partners and seeks to strengthen their role in advocacy. Advocacy involves raising awareness of unfulfilled rights in the society and seeking solutions for decision-making. Advocacy includes an analysis of the problem: “What is the problem? What is the root cause of the problem?” After the problem is identified, thinking shifts to seeking solution options, and to addressing the capacity gaps that the duty bearers may have in fulfilling their responsibilities, as well the capacity gaps that the rights holders may have in claiming their rights.

Advocacy is an effective tool when seeking solutions to focus on and for passing on the information about the solutions to the decision-makers, as well as for pressuring them for action. It may involve campaigns, lobbying, and the media. The goal of advocacy is societal change.

All the best for your journey with advocacy!



” *Let there be justice
for all. Let there
be peace for all.
Let there be work,
bread, water and salt for all.
Let each know that for each
the body, the mind and the soul
have been freed to fulfill them-
selves.* **Nelson Mandela**

WHY ADVOCACY?

This section discusses why advocacy is important, and the role of the civil society in advocacy.

We all agree that human dignity is the core value of our work. More concretely, to achieve social justice for all human beings, and especially for those who are oppressed, we strive to improve the fundamental conditions for a dignified life, for example food security, education, freedom, and safety.

The conditions for a dignified life are formulated in the concept of human rights. International law, and in many cases national laws, obliges states to respect, protect and fulfill human rights. Therefore, duty bearers in societies, governments and legal systems are responsible for the wellbeing of people, whether they recognize it or not. To achieve lasting change, we should not only alleviate human suffering, but tackle the root causes of human rights violations by advocating and reminding duty bearers of their responsibilities. We can be agents of change for a just and peaceful society!

>> Advocacy is about:

- Using your strategic influence to defend human rights
- Speaking out against injustice, discrimination, and inequality
- Modelling an alternative society
- Confronting authority in case they break human rights
- Bringing peace and reconciliation
- Seeking social, economic, and political justice

1.1. WHAT ARE HUMAN RIGHTS?

We all are entitled to human rights simply because we are human beings. Human rights are not granted, but inherent to us all, regardless of nationality, sex, national or ethnic origin, color, religion, language, or any status.

>> Essentially, human rights are also:

- Universal: Human beings in every country are all equally entitled to the same human rights.
- Inalienable: Human rights belong to everyone and they cannot and should not be taken away.
- Indivisible and interdependent: All rights are equally important and complementary.

These principles are set out in The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 1948. UDHR is the foundation of all international human rights law.

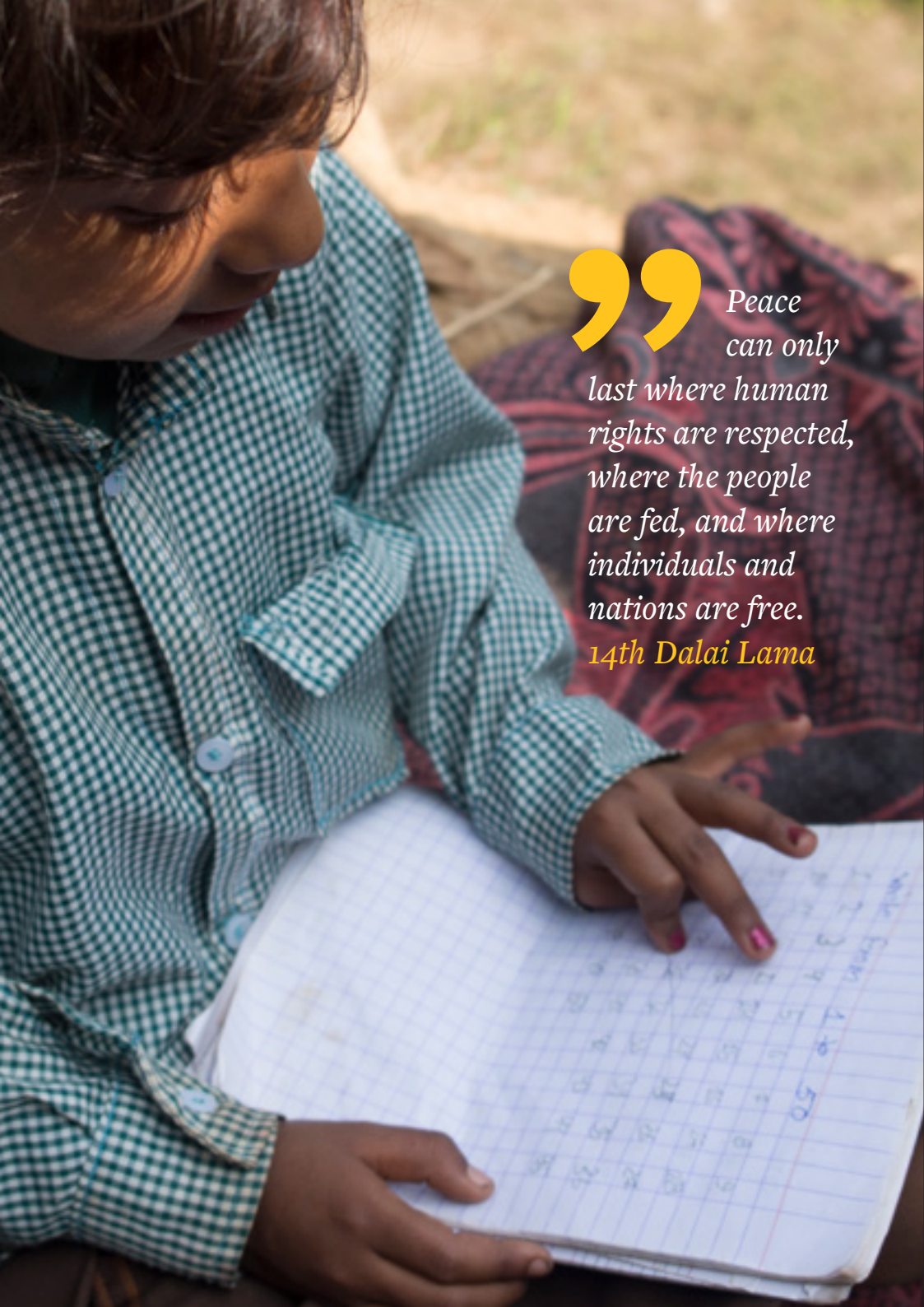
>> Rights and obligations

All States have ratified at least 1 of the 9 main human rights treaties and 80% of states have ratified 4 or more (in 2021). This means that states have the following obligations under international law:

- Obligation to respect: States must not interfere with or curtail the enjoyment of human rights.
- Obligation to protect: States must protect individuals and groups against human rights abuses.
- Obligation to fulfill: States must take positive action to facilitate the enjoyment of human rights.

Individuals have the obligation to respect and stand up for the rights of others.

Reflect: UDHR Article 1. All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood.



” *Peace
can only
last where human
rights are respected,
where the people
are fed, and where
individuals and
nations are free.*
14th Dalai Lama

1.2 MOTIVATIONS FOR ADVOCACY

Human rights are based on the core values of human dignity and equality. Because all humans are equal, they have human rights, the basic standards for a dignified life. Understanding these two values is simply all we need to be able to adhere to human rights.

Sometimes, the universality of human rights is debated. Opponents claim that human rights are cultural constructs of Western societies non-compatible with other countries. However, the UDHR and UN human rights treaties have been drafted co-operatively by all states and many CSOs and religious groups. In the process all participants have confirmed the fact that the values behind human rights are universal and therefore supported in nearly every culture, religion, and country.

>> Human dignity and equality include practical values essential for us:

- **Freedom:** Humans should not be demeaned by forcing them to act against their will.
- **Respect for others:** Treating others with respect is a recognition of their dignity.

- **Non-discrimination:** People's rights and opportunities do not depend on their characteristics.
- **Tolerance:** Despite of their differences, all people are equal in their humanity and should be treated accordingly. Equality does not imply uniformity.
- **Justice:** Everyone deserves just and fair treatment.
- **Responsibility:** We all are responsible for realizing and implementing the rights of others.

1.3 BEING AN ADVOCATE: ROLE OF CIVIL SOCIETY IN ADVOCACY – FOR AND WITH THE LOCAL COMMUNITY

Human rights exist for us all. However, governments and social groups restrict and violate human rights on every continent. Some violations are done intentionally, others in lack of better knowledge or in intention to protect interests and beliefs of states or social groups.

How can we as civil society actors urge our communities, societies, and states to put human rights into practice? Advocacy is done by building knowledge and respect for human rights in the minds of local people, in national justice systems and policies and practices of local and national authorities. In this way, we work for the realization of human dignity of everyone.

We all can use our influence to speak up for human rights. Here are examples of advocacy activities:

- **Recognize your rights!** Carefully study human rights and their implementations. When we are aware of our rights and government obligations, we can raise awareness and apply advocacy.
- **Lobbying to change policy or behavior:** Because states and state representatives are obliged to ensure that human rights are respected, we can advocate duty bearers to make necessary policies, laws, and regulations (or changes in the current ones), propose recommendations and solutions, and follow up on state implementation of human rights policies.
- **Documentation:** Gathering evidence of violations, research and monitoring are important tools for effective action and in communicating the aspects and volume of human rights issues.
- **Using legal mechanism:** Taking the cause to the local or national justice system may be relevant. If national justice systems do not function on a neutral basis, regional justice systems or the justice system of an international organizations can be approached.
- **Partnering with international organizations:** International organizations like the UN, EU and regional organizations have the power to exert influence and pressure on national governments.
- **Linking up with other groups or movements:** Although own action is needed, there can also be benefit in joining a larger movement to gain experience and to make your voice heard.

- **Awareness Raising:** Attracting mass attention to a human rights issue, utilizing the media, and inviting others to join in shows duty bearers that people are following on their actions.
- **Advocacy at the local level:** It is beneficial to discuss with local leaders how their value system can be understood as supportive of human rights, and how this knowledge can be forwarded.

Reflect: Do you know what to do if human rights are violated in your community?

Reflect: Have you ever been involved in human rights advocacy? What did you do and what results did you achieve? What did you learn?

Reflect: Read a citation from the Preamble of the Charter of the United Nations: “We the people of the United Nations determined to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war (...), and to reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person, in the equal rights of men and women and of nations large and small, and to establish conditions under which justice and respect for the obligations arising from treaties and other sources of international law can be maintained, and to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom.”

Why is the Role of CSOs Important in Advocacy?

1. **Influence:** Local CSOs can exert real power and influence on local issues and local people in situation of power. As part of the community, CSOs see and experience local injustice, and they are able to speak out and take action.
2. **Empowering citizens:** CSOs are often well placed to empower citizens at a grassroots level, because they represent large numbers of people. Local CSOs can be influential, sustainable, and relevant to local people.
3. **Gathering and sharing information:** The local community is ideally placed to gather first-hand accounts and information about what is happening at a local level. They can pass this on to other citizens and duty bearers, raise awareness and promote human rights.
4. **Acting as a mediator and peacemaker:** Local CSOs can act as an important force for change and reconciliation in a community.



2 THE WHAT, WHERE AND WHO OF ADVOCACY

This chapter lays the foundations for advocacy work. It introduces some important concepts and principles about advocacy. It covers the what, where, who and why of advocacy.

2.1 ADVOCACY – A DEFINITION

Advocacy is standing up for the rights and position of the poorest of the poor, vulnerable and oppressed, by influencing policy- and decision-makers at all levels of power.

- Raising awareness on social problems, and seeking solutions
- Includes analyses of: What is the problem? What is the cause of the problem? How might it be solved?
- Providing decision-makers with information, putting pressure on them and giving them perspectives
- Advocacy is not complaining about a problem. After the problem is identified, advocacy shifts to seeking different solutions to focus on.

”

When the whole world is silent, even one voice becomes powerful.
Malala Yousafzai

2.2 RESULTS OF ADVOCACY

1. Knowledge of problems (gaps between right holder and duty bearer, learn more later!) increases – here awareness is needed!
2. Increased attention and level of discussions
3. More positive attitudes and change in attitudes
4. Initiatives and decisions to change policies and customs
5. Putting policies into practice
6. Chanced practices – chanced behavior

The overall objective is to change the particular policies or practices of the decision-makers for the benefit of those who are poor, vulnerable, and oppressed.

Advocacy is never just about raising awareness of an issue, a problem, or a situation. It seeks to bring about social change!



ADVOCACY PYRAMID – LEVELS OF DOING ADVOCACY



2.3 WHY SHOULD CIVIL SOCIETY BE INVOLVED IN ADVOCACY?

- Civil society actors form a network that covers an extensive geographical area, reaching to the most remote places.
- As a part of the civil society, we are in the position to affect changes in attitudes, because civil society actors meet with people regularly and over a long period of time.
- The most effective change comes from inside the country, when local civil society actors are empowered to become advocates for the rights of the most vulnerable ones.

>> DIFFERENT WAYS OF DOING ADVOCACY

Advocacy for people. **Advocacy** can be done on behalf of communities affected by a situation. This can be carried out by people and organizations that are not directly affected, including staff and supporters of organizations in developed countries. This approach works in consultation and engagement with the affected communities. It is a suitable option in situations where affected communities are unable to speak out for themselves.

Advocacy with people. **Advocacy** can be done in a collaborative way between communities affected by a situation and those who are not directly affected, including staff and supporters of organizations in developed countries.

Advocacy by people. **Advocacy** can be done by communities directly affected by a situation. If appropriate, those who are not directly affected, including staff and supporters of organizations in developed countries.

(see more; Tips and Tricks!)

2.4 GOOD PRACTICES IN ADVOCACY

- Accountability in advocacy is about acknowledging and assuming responsibility for advocacy messages, decisions, and actions. We are accountable to all those who are interested in and affected by the situation.
- Legitimacy in advocacy is about ensuring that the advocate has authority to advocate. A legitimate advocate is involved in, interested in, or affected by the issue, or has a genuine reason for advocating on behalf of someone else.
- Participation in advocacy is about involving all the people interested in and/or affected by the issue. It is about consultation and cooperation to make sure that everyone who wants to participate is given opportunities to be included throughout the advocacy process.
- Representation in advocacy is about ensuring that, when advocacy is done on behalf of other people, the views of those people are accurately and fairly taken into account at all stages of the advocacy process. It is about communicating with those that are affected to ensure that they are satisfied with the advocacy messages, decisions, and actions undertaken on their behalf.

Following these principles helps advocates to avoid the temptation of rushing in and doing advocacy work on behalf of others when they could do it in collaboration with them, or, where possible, enable them to do it themselves.



3 ADVOCACY CIRCLE – HOW TO PUT IT INTO PRACTICE

(Adopted from Woord en Daad advocacy manual)

3.1 ANALYZE THE PROBLEM

- Why does a problem occur?
- Find the roots of the problem you want to address. What or who keeps the situation from improving? Who or what could help to improve the issue? Use trustworthy facts and sources! (see *Annex; problem tree*)



3.1.1 WHAT IS AN ADVOCACY ISSUE?

An advocacy issue is a problem or need that will only be changed or met, if there is a change in a law or policy, or a change in the implementation or practice of a law or policy. For example, an advocacy issue might be the lack of affordable education, in which case the problem will only be changed when the government policy of free education for all is implemented across the whole country.

The most strategic advocacy issues usually:

- Have significance and importance to people in the affected communities
- Link directly with an organization's programmatic experience, and are consistent with its vision and values
- Require a change in policy or practice to bring about change
- Will block progress towards change on other issues, if left unaddressed
- Have potential to unlock possibilities for other changes, if dealt with successfully
- Are issues people feel passionately about, and agree that they need to change
- Have a problem and a solution that are easy to communicate in simple language to diverse audiences
- Are winnable and/or achievable, at least in the long term, even if not in the short term
- Make full use of opportunities, such as landmark moments, to influence change

A vision for change focuses on solutions, not problems. It encourages people to dream about the future and provides them with something to aspire to. It enables them to envisage what their community and society could be like, if things were to change for the better. It can be very motivational.

See annex: Theory of Change



4 MAPPING STAKEHOLDERS

Advocacy success is cooperative success. Therefore, advocacy requires cooperation between and together with different actors and stakeholders. Stakeholders can be individuals, groups, organizations, institutions, and departments or ministries that have interests (actual or potential) in a project or program. They are called stakeholders, because they have a 'stake' in the project or program, which usually means that they have something to gain or lose through it. In the context of advocacy, stakeholders are people who are affected by, interested in, or able to influence the identified advocacy issue.

They include the constituents who may be directly and ultimately affected, either positively or negatively, by the advocacy process, as well as those who are intermediaries. All stakeholders must be identified in the development of an advocacy initiative. Their interests must be assessed, even if they are excluded from the decision-making processes. Consideration must be given to the ways in which their interests affect the viability of our advocacy plans, and relationships must be established with them.

Identify:

- Who is the relevant contact person within each group or organization? (If there is more than one, e.g., if a minister has two advisers, one for and the other against, list both.)
- What is their specific interest or stake in the issue? Why does it matter to them?
- What is their position on the issue?
- What is their likely impact or influence on the issue?
- How much power do they actually have to change things?
- Are they in favor of your position [+] or against it [-]?

See Annex – Stakeholder Mapping Tool

See Annex – Collaborative Advocacy Check list

4.1 RESOURCE IDENTIFICATION FRAMEWORK

As with all relief and development work, it is important to consider what resources are available to us before commencing an advocacy initiative. It is also important to keep assessing and allocating resources throughout its duration.

- Public support. Different groups and individuals may be interested to contribute. Contributions, even little ones, build increased ownership. People's money, information, and volunteering time are valuable gifts.

- Business support. Businesses that are interested in your cause can contribute money, information, or the valuable gift of the time of specialized people (e.g., lawyers, advertisers, artists, accountants).
- Government support. Even though government bodies are often the decision-makers you address, other government levels or bodies might be very willing to contribute to your advocacy work. They can help by providing, e.g., meeting space, goods, sometimes even land, and valuable insider information.

4.2 WHO HAS POWER TO BRING CHANGE?

- Who is responsible for the problem and the solutions?
- Do we have access to them?
- Are they open to discussion?
- Do they agree that they have responsibility for change?
- Are they able to do something?
- SMALL steps are also steps!



5 PLAN YOUR STRATEGY

- Are we clear about our desired impact, outcomes, outputs, inputs, and activities? (See annex – Theory of Change)
- What changes are we seeking? How will we measure those changes? Have we got relevant and sufficient indicators in place?
- Are we confident about our proposed advocacy activities? Have they worked before? Are there alternatives?
- Do we have the skills and resources that we need?

Advocacy planning requires not just an understanding of what you should do, and when and how you will do it, but also an understanding of how change will happen, and what role your organization or community will play in it.

An advocacy indicator is a sign that change is happening because of our advocacy work. We measure these changes through evidence or means of verification, i.e., information that we can use to show that our advocacy work has made a difference.



SET A GOOD GOAL!

- Recognize transformation
- What effects should be accomplished in order to foster further transformation?
- A good goal is tangible, recognizable, and achievable
- What actions are needed?
- Stakeholders' resources!
- Recognize the current ongoing dialogues in the society

IS YOUR GOAL SMART?



Specific



Measurable



Attainable



Relevant



Time-bound

Objectives are the measurable steps that are used as guidelines for evaluation. They are the individual steps that will allow you to reach your goal.

Objectives generally answer the following questions:

- What are you going to do?
- How will you do it?
- By what time will you do it?
- How much change do you expect?

Objectives usually consist of the following three components:

- A single target indicator or activity to be measured
- A target population
- A time frame

6 RISK MANAGEMENT

Advocacy may come with specific risks. By being alert, most of these risks are very manageable, as we enter into relations diligently. Some important points of attention for all who engage in advocacy:

- Prepare well! Plan for sufficient resources before you do advocacy. Personnel, investment in time and budget have to be planned properly. This is often underestimated.
- Avoid one-sided relations with only those in power, or with only opposition groups. Also, after elections, rebuilding network contacts is often necessary.
- First, seek cooperation, then, when needed, engage in confrontation. Try to work together with the authorities that can help to solve issues. Pick issues that are shared by the larger segment of the society. Beware that in some countries the government or people do not like NGOs to be aligned with foreign organizations when doing advocacy.

WHY WRITE A PLAN?

Writing plans is a key activity in NGO and business annual cycles. Planning has four main purposes:

1. A plan as an action guide. When written down, all staff members can check the plan to know what to do next.
2. Accountability to management. When your organization chooses to be active in advocacy, management wants to know what progress is being made in order to evaluate their staff's and organization's performance.
3. Accountability towards donors. Donors are interested to know your advocacy plans in order to evaluate, whether they are willing and able to contribute.
4. Gathering information for learning purposes. The Monitoring and Evaluation plan supports the gathering of information about the advocacy project and its context. This information will be very important when, at the end of the project, you want to evaluate it and learn from the project.



7 ACTION!

What the action phase looks like, depends on your context and approach to advocacy as an organization. Organizations and networks with an advocacy specialization, a corporate political advisor, or an advocacy team can actively reassess and change tactics. Organizations that integrate advocacy within their broader action 'naturally' adapt to opportunities on the go. Thus, 'Action' may not be experienced as a separate step, but rather as the start of advocacy activities in integrated action.

See more: Tips and Tricks!

8 EVALUATION AND LEARNING

- Accountability to management: management wants to know whether the investment of time, money, and people have resulted in positive outcomes and impact.
- Accountability to stakeholders and donors: advocacy evaluation makes results communicable. It can be used to show allies, decision-makers, or donors what outcomes have been achieved or how your strategy has contributed to the observed change.
- Learning about effective strategies: evaluation allows you to learn about effective and ineffective strategies in your context. It may provide the necessary information for responding more effectively to unexpected events next time. Do an evaluation together with your allies to achieve joint learning, increase ownership, and strengthen your network.
- When to evaluate: advocacy evaluation is often a success assessment. But even when things go very differently, evaluation may support joint learning about advocacy strategies and tactics. Evaluation is useful after a great success or disappointment. This can be done halfway of the project or at the end of it.

8.1 MONITORING

- Identify 'progress markers' to see what progress decision-makers have made towards achieving the outcomes
- What are we doing to support the achievement of outcomes?
- How well have we performed?
- Largely qualitative data collection
- Keep a logbook (see Annex)

8.2 WHAT IF SOMETHING GOES WRONG?

1. Learn to tell about your field (line of work) and topic articulately
2. Prepare for communication situations well
3. Prepare for challenging questions beforehand
4. If you make a mistake, admit it
5. Treat interviewers with respect
6. Don't operate alone; ask for help from your organization
7. Tomorrow is a new day!



9 ETHICAL ISSUES

- Act in line with your organization's core values
- Clarity of purpose – supporters should know your objective and expect realistic results
- Advocacy is independent of service delivery interests; internal policies give the advocate room to fulfil his/her mission
- Putting people first – beneficiaries' interests are prioritized over organization's or other interests
- Empowerment – in the end, aim at empowering communities to advocate for themselves
- Ensure that people are not excluded from the process on the basis of race, sex, or position
- Make the advocacy process and information accessible for all
- With good monitoring and evaluation, advocacy activities are accountable.

10 HUMAN RIGHTS, POLITICS AND ADVOCACY

Human rights belong solely to human beings: individuals and social groups. The purpose of these rights is to regulate the actions of states and to protect individuals.

Human rights law is the cornerstone of advocacy. Even when we focus on a particular rights area, the vision of advocates is always the full realization of human rights for everyone. Therefore, it is necessary to engage the human rights principles into advocacy regardless of whether specific rights have been set as expected results or not. Especially the principle of non-discrimination should be followed throughout the identification, formulation, and implementation of advocacy activities.

Human rights include civil and political, as well as social, economic, and cultural rights. Civil and political rights tend to demand immediate implementation and require the state to respect individual choice and freedom, e.g., the right to vote and freedom from arbitrary arrest and torture. Social, economic, and cultural rights usually demand longer term implementation and more active or positive contribution from the state, e.g., the right to education, health, employment, and participation in cultural life.

When advocating on poverty issues, we are almost always arguing for collective rights to bring greater equality. This applies particularly in situations where a group of people needs special protection of their rights; if its members are to enjoy living conditions on equal terms with the majority of the population; and where government action is needed for that equality to be realized.

Rights only make sense if someone has the responsibility to ensure that they are respected. The aim is that everyone, including the person living in abject poverty, knows their rights and can act to enforce them. It is equally important that the authorities and duty bearers know their human rights obligations and are capable of implementing them.

>> CHECKLIST OF RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

RIGHTS HOLDER

All human beings are rights holders.

- Is entitled to rights
- Is entitled to claim rights
- Is entitled to hold the duty-bearer accountable
- Has a responsibility to respect the rights of others

DUTY BEARER

Duty bearers are people in power who are legally or morally responsible for the wellbeing of the people.

- Has the obligation to respect, protect and fulfil human rights
- In most cases, can be advocated to make human rights friendly decisions and actions
- Is never entirely neutral, but always under the sphere of influence of groups, ideologies, etc.



WHY WE SHOULD ENGAGE WITH DUTY BEARERS?

We can be the ones influencing duty bearers! Because all rights holders are affected by the decisions made by duty bearers, we must engage with the political forum to achieve social change. CSOs are in the position to remind duty bearers of their legal human rights obligations, share knowledge of human rights violations and recommend solutions. If we fail to take our chances, the forum is left to other groups that might not be favorable to our cause. Also, if we do not engage, we will end up only doing relief work and helping those suffering to cope with the effects of abuse, while the root causes and core problems remain unsolved.

In our private lives we can support whatever political party we prefer. Yet, advocacy should be neutral and targeted to all political parties, relevant organizations, and duty bearers without favoring or taking a stand on behalf of any political ideology. Our message should always be grounded in international and universal human rights standards, not in partisan political opinion. Otherwise, we risk our credibility by becoming politicized. A politicized agenda is always a compromised agenda, one that gets easily hijacked and re-translated by political parties in their struggle for power.

” *Life’s most persistent and urgent question is, ‘What are you doing for others?’*
Martin Luther King Jr



11 ADVOCACY AND DIFFICULT POLITICAL CONTEXTS

- Advocacy is required in a difficult political context for the same reasons that advocacy is required in other contexts: it contributes to poverty alleviation by addressing the underlying causes of poverty, and it is complementary to programmatic work that addresses the effects of poverty, policies and practices.
- It holds governments to account for the provision of, and the access to, basic services, such as health care, education, shelter, water and sanitation.
- It asks decision-makers to uphold laws; it benefits people who are poor, vulnerable, and marginalized.

- It helps people to communicate with decision-makers, empowering them to make suggestions and seek justice.
- It can be done even when the difficult political context makes it inadvisable to use the word ‘advocacy’ or the phrase ‘seeking justice’.
- In many difficult political contexts, citizens live in poverty, your group may be in a minority, and anyone who is perceived to be against the government in any way is potentially at risk of persecution. In these circumstances, advocacy is important, because it can open up civil society space and enable civil society to engage with the government on an ongoing basis. Also, advocacy can encourage changes in the accountability and transparency of the government and other public institutions.



12 TIME TO TAKE ACTION – TIPS AND TRICKS

This section discusses how to implement the advocacy plan and take action. It also introduces different styles you can use, like lobbying, mobilizing, and using the media. Remember, before starting any practical action, make sure you have a good advocacy strategy that includes your goal, advocacy message, network, needed steps, resources and evaluation plan!

12.1 FORMING THE CORE MESSAGE

Support questions:

Target audience: Who is the message directed to?

Context: What social issue, that is familiar to the recipient, is the project involved in?

Issue: Which part of the issue does the project address? What makes the project unique?

Relevance: Why is it important to act right now?

Benefit: How does the project solve the issue? How will society change?

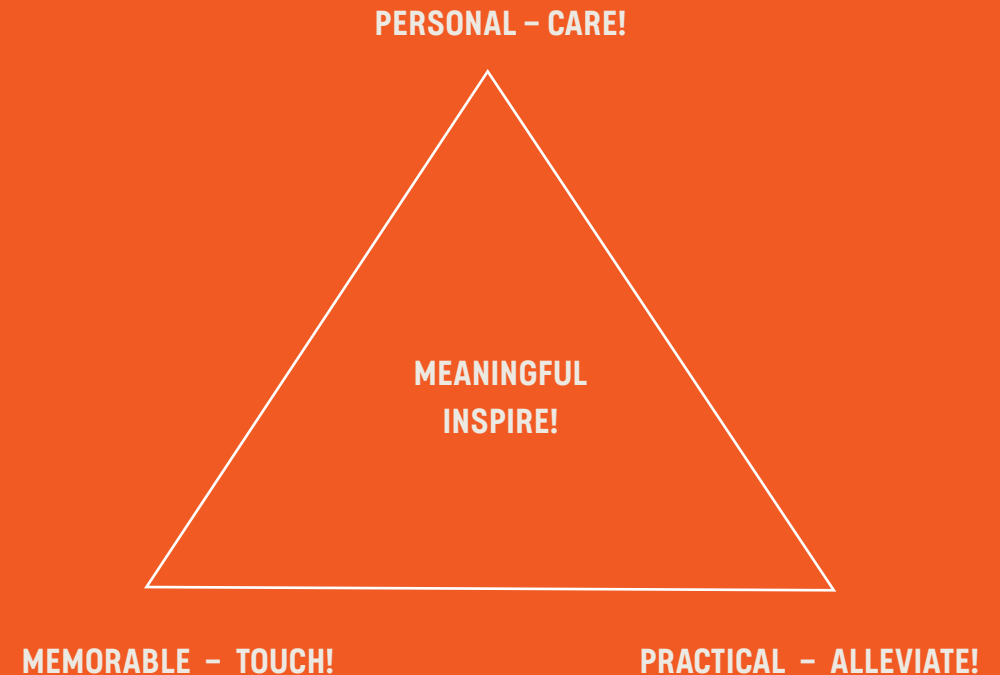
FORMING A GOOD ADVOCACY MESSAGE:

- Is your message clear and tangible?
- Is it concise?
- Is it appealing?
- Is it distinctive?
- Is it factual?
- Is it plausible, realistic?

WHAT MAKES YOU VALUABLE TO OTHERS:

- Have a positive attitude, be solution-driven
- Be trustworthy and faithful
- Bring valuable knowledge and insights
- Bring valuable connections
- Have an eye for the perspective of the other
- Be good at listening, show interest in the other
- Follow-up on referrals

ADVOCACY TRIANGLE:



Practical: break complicatedness and convenience

Personal: break indifference

Memorable: break insignificance

Meaningful: break apathy, inspire! involve in transformation, utilize everyone's skills and knowhow, etc.

(Advocacy triangle; source Gjerstad, 2015)

Advocacy serves human needs. It is a good idea to consider advocacy through these needs. An influencer may aim to fulfill these needs through ethical means:

1. The need for a positive self-image (I am valuable and accepted)
2. The need for a sense of belonging (I belong to a group/community, and I enjoy it)
3. The need for significance in existence (my existence and actions have a greater meaning)
4. The need for accuracy or being right (I can, and I know)
5. The need for control (I have control over things and decision-making power)

DIFFERENT WAYS OF DOING ADVOCACY

Insider approach:

- 'Silent diplomacy'
- Lobby, policy influencing
- Personal and direct relationship
- Most room to maneuver
- Cooperative
- Less ownership amongst people

Outsider approach:

- Making your message public/visible
- Media engagement
- Mass mobilization

- More confrontational
- More voices – stronger message?
- Broader attention to issue
- May be perceived as confrontational

Advocacy for the people:

- Professional character: knowledge and expertise
- Proximity to decision makers: good networks
- Legitimacy: less direct ownership by the people
- Be clear about who you represent
- Be accountable to the people about your advocacy on their behalf directly or indirectly
- Risk: wide distance between 'policy bubble' and real people's lives; professional lobbyists

Advocacy with the people:

- Champions citizen representatives
- Less empowerment and ownership among citizens
- Direct dialogue between decision-makers and citizens
- Easier to keep the message focused
- Fits very well with the insider approach
- Less time and money consuming

Advocacy by the people:

- People are empowered to speak up
- Ownership by the people
- Closes the gap between decision-makers and citizens, and

may create space for direct dialogue

- Challenge to keep the message focused
- Might be time and money consuming
- Awareness raising and capacity building are often needed
- Important to connect people with the right decision-makers and with the right message

12.2 ADVOCACY MEETING

Before the meeting:

- Who is/are in front of you? What is his/her/their political agenda?
- Decide on the key message. Know how your message relates to the political agenda.
- Decide on cooperation: With whom? Why? Make clear agreements on roles.
- When are you satisfied (commitments, what kind of dialogue)?

During the meeting:

- Know how much time you have
- Be clear in communicating your main message (TEA method)
- Be open to response and questions to stimulate dialogue
- Support your message with evidence. Bring documents with you.
- Observe your counterpart and be flexible



After the meeting:

- Identify issues for follow-up, and send a thank-you message

Responding to questions and counterarguments:

- Listening is the key!
- Take a deep breath and think before you answer
- Do any of the arguments you have already made answer the question/counterargument? If so, repeat them.
- Avoid clichés and jargon (= technical words)
- Keep it simple: it is easier to follow shorter sentences
- Try to avoid reading (it is monotonous)
- Use humor (be careful ...)
- Don't forget body language!

Good speech includes:

- Ethos: the source's credibility, the speaker's/author's authority
- Logos: the logic used to support a claim (induction and deduction); it can also be the facts and statistics used to help support the argument
- Pathos: the emotional or motivational appeals; vivid language, emotional language, and numerous sensory details
 - easy to handle
 - easily accessible
 - as familiar as possible (related to previous knowledge)

- as attractive as possible
- well packaged (emotions, senses)

Methods of rhetorical influence:

- Skillful speech: impactful by creating an inspiring vision ("I have a dream!")
- Argumentation rhetoric: the focus is on the methods and means that aim to influence the audience's views
- Rhetoric of metaphors: use of skillful expressions, stories, or speech that appeals to emotions, etc.

PITCH!

1. A SHORT and PRECISE description of

- you
- your organization
- your agenda
- your product...

2. Conveys only the most necessary details

3. Length: 1- 3 min maximum!

TEA- METHOD

TOUCH:

Make a connection by communicating urgency

- Know the person(s) in front of you; connect with them
- Involve others
- Use a striking example (story)

ENTHUSE:

Warm the other for your solution, and explain how he/she may contribute

- Practical, but being clear about where you are heading to in the long term
- Focus on the outcome challenge you have formulated for this actor

ACT:

Suggest the first or the next few smaller steps towards the solution

12.3 LOBBYING

The main aim of lobbying is to influence decision-makers to bring about changes in laws, policies, and practices. In different contexts, these decision-makers might include national or local government officials, civil servants, business leaders, members of the Parliament, international organizations, and village elders or chiefs, as well as religious leaders. The thing they have in common is that they are people who have power to bring about the changes we are seeking.

Lobbying can be:

- Writing a letter
- Sending a position paper
- Making a phone call
- Arranging a visit or a meeting
- Conducting a visit or a meeting
- Enabling a decision-maker to go and meet with a community affected by the issue

Before starting, find out:

- Who has responsibility and power to change the law, policy, or practice?

- What are we trying to achieve?
- Who can influence the situation?
- Who do we have access to, including existing relationships?

(Note! Go back to “Advocacy Meeting – and Good Speech” to get some tips for your lobbying meeting)

12.4 MOBILIZING PEOPLE

‘Mobilizing people’ involves enabling people to participate in actions that increase pressure on decision-makers to bring about the changes we are seeking. The aim is to show that people are concerned about the issue and want to see change on the issue. While detailed discussions with decision-makers usually take place in lobbying meetings, most ways of mobilizing people or campaign actions are open to everyone.

Mobilizing people should also be linked to ongoing lobbying work and the direct contact with decision-makers, if possible.

Mobilizing people creates opportunities to:

- Increase pressure on decision-makers by showing there is public concern, a wide range of interested groups, and a high level of awareness and understanding of the issue
- Add legitimacy to lobbying efforts by involving the people affected by the issue
- Open access to decision-makers, if lobbying is not achieving much

- Use energy or frustration in a positive way that will bring about change
- Bring media attention to the issue, and raise the profile of the issue
- Produce greater commitment to the issue by those involved
- Lobby directly where it has not been possible to lobby before

Select an activity that is appropriate for the context and culture!

- Work in networks, alliances and coalitions with other groups interested in the issue and with the media
- Seek permission from the relevant authorities for any public meetings, marches, or events
- Find out and stay informed about the relevant laws that permit public activities. Seek guidance from lawyers, if necessary
- Keep a close eye on the media to see, if there are any precedents, good or bad
- Be realistic about what can be achieved. Otherwise, there is a risk that we will be perceived as weak by our targets and potential supporters.
- Invite public officials to join in activities when appropriate (be aware of the possibility of being used by public officials for political reasons)

Awareness-raising is often the first step in mobilizing people to act on a particular issue.

Awareness-raising needs to be done with those who are directly affected by the issue, and with others who are concerned for those affected, for example, churches, activists, and supporters of organizations working on the issue.

If people are not aware of the issue, they are unlikely to act until they are informed and aware. It is also unfair to expect people to act, if they have insufficient information or do not understand the issue.

Awareness-raising is therefore essential in order to empower people to act.

Awareness-raising may not lead to advocacy, if it simply raises awareness of poverty and injustice without helping the community to make the connection between their situation and the decisions and actions of those who have power to change the situation. Awareness-raising, therefore, needs to include an analysis of the power relations.

When considering the most appropriate and effective ways of awareness-raising for advocacy, it is important to understand how adults learn.

People generally remember:

- 20% of what they hear
- 30% of what they see
- 50% of what they hear and see
- 80% of what they discover for themselves



12.5 EFFECTIVE CAMPAIGNING

Organizing an inspirational event or campaign:

1. Clarify the goal: Why is the event organized, what is the end goal?
2. Choose the participants carefully: a public event, if the aim is to stir conversation and visibility; workshops, if the aim is to invite strategically central stakeholders – quality over quantity!
3. Right timing: avoid overlapping events!
4. Make sure the facilities are taken care of (location, catering, etc.)
5. Link the event to other significant occasions, if possible (like UN international days, etc.)
6. Assign responsibilities and roles
7. Collect and analyze feedback
8. Post-event debriefing: What was achieved? What next? How and what to follow up?

12.6 USING THE MEDIA

The media includes traditional media platforms, such as radio, television, newspapers and magazines, as well as electronic and online media, such as email, the internet, social networking sites and blogs. It is a powerful force that can build awareness, shape public opinion, and influence decision-makers and their decisions leading to changes in laws, policies and practices.

What drives media interest?

- Topicality/relevance
- New perspectives to current dialogues/conversations
- A surprising piece of information or phenomenon
- A touching and conversation-stirring story
- Useful information

Some tips:

- Write an opinion piece or an article about an issue
- Invite media to events
- Offer interviews with partners from your work
- In case 'direct' lobbying has not led to the desired result, make a public appeal, but choose carefully the right media and the right tone of voice
- Use social media: decision-makers and politicians make much use of Twitter and LinkedIn – How about in your country?

When writing for the media, make sure you answer the following questions:

- What is happening / has happened? The media story
- Who, where, and when? The facts
- Why is it happening / has it happened? The analysis
- How is it affecting people, and why is this important? The relevance
- What needs to happen now?

Reminder: Form a message that is

- Easy to handle
- Easily accessible
- As familiar as possible (related to previous knowledge)
- As attractive as possible
- Well packaged (emotions, senses)
- Practical: break complicatedness and convenience
- Personal: break indifference
- Memorable: break insignificance
- Meaningful: break apathy, inspire!, involve in transformation, utilize everyone's skills and knowhow, etc.

A to-do list for Twitter use:

1. Register as a person, not as a project
2. Consider what it is that you want to achieve
3. Follow those whose attention you want to capture
4. Map out the hashtags relevant to the sector, and use them
5. Publish content that is beneficial to the followers (80% content produced by others and 20% own content)
6. Share content that is easy to react to – interact
7. Share links and images
8. An expert can also tweet about their free-time and other such topics
9. Twitter requires endurance

A good blog post:

1. Pick one standpoint for your post
2. Strive to tell your audience something exciting; share it immediately in order to hook the reader
3. Let your own voice and opinion be heard. You find your own personal style only by writing!
4. Set aside time for sharing the text and for conversations
5. Keep in mind visual aspects

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ANNEX 1: ADVOCACY PLANNING CHECK LIST

- 1. What is the problem?** (Is it serious? Is it urgent?)
- 2. What are the effects of the problem?** (How does the problem affect people who are poor, vulnerable and marginalised? Does it impact certain groups more than others? If so, who and how? Do we have enough information to verify this?)
- 3. What are the causes of the problem?** (What is the role of the policies and practices of the national government? What is the role of churches and other groups? What contribution is made by cultural, environmental and socioeconomic factors? Do we have enough information to verify this?)
- 4. What do we think needs to be done?** (What is our vision for change? What are our suggested solutions? What are their advantages and disadvantages? Can we defend our position? Are our proposals realistic? Do we have sufficient information in support of our suggestions?)
- 5. Who has power to bring about change?** (Who is responsible for the problem and the solutions? Do we have access to them? Are they open to discussion? Do they agree they have responsibility for change? Are they able to do something?)
- 6. Who else is working on the problem?** (Who can we work with to address the problem? Are they having any impact? Are there people who are not yet addressing the issue, but could be persuaded to help us? Who might oppose us, and how will we respond to their opposition?)
- 7. What risks might we face?** (What have we done to identify, assess and reduce the risks? Are the risks greater if we do nothing than if we go ahead with advocacy work? What assumptions have we made? Do we have adequate information for a risk analysis?)
- 8. Do we have an advocacy plan?** (Are we clear about our desired Impact, Outcomes, Outputs, Inputs and Activities? What changes are we seeking? How will we measure those changes? Have we got relevant and sufficient indicators in place? Are we confident about our proposed advocacy activities? Have they worked before? Are there alternatives? Do we have the skills and resources we need?)

ANNEX 2: CHECKLIST FOR COLLABORATIVE ADVOCACY

When considering whether to work with other people, groups, organisations and institutions, it can be useful to ask the following questions:

Does a joint advocacy initiative already exist?



Yes. Should we join it?

1. Purpose

- What is the purpose of the joint advocacy initiative?
- How are decisions made?
- If you join, will you add anything and /or gain anything?

2. Resources

- What contributions can you make?
- What resources will you be expected to contribute to the joint initiative (money, time etc)?

3. Learning

- How will participation in the joint advocacy initiative help you learn and develop in your advocacy work?

4. Risks

- What are the risks of not joining?
- Does the advocacy initiative have a public profile – what are the possible risks of being associated with it?
- What are the potential risks of joining?



No. Should we create one?

1. Vision and values

- Who shares your values?
- Would you be able to work with them?
- Who else has a similar vision?

2. Advocacy issue

- Who is already working on the same advocacy issue?

3. Contributions

- Who might be able to provide something that you need?

4. Capacity and cooperation

- Who else has capacity to advocate?
- Who could cooperate with you?
- Is it possible to achieve the desired impact?

ANNEX 3: KEEPING A LOGBOOK:

- (Mini) Description of the activity result or news item:
Who changed what, where, and when?
- (Mini) Reflection on Relevance:
How does this relate to your plan?
- (Mini) Reflection on activities/contributions:
What did your organization do to contribute?
What did other people and organizations contribute?
- Sources!

PERIOD	ACTIVITY	DATE	INDICATION OF RESULTS	REMARKS	RELEVANT MEDIA ETC PUBLICATIONS
Example: March 2019	International Women's day: Campaign with xxxx- NGO. - media campaign with Ibra-radio - event for ladies in Bukavu – city together with CEPAC- church and Unifem	8.3	- participant number: - feedback from event: (feedback from audience, stakeholders, net- work – write down how feedback was collected)	- next time remember to start planning earlier :) - well done: good team work, clear roles!	- local news paper article - facebook - twitter etc

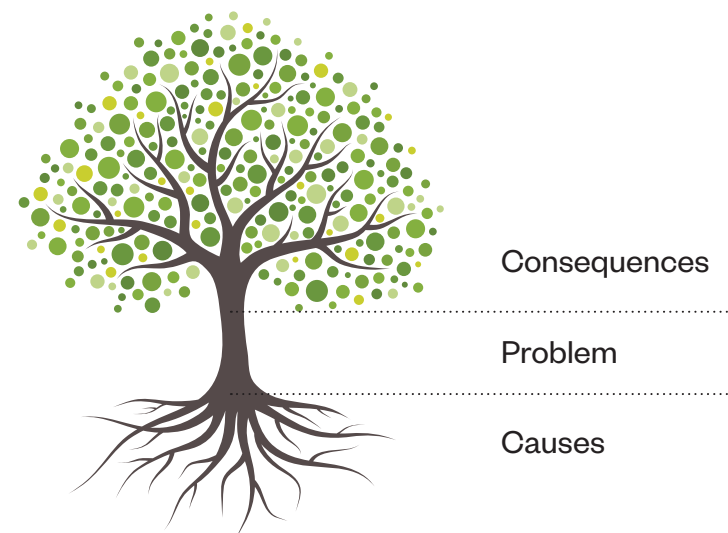
ANNEX 4: PROBLEM TREE ANALYSIS:

1. Brainstorm with your team or target group to identify the most important problems.
2. Make the problem tree together with the people and strategic partners.
3. For each problem, make a tree
 - Write the problem in the centre of a paper or white-board
 - Discuss together the possible causes for the problem situation. Write these as roots. Ask: "Why do we have this problem?" Write the first line of causes under the problem. Ask: "Why do we have these causes happening?" Write the second line of causes under the first. Continue with following lines if needed.
 - Discuss the possible effects of the problem. Write these as branches. Ask: "What if the problem will not be solved?" Add a second and following level of consequences like above, like branches to a tree.

Identify the advocacy issues in your problem tree

Remember to ask – is this an advocacy issue – could this be solved by using advocacy, advocacy tools, advocacy methods?

Your team might come up with a wide range of problems. In that case, it is important to prioritize on the areas you will address your advocacy interventions. (based on the most pressing needs and available resources)



ANNEX 5: STAKEHOLDER INFLUENCE MAP

1. Take your intermediate outcome as a starting point.
2. List all important stakeholders affected by or affecting the issue in the column on the left side.
3. In the columns to the right, map their level of agreement with your position statement, their reasons for interest in the issue, and measures for engagement and influence.

ISSUE (Advocacy theme etc)	Level of agreement	Engagement	Priority of the issue	Reason of interest	Resources	Degree of influence	Relevant or potential connections		
Group 1 Those who are directly affected	-3 to +3	Low-Medium-High	Low-Medium-High		time, money, people	Low-Medium-High			
Group 2 Those responsible for finding a solution									
Group 3 Those concerned or interested									

ANNEX: 6 THEORY OF CHANGE – PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

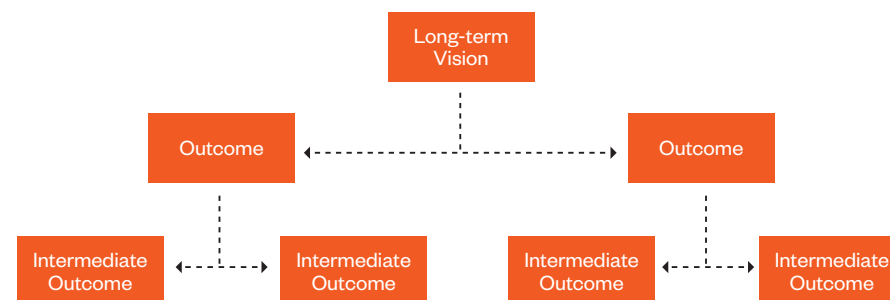
In all advocacy work, it is important that we know what strategies are likely to be successful in influencing the decision-makers, duty bearers, we want to target. This will enable us to make the best use of our resources and have the best chance of bringing about the change we desire.

A Theory of Change gives an advocacy plan its components. These components are the same as for other types of plans:

- Inputs are the human and financial resources used in a project or programme: money, time, materials, equipment, existing research, information, expertise, experience, contacts etc. Advocacy examples: amount of staff time, funding, relationships with allies. Which Inputs do we have already, and which do we need to find so we can do our Activities?
- Activities are step-by-step tasks. They are the actions undertaken in a project or programme, which use the Inputs to produce services, products, activities etc. Advocacy examples: research, lobbying, mobilisation, using the media, monitoring. How will our Activities deliver the Outputs?
- Outputs are the products, services or events that are produced as a result of the Inputs combined with the Activities. They are necessary for the expected Outcomes to be achieved. Advocacy examples: levels of public awareness, number of lobbying meetings, numbers mobilised

What Outputs can we deliver in our timeframe to achieve the Outcome?

- Outcomes are the specific changes resulting from the project or programme for those affected by the issue, such as changes in knowledge, skills, attitudes, behaviour, awareness, practices and policies. They answer the question, 'So what?' An Outcome describes the difference the work will make, ie the desired achievements of the project or programme.
What Outcomes do we want to achieve, and how will they contribute towards the planned Impact?
- Impact is the longer-range, cumulative effect of programmes on what they ultimately aim to change. Impact is rarely, if ever, the result of a single programme. However, a programme may contribute to Impact. Impact is often felt countrywide. It is the long-term, hoped for, desired end result. Advocacy example: implementation of changes in a policy or practice. What long-term change do we ultimately want to see in society?
- Assumptions are beliefs about factors or risks that could affect the progress or success of a project or programme. Advocacy examples: decision-makers will remain in power, allies will continue to want to work on joint advocacy initiatives. What are we taking for granted?



Adopted from Woord en Daad training material



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