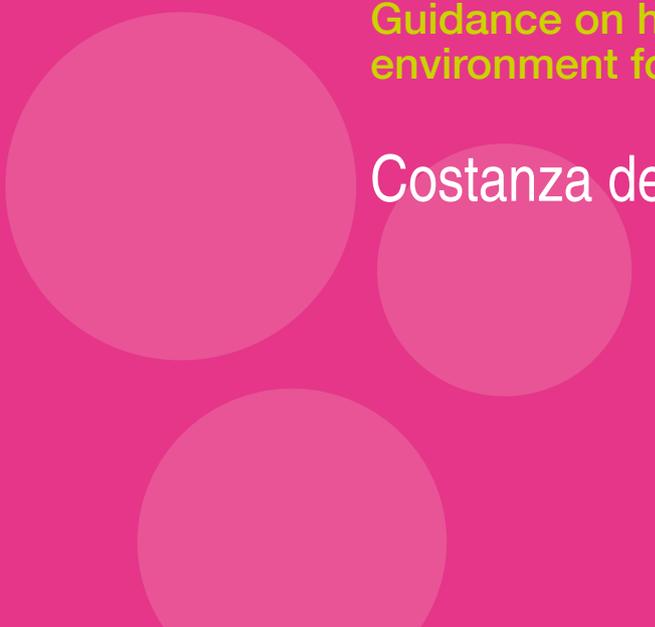




Advocacy Toolkit

Guidance on how to advocate for a more enabling environment for civil society in your context

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□ Preface

What are the Open Forum and the International Framework for CSO Development Effectiveness?

The **Open Forum for CSO Development Effectiveness**¹ is a global process set up by and for Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) worldwide, to create a shared framework of principles that defines effective CSO development practice and elaborates the minimum standards for an enabling environment for CSOs, while at the same time promoting civil society's essential role in the international development cooperation system.

The Open Forum process was initiated in an exploratory meeting on CSO Effectiveness in June 2008 in Paris, France and was formally set up in latter part of 2008 following the Third High level Forum on Aid Effectiveness (HLF3) in Accra, Ghana, in response to the call to civil society organizations to articulate their own statement on development effectiveness. The mandate of the Open Forum runs until the Fourth High Level Forum (HLF4) at the end of 2011 in Busan, South Korea, where its conclusions will be presented for official acknowledgment. At the same time, the outcomes of the process are also a perpetual reference point for civil society organizations on their own effectiveness as independent development actors.

The objectives of the Open Forum form three key pillars:

1. Achieving a consensus on a set of global Principles for Development Effectiveness
2. Developing guidelines for CSOs to implement the Principles
3. Advocating to governments for a more enabling environment for CSOs to operate

These three components form the ***Siem Reap CSO Consensus on the International Framework for CSO Development Effectiveness*** (International Framework) – the consolidated outcome statement of the Open Forum².

The Open Forum consultations process was guided by a 29-member Global Facilitation Group of CSO platforms worldwide. In the 3 years of its mandate (2009 to 2011), the Open Forum reached out to thousands of CSOs across the globe through national, regional, and thematic consultations with the aim of identifying the common principles that guide their work as civil society and the standards for an environment in which they can operate most effectively – in other words, to determine what constitutes development effectiveness for civil society. The worldwide consultation process was designed to enable the greatest possible number of CSOs to contribute, ensuring that the Open Forum process was legitimate and inclusive of civil society globally.

In conjunction with the civil society consultations, the Open Forum also held multi-stakeholder meetings at regional, national and international levels in order to facilitate dialogue and discussion between CSOs, donors and governments on the enabling conditions for a vibrant civil society. Based on the inputs generated from the thousands of stakeholders who participated in the Open Forum consultation process, the first Global Assembly of the Open Forum in Istanbul, Turkey (September 2010) endorsed the eight "Istanbul Principles" of CSO Development Effectiveness, which form the basis for effective development work by CSOs around the globe.

At the second and concluding Global Assembly of the Open Forum in Siem Reap, Cambodia (June 2011), the final version of the International Framework for CSO Development Effectiveness, including the eight Istanbul Principles, was endorsed. It was developed following further inputs from civil society representatives during the first Global Assembly, as well as many more national, regional and thematic consultations that took place between the two Global Assemblies.

The *International Framework* is accompanied by this Advocacy Toolkit which provides guidance on how CSOs can use the messages in the International Framework to advocate for a more enabling environment in their national and regional contexts, and an Implementation Toolkit with guidance on how to put the

¹ www.cso-effectiveness.org

² Available at: http://www.cso-effectiveness.org/-global-report_052-.html

Principles into practice³.

With the agreement on the final version of the International Framework for CSO Development Effectiveness, and through the Open Forum process, civil society has fulfilled its ambitious vision to develop a collective and consolidated statement of global civil society on CSO development effectiveness principles and practices. And, with this Advocacy Toolkit, civil society organizations can continue to advocate for a more enabling environment for their work, capitalizing on the global momentum to improve their effectiveness as development actors.

What is the purpose of this Advocacy Toolkit?

CSOs as development actors are profoundly affected by the policies and practices of donors, developing country governments and CSOs in their role as donors. This toolkit provides the necessary information, guidance and tools that CSOs around the world can use to contextualise the International Framework and advocate for a more enabling environment for CSO development effectiveness in their very own realities.

The toolkit should encourage advocacy

- **Among and between CSOs:** for the exchange of best practices, learning and experiences and to foster networking and collaboration for the achievement of shared civil society enabling advocacy goals (e.g. at the regional level or internationally).
- **Towards external stakeholders:** with a formal commitment to supporting the work of CSOs as development actors in their own right, and in line with the International Framework for CSO Development Effectiveness, donors, national governments and other institutional actors, will be encouraged to commit and effectively ensure minimum conditions for a more enabling environment for CSOs.

How can this Toolkit be used to advocate for a more enabling environment for CSOs?

- Encourage and build capacity for CSOs to engage with other stakeholders (e.g. government, donors, private sector) on putting in place and/or strengthening enabling standards for CSO development effectiveness.
- Assist CSOs in conducting an 'Enabling Environment Analysis' in order to identify critical external barriers (including legal, bureaucratic, fiscal, informational, political and cultural norms, policies and practices) that negatively affect CSO ability to achieve better development effectiveness.
- Provide guidance on how to address these external barriers and achieve positive change through strategic advocacy initiatives at the local, national, regional and international level.
- Suggest tools to map the main stakeholders in the national/regional/international development effectiveness discourse (CSO actors, donors, governments, regional and international institutions, the media) and identify key targets, influentials, and opponents.
- Provide suggestions on how to develop effective messages and identify a range of advocacy activities or tools vis-à-vis the respective stakeholders for conveying your messages and mobilizing support for your change objectives.
- Provide guidance on communication strategies and tools including working with and providing content for the media.
- Encourage the coordination and strengthening of collective efforts on shared advocacy asks and targets.

³ Available at: <http://www.cso-effectiveness.org/-toolkits,082>

How is this Toolkit organised?

The toolkit is divided into three sections.

SECTION 1 is an overview summarising the main points and key steps in advocating for a more enabling environment for CSOs.

SECTION 2 provides essential information and documents on CSO development effectiveness and enabling environment.

SECTION 3 provides step-by-step guidance and tools on activities and logistics to assist CSOs develop, implement, monitor and evaluate their advocacy for an enabling environment.

A variety of advocacy tools are included throughout the toolkit and templates are available in the annexes. Each section also includes practical tips, case studies and quotes representing Open Forum members' voices.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We would like to thank all the people who took part in the Open Forum's national, regional, international and thematic consultations between 2008 and 2011. Their discussion of minimum standards for a more enabling environment for CSOs forms the basis for this Advocacy Toolkit.

We also thank the participants of the Open Forum's Global Assembly in Siem Reap, Cambodia in June 2011, especially those who joined workshops on Advocacy, the facilitators and note takers, and those who provided valuable advocacy resources. In particular, we would like to acknowledge the contributions of Adele Poskitt (CIVICUS), Brian Tomlinson (AidWatch Canada), and Kimberly Darter (InterAction) for their inputs to the development of this final toolkit.

Thank you to all those who contributed excellent case studies and reflections on their advocacy work following the Global Assembly. For considerations of space, not all have been featured in this Advocacy Toolkit, but all of the case study contributions are available on the [Open Forum website](#)⁴.

For the case studies, we would like to thank: Mauricio Cadavid and Liliana Rodríguez Burgos (CCONG, Colombia), Laura Becerra (EQUIPO PUEBLO, Mexico), Xenia Tovar (Observatorio de la Cooperación Internacional, Colombia), Vera Masagao Ribeiro (ABONG, Brazil), Rosa Inés Ospina-Robledo (Rendir Cuentas, Argentina), Graça Samo (Forum Mulher, Mozambique), Marta Cumbi (FDC, Mozambique), Rosalinda (Maan) Tablang (CPDG, Philippines), Adam Nord and Mandeep Tiwana (CIVICUS, South Africa), Fraser Reilly-King (CCIC, Canada), Ilyas Safarli ('Uluchay' Social-Economic Innovation Center, Azerbaijan), Melanie Ossberger (GLOBALE VERANTWORTUNG, Austria), Auli Starck (KEPA, Finland), Gary Walsh (DOCHAS, Ireland), Bruno Stoeckli (Alliance Sud, Switzerland), Lyubov Palyvoda (CCC, Ukraine) for their time and for sharing their experiences.

Finally, we also thank the Open Forum staff, including Olga Kozhaeva, Communications and Advocacy Officer, for her support in putting together this Advocacy Toolkit and Amy Bartlett, Global Coordinator, for her final edits and oversight.



**OPEN FORUM
SECOND GLOBAL
ASSEMBLY,
SIEM REAP-CAMBODIA,
JUNE 2011**



**OPEN FORUM
FIRST GLOBAL
ASSEMBLY,
ISTANBUL-TURKEY,
SEPTEMBER 2010**

Overview and Summary of this Toolkit

Defining an enabling environment for CSO development effectiveness

CSOs play important roles as stakeholders in international development, channeling aid but also as donors themselves. CSOs, as independent development actors, are profoundly affected by the context in which they work. The policies and practices of developing country governments and official donors affect and shape the capacities of CSOs to engage in development. Progress in realising the Istanbul Principles in CSO practice, therefore, depends in large measure on enabling government policies, laws and regulations consistent with these principles. Over the past few years, however, many CSOs - North and South- have experienced deteriorating enabling conditions for their work. Democratic space for CSO-initiated development activities and advocacy has narrowed in both developed and developing countries.

The enabling environment section of the International Framework elaborates on minimum standards required by CSOs from governments and donors to fulfill their role as development actors in their own right.

To be effective, CSOs call for governments and donors to:

- Fulfill their human rights obligations
- Recognise CSOs role as independent development actors
- Foster democratic political and policy dialogue to improve development effectiveness
- Be accountable for transparent and consistent policies for development
- Create enabling financing for CSO development effectiveness

The *International Framework* further specifies certain **minimum standards**, or pre-conditions, for a robust and effective civil society.

Advocating for a more enabling environment

Advocacy can be a powerful tool to assist CSOs around the world to contextualise the International Framework and call for a more enabling environment for their development effectiveness in their very own realities. Through advocacy CSOs can convey their messages on development effectiveness and enabling standards to key audiences in order to influence decision-making processes and nurture multi-stakeholder policy dialogue. Advocacy with respect to CSO development effectiveness and enabling environment can be broadly defined as:

A DELIBERATE PROCESS DESIGNED TO INFLUENCE THE POLICIES AND ACTIONS OF THOSE IN POWER IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE AN ENABLING ENVIRONMENT FOR AN EFFECTIVE CIVIL SOCIETY BASED ON MINIMUM STANDARDS AGREED THROUGH MULTI-STAKEHOLDER DIALOGUE, WHEREVER POSSIBLE.

RECOMMENDED MINIMUM STANDARDS FOR AN ENABLING ENVIRONMENT FOR CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS

AREA	MINIMUM STANDARDS
Fulfillment of human rights obligations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Freedom of association and assembly; • Legal recognition facilitating the work of CSOs; • The right to freedom of expression; • Freedom of movement, mobility rights and the right to travel; • The right to operate free of unwarranted state interference; • The legal space to seek and secure necessary resources in support of legitimate roles in development.
CSOs as development actors in their own right	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full participation of CSOs as independent development actors in their own right affirmed and ensured by governments and donors through legislation, policy and programming.
Democratic political and policy dialogue	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Systematic inclusion of diverse views, particularly those from grassroots-based social organizations, women's organizations and indigenous peoples' representatives; • Transparency and clarity of purpose and process; • Freedom to access information, including country strategies and program plans; • Access to documentation in the languages of those being consulted; • Timeliness of consultations in order to impact decisions; • Recognition of the responsibilities and contributions of other actors, especially parliamentarians and local government; and • Appropriate resources to enable full participation of stakeholders.
Accountability and transparency for development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full transparency and accountability for development priorities, strategies, plans and actions by governments; • Place and role for CSOs clearly defined in donor strategic frameworks and plans.
Enabling financing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A long-term results-oriented perspective, which includes core institutional support, based on the notion that CSOs provide public goods; • Responsiveness to CSO initiatives; • Access for a diversity of CSOs, including support for different-sized CSOs, and support for coalitions and networks • Predictable, transparent, easily understandable and harmonized terms; • The view to promoting the mobilization of local resources; • Support for the full range of CSO programming and innovation, including policy development and advocacy.

Advocacy might be a useful way to leverage change when:

- There are no policies, laws and regulations to adequately support CSO development effectiveness (no or weak enabling standards);
- Existing policies, laws and regulations are detrimental - 'dis-abling' - to CSOs, impeding their development effectiveness;
- 'Enabling' policies, laws and regulations exist but are not being implemented.

Operating in a complex socio-political environment emphasises the importance of a sound advocacy process and careful planning. Some key steps for advocating for a more enabling environment for CSOs are outlined in the diagram below.

Planning your advocacy



In the end, advocacy is not a linear process. These steps may not always occur in exactly the same order. CSOs may have to react and adapt to a changing external environment, particularly when advocating in difficult situations or in a hostile political context. Strategies may have to change and CSOs may have to take opportunities as they come. However, it is important to consider, analyse and plan for each step as an integral part of strategy development. Detailed guidance, tips and tools to assist CSOs work through their advocacy planning process are provided in this toolkit.

Using this Toolkit for your CSO enabling environment advocacy work

This toolkit is meant to give some basic ideas and guidance for CSOs looking to advocate for a more enabling environment for their development work, based on the minimum standards articulated in the International Framework for CSO Development Effectiveness.

Below is a summary of the steps CSOs might take to help guide their planning for enabling environment advocacy in their own national contexts and realities. In the toolkit itself, there are also several case studies which highlight some of the challenges and successes that civil society has encountered thus far in some of its advocacy work around enabling environment for CSOs.

STEP 1 CONTEXTUALISING CSO DEVELOPMENT EFFECTIVENESS

- In order to develop meaningful advocacy strategies at the international, national and local levels, it is essential **to identify, analyse and prioritise external barriers to CSO development effectiveness**. These may be related to systematic human rights violations by the authorities which may affect CSOs their staff and volunteers; the failure by the authorities to recognise CSOs as actors in their own right; weak or non-existent policy dialogue to improve development effectiveness; lack of transparency and accountability by the government; and lack of funding or dis-abling funding modalities for CSOs. Any one or more of these barriers will hinder the ability of CSOs to realise the Istanbul Principles in their practice, thwarting their development effectiveness.
- An approach for **conducting an Enabling Environment Analysis**, based on the minimum standards for effective civil society as outlined in the International Framework, is suggested in this toolkit. This should help CSOs analyse and identify the greatest and most immediate barriers to their work - and, ultimately, to their development effectiveness - that they wish to address through advocacy.
- Sections include:
 - Identifying Critical Barriers for CSO Development Effectiveness
 - **TOOL: Enabling Environment Analysis**
 - Understanding Power Relations
 - **TOOL: The Power Cube**

STEP 2 DEFINING WHAT YOU WANT TO CHANGE

- After undertaking an Enabling Environment Analysis, it might be useful **to define more clearly what changes CSOs want to influence in their own realities**. Defining a longer-term goal and short and medium-term change objectives is a fundamental part of the advocacy planning process. Objectives should define concretely what will be accomplished, with whom, how and in what period of time.
 - **TOOL: The SMART Approach**

STEP 3 KNOWING WHO CAN MAKE CHANGE HAPPEN

- For CSOs seeking to influence policy and practice, **analysing the political context** is essential. Understanding how decision and policy-making processes work in any given political context – regardless of the political system - and who has the power to influence or make the changes sought, will shape the effectiveness of particular advocacy strategies. Mapping this political context and visualising policy-making processes may help CSOs identify who the main actors involved are and what entry points for advocacy there might be.
- When facing a hostile government, in situations of conflict, or when denouncing systemic human rights violations, CSOs may sometimes decide **to target powerful actors beyond their national context** (e.g. taking your issues to the UN) that may influence policy and decision-making processes in their own country.
- A simple tool is suggested for **conducting a stakeholder analysis to identify key targets**, those who may have some influence over these (influentials), potential allies and opponents.
- It might also be useful to deepen the analysis by **profiling key targets** according to what they know about the issue or barrier CSOs are seeking to overcome; what their attitude to the issue is and why; and finally finding out about targets' hidden agendas that may have a bearing on CSO advocacy efforts.

- *Sections include:*
 - Understanding decision making and policy-making processes
 - [CASE STUDY: Influencing legislative processes: experiences from Africa](#)
 - [CASE STUDY: The London-Cartegena-Bogotá Process](#)
 - Conducting a Stakeholder Analysis
 - [TOOL: The Power and Will Matrix](#)
 - Getting to know your audiences

STEP 4 BUILDING ALLIANCES TO STRENGTHEN YOUR VOICE

Building alliances and coalitions is essential to advocate for a more enabling environment for CSO development effectiveness in any context. As the experience of the Open Forum process shows, the collective voice of CSOs can be a powerful tool for change.

- [TOOL: Developing an MoU or Common Platform for Advocacy](#)
- [TOOL: Template for recording group meetings \(Annex 4\)](#)
- [CASE STUDY: Platform for a new CSO regulatory framework in Brazil](#)

STEP 5 MAKING YOUR CASE

- **Collecting and presenting solid evidence** about the causes and consequences of the barrier, or disabling conditions that CSOs are seeking to overcome and the viability of the proposed solution, are fundamental to supporting your enabling environment advocacy work.
- Evidence is seldom enough on its own, particularly when operating in an adverse political environment. **It's what you do with the evidence that matters.**
- Advocacy communication should seek to inform, persuade and move people to action. It is important to **develop messages for key audiences**. CSOs should develop one clear core message, which clearly summarises their position and the changes they want to bring about. This will then guide the development of more specific, tailored messages that will be directed at different audiences, perhaps on different aspects of the core message.
- *Sections include:*
 - Using evidence to make your case
 - [CASE STUDY: Declining space for civil society and human rights in Canada: collecting evidence through 'Voices'](#)
 - Developing clear messages
 - [TOOL: Ten Golden Rules for Developing Effective Messages](#)

STEP 6 CONVEYING YOUR MESSAGES

- There are a great variety of ways in which CSOS may deliver their messages and advocacy asks (proposals for changing policy and practice) to different audiences depending on the context. **Different CSOs should judge what methods and tactics may be most effective to get their message across**, based on the political situation in their context, their culture, traditions and the risks that they may face in speaking out about their chosen issue.

- When giving consideration to **the timing and logistics of your messaging**, it may be useful to consider the following: who will convey the messages (source)? Which way will the messages be delivered (format)? Which is the best time and place to deliver the messages?
- Although to some extent unavoidable, **it is important for CSOs to consider risks, challenges and potentially negative situations when planning their advocacy and before they engage in any advocacy activities**. While acknowledging that all effective campaigns require some risk-taking, carrying out a comprehensive risk assessment may help CSOs select advocacy strategies and think through how to minimise or mitigate the risks to the organisation, staff, volunteers, activists and the people they work with. A simple risk assessment tool is outlined in the toolkit.
- Further guidance and tips are offered on some ways in which CSOs may convey their messages on development effectiveness and minimum enabling standards. These include: one-to-one communication (lobbying), negotiation, working with the media, using social media and mobilising public support.
- Sections include:
 - Assessing and Managing Risk
TOOL: [Advocacy Risk Analysis](#)
 - Engaging with the media
TOOL: [The 'One Minute' Message](#)
 - One-to-one Communication (Lobbying)
TOOL: ['Sticky Questions' Paper](#)
 - Using social media
CASE STUDY: [Social Media and the Arab Spring](#)
 - Negotiation
CASE STUDY: ['Free the Morong 43' Campaign, Philippines](#)

STEP 7 CONSOLIDATING YOUR PLAN AND TRACKING PROGRESS

- **Pulling together an advocacy plan** capturing all the information generated during the planning process is essential. An advocacy plan is an important document that should be adopted by senior managers and shared by all those implicated in the advocacy initiative. An example of an advocacy plan is presented as an annex to this toolkit.
- **Monitoring and evaluating advocacy for an enabling environment** is essential for accountability and to make sure lessons are learned to improve any future advocacy. Constant impact monitoring is particularly important in advocacy as it enables CSOs to look for evidence of change as they go, assess progress in bringing about change and to test whether assumptions about how change happens in their context are correct. A number of tools and advocacy indicators are suggested in the toolkit to assist CSOs document, monitor and evaluate their advocacy.
- **Sections include:**
 - Developing an advocacy plan
 - TOOL: [Sample Template for an Advocacy Plan \(Annex 2\)](#)
 - Monitoring and evaluating your advocacy
 - TOOL: [Examples of Advocacy Indicators \(Annex 3\)](#)
 - TOOL: [Outcomes Journal \(Annex 5\)](#)

Essential information on CSO enabling environment

This section provides background information on the minimum standards for an effective civil society; the outcomes of the multi-stakeholder dialogue on enabling standards; international commitments already in place and other international provisions.

CSOs in international aid and development effectiveness dialogue

CSOs play important roles as stakeholders in international development, channeling aid but also as donors themselves. This independent role in development has been officially recognised at the High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness in Accra, Ghana, in the year 2008. At that time, civil society organizations were given the mandate to determine the principles, guidelines and enabling environment standards needed to fulfill this role as development actors, through the *Open Forum for CSO Development Effectiveness process*⁵.

CSOs, as independent development actors, are profoundly affected by the context in which they work. The policies and practices of developing country governments and official donors affect and shape the capacities of CSOs to engage in development. Progress in realising the *Istanbul Principles* in CSO practice, therefore, depends in large measure on enabling government policies, laws and regulations consistent with the *Istanbul Principles*. Over the past few years, however, many CSOs - North and South- have experienced deteriorating enabling conditions for their work. Democratic space for CSO-initiated development activities and advocacy has narrowed in both developed and developing countries.

The enabling environment section of the *International Framework* elaborates on minimum standards required by CSOs from governments and donors to fulfill their role as development actors in their own right. To be effective, CSOs call for governments and donors to:

- Fulfill their human rights obligations
- Recognise CSOs role as independent development actors
- Foster democratic political and policy dialogue to improve development effectiveness
- Be accountable for transparent and consistent policies for development
- Create enabling financing for CSO development effectiveness⁶

Minimum standards for effective civil society

ENABLING ENVIRONMENT: the political and policy context created by governments, official donors and other development actors, including CSOs acting as donors, that affect the ways CSOs might carry out their work.

MINIMUM ENABLING STANDARDS: are a set of interrelated good practices by donors and governments – in the legal, regulatory, fiscal, informational, political and cultural areas – that support the capacity of CSO development actors to engage in development processes in a sustained and effective manner.

⁵ www.cso-effectiveness.org

⁶ See also table below.

In accordance with its messages to governments and donors, the International Framework further specifies certain **minimum standards**, or pre-conditions, for a robust and effective civil society. These include:

AREA	MINIMUM STANDARDS
Fulfillment of human rights obligations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Freedom of association and assembly; • Legal recognition facilitating the work of CSOs; • The right to freedom of expression; • Freedom of movement, mobility rights and the right to travel; • The right to operate free of unwarranted state interference; • The legal space to seek and secure necessary resources in support of legitimate roles in development.
CSOs as development actors in their own right	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full participation of CSOs as independent development actors in their own right affirmed and ensured by governments and donors through legislation, policy and programming
Democratic political and policy dialogue	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Systematic inclusion of diverse views, particularly those from grassroots-based social organizations, women’s organizations and indigenous peoples’ representatives; • Transparency and clarity of purpose and process; • Freedom to access information, including country strategies and program plans; • Access to documentation in the languages of those being consulted; • Timeliness of consultations in order to impact decisions; • Recognition of the responsibilities and contributions of other actors, especially parliamentarians and local government; and • Appropriate resources to enable full participation of stakeholders.
Accountability and transparency for development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full transparency and accountability for development priorities, strategies, plans and actions by governments; • Place and role for CSOs clearly defined in donor strategic frameworks and plans.
Enabling financing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A long-term results-oriented perspective, which includes core institutional support, based on the notion that CSOs provide public goods, • Responsiveness to CSO initiatives • Access for a diversity of CSOs, including support for different-sized CSOs, and support for coalitions and networks • Predictable, transparent, easily understandable and harmonized terms, • The view to promoting the mobilization of local resources; • Support for the full range of CSO programming and innovation, including policy development and advocacy.

Multi-stakeholder dialogue on minimum standards for an enabling environment

What is the role of the Open Forum in multi-stakeholder dialogue?

As part of the consultation process, the Open Forum also held multi-stakeholder meetings to facilitate dialogue and discussion between CSOs, donors and governments specifically on the enabling conditions needed by CSOs to be effective as independent development actors. The outcomes of these multi-stakeholder consultations fed into the International Framework, contributing substantially to the formulation of CSO messages to governments and donors. An important process for the Open Forum in relation to multi-stakeholder dialogue has been that of co-chairing the Multi-Stakeholder Task Team on CSO Development Effectiveness and the Enabling Environment.

What is the Task Team on CSO Development Effectiveness?

The *Multi-Stakeholder Task Team on CSO Development Effectiveness*⁷ and the Enabling Environment is a group of CSOs, government representatives and donor agencies working to gather evidence on the implementation of civil society commitments in the Accra Agenda for Action towards the Fourth High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness, and part of Cluster A (Ownership and Accountability) under the Working Party on Aid Effectiveness of the OECD-DAC.

The rationale for the Task Team's operations is that, given the magnitude of roles and of aid flows attributable to civil society organizations in international development architecture, all stakeholders share an interest in engaging with CSOs to maximise their voice and contributions to development.

Advocacy messages from the Multi-Stakeholder Task Team

In preparation for the Fourth High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness (HLF4), the Task Team agreed on a series of common messages drawing on the evidence collected on the external conditions for CSO work since Accra. Selected messages of the Multi-Stakeholder Task Team are specifically referenced in the International Framework for CSO Development Effectiveness and constitute another source of globally applicable advocacy messages.

International commitments already in place around CSO enabling environment standards and asks

High Level Forums on Aid Effectiveness

■ Paris Declaration⁸ and Paris Principles

The Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness is an international agreement between aid donors and recipient governments based on five principles:

- **Ownership** - referring to aid management at recipient country level
- **Alignment** of aid flows with recipients countries' specific development plans
- **Harmonisation** of donor requirements
- **Managing for results**
- **Mutual accountability** – shared responsibility for improved aid effectiveness

⁷ <http://www.cso-effectiveness.org/-multi-stakeholder-task-team,079-.html>

⁸ <http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/30/63/43911948.pdf>

For civil society, while the Paris Declaration provides a base for collaboration with partner governments, it has been criticised for focusing mostly on donor/government relationships. Specifically, the Paris Principle on Ownership commits partner countries (interpreted as governments) to “Take the lead in co-ordinating aid at all levels in conjunction with other development resources in dialogue with donors and encouraging the participation of **civil society** and the private sector.”

■ **Accra Agenda for Action (AAA)**⁹

AAA Paragraph 20 recognizes the importance of CSOs as independent development actors in their own right and puts forward a commitment to work together to maximize CSO contributions to development as a responsibility shared among CSOs, donors, and developing country governments.

AAA Paragraph 13 calls for higher levels of engagement and broad-based dialogue with CSOs, parliaments and other development actors by donors and developing country governments on development policy, including the preparation, implementation and monitoring of governments’ national development policies and plans.

AAA Paragraph 24 further commits donor and developing country governments to enhance transparency and accountability to each other and to their citizens.

See the full text of the Accra Agenda for Action [here](#)¹⁰.

The Accra High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness is regarded by many as a breakthrough for civil society, as its resulting declaration – the Accra Agenda for Action (AAA) – recognised CSOs as independent development actors in their own right.

■ **Busan Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation**

The ***Busan Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation***¹¹ is the multi-stakeholder agreement resulting from the 4th High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness, November 29 to December 1 2011 in Busan, Republic of Korea - **which for the first time establishes a framework for development cooperation agreed between civil society organizations as full and equal participants** and partner governments, traditional donors, South-South cooperators, the BRICs, and private funders.

For civil society, the Busan Partnership acknowledges the culmination of the 3-year consultation process with thousands of CSOs worldwide on the standards that guide CSOs’ unique and independent role in development. Both the outcomes of the Open Forum - the ***Istanbul Principles***¹² and the ***International Framework for CSO Development Effectiveness***¹³ - have been officially recognized and thus given global legitimacy in the agreement:

9 <http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/30/63/43911948.pdf>
10 <http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/58/16/41202012.pdf>
11 The full document is available here: <http://www.aideffectiveness.org/busanhl4/en/component/content/article/698.html>

12 More information here: <http://www.cso-effectiveness.org/-8-istanbul-development,067-.html>
13 Available here: <http://www.cso-effectiveness.org/-global-report,052-.html>

Busan Partnership Paragraph 22:

Civil society organisations (CSOs) play a vital role in enabling people to claim their rights, in promoting rights-based approaches, in shaping development policies and partnerships, and in overseeing their implementation. They also provide services in areas that are complementary to those provided by states. Recognising this, we will:

- a) Implement fully our respective commitments to enable CSOs to exercise their roles as independent development actors, with a particular focus on an enabling environment, consistent with agreed international rights, that maximises the contributions of CSOs to development.
- b) Encourage CSOs to implement practices that strengthen their accountability and their contribution to development effectiveness, guided by the **Istanbul Principles** and the **International Framework for CSO Development Effectiveness**.

This global multi-stakeholder recognition of the International Framework for CSO Development Effectiveness, and in particular of its Section IV on Critical Conditions for Enabling CSO Development Effectiveness, gives civil society an important base to further advocate for an enabling environment to operate as full and independent development actor.

Examples of other International Provisions

Public authorities are required by international law to provide protection when the integrity of a civil society organisation or lives of its staff and members are threatened.

- ***UN International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR)***¹⁴

Article 21: The right of peaceful assembly shall be recognized. No restrictions may be placed on the exercise of this right other than those imposed in conformity with the law and which are necessary in a democratic society in the interests of national security or public safety, public order (ordre public), the protection of public health or morals or the protection of the rights and freedoms of others.

Article 22: Everyone shall have the right to freedom of association with others, including the right to form and join trade unions for the protection of his interests

- ***UN Human Rights Council Resolution on the Right to Peaceful Assembly and Association***¹⁵

¹⁴ <http://www2.ohchr.org/english/law/ccpr.htm>

¹⁵ http://ecnl.org/dindocuments/335_UN%20FoA%20Resolution%20Final.pdf



BUSAN GLOBAL CIVIL SOCIETY FORUM, BUSAN-REPUBLIC OF KOREA, NOVEMBER 2011



FOURTH HIGH LEVEL FORUM ON AID EFFECTIVENESS, BUSAN-REPUBLIC OF KOREA, NOV.-DEC. 2011

Examples of Regional Provisions

- ***Arab Charter on Human Rights¹⁶ Including Article 24:*** Every citizen has the right to freely pursue a political activity, to freely form and join associations with others to freedom of association and peaceful assembly.
- Freedom of Association: ***European Court of Justice Case Law¹⁷***
- Civil Society Participation: ***European Court of Justice Legal Texts¹⁸***
- Freedom of Association and Civil Society Participation: ***Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe¹⁹***
- ***The ASEAN Charter²⁰***
There is an indirect reference to freedom of association such as in the preamble: “ADHERING to the principles of democracy, the rule of law and good governance, respect for and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms;”
- ***African Charter on Human and People’s Rights²¹***
Article 10: Every individual shall have the right to free association
Article 11: Every individual shall have the right to assemble freely with others.
- ***Freedom of Association and Civil Society: Organization of American States Legal Texts²²***

Examples of National Provisions

See a compendium of some of the legal texts relevant to CSO enabling environment for your country by visiting ICNL’s website [here²³](#).

16 <http://www.pogar.org/publications/other/laws/humanrights/acharter-04e.pdf>
17 <http://www.icnl.org/knowledge/ngolawmonitor/coe.htm>
18 <http://www.icnl.org/knowledge/ngolawmonitor/coe.htm>
19 <http://www.icnl.org/knowledge/ngolawmonitor/osce.htm>

20 <http://www.aseansec.org/publications/ASEAN-Charter.pdf>
21 <http://www.africa-union.org/root/au/Documents/Treaties/Text/Banjul%20Charter.pdf>
22 <http://www.icnl.org/knowledge/ngolawmonitor/oas.htm>
23 <http://www.icnl.org/knowledge/ngolawmonitor/index.htm>

CASE STUDY:

Taking messages on human rights violations to the UN: Experiences by CIVICUS²⁴

Taking your case to the UN can be easier than you thought. But first, it is important to have an idea of the geography of the Human Rights Council (HRC). It is basically a geography of circles. The country representatives constitute the inner circle, and ECOSOC (Economic and Social Council) approved NGO's constitute the second ring while the secretariat (the branch that records all the data, what is said, etc.) constitutes the outer ring. Throughout the year, there are many moments in which NGOs can comment on the processes of the HRC both complimenting and condemning countries, bringing new info to the fore, seeking support. Also, NGOs lobby country representatives, hold side events, and work with other international NGOs to galvanize international solidarity.

The first step for taking your issue to the UN should be to contact an NGO (e.g. CIVICUS) who has a representative on the second NGO ring, who observes the council on a daily basis and who has contacts there. This person can be your eyes and ears at the UN. They can lobby for you, which means that he or she can meet or greet country representatives to bring issues to the fore, hold side events, and speak at the Council. In 2011, for instance, CIVICUS reached out to our representative on the issue of Belarus. Teaming up with other representatives, they helped stage a side event bringing human rights defenders from Belarus to the UN to speak to UN country representatives. In attendance was also the EU ambassador to the UN. The scope of the meeting was to lobby for a human rights council resolution condemning the actions of the Lukashenko regime and calling for steps to be taken. Several side events later, this resolution was achieved as a result of UN representatives and in-country human rights defenders working together.

Additionally, our representative helped stage private meetings with special rapporteurs on torture, human rights defenders, and freedom of expression. We invited human rights defenders from Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan to visit with special rapporteurs to present their data. Special rapporteurs are a flexible arm of UN advocacy. They can create private reports on human rights in different countries around the world and present and publicize data on human rights violations. The result of these meetings was that we alerted a very significant arm of UN action to events in Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. During this action, we also spoke at the Council, which garnered significant attention.

For further information and advice on how to take your case to the UN contact Adele Poskitt (CIVICUS) on adele.poskitt@civicus.org

24 <http://www.civicus.org/>

Advocating for an enabling environment

“An enabling environment for CSOs will never be given to us on a silver platter. CSOs have to defend their rights and work hard to achieve it”

CSO activist, Philippines

In this section the concept of advocacy for an enabling environment is introduced. Step-by-step guidance, tips and tools are provided in order to assist CSOs plan, implement and monitor their advocacy strategies.

What is advocacy?

There are multiple definitions of advocacy and many ways of doing advocacy. Fundamentally, advocacy is a set of organised activities designed to influence the policies and actions of those in power in order to achieve lasting and positive change. It also aims to make decision-making processes more inclusive and ensure policies designed to protect poor and marginalised populations are implemented.

Advocacy with respect to CSO development effectiveness can be broadly defined as:

A DELIBERATE PROCESS DESIGNED TO INFLUENCE THE POLICIES AND ACTIONS OF THOSE IN POWER IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE AN ENABLING ENVIRONMENT FOR AN EFFECTIVE CIVIL SOCIETY BASED ON MINIMUM STANDARDS AGREED THROUGH MULTI-STAKEHOLDER DIALOGUE, WHEREVER POSSIBLE.

Why advocate for a more enabling environment?

Progress in realising the *Istanbul Principles* in CSO practice will depend heavily on enabling policies, laws and regulations consistent with the *Istanbul Principles*. Advocacy can be a powerful tool for conveying CSO messages on development effectiveness and enabling standards to key audiences in order to influence decision-making processes and nurture multi-stakeholder policy dialogue. Advocacy might be a useful way to leverage change when:

- There are no policies, laws and regulations to adequately support CSO development effectiveness (no or weak enabling standards);
- Existing policies, laws and regulations are detrimental - 'dis-abling' - to CSOs, impeding their development effectiveness;
- 'Enabling' policies, laws and regulations exist but are not being implemented.

What advocacy is not

There are common misconceptions about what advocacy is. Advocacy is often confused with other related approaches that despite sharing some elements do not constitute advocacy as such. For example, although an information education and communication campaign to help eradicate violence against women and girls may be an effective approach for influencing behaviour at the inter-personal and household level, it will not – on its own – achieve change in policy and practice on this issue.

However, coupled with advocacy efforts targeting relevant policy-makers for the introduction, reform or implementation of policies and/or laws to safeguard women and girls subjected to violence in the family, education and communication may be a very useful activity within a broader advocacy strategy.

CONCEPT	TARGET AUDIENCE	OBJECTIVE	MEASURING SUCCESS
Information Education and Communication (IEC) for behaviour change and awareness	Individuals, households and segments of a community (e.g. men, women, youth)	Raise awareness and increase understanding for behaviour change (e.g. condom use, hand washing, anti-smacking)	Change in knowledge or skills (i.e. behaviour change) Increased awareness and understanding
Public Relations	Consumers, donors, general public and stakeholders	Improve organisation's brand and visibility, increase programme coverage and credibility.	Improved public perception, increased donations, increased programme coverage, improved perceptions about organisation.
Fundraising	Government, donors, private sector	Increase funding for the organisation and programmes	Increased funding for the organisation
Advocacy	Public institutions and policy makers	Change policies, laws, regulations, programmes, practices and resource allocation	Policies developed, reformed, implemented, changes in regulations, programs, practices and resource allocation

Source: adapted from 'Advocacy Matters: Helping children change their world', Save the Children 2007

You may wish to begin your advocacy planning process by openly discussing what advocacy means to your organisation in order to define your unique 'advocacy identity' – i.e. your understanding of and your approach to advocacy. This should be informed by your organisation's particular values, mission and history. The process should enable you to de-mystify advocacy while exploring any of the common misconceptions about what advocacy is and is not (see above) that could cause some internal tensions when implementing your strategy.

Planning an advocacy initiative

Operating in a complex socio-political environment emphasises the importance of a sound advocacy process and careful planning. Strategy development is at the core of effective advocacy. Advocacy is a systematic and logical process with distinct steps and activities. Some of the suggested key steps for planning an advocacy initiative for an enabling environment are outlined below.



Please note: Advocacy is not a linear process, particularly when advocating for an enabling environment. These steps may not always occur in exactly the same order. You – and your allies – may have to react and adapt to a changing external environment, particularly when advocating in difficult situations or in a hostile political context. Your strategies will have to change accordingly and you may have to take opportunities as they come. However, it is important to consider, analyse and plan for each step as an integral part of your strategy development. In this section of the toolkit, we will cover each step in detail providing guidance, tips and tools to help you work through your advocacy planning process.

STEP 1

CONTEXTUALISING CSO DEVELOPMENT EFFECTIVENESS

Identifying critical barriers to CSO development effectiveness

In order to develop meaningful advocacy strategies at the international, national and local levels, it is first essential to identify, analyse and prioritise external barriers to CSO development effectiveness in the context in which you work. These may be related to systematic human rights violations by the authorities which may affect CSOs their staff and volunteers; the failure by the authorities to recognise CSOs as actors in their own right; weak or non-existent policy dialogue to improve development effectiveness; lack of transparency and accountability by the government; and lack of funding or dis-abling funding modalities for CSOs. Any one or more of these barriers will hinder the ability of CSOs to realise the *Istanbul Principles* in their practice, thwarting their development effectiveness.

An approach for conducting an **Enabling Environment Analysis**, based on the minimum standards for effective civil society as outlined in the *International Framework*, is suggested. This tool is in no way prescriptive. Its aim is to help you assess your own enabling environment to identify critical barriers to your development effectiveness as an organisation that you wish to address through advocacy. It should help inform internal discussions with your colleagues, partners and allies in order to help you focus your advocacy.

TOOL ENABLING ENVIRONMENT ANALYSIS

Guidance

1. In a group, work through the **Enabling Environment Assessment**²⁵ (below) discussing which barriers may be most relevant in your own context. It is suggested that, for each standard, you discuss whether it is generally respected, or applied, in your situation. Once you have identified standards that are not being respected (and you have completed the first column of the matrix) then you can move on to step 2.
2. For all standards that are not being respected or applied by your government, or local authorities, you should then discuss which ones constitute the greatest and most immediate barriers to your work and, ultimately, to your development effectiveness. It is suggested that you record this information in the second column of the matrix in terms of their level of importance (as High, Medium or Low).
 - **HIGH:** A barrier that has critical importance for CSOs hindering their status and independence, seriously affecting their operations, funding as well as potentially endangering their staff.
 - **MEDIUM:** A barrier that has a damaging impact on some aspects of CSO development effectiveness but that may be overcome in the medium to longer term.
 - **LOW:** A barrier that only marginally affects the ability of CSO to implement the *Istanbul Principles* and achieve greater development effectiveness.

N.B. If you are operating in a challenging political environment for civil society, it is possible that most of these minimum standards will not be implemented or respected by those in power. If so, it is suggested that you still identify the most critical and immediate issue that you wish to change. You could

²⁵ This is based on the categorisation of enabling standards outlined in the *International Framework for CSO Development Effectiveness*.

also think about which of the barriers, if overcome, may strategically affect some of the other barriers. You can then work through the Enabling Environment Analysis (step 3) in order to assess how likely it is that the change you seek can be achieved through advocacy.

3. Next, you should begin to think about the added value of advocacy. Not all the problems that you face may be resolved through an advocacy approach aimed at influencing policy and practice while some might require a much longer-term engagement. Focusing on those barriers that you have identified as 'high' importance, you should go through the **advocacy guiding questions**. These should help you work out which of these problems are most likely to be effectively addressed through advocacy. This list of guiding questions is not exhaustive and you might want to elaborate on it by identifying your own criteria. Once you have decided on the likelihood of achieving change (High, Medium or Low) through advocacy on your selected barriers, you should record that information in the final column.
 - **HIGH:** Change is very likely to be achieved through sustained advocacy in the short to medium term.
 - **MEDIUM:** Change might be achieved through advocacy but over a longer period.
 - **LOW:** Change on this issue will not be achieved through advocacy but will require longer-term societal changes.
4. By this stage, you should have narrowed your initial list of barriers down considerably. You should focus on those barriers that you have identified as 'high' importance and those where you have a 'high' likelihood of achieving positive change through advocacy. It is advised that you choose no more than TWO critical issues (or barriers) in your advocacy strategy in order to avoid over-stretching. If you are still finding it difficult to prioritise, then you may consider focusing on one or two urgent issues that may also have an effect on other identified barriers. The advocacy guiding questions (plus your own criteria) should complement your enabling environment analysis informing your discussion and helping you achieve a consensus.

ADVOCACY GUIDING QUESTIONS

- Can we achieve positive change on this issue through advocacy or would change be best achieved through another approach?
- How long would it take us to achieve meaningful change through advocacy (a 1 to 3 year advocacy initiative)?
- What strategic opportunities are there to address this issue in the short and medium term?
- How does a particular issue affect other barriers to enabling conditions? Is it strategic?
- What is our legitimacy in addressing this issue?
- What is our assessment of the sensitivity and risks associated with working on this issue?
- Can we forge strategic alliances with others who will support us?
- What is our capacity to undertake a successful advocacy initiative on this issue? What do we need to have in place?



OPEN FORUM
SECOND GLOBAL
ASSEMBLY,
SIEM REAP-CAMBODIA,
JUNE 2011



EUROPEAN
REGIONAL
CONSULTATION:
BRUSSELS,
BELGIUM
APRIL 2011

AREA

1. Fulfillment of human rights obligations

Legal recognition facilitating the work of CSOs

Freedom of association and assembly

The right to freedom of expression

Freedom of movement, mobility rights and the right to travel

The right to operate free of unwarranted state interference

The legal space to seek and secure necessary resources in support of legitimate roles in development

2. Recognising CSOs as development actors in their own right

Full participation of CSOs as independent development actors in their own right affirmed and ensured by government and donors

3. Democratic political and policy dialogue

Systematic inclusion of diverse views, particularly those from grassroots-based social organizations, women's organizations and indigenous peoples' representatives

Transparency and clarity of purpose and process

Freedom to access information, including country strategies and program plans

Access to documentation in the languages of those being consulted

Timeliness of consultations in order to impact decisions

Recognition of the responsibilities and contributions of other actors, especially parliamentarians and local government

Appropriate resources to enable full participation of stakeholders

4. Accountability and transparency for development

Full transparency and accountability for development priorities, strategies, plans and actions by governments

Place and role for CSOs clearly defined in donor strategic frameworks and plans

5. Enabling financing

A long-term results-oriented perspective, which includes core institutional support, based on the notion that CSOs provide public goods

Responsiveness to CSO initiatives

Access for a diversity of CSOs, including support for different-sized CSOs, and support for coalitions and networks

Predictable, transparent, easily understandable and harmonized terms

Promoting the mobilization of local resources

Support for the full range of CSO programming and innovation, including policy development and advocacy

Understanding power relations

DEFINING POWER

Power is not static and it is not a finite resource; it can be used, shared or created by social actors and their networks in multiple ways. For instance, power, or unequal power relations, can be viewed as a form of control of one person or group (the powerful) over others who are seen as powerless.

- **POWER 'OVER' OFTEN OPERATES IN VARIOUS WAYS TO MAINTAIN THE STATUS QUO AND DISCOURAGE POOR AND EXCLUDED PEOPLE AND GROUPS FROM EXERCISING THEIR RIGHTS.**

But power can also be seen as a positive force for personal and social change and positive action.

- **POWER 'TO': REFERS TO THE CAPACITY TO ACT, TO EXERCISE AGENCY AND TO REALISE THE POTENTIAL OF RIGHTS, CITIZENSHIP OR VOICE.**
- **POWER 'WITHIN': REFERS TO GAINING A SENSE OF SELF-IDENTITY, CONFIDENCE AND AWARENESS THAT ARE PRECONDITIONS FOR ACTION.**
- **POWER 'WITH': REFERS TO THE SYNERGIES THAT CAN EMERGE THROUGH PARTNERING AND COLLABORATING WITH OTHERS, OR THROUGH PROCESSES OF COLLECTIVE ACTION AND ALLIANCE BUILDING.**

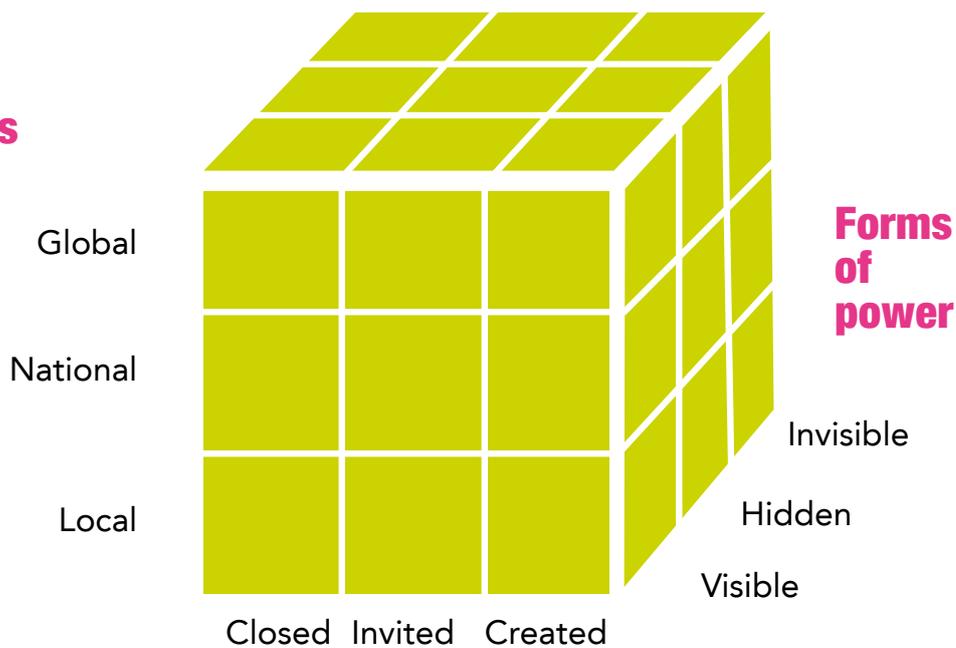
In advocacy, it is essential to appreciate the interrelationship between change and power. However, advocacy is often undertaken without a clear understanding, or proper analysis, of how change occurs. Many advocacy strategies are based on the assumption that policy change will be sufficient to achieve lasting social change. While policy change is essential for CSO development effectiveness, identifying and exploring the multiple power dimensions that affect your situation may, for instance, reveal why certain policies are passed or implemented and others are not. It may also help to understand how cultural and social factors influence the way in which citizens view the world, how they behave and why they may or may not take positive action.

Although there is no 'one size fits all' approach to transforming power relations, doing a power analysis will help you explore the different forms of power at play in any given context, how they affect the changes you wish to achieve and what opportunities and entry points there might be for action. There are many different approaches to power analysis. One of the most comprehensive tools is outlined below.

TOOL THE 'POWER CUBE'²⁶

The Power Cube approach is a useful tool for identifying levels, spaces and forms of power and analysing how they interact with each other. It allows you to conduct a comprehensive power analysis of any context or issue helping you fully explore relationships and forces to find potential entry points for advocacy and ways of challenging power dynamics.

Levels



Spaces

DIMENSIONS OF POWER

FORMS

Visible: observable decision-making mechanisms (e.g. political bodies, legislatures, local assemblies and fora).

Hidden: shaping or influencing the political agenda behind the scenes (e.g. to defend vested interests by creating barriers to participation and keeping certain issues off the agenda).

Invisible: ways in which awareness of one's rights and interests are hidden through the adoption of dominating ideologies, norms, values and forms of behaviour.

WAYS OF CHALLENGING POWER

Lobbying, advocacy and mobilisation to influence decision-making processes.

Strengthening people's voices and their capacity to speak out; overcoming barriers to participation through mobilisation; using research and media to challenge how issues are 'framed'.

Awareness raising, adult education, participatory research to validate people's knowledge, popular communication to challenge dominant stereotypes and discourses.

DIMENSIONS OF POWER

SPACES

Closed spaces: where decisions are made by closed groups behind closed doors with little consultation or broad involvement (e.g. parliaments, boards, expert groups etc.)

Invited spaces: where people are invited to participate but within set boundaries; these spaces may be institutionalized or transient (e.g. participatory fora, one-off consultations).

Claimed spaces: where less powerful groups claim a space where they can set their own agenda (e.g. through social movements, protest or community associations).

LEVELS

Global: power and authority at the global level – global governance - has grown with increasing globalisation. Supra-national authority is also increasingly held by regional level bodies (e.g. the African and European Unions)

National: national governments remain a critical entry point for change, particularly for an enabling environment for CSO development effectiveness.

Local: sub-national levels of power may vary according to the context but they are important points of leverage for holding and challenging power.

WAYS OF CHALLENGING POWER

Calling for greater transparency, rights to information and disclosure, public accountability, demanding for the opportunity to have greater voice

Gaining knowledge and expertise on key issues and regulations, strategies for negotiating and compromising on the set boundaries for participation.

Ensuring that voices and messages from these spaces leverage openings in decision-making processes.

Targeting supra-national institutions such as the UN, WTO, World Bank IMF, the European Union, the African Union, ASEAN, Mercosur, etc.

Focusing advocacy efforts on government ministries, elected bodies (e.g. parliaments), executive bodies, national political parties, courts, etc.

Strategies for participation in local governance may include participatory budget monitoring and control or holding local institutions to account.

Guidance

In analysing power using the Power Cube framework, you can start with any of its dimensions. If you want to concentrate on how power relations affect your issue then you can start with looking at the **forms** of power. If you are interested in analysing and opening up **spaces** for participation, citizen action and multi-stakeholder dialogue, then start with that dimension. If you want to focus on exploring relations between local, national and global expressions of power relevant to your issue then you might want to start with identifying power relations at the different **levels**.

However, the real challenge in conducting a power analysis is recognising that not only does each of the concepts along a single dimension of power interact with the other (e.g. local, national, international), but that they may also interact with concepts in the other dimensions as well. You will need to act at more than one level, and address more than one dimension of power simultaneously to bring about lasting change.

Source: “*Power Pack – Understanding Power for Social Change*”, Institute of Development Studies, UK

Useful links: www.powercube.net

STEP 2

DEFINING WHAT YOU WANT TO CHANGE

DEFINING POWER

- **ADVOCACY GOAL:** This illustrates your long-term vision of change. It describes the overall change you want to achieve as a result of your advocacy work. Your goal can be expressed in general terms. For instance: “All CSOs in country X are enabled to act on their potential to implement the Istanbul Principles thus achieving greater development effectiveness”.
- **ADVOCACY CHANGE OBJECTIVE:** this should define concretely what will be accomplished, with whom, how and in what period of time. The objective should focus on a specific action that an institution can take (or outcome) within a timeframe of 1 to 3 years. For example: “A new CSO bill, consistent with the Istanbul principles - is adopted and implemented by the government in country X by 2014”.

Defining your goal and objectives is a fundamental part of your advocacy planning process. Change objectives should contribute to achieving your goal. It is common for advocacy strategies to have 1 to 3 objectives. Any more might make your strategy unmanageable and may risk over-extending your resources.

When analysing your problem before you start strategising your advocacy work it might be useful to produce a common **problem statement**. A problem statement is a short description of a problem – or a critical barrier to CSO development effectiveness - in your context. For example: weak CSO regulatory framework in country X.

“Despite CSOs being widely recognised as development actors in their own right by Government X, this has not been adequately translated in policy and legislation. Existing policies and legislation on CSOs are inadequate to promote CSO development effectiveness.”

Once you have formulated a problem statement it might then be useful to turn it into a positive statement or your **vision of change**. You can express your vision of change (or advocacy goal) in a statement describing what changes you want to see as a result of your advocacy in the short, medium and longer term. To do so, it might be useful to consider what type of change you want to see. Changes in policy, practice and power relations can be categorised as²⁷:

Changes in discourse: whereby the people in power change the words, narrative and concepts they use. For instance, the Prime Minister mentions development effectiveness in a speech for the first time.

- **Changes in procedure:** whereby things – mostly decision-making processes - are done differently. For instance, Government policies are made through broad-based consultation with all stakeholders.
- **Changes in attitude:** denoting a more favourable attitude towards other actors and their values and causes. For instance, the Government starts treating CSOs as development actors in their own right working in collaboration rather than in competition with them.

²⁷ This categorisation is adapted from “Strengthening World Vision Policy Advocacy – A guide to developing advocacy strategies”, Datta August 2011 – Overseas Development Institute, London, UK

- **Changes in content:** actual changes in policy, law, regulations, budgets or strategies and programmes in line with your core advocacy messages.
- **Changes in behaviour:** denoting permanent changes in the ways individuals or organisations act or behave. For instance, the Government publishes financial information on its aid programme making it available to the general public.

Objectives should be **change-oriented** and not activity-oriented. They should describe the change that you want to bring about rather than what you want to do.

For example:

“ *The Government publicly recognises the value of CSOs by reviewing its regulatory framework for CSOs in line with the Istanbul Principles by 2013* „ and not “ *To raise awareness of the important role of CSOs and increase funding levels.* ”

TOOL THE SMART APPROACH

The SMART approach is one way of helping you form strong change objectives. Your objectives should be Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-bound. Below are some tips to help you be SMARTer.

SPECIFIC

- Watch out for jargon or rhetoric, words like ‘sensitise’ and ‘empower’ are vague and should be broken down into more clearly defined results.
- Watch out for words that can be interpreted in a variety of ways, e.g. accountability, transparency etc. and be as specific as possible as to what change you want to see.

MEASURABLE

- Be as exact as possible about **who, what, where, and when**. For example an objective might state, “educate citizens about their rights”. When possible, estimate the number of people you aim to reach and what they will do as a result.
- Objectives that refer to a state of mind and a process like ‘empower’ are almost impossible to measure. However process objectives are appropriate for advocacy. ‘Group formation’ or ‘strengthening’ can be a good indicator for process words like ‘empowerment’. For example, “bring together community members in small groups to voice their concerns and define their common priorities”. So, when you use words that refer to a state of mind you should ask yourself: “What does an empowered person do?” Ask yourself “Sensitise for what?” Use the answers to formulate your objective better.

ACHIEVABLE

- The more concrete you are about who, what, where and when, the more realistic your objective will be. Process goals like empowerment and awareness-raising are long-term and elusive. Imagine concrete signs – or milestones - along the way of what an empowered / or an aware person does and make those your objectives.

REALISTIC

- Changing attitudes and behaviour is a very long-term endeavour. Try to be realistic when you decide which and how many people you plan to influence.
- Realistic objectives reflect the limits of available funding and staff.

TIMEBOUND

- Although the exact timing of social change outcomes is almost impossible to predict, you should be as precise as possible about your timeline stating by when you anticipate to achieve your aim.
- If that is too difficult to predict you may want to break your objective into milestones which will mark your progress in accomplishing your aim. For instance, if getting new legislation in place seems too long term you can focus initially on getting a new policy in place, then consequently you can focus on getting parliament to pass a motion in support of a new law and so on.

Source: Adapted from L. VeneKlasen with V. Miller "A New New Weave of Power, People & Politics – The Action Guide for advocacy and Citizen Participation" World Neighbours, 2002



STEP 3

KNOWING WHO CAN MAKE CHANGE HAPPEN

Understanding decision making and policy making processes

“*Advocacy to prevent the passage of proposed legislation is a long and protracted process.....while the aim should be to prevent the passage of all restrictive aspects of a proposed law, even if just some aspects are removed, they can go a long way in creating a more enabling environment for civil society.*”

CIVICUS Staff

For CSOs seeking to influence policy and practice, analysing the political context is essential. Understanding how decision and policy-making processes work in any given political context – regardless of the political system - and who has the power to influence or make the changes you seek, will shape the effectiveness of particular advocacy strategies. Mapping this political context and visualising policy-making processes may help you identify who the main actors involved are and what entry points for advocacy there might be.

CASE STUDY:

Influencing legislative processes: experiences from Africa

Upholding women’s rights in Mozambique

The absence of laws to protect women against domestic violence, considered a family affair, prompted women’s rights organisations and networks in Mozambique to engage the government in a policy dialogue on the issue. Led by Forum Mulher (Women Forum), a loose coalition, or movement of CSOs was established to sensitise the communities about women rights, collect facts on domestic violence and its impact on women and families and start a campaign for criminalization of domestic violence.

Backed by strong evidence on the extent and impact of domestic violence across the country, including life stories by several women, CSOs developed strong advocacy messages for their campaign such as “Nothing Justifies Domestic Violence against Women”. This helped them raise awareness of the issue and forge strategic alliances with influential stakeholders in government (including the Minister for Women and Social Affairs), women members of parliament and lawyers. With the support of legal experts, CSOs formulated a legislative text and submitted it to the government for consideration. The movement was successful in mobilising enough support in parliament to get the proposed legislation against domestic violence adopted in parliament

Reflections from Forum Mulher: Coming together for a common purpose was exciting and created synergies among different organisations. Lawyers, social workers and women representatives all contributed with ideas. Disseminating information, making sure that women and communities denounce cases of domestic violence as well as monitoring the implementation of the approved law are our present top priorities.



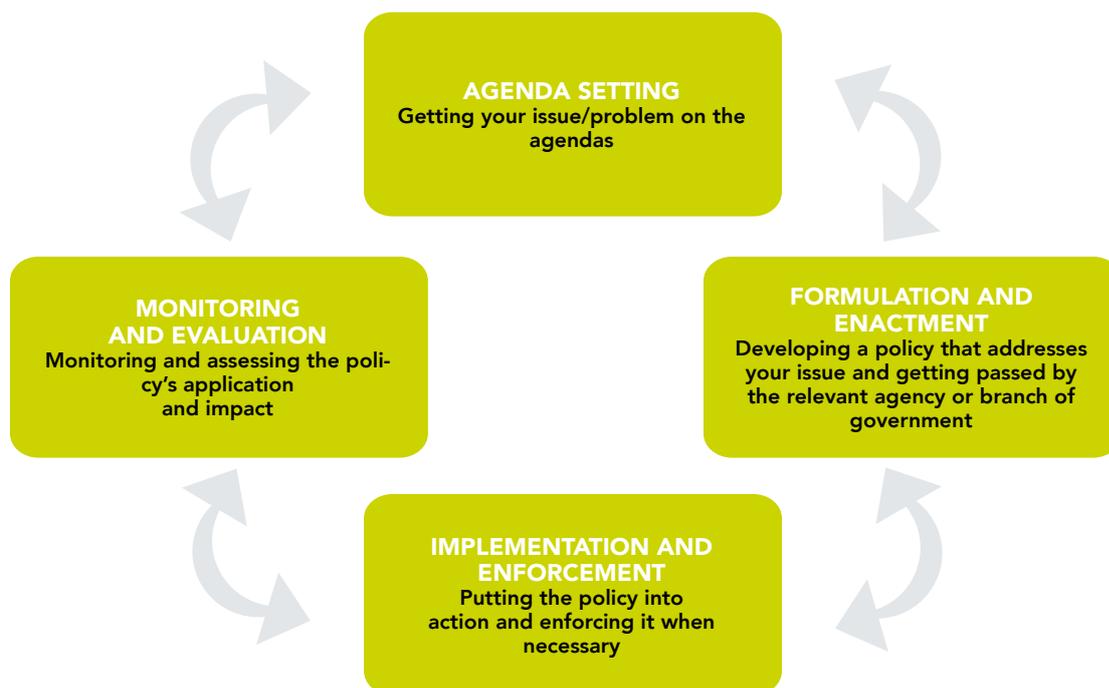
CASE STUDY: **Influencing legislative processes: experiences from Africa**

Safeguarding CSO independence in Zambia

The National Civil Society Platform (supported by CIVICUS) lead a loose alliance of Zambian CSOs to oppose a restrictive bill in parliament that would have seriously curtailed the independence of CSOs in Zambia. The CSO bill would have given the government much more power to interfere with CSO advocacy strategies requiring these to be harmonised with the national development plan. CSOs would also be required to renew their registration every 3 years making organisations critical of official policies more susceptible to bureaucratic arm-twisting. CSOs argued that the bill would breach Zambia's constitutional and international commitments to freedom of association. Key government officials, members of parliament, foreign diplomats based in Zambia, international CSOs, national and international media and the Zambian public were all targeted by the advocacy initiative. Despite a concerted advocacy campaign both at the national and international level, the coalition was unable to leverage sufficient support to oppose the passage of the CSO bill. However, they did manage to extend the registration period for CSOs from 3 to 5 years, which they considered a significant victory.

Reflections from CIVICUS: It was extremely important to work through a coalition of CSOs and cross-border solidarity by civil society was also important. It is best to engage a multitude of stakeholders both nationally and internationally for maximum impact. Advocacy to prevent the passage of proposed legislation is a long and protracted process and often times unsuccessful, as the government does not like to lose face. Nevertheless, while the aim should be to prevent the passage of all restrictive aspects of a proposed law, even if some restrictive aspects are removed, they can go a long way in creating a more enabling environment for civil society.

Generally, the policy-making process has four different and overlapping phases: agenda setting, formulation and enactment, implementation and monitoring and evaluation.



Each phase is shaped by different power dynamics and involves different players. In democratic circumstances, you should be able to find out about, monitor and influence the decision-making process at each stage. However, other powerful stakeholders may make it more difficult for outsiders to find out what is going on until later in the process. In other instances, policies and laws may be decided before they get adopted by the legislature (i.e. parliament), or there might not be a legislature at all.

When facing a hostile government, in situations of conflict, or when denouncing systemic human rights violations, you may sometimes decide to target powerful actors beyond your national context (e.g. taking your issues to the UN) that may influence policy and decision-making processes in your own country. In these cases, donor conferences (see case study on Colombia), anniversaries, peace talks, deal-breaking UN conferences, general elections, foreign media opportunities and humanitarian coordination processes in emergencies may all constitute valid entry points for conveying your messages and influencing decision-making processes. violations, you may sometimes decide to target powerful actors beyond your national context (e.g. taking your issues to the UN) that may influence policy and decision-making processes in your own country. In these cases, donor conferences (see case study on Colombia), anniversaries, peace talks, deal-breaking UN conferences, general elections, foreign media opportunities and humanitarian coordination processes in emergencies may all constitute valid entry points for conveying your messages and influencing decision-making processes.

CASE STUDY:

The London-Cartegena-Bogotá Process

The participation by a group of Colombian and international CSOs at a donor high-level meeting on Colombia in London in 2003 was the beginning of an unprecedented tri-partite dialogue between the Colombian government, international donor governments and civil society. In a hostile arena led by the then President Uribe against CSOs and against a backdrop of abuses against human rights defenders, CSOs present in London called for the opening of a democratic space for civil society actors in the resolution of the conflict in Colombia and longer-term peace-building efforts. The London conference, and the ensuing declaration, validated the important role of civil society and the need for the government to engage in dialogue with CSO actors. This triggered a national tri-partite process between national CSOs, the diplomatic community in Colombia and the Uribe government, known as the London-Cartagena-Bogotá Process. As part of this process, the Colombian government even pledged to “protect civil society leaders, including of trade unions, who have suffered threats against themselves and their families”. The process opened a democratic space for civil society, consolidating the participation of CSOs in the formulation of six annual dialogue agendas, two national strategies for international cooperation, three further international conferences, several seminars on International Cooperation and Human Rights which served to inform the drafting of public policy in Colombia between 2003 and 2011. However, implementation of the agreements made through the London-Cartegena-Bogotá Process by the government has been very weak. Despite reclaiming their voice and a place at the negotiating table, Colombian CSOs feel that peace may still be a long way off.

Reflections from the CSO The Alliance for Peace and Democracy in Colombia: The Alliance building and reaching a consensus between the various civil society actors was essential to strengthening our legitimacy nationally and vis-à-vis the international donor community. Coming to the negotiating table with concrete proposals strengthened our position further. Advocating at the international level allowed us to exert added political pressure to hold the government to account for its pledges. Developing mechanisms for tracking the government’s implementation of their pledges has demonstrated their sluggish progress.

Conducting a stakeholder analysis

“There are many divergent interests within the government....there are groups that feel threatened by CSOs speaking out about human rights violations and the environment”

CSO network representative, Brazil

Understanding how different stakeholders relate to the issue that you are seeking to change is crucial in order to work out who to target with your advocacy and how to move them to action. This can be done through a stakeholder analysis, which may help you identify your key targets, others who may have influence over them, any potential allies and those who may wish to oppose your advocacy (opponents).

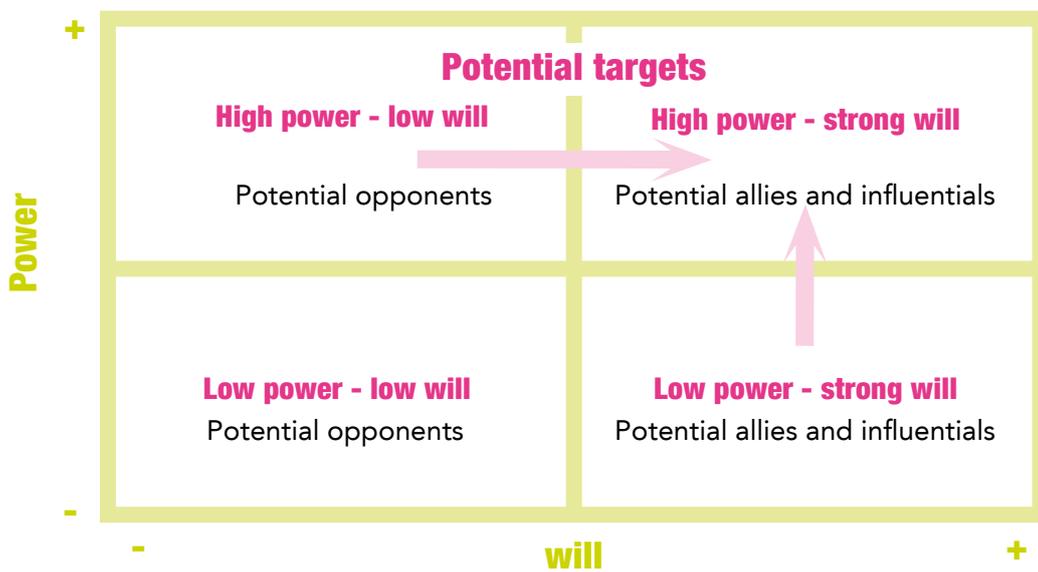
Several approaches offer some guidance on how to conduct a stakeholder analysis. A simple tool is presented here in order to help you map out stakeholders on a matrix according to their respective ‘will’ and ‘power’ to bring about change on your issue. The questions below can also be adapted to your particular situation as a means to refine your advocacy approach and more specific plans of action.

TOOL

THE POWER AND WILL MATRIX

Guidance

1. This exercise is best conducted in a group when a variety of team members are able to input.
2. Reproduce the Power and Will matrix (illustrated below) on a flip-chart.



3. Brainstorm all the stakeholders. These are all those actors (it is best to focus on individuals rather than groups or organisations) who can affect or who will be affected by the change you are seeking. If you have mapped out the policy-making process relevant to your issue, then you may have already identified who some of the key decision-makers at key moments in the process might be. Write the name of each individual stakeholder on a separate card (or post it note).

4. Place the cards on the matrix based on: (a) how much power you perceive them to have on achieving change on your issue; and (b) how willing they are to bring about the change you want to see. The way in which you position the actors on the matrix should be backed by evidence (i.e. research, conversations, interviews, observation etc.) and you should note the reasons for the location (e.g. political will may be influenced by political orientation, personal beliefs, personal interest etc.).

5. The matrix will allow you to start identifying potential targets, allies, influentials and possible opponents depending upon which quadrant the actors are located in. Actors with the most power (in the two upper quadrants of the matrix) will be your main targets and should be prioritised. You may be able to identify actors (influentials) that are on side and, despite having little power, may be able to leverage change by helping you influence key targets (e.g. opinion formers, celebrities, spouses of top politicians etc.). Potential opponents, on the left hand side of the matrix should be identified and action taken to prevent them from jeopardising your advocacy.

6. At this stage, you may wish to prioritise key actors that you will focus your efforts on. You can do so by circling those that you consider to be main actors.

7. Once you have prioritised, you can start discussing what changes in the behaviour (or stance) of the main actors you would like to see in relation to your issue and what action you would like them to take. You can show these 'trajectories of change' visually on the matrix (as shown in the example below in red). For instance you may wish to raise the awareness of your issue among powerful actors in order to persuade them to take positive action. You can then break each trajectory of change into progressive steps that you would:

- Expect to see: short-term changes confirming that the actor is moving in the right direction and responding to your advocacy efforts (e.g. speaking out more on your issue, participating in relevant meetings).
- Like to see: medium to longer-term results of progressive changes brought about by your advocacy and other influences (e.g. approaching others to positively influence them on your issue).
- Love to see: very long term changes which extend beyond the life of your advocacy initiative and result from a continuous process of change driven by forces beyond your control (e.g. lasting change in invisible power relations pertaining to norms and values on your issue).

8. You should record this information in your advocacy plan, an example of which is presented in Annex 2. You can then monitor progress on targets' changes in attitudes and behaviour using the example of an Outcomes Journal in Annex 5.

Getting to know your audiences

“ Although decision-makers may support civil society and approve of our advocacy publicly, in reality they put barriers on our way, they delay political processes and they discredit CSOs ”

CSO staff, Mexico

As part of your stakeholder analysis, it may be useful to gather supplementary information to 'profile' your key targets and audiences. This will allow you to later devise messages and influencing strategies tailored to who they are, their political affiliation, what they know and think about your issue, their interests and personal beliefs and also what they really care about (i.e. any potential hidden agendas they might have). You can find out about your targets' interests and attitudes through a variety of sources including personal experience, other people's and colleagues' experiences, websites and internet searches (e.g. Google), newspapers and other media. Developing informal relationships with allies within the constituencies of your targets is often also very useful, particularly in the end game of a particular policy process or in adverse circumstances.

You should focus on the following:

- **What they know about your issue:** Assessing your targets' baseline knowledge is crucial to any awareness raising activities you wish to carry out. Are they aware of the issue? How much do they know about it? Have they got access to factual information and research on the issue? Have you shared any such information with them?
- **What their attitude towards your issue is:** You should bear in mind that attitudes and beliefs are an important form of hidden power that may have a very important bearing on your advocacy. Do your targets support your issue or not? Who and/or what concerns shape their attitude towards your issue? Is this attitude towards your issue shaped by who they are and what they stand for (i.e. personal beliefs, religion, politics etc.)? What or who might influence change in their attitude or openness to your issue?

- **What they really care about:** Finding out about any hidden agendas (and hidden power dynamics) is extremely useful as these may make or break your advocacy strategy. These agendas may not be directly related to your issue. For instance, most politicians (in a democratic political system) ultimately care about being re-elected while most journalists will be interested in stories that will help sell their paper. Do your targets resist taking any action on your issue in order not to antagonise other powerful colleagues? Do they want to ingratiate foreign donors and so are not prepared to take a stance on your issue? Do they have any conflicts of interest (e.g. do they have positions on private companies, links with the media etc.)? Once you know what your targets really care about you can leverage change by developing strategies to get round any blockages and putting pressure where it really matters.

STEP 4

BUILDING ALLIANCES TO STRENGTHEN YOUR VOICE

“ *A successful advocacy campaign depends very much on the unity, dedication and perseverance of fellow CSOs* ”

CSO activist, Council for Health and Development, Philippines

Alliances and coalitions can greatly enhance advocacy by bringing together the strength and resources of diverse groups at the national, regional and international level, but they are difficult to form and sustain. They sometimes suffer from unrealistic expectations, such as the notion that people that share the same cause will agree on everything. Donors who support advocacy are often eager to support coalitions or consortiums. Coalitions and consortiums have, in some cases, been promoted as the ‘silver bullet’ for CSO collaboration. As a result, some coalitions and consortiums are donor-initiated or donor-created. But, coalitions and consortiums are usually stronger if they grow organically out of common interests. Experience shows that they are unlikely to survive if they are externally imposed.

Building alliances and coalitions is essential to advocate for a more enabling environment for CSO development effectiveness in any context. As the experience of the Open Forum shows, the aggregate voice of CSOs can be a powerful tool for change. But working with others is not always straightforward. Before embarking on building or joining alliances you should think about all benefits and challenges carefully. You may also wish to consider the following tips.

- Be clear about the advocacy issue proposed as the focus of the coalition
- Have a clear process for agreeing on the main messages for the coalition, including if necessary developing a shared policy platform or agenda that unites the coalition
- Develop membership criteria and mechanisms for including new members and sustainability
- Resolve what the coalition/alliance will and will not do
- If the group is large select a steering committee

DEFINITIONS

Coalitions often have a more formalised structure. They involve joint work between a disparate group of CSOs around a single major event, a set of related issues or a broad campaign. Coalitions usually involve long-term relationships and agreement on a platform among the members.

Alliances generally involve shorter-term relationships among members and are focused on a specific objective. Being limited on time and goal, alliances tend to be less demanding on members.

Networks tend to be loose flexible associations of people or groups coming together around a common concern or interest or periodic joint initiatives. Foster the sharing of information and ideas.

CASE STUDY:

Platform for a new CSO regulatory framework in Brazil

On occasion of the 2010 presidential elections in Brazil, 180 organisations and networks joined forces to call for a new regulatory framework for CSOs. They established a platform and kicked-off political dialogue by sending an open letter outlining their proposals to the presidential candidates in the run up to the elections. The platform comprised a wide range of CSOs from development, environment and human rights backgrounds, private sector actors, grassroots groups and movements and religious groups. Two presidential candidates supported their campaign. Dilma Rousseff, who was later elected, responded to the platform with an open letter to civil society outlining her own proposals for a new regulatory framework.

Following the election, the platform initiated a more structured dialogue with the Rousseff administration and put forward proposals on the structure and functions of a multi-stakeholder committee to inform the formulation of the new government policy. The multi-stakeholder committee will be established in November 2011 at an open international conference. Over a period of three months, the Committee will facilitate dialogue on the following issues: (a) CSO registration; (b) public financing of CSOs; (c) accountability; (d) awareness raising and advocacy with a view to informing the review of the CSO regulatory framework.

Reflections from the Brazilian NGO platform ABONG²⁸: Our advocacy efforts got the government to acknowledge that the regulatory framework for civil society organisations had to be reviewed. Formulating credible policy proposals was essential to sustaining our dialogue with the government contributing to raising public awareness of our issues and reaching out to the media. As a result, the Rousseff administration involved the Ministry for Planning and the Economy for the first time, deepening the policy dialogue with civil society. The advocacy continues and the platform is now developing a website to inform members, the media and citizens of the on-going campaign.

²⁸ <http://www.abong.org.br/>

TOOL**DEVELOPING A MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING²⁹ OR A COMMON PLATFORM**

A memorandum of understanding or a common platform document are important in setting out the objectives, mandate, values and guiding principles of a coalition or alliance. Where appropriate, day-to-day management, leadership and accountability issues should also be included. A memorandum or a common platform should address the areas suggested below. You can also adapt these according to your needs.

Mandate

- Outline what the group stands for, what it will do and, where appropriate, what it will NOT do

Membership

- Define criteria for who can join the group

Participation

- Define how members are expected to participate and contribute (e.g. equally or according to their capacity?)

Leadership

- Agree on how and when leaders will be chosen

Management

- Decide on rules for decision-making, in particular for public messaging, and conflict management. When will members act as a group and when can they act individually? Who can act as spokespeople for the group? How will members communicate and share information? How will you plan activities and monitor progress?

Relationships

- Define the steps that will be taken to maintain and nurture the relationships

STEP 5

MAKING YOUR CASE

Using evidence to make your case

You will need solid evidence about the causes and consequences of the barrier, or disabling conditions, you are addressing and the viability of your proposed solution. Good research, especially participatory research, will help consolidate your legitimacy both vis-à-vis the people you work with and the decision-makers you are targeting in your advocacy.

But, remember that evidence is seldom enough on its own, particularly when operating in an adverse political environment. **It's what you do with the evidence that matters.** This must be informed by your analysis of the power relations affecting change on your issue within your unique context as well as your risk analysis.

You may want to consider the following:

- What evidence do you already have on your issue? Is this rooted in your experience? What type of evidence is it (factual, anecdotal, quantitative, qualitative)?
- What is the nature of the evidence you have. Is it reliable? Will it help you raise awareness of your issue with your target audiences?
- If you need to collect new or additional evidence, then consider how you want to collect this. This may be informed by your approach to advocacy (e.g. community empowerment for change) or what you feel might be most useful to you, for instance involving reputable local or international academics and experts to assist you conduct robust investigations on your issue (e.g. human rights violations, legal appeals or financial analysis).
- How should you package your evidence to maximize its impact? This includes what format you will present your evidence to your target audiences (oral presentations by the groups/people affected, a documentary, a short written report backed by longer papers detailing the evidence, a policy statement, a pamphlet etc.). This also may affect what type of information you collect and how you do it.
- You may also decide to present your evidence in different formats to different audiences and through different channels (e.g. televise a documentary, launch on online forum, invite community speakers to a conference aimed at decision-makers, draft a policy paper or a shadow report for politicians or a fact sheet - or primer - for the general public or media contacts etc.) depending on the opportunities and entry points that you may have identified in your advocacy planning process.

Developing clear messages

Advocacy communication should seek to inform, persuade and move people to action. It is important to develop messages for each of your different audiences. First, you need to develop one clear **core message**, which clearly summarises your position and the changes you want to bring about. This will then guide the development of more specific, **tailored messages** that will be directed at different au-

diences, perhaps on different aspects of the core message. The core message will also guide slogans, sound-bites or stories, which you rely on in our advocacy work. The stakeholder analysis may provide important information that should assist you in the preparation of effective messages.

CASE STUDY:

Declining space for civil society and human rights in Canada: collecting evidence through 'Voices'

Since the Conservative government came to power in 2006 in Canada under Stephen Harper's leadership – first as a minority government, and in May 2011 as a majority government – the space for civil society has been declining. Women's groups, social policy research institutes, human rights organizations, anti-poverty groups, international development organizations, including the [Canadian Council for International Co-operation](#)³⁰(CCIC), have all seen long-standing government funding pulled. Diplomats, high-level bureaucrats, heads of government agencies, Ethics and Safety Commissioners have been censored for communicating their concerns to Canadians, and have been personally sanctioned, or treated with contempt for doing so. Unions have seen their space for collective bargaining eliminated through successive back-to-work legislation and there has been significant infringement on the rights of citizens engaged in peaceful protest, such as at the G-8/G-20 meetings in 2010. Government officials have been kept on a tight leash, making meetings with civil servants increasingly difficult. The government's performance on access to information requests has declined, information has been withheld or censored, and much needed transparency reforms delayed.

In 2010, over 200 Canadian organizations and individuals concerned about this trend, joined forces to launch '[Voices-Voix](#)³¹', a broad coalition committed to defending collective and individual rights to dissent, advocacy and democratic space. Since then, the coalition has been: (a) documenting a range of attacks on the democratic space for dissent; (b) promoting debate amongst coalition members and allies about how to defend the space for democratic dissent and advocacy in Canada, through an online forum and a series of events; (c) encouraging the Canadian public to 'raise their voices' so that governments meet their core responsibilities to respect the equality, transparency and diversity of voices that make a democracy thrive.

Reflections from CCIC: For organizations like CCIC that work to identify gaps in existing government policies on international development issues and advocate for change, this has proven to be an extremely difficult environment in which to operate. What is at stake is the ability of Canadians to advocate for the protection of human rights both within Canada and abroad, and to do so without political interference, intimidation or manipulation. But civil society is resilient and innovative. With the backing of its membership, CCIC continues to look for opportunities within government, among Members of Parliament (MPs) and media to make our positions and views heard.

For further information: Fraser Reilly-King, CCIC freillyking@ccic.ca

TOOL**TEN GOLDEN RULES FOR DEVELOPING EFFECTIVE MESSAGES³²**

- 1. Know your audience:** Find out what they know, their concerns, their values and priorities and what kind of language they use.
- 2. Know your political environment and moment:** What are the big controversies, the big issues and fears in your context? How might they affect your messaging? What is considered left, right and centre?
- 3. Keep your messages simple and brief:** Make sure someone who does not know the subject can easily understand the information. Avoid jargon. This is particularly important when advocating on some of the more technical issues relating to CSO development effectiveness.
- 4. Use real life stories and quotes:** The human element makes a problem, or issue, real. Quotes and personal stories bring to life the challenges faced by those directly affected. They also help to make the message locally relevant by presenting information relating to the local context and therefore more easily understood by your audience.
- 5. Use precise, powerful language and active verbs:** For instance, *"Women's rights are human rights"*, *"We don't need more empty words on a sheet of paper"* *"Free the Morong 43!"*.
- 6. Use facts and numbers accurately and creatively:** The facts you choose and the way in which you present them to make your case is very important. Saying *"1 in 3 women....."*, rather than *"over 30% of women....."* conveys the same fact more clearly. Comparing figures without actually quoting numbers may also convey your message effectively, for example: *"More is spent on buying chocolate in our country every year than what we contribute to fight global poverty"*. Consider the following statement used by a CSO coalition in Austria to oppose the slashing of their international development budget: *"3000 lives of children are at risk. The foreseen deep budget cuts will affect the lives of many people, especially children, in developing countries in a very negative way. In some cases the cuts will make a difference between life and death"*.
- 7. Adapt the message to the medium:** Each medium has its own possibilities and limitations. For example, sounds and different voices and background noises will be very important when conveying your message on the radio, whereas making full use of the visual element of your message will be crucial on television and more frequently on the internet.
- 8. Allow the audience to reach their own understanding:** Provide basic details as too much information may appear dogmatic and may cause you to lose your audience's attention.
- 9. Encourage the audience to take action:** You must be clear about what action your audience – whether it's your key targets or the general public – can take to support your cause. Offer straightforward suggestions like *"support the CSO bill in Parliament"*, *"sign our online petition"*
- 10. Present a possible solution:** Always tell your audience what you propose in order to advance a better policy for CSOs and keep it simple. For instance: *"The government needs to show its commitment to civil society as an important development actor by providing new policy and appropriate funding regulations for CSOs"*.

32 Adapted from L. VeneKlasen with V. Miller "A New Weave of Power, People and Politics", 2002.

STEP 6

CONVEYING YOUR MESSAGES

There are a great variety of ways in which you may deliver your messages and advocacy asks (your proposals for changing policy and practice) to different audiences depending on your context. You are the best judge of what methods and tactics may be most effective based on the political situation in your context, your culture, traditions and the risks that you may face in speaking out about your chosen issue.

It may be useful to consider the following when thinking about your delivering your messages:

- **Source:** Whom will the audience respond to and find credible? For example, local celebrities or opinion formers who have been personally touched by your issue (e.g. human rights violations) might work with some audiences while an eloquent spokesperson from civil society or a foreign internationally renowned expert might be better in other cases.
- **Format:** Which way will you deliver your message for maximum impact? For instance, a letter, a face-to-face meeting, a policy paper, a report, a flyer, an advert, a high level conference or a documentary or a combination of these formats?
- **Timing:** Which is the best time to deliver your message? Can you time your message with a particular moment – known as a hook – in either the decision making process or your advocacy initiative? Can you make it coincide with a relevant anniversary or a national day to mark a relevant issue? It is likely that you will have to take advantage of several appropriate opportunities – or hooks – during the course of your advocacy. ‘Hooks’ are particularly important when planning your media strategy.
- **Place:** Is there a location or venue to deliver your message that will enhance your credibility and political impact? For example, a side event at an international conference or a presentation in parliament or at a well-reputed institute associated with civil society issues.

Assessing and managing risk

Challenging power through advocacy can be risky, potentially resulting in backlash and conflict in some cases. Although to some extent unavoidable, it is important to consider risks, challenges and potentially negative situations when planning your advocacy and before you engage in any advocacy activities. While acknowledging that all effective campaigns require some risk-taking, carrying out a comprehensive risk assessment may help you select advocacy strategies and think through how to minimise or mitigate the risks to your organisation, staff, volunteers, activists and the people you work with.

TOOL ADVOCACY RISK ANALYSIS³³

This is a very simple tool to help you think through what risks you might be facing by embarking on your advocacy initiative, the impact that these risks and negative situations could have on your organisation, your staff and others, how likely it is that these situations might happen and what action you could take to minimise or avoid these risks. The outcomes of this analysis should be recorded in your advocacy plan (see an example in Annex 2 of this toolkit).

Guidance

1. With your colleagues and peers brainstorm what risks you might be facing in carrying out your advocacy initiative. What major things might go wrong and how could people's lives be endangered? Could your actions provoke a negative backlash and put your organisation, staff and the people you work with in danger? What is the nature of these risks and are they different for different stakeholders implicated by your advocacy initiative?

2. Once you have identified the major risks, think about their level of potential impact on your organisation (in terms of reputation, status, funding, operations), the staff and volunteers and the external people you work with. Consider the suggested categories:

- **HIGH:** a catastrophic impact threatening the future existence of your organisation/group/movement endangers people's lives or could lead to a potential reversal of the issue you are trying to change (e.g. criminalising CSOs that speak out).
- **MEDIUM:** some damaging effects in the short term but with little repercussions in the longer term
- **LOW:** a noticeable impact that has little effect on the organisation, the people or your advocacy.

3. Now think about how likely it is that the risks or negative situation will actually happen. Decide whether their likelihood is:

- **HIGH:** likely to take place in the next x months or years, may be already taking place.
- **MEDIUM:** could potentially happen in the next x months or years.
- **LOW:** it would be very surprising if it did happen.

4. For risks that have a high impact and high likelihood, as well as some medium level risks, you should then discuss and develop clear strategies that might help you minimise their impact, or avoid them altogether if possible. Consider what you could do to reduce the risk for the organisation/group, the people and yourself if your advocacy didn't work as planned? What would you need to have in place? Who would have the authority to take action? The analysis of risk should be revisited periodically as your advocacy develops and unexpected outcomes are considered.

One-to-one communication (Lobbying)

The term 'lobbying' comes from the word 'lobby' which refers to an entrance area or meeting place. In the case of advocacy, it refers to direct one-to-one conversations and/or meetings where people get access to and seek to persuade those in power. One-to-one communication with people in power, or those that have influence over them (influentials), can take many different forms ranging from informal conversations in social settings (e.g. over lunch or coffee) to formal meetings in official settings (e.g. in a politician's office). Engaging directly with decision-makers is an important part of all successful advocacy, but it may not be possible in all contexts and needs to be timed well to assure impact. You will have to judge whether and when lobbying is an appropriate method for conveying your messages in your context.

Essentially, lobbying is aimed at educating and convincing your interlocutors to support and advance your issue. Lobbying is an art, not a science. The way in which you communicate is ultimately informed by social

norms and values in your society. Every successful lobbyist must develop an individual style that works for them in their context and in their particular circumstances. If possible, it is important to receive advice and involve those among CSOs with some experience in lobbying, prior to setting the meeting with politicians or officials. They may already know the target audience and can advise on the best approach.

SOME GROUND RULES FOR LOBBYING

- Cultivate good long-term relations with your target decision makers but don't confuse access with influence – and don't let good relationships stop you taking public action where necessary and if appropriate.
- Seek to find common ground where change may be possible.
- Be propositional rather than oppositional, wherever possible.
- Seek to establish yourselves as a trusted source of evidence and policy advice in relation to your issue.
- Give credit where credit is due – failure to do so is what many decision makers dislike most about NGOs.
- To avoid unnecessary misunderstandings with targets explain your organisation's approach to advocacy, particularly if it combines a twin track strategy of persuasion and pressure.
- Where appropriate inform targets of media and popular mobilisation actions in advance, and share briefing papers before publishing them.
- Don't expect to achieve change in one meeting or letter.

Once you have developed your core and tailored messages, it is often useful to develop a 'Sticky Questions' paper (also known as a question & answers paper) before you engage in any face-to-face meetings with decision-makers or you communicate your messages to the media. A 'Sticky Questions' paper can be a useful working document for internal use. It enables everyone involved in the advocacy process to give clear, accurate and consistent answers to the most common questions, particularly any controversial – or 'sticky' - ones. It can be used when communicating with your colleagues, external targets and technical experts, peer organisations and the media.

Guidance

With your colleagues, brainstorm a list of common questions around your issue. You should give particular attention to any controversies relating to the issue addressed by your advocacy and that you will most likely be asked to comment on or justify.

1. Draft short answers (not more than one or two paragraphs long) to the questions. The answers should be carefully worded, accessible yet unambiguous and comprehensive. Ideally, you should be able to give these answers out without needing to explain them further. You may therefore want to try your answers out on external contacts (or family members) in order to help you pitch them at the right level.
2. Your 'Sticky Questions' paper is a living document. It should be developed through a series of drafts so that different people can contribute to the answers. It should be regularly updated as and when further response is received to advocacy activities and following media interviews.

Negotiation

Negotiation lies at the heart of advocacy for social justice. Negotiation can be defined as a process to resolve conflicts or issues when someone else exercises important control over what you want. Through negotiation, different groups try to agree on a solution that both sides can live with. When facing a politically hostile environment or in situations of conflict, compromise may be near impossible. In more favourable circumstances, however, negotiation can be a very useful avenue for advancing your issue with those in power. All negotiations are underpinned by social values, usually within a context of unequal power where various forms of bias are often invisible (invisible power may be shaped by class, age, ethnicity, gender and other factors). Before engaging in a negotiation process it may be useful to:

- **Take stock:** what do you bring to the table? What do you have that the other group may want or needs? What do you know about the other party/group and situation that you can use to influence them (based on your stakeholder analysis)? What are your weaknesses?
- **Learn as much as you can:** Avail yourself of the information that you have collected thus far in your advocacy process both with regard to your interlocutors/targets and the evidence for your argument. Try putting yourself in the other side's shoes, what counter-arguments and blockages might they put forward?
- **Develop negotiating scenarios:** Define what you want out of the negotiation. What is your range of options for a negotiating outcome? What is the minimum that you are prepared to accept? What is the worst that can happen? Are there any alternative solutions? What are the other party's options? What are their constraints and what do they want to get out of the negotiation? Where possible and appropriate bring other influential stakeholder allies to the table.

³⁴ Developed with input from Fraser Reilly-King from the Canadian Council for International Co-operation.

TIPS FOR NEGOTIATION

- **Hold out incentives to show that you have something of value:** make sure you have something of value to them and make it obvious you do.
- **Step up the pressure to demonstrate the cost of not reaching a settlement:** issue a credible ‘threat’ (e.g. media exposure, protest, boycott), force a choice on the other party and make consequences tangible to them.
- **Establish your authority and credibility:** make sure you have an explicit mandate from the people you represent (e.g. CSOs, grassroots groups, communities etc.) and make that known to the other party.
- **Enlist support and show clout:** Use allies to get you to maximize resources and respect.
- **Maintain control over the process:** anticipate the reactions of the other party, build support behind the scenes for your agenda using allies and raising awareness of your issue through advocacy.

Engaging with the media

- If you want to raise awareness of your issue to get public support and put additional pressure on key decision-makers, you may consider working with the media. You may also consider using social media (Facebook, Twitter and blogs) to disseminate your messages. Below are some key steps for engaging with the media.
- **Compiling a media list:** identify all relevant media outlets (newspapers, radio stations, TV), particularly those that may influence your advocacy targets, and find out who you should talk to about your issues and ideally who has covered these issues in the past.
- **Drafting a press release or a letter to the Editor** outlining your ‘story’. Press releases are generally issued to mark a launch (e.g. the launch of the *International Framework* in your country) or an event.
- **Contacting the media:** at least one week before your event, or at key moments in your advocacy, send your press release to all contacts on your media list. Pitch your story to sympathetic journalists who have covered your issues in the past or who have demonstrated a particular interest.
- **Follow up** with each contact by phone to confirm receipt, and while you have their ear, ask them if they have the time for you to pitch your story idea. Ask them if they think your story will be of interest to them, or if they have other suggestions. Most reporters are happy to talk to you if you are professional and respect their deadlines. If they are on deadline, ask them if you can call them back at a more convenient time.

GUIDANCE FOR PREPARING A PRESS RELEASE:

- Be clear what message you want to convey: identify 3-4 clear and specific messages
- Make it short: ideally one page and definitively no longer than two pages
- Use precise, clear language and active verbs
- Avoid using technical language
- Use quotes to make your arguments stronger
- Include clear recommendations and calls for action
- Start for the most important information and leave the background information for the end
- Include links for further information.

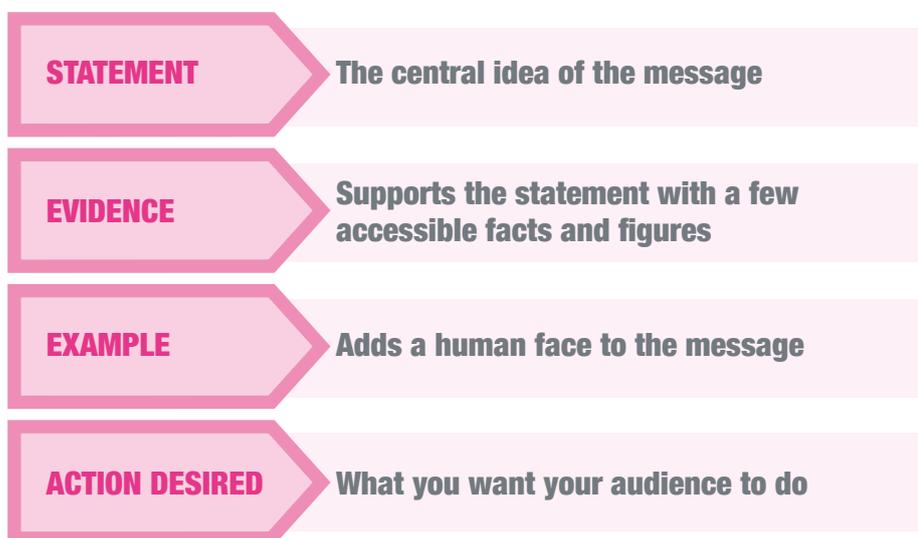
- **Giving interviews:** if your story runs in the media expect to be asked for interviews. This is when your 'Sticky Questions' paper might come in handy. The 'One-Minute Message' tool below might also help you prepare.

During an interview make sure you:

- Speak from the heart.
- Stay calm – remember that you know more about the issue than the journalist does.
- Keep your answers brief using simple language and don't use acronyms or jargon.
- Be creative, paint a picture "imagine what it must be like to..."
- Never answer a question in haste, if you need more time just repeat the question.
- Don't make things up. If you don't know just say it.
- Do not get sidetracked and always take the journalist back to your key messages. You can use several phrases known as 'bridging' to do that (e.g. "I think what you're saying is important but the main issue is...", "we really need to focus on...", "the real issue here is...", "what the research tells us is...", "the thing to remember is...", "but..." etc.)
- Do not let the journalist set the agenda and the message.

Thanking reporters: After your story runs, contact the reporter and thank them for their time and for sharing your message with the public. A simple handwritten note card or an e-mail is a very nice gesture.

It is very useful to be able to summarise and convey your key message in three or four concise sentences, or 'sound-bytes'. This is useful for TV or radio interviews where contributions are generally edited down to a maximum 30 seconds, or in case of fortuitous meetings with key decision-makers such as meeting Ban Ki-moon in the lift! This is known as 'the one-minute message' and it consists of:



Using social media

In recent times, social media tools have increasingly grabbed news headlines by either triggering diplomatic incidents (Wikileaks) or fuelling social protests during the 'Arab Spring' (Facebook and Twitter). The term 'social media' encompasses a plethora of tools each with distinctive characteristics. The increased use and importance of these tools has sometimes challenged the right to freedom of expression and access to information leading to a shake-up in traditional approaches to advocacy and campaigning. This has opened the way to a new form of 'digital activism'. In order to understand how you can make use of these tools in your advocacy you could consider the following four core 'layers' or dimensions underpinning all social media³⁵.

Content: social media tools allow anyone (who has access to the internet) to create their own multi-media content. 'User generated content' is at the heart of most social media platforms. This can be very empowering, particularly in more repressive societies. It has led to critical 'blogging' and to 'citizen journalism' where amateurs can report and comment on what is happening on the ground, particularly during crisis situations (e.g. www.blogger.com, www.indymedia.org, www.bulatlat.com).

Collaboration: Social media facilitate the aggregation of small individual actions into meaningful collective results. This is possible through 'conversation', 'co-creation' and 'collective action'. Online conversations create traffic and may well become 'viral' allowing you to spread your message quickly to vast numbers of people. Co-creation – where several users independently contribute content – fosters collaboration and may start building 'digital partnerships'. Wikis (entries in Wikipaedia), group blogs, photo pools, and video collages are all examples of co-creation. Collective action goes one step further by using online engagement to initiate meaningful action like for instance signing e-petitions, fundraising, or organising 'offline' protests or events. All these forms of digital activism may provide you with useful avenues for leveraging action for your cause.

EXAMPLES OF SOCIAL MEDIA

- Blogging (www.wordpress.org)
- Micro-blogging (www.twitter.com)
- Video-sharing (www.youtube.com)
- Photo-sharing (www.flickr.com)
- Podcasting (www.blogtalkradio.com)
- Mapping (www.maps.google.com)
- Social networking (www.facebook.com)
- Social voting (www.digg.com)
- Social bookmarking (www.delicious.com)
- Lifestreaming (www.friendfeed.com)
- Wikis (www.wikipedia.org)
- Virtual Worlds (www.secondlife.com)

Community: Social media facilitate sustained collaboration within an online 'community' around a shared idea, over time and across boundaries. However, a vibrant online community cannot be built in a vacuum as people will only come together (digitally or not) around an issue that is meaningful to them. In order to mobilise public support for your issue, you may focus on building an online community around a specific event or campaign. For instance, 'Vote Report India' created an online platform for collectively tracking irregularities in the 2009 Indian elections. A vibrant online community was created by the 'Free Morong 43' campaign to call for the release of 43 health workers illegally detained in the Philippines in 2010 (see case study).

Collective Intelligence: Social web enables us to not only aggregate individual actions but also to process that information (using complex algorithms) and make use of it as we like. So, for instance, commercial websites like Amazon can send you tailored recommendations based on your clicking and browsing histories. There are very few examples of this being used for non-commercial purposes but it could have huge potential for nurturing digital activism.

The best social media initiatives should leverage all four dimensions. An example of this is [MoveOn.org](http://www.moveon.org)³⁶ that has managed to build a strong community around progressive politics in the US. Another very good example is [Global Voices Online](http://www.globalvoicesonline.org)³⁷ and its sister project [Global Voices Advocacy](http://www.globalvoicesadvocacy.org)³⁸, which aim to build a global anti-censorship network of bloggers and online activists throughout the developing world that is dedicated to protecting freedom of expression and free access to information online.

Useful links: www.facebook.com/CSOeffectiveness
<http://twitter.com/CSOpenForum>

³⁶ <http://front.moveon.org/>

³⁷ <http://globalvoicesonline.org/>

³⁸ <http://advocacy.globalvoicesonline.org/>

CASE STUDY: **Social media and the Arab Spring**

2011 saw a rising tide of citizen-led protest across North Africa and the Middle-East against autocratic and corrupt regimes. Dubbed the 'Arab Spring', this sudden wave created a 'domino effect' with activists in one country following and gaining confidence and support from those in others. Although this pattern has been witnessed before in other contexts, the novelty in the Arab Spring was the mass use of digital media, mobile phones, and satellite TV. These tools helped bring together disparate groups from Morocco, to Egypt, to Tunisia, Lybia, Syria, Bahrain and Yemen around a common cause transcending borders, openly defying state control and bypassing conventional media channels.

At the height of the protests, during the Tahrir Square occupation in Cairo, Twitter witnessed between up to 45 'tweets' per minute from Egypt, most of them in English. This provided a platform for immediate media attention and global visibility. Social media also provided protesters with information about how to counteract the security forces, with maps showing locations for protest meetings as well as practical advice on what to do if attacked with teargas. As governments desperately tried to clamp down on protesters by blocking social networking sites (Tunisia) or cutting all communication systems (Egypt), this only fuelled discontent ultimately contributing to their demise. The role of social media in the Arab Spring has been hotly debated.

Ultimately, social media are only tools that may help galvanise public support where there is a common cause and in the right circumstances. Despite being pivotal in Egypt and Tunisia, social media did not have such an important role in Yemen, Syria and Bahrain, for instance. In the absence of strong political leadership for alternatives, social media may influence the outcome for authoritarian regimes, but play less of a role in shaping the powers that emerge to take its place.

Mobilising public support

Mobilising public support for your issue can be very powerful but sometimes also very dangerous. The power of the public to influence decision makers varies from country to country. You will be the best judge of whether this can be a viable option for addressing your issue in your context. You will need to be realistic about why you may want to mobilise the public and what they can help you achieve.

There are numerous ways for getting public support ranging from letter writing and petitions to decision-makers to symbolic actions (like waving flags or holding vigils), protests and public demonstrations. If you opt for mobilising popular support for your issue, you will need to decide which way will be most appropriate and effective for doing so in your circumstances. Make sure that you have conducted a risk analysis (see below) before you engage in any activities that may seriously jeopardise your or your partners' and allies' security.



CASE STUDY:**Free the Morong 43 Campaign, Philippines**

In February 2010, 43 health workers attending a first responders training workshop organised by the Council for Health and Development (CHD) in Morong (Philippines) were illegally arrested by the Army. The health workers were accused of belonging to the New People's Army, a rebel insurgency. Initially subjected to ill-treatment including physical and psychological torture while in military custody, an legal challenges resulted in a majority of the health workers eventually being transferred to the civilian police custody where they remained in detention for over 10 months. They were finally released by order of the newly elected President Benigno Aquino III in December 2010 following a nation-wide campaign and international pressure. Organised action for the release of the 'Morong 43' – as they became known – started hours after their arrest and a broad coalition led by Karapatan: Alliance for the Advance of People's Rights formed the 'Free the Morong 43 Alliance' to strengthen and amplify the effort. The Alliance launched a multi-pronged mass campaign. Using social media (facebook, twitter, blogging), video (You Tube) and traditional media channels they raised public awareness of the issue and organised joint actions, rallies and protests.

The campaign denounced the abusive practice of the military, systemic human rights violations and particularly the denial of the right to health. They stirred the support of the government's hospital workforce from top directors to hospital workers and nurses. Streamers for the release of the 43 were displayed on the gates of the country's top hospitals and former Secretaries of the Department for Health and national medical professional associations all called for the immediate release of the health workers. Citizen actions in the form of petition signing, mobilisations and forums were held almost twice a week. Dialogue with government bodies such as the Commission on Human Rights and the Department for Justice was sought and President Aquino's election campaign also provided a good entry point to highlight human rights violations by the previous regime and seek the release of the 43.

The campaign reached out internationally through Alliance partners. Lawyers' associations from a variety of countries including Japan, France, the US and Canada co-ordinated the drafting of resolutions and appeals targeted at the Government of the Philippines challenging the legal grounds on which the 43 had been arrested. Meanwhile, inside the detention centre the 43 health workers launched support actions and reprisals, such as hunger strikes, to demand their freedom and the improvement of their welfare in the camp. Only after nearly a year of public pressure and legal challenges against unsubstantiated legal charges did the government drop the charges against the 43. The last of the health workers was freed in February 2011. In 2011, 6 of the 43 have filed lawsuits for damages against the former President Arroyo, army generals and other top security actors but thus far no one has been held accountable for the illegal arrest and detention of the Morong 43.

Reflections from Karapatan and CIVICUS (which supported Karapatan): The freedom of the Morong 43 would not have been possible if so many national and international CSOs had not taken a stance against human rights violations and for the right to health. Combining the legal battle with a mass campaign was very effective as it raised public awareness while exposing the

illegality of the health workers' arrest and detention. The positive intervention and reports of the constitutionally mandated and independent Human Rights Commission within the first week of the Morong 43's detention was critical in confronting the government on the illegality and injustice of the arrest and continued detention. The national Human Rights Commission's principled stand on the issue provide strong moral support to the sustained public and legal campaign organized by civil society. While the Presidential election campaign offered a very good opportunity to focus the political spotlight on situation of human rights nationally, things did not change overnight after the new President's election. The need of sustained, hard advocacy persisted the same as before the election to secure the eventual release of the Morong 43.

Further information: <http://freethehealthworkers.blogspot.com>
www.karapatan.org

Follow ongoing developments on the Morong 43 on twitter and facebook
To know more contact Adam Nord, CIVICUS, on adam.nord@civicus.org



STEP 7

CONSOLIDATING YOUR PLAN AND TRACKING PROGRESS

Developing an advocacy plan

All the information generated during the advocacy planning process should be captured in an advocacy plan. This is an important document that should be adopted by senior managers within the organisations involved and available to all staff implicated in carrying out your advocacy strategy. A suggested template for developing an advocacy plan is available as an annex to this toolkit. This is only a suggested format as there are countless ways of pulling together an advocacy plan. Generally, however, this plan should summarise the conclusions of the following key steps in the planning process:

- Enabling Environment and power analyses
- Vision of change and specific change objectives
- Policy analysis including opportunities and entry points for advocacy
- Stakeholder analysis and approach to developing your advocacy initiative
- Core and tailored messages
- Key stages in the plan, including short and medium term activities planner/timeline of major activities

Monitoring and evaluating your advocacy

Good planning, monitoring, evaluation and impact assessment are essential for effective advocacy, for accountability and to make sure lessons are learned to improve any future advocacy. However, advocacy is not straightforward and it aims to influence complex social and political environments. Constant impact monitoring is particularly important in advocacy as it enables you to look for evidence of change as you go, assess progress in bringing about change and to test whether your assumptions about how change happens in your context are correct.

There is no one way of measuring progress and impact in advocacy. Different methodologies have been developed and applied by different organisations, coalitions and networks. Generally, if your planning process is sound and you have covered the main steps well - particularly setting your change objectives - you will be in a good position to monitor your own progress as you move along.

It is important for you to assess both the process and impact of your advocacy. Process monitoring will allow you periodically to judge whether:

- your approach and tactics are working
- enough target audiences are being reached and your messages are accessible to them
- you are using the most appropriate channels to convey your messages
- you are collaborating with the right allies and partners

Impact monitoring instead is useful to know whether:

- your objectives are likely to be achieved in the given timeframe
- you need to do more to sustain change in the longer-term
- what unintended impacts – positive or negative – may have occurred
- commitment to specific changes by your targets have been followed through (e.g. pledges of additional funding)

Being organised, documenting your progress in a transparent way and ensuring that information flows freely both within your organisation and within your broader network will make monitoring and evaluating your advocacy work easier and more straightforward. An example of a possible format for a monitoring and evaluation framework for your advocacy initiative is found in [section 4](#) of an Advocacy Plan template profiled in [Annex 2](#). In [Annexes 3 to 5](#) you will find other ideas and tools to help you document your advocacy and track your progress. These include: (a) suggested advocacy indicators, (b) a suggested template for recording meetings and (c) an example of an outcomes journal for tracking changes in your key targets.

DEFINITIONS

- **Activities:** are what you actually do, e.g. writing a paper, organising a meeting etc.
- **Outputs:** are the direct results of your contribution, the tangible products delivered on completion of your activities, e.g. materials developed, meetings occurred etc.
- **Outcomes:** are the immediate and observable changes in relation to your advocacy objectives, brought about as a direct result of your activities. For instance, a draft policy on dialogue with civil society formulated or additional funding for CSOs committed.
- **Indicators:** are objective ways of measuring that progress is being achieved. These must relate to the aims and objectives of your advocacy initiative.
- **Impact indicators:** are needed to assess what progress is being made towards reaching your objectives and milestones and what impact your advocacy work has had on influencing your key audiences. Impact indicators measure the ‘outcomes’ and/or longer-term impacts of your advocacy. For example, increase in number of politicians who speak up about your issue or percentage increase in allocations to CSOs.
- **Process indicators:** indicate what progress has been made in implementing your activities and measure outputs generated as part of your advocacy work. For instance, number of meetings held, attendance levels, circulation figures for key reports etc.

Annexes

ANNEX 1 GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Activities:	These are what you actually do in your advocacy e.g. writing a paper, organising a meeting etc.
Advocacy:	A deliberate process designed to influence the policies and actions of those in power in order to achieve an enabling environment for an effective civil society based on minimum standards agreed through multi-stakeholder dialogue, wherever possible.
Advocacy change objective:	This should define concretely what will be accomplished, with whom, how objective and in what period of time. The objective should focus on a specific action that an institution can take (or outcome) within a timeframe of 1 to 3 years.
Advocacy goal:	This illustrates your long-term vision of change. It describes the overall change you want to achieve as a result of your advocacy work. Your goal can be expressed in general terms.
Aid Effectiveness:	Aid effectiveness relates to measures that improve the quality of the aid relationship, primarily focusing on the terms and conditions of the resource transfer itself. The Paris Declaration defined five principles that should guide official donors and developing country governments to improve the effectiveness of this resource transfer.
Alliances:	These generally involve shorter-term relationships among members and are focused on a specific objective. Being limited on time and goal, alliances tend to be less demanding on members.
Allies:	Prominent individual or organisations that support your case in different ways and degrees. These can be potential partners for your advocacy initiative.
Coalitions:	These often have a more formalised structure. They involve joint work between a disparate group of CSOs around a single major event, a set of related issues or a broad campaign. Coalitions usually involve long-term relationships and agreement on a platform among the members.
Development Cooperation:	Development cooperation is sometimes used interchangeably with "aid" or "development assistance", but includes more than ODA resource transfers. BetterAid uses "development cooperation" to include a range of international relationships between governments or people for the purposes of achieving the Internationally-Agreed Development Goals (IADGs) in developing countries. It can include civil society cooperation and growing cooperation between developing countries (South-South Cooperation) for the purposes of development.

Development Effectiveness:	Development effectiveness promotes sustainable change, within a democratic framework, that addresses the causes as well as the symptoms of poverty, in equality and marginalization, through the diversity and complementarity of instruments, policies and actors. Development effectiveness in relation to aid is understood as policies and practices by development actors that deepen the impact of aid and development cooperation on the capacities of poor and marginalized people to realize their rights and achieve the IADGs. Conditions for realizing development effectiveness goals must include measurable commitments to improve the effectiveness of aid.
Enabling environment:	The political and policy context created by governments, official donors and other development actors that affect the ways CSOs might carry out their work.
Enabling standards:	These are a set of interrelated good practices by donors and governments – in the legal, regulatory, fiscal, informational, political and cultural areas – that support the capacity of CSO development actors to engage in development processes in a sustained and effective manner.
Impact indicators:	These are needed to assess what progress is being made towards reaching your objectives and milestones and what impact your advocacy work has had on influencing your key audiences. Impact indicators measure the ‘outcomes’ and/or longer-term impacts of your advocacy. For example, increase in number of politicians who speak up about your issue or percentage increase in allocations to CSOs.
Indicators:	These are objective ways of measuring that progress is being achieved. These must relate to the aims and objectives of your advocacy initiative.
Influentials:	Individuals who may not have any power themselves but have some influence over your targets. Remember, influentials can use this influence for or against your case.
Lobbying:	One-to-one conversations and/or meetings where people get access to and seek to persuade those in power.
Networks:	These tend to be loose flexible associations of people or groups coming together around a common concern or interest or periodic joint initiatives. Foster the sharing of information and ideas.
Opponents:	Influential people, organisations and institutions who oppose your advocacy for different reasons and to different degrees.
Outcomes:	These are the immediate and observable changes in relation to your advocacy objectives, brought about as a direct result of your activities. For instance, a draft policy on dialogue with civil society formulated or additional funding for CSOs committed.
Outputs:	These are the direct results of your contribution, the tangible products delivered on completion of your activities, e.g. materials developed, meetings occurred etc.

Policy:	A policy is a plan, course of action, or set of regulations adopted by government, business or an institution, designed to influence and determine decisions or procedures.
Policy analysis:	Policy analysis examines plans and regulations set by governments, business or other institutions, including CSOs, and how policies (or lack of policies or implementation) affect specific groups of the population
Political context:	This includes aspects such as the distribution of power, the range of organisations involved and their interests, and the formal and informal rules that govern the interactions among different players. Political context shapes the ways in which policy processes work.
Process indicators:	Indicate what progress has been made in implementing your activities and measure outputs generated as part of your advocacy work. For instance, number of meetings held, attendance levels, circulation figures for key reports etc.
Stakeholders:	All those who can affect or who will be affected by the change you are seeking.
Targets:	Individual decision-makers with the power to respond to your advocacy demands and to move the political process towards addressing your issue.

ANNEX 2 ADVOCACY PLAN EXAMPLE

PART 1 – OVERVIEW

1. Advocacy Group

Lead:

Core Team: people working closely on the planning/delivery of the strategy

Satellites: people who act as reference points/have occasional involvement

2. Vision of Change

What is overall goal you want to achieve as a result of your advocacy for a greater enabling environment in your context?

3. Change Objectives

What are the specific concrete and measurable changes that you want to bring about and that will in turn contribute to achieve your goal?

4. CONTEXT – Enabling environment and political analysis

This should help contextualise your advocacy strategy. It should draw on your situation and political analyses outlining the main problem (or issues) and briefly outline what solution you envisage.

5. Targets

Identify the main decision-makers that your advocacy will target at the national, sub-national or local level.

6. Entry points and opportunities

Following on from the previous section and drawing on your power and political analyses, here you should make reference to key entry points and opportunities for profiling your key messages and influencing direct policy change (key stages in relevant policy making processes, upcoming national or international meetings and conferences, key anniversaries etc., the decision makers to be targeted and how you will reach them (tactics).

ENTRY POINT/OPPORTUNITY	WHEN? This could refer to a specific date e.g. for an event like a conference or a timeframe for policy formulation for instance	KEY TARGET(S)	TACTICS FOR INFLUENCING

7. Key Messages

Briefly outline your core message first. Then use the matrix to outline the key messages for your key audiences (e.g. target politicians, technical experts, allies and partners, the general public). You should also consider the format and channel best suited to that audience.

AUDIENCE	KEY MESSAGES Please express each of these messages in four key parts to make up a messaging framework: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• What's the issue?• Why it's important?• What's the call to action?• What are you going to do?	SOURCE (most trusted by audience e.g. specific media outlets or a technical body on nutrition)	FORMAT (most likely to reach your audience e.g. report, policy brief, one-to-one communication, expert briefing, TV documentary)

8. Risk analysis

List the major risks (challenges or obstacles) to the success of the advocacy strategy (e.g. dangers, obstacles – both internal and external etc), decide what the likelihood of each negative situation taking place is and steps that you might take to mitigate each risk.

RISK	IMPACT (High/Medium/Low)	LIKELIHOOD (High/Medium/Low)	RISK MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

PART 2 – SUPPORTING INFORMATION

This part of the strategy provides additional, yet essential, information in order to contextualise your advocacy initiative. When completing these tables, care should be taken to limit the content to the only the most significant targets or opportunities/approaches that will deliver change.

1. Target Analysis

Using the table below, for each of your key targets identify 1-3 influentials, chart their attitude to your issue, their level of influence, how important the issue is to them and briefly outline what change you want to see in their knowledge, behaviour and the action you want them to take.

DECISION-MAKERS & INFLUENTIALS	ATTITUDE TOWARDS THE ISSUE (To what extent are they supportive, opposed, cautious?)	POWER TO MAKE CHANGE HAPPEN (STRONG/MEDIUM/WEAK)	IMPORTANCE OF THE ISSUE TO THEM (HIGH/MEDIUM/LOW)	WHAT CHANGES DO WE WANT TO SEE IN THEIR BEHAVIOUR AND THE ACTIONS THEY TAKE? This should be categorised as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • changes we expect to see • changes we would like to see • changes we would love to see
Target X				
Influentials:				

2. Allies and Partners

It is useful to map out what evidence/research you will need to build a robust case that will influence your targets for each of your objectives. It is important to link this directly to each of your change objectives in order to identify what evidence/research will be essential to support your advocacy. Identify evidence that is already available and evidence that will need to be gathered as part of the strategy (i.e. gaps in knowledge/evidence) and the timeframe by which this new evidence would be required.

Identify the top 3-5 individuals, CSOs or coalitions that aim to ally/partner with you in your advocacy work	LEVEL OF INFLUENCE (HIGH/MEDIUM/LOW)	POSITION ON ISSUE Clarify the ally/partner position in relation to the advocacy issue – is it same as ours/where different?	TACTICS FOR COLLABORATION (Identify ways in which we could successfully collaborate with each ally/partner)
1.			
2.			
3.			
Etc.			

3. Evidence base

It is useful to map out what evidence/research you will need to build a robust case that will influence your targets for each of your objectives. It is important to link this directly to each of your change objectives in order to identify what evidence/research will be essential to support your advocacy. Identify evidence that is already available and evidence that will need to be gathered as part of the strategy (i.e. gaps in knowledge/evidence) and the timeframe by which this new evidence would be required.

	OBJECTIVE	AVAILABLE EVIDENCE	FURTHER EVIDENCE REQUIRED
1.			
2.			
3.			
Etc.			

4. Monitoring & Evaluation Framework

OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES	INDICATORS OF PROCESS Include SMART indicators you will use to monitor your progress – these should directly reflect the milestones and activities you have identified in the advocacy plan (e.g. X successful in facilitating establishment of task force/ coalition established to work on issue X / Joint workshop with target successful in raising concerns about issue X / articles in the media / inputted to parliamentary/government reports on X and other related issues).	INDICATORS OF IMPACT Evidence the there has been positive change (in policy and practice) towards achieving the objectives (e.g. policy X reviewed as a result of our advocacy work / Government resources allocated to CSOs increased by X%).
Objective x		
Activities.		
Objective xx		
Activities		

ANNEX 3 EXAMPLES OF ADVOCACY INDICATORS

Framework for understanding possible outcomes and impact of advocacy and campaigning work³⁹

DIMENSION OF WORK	INDICATORS OF PROGRESS - GOOD AND BAD	INDICATORS OF CHANGE AND LONGER TERM IMPACT
<p>Policy change e.g. Legislative change</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Change in law • Change in corporate behaviour 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased dialogue on an issue • Raised profile of issue • Changed opinion (whose?) • Changed rhetoric (in public/private) • Change in written publications • Changes in key personnel • Offers of funding by corporations • Undermining activities from target or allies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changed policy • Change in legislation • Policy/legislation change implemented • High quality personnel in charge of implementing policy • (and in the very long term) positive change in people's lives as a result of the policy/legislation change
<p>Developing Capacity for Advocacy By working with...</p> <p>NGOs Movements/networks Trades Unions Community Based Organisation Popular Organisations Partner organisations Local journalists Academic organisations Human Rights Lawyers And so on.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Change in individual members' skills, capacity, knowledge and effectiveness? • Change in individual civil groups' capacity, organisational skills, effectiveness? • Greater synergy of aims/activities in networks/movements, or alliances/networks break down • Change in collaboration, trust or unity of civil society groups • Greater freedom of expression • Greater acceptance/recognition of civil groups • Existence of fora for civil groups to input into a wider range of decisions • Increased legitimacy of civil society groups • Increased number of civil society groups • People's monitoring committees on service delivery • Stakeholder consultation groups by companies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased effectiveness of civil society work • Civil groups active in influencing decision-makers in ways that will benefit poor people. • More responsive policy-making structures set up. • Increased participation of civil society groups in influencing decisions • Change in accountability and transparency of public institutions • Change in accountability of civil society groups • Companies respond to stakeholder consultation groups.
<p>Supporting people to advocate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • e.g. citizens' groups to advocate for themselves. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greater awareness of individual rights and the power systems that withhold rights. • Change in citizens' skills, capacity and knowledge to mobilise and advocate on their own behalves. • Recognition of rights by decision-makers. • Willingness to listen to children's' views. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved access to basic rights such as health, housing, water, and food. • Action on the ground reflects real needs of people.

Possible advocacy indicators

As shown above, indicators need to be linked to specific activities and change objectives. They are needed to show progress on the way, for intermediate changes and final expected change at the targeted institution. The following indicators are given as examples:

WHAT TO MONITOR	POSSIBLE INDICATORS
Your relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changes in the frequency and content of conversations with external sources and target audiences. Are you discussing new ideas? Are you becoming a confidante or a source of information or advice? • Face to face. Wide range of characteristics of meetings in particular contexts signal significant achievements or changes. Generalisations are difficult and possibly inappropriate. Certain events signify the establishment of trust between parties, but not necessarily movement of relationship towards advocacy objectives.
The media (TV, radio, newspapers, internet)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quantitative, volume and range of publicity • Qualitative: analysis of contents and media response <p>For example: Column inches on your issue and the balance of pro and anti comment. The number of mentions for your organisation. Analyse whether media is adopting your language.</p>
Your reputation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Record the sources and numbers of inquiries that you receive as a result of your work. Are you getting to the people you wanted to get to? How and where have they heard of your work? How accurate are their pre-conceptions about you and your work? • Perceived legitimacy of the NGO as advocate can be an indicator.
Public opinion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analyse the popular climate through telephone polling, or through commissioning surveys. (can be very expensive)
The target institution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changes in knowledge and attitudes of immediate recipients of the advocacy communications. What types of changes would they expect if advocacy messages were having an effect? • Indicators showing changes in areas, which have been identified as strategically key from past campaigns. <p>E.g. Looking at impact on international finance institutions: Paul Nelson research: Record of advocacy proposals suggest four key strategic factors in motivating significant policy change:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Support from senior management, or midlevel management</i> <i>Initiative by major shareholders</i> <i>Active internal leadership</i> <i>External pressure</i>
The stages of policy change and implementation.	<p>These stages can be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changes in rhetoric : Record and observe changes in the rhetoric of your target audience. Keep a file of their statements over time. What are they saying about you and your campaign? Are they moving closer to your position, adapting to or adopting any of your language or philosophy? (but beware co-option) • Changes in policy or legislative outputs. It is possible to differentiate between generic types of policy change and their relative importance, for example, through looking at the authorities involved, and the explicit and public nature of policy statements. • Budgets are important policy statement, signalling a real commitment to specific priorities. Can monitor budget allocations and expenditure. • Changes in behaviour: policy implementation: To what extent has new legislation or policy been translated into administrative procedures or institutional practice (This is often not monitored very well, but is crucially important.) • Where policy change is local it may be possible for local groups to monitor its implementation • Include within the policy change the commitment to report on progress • Seek agreement for allow independent monitoring, often in addition to internal monitoring. • Who bears costs for monitoring? Implementers bearing costs may signal greater commitment

ANNEX 4
TEMPLATE FOR RECORDING MEETINGS

This is a simple “Word” based format. It ensures that each meeting has a clear objective, and is analysed immediately in terms of how effective it was and what should be done to follow it up. All meetings related to the advocacy work can be written up according to this format. They can then be compiled by a coordinator, and used as a basis for deciding what follow up needs to be done. The meeting notes can be used as a record of contact with different targets and influentials, and can be used to track any changes in attitude over time.

PROJECT NAME	
MEETING TITLE	
MEETING PLACE DATE AND TIME	
WHO ATTENDS	
OBJECTIVES OF MEETING	
WHAT HAPPENED IN RELATION TO THE OBJECTIVES	
WHAT HAPPENED IN TERMS OF TARGETS' ATTITUDES, MOTIVATION, INFLUENCE	
COMMENTS	
FOLLOW UP ACTION	
WHAT:	
WHEN:	
WHO:	

ANNEX 5 OUTCOMES JOURNAL

This is a simple 'target centred' method for tracking progress on achieving your objectives over time. The outcomes journal focuses specifically on monitoring changes in the behaviour of the key decision-makers you are targeting. Progress should relate to the changes in behaviour that you have identified and categorised for the stakeholder analysis and in completing the Advocacy Plan. The journal can be completed at regular intervals or used to note particular developments concerning individual targets as they unfold. A separate journal can be established for individual key targets. The Journal template can be used by you and your colleagues and should be periodically discussed in group meetings to aggregate shared perceptions of change in your targets.

Outcome Journal for:	Which decision-makers does this refer to?
Progress from/to:	Timeframe of recorded change
Contributors to monitoring update:	i.e. who recorded the outcomes journal
Progress on changes we EXPECT to see in target (Low/Medium/High)	
1.	
2.	
3.	
Progress on changes we would LIKE to see in target (Low/Medium/High)	
1.	
2.	
3.	
Progress on changes we would LOVE to see in target (Low/Medium/High)	
1.	
2.	
3.	
Description of change:	
Contributing factors and actors:	
Sources of evidence:	
Unanticipated change:	
Lessons / Required changes to approach & tactics/ Reactions:	

ANNEX 6 RESOURCES

"Participatory Learning and Action: A trainer's guide" Jules N Pretty, Irene Guijt, John Thompson, Ian Scoones, International Institute for Environment and Development, 1995

"Advocacy for Social Justice: A Global Action and Reflection Guide" David Cohen, Rosa de la Vega, Gabrielle Watson, Oxfam/Advocacy Institute, 2001

"Critical Webs of Power and Change: Resource Pack for planning, reflection and learning in people-centred advocacy" Jennifer Chapman, Almir Pereira Jr., Sarah Okwaare, Laya Prasad Uprety, Vincent Azumah, Valerie Miller, 2005

"A New Weave of Power, People and Politics: The action guide for advocacy and citizen participation" Lisa VeneKlasen with Valerie Miller, World Neighbours, 2002

"Advocacy Matters: Helping children change their world – An International Save the Children Alliance guide to advocacy", Louisa Gosling and David Cohen, 2007

"Advocacy Toolkit: A collection of tools to help plan, implement, monitor and evaluate advocacy" Costanza de Toma and Louisa Gosling, Save the Children UK (unpublished), 2005

"Outcome Mapping: Building learning and reflection into development programmes" Sarah Earl, Fred Carden and Terry Smutylo, International Development Research Centre, 2001

"Advocacy Tools and Guidelines: Promoting policy change" Sofia Sprechmann and Emily Pelton, Care International, 2001

"Tax Justice Advocacy: A toolkit for civil society" Sally Golding, Matti Kohonen, Katrin McGauran, David McNair and Sophie Powell, Christian Aid, 2011

"Making Change Happen: Power – Concepts for revisioning power for justice, equality and peace" Just Associates (US), 2006

"Power Pack: Understanding Power for Social Change" Institute of Development Studies (UK), 2011

"Mapping Political Context: A toolkit for civil society organisations" Robert Nash, Alan Hudson and Cecilia Luttrell, Overseas Development Institute (UK), 2006

"Strengthening World Vision Policy Advocacy: A guide to developing advocacy strategies" Ajoy Datta, Overseas Development Institute (UK), 2011

"Political-Process Monitoring: Activist tools and techniques" Kourtney Pompei and Lacey Kohlmoos, National Democratic Institute, 2010

"Critical Stories of Change – United Behind the Right to Health: The story of the Action for Global Health Network Europe" ActionAid, 2011

"Incidencia Política para la gobernabilidad democrática local" Eduardo Cáceres Valdivia y Julio Ernesto Díaz Palacios, 2009

"Manual de Incidencia Política" Jorge Rodríguez Sosa, 2003

"Manual Para La Facilitación De Procesos de Incidencia Política" Andrés McKinley y Patrick Baltazar, 2005

"Campañas para la Movilización Social" Ingeniería sin Fronteras Asociación para el Desarrollo, 2010

"Incidencia Política, Comunicación y Formación de Coaliciones Ciudadanas" Karen Sirker, (date unknown)

"Early Warning System Project - Full Implementation Phase - Information Paper and Toolkit", CIVICUS and ICNL, 2010

"Global Call to Action Against Poverty (GCAP) Strategic Plan 2011-2014" <http://www.whiteband.org>

"Pathways for Change – 6 Theories about how policy change happens" Sarah Stachoviak, Organizational Research Services

"Compendium of International Legal Instruments and other Inter-Governmental Commitments Concerning Core Civil Society Rights" Compiled by Roberto Wohlgemuth J, Edited by Mandeep Tiwana and Michael Rubin - Civil Society Watch Programme, CIVICUS, 2010



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