

This section will cover:

How to complete the first phase of the planning cycle:

- Understanding the problem you are trying to solve
- Identifying an alternative aim
- Breaking down the objectives or stepping stones towards achieving your aim
- Defining targets and allies

4



The first phase of the advocacy planning cycle described in section three is covered in this section (**planning**). The second phase is covered in section five (**your role in making change happen**).

Throughout the planning advocacy sections we use a fictitious example (in red) to help illustrate the points.

1. THE ISSUE – WHAT IS WRONG?

For organisations which work on a single issue, this first question may not seem relevant. However, given we all have limited resources, you may not have the capacity to run a successful advocacy campaign on all the aspects of work you are trying to do. For example, if you work on an issue such as violence against women, you may still want to work out which aspect your campaign will focus on, such as a particular form of violence or a specific gap in support services or legal rights.

Criteria

Many organisations use different criteria to select what to work on. Here are five core criteria to guide you:

- **Important:** How important is this problem to the people that you are working with and have they themselves identified it as a priority? You may also want to ensure that it meets women's strategic as well as practical interests (see **section two, 2.2**).
- **Achievable:** Is there a feasible solution and one which people that you could influence have control over? Is there a process where key decisions could be made? Is the time right? (Note: this doesn't mean you should only campaign on easy issues – the solution may be a long term prospect but ultimately it needs to be possible).
- **Sellable:** How communicable an issue is this? Are influential people interested in it? Do you have good evidence and stories to back up your argument? Will people be motivated by it?
- **Added value:** Is your organisation well placed to take on this issue? If lots of people are already working on the issue, would you have anything to add? Or if nobody is working on it, would you have impact working alone? Do you have expertise and a good reputation in this field already?
- **Organisational fit:** Does it fit with your organisational objectives, vision and mission? (You may, for example, want to work on an issue which will raise your profile, allow you to raise funds, or empower the people you work with). Can you handle any risk involved?

TOOL Criteria Matrix for choosing Aims or Objectives



You can use a table to guide you through this criteria

- 1** Draw a matrix with your criteria down the left hand side. Think through the ones we suggested on the previous page and make sure they are right for you. Getting agreement on these is crucial
- 2** Then give one column to each of the possible aims (or objectives) you are considering
- 3** Rate each issue 1-5 depending on how well it meets your criterion. If some criterion are more important than others you could weight them by giving double points
- 4** In theory you now add up the totals for each column to find the winner. In practice it is the discussion which takes place in filling out the matrix which will provide you with the answer. Ideally you want consensus to emerge

This is illustrated in the table below

	Aim 1	Aim 2	Aim 3	Aim 4
Criteria A	4	2	3	3
Criteria B	2	3	4	2
Criteria C	3	3	5	3
Criteria D	3	1	4	3
Total	12	9	16	11

Some organisations also want to ensure that their advocacy work has a broader impact on civil society participation. This may be particularly true if working on women's rights. This criterion would include:

- the impact on people's sense of and access to power;
- the development of new leaders and lasting alliances, and
- the possibility of a greater acceptance of rights and even a change in power relations.

Naming the problem

It will help later on if you can identify the actual problem that you want to tackle, not just a theme or subject area.

In our campaign example, the problem could be:

Violence => Half of all the women in our country have been raped yet there is little deterrent as few men are ever prosecuted.

Other examples of problems could be:

Girls' education => Many girls in this district are not finishing school.

Water and sanitation => Women in this urban area spend up to two hours a day fetching water.

Consider *who* is most affected by this problem. Is the problem worse in rural communities rather than in urban areas? Are some people particularly disadvantaged, for example, disabled women/girls or women from a particular ethnic background or caste? This will be important when we start to think about strategy.

Are you sure this really is a problem? Consult your partners and the people you work with to find out their views. Is this a donor-led ambition or a problem identified by the women you are advocating on behalf of? Spending time to conduct research is particularly important at this stage (see **section six, 2.3**).



TIP Many organisations will complete the first phase of the planning process on a number of issues before deciding which one to work on. If you have time and capacity this can be a good idea. You won't really know whether an issue meets your criteria until you have done quite a lot of thinking and research.

Once you have identified your issue and problem you are then ready to define the aim of your campaign.

2. THE AIM OR GOAL – WHAT IS THE ALTERNATIVE?

It is surprising how many organisations start a campaign without really knowing what they are campaigning for. You must have a goal that you are working towards not just a broad subject.

Once you have identified the problem you are tackling you can flip it into a positive aim. This aim can be quite general and you can then become more specific when you come to the objectives stage (explained below).

In our campaign example, the aim could be:

=> Women and girls in our country live free from fear of violence while rapists fear being convicted.

Other examples could be:

=> All girls in our region finish primary school.

=> Clean water is available to all dwellings in our local district.

Make sure your aim really describes what you want to achieve. Is it that you want all girls to finish primary school or that you want all girls to be able to read and write?

TIP Base your aim on your organisation's vision for society. This will make it more inspiring and you are more likely to be fully committed to it.



Challenging gender roles

You should also be careful that your aim does not reinforce gender stereotypes. For example, the aim: 'It should be easier for women to collect water' suggests that water collection is a woman's job. In contrast, 'Clean water should be available in all dwellings' doesn't reinforce this assumption. Similarly, instead of saying that women should be supported in caring for relatives with HIV, your aim might be to ensure that people with HIV get sufficient state provided care; that support is given to women and men caring for relatives with HIV; and that men's involvement in the provision of home based care is increased.

When you talk about your campaign you can now say:

"We aim to ensure that all girls finish primary school"

Not:

"Our campaign is about girls' education"

STRATEGIC CHOICE Choosing your aim can be difficult as there are many things which may seem crucial to work on. However, it is important to pick only one aim so that you can really target your resources and achieve your potential.



The next step is to fully understand the problem you are tackling, so that you can develop the objectives which will get you to your aim.

3. WHAT IS YOUR ANALYSIS OF THE PROBLEM?

This is the most substantial part of the planning process. Here are three areas we suggest you cover in your analysis:

- Root causes of the problem
- Solutions to the problem
- The external context including:
 - Current policy thinking
 - The policy environment
 - Policy making processes

There are lots of different methods you could use. We have suggested tools to assist you with each area. In this section it is important that you refer to **section two** on understanding power.

3.1 GETTING THE ANALYSIS RIGHT

● **Get your facts right**

You have to get your research right – if you slip up your reputation will be damaged and this will affect everything else you say. Make sure you can get the evidence you need if you do not already have it. A common mistake is to go too far down the planning process based only on assumptions, only to find you don't have a strong enough case. Tools such as a problem tree can add to this danger as they can lead to the complexities of a problem being overlooked. You are going to have to prove your case later on so make sure it stands up now. See **section five, 2.3** for ideas on how to make your research effective.

● **Don't waste your time**

If you don't have many resources don't feel you have to spend weeks on analysis. If it's an issue you've been working on for a long time you probably know most of the answers already. These tools are ways to check that your assumptions are the right ones and highlight any areas that do need a bit more research. Analysis is crucial – but that doesn't mean it has to take forever.

● **Create ownership**

The discussion involved in this analysis can be an important way of ensuring that everyone in the organisation sees things in the same way. If not, then you may have problems further down the line. For organisations working with local partners, it may be important at this stage to seek their input to ensure that your analysis is consistent with realities on the ground. This is not about getting a consultant to write a report no one reads. It is important that your organisation takes the time to own and understand the thinking.

● **Consider power and political will**

In scoping the external context you need to think about power. Someone will be benefiting from the status quo and you need to understand who will benefit and who will lose as a result of the changes you want to see. The problem may be lack of technical solutions but more often it is the absence of political will and the existence of vested interests in keeping things the way they are. All advocacy is contested; otherwise the change would simply happen. Part of planning is working out why the change isn't happening so that you can move forward. Remember you may

need to look at household power too, particularly if you want to change gender relations (see **section two, 1.2** on understanding power).

● Remember why you are doing this

This analysis will inform your choice of objectives, and later your strategy and messages. Focus on the things you might have influence over in the next three years.

3.2 ROOT CAUSES OF THE PROBLEM

The first step is to define the root causes. The issue may be that girls are not staying in primary school but that does not explain why this is actually happening.

TOOL The Problem Tree



The problem tree is a way of identifying root causes.¹⁰

- 1) Draw a tree with many roots and branches, and write your problem as the trunk.
- 2) Brainstorm why the problem is happening and write the answers on the roots. You could use post-it notes to do this so you can make changes as you go along.
- 3) Then think deeper. For each of these roots ask 'why' or 'what causes that'.
- 4) If you find that you don't know the answer flag it up as an area for more research.

Start filling in some branches too. If you solved the problem on the trunk what would happen? This helps you make sure that the trunk problem really is the right one. Make the roots thicker the more important they are. The debate that you have in deciding which roots should be the thickest is important. So too is digging deeper to find the next levels of root causes.

3.3 POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

Once you've done the problem tree you will probably come up with a number of thick roots. These are the ones you should analyse further. They are the main reasons why your problem is occurring, and so will provide the answer to achieving change.

For each of your root causes – do some thinking and research into two areas:

- What is the technical or practical solution to this problem?
- What is the political solution to the problem?

Law makes it easier for perpetrators to be tried; Funding is increased for rape crisis centres; Women report rape to the police; Rape cases progress to court; Perpetrators are convicted; Public awareness that rape is a crime.

Women and girls in our country live in fear of violence whilst rapists are rarely ever prosecuted.

Legal provision is insufficient

Domestic violence treated as a private matter; current law puts onus on woman to prove lack of consent

Survivors of GBV don't report the crime

Community leaders don't support women; women blaming themselves; few prosecutions; long distance to courts

Nowhere for survivors of GBV to go for help

Rape crisis centres underfunded; social services making cuts



TOOL The Why Technique¹¹.

Anyone with a small child knows this one well. Every time you find an answer ask yourself 'Why?' Use this in all aspects of your planning. You may drive your colleagues wild but you'll get a better result.

The immediate problem

Children are not going to school

Ask why?

They keep falling ill

Ask why?

They drink bad water

Ask why?

The well is too far from the school

Ask why?

The local government said it would dig a new well last year but it hasn't

Ask why?

Central government has not released the funds they promised

Ask why?

The bilateral donors haven't released the pledged aid funds

3.4 EXTERNAL CONTEXT

Your tree is located in a forest, facing climate change and de-forestation. Your analysis can't take place in isolation of the world around you.

i) Mapping the external environment

There is a great deal of information you could use in mapping the external context. The problem can be having too much rather than too little. PESTLE analysis is a way of ordering your thoughts. It is a tool to consider the external factors which may affect your campaign.

TOOL The PESTLE Analysis¹²

PESTLE stands for: Political; Economic; Sociological; Technological; Legal; Environmental.



Political The relevant political factors and trends in the country (including the government, legislature, judiciary and other government bodies, as well as other political movements and pressure groups)



Economic The economic factors and trends in the country (including where your governments gets its money, who are the main private sector employers, income distribution and levels of poverty)



Sociological The relevant sociological factors and trends in the country (including demographic information, education and health statistics, employment rates, land ownership, media). Consider including factors contributing to disadvantage and the overall situation in the country for disadvantaged people



Technological The technological factors and trends in the country (including information technology, infrastructure, access to telecommunications and broadcast media, etc.)



Legal The legal factors and constraints that are relevant to your advocacy work



Environmental Any relevant environmental trends in the country (including deforestation, pollution, drought/flooding, agriculture, etc.)

Steps:

- 1) List the external factors which could affect your campaign in the above categories.
- 2) Identify which of these may be most significant to your work – either as opportunities or threats. Think about how they affect women and men differently.
- 3) Between you, agree on the five key trends that you consider most important for your issue.
- 4) Do any more research needed on these five so that you can input them later into the strategy stage.

ii) Current policy

You need to be familiar with current policy to determine what change is needed. For example, the change you require may actually be law already with the problem being one of implementation.

Example

In the UK, years of campaigning led to the Equal Pay Act under which women have to be paid the same as men for equivalent work. But, in reality, the pay gap is still large. This requires our campaigning to push for it to be easier for women to take their employers to court, and to show that part time work is usually paid less and that it is women who make up the majority of part time workers (see case study at the end of this section).

It is also important to know who is making the decisions. Don't waste your resources by aiming your campaign at the wrong target.

It may be helpful to ask yourself which of the following are you trying to achieve (it may be a combination):

- Implementation of existing policy or law
- More resources
- Higher priority given to the issue
- New policy or laws
- Reform of existing policy or laws
- Change in understanding of the problem
- Shift in cultural norms

Make sure this is reflected in your objectives when you come to formulating them.

iii) Mapping the policy environment

Policy is rarely just made of facts; it's usually based on ideas, theories and assumptions. To achieve change you may have to challenge or adapt those ideas or assumptions. Part of your mapping should look at what the reasons and justifications are for resistance to change.

Example It was widely accepted that third world debt could not be cancelled or the economic system would collapse and nobody would lend to those countries which had defaulted. Once this assumption was challenged it was harder for donor governments to argue against cancellation.

You need to work out exactly what you are up against so that you can identify the best objectives in order to meet your aim. This is particularly true when doing gender advocacy, as long held cultural values which are presented as 'fact' may shape policy decisions, such as the assumption that women can only do certain kinds of work.

In the past, some campaigns have wasted resources demonstrating that there is a problem when in fact decision makers agreed there was a problem. The real issue may be that decision makers don't think that a viable solution exists or don't think it is their role to do anything about it.

TOOL Mapping decision makers' opinions



On a flip chart, write down the key opinions that the main decision makers have about your issue. Different decision makers may have different positions. Their responses can usually be put into the following six categories:

- **Not a problem** – There is no problem
- **Inappropriate** – It's not appropriate for us to act on it – someone else (e.g. national government or donor) should act, or it is a 'family or personal' matter
- **Unsolvable** – Nothing can be done about it – any solutions proposed will not work
- **Low priority** – There are too many other important issues and we do not have enough resources to address this one
- **Against self-interests** – I would not gain anything from acting on this – it might even damage my interests or lose me support
- **Agreement** – Yes I agree with you

In our campaign example, decision maker's responses on violence against women and girls might include:

- Violence against women isn't really a problem in our country

compared to many others.

- It is really a family matter – not one that legislators (or donors) should get involved with – its culturally sensitive.
- It is awful but it is such a difficult issue to solve — you can't stop men doing it.
- HIV is a much bigger issue for us so that is what we are going to focus on.
- Working on violence isn't a vote winning issue and may lose me support from my traditional voters.
- Yes, I agree with you – now what shall we do?

Once you know what you are up against then you will be in a much better position to argue back once you start working on your messages (see **section five, 4** on messages). It may help to consider:

- How polarised is the debate?
- How flexible are people in their opinions?
- Where is our position on the current spectrum?
- Are there influential actors who can move the centre of the debate towards our position?
- Can we re-frame the debate to move away from deadlock?



TIP Internationally agreed principles can be very helpful in re-framing your aims and objectives in a way in which decision makers find acceptable – (see **section eight** on international processes)



WOMEN'S RIGHTS The mapping of ideas is particularly important when working on women's rights. One dilemma we often face is whether to use the instrumentalist approach to justify our demands (see **section five, 4.4**).

iv) Mapping the decision making process and opportunities

Here you will need to map the relevant decision making processes - both formal and informal – and identify the points where you can and should intervene. In addition to the normal political process there may be one off opportunities such as a big conference or event.

External opportunities might include:

- Reviews of a particular law, of the constitution, or of international agreements
- Elections
- Ongoing monitoring of current policy and implementation
- Budget reviews
- Parliamentary reviews
- New political actors on the scene

When identifying the opportunities make sure you are clear about the timeframe, what is actually open for discussion, and who will make the decision.

TIP Conferences can be very useful as they provide a focal point and often receive media attention. However, check it really is a decision making forum and not a jamboree. Most important is to make sure you get to the process early enough – most policy decisions and negotiations will actually have been fully concluded before the main event starts.



Example INGOs have been attending the G8 Summits of the most powerful industrialised countries for nearly twenty years. However, very few decisions are actually taken at these meetings. At least six months earlier a group of civil servants will start to meet to discuss the policy content of the Summit declaration. These are known as ‘sherpas’. The Finance and Foreign Ministers will also meet ahead of the main summit.

TOOL Mapping the steps to your aim

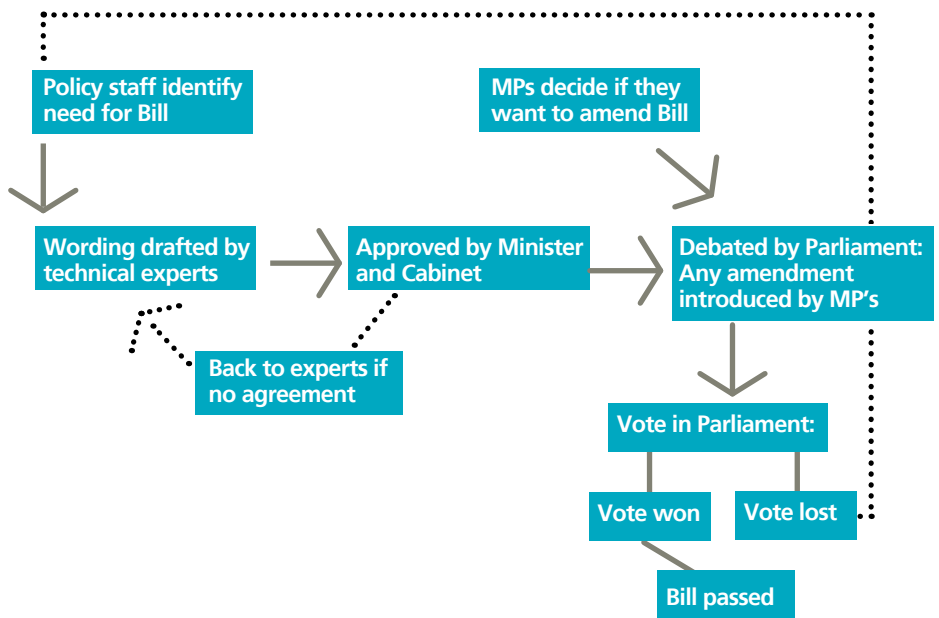
Put a line of paper along one wall with where you want to be (your aim) on the left and where you are currently on the right. Then work backwards – writing down the steps you will need to get to your aim. Think of different options for each step – what will you do if X or Y happens? You can’t always predict what will happen and you may need to be able to change strategy fast. Thinking about it in advance will help you to react quickly! Be prepared to change direction if you are not getting anywhere. See **sections seven and eight** on national and international processes for help.



TOOL Mapping Political Processes

You may find it useful to map out the political process you are trying to influence. The diagram on the next page is an example of this. It is a simplified version of the passage of most Bills. All the actors in the political process could be influenced by lobbying (although each with a different kind of lobbying). However, influencing them before their stage in the Bill has passed is crucial.





Example

When Evo Morales, Bolivia's first indigenous President, swept to power in January 2006, his priority was a new Constitution. A broad alliance of women's organisations seized this opportunity to ensure that their concerns were reflected. They consulted with 30,000 women across the country before drawing up proposals for the Constituent Assembly, the body responsible for overseeing and drafting the Constitution. Crucially, the alliance acted early enough to ensure their proposals were considered in the early stages of the drafting process. They were successful and the new Constitution enshrined the principles of equal opportunities, non-discrimination, equity and affirmative action and, in addition, women's specific rights to a life free from violence; education; health; political participation without discrimination; recognition of the value of housework; sexual and reproductive rights; safe motherhood; land and labour rights; and equal rights and duties in domestic responsibilities.



TIP Opportunities are often confused with unforeseen events. Most opportunities can be planned for. Things rarely happen without any advance warning. A truly unforeseen event is more likely to occur when a decision goes an unexpected way – or an ally is surprisingly appointed to a key position.

REALITY CHECK Taking stock of our environment



At what level do changes need to occur?

- Personal, household, local, regional, national or international - Where does power lie? (see **section two** on power)
- What are the power relationships between women and men, and how are they reinforced?

What is the current policy in this area?

- If the formal policy is already in place the problem may actually be one of implementation, not policy change.

What is the policy environment?

- How do decision makers view your issue?
- Is your issue discussed, opposed or ignored?
- Are there areas of consensus or international targets that you can work within such as the MDGs?

What are the formal and informal political decision making processes relevant to your issue?

- Where are the key decision making points? How does informal decision making work?
- Are there any key opportunities coming up such as budget decisions?
- Is everything about to change – for example an election looming?

Who are the key actors?

- We will look more at this under targets and allies later in this section.

Pegs

Pegs are different from the political processes you are targeting. They are events that you can use to get your message across to your target audience; they are not events or processes that you need to influence in themselves. This distinction is important as it defines how you use a peg and how many resources to dedicate to it.

WOMEN'S RIGHTS International Women's Day on March 8th is one peg often used by women's organisations. It is marked across the world so it is an excellent way of building solidarity with others who share your objectives. Some decision makers also like to mark the event so you may be able to provide them with a platform and influence what they have to say. Be careful though, especially if you want media coverage – the day can get very crowded with lots of different events. It could be a key time to work in alliance with others.



REALITY CHECK Should we go ahead?

Good planning requires constant questioning. This is a good stage to pause and make sure you want to go ahead with the campaign:

- Is our aim viable?
- Does someone have the ability to make the changes needed?



- Are we realistically able to influence them to act?
- Do we have a comparative advantage on this issue? Does it play to our strengths?
- Are we going to be able to get the case study material and evidence that we need?
- Are we likely to have the resources to make this happen?

It can be useful to ensure that you have at least one sufficiently senior person to take on this role of performing a reality check (sometimes it's the role of the Board but they may not be involved regularly enough). Make sure others appreciate this role and that such questions are not seen as a nuisance.

4. OBJECTIVES – WHAT MUST CHANGE TO MAKE THINGS BETTER?

Assuming your aim cannot be easily reached you will need to identify the stepping stones or concrete changes which need to be reached in order to achieve the goal.



TIP It is vital to get these right. Get them wrong and you could waste several years trying to achieve something which will not actually bring about the results you want. Think carefully about whether the objectives you are considering are the best way to get to your overall aim.

In some cases, where your aim is a modest one, your aim and objective might be the same. For example, if your aim is to ensure your local council maintains funding for the rape crisis centre you may not need to break your campaign down into stepping stones.

Contents of an objective

An objective should ideally include:

- ✓ What action is needed
- ✓ Who will take the action
- ✓ When they will take
- ✓ Where or how they will do it

Objectives in our example

- During the forthcoming review of the Domestic Violence Act, secure an amendment making it easier for a survivor of violence to bring a case forward.
- In next year's budget round, ensure that there is an increase in funding to rape crisis centres for legal support of \$xx.
- To increase the ability of women who have experienced violence to report a case in, for example, 10 districts.

TOOL Making Objectives SMART



Objectives should be: specific, measureable, achievable, realistic and timed. In the real world, it may not be possible to meet all these criteria (or desirable) but it provides a good discipline to consider your objectives in this way. See it as something to work towards rather than a hard and fast rule.

S

**Specific:
a precise not
general change**

- While your aim is general, your objective more narrowly defines what you want to see happen
- Don't use jargon or words which could be misinterpreted
- It is possible to be specific even if you don't know what the solution is. For example, an objective may be about gathering more information such as campaigning for the regional district to commission research and allocate funding to determine the barriers to women reporting rape.

M

**Measurable:
so you know if
it's been achieved**

- A quantifiable objective makes monitoring easier – but we know that not everything that can be counted counts, especially in the case of gender when we are often trying to measure changes in attitudes or experiences. If you need to use a qualitative measure then do. Quantification of qualitative data can be a useful strategy (for example, tracking the increase in the number of women and men who believe that violence against women is unacceptable).

A

**Achievable:
realistic or at least
possible within
the timeframe**

- One common mistake is to work towards too broad a goal which you know you can't realistically achieve; you therefore carry out any actions which you think might help rather than really focussing on achieving a particular change. This might work – but it won't be the most efficient use of your scarce resources. In particular, don't expect a paradigm shift overnight; few groups give up their power willingly or simply as a result of evidence. But don't only work on the easy bits – they may not bring about the transformation you need. The answer is to keep breaking down the harder jumps into stepping stones.

R

**Relevant:
will contribute to
your aim**

- Your objective must be a stepping stone towards achieving your aim. One mistake CSOs often make is to pick an objective that seems easy to achieve rather than one which will truly make a difference. Identify fundamental changes based on your power analysis, not superficial ones. This might mean focusing on 'strategic' rather than 'practical' gender interests, even though these are more difficult to achieve (see more about this distinction in **section two, 2.2**).

T

**Time bound:
to happen by a
particular date**

- Most campaign planning identifies objectives that might be achieved within 3-5 years.

The problem with using mnemonics is that they sometimes over simplify! In addition to being SMART your objectives should be:

A change not an activity

- Your objectives should be change oriented rather than activity oriented – i.e. not what you are going to do but what you want to see happen.

Useful in its own right

- Ensure that these are valuable achievements in their own right as well as being stepping stones. If you don't achieve your aim you will at least have made a difference along the way, particularly if you have altered power balances or opened political space.

Watertight

- If you achieved your objective would it bring about exactly what you hoped for – for example have you only asked for a policy change without asking that this be funded?

So...

Use - During the next budget round the Minister of Finance will agree to allocate x amount to be spent on increasing sanitation for girls in schools.

Not – The government should do something about girls not going to school because they are menstruating.

Use - The Local district council will provide sufficient sanitation facilities for girls in 100 schools in the district by 2012.

Not- All girls should get a good education in the future.

Example The initial objective of the UK campaign against Third World debt was to force any bank with developing country debt on its book to cancel them. The banks were able to side-step this by selling off their debt to other companies. A more watertight objective was needed which also targeted selling off the debt.



REALITY CHECK On your objective

- Would achieving this objective really contribute to our aim?
- Can someone make the solution happen?
- Are we likely to influence them?
- Why now? Is there a window of opportunity or a shift in power which makes success possible?

TIP Now is the time for positive alternatives. Your audience will be much more inspired by this than by the account of the problem. Show that there is a better way. You could call for “women’s voices to be heard by ensuring that half of all parliamentary candidates are women” rather than saying “Stop men dominating local politics”.



STRATEGIC CHOICE For any one aim, it’s usual to identify about three objectives. If you choose more than this you may find your advocacy work is spread too thinly. The criterion for this choice are similar to those for choosing the aim (and you may find it helpful to use the matrix tool in part 1 of this section again too):



- Importance in achieving our goal
- Achievability
- Sellability of the issue
- Your added value in working on this
- Fit with your organisational goals
- Impact on women’s empowerment

5. TARGETS – WHO HAS THE POWER TO ACHIEVE CHANGE?

Your targets are the people who have the power to make the changes needed to achieve your objectives. They are often known as decision makers. You must correctly identify them. If not, you will waste valuable time trying to influence the wrong people.

Primary targets

A common problem for gender advocacy is that it is often directed at gender focal points or women’s ministries, yet they may well not have the power to make the change you want, and could be better allies than targets.

Your targets will be people not just institutions. Sometimes authority lies with a particular post, but it can also sit with particular individuals. It is important to look for what’s really happening not just who has the power on paper. Think beyond your usual contacts or targets.

As with political processes, your target might be at international, national, local or household level, or a mixture of these. Where your objective relates to formal policy processes, politicians and officials are likely to be the target. If, however, your objective relates to social norms or customary law then informal leaders such as religious figures or community leaders may also be targets. For some organisations, the target is the private sector or commercial companies. In this toolkit we have focused on governments and official institutions.

Consider:

- Where will the key decision be taken?
- Who really has power?
- Be specific – think individuals or departments not whole institutions
- Who will they consult?
- Can anyone stop the change happening?
- Where will the money come from?

In our campaign example the targets might be:

- The Justice Minister
- The Minister for Finance and the team of advisors
- Women who are at risk of violence

Secondary Targets or influencers

Where your primary targets are difficult to persuade or even reach, you may access them by working out who influences them – these are your secondary targets.

Be creative, many politicians have admitted that their families have changed their minds or a religious leader. For senior politicians, find out which advisors they trust. Influencers include:

- People to whom they are accountable
- Advisors
- Local government or councillors
- Media
- Public opinion (think about how this is expressed – voter protest/ media as a proxy etc)
- Personal contacts
- Celebrities
- Academics

In thinking about which influencers to use you may also want to think about whether your methods are contributing to your aim. If you want to build women's empowerment then focusing resources on women's groups may be better than building your relations with celebrities.

Influencers in our example campaign

- Parliamentary sub-committee, lawyers association
- Media and the National Budget Network
- Gender worker for the local district, leaders of women's organisations in the district

Example The Women in Politics Support Unit (WiPSU), one of Womankind's Zimbabwean partners, are working with women MPs as influencers. Through Community Constituency Forums

(CCFs) women activists are given training and then supported to work closely with their local woman MP or councillor. They develop joint action-plans that map out community and policy priorities for the year ahead and meet regularly to check progress and hold their MP or councillor to account. The women MPs and councillors usually cannot make the changes themselves and have in turn to find ways of lobbying further. For example, in Ghutu South constituency, the MP took the CCF's concerns around high unemployment to local training institutions and secured vocational college places for young women. Ghutu South now boasts the highest young women's employment rates in the country. In another example, Glen Norah constituents brought the high cost of sanitary products to the attention of their MP who raised the issue in Parliament. In turn, members then support the re-election efforts of their MP or councillor, thus maximising the numbers of strong women candidates running for office, who they will be able to work with in the future.

TIP The key decision maker is not necessarily the official on paper. Do some informal research to find out who really makes the decisions.



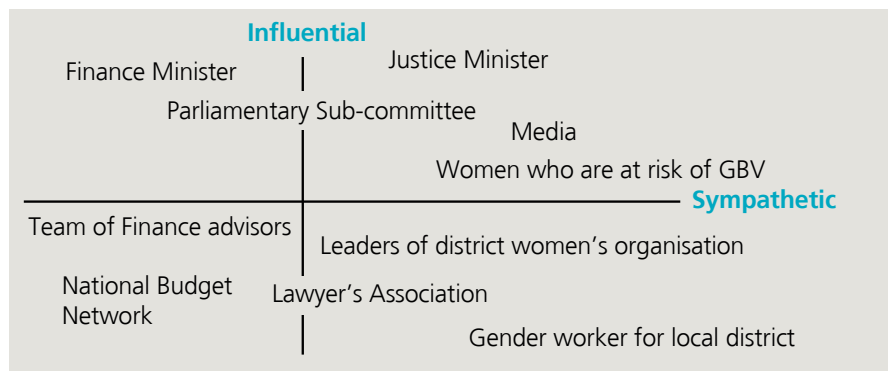
TOOL Target Matrix

The target matrix can be a helpful tool.

- The horizontal access shows how sympathetic the target is to your campaign – most sympathetic on the right.
- The vertical access shows how important the target is in influencing the key decision – most influential at the top.

Then include the influencers in another colour.

The targets in the top right hand corner are the best ones to target (they are the most influential and the most sympathetic). In the bottom left hand corner are the least important to target. Below is an example based on our example campaign:





STRATEGIC CHOICE Don't just do a long list of all the possible targets. Remember that your planning is all about strategic choices so you can use your resources wisely. The two core criteria to use are:

- How much influence does this person have on achieving my objective?
- How much influence could we have over them?

What will make your target act?

Now find out as much as you can about your target. They may have surprising interests:

- Ask others
- Use the internet and other media
- Look at their speeches and publications

Consider:

- How can this target make the changes I want?
- What resources or information would they need?
- When would their opportunity be?
- What motivates the target to act?
- Why would they listen to me?

See if they are concerned about the opinion of others (parliamentarians, voters etc.) or if they have any formal accountability to you or your allies.

At this stage you might also want to think about who delivers the message. It does not have to be you. You may find allies or influencers who the target is more likely to listen to. For example, sometimes senior news commentators are thought by politicians to be authoritative – getting your message spoken by them could be useful.



TIP Creating a sense of ownership of the decision maker in a change process can be a difficult but effective way of making them act. One strategy is to involve your target from the start, for example, in a piece of research you are undertaking. It's much harder for them to refute your findings if they have agreed to the TOR!

In the following example, well-meaning supporters of a campaign actually made things worse by using methods and language which antagonised the target decision makers. They had failed to do their research and check with the person affected.

Example

The Amina Lawal 'Letter-Writing Campaign' is seen as an example of a campaign which was not based on an understanding of the target. Emails were sent around the world asking supporters to 'sign on' to the campaign to protect Amina Lawal, a

young Nigerian woman who was sentenced to stoning to death for adultery in August 2002. Behind the scenes, the women's rights groups BAOBAB were negotiating in a way which was much more appropriate to the local context. The letter, which was seen as portraying negative stereotypes of Islam and Muslims, in fact aggravated the situation and put Ms. Lawal and her supporters in further danger.¹³

6. ALLIES – WHO WILL HELP THIS PROCESS?

Who shares your goals and has some power to influence?

Unless your issue is very narrow (or you are very powerful) you are unlikely to win on your own. Now is the time to think about allies. You may have more impact working through a coalition or network and galvanising wider civil society support for your goals.

The easiest place to start is with organisations like your own but you should also look wider than this. You may find strange bedfellows – people who also want to achieve your objectives but for different reasons. However, they may cause problems too; if they do not share your ultimate aim then they may accept compromises that you would not and might ultimately undermine what you are trying to achieve (see **section six, 2.2**) In choosing allies you might want to consider whether their aims and values are compatible with yours. Also consider whether they bring influence, skills or resources which you lack.

WOMEN'S RIGHTS Potential allies for gender advocates



- **Other women's organisations and gender activists**
- **Other social justice movements and activists** – they may be able to contribute resources, access, skills or information that you do not have.
- **Parliamentarians with a commitment to women's rights, gender equality and social justice** – these are often women, but may also be progressive men. Just because a politician is a woman does not mean she is automatically supportive.
- **National women's ministries** – but bear in mind that they often have low capacity or limited political influence.
- **Gender focal points or champions in government or development cooperation agencies** – however where this role has been added to existing portfolios, champions may have insufficient time, or inclination, to be really helpful.
- **Non-gender experts in development agencies** – these can be very valuable allies if they share your goals.

Example

It can be worth trying to keep a broad range of allies. Women in Politics Support Unit WiPSU co-founded the cross-party Women's Parliamentary Caucus which has facilitated successful exchanges between women MPs and councillors from Zimbabwe's two main political parties, Zanu PF and the Movement for Democratic Change, on a number of subjects, including the impact of early marriage on girls, and bride inheritance. By maintaining a strictly non-partisan stance, WiPSU has been able to develop good working relations with members of both parties — and ensure access to otherwise sensitive political spaces.

Opponents

Who stands to lose, and has the power to stop you achieving your objectives?

Unless you are very powerful, you are unlikely to be able to stop your opponents. However, you can invest time in understanding their arguments and having your counter points ready, and trying not to be surprised by any stunts they may pull. Knowing how strong your opponents are may also make you realise that a particular objective is actually not feasible or a target not easily influenced and you should re-prioritise.

10 Adapted from VSO, *Participatory Advocacy: A Toolkit for VSO staff, volunteers and partners*, 2007, p.85 http://www.vsointernational.org/Images/advocacy-toolkit_tcm76-25498.pdf

11 Adapted from INTRAC, *Advocacy and Campaigning Course Toolkit*, 2008, p.10 <http://www.intrac.org/data/files/resources/629/INTRAC-Advocacy-and-Campaigning-Toolkit.pdf>

12 Adapted from VSO, *Participatory Advocacy: A Toolkit for VSO staff, volunteers and partners*, 2007, p.88 http://www.vsointernational.org/Images/advocacy-toolkit_tcm76-25498.pdf

13 Association for Women's Rights in Development, *An Advocacy Guide for Feminists*, Young Women and Leadership Series, 2003 <http://www.awid.org/Library/An-advocacy-guide-for-feminists>

Case Study – The UK Equal Pay Campaign

Since 1970 it has been against the law in the UK to pay women less than men for doing the same job. Yet nearly 40 years on a significant number of employers are still breaking the law.

The Fawcett Society, a UK women's rights advocacy group, had been campaigning to secure equal pay for women for a number of years. When they heard that the Government was going to publish a new Equalities Bill this seemed like the ideal opportunity for a new phase of the campaign. They decided to work in **alliance** with UNISON, a trade union with legal expertise and experience in taking equal pay cases to court.

The **objective** was to include in the Equalities Bill provisions that would put the onus on companies to show that they are meeting their legal obligations, as well as make it easier for women to take cases to court.

A mapping of the **external context** was undertaken. A major economic recession was developing that might temper the public's enthusiasm for anything that would cost money. An election was looming which the governing Labour party was likely to lose. This made it important to get the Equalities Bill passed quickly.

Political mapping demonstrated further challenges. Many of the relevant Government Ministers were committed to gender equality yet were not in support of this particular campaign. The campaigners wanted to put pressure on the Ministers without losing them as long term allies.

Legal evidence and **research** was already available on the estimated numbers of firms not complying with the law.

A **policy message** was developed: the current legislation on equal pay puts the onus on the individual. She

must have the information to know she is being paid unfairly compared to men, and then have the resources and courage to build a case. Legal action could take 10 years to conclude. Fawcett argued that this process must be made easier. In addition, it should be the employers' responsibility to undertake a 'Gender Pay Audit' so that they can be sure they are meeting their legal obligations to pay women and men the same for doing the same job.

The policy proposal then included details on the way in which the Gender Pay Audit should take place, and the changes in legal wording needed to make it easier for women to take cases to court. **Specific suggestions** were made for clauses to include in the forthcoming Bill.

Comparisons were also made with a Canadian Act which demonstrated that the **campaign asks were feasible. International statements** from the European Commission and European Parliament on compulsory pay audits were also cited to support the argument.

Because of the recession, the argument was partly framed in an instrumentalist way, explaining the importance of women's contribution to the economy. A poll of popular opinion from a highly reputable polling company was used to demonstrate that voters would support the proposal despite the economic climate.

The combination of **targets** meant that different strategies were needed. The Business Secretary had been the main target in previous phases of the campaign; he still needed convincing that the issue was important and was likely to argue against anything in the Bill which might cost companies money. Supporter actions and media coverage were therefore targeted at him.

In material for the media and supporters, it was important to present the arguments clearly and simply, and to provide **case studies** from previous legal cases.

A different **strategy** was needed with the campaign's other targets. All the Ministers connected to the Equalities Bill had, at some point, been sympathetic to the women's movement and did not need convincing of the importance of equal pay. The problem was that the Equalities Minister disagreed with Gender Pay Audits and had her own ideas about how best to enforce the law. Her strong record on gender equality in some ways made lobbying more difficult. She was very unlikely to back down and so a new approach was needed.

In addition to lobbying the Equalities Minister directly, the strategy was to also try to get her junior Minister, one of the Treasury Ministers and the Solicitor General (all of whom were women with a commitment to gender equality) to understand the new proposal so that, even if they did not publically contradict the official policy, they might help behind the scenes.

Meetings were also held with other **influencers** like the government technical advisors to explain the proposals. In particular, the issue was **framed** in a new way to avoid using the term 'Gender Pay Audit' which the Equalities Minister had publically opposed.

The forthcoming election meant that one of the best ways to motivate the targets was to present the issue as a potential vote winner. The concept of 'legacy planning' was also used. Ministers who knew they probably would not be in power after the election were keen to leave office having done something that would go down in the

history books.

Another **tactic** was to work with the opposition party, to create some competition among the political parties. Polling was done, and shared with Ministers, which suggested that the Government was losing its reputation on the issue with the public. This had to be handled carefully as **mixed messages** risked alienating the other Ministers with whom the Fawcett Society had good relations.

In the past the equal pay campaign had made good use of the **media**. However the role of press work in this phase of the campaign was less clear. It was relatively easy to explain why the issue of equal pay for women was important, but much harder to explain succinctly why the Government's proposal was wrong without getting into technical details. There were also concerns that adverse publicity might entrench the Minister's stance.

In the end, although the campaign objectives were only partially met, the Bill was finally published!