

This section will cover:

Your role in making change happen.

The next steps in the planning cycle:

- Identifying your role
- Considering the actions your organisation will take



In the previous section we looked at aims, objectives and targets – who we need to influence to do what. In this section we start looking at what *you* will need to do to persuade your targets to carry out your objectives. Once you've identified your resources and worked out your strategic approach you are then ready to complete your action plan (see **5** in this section). Finally, you'll put in place tools for monitoring and evaluation. This is phase two of the advocacy planning cycle described in **section three**.

The illustrative example (in **red**) is continued in this section.

Your strategy will usually last you the lifetime of the campaign, which could be as long as three to five years. An action plan is usually done once a year, to coincide with the budget.

1. RESOURCES – WHAT INFLUENCE AND POWER DO YOU HAVE?

Now make a realistic assessment of your own resources. Many campaigns fail because they are simply too ambitious and in trying to achieve everything end up gaining little. It is better to achieve success with one project than to fail on ten.

Your resources include both the assets and skills you have within the organisation, as well as your potential power to influence.

What power do you have?

- Could you create public embarrassment for your target?
- Do you have information and evidence that could be useful to them?
- Can you bring political support with you?
- Can you explain new concepts and make them look relevant?
- Could you help them comply with donors' wishes?

Think about your specific strengths and points of leverage. Do you know the editor of a paper? Is one of your project partners a particularly moving spokesperson? Is your local representative influential?



TIP Different skills are needed. Managing an advocacy project is much like managing any other project; you need a mix of skills in your team.



TOOL Assessing your resources.

This tool will help you think about any gaps in your resourcing before you start a particular activity.¹⁴

Money

- What money do you have available for this advocacy project?
- Where is the money coming from: your organisation, partners, other funders?
- Are there likely to be cashflow problems, or difficulties getting authorisation for spend?
- Roughly how much do you think you will need to implement the activities you are considering?
- Is your budget realistic and based on actual costs or quotes?

People

- Who will be available to work on the different aspects of the project?

Skills and experience

- Do the key people have the right skills and experience?
- If not, can you train them or get other people involved?

Other human resources

- Do you have access to other people who can help?
- Do you have volunteers to distribute leaflets, campaign supporters to write letters, community members to attend meetings?

Partners

- What could potential partners deliver?

Information and knowledge

- Have you been able to do enough research and analysis on the issue, on your objectives and solutions, and to identify your targets?
- If not, do you need to look again at the earlier steps in the advocacy planning cycle?

Relationships

- What relationships do you, your staff, volunteers and partners have which you will be able to use?
- These may be among target audiences, influencers or in practical areas such as materials design or the media?

Reputation

- Do you or your partners have a strong reputation among the target audiences, with the public or the media? If not, have you developed strategies and tactics to get around this?
- Can you recruit influential spokespeople or celebrities to speak on your behalf?
- Do you need to work in partnership with another, better-known organisation?

Time

- Do you have enough time to implement your project efficiently?
- Are there particular deadlines that you have to meet?
- Are there external events that you wish to use, such as elections, national or local political meetings, government planning cycles or international summits?

2. STRATEGY SUMMARY

The next step is considering what *you* are going to do – rather than what you want to persuade others to do. You need a brief description of what your role will be in achieving the objectives you have set out. This is not just a list of activities; it needs to be a summary of your understanding of how you can influence your targets to achieve your objectives.

Your final strategy may be just a few paragraphs. It is the thinking and questioning behind it which is important. This needs to be collectively owned, so process is important. Do what works best in your organisation but try to make sure everyone is on board or cracks will show later. As with the analysis done earlier, don't get a consultant to write a report and then just use the recommendations. You have to understand what is behind the strategy and why.

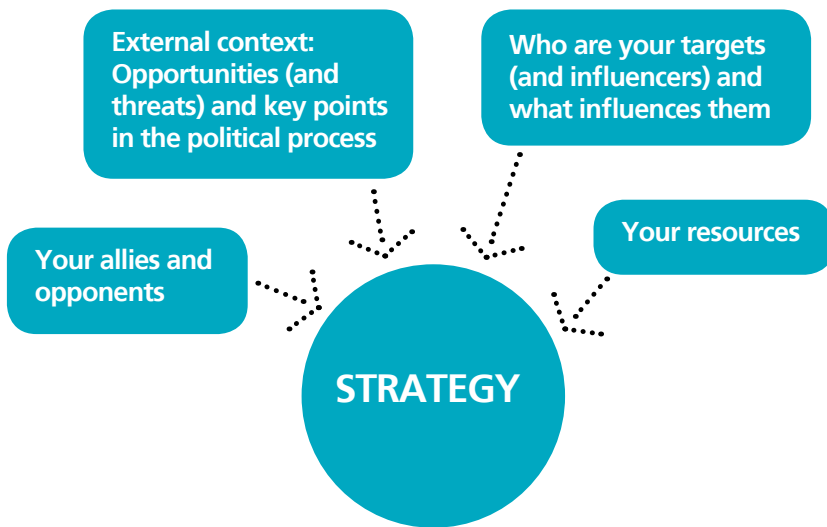
The analysis you will do here may be very similar to that done in **section four**. Don't worry too much about which goes where – each part needs to inform each other. You need to understand the context within which you are working before choosing which tools to use.

Oddly this is a bit often missed out by CSOs (and in toolkits) as it's the messy bit and it's hard to do a check list for.

2.1 DESCRIBING YOUR STRATEGY

Given who we are, who we are working with, what motivates our targets and what the opportunities are – what should we do?

The first step is to consider your inputs as these will shape the type of strategy you adopt:



Your strategy might cover:

- your key targets and what will motivate them to act
- the political processes and where you are going to try to influence (**see sections seven and eight** on national and international processes)
- the dominant ideas or ideology – the gaps or consensus areas
- the best external opportunities and pegs and whether to create some
- who your allies are and how to work with them
- who your opponents are and how to neutralise them
- what resources you have
- how to minimise risks

Learn from what worked for others, but it is vital to remember that your campaign has specific asks and targets and a timescale – there is no blueprint. You have to work out what is best for you.

Using our hypothetical example:

Objective one

The review of the Domestic Violence Act provides an excellent opportunity to close a loop-hole in the law. It will formally take place in 2013 but the review committee is already meeting. The influence point will be the Parliamentary sub-committee and the drafting stage. They are particularly influenced by the lawyers' association so we will work with them. By the time the review is presented to Parliament, we will have built up allies in the relevant sub-committee who will raise any concerns we still have and propose specific amendments. We have legal advice from the Women's Law Centre and support from a leading barrister and

will be presenting this to the Justice Minister on International Women's Day, when we hope also to receive media coverage by organising a night-time demonstration of women walking the streets.

Objective two

We need to increase funding for the provision of support for female survivors of violence within rape crisis centres (including provision of legal advisors and information about the potential change to the law). The budget process has already begun and we will influence it primarily by demonstrating the lack of current provision and the efficiency of a small increase in funding. The national budget network is already up and running and ready to input into the process at strategic points. Our role will be to influence the steering group of this network to include our demands on funding for rape crisis centres. We will do this by working closely with the National Women's Centre who have a place on the steering group and are already allies, and with our allies inside the INGOs who are on this group. We have evidence of need, and of how effective other centres have been when funding is increased. The Finance Minister is very concerned about adverse publicity and its effect on the multilateral donors, so we will use the visit of the World Bank representative as a good platform to get media coverage.

Objective three

To ensure that women are aware of the support available through rape crisis and to raise awareness about what the amendment to the law means for women survivors, we will run workshops from a mobile bus – targeting those areas which have not yet had any such training, but where there is a strong crisis centre already. Working with the gender worker of the local district and local women's organisations we have arranged for a training bus to do a tour of workshops. An organisation promoting sexual health is already planning the tour and we will ask them to share the administration and costs.



STRATEGIC CHOICE

This is not a list of everything you could do – you have to be strategic about picking out the things which will most help you reach your objectives with the minimum effort.

- Will it influence your target to take the actions you want?
- Does it play to your strengths?
- Will it have a long term benefit?

This is not about what sounds fun to do nor is it about listing all the things you can think of!

TIP

- Get the timing right – CSOs frequently start advocacy much too late in a process when decisions have already been made. If you've missed the boat this time then look for a future process to influence.
- Think about ideas as well as processes. Sophisticated advocacy involves using current ideas and re-framing them.
- Try to set agendas as well as reacting to them.
- Can you piggy back on others' events rather than creating your own?



2.2 DEFINING YOUR APPROACH

Underlying your strategy will be a particular set of approaches you take towards the advocacy you do. Agreeing and defining this within your organisation will help coherence, and will be especially useful if you are working with allies. It can help to prevent misunderstandings in the future.

In **section two** on power we explored how you will work with the different kinds of power that you have, and that you face. This will be part your approach.

The kind of advocacy you do will have in part been set by the kind of organisation you are and the resources and expertise you have. But it must also reflect the external context in which you are operating.

TOOL From ignored to courted

The tool on the next page will help you consider what stage you are at on the advocacy continuum.



From ignored to acted on – an advocacy continuum¹⁵

Ignored

If no-one is interested in your issue then your strategy may need to involve making as much noise as possible – you don't need to be too nuanced. Your issue will not even be on the political agenda and you have little to lose.



Opposed

If decision makers are opposing you that is progress! It means you have had an impact and they are worried. Hold your nerve. You may need to continue to make noise until you are firmly on the political agenda, but at some point it will also be time to start engaging with your influencers and giving your detailed policy message to counter the opposition and show you are credible.



Misunderstood

Your issue is now on the political agenda – but not necessarily in the way you would like it to be. Your real message has not yet got through.



Absorbed

In some ways, the hardest phase is if your language is being used and co-opted – but to mean something other than what you want to say. This can often be the case with women's rights work where lip service is paid to women's needs with no real understanding of the problem. Decision makers may also say that they are on your side, and may genuinely understand your point, but then find all sorts of reasons to do nothing.



Heard

When a decision maker promises to act on what you say, you are nearly there – but make sure they follow through. Politicians' promises are often broken or back-tracked on. One common trick is to watch out for funds being re-promised or re-packaged.



Acted on

If the changes you want are actually made, you've met your objectives. You have really arrived if decision makers see you as so influential that they actually court your seal of approval as a way to win votes!

Where you are on the advocacy continuum helps you decide what kind of strategy to use. If you are at the ignored stage then polite letters to the Minister is unlikely to work. On the other hand, if you have been heard then a disruptive sit-in may be counterproductive and you need a more nuanced approach. Most important is to recognise that being opposed is better than being ignored – and not to give up at this stage.

In many countries the women's movement has gone through the various stages. Initially the idea of equality for women was not even discussed in political circles and was seen as a fringe issue. However, as the movement became stronger it was seen as a threat and faced fairly blunt and brutal repression. In many places, this is still the case. In others countries though, women's equality is frequently referred to and politicians compete with each other to appear the most women-friendly – often appropriating feminist language but with no understanding or resources to back it up.

Example The UK INGO Christian Aid had been campaigning against World Bank designed Structural Adjustment Programmes without getting much response. Then a report was written using evidence from partner organisations in Zimbabwe including Zimbabwe Congress of Trades Unions and the Zimbabwe Project. Suddenly World Bank officials became hostile, and a senior member of staff came to Christian Aid for a meeting with the Director where he criticised the report in detail. It was clear officials had spent a long time working on their response. The Director was experienced enough to know that this meant the report had hit home, and used the meeting not only to defend the research but also to drive home the campaign's core message. It was the start of a new and more influential phase of the campaign.

Using our campaign example:

In our imaginary case – the campaign is at the absorbed stage. There was recognition of the problem and an Act was passed, but no real thought was given to how difficult it would be for women to use the law to bring cases. The Government wants to look good on women's rights to donors though – so the approach needs to be one where evidence is used to show why the current set up is not achieving its desired goals.



TOOL Inside or Outside?

You can then define your approach as an insider or outsider – or you may combine them.

Insider

Make yourself useful to the target by showing that you can help them achieve their own objectives and working with them to find solutions. This allows you to gain trust, access and information and to understand processes and positions. This works best if you share some objectives. Making targets think an idea is their own can be particularly useful.

.....
Risks – co-option; compromise of your objectives; being side-tracked; excluding others; spending time without meeting objectives; being used to legitimise a process or decision.

Outsider

Create political pressure through public mobilisation and media pressure to get an issue on the agenda. In the long term this may lead to more fundamental change and be more empowering to others. It allows you to hold true to your principles, gives more freedom, and may give you more profile. You may also create space for others to play the insider role.

.....
Risks – can alienate targets and increase confrontation thereby preventing change. Can also exclude you from access in the future and you may lose funding.

Insider/Outsider

Many organisations try to combine the two. For example, some staff may go into a meeting dressed in suits while others march with placards outside. This can seem like a good way to keep your options open, and it is certainly possible to do both if you plan well and are consistent. The lobbyists may well have more influence if they are seen to be supported by the crowds outside or if their organisation has just been on the media as spokesperson for a demonstration. This middle approach can also involve engaging, but in a critical way. For this to work you need to have very strong evidence for your arguments.

.....
Risks – one part of the strategy can easily undermine the other – A Greenpeace lobbyist was quickly thrown out of the World Bank Annual Meetings after her colleagues had scaled the building opposite with a banner.

Whichever approach you choose make sure it's the right one for the cause, not just the one you personally feel happier with. It is very important that the whole organisation is behind whatever approach you take and you should spend some time building consensus. The approach should reflect both the objectives and political context that you are working in and your own organisation's strengths.



CAUTION It is important to acknowledge one's own power and not misuse it in advocacy – a classic danger is in getting close access at the expense of others. This can lead to being seen as the moderate and in doing so makes others look extreme and so make it more difficult for them to get access.

TIP Remember that your targets may read material that wasn't aimed at them – anything you say needs to work with everybody you want to influence. In the UK, the World Development Movement discovered that the special advisor to the Minister for International Development was subscribing to their supporter magazine – and was upset to find her boss criticised in it!



2.3 EXIT STRATEGY

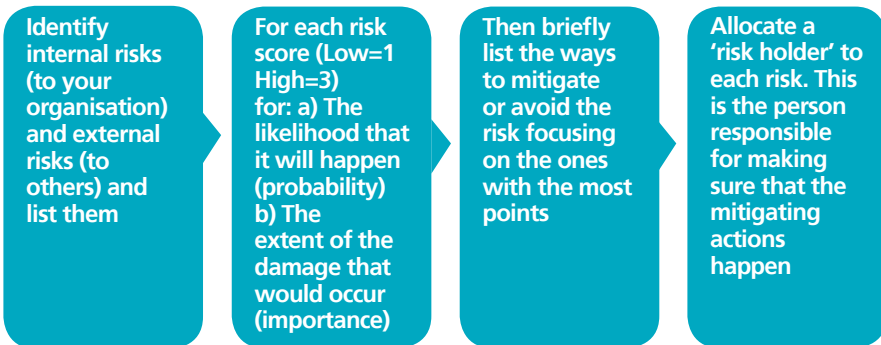
Some organisations continue campaigning until they achieve their aim. But others may find they have to move to a different area of work before it's completed. This can be very difficult for your partners and allies. If you know that you can only commit for a certain period of time then say so at the outset, and think about what legacy you will leave and what capacity you will build around you.

2.4 RISK MANAGEMENT

Risk management involves:

- Identifying risks
- Assessing the level of risk compared to the potential benefits of the proposed action
- Identifying strategies to mitigate risks
- Agreeing 'holders' of the risk

TOOL Risk Analysis¹⁶



WOMEN'S RIGHTS Advocacy on women's rights brings with it particular kinds of risks. Creating networks, nationally and internationally, and shoring up international contacts and exposure, can help reduce vulnerability. In all situations, documenting threats, harassment and violations, and where possible reporting these to the police, is crucial for seeking redress or remedy and holding perpetrators to account.



Example

Given the hostile contexts in which some advocacy takes place, coalition building can provide protection. One well-established grouping is the Coalition for Sexual and Bodily Rights in Muslim Societies, which consists of NGOs and academics from women's, human rights and LGBT movements in the Middle East, North Africa and South and Southeast Asia, involved in advocacy for the promotion of sexual and reproductive health and rights in Muslim societies. Another is the Latin American and Caribbean Women's Health Network, which supports campaigns such as for the decriminalisation of abortion, lobbies governments to formulate new SRHR policies, and monitors the implementation of national agreements.

Risks to women human rights defenders

Women defenders are more at risk of suffering certain forms of violence and prejudice than their male counterparts. This is often due to the fact that women defenders are perceived as challenging accepted socio-cultural norms, traditions, perceptions and gender roles and stereotypes. Reported violations have included threats, death threats, arrest and detention, criminalisation and sexual violence and rape against women and their families. Groups which are most at risk include women defenders working to fight impunity for alleged human rights violations, women trade unionists, women indigenous rights activists, women environmental and land rights activists and those working on LGBT rights.¹⁷

See **section nine** on resources for some useful reference materials on women's human rights defenders.

As well as security concerns, there can be other personal costs to undertaking advocacy on women's rights. With most funding grants not covering basic costs such as a decent wage, benefits or security measures, overwork, stress, ill-health, and trauma can be common features of women's rights advocacy. Research with more than 100 women's rights activists from 45 countries revealed that many advocates work very long hours without breaks, travel a lot, feel guilty for not spending enough time with their families, worry about their financial security and retiring without a pension, and can suffer from exposure to trauma day in and day out.¹⁸

3. ORGANISATIONAL OBJECTIVES – WHAT MUST YOUR ORGANISATION DO?

Having done the strategic narrative you can now list your own organisational objectives. What are the immediate things you expect to achieve next year which will help meet the longer term advocacy objectives? These are the things you want to achieve, not what you want someone else to do. It is the next set of stepping stones.

You will probably want to do new organisational objectives each year, in the same way that you will do a new action plan.

There may be a lot of stepping stones to cross before making your objective happen. Your objectives might therefore include¹⁹:

Capacity

- Organisational capacity built
- Commitment created within the organisation
- Advocacy capacity of partners strengthened
- Alliances/networks formed
- Funding secured
- Sufficient evidence collated

External support

- Interest among civil society
- Public support created
- Media coverage of the issue
- Opposition discredited

Policy platforms

- CSO action legitimate in eyes of decision makers
- Re-framing of an issue is accepted
- Influencer is persuaded to lobby target
- Issue on the agenda of a particular meeting
- Positive relationship with decision maker established
- Issue on political agenda
- Target accepts funding is possible

Our campaign example:

Outcomes

- Build our evidence of the number of rapes which are going unreported
- Make alliances with grassroots women's groups who are running workshops with women who have been raped
- Ensure all staff are on-board

- Prepare legal wording of proposed amendment
- Arrange meeting with the National Budget Network, and then with the relevant civil servants

4. CORE MESSAGES AND ASKS

4.1 POSITION PAPER

This document can be the basis for lots of other work so it's worth investing the time at the start. It could remain an internal document or be used with a public audience. It need only be a couple of sides long. It could include:

- Outline of the problem and its causes and effects
- Your evidence and case studies
- Why change is important
- Your proposed solution
- Who is responsible for making this happen
- Why now
- What you want others to do to help

4.2 POLICY ASKS

The policy asks are the specific actions that you want your targets to do, and should closely reflect your objectives. You will need to be able to tailor them to decision makers and paraphrase them for a popular audience, but as policy asks they need to be realistic, detailed, accurate and specific. **Sections two, seven and eight** on power, national and international processes and the thematic resources in **section nine** should all help.

- Go back to your research on targets - make sure the decision maker actually has power to do this
- Be timely – why should it be done now, and is there a suitable process
- Be careful what you wish for – you must make sure that you would be satisfied if the decision maker did exactly what you asked
- Think about the policy environment – what language should you use to make the ask seem acceptable
- Is there an external process or target such as the MDGs that you should link to
- Be realistic but ambitious

In our campaign example:

- Section IV point X of the Domestic Violence Act should be amended to include X

- The 2012 budget should include X amount of provision under the Women’s Ministry justice team for the specific funding of Y number of legal advisors in rape crisis centres.

In **section seven** on national processes we look in more detail at policy asks in relation to gender equity goals.

4.3 CORE MESSAGE

A campaign works best when you have a core message which you will repeat over and over again. This should include: What / When / Why /Why Now – and, crucially, How to act.

A great core message needs to capture someone’s attention and persuade them of the argument – but with no call to action nothing is achieved and they will walk away.



TIP You have to believe you can win change and reflect this in your message. Hope is inspiring and invigorating.



In our campaign example the core message might be:
Women deserve support, safety and justice! Yet half the women in our country have been raped and the perpetrators walk free. We have a once in a lifetime opportunity to change the law to deliver real justice for women. Sign our petition today.

4.4 FRAMING

The message remains constant, but is framed differently depending on the motivation of the particular audience. Any change we want will be political – not everyone will have the same reasons for thinking that it should happen as motivations are different. But only change the frame; the core message must always stay the same.

In framing you might focus on:

- Shocking statistics
- A moving personal story that the audience may relate to
- The potential popularity the target might win by acting
- A sense of purpose and belonging to a cause that a supporter might feel
- An appeal to core values or religious beliefs
- A way to help individuals do their job or meet their targets
- The urgency of the timing – importance of seizing an opportunity

Most people act out of self-interest at some level – even if that self-interest is feeling good about themselves for acting selflessly!

Framing for decision makers:

- Some want to leave a positive legacy – this action could be it
- Others want to be seen as innovative – which can be useful if you are trying to break new ground
- Others want to win votes – can you help them get the ‘women’s vote’



WOMEN'S RIGHTS Feminism has often been dismissed as a Western concern. Using regional agreements and protocols rather than international ones can be a useful way of framing to persuade decision makers that the concern is national and not imposed on them (see **section eight** on international processes).

Example

Violent inter-clan warfare between Somalia's five fiercely independent clans resulted in widespread poverty and deprivation, which hit women hardest. Yet the peace and reconciliation effort launched in 1999 failed to incorporate women into the process. Save Somali Women and Children (SSWC) framed the issue very cleverly by forming a 'sixth' clan consisting of women. This was officially recognised and incorporated into the peace process, therefore giving women the opportunity to participate in the political process on an equal footing.

The instrumentalist approach to framing advocacy

Typically there are two ways to frame gender advocacy:

● Justice or Rights

It is unfair and wrong that women and girls routinely have their rights violated and are condemned to lives of poverty because of gender discrimination and an unequal distribution of power and resources. It is our moral duty to erode these vast gender inequalities of opportunity and outcomes, and uphold principles of human dignity, equality, justice and freedom.

● The instrumental benefits of investing in women and girls

Investment in women, or in tackling gender inequality, is good value for money because of its multiplier effect. Women have greater responsibility than men for caring for children and other family members and so are more likely to invest resources in meeting household requirements than for their own consumption. Investing in women is good value for money since it reaps rewards which extend beyond women to their children, families, and whole societies.

Donors are increasingly using instrumentalist arguments. For example the World Bank, in its Gender Equality Action Plan, argued: *'the global community must renew its attention to women's economic empowerment and increase investments in women...increased women's labour force participation and earnings are associated with reduced poverty and faster growth; women will benefit from their economic empowerment, but so too will men, children and society as a whole...'*²⁰

Gender advocates have made strategic use of these more instrumental arguments to mobilise support and resources for women's rights. Yet there are also risks in relying on these arguments. For example, drawing on arguments about economic growth rather than rights and justice may be effective at increasing women's labour force participation but do little to ensure these jobs are safe, fairly paid and non-exploitative. Nor will instrumental arguments effectively address the burden of women's unpaid care work, which may continue alongside paid employment.

While investing in women and girls is an important strategy for ending poverty and transforming societies, the most important reason for investing in eliminating gender inequality is to transform women's lives, safeguard their human rights, and create a fairer world. Instrumental arguments should be used with caution.

4.5 ANTICIPATING COUNTER- ARGUMENTS

In framing a message you may also anticipate a target's opposition to your proposal – this can be very disarming for them.



WOMEN'S RIGHTS Common arguments – and how to respond?

But men and boys also suffer from poverty and violence...

This is true, but the poverty and violence experienced by men and boys is nothing like on the same scale as that experienced by women and girls. Women and girls are estimated to make up 70 per cent of the world's poor – a result of the unequal distribution of power and resources between women and men. These inequalities give rise to higher rates of poverty among women relative to men, and a more severe experience of poverty by women than men.

It is not only women in households without male breadwinners who are vulnerable to poverty. Women and girls living within male-headed households may also be poor – even when the household is considered to be well-off – because of the unequal distribution of power and resources, such as food and property, within households.

But gender is a western concept - it has no place in our culture

It is not uncommon to hear the argument that gender roles and norms are specific to local culture and are best left alone. Appealing to 'authentic' cultural values or tradition like this is a popular way of opposing women's rights or legitimising rights violations. Yet this cultural argument overlooks the powerful historical mobilisation by 'indigenous' women's organisations and activists against gender inequality. It also fails to account for the numerous commitments governments have made to advancing gender equality and women's rights - in their legislation and constitutions, in national development strategies and gender policies and action plans, and in the signing and ratification of regional and international rights frameworks. These commitments oblige governments to take action to combat gender discrimination and advance women's rights.

But gender equality is only one of the many development issues - why should it be privileged?

Gender is not a sector like health, education or agriculture - it is integral to the success of all development interventions across *all* sectors. Whatever the focus, whether it is conflict or climate change or economic growth, unless a gender perspective is incorporated into the planning, implementation and monitoring stages of development programming, women's specific needs are likely to be overlooked. This undermines the effectiveness of development interventions. It also excludes women and girls from benefiting from and contributing their knowledge and insights to development responses. Another good reason why gender equality should be a development priority is because of the "multiplier effect" (described on the previous page) of investing in gender equality.

5. ACTIVITIES AND ACTION PLAN – WHO SHOULD DO WHAT, WHEN?

For each of your desired objectives you will have a list of activities. Make sure these contribute to achieving your objectives. Be clear which of your targets or influencers each activity is directed at, and which of your objectives it is moving you towards.

- **The methods should reinforce each other.** It is great to enter a lobby meeting when you've just been quoted in the press or to see a pile of your supporters' letters on the desk of someone you've come to meet! In listing your activities make clear any links – then if one falls through you know this has implications for the other.
- **Make sure you don't undermine yourself.** Media work criticising a decision maker could completely undermine the relationship a colleague has carefully built. This is why planning is so important.
- **Do only what is necessary.** You don't have to use every method just because it worked for others. Sometimes the easy options work – it never hurts just to ask politely for the change you want before mounting a campaign. Having asked first will give you credibility when you come to campaign.



CAUTION A common mistake among even the most sophisticated of advocacy organisations is to undertake activities because they are new and exciting and make managers feel proud of the organisation. If these are needed to achieve a particular outcome (like motivating staff or gaining profile) then go ahead – but beware of vanity projects.

You can plan for unforeseen opportunities too. If you have a good message ready then you can use it whenever you get the chance. Make sure you keep some spare capacity for such events.

Example **Campaign for Parliamentary quotas in Albania**
This campaign for quotas is an example of successfully combining different methods and using influencers. The Albanian Centre for Population and Development and the Independent Forum of Albanian Women contributed to the 2002 Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) report which focused on the absence of measures in the Albanian government's policies and in national law to reverse the lack of representation of women in national and local politics.

When the Albanian government failed to take action following the CEDAW report, the organisations did not give up. With others, they set up a national coalition of human rights NGOs, women's organisations

and Women's Committees of the main political parties.

The coalition used a variety of methods to influence their government target to agree to guaranteed quotas for women in Parliament. As well as lobbying the government, they tried to build allies by giving parliamentarians gender training. The media were targeted as influencers and so the coalition launched a media campaign, while also training journalists to be more gender sensitive. Members of the European Parliament were also identified as influencers, and lobbied, so that they in turn could put pressure on the Albanian government to fulfil its international human rights commitments to promote equal participation of women and men in politics.

The campaign was successful. Five years on, the Albanian government finally introduced a Gender Quota Law that mandates that 30% of elective positions be filled by women, by placing women in one of every three positions on their electoral lists or through other mechanisms. After Albania's national elections in June 2009 the percentage of women in Parliament leapt from 7% to 16% — and the Speaker is a woman for the second time in a row.

CAUTION Activities have political impacts. If you are also trying to open up the political system, using celebrities or hidden advisors may not help your cause, whereas a demonstration can make participants feel empowered.



Your menu of activities can be divided into three sections. Each of these is explored in detail in **section six**.

Activities to prepare for the campaign:

- Internal training, fundraising and other processes to create internal support
- Alliance building
- Research and policy analysis and the collection of case studies

Activities aimed at decision makers to achieve policy change:

- Lobbying
- Media
- Outputs such as publications
- Activism – actions by your supporters, partners or the public

Activities which empower individuals to act:

- Consciousness-raising
- Community activism
- Workplace activism

Section six will include 'how tos' on some of these activities.



REALITY CHECK

You must keep going back to:

- What motivates the target or influencer to act?
- What are the political processes?
- Where does our power and influence lie?
- Who can we work with and who might oppose us?
- Where are the external opportunities?
- Do we have the evidence?
- What other resources might we need?

Action plan and budget

This pulls together all the work you've done so far into a document that you can actually use. It will usually cover one year – coinciding with your financial year.

Keep it simple – if you don't refer to it then it is not working. Make sure the structure fits for your organisation. Have your action plan at all your project meetings.

Make sure everyone is clear who is managing each aspect of the campaign and how this will fit together. For big organisations, difference of opinion among departments can be a major advocacy problem.



TOOL One way of devising an action plan is to have columns with the following headings:

- a. Outcome
- b. Activity
- c. Deadline
- d. Person responsible
- e. Resources needed

Below is an example of an **action plan developed for our campaign example**. Some action plans also include a column for indicators.

Aim: Women and girls in our country live free from fear of violence while rapists fear being convicted

Objective: 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

Target: Justice Minister

Outcome/ Output	Activity	Deadline	Persons responsible	Resources needed
All staff supporting the advocacy project	Strategy meetings involving all staff	June 1st	Campaign Manager	Workshop space Staff time
	Workshops to explain the campaign			
Key influencing points identified	Process of the forthcoming legislation mapped to identify influence points	June 14th	Policy Officer	Staff time
Specific legal proposal developed	Meetings arranged with lawyers association	June 14th	Policy Officer	Staff time Meeting space
	Research completed on the legal wording that should be used			
Policy briefing ready to be distributed	Policy brief drafted	August 30th	Policy Officer and Editor	Staff time Designer and Printing costs Meeting space
	Formal meeting with allies to sign off the brief			
	Print and design of brief			
Parliamentary sub-Committee contacted and sent briefing	Identify contacts in sub-committee and post them the brief	September 15th	Campaign Manager	Staff time
Meet with Justice Minister	Draft letter to be shared with allies and CEO before sending	September 21st	Campaign Manager and CEO	Staff time and travel costs

Outcome/ Output	Activity	Deadline	Persons responsible	Resources needed
Press release sent to target journalists just before the Bill is discussed in the house	Case study identified Press release prepared and signed off by allies and CEO CEO briefed with key messages and mock interview undertaken	October 15th	Policy Officer, Press Officer and CEO	Staff time and printing costs



TIP Be prepared for success. It may be months or even years before you start making headway, but occasionally things move faster than expected. You only get one chance so make sure that you are ready. Don't ask for a meeting with the Minister until you know what you will say. If they offer you one the following week it will look very bad if you have to postpone or turn up un-prepared.



TIP If the external context changes, be prepared to adjust your strategy or even your objectives (see **section three** on the advocacy planning cycle).

Timeline

- You may also want to do a separate timeline. (Make sure you start your line where the pre work has to start – not where it has to finish!) This can be a useful way of seeing if your activities are too bunched together for your given capacity.



TIP Make sure your timeline reflects external imperatives, not your own internal processes.

Budget

- prepare this alongside your action plan, making sure you've left some contingency funds. Remember there may be an unforeseen opportunity you want to seize.

THEN

- Do a reality check – can you really achieve what you've set out to do. If you've planned too much then prioritise now rather than failing to do something. Remember that everything is important but not everything is possible – make those difficult choices.
- Be adaptable – the art of campaigning involves seizing unforeseen opportunities. Make sure you have space in your plan to do this.
- Review – if things don't work out the way you thought then change your plan, don't just forge ahead.

ActionAid UK, an international development organisation, was delighted with their campaign success when, on international women's day in March 2010, a UK Minister for international violence against women (VAW) was announced. However, success was short-lived. After the election of a Conservative Government in May 2010, the post was not filled. The campaigners soon learned how to adapt their campaign plans to changes in the external context.

The new campaign **objective** was to secure a Ministerial post for international VAW within the new Government. Intelligence had indicated in the months prior to the election that the post was in danger; therefore, planning for this advocacy work was already underway.

Meetings were arranged with key government officials and a **briefing** on the importance of the post was prepared. The officials provided valuable information on who the campaign should **target** and on which **messages** would resonate. As a result of this information, it was decided to target the Foreign Office Minister.

Meetings were also held with potential **allies** such as the previous international VAW Minister and MPs with an interest in gender and development issues, and written briefings were provided. As a result **parliamentary questions** were asked on why the post had not been filled. Events were also held at all three political party conferences to provide information about VAW, and the need for the post, and to identify allies across the political spectrum.

ActionAid UK was also a member of the Gender and Development Network VAW Working Group. This

ready-formed **alliance** was a source of resources and intelligence and also became a coordinating mechanism for the other organisations that supported the campaign. Key to the success of this multi-agency approach was the development of **core messages** which all members used in their advocacy. The campaigning actions of other organisations in the working group, such as **online actions with supporters and events**, complemented **lobbying**. ActionAid sent a letter to the Foreign Minister which was given extra impact when, a week later, a letter was also sent from the alliance.

Mapping of other **political processes** revealed that a National Action Plan (NAP) on Security Council Resolution 1325 on women, peace and security was currently being developed by another department. The campaigners were successful in influencing the NAP to include the appointment of a Government lead for VAW. An event was also held on VAW and the SCR 1325 NAP which allowed ActionAid to publicise the campaign to new allies.

Planning was difficult as an announcement by the Government on the post could happen at any time. A postcard action was about to go to supporters from an alliance member so **scenario planning** was used to develop alternative policy asks if an appointment was made, ensuring that the campaign could continue. Specifically these called for the Minister to have sufficient authority, resources and access to do their job properly.

Information from allies informed ActionAid that the main sticking point for the appointment was the lack of any female Ministers in the international departments. This

information also suggested a need to **target** the Minister for Women who was pushing for a woman to hold the post. A **different strategy** was needed and ActionAid approached allies in the women's sector to write a joint letter to the Women's Minister making it clear that it was crucial that the post was at ministerial level whether held by a woman or man. At the same time, phone calls were made to advisors in the Foreign Office highlighting the same message.

This change in strategy did not have the desired effect and intelligence suggested there would shortly be an appointment of a 'Champion' rather than a ministerial role in order for a junior woman Minister to hold the post. This presented a difficult decision. Should the campaigners continue to press for a ministerial role which risked alienating the 'Champion' or should they welcome the appointment? Welcoming the appointment seemed the best way to strengthen the Government's approach to VAW. The less senior post could still be effective (and may in some ways be preferable with greater time to devote to championing the issue) – provided the individual had influence within the Government. Ensuring this influence became the new objective for the campaign, alongside defining the priorities of the post.

Key messages were formulated to focus on the need for access and resources for the Champion and an **online action** was developed which was ready to go live when the announcement was made. Comment was also provided to the media. This tactic, of supporting the appointment, has ensured the

coalition has been consulted about the priorities for the role and has had the access to successfully influence the government's work on international VAW.

6 MONITORING, EVALUATION AND LEARNING – HOW WILL YOU KNOW IF YOU ARE GETTING IT RIGHT?

Monitoring is:

- Continually checking your activities against your plans to see if you are achieving what you said you would, and
- Checking your plans against reality to see if they need adjusting to make them more effective in achieving your objectives.

Good monitoring allows you to pick up problems early and make adjustments, rather than wishing in retrospect that you had done something differently.

Monitoring also allows for the collection of data which will be needed for future evaluations. It is important to collect qualitative as well as quantitative data.

Evaluation takes place at strategic points in the campaign and assesses whether objectives have been met rather than just whether activities have been undertaken. It will also assess whether unexpected changes have occurred. Evaluation of advocacy is notoriously difficult. It is almost impossible to prove that a particular change occurred as a result of a particular action. Additionally, decision makers will not always tell the truth about what influenced them – they may want to take credit for an idea themselves rather than admit to being pushed into action by a campaign. Nevertheless, monitoring and evaluation is important, both for your own learning and for your accountability to your stakeholders.

Both monitoring and evaluation are much easier to do if you set up systems from the outset.

TIP Celebrate success – among staff, supporters and your allies. Even small successes will spread energy and motivation to keep going with enthusiasm.



M&E from a gender perspective²¹

A feminist M&E approach would:

- ✓ Have tools to unpack the nature of gender and social inequalities;
- ✓ Treat gender and social inequalities as systemic and therefore examine how interventions address them as such;
- ✓ Not seek to attribute change to particular actors, but to understand contributing actors and factors;
- ✓ Break the hierarchy between the evaluator and the “evaluated” and respect the knowledge of both; and
- ✓ View M&E as a political activity, not a value-free assessment, and use

it as part of the change process.



TIP The more your advocacy work tries to challenge those with power, the harder it may be to evaluate whether you are really successful. Sometimes it may seem as though you are going backwards, but this could be because you have had an impact on your target, and they are fighting back. At other times, what appears to be success may actually be your targets making small concessions in an attempt to prevent you from getting the more fundamental changes you really want in the long term.



TOOL Monitoring and Evaluation Resource

The feminist network AWID has recently produced a new Wiki <http://www.awid.org/Library/AWID-s-Wiki-on-Monitoring-and-Evaluation>

For more ideas see: [http://www.globalhealthcommunication.org/tool_docs/15/an_introduction_to_advocacy_-_training_guide_\(pages_121-137\).pdf](http://www.globalhealthcommunication.org/tool_docs/15/an_introduction_to_advocacy_-_training_guide_(pages_121-137).pdf)

14 Questions taken from Wateraid SAAdvocacy Sourcebook, p.55 http://www.wateraid.org/documents/plugin_documents/advocacy_sourcebook_2.pdf

15 Tool developed by Jessica Woodroffe, 2011.

16 For more information see VSO, Participatory Advocacy: A Toolkit for VSO Staff, Volunteers and Partners, 2009, p91 http://www.vsointernational.org/Images/advocacy-toolkit_tcm76-25498.pdf

17 Report of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders, Margaret Sekaggya, A/HRC/16/44, United Nations, 20 December 2010

18 Barry, J. with J. Dordevic. What's the Point of a Revolution If We Can't Dance?, Urgent Action Fund for Women's Human Rights. 2007

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20 World Bank, *Gender Equality as Smart Economics, World Bank Gender Equality Action Plan (Fiscal years 2007-10), 2006.*

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