SAFERWORLD

CONCILIATION RESOURCES
working together for peace

2011

Advocacy Capacity Building

A Training Toolkit

Produced as part of
THE PEOPLE'S PEACEMAKING PERSPECTIVES PROJECT

Contents

This document has been produced with the financial assistance of the European Union. The contents of this are the sole responsibility of Conciliation Resources and Saferworld and can under no circumstances be regarded as reflecting the position of the European Union.

Introduction

This toolkit is designed to support the advocacy capacity building element of the People's Peacemaking Perspectives project. It is targeted primarily at PPP, CR and SW staff involved in advocacy capacity building work, and can also be used as a reference and resource book for workshop participants on an ongoing basis.

We hope to encourage a more strategic approach to advocacy. Advocacy work may be unfamiliar to staff and partners; or where advocacy work is done, a more informal approach may be being adopted that risks missing opportunities or squandering limited resources. A more strategic approach focusing on analysis, planning and allocation of resources according to priorities has, in the experience of SW and CR, increased the chances of making an impact with our advocacy work.

The tools presented here are not an exhaustive list and staff or partners may find that the exercises contained within the handbook are not appropriate for their context. There are of course other potential tools which can be used in developing an advocacy strategy, and staff/ partners should use their own experience to inform advocacy capacity building in their context.

Structure of the Toolkit

The toolkit is divided into 7 sections:

A session giving a brief introduction to the 'what, why and how' of advocacy and the '6 steps' process of devising an advocacy strategy. The rest of the toolkit is then divided into these 6 steps:

Step 1: Assessing the Situation – including an exercise on doing a SWOT Analysis

Step 2: Establishing the Goals – including exercises on 'Understanding problems and solutions', the 'Solutions Table' and 'Ranking Solutions'

Step 3: Developing an Influencing Strategy is broken down into 3 sections:

- Section 1: Identifying, Categorising and Analysing Stakeholders with exercises on all 3
- Section 2: 'Defining an Influencing Strategy' with exercises on 'Channels of Influence' and Influence Mapping'
- Section 3: 'Considering the Options for Advocacy Activity' with exercises on 'Developing Effective Relationships' and 'Communicating Effectively'

Step 4: Finalising the Details – including exercises on 'Clarifying a Theory of Change' and 'Being SMART'

Step 5: Implementation and Monitoring – including exercises on 'Gantt Charts' and 'Setting Indicators'

Step 6: Evaluation – including an exercise on 'Evaluation'!

There are also 4 annexes:

- Annex 1: A participants' questionnaire to establish their level of experience and training needs
- Annex 2: A mock agenda for a two day workshop
- Annex 3: A mock agenda for a one day workshop
- Annex 4: An advocacy strategy template

Using the Toolkit for a Capacity Building Workshop

The Toolkit is designed to be adapted for each capacity building workshop that will be run in PPP countries during 2011–12. As well as the exercises that make up the bulk of the toolkit, the annexes are also designed to help run the workshops. A suggested process for organising and planning a workshop would be:

- Assess the needs of the workshop participants using the questionnaire in Annex 1 and further consultation with local staff and partners.
- Be clear about what else the workshop participants will be asked to do – many of the PPP advocacy capacity building workshops will come on the back of or be part of larger workshops on participatory conflict analyses.
- Familiarise yourself with the 6 steps for devising an advocacy strategy set out in the toolkit.
- Consider where in the 6 steps you want to begin and end your advocacy workshop and what would be the most useful exercises to run – e.g. if you are running the advocacy session directly after 2 days of conflict analysis it may be that people will be clear about the problems and solutions they want to address. Or if you only have 1 day you may want to only run a few of the exercises. Annexes 2 and 3 may be helpful as suggested agendas for 1 and 2 day sessions but your workshop will be more successful if it takes context as the starting point and bases the sessions on previous experience, needs and what will have already been covered.
- Develop a plan for the workshop including which exercises you will run – be realistic about timing! Discuss this with local staff and partners and or other PPP staff, finalise this and share with workshop participants, ideally a few days before the workshop.

The Toolkit is designed to help you understand the rationale behind each step in the process and the accompanying exercises, and to help you present these exercises in an advocacy training workshop. To assist you further, some of the tools and exercises (including blank templates for participants to complete) are available as separate handouts which you can print and distribute among participants as required, and/or as PowerPoint slides to help you present and explain the exercises during the workshop. You should think through which slides you will use and handouts you will need to print in advance of the workshop (printing facilities are not always readily available!).

The 'preparation box' for each exercise will give you some tips and will highlight what resources are available for each exercise:

PP indicates that there is an accompanying PowerPoint to help you present the exercise

H indicates that there is a handout which can be distributed to help participants complete the exercise.

Equipment checklist

Before you leave for your training workshop, check what equipment and facilities will be available, and what you will need to bring with you

☐ Overhead-projector	☐ Printing facilities	☐ Computer/Lap-top
☐ USB memory stick	☐ Flip chart paper	☐ Flip chart pens
☐ Blue-tac/tape	☐ Post-it notes	

TIP: Remember to save a copy of your presentation and required handouts onto a USB stick, and email this to yourself, so that you can easily access it should any technological problems arise.

Introduction to Advocacy

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PREPARATION Before you begin your workshop you should recap on the basics and ensure you know the 6-steps in developing an advocacy strategy.

RUNNING THE EXERCISE Talk through the following explanation as an introduction to your workshop, emphasising the importance of strategic advocacy following the 6-step process.

What is advocacy?

Advocacy is a strategic *process* to *influence* the policies and practices that affect people's lives. This can be roughly divided into two phases: advocacy planning and advocacy activity:

- Advocacy Planning includes the process by which goals are set, targets are selected and influencing strategies are devised.
- Advocacy Activity is the means by which the plan is implemented and includes the formulation of messages and the type of lobbying activity undertaken.

Why do we do advocacy?

To promote the concerns and analysis of ordinary people affected by conflict and insecurity:

- Because change is inevitable – what is not inevitable is the direction of change, and that is what we *can* influence.
- Because through advocacy we can achieve change from the local to the international level and have an impact on those who influence change.
- Because advocacy acts as a multiplier on the effectiveness of the work we do on the ground.

What kind of advocacy?

There are many different types of advocacy activity ranging from lobby meetings to seminars, workshops and report launches. Which activity is used is determined by many different factors foremost of which is the likelihood of achieving impact. For Saferworld and Conciliation Resources, our advocacy activities primarily focus on:

- Bringing communities together to articulate their needs and concerns to decision makers.
- Using our experience of working on the ground to draw evidence-based arguments about the way the international community can best prevent and resolve violent conflict.
- Engaging directly with government officials and international institutions such as the EU and UN to influence policy.

How do we do advocacy?

Because advocacy is a process, rather than just an event, the key to doing advocacy successfully is to develop an 'advocacy strategy' that is implemented over time with creativity and persistence.

A 6-step process for devising an Advocacy Strategy

The six step process shown below is designed to ensure that all the key elements are taken into consideration when we are devising our advocacy strategy. The process is designed to help ensure that key factors affecting our work are addressed, and priority objectives and targets for our advocacy are identified enabling us to maximise the impact of our advocacy activity with the limited resources available to us.

This toolkit will take us through each of these steps and provide us with tools to help complete each stage of the process. At the end of the process we should be able to produce an advocacy strategy document similar to the template included as an annex 4. That strategy will help us establish a logical theory of change that will enable us, our colleagues, partners and others to understand what we are seeking to change and how, allowing them to feed into and support the advocacy work.

Step 1: Assessing the situation

It's important to assess the context in which you will do your advocacy work before devising your strategy and starting on your advocacy activities. A good understanding of the external and internal factors that affect your chances of success will help you to identify what type of approach and which activities are likely to have most impact.

- **What are the strengths and weaknesses of your organisation? What are the opportunities and threats facing your work on this issue? (Exercise 1 – SWOT Analysis)**

EXERCISE 1

SWOT Analysis

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PREPARATION Familiarise yourself with the difference between the different categories of the SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats) and look through the questions designed to highlight the internal and external factors and the illustration.

TIMING The exercise should take between 60–90 minutes depending on the group work and levels of experience within the group.

Introduction

Explain that thinking about our (internal) organisation and our (external) environment is the first step in helping us maximise our potential and avoid pitfalls as we develop our advocacy plan. A SWOT Analysis allows us to consider how to use our particular experience and other strengths to respond to the opportunities and threats in the environment we plan to work in. It also enables us to choose approaches that have the best chance of success. It can help us design a strategy which builds on our strengths, manages our weaknesses, seizes opportunities and counters any threats.

Running the exercise

1. Present the SWOT Table

Ask how many people have heard of a SWOT Analysis before – what does the acronym stand for?

Explain that the 'Strength and Weaknesses' section focuses on internal strengths or weaknesses whereas the 'Opportunities and Threats' concern the external factors that may improve or threaten our chances of success.

Run through some of the issues that people may want to consider when looking at these internal and external factors:

INTERNAL – STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

Possibly present the 7 issue areas on a PowerPoint: **Legitimacy**, **Credibility**, **Accountability**, **Preparedness**, **Working with others**, **Resources**, **Funding**.

Talk through some of the issues within each of these issue areas:

- Does our organisation have **legitimacy**?
  - Who does our organisation speak for?
  - Who will accept our right to speak out on conflict issues?
  - Who questions our legitimacy? Why do they question it?
  - How can we enhance our legitimacy?
- Does our organisation have **credibility**?
  - What ways do we use to communicate?
  - How reliable is the information our group provides to the public?
  - Are our organisation's leaders seen as trustworthy, knowledgeable and expert?
  - How can we increase our credibility?
- Is our organisation **accountable**?
  - Who makes decisions in our organisation or the coalition that we are part of?
  - How open is the decision-making process?
  - To whom are decision-makers within the coalition accountable?
  - How are they held accountable?
  - How are members informed and involved?
  - How do we communicate our progress to others outside the organisation?
  - How can we improve our accountability?
- Is our organisation **prepared**?
  - What past experience do you have that will be most relevant?
  - Do you have access to the research that you need to make your case convincingly?
  - Have you considered and prepared for the security and risk implications of your intervention?
  - Have you considered and taken into account the relevant gender dimensions of your work?
  - Have you identified the key stakeholders and what this means for your work?
  - What do you need to do to improve your preparedness?
- Is our organisation able to **work with others**?
  - Is our organisation well placed to work with others?
  - What are your experiences of working with others previously?
  - Which have been our best partnerships and why?
  - What can we learn from these experiences to ensure that future relationships are more successful?
- Does our organisation have sufficient **resources**?
  - Do we have the physical resources we need?
  - Do we have the right people with the right experience and skills?
  - Are our people and other resources deployed in the best way?
  - How could we better match our resources and our programmes?

- Does our organisation have secure **funding**?
  - Are there good systems of financial control within the organisation?
  - Do we anticipate significant changes in our expenditure over the next 2–3 years?
  - Can we predict how income sources will develop over the next 2–3 years?
  - Are we getting money from a good range of donors and funders?
  - What are the financial priorities for the organisation and do we have plans to meet them?
  - What measures can we take to improve the security of funding?

EXTERNAL – OPPORTUNITIES AND THREATS

Again possibly present the main external factors on a PowerPoint slide: **Political factors**, **functioning of key institutions**, **public accountability**, **economic factors**, **social factors**.

Then highlight questions that could be relevant to these issues:

- What **political factors** could have a critical influence on our work?
  - Which groups or individuals have power to make the changes we are looking for and which are excluded?
  - What kind of political alliances exist? What are the relationships between the key players; and between decision-makes and our organisation?
  - What political opportunities are coming up that we could use to bring about to achieve your aims – processes, influencing opportunities?

- How do **key institutions** function?
  - Are government and state institutions accessible?
  - Do regional state and local government have significant decentralised authority?
  - How do the military and police operate? Is the judicial system impartial?
  - How much influence do international donors have on government policy?
  - Who else outside the country has influence?
  - Which institutions are likely to present opportunities for our work and which are likely to put up barriers?

- What are the levels of **public accountability**?
  - How (if at all) is policy change monitored and enforced?
  - Does corruption play a significant role in how decisions are taken? At what levels?
  - Do decision-makers behave in an open and transparent way? How do they communicate their decisions to the public, if at all?
  - Do we have access to information about decisions made?
  - How are decision-makers held accountable?
  - What kind of access are we likely to get to decision-makers?

- What **social factors** could have a critical influence on our work?
  - Is the media wholly state-controlled? Can it be critical? How will it portray us?
  - How strong is civil society organisation? How independent?
  - Is civil society participation in political life tolerated?
  - How are we, as representatives of civil society, likely to be viewed by the decision-makers we may wish to influence?
  - Who is likely to support or oppose us?
  - How are electronic communications used and viewed in society?

- What **economic factors** could have a critical influence on our work? For instance:
  - How does conflict affect local and national economies? What are the economic benefits? What are the costs?
  - How does conflict affect people's access to resources?
  - How does the overall state of the economy affect our ability to operate?
  - What relationship, if any, does our government have with donor countries?
  - What economic alternatives are there?

Once you have run through the Internal and External Factors, present the SWOT Table and ask participants to suggest a few strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats using the questions within each box below. Write up appropriate suggestions within each box.

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Strengths	**Weaknesses**
What are the positive aspects within your organisation that could be important in your work?	What are the factors within your organisation that might inhibit your work?
Opportunities	**Threats**
What are the factors in society (external to your organisation) that could positively affect your work?	What are the factors in society (external to your organisation) that could have a negative impact on your work?

2. Break up into groups and ask each group to fill in the SWOT Table detailing internal strengths and weaknesses and some of the most relevant external threats and opportunities for work on a particular issue.

3. Either ask them to present their completed tables from their group work or move straight to a group discussion reflecting on how useful they found this: Did it highlight any gaps or issues people hadn't considered? Did it highlight any organisational advantages that people hadn't considered?

4. Explain that once you've conducted the SWOT it is then useful to conclude by considering issues that inform our choice of strategy and activity. Ask:

- How can we maximise our strengths and counter our weaknesses?
- How can we exploit our opportunities and minimise our threats?

Step 2: Establishing the goals

Having looked at the context (both internal and external) affecting the issue you are working on, the next stage is to begin to clarify the problems you are seeking to address and the goals (or solutions) you will prioritise.

- **What is the issue; what are its causes and consequences? What solutions would deal with the causes, and what would these achieve. (Exercise 2 – Problem-Solution Tree)**
- **What is the change you are seeking; what type of change; who needs to change, and at what level? (Exercise 3 – Solutions Table)**

EXERCISE 2

Understanding Problems and Possible Solutions

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PREPARATION

1. Familiarise yourself with the Problem-Solution Tree and the process for developing it.
2. Decide how you want to present the tree – a PowerPoint is available but you may prefer to present it on flip charts. Do you want to use handouts of the template?
3. The group work will need flip chart paper and Post-it notes.

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TIMING This exercise will probably take around 60–90 minutes.

Introduction

Explain that we now have an understanding of the internal and external factors that may affect our work. We can now start focusing more precisely on the issue we want to address and what solutions we are calling for.

Understanding problems and identifying their solutions is the starting point for action. It is vital that we have a good understanding of the problems we face, as well as their causes, consequences and possible solutions. Unless this is the case, as an organisation we may soon find that we are unclear about some of the fundamentals of our work – what we are trying to change, how and why.

Analysis of situations affected by conflict invariably reveals a very complex set of causes and consequences. This complexity can be problematic. Being faced with such a range of inter-related problems and causes can make it difficult to believe that we can do anything about it. This can be overwhelming and make it difficult to know where to start.

Problem-Solution Trees are a tool to help us outline the problems our society faces, their causes and consequences, and then to use this analysis as a basis for developing a positive response to the situation. They provide a way of:

- Representing complex issues more simply and
- Identifying ways of tackling seemingly intractable problems.

Running the exercise

This exercise works best in groups of 5–10. Present the Problem-Solution Tree on a flip chart or PowerPoint and run through the different elements.

Constructing the Problem-Solution Tree

Start with the Problem Tree. Ask each group to:

1. Simply state the **problem** they are facing as an issue to be addressed.

   PPP e.g. "*Despite a strong conflict prevention/peace-building policy framework, the EU often lacks detailed analysis of the conflict dynamics in many conflict-affected and fragile states that have a major impact on the successful implementation of their policies*."

2. Identify the main **causes** of the problem and list them in boxes below the problem statement:

   PPP e.g. "*Lack of understanding of the importance of detailed conflict analysis"; "Lack of political prioritisation given to conflict analysis"; "Lack of significant resources dedicated to generating detailed conflict analysis*."

3. Identify the main **consequences** of the problem, list them in boxes above the problem statement.

   PPP e.g. "*In Brussels the EU fails to invest in detailed conflict analysis*"; "*EU's policies in countries are often not tailored effectively to the local context*"; "*The EU takes a top-down approach in its programming which often ignores the views of the locals and sometimes exacerbates conflict dynamics.*"

Then begin the Solution Tree: Ask the groups:

4. For every cause of the problem you have already identified, suggest a **solution**; write this (maybe using a Post-it note or a sticker) above the cause; there may be more than one solution per cause in which case use 2 Post-its.

   PPP e.g.
   CAUSE: Lack of understanding of the importance of detailed conflict analysis
   SOLUTION: *Awareness raising amongst politicians and officials in Brussels*

   CAUSE: Lack of political prioritisation given to conflict analysis
   SOLUTION: *Pressure put on politicians on the need for detailed conflict analysis*

5. Consider what would be different if these solutions were achieved – how would the consequences be transformed? Identify the new desired **outcomes**. Write these (on Post-it notes or stickers) over the problem consequences.

   PPP e.g.
   CONSEQUENCE: In Brussels the EU fails to invest in detailed conflict analysis
   OUTCOME: *The EU invests appropriate levels of resources in generating detailed conflict analysis*

   CONSEQUENCE: EU's policies in countries are often not tailored effectively to the local context
   OUTCOME: *The EU's policies in countries become more tailored to the local context*

6. Finally, using the information from the previous step, ask each group to construct a new tree. Above the line identify the new outcomes, below write the solutions and through the middle, restate the same problem-issue in terms of your **vision** for the future.

PPP e.g.

PROBLEM: EU often lacks detailed analysis of the conflict dynamics in many conflict-affected and fragile states that have a major impact on the successful implementation of their policies.

VISION: *The EU prioritises detailed analysis of conflict-dynamics in many of the conflict-affected countries in which it's working and this helps improve the successful implementation of EU policy*.

7. Recap the process: In the example above we have used the Problem-Solution Tree to move from the identified problem and its causes and consequences to a range of solutions and outcomes and a vision for our work. Explain that we can now use this analysis and especially the solutions we've identified to help us move towards a strategy for addressing our problem.

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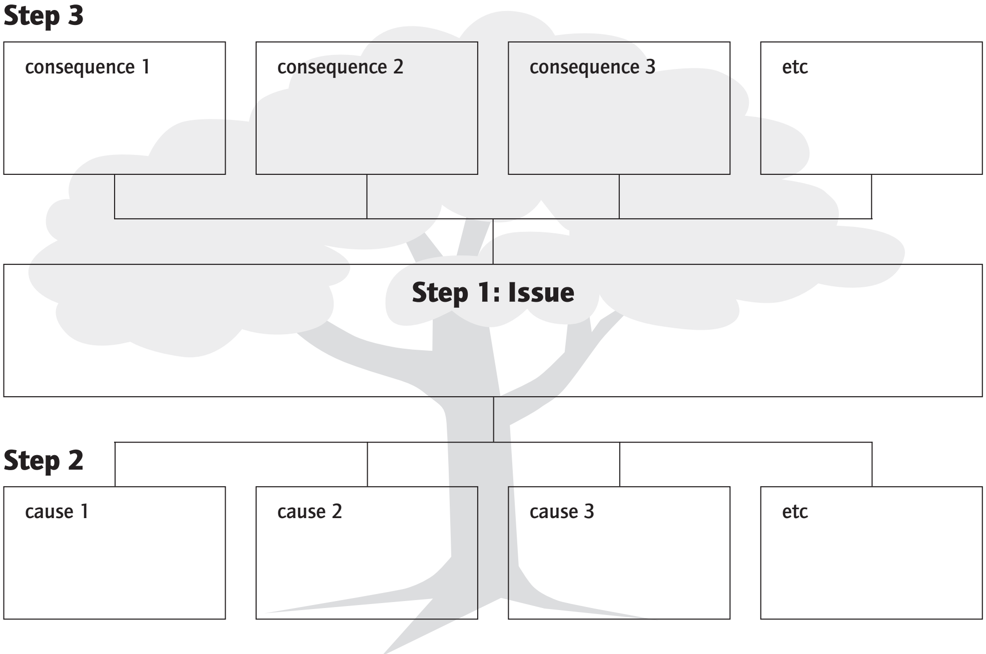
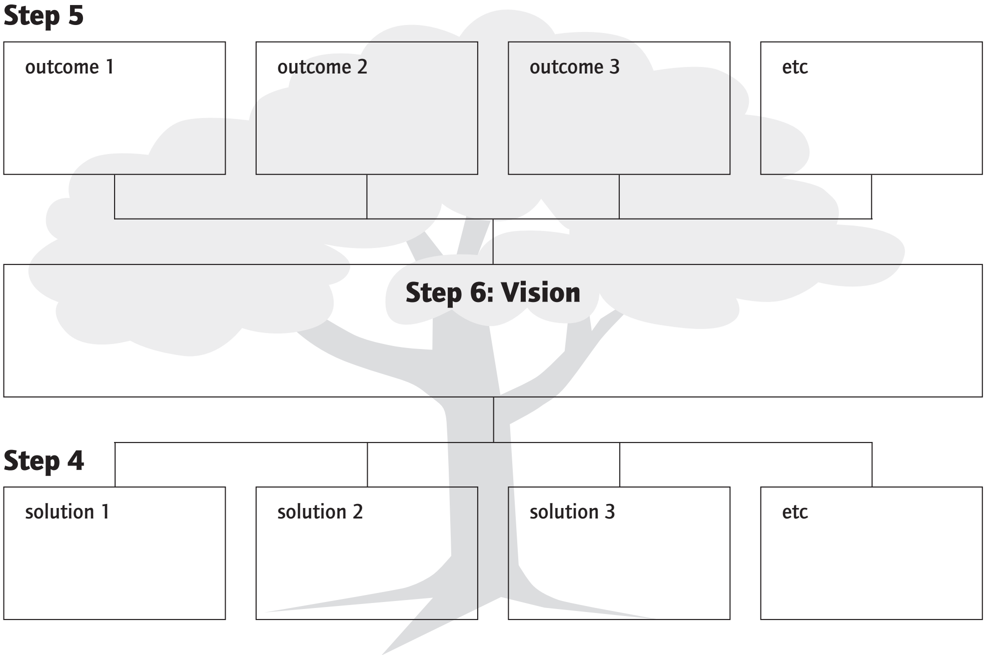
Problem Tree



Solution Tree



EXERCISE 3

Solutions Table

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PREPARATION

1. Familiarise yourself with Solutions Table.
2. Decide how you want to present the table – a PowerPoint is available but you may prefer a flip chart; do you want to use handouts of the template?
3. The group work will need flip chart paper.

TIMING This exercise will take around 30 minutes depending on whether a Problem-Solution Tree has already been developed.

Introduction

Explain that we need to be clear about the range of solutions available before we start developing our strategy and programme of action.

It's useful to categorise the different types of change we want to see. Often when we're seeking change through our advocacy work we're looking at three different elements of change:

- At what level does change need to happen: Local, National, Regional or Global?
- What type of change is it that we're trying to achieve?
  - Changes in the policies of a government or other type of institution?
  - Changes in the practice of a particular institution?
  - Changes in the actions of a particular group of people?
  - Changes in the awareness, attitudes and beliefs of a group of people?
- Who needs to change?
  - Institutions (the police for example)?
  - Individuals or group of people within institutions (for instance, the Chief of Police or local police station chiefs)?
  - Key individuals in society – influence-formers such as newspaper editors?
  - A particular social group – e.g. young men living in a particular geographical area?

Running the exercise

Filling in the Solutions Table

Explain that the Solutions Table can be used to identify these three different elements of change and map them against each other. It is designed to help us reach clarity about the kinds of change we want to see at the different levels and start us thinking about who needs to change.

Ask people to come up with suggestions for the problems and solutions/changes they want to see and then identify who needs to change at each of the relevant levels.

H Solutions Table: Template

	At the local level	At the national level	At the regional and international levels
What are the problems, their causes and consequences?			
What kind of change(s) do you want to see?			
Who needs to change?			

Concluding the exercise: setting the goal

Both the Problem-Solution Tree and the Solutions Table help us to understand the problems and identify solutions. Having also thought through what type and level of change is needed we can now express the changes we want to see as our goal. Our goal should include two elements: What kind of change we want to see and who needs to change? It should be expressed as specifically as possible but at this stage is a broad goal.

Example of Goal: *To improve the implementation of EU Policy by ensuring the External Action Service prioritises detailed and participatory analysis of conflict dynamics within conflict-affected and fragile states*.

H Illustration: Obstacles to change in Cambodia

The Working Group for Weapons Reduction [WGWR] has gained a better understanding of the difficulties that Cambodia faces. The following are the issues identified by WGWR as being the main obstacles faced by weapons reduction efforts in Cambodia.

	At the local level	At the national level	At the regional and international levels
What are the problems, their causes and consequences?	The culture of violence is a legacy of decades of internal conflict. Although the fighting is over, people continue to use weapons as the first solution to solve their problems. This is true even for minor disputes, which often turn deadly. In local communities there is a serious lack of trust between civilians and the authorities responsible for maintaining security. Almost no dialogue takes place between civilians and local authorities on security and small arms issues.	The creation of the National Commission for Weapons Reform and Management was a major step forward, but it is not yet operational and lacks the capacity, resources, and support it needs to become effective.	Efforts by the government and the international community, supported by civil society, are now better resourced and timed, but still lack a strong basis of understanding, comprehensiveness, and coordination.
What kind of change(s) do you want to see?	Dialogue needs to be encouraged between these groups to help ensure that disarmament efforts are accepted, sustainable, effective, and address underlying root problems.	Unless the attitudes of civilians, security forces, and authorities are addressed, the demand for weapons will still remain. To transform this dependence on weapons into skills for non-violent conflict resolution is important work requiring long-term commitment.	Without a strategy to develop capable, resourced and self-led Cambodian efforts, current activities remain short-sighted and of limited effectiveness. An internationally-supported long-term strategic plan is needed.
Who needs to change?	■ security forces ■ local authorities ■ civil society/civilian groups	■ police, armed forces and other security forces must develop new policies and practices ■ individuals and groups must find ways to deal with their own fears and find common solutions to improve security	Regionally and internationally, institutional support for the government is needed to increase its understanding and capacity to carry out the work.

EXERCISE 4

Ranking Solutions

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PREPARATION Familiarise yourself with the Ranking Solutions exercise including the ranking table; decide how you will present the table and prepare materials for the exercise.

TIMING This session should take about 45 minutes.

Introduction

Explain that if the group has previously developed a Problem-Solution Tree or filled in a Solutions Table, we will have identified a number of different solutions that address the problems we are facing. However, given the limited resources we have available, we will probably want to focus our efforts on a specific solution rather than trying to address everything.

The decision about where to focus our efforts is a vital one and it's worth investing effort to get this decision right. A poor choice of focus at this stage can be very damaging to our ability to achieve change. One useful tool in helping us make a decision is a ranking exercise. This enables us to make direct comparisons between various options against a standard set of key criteria.

Explain that Ranking Solutions enables us to use limited resources most effectively because:

- Prioritising our solutions is the first step in making sure that what we seek to achieve is manageable and realistic and that it makes sense in the context of the external environment and our own ability to respond to it.
- Being clear about our goal should give clarity to our whole programme of work by giving vital focus and helping us think through how the change we seek will actually happen.

Based on the answers to the following questions, we should be able to identify which is the most appropriate solution that we are going to focus on. We are then in a position to determine what we hope to achieve. Think about this in the context of the external political, economic and social environment and in terms of our organisational capacity. If we have conducted a SWOT Analysis we have already developed an excellent understanding of the context in which we plan to act.

Running the exercise

Refer back to previous solutions that you have identified (if the group haven't done a Problem-Solution Tree or a Solutions Table then ask the group(s) to brainstorm potential problems and solutions.

Consider the following questions for each potential solution:

What is the potential impact?

- How significant would the impact be on the lives of affected individuals and communities if the solution were adopted?
- Who will benefit and who will be left out of the benefits?

What are the prospects of success?[1]

- How realistic is it that some kind of change in line with our proposed solution will actually occur?
- Will we be able to maintain action throughout the timeframe of likely change?
- Is it likely that there could be changes that maybe don't achieve our proposed solution but still would benefit affected individuals and communities.
- Who will oppose us, and how powerful will their opposition be?

Does it make sense internally for our organisation to work on this issue now?

- Does working on this issue fit with our organisational values, mission and mandate?
- Does it play to our strengths and minimise our weaknesses?
- Do we have sufficient resources? How might it affect future funding?
- How might it affect important relationships?
- Do our efforts fit within a wider movement?
- What additional benefits does our organisation bring by getting involved on this issue?

Does it make sense externally for our organisation to work on this issue now?

- Does working on the issue respond to specific opportunities?
- Can we minimise the impact of any threats?
- What are the security implications? What other risks are there? Are they manageable?
- Does it help link local and global concerns?
- Can we picture a sequence of achievable steps that will lead to our proposed solution?

Having introduced the four categories (potential impact, prospects of success, internal rationale and external rationale) explain that we can now use these categories to help reach a decision about which solution we should focus our efforts on.

Explain that the ranking exercise is based on a simple scoring technique:

1. List the range of options you have identified as possible solutions.
2. For each possible solution in turn, consider how well it scores against four criteria:
   - Potential impact
   - Prospects of success
   - Internal rationale
   - External rationale
3. Give each solution a score between 1 and 5 against each criteria, where 1 is a very weak match and 5 is a very strong match.
4. Total the scores and use this as a basis for reaching a decision about where your focus should be.

1 Note: This can be subjective. People may be less inclined to engage in unfamiliar areas of work and may therefore assess the prospects of success as being less than they would for other more familiar work areas.

The following example illustrates how the ranking exercise works:

Possible Solutions	Potential Impact	Prospect of success	Internal Rationale	External Rationale	Total score
Training of journalists	4	4	5	5	18
Conducting survey	5	5	3	5	18
Public Education	5	5	2	5	17
Trust building	5	4	4	5	18
Transparency – public information	5	1	2	5	13
Advocacy for legislation	3	4	4	3	14
Media events and round tables	5	5	4	5	19

Based on a combination of this and earlier analysis of their external and internal situation, the NGO who conducted this analysis decided to focus their efforts on media events and roundtables.

H Ranking Solutions: Template

List of Possible Solutions	Potential Impact	Prospect of success	Internal Rationale	External Rationale	Total score

Step 3: Developing an influencing strategy

Developing an influencing strategy is at the centre of the development of an advocacy strategy. It looks at the changes you want to bring about, who needs to make that change happen, and allows you to think through how to influence that person to change. To do this you will need to consider the forces supporting and opposing the change, and the best resources and options available to you to influence your target. Step 3 is divided into three sections:

Section 1: Identify, categorise and analyse all the stakeholders

- Which organisations, institutions and individuals are involved in or affected by your work? How do you find more about them? (Exercise 5 – Categorising Stakeholders)
- Who or what has the power to make the change you have identified is necessary? Which organisations and/or individuals will support and oppose your calls? How much influence do they have? (Exercise 6 – Categorising Stakeholders, Exercise 7 – Stakeholder Mapping)

Section 2: Devise your influencing strategy

- Who is the target for your advocacy? Do you understand their position on the issue? (Exercise 8 – Influence Map)
- Who or what would best influence the target to support your goals? (Exercise 9 – Channels of Influence)

Section 3: Consider the options for your advocacy activity

- What relationships do you need to build to conduct your advocacy successfully? How will you build these relationships? (Exercise 10 – Building Effective Relationships)
- Who is the audience for your advocacy? How will you reach them and what will you say? (Exercise 11 – Communicating Effectively)
- How will you conduct your advocacy meetings/events? (Exercise 12 – Advocacy Activity, Face to Face Meetings)

EXERCISE 5

Identifying Stakeholders

PREPARATION Read through and understand the questions about each of the stakeholders. You will need flip chart paper.

H **TIMING** Should take about 30 minutes.

Introduction

Explain that in any situation, all kinds of relationships affect our work. There will be a variety of individuals and institutions whose interests include areas of work that are relevant to our own priorities (so-called "stakeholders"). The term stakeholder can be defined as including any individuals or organisations who are either interested in or directly affected by the position that we take on a particular issue.

Advocacy work often involves calling for change. There may be stakeholders who support our calls, and there may be others that oppose those calls. Some will not want to engage, or have the resources to engage on our area of work. It is therefore important to understand who these actors are, and whether they can/will support us.

If, for example, we want to improve local community policing where we live, we will need to work out who supports our position and who opposes it. We can do this by looking at the attitudes of the people and groups who are interested in or affected by our position, such as local police officers, local government officials, victims of crime, and those currently benefiting from the status quo. Consider the importance of the issue to them, as well as the influence that they wield over the change we desire.

Running the exercise

Take a piece of flip chart paper and brainstorm with the group the three sets of questions below on 'government stakeholders', 'other organisations and individuals' and 'international players'. Alternatively ask them to split into 3 groups and take one set of stakeholders each. After they've answered all the questions, bring them back together and get them to report back to the group as a whole.

H Identifying Stakeholders checklist

You need to research	How to find out more
Which part of government is responsible for relevant issues including: • Negotiations and participating in international/regional fora • National law enforcement & border controls • Provincial and local government • Local law enforcement • National defence & military • Development and grant making • Finance • Negotiating/liaising with non-state actors • Social inclusion and equality	**Getting information about governing institutions:** • Does your government produce a directory? • Does it have a website outlining what different departments do? • Are there other civil society organisations working with governments who could give you the information? • Are UN agencies operating in your country or region (UNDP, UNICEF, DPKO, etc.) that could supply you with information? • Can you get the information from local government or community leaders?
Which other organisations and individuals have a major interest in your issue? Name specific... • NGOs • Media • Police • Business • Youth groups • Academics • Judiciary • Community groups • Political parties • Members of parliament • Labour organisations • Women's groups • Religious groups • Elders and community leaders	**Getting information about organisations and individuals** • Check to see if there are any other local NGOs working on similar issues • Have any political parties produced statements on relevant issues • Are there public records of parliamentary debates or is there public access to parliamentary sessions? • How much media coverage of your issue, and by which media?
Which international players have an interest in your issue? Again, name specific... • Donors • NGOs • UN bodies • Regional groups (e.g. Organisation of American States, EU, etc.) • Trans-national corporations involved in the country • Trade unions • International financial institutions • Other governments that are working to introduce new policies in the area	**Check big international NGOs with a relevant focus to their work. Many might have country or regional offices close to where you work e.g.** • Oxfam GB • World Council of Churches • Amnesty International • International Committee of the Red Cross/Red Crescent Check with UN depts. to access reports and work on relevant issues within the UN system, plus also statements, positions and voting records of member states.

EXERCISE 6

Categorising Stakeholders

PP

PREPARATION Read and understand the exercise. Draw a Stakeholder Grid on a flip chart.

TIMING The session should take about 30 minutes.

Introduction

Explain that when analysing potential allies and opponents we should make sure that we've identified as wide a group as possible. Completing exercise 5 should provide us with a comprehensive list. Make sure that we name them explicitly: for example, "business" will not help our analysis – name the companies with a direct interest in our issue and what they do. Categorising Stakeholders will help us focus on the most important stakeholders and understand how they currently connect to the issue. This will help us decide how we might relate to them, now and in the future.

Running the exercise

Draw a grid on a flip chart and write 'Target', 'Beneficiaries', 'Opponents' and 'Allies' in the four squares. Run through the definitions of each of these categories with the group (see below). Then take the list of stakeholders identified in Exercise 5, discuss which group they fit into and put them onto the flip chart.

The Target

Your target is the decision maker: the individual or group with the power to make the change that you are seeking.

The Beneficiaries

These are the people whose lives we hope will be improved by the successful achievement of our goals.

The Opponents

These are the people who oppose what you are trying to do. Some could become allies in time, with greater understanding of the issues, or they could stand in the way of what we're trying to do, in which case they may become targets. Ask the group who is benefiting from the current situation?

- Who is benefiting economically and/or politically?
- Who is likely to actively oppose you and what motivates them?
- How powerful are they – how much of a block on progress might they be?

The Allies

Those people and organisations will support this change because they will benefit, either directly or indirectly, from the changes that we are trying to bring about. They may include, for example, religious or community leaders, sympathetic journalists, politicians or political parties, funders or donors and so on.

Questions to ask would include:

- Who is losing out from or disadvantaged by the current situation?
- Who else might want to see the situation change?
- How powerful are they? Should/could we work with them?

EXERCISE 7

Stakeholder Mapping

PP
H

PREPARATION Read and understand the exercise. Draw a Stakeholder Map on a flip chart.

TIMING The session should take about 30 minutes.

Introduction

Explain to the group that the Stakeholder Mapping exercise is designed to help us think through more thoroughly a stakeholder's influence and their position on our issue. It is also designed to help us compare different stakeholders in terms of two criteria:

- How influential they are on our issue – how much people listen to this particular stakeholder's views on our issues.
- How supportive or opposed to our position they are – and how strong this support or opposition is.

Running the exercise

Present the Stakeholder Mapping table (template overleaf) and explain what the axis represent. Then map relevant stakeholders from your previous exercises on the table. Ask the group to think about and discuss where particular stakeholders should appear on the map. This is likely to lead to some discussion and disagreement so ask participants to back up their arguments for why a particular stakeholder may be more or less influential or more or less supportive. Once you have agreement from the group, write the name of the stakeholder in the box that's been agreed on the flip chart. Alternatively you can write the name of the stakeholder on a Post-it note or piece of paper and then stick it to the table – the benefit of which is that they can then be moved around if there is disagreement about where they should be located.

Once you have mapped all the relevant stakeholders discuss the implications of this exercise for the focus of your advocacy. It is unlikely that the most influential stakeholder will be the most supportive (although you might be lucky!). You may want to focus on a discussion of whether it is more important to prioritise working with the most supportive targets or the most influential. This will depend on a number of factors – the likelihood of success: what are your chances of impact by challenging those opposed to your position; the timing of your advocacy: do you need to build up your allies before confronting your opponents?

H Stakeholder Mapping: Template

	High				
Influence on our issue – ability to bring about the change we want to see	**Medium**				
	Low				
		Strongly Opposing	**Opposing**	**Supportive**	**Strongly Supportive**
		Position on our issue			

SECTION 2: DEFINING YOUR INFLUENCING STRATEGY

EXERCISE 8

Influence Map

PP

PREPARATION Familiarise yourself with the exercise. Decide whether to divide the participants into groups or to run as a plenary exercise. You will need flip chart paper and different coloured pens or Post-it notes for this exercise.

H

TIMING Running this exercise will take around 30 minutes.

Introduction

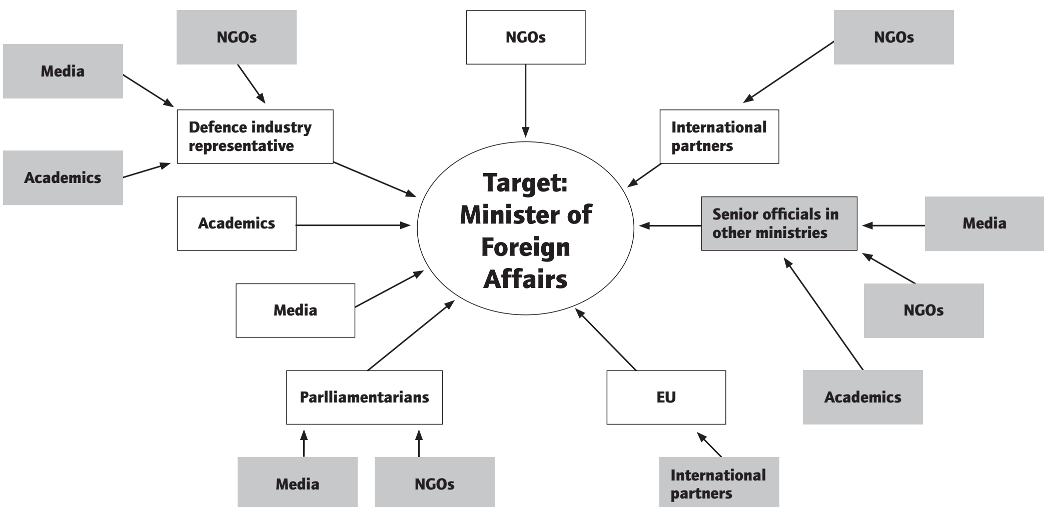
An Influence Map is a tool you might use in developing, presenting and explaining your influencing strategy. It provides a simple visual guide to the routes that you will be taking in order to influence your target.

Running the exercise

Starting with a blank sheet of paper:

1. Write the name of your target on the centre of the page.
2. Around the target, using a different coloured pen or post-its, write/place the names of the main or primary channels of influence that you could use to reach your target.
3. Ask the group/s to identify any secondary channels of influence that you may be able use to influence the main channels, and using a different colour of pen or post-it, write/place these on the page.
4. Fill in the arrows to represent the influencing relationships.

H



EXERCISE 9

Channels of Influence

PP

PREPARATION Familiarise yourself with the exercise. Decide how to present the exercise and whether to divide the participants into groups or to run as a plenary exercise. Draw a Channels of Influence Table on flip chart paper.

H

TIMING Running this exercise will take between 30–45 minutes.

Introduction

Explain that one of the most important elements of our influencing strategy will be identifying the means we will use to influence our target. This involves selecting the channels through which we can focus influence on them. A channel of influence could be:

- A direct personal relationship (i.e. do we know the relevant official working on our issue),
- An indirect relationship (would our local MP lobby the Government on our behalf/would supportive media coverage make the government more amenable to change), or
- A process (how will the outcome of review-X affect policy-Y).

In any situation, it's likely that there will be a range of different channels open to us to influence our target. Remember to think about informal influencing channels and opportunities as well as formal channels. For instance, is the President's wife interested in our issue? Is the local police chief likely to respond positively to a favourable opinion voiced by a close friend who one of our members may know well?

The trick is to identify and then focus our efforts on the most effective means available. By considering the quality of the two relationships involved in this influencing process – between us and the channel and between the channel and the target – we will be able to make an appropriate selection of which channels to concentrate on. For example, if we judge that supportive media coverage of our issue would have more influence on the target (say a Government Minister) than an opposition MP, we would want to focus our efforts on developing our relationship with the relevant journalist/s.

Running the exercise

Using the Channels of Influence Table template:

1. If they have not already completed an Influence Map, ask the groups to brainstorm a list of the channels of influence that they could use to reach their target. (Otherwise refer to the Influence Map).
2. Ask the group to rate (high, medium or low) the channel in relation to how effective they will be at influencing the target.

3. Similarly, ask them to rate (high, medium or low) the channel in relation to how effectively they will be able to influence that channel.

4. Plot the results on the Channels of Influence Table.

H Channels of Influence Table

How effectively will we be able to influence the channel?

		High	**Medium**	**Low**
How much influence will the channel have with our target	**High**			
	Medium			
	Low			

Once we have decided where on the table our channel should sit, we will be able to use these findings to prioritise channels and to help develop tactics for achieving our goal.

SECTION 3: CONSIDERING THE OPTIONS FOR ADVOCACY ACTIVITY

Now you've done your influencing strategy and are clear about who you're going to try and influence and why, the third element of defining the influencing strategy is determining which activities you are going to use to influence your target.

EXERCISE 10

Developing Effective Relationships

PP

PREPARATION **This is essentially a brainstorming session that can either be run in small groups with a feedback session or in larger groups. This will depend on the size of the group and dynamics within the group. Flip chart will be required.**

TIMING **Running the exercise should take up to 30 minutes.**

Introduction

A central part of advocacy activity – some would say the single most important part of advocacy – is developing effective relationships. It becomes particularly important in the many contexts where there are actually only a handful of people responsible for taking the decisions we are concerned about.

Running the exercise

Ask the group to brainstorm "*What are the important attributes our organisation needs to develop effective advocacy relationships*."

Use the following attributes as prompts:

- Credibility – being seen as an organisation that is able to provide credible evidence, arguments and recommendations on topics of concern.
- Trustworthiness – demonstrating that we are an organisation that can be trusted to provide accurate and well-thought through information and can be trusted to work in a collaborative way.
- Awareness of the targets' perspective – demonstrating that we are able to see the problems we are discussing from different perspectives and appreciate the incentives and disincentives for a target taking action as well as what targets need in order to be able to do their jobs more effectively or more easily.
- Awareness of the areas of responsibilities of different targets and the appropriate time to approach different targets – depending on their seniority and role in the decision-taking process.
- Awareness and understanding of when to use different advocacy approaches – Effective relationships don't have to be good relationships all the time. We should be able to criticise our targets without destroying the relationship. Cultivating respect is crucial to most relationships.

Now ask the group(s) to brainstorm "*What can we do as an organisation to help us improve our chances of developing good relationships*."

Use the following points as prompts:

- Ensure our arguments and recommendations are based on the evidence we have received from the ground and can be backed up, substantiated and defended when challenged.
- Tailor our advocacy activities and the material and messages we are producing accordingly.
- Develop a good understanding of who our targets are – not just in terms of the role they play but their positions on certain issues, their connections to different political or social groups, their particular interests (geographical or thematic), their educational background or their attachment or affiliation to other relevant organisations.
- Ensure we use the right approach at the right time – constructively arguing at some points; openly criticising at others.
- Ensure we're using appropriate contacts for appropriate targets – i.e. bringing in senior members of staff to meet more senior targets.
- As far as possible working to ensure we make our work 'interesting' to our targets, interpret it in terms of their personal perspective and ensure they see our recommendations as both in their interests and consistent with their opinions.
- The background to our efforts to develop better relationships are our efforts to get better at doing 'the basics' of advocacy: establishing a clear problem statement, setting clear objectives, being clear about our power analysis and who the key actors are.

EXERCISE 11

Communicating Effectively

PP

H

PREPARATION Again this is essentially a brainstorming session that can either be run in small groups with a feedback session or in larger groups. Flip chart will be required.

TIMING The session should take about 45 minutes.

Introduction

Explain that another key element of advocacy activity is communication. Whenever we act, we are communicating with an audience. In different political situations and at different times, different approaches will be more appropriate; but in all cases, we need to deliver our messages in relevant and effective ways. To do this, we will need to set clear goals, identifying which audiences we are communicating with, and why.

Running the exercise

Ask the group to brainstorm *Different types of audience*:

In general the groups suggestions can be grouped into three types of audience:

- Decision-takers, policy makers and opinion formers
- Groups and individuals who are interested in the issue
- Wider public

For each type of audience, both the message and the ways of delivering it will be different. It will be important to research our audiences, and ensure that we are as specific as possible. For example, the 'wider public' is not a single or homogenous group, and is made of up of many different sub-groups which may have differing views on or interests in your work e.g. men, women, children, the politically active, businessmen, trade unionists etc.

In developing our communications strategy and selecting our audiences, we need to ask ourselves the following questions:

Who are you trying to reach?

- Who are the various audiences that you want to reach?
- Why are you communicating with them?

What will you say?

- What do they know and care about?
- What messages will work best with each particular audience?
- What do we want to say to them?

How will you reach them?

- In writing
- Face to face meetings
- As part of a wider seminar/policy event
- Through the media

Ask the groups to pick a target audience – say 'policy makers', 'trade unions', 'young men' or 'older women'. Ask them to spend 10 minutes thinking about:

- What we would say to this group
- How we would reach them

Ask them to feedback their thoughts and ask for feedback from other groups.

Present the chart below showing some of the different ways of communicating with the three types of audience.

H

different audiences, different messages	**brief description of the different audiences**	**types of message that it might be appropriate to communicate to these audiences**	**examples of good ways to convey messages to the different audiences**
small numbers of people	(1) policy makers and opinion formers	either detailed, evidence-based arguments, or else show how the issue relates to their power and status	through detailed policy documents, or simpler letters or meetings to establish the importance of the issue to them
	(2) groups and individuals who are interested in the issue	*explain what you are calling for and why, identifying the barriers to change, but without being too specific about the detail*	through newsletters, leaflets, and newspaper articles; provide more detailed information to those who ask for it
large numbers of people	(3) the wider public	*simple and emotional stories and messages that make it easy to understand and engage with the issues*	through using celebrities or the personal testimonies of those who have suffered as a result of small arms misuse

EXERCISE 12

Advocacy Activity – Face to Face meetings

PP

PREPARATION **Again this is a brainstorming session that can either be run in small groups with a feedback session or in larger groups. Flip chart will be required.**

TIMING **The session should take about 45 minutes.**

Introduction

Explain that there are many different types of advocacy activity, but the focus of Saferworld's and Conciliation Resources' advocacy tends to be at the decision-takers, policy-makers and opinion-formers level. In doing so we make use of a range of activity, but especially one-on-one meetings, policy roundtables and written materials, and occasionally through media work.

Running the exercise

1. Ask the groups to brainstorm what are the sorts of things they should do, *before the meeting*, to ensure the meeting goes well. Write them up on a flip chart.

Use the following as a guide:

Do some research

- Who are you meeting? Check their background for relevant interests
- Have they spoken publicly on your issue?
- What is their level of authority? What can you ask them to do?
- What will their likely response be?

Know your subject

Make sure that you are fully up-to-date with your issue. Assume that you will need to be able to explain your issue in simple terms to someone with no previous knowledge of the subject, but be prepared for probing/challenging questions.

Be clear about the objective

Is there a specific outcome you hope for? In other words, what action do you want them to take? If you don't know, nor will your audience!

Assign roles

If you are going as a group, be clear about who will present the main points, who will take notes etc. Choose your messenger(s) carefully according to confidence, levels of expertise, subject specialism, seniority etc.

2. Ask the groups to brainstorm what are the sorts of things they should do, *during the meeting* to ensure the meeting goes well. Write them up on a flip chart.

Use the following as a guide:

- Be succinct, direct and clear but never confrontational.
- Demonstrate the logic behind your message and the reasons why they should act on it.
- Mention any relevant allies (that they would respect) and their contribution on the issue to strengthen your case.
- Leave behind key materials, particularly a briefing paper and summarising the issue and your main arguments, and perhaps some background information on your organisation.
- If appropriate, check what you have agreed before finishing the discussion and if get agreement in principle for a follow-up meeting.

3. Ask the groups to brainstorm what are the sorts of things they should do *after the meeting* to ensure effective follow up. Write them up on a flip chart.

Use the following as a guide:

- Follow up with a letter of thanks, summarising what was discussed and any commitments made.
- Inform them of what you plan to do next and keep them informed of progress.
- Keep a summary of the discussion for future reference.

4. Talk the group through the following 'top tips' and 'common mistakes' and if time get their reactions.

Top Tip 1: Keep aware of the time and of the body language of your audience. A shorter meeting where the audience is engaged and asking questions is much preferable to a longer meeting where you are the only one talking... Leave them wanting more!

Top Tip 2: Avoid presenting your case in an overly emotive way. Work on conflict issues will inevitably touch on shocking and tragic stories, but it is not always necessary or useful to raise these in an advocacy context: you or your messenger may get caught in the emotion of the story focusing on the details of this rather than your message; but more importantly it will make your audience feel uncomfortable and reduces the space for them to critically engage with the issue and your message.

Common mistakes to avoid

- Making recommendations that are wildly unrealistic
- Not having a unified voice among your members or network
- Having inadequate information to support your case
- Not being consistent and not delivering clear messages
- Cutting off lines of communication with your target

Step 4: Finalising the details

With your broad influencing strategy in place, you now need to plan your approach in greater detail. At this stage, the clearer you can be in stating what you are hoping to change (your objectives), the easier it you'll find it to focus all your resources and energy on making it happen. Clear thinking here brings a discipline to your programme of action, helping you to plot a route.

- **What is your 'theory of change', and what assumptions is it based on? What will you achieve by your actions? (Exercise 13 – Theory of Change and Impact Ladder)**
- **Are your objectives Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-bound? (Exercise 14 – Being SMART)**

EXERCISE 13

Theory of Change and the Impact Ladder

PREPARATION Familiarise yourself with the overall exercise, the Impact Ladder and the process for developing a theory of change. You will also need to either print out copies of the Impact Ladder or present it during the exercise.

H **TIMING** Running this session should take up to one hour.

Part 1: Critically assessing your 'Theory of Change'

Introduction

Explain that we now need to clarify the logic that underpins our advocacy activity – our '*Theory of Change*'. At its most basic, a theory of change explains how a group of early and intermediate accomplishments set the stage for producing long-range results. It makes clear what *assumptions* we are making about the process through which change will occur.

Challenging the assumptions we have about how change happens within our context and asking whether our strategy is based on the right assumptions will help ensure limited resources are used in the most effective manner. When a theory of change is built around the wrong assumptions about the local context, even the most elaborate advocacy strategy can fall apart.

The simplest way of elaborating a theory of change is by asking "What do I think will be achieved by my actions?" and then following the chain of events that we think will occur as a result. The answer will probably be something like: "I believe if I do this successfully, this will happen, which will mean this will occur, and then this will change, and ultimately the broader goal will be reached". Following this chain of questioning will help us to examine the assumptions that we've made in deciding a particular strategy is the right one. It will also help us assess whether the actions we've decided to take are *necessary* and *sufficient* to achieve our goals.

Running the Theory of Change exercise

- Ask the participants what they think about the idea of a 'Theory of Change'. Do they already articulate a theory of change for their advocacy work? Are there other ways in which they describe the logic behind their advocacy activity?
- Split the group into small groups of 4 or 5 and ask them to articulate a theory of change for a goal they are working towards by answering the question "What do I hope to achieve by my actions".
- Ask the group to brainstorm the **assumptions** that their theory of change is based on.
- Ask the group to critically assess whether they think the actions they are proposing will be **necessary** to achieve the stated outcome – are they the right actions to be undertaking
- Ask the group to critically assess whether they think the actions they are proposing will be **sufficient** to achieve the stated outcome – and if not what else needs to happen.
- Ask the smaller groups to feed back to the larger group and invite other groups to comment on the presentations challenging assumptions and critiquing approaches.

Have a discussion about whether participants think that having a stated theory of change has been useful in assessing whether they are on the right track with their advocacy.

Part 2: The Impact Ladder

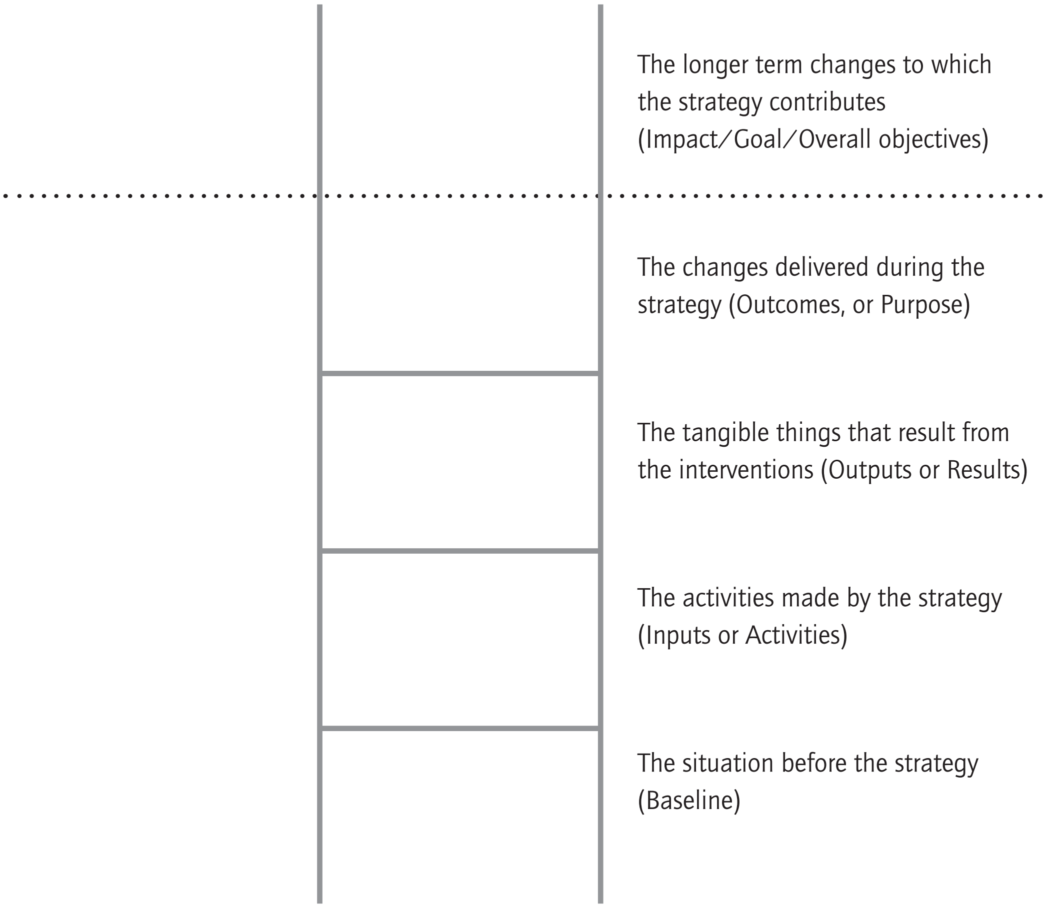
Introduction

Explain that this is an opportunity to separate out the different elements of what we are hoping to achieve by our actions. The Impact Ladder will help us to do this by clarifying the links between our actions and progress at different levels.

Running the Impact Ladder exercise

1. On a flip chart, introduce the Impact Ladder and talk through it. Explain that it highlights how progress at one level contributes to progress at the next; the ladder shows us that its important to measure changes at each level, in order to demonstrate how we are 'walking up the ladder' – we can't measure impact unless we have also monitored progress and change at the lower rungs of the ladder. But stress that the top level (impact) is beyond the control of the project; we should aim to contribute to impact, but cannot create it through our project alone.
2. Map the goals and emerging objectives developed during previous sessions onto the Impact Ladder, to see which level it sits at, and to try begin working out what fits at the other levels (if a number of goals/objectives have been developed the previous sessions, just do this for one of the goals, to save time and provide an example).
3. Have a discussion about whether participants think that they might find the Impact Ladder useful in planning, understanding and monitoring their work. If so, how might they use it? Or have they used similar tools (might link to a discussion on log frames).

H The Impact Ladder



EXERCISE 14

Being SMART

PP

PREPARATION **Familiarise yourself with the SMART acronym. Prepare a flip chart with the acronym spelt out (although you may want to write this as part of the exercise). Familiarise yourself with the illustration of a SMART objective and if possible come up with your own more relevant illustration from your context.**

TIMING **This exercise should take around 40 minutes.**

Introduction

Explain that intermediate steps that you need to take on the way to your ultimate goal are often called 'Outcome level objectives'. They are changes we can directly bring about or clearly contribute to. They also allow you to see how you can measure your progress towards your goal.

Running the exercise

1. Introduce the SMART Acronym – you may want to write the 5 words on a flip chart as you introduce the concept.

When we set objectives it's helpful to state them so that we'll be able to see whether we have achieved them or not – be SPECIFIC and MEASUREABLE. If we state them as results – in other words state as precisely as possible what we seek to change and indicate by when – we and others can work out what to measure, and by when.

If our objectives are informed by our analysis of what approaches will work, and derived from our previous assessment of the external environment and internal realities of our situation, they should include REALISTIC steps that focus on concrete change.

Once we have stated our objective in this way, you can reflect on whether it is actually ACHIEVABLE in the terms you have suggested.

Specific **M**easurable **A**chievable **R**ealistic **T**ime-bound

2. Introduce the illustration of a SMART objective.

The following is an illustration of the difference between a change-focused goal, a more specific action-focused objective and a SMART objective.

Goal: To improve the EU's conflict prevention and peacebuilding policies by using the results of PPP participatory conflict analyses.

Action-focused objective: To improve the EU's conflict prevention and peacebuilding policies by organising meetings with key officials to communicate the need to improve existing conflict prevention and peacebuilding instruments.

SMART objective: To improve the EU's conflict prevention and peacebuilding policies by organising meetings with key officials in the Commission, EEAS and Delegations between January 2011 and March 2012 to communicate recommendations for the improvement of existing conflict prevention and peace-building instruments on the basis of PPP participatory conflict analyses.

3. Discuss whether the group can see the value of setting SMART objectives and whether they think setting them would be useful to their work.

4. Break the group up into groups of 4 or 5 people and ask them to come up with a SMART objective for an outcome they have previously identified.

5. Bring them back into the bigger group and ask each group to present their SMART objective and then judge how SMART it is against the 5 elements – having the 5 words on a flip chart will be useful at this stage.

6. Ask the group to reflect on how useful they think SMART objectives are and whether they think they will use them in their planning.

Step 5: Implementation and monitoring

An advocacy strategy needs timelines, clear lines of management and clarity on responsibilities. You need to decide what you will measure (indicators) to allow you to track progress and adjust your work accordingly. Strategies are not set in stone, but you need good reasons, based on sound analysis, to adjust them to meet external and internal requirements. This means you need to know whether you're being successful or not.

- **What are the timelines for your objectives and acitivities? Who should be doing what and when should they be doing it? (Exercise 15 – Gantt Chart)**
- **How will you monitor your progress? Will you be able to adapt and change your strategy if necessary? (Exercise 16 – Setting Indicators)**

IMPLEMENTATION

It is important to plan in as much detail as possible how your strategy or activity will be implemented, particularly for larger projects. An implementation plan will make it clear to everyone involved what is expected of them and at what stage of the project timeline. Setting out an implementation plan can often highlight the scale of what is being planned and will help you allocate the necessary resources and staffing.

EXERCISE 15

Gantt Chart

PP

PREPARATION Familiarise yourself with the Gantt Chart, and decide how you will present this exercise. Think about any specific advocacy related Gantt Charts you have used recently which might help you explain the utility of this tool.

H

TIMING This session should take about an hour.

Introduction

Explain that a Gantt Chart pulls together our plan and makes it clear who should be doing what, and when. Gantt Charts provide a good way of displaying our action plan. They make our plan clear so that all those involved share our understanding of what needs to be done, and when specific actions have to be completed by to ensure timely project delivery.

A Gantt Chart not only lists the activities in an easy to read timeline, it can help reveal the relationships and the dependencies between activities. And it's also a practical way of ensuring that resources are not too thinly spread at any one time.

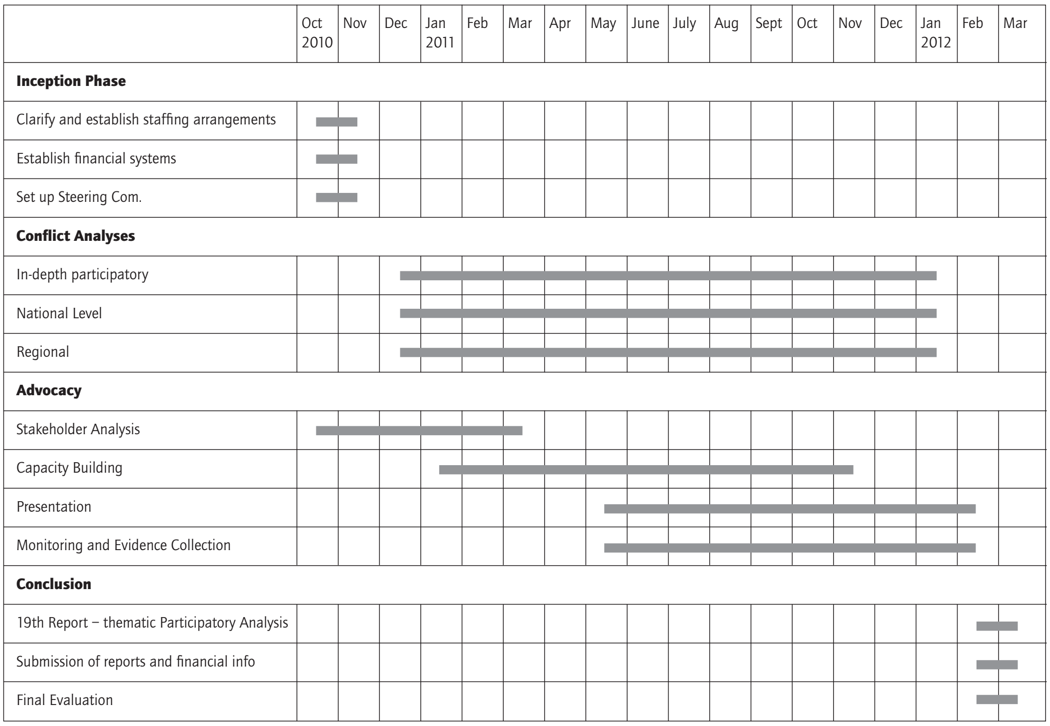
Gantt Charts are useful for sharing information about the plan and can be used as a basis for monitoring and reporting on progress.

Running the exercise

For each area of work:

1. List all the activities that you need to undertake.
2. Arrange them roughly in the order in which they should happen.
3. Identify the likely duration of each activity.
4. Put this information on to the project Gantt timetable.
5. Ensure that your activities are linked to any relevant external events or deadlines.
6. Ensure that you put things in the right order, so that the things that need to happen in advance of a particular task have happened.
7. Ensure that you have adequate resources available to be able to do all the work; you may need to delay or rescheduling some of the tasks as a result.
8. When complete, allocate responsibility to individuals for the completion of specific activities.

H Example Gantt Chart – PPP project overview



MONITORING

Monitoring is a continuous process of information gathering throughout the duration of a project. The information gathered provides regular indications of progress (or lack thereof) against plans and expected results, and highlights where adjustments to the project might be needed. If planned from the outset of the project, monitoring should not be too time-consuming.

EXERCISE 16

Setting Indicators

PP

H

PREPARATION Familiarise yourself with the Setting Indicators Template – you may want to produce some of these as handouts or present it on a flip chart/PowerPoint slide.

TIMING The session will take at least 45 minutes.

Introduction

Explain that as we implement our plan, we should always monitor our progress. This is important in enabling us to use limited resources most effectively because:

- Monitoring helps us identify what's working and what isn't, allowing us to learn, to be adaptable and change strategy and tactics as events develop.
- As we find out more about the context in which we're operating and as the situation changes, we should be prepared to revise the objectives that we have earlier established. Effective monitoring, which involves comparing actual progress against objectives, should help us do this appropriately.

The key to manageable and effective monitoring is to pick a limited number of things we will measure (indicators) that correspond most closely to the change we are trying to bring about, and determine who will collect the information and when.

It's easy to get overburdened by the requirements of monitoring, and just as easy to end up monitoring the wrong things. We should choose to monitor a few important things, and make sure we review them regularly.

For instance, in Step three we talked about the importance of effective relationships, and how much successful advocacy depends on this part of the work. This would be one aspect we would want to monitor. The criteria highlighted credibility, trustworthiness, and knowing our targets (their positions, roles, and attitudes). In regular review meetings, we would want to spend time assessing how quickly and well we are progressing in these areas.

Running the exercise:
Using the Setting Indicators Template

For each objective you have set in the previous session ask the group to consider the following issues:

What will we measure to tell us whether this objective is being met, or not?

Where will you find this information – what are the main sources and techniques that you will use?

H Setting Indicators Template

Objectives	**What you will measure [indicators]**	**Sources of information [means of verification]**
Objective one e.g. increase the awareness of a particular issue amongst members of parliament?	The number of MPs who have heard of the issue	Questionnaire or opinion poll
Objective two e.g. increase the political will of MPs to act on a particular issue	The number of MPs who speak out on the issue/support a statement/bill	Lists of signatures, Records of debates
Objective three Establish x platform as main source of credible information about this issue	Number of requests we get for information No of invitations to key meetings	Internal documents and emails

Explain that the important point about this exercise is both in identifying what indicators you are going to use to measure progress and the sources of information you will use to establish whether your indicators have been met BUT ALSO in building the gathering of this evidence and the reviewing of progress into your plans. Finish the session by asking the group if this template would be useful for their planning.

Step 6: Evaluation

Evaluation is different from monitoring in that it seeks to determine the value of the work, rather than whether it has happened according to plans or not. It involves making judgements about the difference the work has made: whether it is relevant, meaningful, lasting, whether it benefitted and involved the right people, and whether it represented a prudent use of resources.

- **How will your advocacy strategy or activity be evaluated? By whom, and when? (Exercise 17 – Evaluation)**

EXERCISE 17

Evaluation

PP

PREPARATION Familiarise yourself with the questions and think of some illustrations from your own experience/the local context to help explain the issues. Use the sample advocacy strategy for participants to work on in small groups.

TIMING The session should take about 1 hour.

Introduction

Evaluation often occurs at the end of a project (though sometimes also at mid-term) and is a way to identify lessons and best practice.

This phase in the process:

- Allows you to look back and make judgements about past effectiveness (which stakeholders such as funders might be interested in).
- Allows you to learn from experience to improve future practice.
- Helps you to understand whether your theory of change stands up to scrutiny.
- Helps others to see what changes have occurred, and whether those changes are important.

Attribution/contribution

It is very difficult to prove without doubt that our programmes of action have directly resulted in specific political and social changes, and even more problematic to establish links between our programme of action and the impact on beneficiaries. This is because we are operating in a complex environment in which our own interventions don't take place in isolation – from the activities of others, from the local contexts or from the economic and political situation in which we are working. What we can realistically aim to do, however, is to build a reasonable argument to show that our work has contributed to any perceived change and added a perspective or an angle that has not been contributed by other actors.

Data and evidence

Valid evaluation depends on gathering a range of data and subjecting it to scrutiny to see what it tells us about the effect of our work. To do this, we need have a clear, logical link between what we have said we're going to change (goal), what the situation was when we started (baseline) and what we will measure to prove whether we've been successful or not (indicator). Our SMART objectives (milestones) allow us to track progress and collect evidence. To help ensure a smooth evaluation process, collect and maintain your data and evidence somewhere that is easily accessible.

Running the exercise

Use the sample advocacy strategy in small groups, and encourage them to consider the following questions:

1. Who should participate in the evaluation? How? On what terms?

It will be important to try to evaluate how our work has affected people at different levels, (individual, family, community, region, etc). This helps us build up a more coherent picture of what has changed, who has benefited, who hasn't, and why.

Think about the participation of the following audiences in the evaluation process: beneficiaries, local community organisations and groups; those who have been working on the issue within (and in partnership with) our organisation; decision makers and government officials. Who should be involved and how in evaluating the sample strategy?

2. Who will design and conduct the evaluation?

We have the choice to bring in an outside eye, to involve representatives of affected communities, or to mix the team. Who will we involve in the design? Will we use internal or external evaluators? Or a mix of both?

3. When should the evaluation be conducted?

Make sure this is planned into our Gantt Chart, and given sufficient funds. Will the money run out once the project is over? Do we need to plan to evaluate at the mid-term, or six months before the end, so that we can consider applying for funds to continue?

4. Against what outcomes should the evaluation be conducted?

We should evaluate our programme against the outcomes we expect to have achieved. Be careful not to try and evaluate everything – choose the most important aspect of the work. What will we evaluate? Is it realistic with the funds we have available? What preparation can we do to get the most out of it?

5. What methods will you use?

How will we ensure that we are hearing from different voices and perspectives? How will we gather the range of data and information needed in order to make a reasonable judgement of the difference our intervention has made?

6. What will you do with the results of your evaluation?

How will findings and lessons learnt be used? Can we identify specific things that we and our organisation will do differently as a result? How will we encourage others to think about the implications for their work? What systems do we have in place within our own organisation to learn from evaluations and other reviews? Who will we share them with?

Ask the Groups whether they found this helpful and whether there are things they would add or take out before using this in their work.

Annex 1: Participants' Questionnaire

To help you design the most appropriate advocacy training session for the participants, you should engage with the participants beforehand to gauge the level of their current advocacy activity and to seek their views on what would be useful to cover. This will help you choose which activities and tools to focus on in the time you have available. You should send out a questionnaire to participants a few weeks in advance to give yourself enough time to receive and reflect on the response. Below is a sample questionnaire which could be used for such a purpose.

Questionnaire for Advocacy Workshop

Name of organisation:

What does "advocacy" mean to you or for your organisation?

What are the main themes your organisation is working on? What are the main activities you undertake?

Do you undertake any activities through which you try to influence specific decisions, policies or practices by other actors that affect people's lives? Which ones? Can you give an example?

What kind of change would you like to work for, or would you like your work to contribute towards?

Please describe briefly how you plan and implement such activities.

What are key challenges you are encountering regarding influencing other actors decisions, policies or practices?

What do you expect from this workshop?

Suggestions for issues to be discussed at the workshop:

Designing the Advocacy Training Session

Ideally, training on the learning and tools outlined in this handbook would be delivered in a two-day workshop, with plenty of time for discussion during the exercises and reflection on their utility. However it is understood that it will not always be possible to set aside two days, in which case the handbook is designed in such a way a to enable training to be given in a one-day session. Depending on the level or prior experience of the participants some tools may be more useful than others. Using the results of the participants questionnaire, you should design a programme which best meets the needs of the participants in the allotted time. You should also bear in mind other demands not included in this handbook, such as information sessions on the European Union.

Examples of how advocacy workshops based on this handbook could be run are detailed below.

Annex 2: Mock Agenda

Two day training workshop

Day 1

09.30 Welcome

09.45 Introduction to Advocacy

10.15 Overview Step 1 –
Assessing the situation
Exercise 1 – SWOT Analysis

11.00 Break

11.15 Overview Step 2 –
Establishing the Goals
Exercise 2 – Problem-Solution Tree

12.30 Exercise 3 – Solutions Table

13.00 Lunch break

13.45 Exercise 4 – Ranking Solutions

14.30 Overview Step 3 – Developing an influencing Strategy
Section 1:
Exercise 5 – Identifying Stakeholders
Exercise 6 – Categorising Stakeholders

15.30 Break

15.45 Exercise 7 – Stakeholder Mapping

16.15 Section 2: Exercise 8 – Influence Map

16.45 Exercise 9 – Channels of Influence

17.15 Discussion and recap of the day
Address any questions and outline the agenda for the next day

17.45 Adjourn

Day 2

09.30 Welcome and Recap

09.45 Step 3 – Section 3
Exercise 10 –
Developing Effective Relationships

10.15 Exercise 11 –
Communicating Effectively

10.45 Break

11.00 Exercise 12 – Advocacy Activity

11.45 Overview Step 4 –
Finalising the Details
Exercise 13 – Theory of Change and Impact Ladder

12.45 Lunch

13.30 Exercise 14 – Being SMART

14.15 Step 5 –
Implementation and Monitoring
Exercise 15 – Gantt Chart

15.00 Break

15.15 Exercise 16 – Setting Indicators

16.00 Step 6 – Evaluation
Exercise 17 – Evaluation

16.45 Discussion and recap on 6 steps
Questions + Answers

17.15 Close

Annex 3: Mock Agenda

One day training workshop

09.00 Welcome and Introduction to Advocacy

09.15 Step 1 – Assessing the situation (Exercise 1 – SWOT Analysis)

09.45 Step 2 – Establishing the Goals (Exercise 2 – Problem-Solution Tree)

10.45 Break

11.00 Step 2 – Establishing the Goals (Exercise 3 – Solutions Table)

11.30 Step 2 – Establishing the Goals (Exercise 4 – Ranking Solutions)

12.00 Step 3 – Developing an Influencing Strategy (Exercise 5 – Identifying Stakeholders and Exercise 7 – Stakeholder Mapping)

13.00 Lunch break

13.45 Step 3 – Developing an Influencing Strategy (Exercise 8 – Influence Map, or Exercise 9 – Channels of Influence)

14.15 Step 3 – Considering the options for advocacy (Exercise 10 – Developing Effective Relationships, and/or Exercise 11 – Communicating Effectively)

15.00 Break

15.15 Step 3 – Considering the options for advocacy (Exercise 12 – Advocacy Activity)

16.00 Step 4 – Finalising the details - (Exercise 14 – Being SMART)

16.45 Step 5 – Implementation and Monitoring (Exercise 16 – Setting Indicators)

17.30 Overview Step 6 – Evaluation
Questions + answers

18.00 Close

Annex 4: Advocacy Strategy Template

Having thought and worked through the 6-steps of strategic advocacy, you should now be able to frame a coherent strategy which brings the different elements together in one document. Such an advocacy strategy should resemble the following template.

Advocacy Strategy

Background

This section should briefly outline the background to the security and conflict context of the relevant country/region, and the history of your involvement in this country and/or on this particular issue. Refer to any recent reports, on other ongoing work, which might be relevant or useful to be aware of.

The issue – what problem are you working on?

This section should set out in some (but not extensive) detail the issue/s on which your work focuses. You should set out as clearly as possible the problems as you see them, and the solutions you are working towards.

Your 'power analysis' – who are key players and what is their position

This section should detail the key actors that are relevant to the issue you are working on, their positions on your issue (whether they are supportive of opposed) and should set out the key target/s, allies and opponents.

Your advocacy goals and specific objectives – what are you trying to change?

This section should set out your change-focused advocacy goals, which will enable you to achieve the solutions you are working towards. You should also set out some of the detail of your advocacy objectives, including what type of advocacy is required to help achieve the solutions identified above, and why. This should be supplemented by any interim SMART objectives which form the basis of your advocacy strategy.

Your influencing strategy – how will you persuade your targets to act?

This section should outline how you plan to influence key actors e.g. which channels of influence will you use; and detail your 'theory of change' i.e. what logic are you using and what assumptions have you made.

Your activity plan – time for some detail

This section puts your influencing strategy into action, and will begin to detail the who, what, where and when of your advocacy activity. A timeline will help you keep track of progress.

The indicators – how will you judge your progress?

This section should outline some indicators by which you can judge the success of your advocacy work. Setting indicators will allow you to see what is working and what is not, helping you to refine your strategy further.

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