From advocacy to access
Targeted political action for change
How to use this toolkit

Step-by-step approach
Each stage of the advocacy process has its own fact file. The stages are getting started, building networks, research, champions, developing strategy, communications, and monitoring and evaluation.

Each fact file has two purposes:
• it outlines **what you need to do**
• it offers guidance on **how to do it** by guiding you through a checklist of questions

The fact files also describe examples from the work of six Member Associations. At the end of each fact file there is a short checklist to help you take stock of what you have done and where you are at, so you know you are ready to move on to the next stage.

As you will read in the introduction – ‘Advocacy – what is it… and why do we need it?’ – the advocacy model we used has four key pillars. In this toolkit we identify the four pillars using the following symbols:

- **Networks**
- **Evidence base**
- **Messages**
- **Champions**

Effective advocacy often means moving backwards and forwards within the advocacy process. At certain points in your advocacy efforts you may have to revisit earlier parts of the process: we signpost such reviews with one of these four symbols at the top of each card.

How can this toolkit help you?

**Political solutions to practical problems**
This toolkit illustrates actions that you can take to find political solutions to practical problems – obstacles that may prevent you from delivering sexual and reproductive health services and upholding sexual and reproductive rights.

It is not intended as a complete encyclopaedia on how to advocate. It is designed for new advocates as an introduction to advocacy, offering tips and tools to help create change at policy level. Two other IPPF publications – ‘Generating Political Change’ and ‘Handbook for Advocacy Planning’ – offer a wide range of information and ideas that you can use to supplement the information given here.

**Advocating for improved policy and funding environments**
This toolkit is based on the experiences of six IPPF Member Associations – and how they used advocacy to improve contraceptive security in their countries. The Member Associations in Bangladesh, Ghana, Mexico, Nicaragua, Tanzania and Uganda all identified issues connected to the funding, policy and supply of contraceptives as major barriers to good sexual and reproductive health and rights in their countries, and to their service provision. They mobilized civil society in their countries to advocate for policy and funding changes to help increase access to contraception.

Although the case studies in this toolkit relate to advocacy for improved contraceptive security, we believe the advocacy process can apply to any issue that requires political priority and action.

**Inside this toolkit …**
1. Advocacy – what is it… and why do we need it?
2. Getting started – Bangladesh
3. Building networks – Mexico
4. Research – Bangladesh
5. Champions – Uganda
6. Developing strategy – Ghana
7. Communications – Tanzania
8. Monitoring and evaluation – Nicaragua
Advocacy

what is it... and why do we need it?

What is advocacy?
Advocacy is a series of strategic and interconnected actions that aim to bring about changes in policy, legislation, funding or regulatory environments. Advocacy can help you to:

- identify problems that prevent you from providing sexual and reproductive health services
- find political solutions to obstacles that stop you offering universal access to sexual and reproductive health
- raise awareness about issues at the political level
- generate action by decision makers to address the problem

Why do we need to do advocacy?
IPPF Member Associations address the symptoms of poverty by providing sexual and reproductive health services. By advocating for a more enabling political environment you address the causes of poverty. This process will remove the barriers that prevent you from providing sexual and reproductive health services.

IPPF Member Associations are leading autonomous locally owned and led non-governmental organizations. This means that Member Associations make credible advocates for two main reasons:

- as service providers you have the evidence base as well as the credibility gained from experience and expertise
- extensive reach at national and local levels gives you the convening power to unite a diverse range of stakeholders on one common agenda

What is the advocacy model?
IPPF piloted an advocacy model. The model has four pillars that will help you to turn an issue into a political priority. This means:

- raising awareness about the issue so that decision makers express concern publicly for an issue
- changing policy to help improve the issue
- ensuring adequate funding is allocated to solve the problem

The four pillars of the model are:

- Networks
- Evidence base
- Messages
- Champions

We take a brief look at each of these four pillars.

1 In this toolkit, ‘policy’ is used to refer to budgetary, regulatory, legislative, financing mechanisms and policy documents.
1. Build a national advocacy network
Key advocacy approach:
- build a national advocacy network to focus on a shared goal
- develop a shared strategy and activity plan to achieve a policy change, or safeguard good policy

2. Research and develop an evidence base of current activity
Key advocacy approach:
- research the sexual and reproductive health situation – aim to identify pressing issues and build the evidence base for advocacy messages and briefings
- find out about national decision-making processes and protocols – this will highlight national and local policy and budgetary processes and identify key decision makers to inform through advocacy activities
- make sure you know about current advocacy taking place to identify successful advocacy activities and possible partners

3. Tailor messages
Key advocacy approach:
- develop and deliver persuasive and evidence-based advocacy messages that resonate with the key decision makers who can implement change

4. Work with key champions
Key advocacy approach:
- identify strategically positioned people who know their way around the government agencies and relevant organizations, and know their processes and procedures – these champions can advise on important advocacy opportunities, and we call them ‘movers’
- develop good relationships with key champions – they are the people with influence who support the outcome you want to bring about and help you achieve it; they are either in a position to make a decision or have access to people who make decisions, and we call them ‘shakers’

Key elements to successful advocacy
Piloting this advocacy model showed that the above four pillars are key to successful advocacy. We also learned that there are other actions to take, that are also key to making sure that decision makers take action.

The essential components of advocacy

As this diagram shows, advocacy is a process. It is a series of interconnected strategic actions that contribute to a positive change at political level. It is like going on a journey, and it is not always a direct route – at different points you will move from one stage in the process to the next. You may sometimes have to revisit an earlier stage in the process. However, this should not be seen as back-tracking; it is about reinforcing your work at critical stages in the process.

2 Relevant documents include policies, a budget or funding channel, a regulatory document or legislation for sexual and reproductive health.
Getting started
the experience in Bangladesh

What do you need to do?
Getting started is never easy, but careful preparation at the beginning will pay off later. By asking these questions right at the start you can identify:

1. **Your advocacy issue** – What is the problem and how can you solve it through political change? (This becomes your advocacy outcome.)
2. **The internal and external environments** – Which of the resources, skills and information do you have internally? Externally, which individuals or factors will add value to your work or offer opportunities?
3. **Realistic expectations** – Given the time and resources available, what can you realistically expect to do?

How do you do this?

1. **Your advocacy issue**
   To identify your advocacy issue and its political solution, you have to survey the sexual and reproductive health environment. This requires two types of research.

   **Research into the state of sexual and reproductive health at local or national level**
   - What are the most critical sexual and reproductive health challenges facing your country?
   - Will a political change help to improve access to sexual and reproductive health?
   - What other organizations are working on this issue or have an interest in finding a solution?

   **Political research**
   - What is the status of your issue with the national or local government?
   - Are there any forthcoming political or decision-making processes, or policy, budgetary or regulatory reviews that could help improve the critical sexual and reproductive health issues you have identified?
   - What resources – skills, network, financial, etc – can you deploy?
The Family Planning Association of Bangladesh was aware that while contraceptives were well funded in Bangladesh, stock-outs were common and the contraceptive prevalence rate decreased by 2 per cent for the first time since 1975. The Association’s research identified problems in the supply chain and, in particular, low capacity to procure contraceptives on time. The government’s oversight of the supply chain stopped in 2005 with its closure of the Logistical Coordination Forum, a multi-stakeholder watchdog. This meant that procurement and forecasting problems went undiagnosed and unresolved. There was a new government in power, and it was keen to resolve issues ignored by the previous government.

The Association was successful in calling for the lapsed Logistical Coordination Forum to be reconvened. This forum identified and raised issues about contraceptive security to a higher level. This helped strengthen the contraceptive supply chain and improve forecasting and procurement. This group helped to advocate for the government to begin producing condoms for domestic use. Production began in 2010.

2. The internal and external environments
You can use tools such as a ‘SWOT’ analysis – exploring your strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats – to help identify issues that will help or hinder your advocacy. You can then work out ways to turn the hindrances into factors that will accelerate your advocacy.

- **Strengths and opportunities** – Internally, these are your resources, skills, ideas and access to political processes. Externally, these refer to the political environment in which you are working and other parts of your civil society community.

- **Weaknesses and threats** – Identify these from your own internal environment and the external environment.

The Family Planning Association of Bangladesh worked through this internal and external survey. The result was a list of factors that hindered, or decelerated, its advocacy. The Association’s priority was then to create ways to turn these advocacy decelerators into action that would help, or accelerate, its advocacy. This is illustrated in the following table.

### Advocacy decelerators
- Limited influence on decision makers.
- Lack of evidence to make the case that stock-outs had a negative impact on health and development.
- Limited knowledge about the procurement mechanism for contraceptives.
- Civil society was concerned about the situation but lacked one cohesive message.

### Advocacy accelerators
- Develop partnership with the ex-Health Secretary/Advisor to the caretaker government. He advised on processes within the Ministry of Health, and how to navigate them.
- Commission new research from well-respected national think tank on the human and economic impact of reproductive health supplies stock-outs and shortages.
- Develop partnership with a consultant from the DELIVER programme – a national expert on contraceptive procurement.
- Convene civil society to focus on a call to the Ministry of Health to endorse and restart the Logistical Coordination Forum.

3. Realistic expectations
- Research about the political environment will help you identify possible opportunities to push your issue up the political agenda.
- The SWOT analysis will help inform what you are likely to achieve given the resources and time at your disposal.

### Next steps
After working through this fact file you should have identified:
- An advocacy issue to focus on
- A political solution to your advocacy issue
- An overview of what you can realistically achieve
Building networks
the experience in Mexico

What do you need to do?
Working in a network will strengthen your advocacy. Working with a group of individuals or other organizations who share your objectives adds value to your work by bringing additional information, skills and ideas to the table, and gives your advocacy a stronger reach. Speaking with one voice and one message makes your voice louder, and prevents duplication of effort.

To build a network there are three questions you need to ask:
1. Who will make effective partners?
2. How do we maintain a relationship and keep the momentum going?
3. How do we manage the network?

How do you do this?

1. How to choose effective partners
The analysis carried out in the previous section will help you decide which potential partners you would like to work with, and whether they are committed to the issue. You can also identify the information, skills and resources you already have and, in turn, identify what else you need. Your partners should add value, and can bring on board skills you may lack or wish to develop further. These could include:
   - access to decision makers at local and national levels
   - access to data, information and research to form the evidence base for your advocacy
   - access to new skills and capacities you do not have or would like to strengthen
   - access to new audiences such as the media

It can be tempting to always work with the same partners, because you know each other's organizations and have established trust. But advocacy offers a great opportunity to reach out more widely and form partnerships with new groups and individuals, maybe even beyond the sexual and reproductive health field. By being creative in your choice of partners, you can increase the reach of your advocacy by:
   - gaining access to new skills
   - forging new relationships with other development sectors
   - developing a credible evidence base by working with researchers
   - creating entry points to new communication channels such as the media, or access to political circles through partnering with parliamentary networks
The IPPF Member Association in Mexico, Mexfam, identified two major obstacles to meeting the contraceptive needs of sexually active young people: a lack of government budgetary allocations and poor transparency over the national budget. To advocate successfully for increased funding at state and national levels, Mexfam knew it would have to track national and state budgetary allocations. Mexfam did not have this skill, so it reached out to Fundar, an organization that specialized in tracking health budgets. This group was also well known and connected to the Senate. Fundar provided Mexfam with credible data, and was also able to access budgetary debates and use such opportunities to communicate Mexfam’s messages.

2. How to maintain relationships with partners

Working in partnership is not always easy. It takes time to build trust and to establish ways of working that complement each other and do not duplicate effort.

Working in partnership relies on volunteerism and joint commitment to an issue. There needs to be added value both for you and for your partners. Partners will not be willing volunteers if they feel they are invited in just to help you meet your advocacy goal.

However, they are likely to participate if they can see added value to working in collaboration, and will share ownership of the advocacy objectives. Factors that add value to your potential partners include:

- **The issue** – solving the sexual and reproductive health problem you have identified through advocacy will also help their organization do their own work. A united voice is stronger than a single voice.
- **The opportunity** to partner with new organizations and increase their visibility.
- **The potential** to collaborate on advocacy events or publications.

3. How to manage partnerships

Partnerships need coordination, which can be done through a secretariat. A secretariat requires:

- a staff member to coordinate it
- resources to cover the communications, meetings and activity costs

Running the secretariat can be hard work, and at first it can seem quite daunting. Over time it will become less labour intensive if a few basic issues are dealt with at the outset. These include clarification about the following:

- **Communications channels** – Information-sharing mechanisms such as an email list serv will ensure open communication and reduce the need for face-to-face meetings.
- **Shared ownership over the strategy** – A planning meeting will ensure that everyone’s voice is heard and that partners feel ownership over the joint objectives.
- **Shared implementation** – Give everyone a different piece of the strategy to lead on. This increases ownership and helps partners to align the joint advocacy to the core work of their own organization, making it more sustainable.
- **Shared decision making** – Make sure that decision-making processes are equal and transparent.

Mexfam built partnerships with old and new partners at national and state levels. At national level, it collaborated with Fundar, because of its expertise in tracking health budgets and maternal health expenditure. Until its partnership with Mexfam, Fundar had not worked on family planning budgets. A small consultancy from Mexfam enabled Fundar to break into this new area of work and, in doing so, also gave it ownership over the work. It also gave Mexfam the information it needed about government budgetary allocations from a credible source to make a case for an increase in the allocations. This resulted in a US$8 million increase to the national allocation in 2010 alone.

Next steps

After working through this fact file you should have identified:

- Potential partners
- A single sexual and reproductive health challenge on which to build collaboration
- Mechanisms to coordinate your partnership
The purpose of doing research is to gather the information that you and your partners need. You will have to conduct different sorts of research in different areas, to gain answers to the following four questions:

1. What is your advocacy issue?
2. How do you access decision-making processes?
3. What is the evidence base for the problem and the solution?
4. Are there other advocates working on the issue?

How do you do this?

1. Your advocacy issue
   
   You may have done some initial thinking on this during the start-up phase.

   Look at the state of sexual and reproductive health at national or local level, and explore the relevant indicators. This will help you to identify specific sexual and reproductive health issues that are critical in your country, and to pinpoint which problem you need to solve.

   Review the policy and funding environment in which you are working. This will help you identify:
   - the level of priority in national policy, regulatory protocols and budgets that affect your issue, and any gaps or obstacles in policy
   - opportunities to influence the relevant policy process that fit within your time frame

2. The decision-making process

   Once you have identified the issue you want to address, and the policy changes required to help solve the issue, you need to think about how you can access and influence the decision-making process. Mapping the links between your Member Association and volunteers to government committees, bodies and decision-making fora can be a way of doing this.

   The Family Planning Association of Bangladesh mapped the supply chain to see which agencies were responsible for the different parts of the process. This helped them identify the lack of government oversight. The Association also mapped decision-making processes in the Directorate General of Family Planning, the department in the Ministry of Health responsible for ensuring contraceptive security. This helped the Association to address the right decision makers with its calls to reform the Logistical Coordination Forum.
3. The evidence base

To create political support for the issue you want to change, you need strong evidence of the urgency of the problem, and its solution, in order to convince decision makers. This serves several purposes:

- it proves that there is a problem that needs to be addressed
- it shows that there is a solution to the problem
- it gives you the content for key messages to communicate to decision makers

You may find that there is enough information available in the public domain to build this evidence. Alternatively, you may find you have to do some advocacy to access the information you need in a timely manner, or even undertake research to gather the evidence. The evidence base should be:

- **credible** – from a well-respected data source
- **relevant** – if possible try and find evidence to link your issue to a priority of your target decision makers

The Family Planning Association of Bangladesh commissioned a well-respected research agency to explore the evidence base. The result was the research report, ‘Human and Economic Impact of Contraceptive Supplies Shortages and Stock-outs’. The research showed that between 2007 and 2008 the cost to the national economy in hours of labour lost was equivalent to US$60 million, and an additional 47,000 children were born as a result of unintended pregnancies. This helped frame the extent of the contraceptive security problem in terms that the Ministry of Health understood, and motivated decision makers to take action to help solve the problems. A researcher known and respected nationally and by the government did the research and led its dissemination. This provided additional credibility to the group’s cause.

Are there other advocates working on your issue? You don’t want to reinvent the wheel. Ask other advocates if they are focusing on this issue. If so, think about how your work will complement their efforts. If they are not focusing on your issue, this could be your opportunity to mobilize their support.

Next steps

After working through this fact file you should have identified:

- [ ] A single sexual and reproductive health issue on which you are going to advocate
- [ ] An opportunity to influence policy
- [ ] Your evidence to support your advocacy ‘ask’
- [ ] The current advocacy work of other advocates
Champions
the experience in Uganda

What do you need to do?
You need champions to help communicate your issues to an audience you may not be able to reach directly. These could include high-level policy makers and the media. Champions are distinctive because they often have the power to make change happen. They may also be able to find ways round obstacles that you are not able to overcome on your own, such as influencing processes.

Champions can fall into two categories – movers and shakers – or they can cross over both categories:

- **Movers** – These are the gatekeepers who may have information about data or political processes they can share with you. They may not be high profile but they have direct access to decision makers and can influence processes.

- **Shakers** – These are the high-profile individuals who can communicate your messages directly to decision makers. They can be high-profile public figures who can also help you raise awareness about why action needs to be taken at a political level to solve a problem.

To identify and harness the support of appropriate champions you need to ask the following three questions:
1. What do you need a champion to deliver?
2. Who will be strong champions for the issue?
3. How do we access them and maintain a relationship with them?

How do you do this?

1. Identify what you need a champion to deliver

Refer back to your initial research about decision-making processes and the individuals involved. This will help you define a purpose for your champions, and clarify the different roles you want them to play.

Reproductive Health Uganda, an IPPF Member Association, had convened the Reproductive Health Supplies Advocacy Network to advocate for an increase in government funding for family planning and for more efficient use of funding for family planning. Despite high levels of unmet need for contraception, the annual budget was woefully inadequate and funds were not spent because of late release from the Ministry of Finance. There was little political will at policy level to address this problem. Reproductive Health Uganda and partners had no direct access to the information or the budget processes they needed to influence. This highlighted two critical areas where they needed champions: movers, to give them access to the information; and shakers, who could ensure the information was used to influence budget processes.
2. Identify who will make a strong champion

Once you have defined a purpose, you need to think of individuals or other groups that you or your network partners can access and who will be supportive of your aims. You may find that you cannot access potential champions, but perhaps some of your other partners can. You may also find champions who are closer to home. Examples include one of your senior volunteers or people you have collaborated with in the past.

Reproductive Health Uganda identified the role or purpose its champions needed to serve. Initial research identified the National Reproductive Health Commodity Security Coordinator as a mover – someone who could provide timely, accurate and credible data. The Network of African Women Ministers and Parliamentarians proved to be very effective shakers. Their position in parliament enabled them to mobilize support from fellow members of parliament, and also ensured funding for contraception was discussed in parliament and included in the national budget. Their work at parliamentary level helped to secure a small increase in government funding but, more importantly, a change to the way funds were disbursed to the National Medical Stores. This change meant the National Medical Stores received funds on time and are now able to procure contraceptives throughout the year. Over a period of 18 months they also advocated for a World Bank loan to be dedicated to improving maternal health, and for 15 per cent of the loan to be ring-fenced for contraceptives.

Reproductive Health Uganda had identified a purpose for its champions, and the champions themselves. Reproductive Health Uganda and its mover, the National Reproductive Health Commodity Security Coordinator, were united by a sense of frustration. Delays in releasing the low levels of funding prevented the Coordinator from being able to procure contraceptives. This, in turn, prevented Reproductive Health Uganda from being able to deliver services. The Coordinator’s added value was the information he could provide, which enabled Reproductive Health Uganda and the Reproductive Health Supplies Advocacy Network to use the information to make changes and solve this problem.

Reproductive Health Uganda had a long-standing relationship with the Network of African Women Ministers and Parliamentarians. These became the shakers, and one of their priorities became women’s health. Reproductive Health Uganda provided members of the Network with the tools and information they needed to become more effective parliamentarians and to improve the levels of government funding for reproductive health.

3. Access champions and maintain relationships

Some champions are highly committed individuals, known for having a passion for a certain issue. If this is the case, the mutual passion for sexual and reproductive health can provide an entry point for your request for support.

Other champions are often very busy, with lots of demands on their limited time. As with network partners, these potential champions are more likely to take up your issue if they can see an added value for themselves, so be aware of this when you approach them to champion your cause. Put your ‘ask’ into context – and show them that supporting your issue and helping to create political change can help them to do their job more effectively.

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Next steps

After working through this fact file you should have identified:

- What qualities a potential champion should have
- Who could be strong champions
- How to access and approach your champions
What do you need to do?
Developing a plan is the key to successful advocacy. The plan will tell you where you are now, spell out what change you want to happen, and will guide you towards making that happen. The plan will help you identify four things:

1. **Your advocacy goal**
2. **Your advocacy objectives** – the political change you want to see happen that will help you to achieve your goal
3. **Your activities** – the steps you need to take along the way to help you achieve your objectives
4. **Your people** – who will lead on different activities

How do you do this?
You should make these decisions in collaboration with the partners who are going to help you achieve your objectives. One way of developing a strategy is to hold a planning retreat.

1. **Identify your advocacy goal**
   Your advocacy goal is your long-term vision – ultimately, the impact of your advocacy.

2. **Identify your advocacy objectives**
   Your advocacy objectives will come from your earlier research into your advocacy issue, where you identified the problem you wanted to solve and its political solution. Your objectives should be narrow and targeted.

Objectives must be ‘SMART’:
- **Strategic** – Is your issue focus narrow enough, and have you identified a specific policy process to influence?
- **Measurable** – Your objectives should be measurable by identifying a specific policy target or decision maker, and a specific change you want to see made.
- **Achievable** – Is your goal achievable given the time, resources and political environment in which you are working?
- **Realistic** – Don’t try to do too much. Pick one issue with one political solution and focus on that.
- **Time-bound** – What is the time frame for making the anticipated political change? What opportunities to influence policies or political decision-making processes are coming up in the near future? This will help establish a timeline for your advocacy.
3. Decide on what activities to undertake to achieve your objectives

This will help to identify what you can do to influence your advocacy targets so that political change is achieved. Activities should all help to contribute to you achieving your objectives.

The Planned Parenthood Association of Ghana wanted to reduce unmet need for contraception by changing the National Health Insurance Act to ensure that contraceptives would be included free of charge under the National Health Insurance Scheme. To do this, the Association had to ensure that contraceptives became integrated into the essential medicines chain. The policy research and mapping it conducted indicated that the National Essential Medicines List was up for review. This provided an opportunity to increase the number of contraceptives on the Essential Medicines List, which informed commodities available in the National Health Insurance Scheme. One of the Planned Parenthood Association’s objectives, therefore, was to increase the number and method mix of contraceptives available on the National Essential Medicines List. Activities included working with the Ghana Health Service to develop messages supporting the inclusion of contraceptives, and attending meetings to promote these messages.

The Planned Parenthood Association of Ghana published its advocacy strategy – ‘It’s Time to Take Charge’ – complete with its situational analysis of the state of family planning in Ghana, key messages and a work plan. This useful composite guide to advocacy for family planning is a useful tool for the Association’s partners and potential new supporters.

4. Decide who will lead on which activities

Once you have identified your activities, it is important to let other partners take responsibility for implementing them. This can be decided according to different areas of interest and skills.

Next steps

After working through this fact file you should have identified:

- Your goal
- SMART objectives
- What activities are appropriate
- Who will lead on implementation
Communications
the experience in Tanzania

What do you need to do?
Messaging is key to effective advocacy. A good message is simple, easy to remember and often repeated. A good message raises awareness about your issue, offers a solution and helps to create the will to find a political solution.

You begin to develop and deliver effective advocacy messages when you can answer these three questions:
1. What is the purpose of messaging?
2. How do I develop messages?
3. How do I deliver messages?

How do you do this?

1. What is the purpose of messaging?

Raising awareness through sensitization
Sensitization means raising awareness about a problem. Very often, the people you want to influence will not realize the importance of your issue, or the impact of leaving the problem unsolved.

UMATI, the IPPF Member Association in Tanzania, found that donor and government funding for family planning had been declining since 2005. As a result, the maternal mortality ratio was still high, and Tanzania was making poor progress towards meeting the Millennium Development Goals, a political priority in the country.

It was calculated that investing US$58 million in family planning would reduce the cost of meeting health-related Millennium Development Goals by US$128 million. This message was key to capturing the interest of the media and parliamentarians. This led to high levels of media debate about the issue and it became a high priority in the 2009 budget.

The ‘ask’, or the call to action
After raising awareness, offer a solution. This is the part of the message where you ‘ask’ for a political change.

UMATI worked with partners, including the Futures Group, to cost out how much funding was needed to meet the current family planning needs. This costing had the backing of all UMATI partners and came from a source well respected by the Ministry of Health. This formed the basis of the Association’s ‘ask.’
2. How to develop messages

Evidence based
Make sure that you use credible and reliable evidence.

UMATI and partners used an analysis of the cost-benefits of investing in family planning from the POLICY project, which had costed out the Millennium Development Goals in Tanzania and Demographic and Health Survey data. These were data sources that the advocacy targets considered credible and well respected. Translating the data into Kiswahili also helped to get the buy-in of government officials.

Solution oriented
Your message should contain a policy, funding, regulatory and/or legislative change that could help solve your problem.

3. How to deliver messages

Secondary targets
Secondary targets are those who may not have political influence but can influence those who do. One example is the media so you could, for example:
- arrange field trips for journalists
- invite them to your events
- use your champions

UMATI partnered with the Population Reference Bureau to provide material for new journalists. This increased the journalists’ knowledge of family planning and their commitment to the issue. They began filing stories about high levels of unmet need and declining funding. The result was that this created a media storm that the government could no longer ignore.

Primary targets
Primary targets include the government and decision makers. You could take the following action:
- arrange meetings with relevant decision makers if possible
- prepare advocacy materials such as briefing sheets
- train champions about your messages so they can access primary targets that you cannot reach

The media storm and UMATI’s contacts with the Ministry of Finance brought the issue of declining funding for family planning to the top of the political agenda. It dominated budget debates and resulted in an increase of US$4.6 million in the government’s budget line for family planning.

Next steps
After working through this fact file you should have identified:
- Messages for raising awareness, and for making your ask
- Well-researched information to help develop targeted, evidence-based messages
- Ways of communicating messages
Monitoring and evaluation
the experience in Nicaragua

What do you need to do?

Monitoring your work at regular intervals throughout the process will help you answer questions such as:
- How well are we doing?
- Where can we change our strategy to make us more successful?
- Are we sticking to our planned activities?
- Are we on track on the timeline?
- Are we meeting our objectives and are they still appropriate for our work?
- Has the external environment changed? Does this impact on our work?

Evaluating your work at the end of your campaign or project, or halfway through, enables you to answer questions such as:
- What have we learned?
- What strategies would we use again in our future advocacy?
- What policy, budgetary or regulatory change did we contribute to?
- Did this policy, budgetary or regulatory change increase access to sexual and reproductive health services?
- Did our advocacy help solve a problem?

To help monitor and evaluate your advocacy, you need to ask the following three questions:
1. How do I collect the data?
2. Which areas of my work do I want to learn more about?
3. What indicators am I going to use to measure my advocacy?

How do you do this?

1. Collecting data
Collecting data, and reviewing data, should be built into the project design, and done at regular intervals as part of your regular work. The data can include copies of letters and correspondence, meeting minutes, newspaper clippings and so on. When developing your documentation processes you should consider what you document, and how, to make sure it is helpful to you.

2. Deciding which areas of your work you want to learn more about
It is not possible, or always useful, to evaluate every area of your work. However, you must assess progress towards objectives. This includes checking whether you are where you need to be in order to achieve your objectives within the time frame, and finding out whether you need to revise your objectives. Identify a few other areas that you will find it helpful to learn from. These could include:
• **Internal issues** – How you work with your partners and whether your communications and information-sharing are effective.

• **External issues** – Changes in the external environment, both political changes and the advocacy activities of other groups working in the same area.

• **Changes in capacity** – Areas where you and your partners have built capacity, and any areas where you may want to improve or require further assistance.

3. Choosing which indicators to use

It is not always easy to monitor and evaluate advocacy. The most important thing to remember is that you need to identify and document what has changed. The best way to do this is through a balance of quantitative and qualitative indicators.

**Quantitative indicators**

Quantitative indicators help you to quantify your advocacy. They are a quick way to measure how your work is progressing, although they do not give a full picture. Example quantitative indicators include:

- How many new partnerships have you developed?
- Has the number of champions or supporters for your issue increased?
- How many times have your messages or issue been covered in the media, in statements by decision makers or in government documents?
- Have you developed any new skills?

**Qualitative indicators**

Qualitative indicators help you find the stories behind the quantitative indicators and they tell you what they mean for your work. They can be gathered by reviewing your project documentation and external documents, and by interviewing stakeholders. Example qualitative indicators include:

- What added value do your new partners bring to your work?
- What added value do your new champions or supporters bring to your work?
- Is the external media and government coverage of your messages and issue more supportive?
- How do your new skills strengthen your advocacy?

PROFAMILIA (the IPPF Member Association in Nicaragua) and its partners were advocating for the government to ensure it could finance up to 75 per cent of the country’s contraceptive needs by 2009. A mid-term review revealed that the government had a large budget deficit. In addition, the H1N1 influenza virus meant that the already limited resources for health were being redirected towards this unanticipated issue.

An analysis by PROFAMILIA and partners showed that their expected result was too ambitious in the changed circumstances. Responding to the changes in the external environment, they revised their expectations and focused instead on coordinating different health agencies to ensure that they worked together to prioritize access to family planning. This change in strategy proved effective. They continued to work with government ministries and other stakeholders through their prominent support of the National Contraceptive Security Committee.

This resulted in UNFPA increasing funding for reproductive health supplies in 2009 from US$455,676 to US$1,093,141. In addition, a forecast indicated that the Ministry of Health would fund 43 per cent of the contraceptives budget in 2010, an increase of 32 per cent.

**Next steps**

After working through this fact file you should have identified:

- Areas of your work that it would be beneficial to you to review
- Internal and external documentation to review and stakeholders to interview
- A small number of indicators to help guide your review of your work and its impact
Who we are

The International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF) is a global service provider and a leading advocate of sexual and reproductive health and rights for all. We are a worldwide movement of national organizations working with and for communities and individuals.

IPPF works towards a world where women, men and young people everywhere have control over their own bodies, and therefore their destinies. A world where they are free to choose parenthood or not; free to decide how many children they will have and when; free to pursue healthy sexual lives without fear of unwanted pregnancies and sexually transmitted infections, including HIV. A world where gender or sexuality are no longer a source of inequality or stigma. We will not retreat from doing everything we can to safeguard these important choices and rights for current and future generations.

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