

TOOL

HOW TO DO AN ADVOCACY STRATEGY

WHY

The chances for success are bigger, when you think through how you are going to achieve your advocacy objectives.

A good advocacy strategy sets a clear change objective and gives direction for your work. That makes it easier to get everyone on the same page and make decisions.

WHEN

Make an advocacy strategy at the start of your advocacy work to guide your efforts. Use your advocacy strategy as dynamic tool – reflect on your approach regularly and adjust your strategy when necessary.

HOW

There are a lot of tools to support you in creating effective advocacy strategies. The relevance of the tools depends on how experienced you are in doing advocacy, where you are in the process and what approach you are taking to your advocacy.

In this paper we have chosen simple and efficient tools, that are easy to use – and we encourage you to tailor the tools and the process according to your needs.

Base your strategy on a thorough analysis

In our experience, a thorough analysis is the basis of good planning - and good planning contributes to making an effective strategy.

Change happens differently in each context – and effective advocacy is based on a good understanding of the local context and your own organizational capacity, the issue you are working with and the power dynamics that are at play in relation to your issue.

How does change happen?

Based on your analysis of the context, the issue and the power relationships at play we recommend you to think through how change may happen.

It can be useful to map out the way to change as a roadmap – a visual or written presentation that shows the change objective and your way to reaching it.

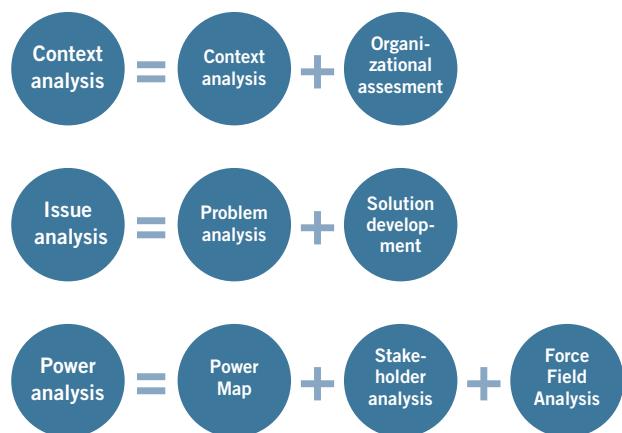
A road map is useful for getting the bigger picture as well as the many small steps along the way – and it can help you question your assumptions and logic about how the change is going to happen. What can you realistically influence?

How to make and use a strategy

It takes time to do a thorough analysis, formulate a strategy and craft a concrete action plan.

If you have little experience working with advocacy, DUF recommends you to spend one or two days on a workshop focused on making a thorough analysis and talking through your strategy and making an action plan.

On the next page, we have given suggestions for how you can structure a workshop as well as tools that can help you to start good conversations.



The analyses above are helpful when you plan your advocacy work.

» It can take a long time before you achieve the change you aim for. Consider how smaller changes can build towards the long term goals that you are trying to achieve – and remember to celebrate the small changes you achieve.

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Elements of a strategy	Considerations
Background and problem	Draw on your context and problem analysis
Change objectives: The change you want to see and the changes you want to see along the way.	Draw on your solution development, Know, Feel, Do
Key influencing strategies	Draw on your Power Map, Stakeholder Analysis, Force Field analysis, Organizational Assessment and Advocacy Road Map
Core message	Know, Feel, Do
Action plan	Think about your activities, resources and timeframe
Risks and assumptions	Consider the risks, challenges and assumptions based on your analyses. Consider how you will avoid or mitigate risks and challenges.
M&E plan	Consider how you make sure you reflect on how your strategy is working and how you document learnings and outcomes.

You can use the format below to plan a 1 or 2 day workshop – it may be rushed to go through all the tools and you may

decide to spend more time to flesh out the analyses either in a longer workshop or in a smaller advocacy task force.

Suggestion for an advocacy strategy workshop

Theme	Purpose	Activities	Tools
Introduction	Introduction and framing		
Why advocacy	Create shared understanding of advocacy	Reflection on what advocacy is and how advocacy can support organizational goals	Change Triangle Know-Feel-Do
Analysis for advocacy	Shared understanding of the context and the organizational capacity, the causes and consequences of the problem, the changes you want to see and the power relations at play	Work through each tool to reflect upon the problem you are trying to solve, the change you want to see and analyze the conditions for creating change.	Context analysis, problem analysis, solution development and relevant power analyses.
Road map	Shared understanding of how change may happen	Draw up a road map – and question your assumptions and logic about how the change will happen along the way.	Advocacy road map
Action planning	Draft action plan with activities clearly linked to analysis of change	Use the road map to think through activities and use a timeline for scheduling activities	Advocacy road map Timeline
Next steps wrap up	Shared understanding of next steps and areas of responsibility	Reflect and decide on the next steps and assign responsibilities	