

TOOL

CONTEXT ANALYSIS FOR ADVOCACY

WHY

Change happens differently in each context – and effective advocacy is based on a good understanding of the local context and the issue you are working with.

The history and the social, political, cultural, economic and environmental conditions of a country or a region shape:

- The **likelihood of change** taking place
- The **positions, ideas and values** of the organizations and individuals with an interest in change
- The **effectiveness and potential impact** of different activities or tactics.

If you understand the context better, you can create a more effective advocacy strategy and have a better chance of making a difference.

WHEN

Do a context analysis, when **analyzing your issue** and **planning** your advocacy. Be aware of changes to the context **during your advocacy** and consider if you need to rethink your advocacy strategy.

HOW

Focus on your issue, think through the relevant questions in column 2 and answer the question in column 3 on how the context analysis influences your advocacy strategy.

Context	Suggested questions	What are the implications on your advocacy strategy?
Political	What kind of political system are you working in? What are the political priorities for the current government? How open is the policy making system? How responsive is the policy making system to civil society? How free is the media? And how responsive is the media to civil society? When are the next elections?	
Economic	What is the current economic situation in your country or local area? What are the current spending priorities of the government? Of specific groups?	
Social / Cultural	What social or cultural factors affect your issue? Are there particular social groups that are affected either by the problem or the solution you might propose?	
Technological	Are there any technologies that may help or hinder your advocacy strategy	
Legal	What are the legal frameworks that apply to your issue? Are there international conventions or national constitutional provisions which are relevant? Is there relevant legislation?	
Environmental	Are there key environmental / ecological factors that need to be considered that are linked to your issue?	
International level	Are there key international organizations and players that affect the issue? Are there relevant conventions, guidelines or policy processes at the international level?	

TOOL

ORGANIZATIONAL ASSESSMENT ANALYSIS

WHY

When you attempt to influence political processes, public opinions or practices, it is important to analyze if your organization is ready for the task.

Effective advocacy work often requires that multiple parts of the organization are able to work together and that you have the necessary resources. Competent and effective **leadership** as well as **management of resources** are key.

It is important to be able to navigate in a changing landscape and adapt your advocacy to new situations, shifting power constellations and openings for change. Keep an eye on what happens on your issue and **analyze** and **adapt your activities** along the way.

Likewise it is key to have or develop the **capacity and skills** needed to dialogue with decision makers, engage the media or involve the members of your organization.

WHEN

The organizational assessment analysis is an internal context analysis. Use it in the **planning** of your advocacy work – in combination with your context analysis, your problem analysis and your formulation of an advocacy strategy.

HOW

Ask yourself the following questions. Remember it's a learning journey – and that you can reach good results without scoring high marks in all aspects. The score card is intended as a tool for dialogue on how your organization is doing to make you reflect on, how you can improve your work.

The contexts and form of organizing differs with each organization. If you disagree with some of the statements or if they are not relevant to you, you decide on whether or not you want to consider it.

Leadership	We are doing good!	We are OK, can do better	We need to improve
Is there a clear link between the objectives of your advocacy and the overall strategy and work of your organization?			
Is there a shared understanding of the advocacy objectives and strategy in the board and the management? Among members?			
Do you have the backing of the board?			
Do you know the needs and interest of your members and/or beneficiaries? Do you have the backing of your members and/or your beneficiaries?			
Is there acceptance of that advocacy work may entail challenges, external critique as well as failures?			
Do you celebrate your successes and involve your members and/or target group in celebrating?			
Are you good at creating and maintaining external network connections and mobilize resources and support for your issue?			

Management of resources	We are doing good!	We are OK, can do better	We need to improve
Have you got clear plans for how you organize and coordinate the advocacy efforts?			
Do you have sufficient financial and human resources?			
Are you able to calculate the costs of your advocacy work and weigh it up against the impact of the advocacy work?			

Analyzing and adapting activities			
Do you have a nuanced picture of our present and potential collaborators, their opinions and interests in co-operation? Have you considered when/where cooperation is effective and relevant?			
Do you know your own strengths and resources?			
Do you have a good and updated understanding of decision making processes, tendencies, challenges and threats in relation to your issue?			
Do you regularly monitor and reflect on how your work is going and if you need to adjust our strategy?			
Can you act quickly if new opportunities appear?			
Are you able to draw on personal and financial resources from other parts of your organization?			

Capacity and skills to do advocacy			
Do you have a communication strategy and messages adapted to each key decision maker or stakeholder?			
Are you able to 'read' the interests of key decision makers and stakeholders and put forward your arguments in a convincing way?			
Do you have a good understanding of the decision making systems and processes you are trying to influence?			
Do you have access to and good relations with the media?			
Do you have a thorough understanding of the issue you are working with?			
Do you have the skills to involve your members and beneficiaries?			