

## TOOL

# ADVOCACY ROAD MAP

### WHY

When you design your advocacy strategy, it is good to think through how you think change will happen. This is sometimes called a Theory of Change or an advocacy storyline – here we call it an advocacy roadmap.

The roadmap is a visual or written presentation that shows the change objective and your way to reaching it. It needs to show your activities, the stepping stones to change and the change you are trying to achieve.

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?

### WHEN

The roadmap is useful in the **planning** of an advocacy strategy. Also, it is a useful dialogue tool for reflecting upon and monitoring change **during your advocacy work**. Go back to the theory, when you **evaluate the effectiveness of your strategy** and use the lessons learnt for future advocacy activities.

### HOW

Draw on your context, problem and power analysis and start out by making an overall reflection on how change happens in relation to your issue.

- **How is change likely to take place?** Are people in power, organizations and institutions open for change – or is change likely to require disruption or contestation?
- **What alliances could drive or block change?** Are there sympathetic officials or politicians, journalists, leadership figures or civil society organizations that are relevant to consider?

- **Can you foresee any developments in relation to your issue** that may help or hinder your work? For instance elections, changes of leadership, changing popular opinion?

Make your own **advocacy roadmap** by asking yourself the following questions:


- What is **the overall change** that you want to see? What would the newspapers write if your advocacy strategy succeeds?
- What **activities** will you do to achieve that change?
- What are the **stepping stones to change** (the outcomes or milestones) that indicate progress toward your overall change?

Use ‘**So that...**’ to show a chain of events, a story line, to demonstrate how one action will be linked to another.

### Here’s an example:

There are youth representatives in the municipal councils in our province, but as it is now, it’s only youth that has been appointed by the mayor who represent youth interests in the municipal council. The appointed youth don’t represent anyone or respond to anyone.

We are going to invite the Provincial Director of Youth and Sports to meet us about our issue of creating democratic elections for youth representatives in each municipality in our province, so that the elected youth actually represent the broader youth...

 You can work from the activities to the change objective to test your logic – or you can work backwards from the change objective and explore what actions that could possibly lead to change.

**So that...**

- The Provincial Director of Youth and Sports is aware of this issue, he understands that there is a growing demand among youth for being involved, and we can present our ideas for action...

**So that...**

- He can take up the issue in his department and with the Provincial Governor to see if our province can test the idea of setting up democratic youth elections at municipal level...

**So that...**

- The Municipal Administrations are asked to organize youth elections in a democratic manner and ensure that the youth representative actually represents the youth of the municipality...

**So that...**

- We can then put forward our ideas to the municipal councils for how the elections can be organized and provide support to engage youth ...

**So that...**

- The municipal administrations are in favor of our ideas and the youth representatives are elected in a democratic way and represent youth interests ...

**So that...**

- We can have a party to celebrate our success!

The above example includes a lot of assumptions for how change happens. What if the Provincial Governor is not in favor of your issue?

What if the decisions made around the organization of youth councils are not made at the Provincial level, but needs to be determined at the national level in the national youth policy? Are there openings at municipal level for organizing the youth councils differently and encouraging the youth in the councils to be more accountable to youth in general?

To test your roadmap and your theory of change, ask yourself what conditions need to be in place for each action to happen – and to what extent your assumptions are realistic? What do you have control over – and what is outside of your control?

» There can be many paths to change. And there can be changes to the context, the power relationships and the situation you are trying to influence. You can use post it notes, so that you can move the activities and outcomes around.

Use the roadmap as a visual overview – as well as a dynamic process tool, you update and reflect upon along the way.



*This tool paper is inspired by material developed by INTRAC*