

Developing an Advocacy Strategy

- ✓ Analyse the problem. Break down the issue into component parts and select the most strategic issue by exploring how the issue affects the people you are working with – what changes do they want or need?
- ✓ Clearly define what it is you want to see change. What solutions have been proposed by others? What do you propose?
- ✓ Understand policy making processes. How do issues get onto the policy making agenda? At what stages can effective interventions be made?
- ✓ Analyse decision-making. Map which institutions can make decisions regarding the issue. Who has the power to decide? Identify primary and secondary ‘targets’ for advocacy and policy influencing – who can make the decision and who can influence the decision makers?
- ✓ Think about the context in which the change will take place and identify any events and vehicles that could be useful to your advocacy. What opportunities are there to influence the issue?
- ✓ Who are your potential allies for this work? Prioritise amongst allies and begin networking.
- ✓ Who are your potential opponents? What arguments will they make, how can these arguments be dealt with?
- ✓ Analyse your institutional capacity to undertake the advocacy, alongside the capacity of allies. Who will do what? When will human and financial resources be needed? Brainstorm solutions to address any weaknesses.
- ✓ Develop a strategy for influencing the primary and secondary targets using components from the advocacy toolbox – lobby meetings, seminars and conferences, policy briefings and research documentation, exposure visits, media coverage, campaigning, etc., etc.
- ✓ What are the costs of implementing your advocacy strategy? Identify these and make a budget.
- ✓ Think - when will your advocacy be over? What happens if you have a success in changing policy? Will you engage in developing and implementing the policy with government or stay away in case you are co-opted? What will be the impact on Southern partners think if you stop work on the issue?
- ✓ Plan and implement all specific activities and individual responsibilities
- ✓ Periodically stop to reflect on any changes in the local context, successes or failures of specific initiatives and overall advocacy strategy and make adjustments as necessary

(Created by Hilary Coulby – from material by Civicus and the Central American Advocacy Training Project of WOLA)