Appendix 1

The following pages contain copies of all the handouts given out during the workshop.

1. Workshop Bingo
2. Learning styles questionnaire
3. Adult learning
4. The differences between a teacher and a facilitator
5. Communication definitions
6. Advocacy definitions
7. Key lessons about health communication
8. Advocacy
9. The empowerment framework for advocacy
10. People's empowerment, people's health
11. Basic elements of advocacy
12. The story of Rosario
13. How to: introduction to research processes
14. How to: conduct interviews
15. How to: conduct a focus group discussion
16. Practical interviewing skills
17. Exercise to practice interviewing
18. Field work – feedback preparation
19. Checklist for choosing an advocacy issue
20. Developing our advocacy strategy
21. Criteria for analysing an advocacy objective
22. Case study summary
23. Stakeholder analysis
24. Audience analysis
25. Tailor messages and materials to the information needs of various audiences
26. How to analyse legislation or policy
27. Key differences between scientific and advocacy communication
28. A view of citizen centred advocacy
29. SWOT
30. PESTLE
31. Table of advocacy capacity
32. Good practice for effective lobbying
33. Suggested lobbying guidelines
34. Lobbying role play scenarios
35. Negotiating skills
36. Try tos and Try not tos
37. How to organise a press conference
38. How to produce a briefing note/ position paper
39. How to write and use a press release
40. Engaging policy and decision makers
41. Advocacy related activities
42. Elements for forming and maintaining networks
43. Coalition building
44. Pre- and post-training self assessment
45. Workshop evaluation form

Workshop Bingo

(Handout 1)

Find someone who………..

You can only ask one question per person

The winner is the first to complete the form (write the name of the person in the box)

FIND SOMEONE WHO…..	NAME
Has attended a workshop in Phnom Penh before	
Was born in Battambang	
Has met someone prominent / famous	
Has an equal number of brothers and sisters	
Has been to university	
Speaks more than three languages	
Likes to sing karaoke	
Has been on a passenger ferry boat	
Has visited Europe	
Has been to a conference	
Has visited Rattanakiri	
Has travelled on a plane	
Has one daughter (only one, not more)	
Does not own a motorbike or moped	

Learning styles questionnaire (Handout 2)

The following questionnaire is designed to give you an idea of your preferred learning styles.

Remember – there are no right or wrong answers; only what works best for you

Do you like ????? (answer 'Yes' or 'No')…

1. To listen to others?
2. To look up information and instructions in a book or manual?
3. To ask people around you for advice on resolving an issue or problem?
4. Reading?
5. To watch other people and learn before you feel confident in applying a new skill?
6. To practice a new skill or knowledge before you feel effective?
7. To jump straight in and get going with a task?
8. Practical things, where the learning can be applied straight away?
9. To measure your own progress when carrying out a new task or applying a new skill?
10. To put a new skill into practice straight away and then figure out what went well or not so well?
11. To try something out and then ask someone else what they felt was right or wrong?
12. To have well-defined objectives and to seek feedback from coach or facilitator on how well these were achieved?

Themes and issues in adult learning (Handout 3)

What is learning?

Learning is the processing of information we encounter, which leads to changes or an increase in our knowledge and abilities.

What are the benefits of learning?

Did you know that…

- using your skills makes you happier?
- learning new skills can be very satisfying, raise your self-esteem and make you feel better about yourself?
- learning opens doors to community activity, voluntary work and involvement in local issues?

The following 6 characteristics can be identified of adult learners

- They are not beginners, but are in a continuing process of growth
- They bring with them a unique package of experiences and values
- They come to education with intentions
- They bring expectation about the learning process
- They have competing interests - the realities of their lives
- They already have their own set patterns of learning

Adult education is therefore most productive when:

- Participation in the learning is active
- The learners are engaged in the design of learning
- The learning fills an immediate need
- The learners are encouraged to be self-directed – shared responsibility for learning
- The educator functions as a facilitator rather than a didactic instructor
- The individual learners' needs and learning styles are taken into account
- Learners are respected and valued – trust in the learning process
- Feedback is provided – this should be corrective but also supportive
- A climate conducive to learning is established – physical environment
- Safe atmosphere is provided – try to minimize worries, issues of self esteem, nervousness, embarrassment etc…
- The learner's past experiences are used in the learning process - experiential
- Learning activities seem to have relevance to the learner's circumstances
- Reflection is encouraged to help draw conclusions and draw principles for future action

  http://www.trainer.org.uk/members/theory/learner/adult_learners.htm

Teaching and Facilitation – difference in approaches (Handout 4)

A teacher:	A facilitator:
Teacher starts from their own knowledge	Facilitator starts from the knowledge of the group
Focuses on the teaching	Focuses on the learning
Plans how best to teach	Plans how people can learn best
Takes responsibility for people's learning	Helps people to become responsible for their own learning
Allows people to progress independently of each other	Ensures that people co-operate with each other
Directs the learning	Allows learning to be self-directed
Tests knowledge	Monitors progress and checks competence
Teacher follows a pre-set curriculum	Facilitator addresses issues identified by the group or their community and adapts new ideas to the needs and culture of the group
Teacher presents new information from the front	Facilitator uses practical, participatory methods, e.g. group discussion and activities in which all members of the group participate
Information flows in just one direction, from teacher to students	Information flows in many different directions between the facilitator and individual group members – a genuine exchange of ideas
Teacher brings extensive knowledge of the subject	Facilitator draws out and builds on the knowledge of the group, and knows where to find further information on the subject
Teacher is concerned with students understanding the right answer	Facilitator encourages and values different views
Teacher works for the community and may come from outside the community	Facilitator works with the community and may come from within the community
Teacher has a formal relationship with the students, based on their status as a teacher	Facilitator is considered as an equal, and has relationships based on trust, respect and a desire to serve

The Brazilian educator, Paolo Freire, believed that education should be liberating. Rather than giving learners answers, education should aim to increase the learner's awareness so that they are able to identify problems and their causes, and find solutions to them. A facilitator's role is to help a group through this process by asking questions that encourage new ways of thinking about and analysing their situation. The facilitator does not know all the answers. Their role is to help the group think critically about their own needs and interests, and to make decisions for themselves. There should be a balance between offering ideas to guide the group and patiently listening and questioning. The facilitator's role is also to encourage each member of the group to contribute to the best of their ability. Everyone has valuable knowledge and a valuable contribution to make. But people can be reluctant to share their knowledge. They may lack the confidence or may not consider what they know to be important. Sometimes people do not want to share their knowledge because it gives them a certain amount of power and advantage over others. However, when we do share our knowledge, everyone benefits. The person sharing it does not lose it after giving it away, and the person receiving it has received something new which they in turn can pass on to others. The facilitator's role is to build trust and respect between the members of the group and to encourage dialogue and learning, from which the whole group will benefit.

Why use participatory approaches?
Advantages

✓ They use inexpensive resources.

✓ They can be used in any physical setting.

✓ They are interesting and fun – helping to involve people in the subject.

✓ They help people to build self-confidence.

✓ They help people to learn about themselves.

✓ They help people to understand the perspectives of others.

✓ Participants with different degrees of experience and literacy can use them.

✓ They prevent individuals from being singled out for what they know, or don't know.

✓ They are less intimidating for less confident participants.

✓ They can help people to analyse complex situations.

✓Outcomes are often documented during the process and do not depend on jargon.

✓ They are memorable.

✓ Lessons learnt can be brought back to local communities or organisations.

Disadvantages

✘ They are difficult to plan, because planning often depends on what the participants want to do.

✘ Involving stakeholders takes time.

✘ It can take time for people who are used to being "pupils" rather than "participants" to feel comfortable with these approaches.

✘ Facilitator techniques can be difficult to master and use effectively.

✘ They can make people feel uncomfortable, for example about drawing.

✘ They can be difficult to document in a report format but can be documented well using photographs or by keeping flipcharts.

✘ Some people may not consider them to be valid ways of working.

✘ Participants may be more focused on the creative, rather than learning, aspect of the activity.

✘ It can be difficult to establish clear action points or conclusions from the activity.

Communication definitions (Handout 5)

Communication means exchange of information between all stakeholders
(Department for International Development (DFID), UK)

Good communication is a two-way sharing of information. It involves finding out people's view, listening carefully to what they say and understanding their solutions. It includes being observant and appreciating the constraints people face at home
(AHRTAG/Healthlink Worldwide, UK)

Communication is a process for partnership and participation. It is based on two-way dialogue, where there is an interactive interchange of information, ideas, techniques and knowledge between senders and receivers of information on an equal footing. It leads to improved understanding, shared knowledge, greater consensus and identification of possible effective action
(Exchange, UK)

People-centred communications help people to become aware of their own ability to understand and change the situation in which they live
(Werner)

Communication is the process not a product. Listening is a key skill in the process
(Exchange)

Communication can involve participatory mechanisms, service delivery, advocacy, civil society building, and research dissemination, networking activities, different uses of mass media
(DFID)

Communication is about recording, learning from sharing experiences, results and lessons learned
(Healthlink Worldwide/Exchange)

Good communication does not need to be expensive or complicated. Instead, it needs to be appropriate and of good quality – in terms of style, format, content and accuracy
(International HIV/AIDS Alliance)

Local knowledge and experience form an important part of communications activity. This ensures a high degree of local relevance and promotes empowerment through local control
(Linny)

ADVOCACY DEFINITIONS (Handout 6)

Advocacy is a set of targeted actions directed at decision makers in support of a specific policy issue

(The Policy Project, Futures Group, USA)

Advocacy is the process of using information strategically to change policies that affect the lives of disadvantaged people

(BOND, UK

Advocacy is any effort to influence policy and decision makers, to fight for social change, to transform public perceptions and attitudes, to modify behaviours, or to mobilise human and financial resources.

(Advocacy for Immunisation , GAVI, PATH, 2001)

Advocacy is about building a convincing case and getting it across to people who are in a position to influence, formulate or implement policy and the decision making process

(WHO)

Advocacy is a process to bring about change in the policies, laws and practices of influential individuals, groups and institutions

(International HIV / AIDS Alliance workshop in Zimbabwe 2001)

Advocacy is pleading for, defending or recommending an idea before other people

(SARA / AED training guide 1997)

Advocacy is an on-going process aiming at change of attitudes, actions, policies and laws by influencing people and organisations with power, systems and structures at different levels for the betterment of people affected by the issue

(International HIV / AIDS Alliance workshop in India, 2002)

Advocacy is about building a convincing case and getting it across to people who are in a position to influence, formulate or implement policy and the decision-making process

(Workshop on essential drugs, WHO 2001)

Advocacy consists of different strategies aimed at influencing decision-making at the organisational, local, provincial, national and international levels.

(SARA / AED training guide 1997)

Advocacy is putting a problem on the agenda, providing a solution to that problem, and building support for acting on both problem and the solution

(SCF Advocacy workshop in Brazil)

Advocacy is a social change process affecting attitudes, social relationships and power relations, which strengthens civil society and opens up democratic spaces

(SCF Advocacy workshop in Brazil)

Speaking with and on behalf of the poor to address the underlying causes of poverty by influencing the decisions of governments, companies, groups and individuals whose policies or actions affect the poor

(Tearfund)

Citizen-centred advocacy is an organised political process that involves the coordinated efforts of people to change policies, practices, ideas and values that perpetuate inequality, prejudice and exclusion. It strengthens citizens' capacity as decision makers and builds more accountable institutions of power

(The New Weave)

The process of influencing key decision makers and opinion formers (individuals and organisations) for changes to policies and practices that will work in poor people's favour

(Action Aid)

Key lessons about Health Communication **(Handout 7)**

1. **Health communication is more effective when it reaches people on an emotional as well as rational level.** Emotional experience, self-esteem, security, inclusion, affection, control and social approval are among some of the most important factors that facilitate behaviour change, along with self-efficacy and perceptions of control. Communication that evokes empathy and other emotions typical of interpersonal dialogue enhance their impact.

2. **Health communication is more effective when it relates to people's social or 'life' contexts.** The process of making and maintaining a life change is made within the context of family, community and cultural factors. Incorporating health communication into a life context also may enable people to make changes across a range of health issues.

3. **A combination of the effectiveness of interpersonal communication and the reach of mass media communication is needed to change population behaviour.** Both types of communication are important and interrelated. Hornik's (2002) review of health communication and behaviour change outlines a communication model in which mass and interpersonal media operate at the individual, social, and institutional levels needed to effect change.

4. **Tailored communication is more effective than general messages.** 'Tailoring' or 'customizing' information so that it more closely meets the needs of the recipients has resulted in significantly improved communication outcomes. The increasing health disparities among vulnerable groups in many countries points to an urgent need to improve our communication approaches with diverse audiences.

5. **Interactive communication is more effective than one-way information dissemination.** Passive dissemination of health information is the most common strategy and the least effective. Messages from experts about people's needs to improve themselves may be unintentionally disempowering.

Interaction and participation in both the process and content of communication are key factors. Research shows that when beneficiaries are involved in the design and dissemination of health communication, the outcomes are more likely to be successful.

Taken together, these findings suggest that our current interventions do not effectively 'touch the emotions' of people in ways that relate to their daily lives and promote change. In other words, experts have messages to send, but people have lives to live. There is increasing evidence that health communication approaches that are set within multiple social contexts and that engage people interactively and personally are more effective (Emmons, 2000). It is clear that we need to do better.

Source: Neuhauser L, Kreps GL(2003) Rethinking communication in the E-health era. Journal of Health Psychology, S(1): 7-23. *In: Chetley.A et al."How to improve the use of medicines by consumers" WHO 2007*

Advocacy (Handout 8)

What is it?

A – Action oriented activities

D – Different strategies aimed at decision makers you want to influence

V – Voice – speaking on behalf of / with others – giving opportunity for voice

O – Others are involved in order to make a difference

C – Changing policies, positions and programmes for social change

A – Answers and solutions

C – Communicating effectively with information

Y – You and people – people can make a difference (people power)

Advocacy is…

...systematic.

…about lobbying.

…about working for change from within the system and from the outside.

…a single specific action or series of actions over time.

…long term.

…the art of the possible.

Its purpose is:

To create a policy and structural environment conducive to the attainment of specific goals and objectives.

It also seeks to:

- Generate resources and support,
- Provide mechanisms for involvement and participation of people in the development process,
- Ensure more pro-people policies and programmes.

It manifests people empowerment by:

- Providing the venue by which an individual can express his/her views and opinions on important issues.

Some further explanations

Advocacy is the act or process of pleading a cause. It changes the social climate where changes in the behaviour of people take place.

It is deliberate and strategic use of information to influence decision-making for:

- Legislators
- Government leaders
- Local executives
- Socio-civic and religious groups
- Business organisations
- Funding agencies
- The general public

What is it all about?

Advocacy is…

…about creating a supportive environment for a cause or issue.

…about giving the right information so that others understand the urgency

…about personal commitment and involvement.

…about resources and appropriate programmes and action.

…about citizen participation and the role of civil society.

…about good governance.

Why do we advocate?

- To build support for a cause.
- To encourage others to support our cause.
- To influence or reform legislation that affects us.
- To change the way people feel about our cause.
- To make a difference to people's lives.

With whom do we advocate?

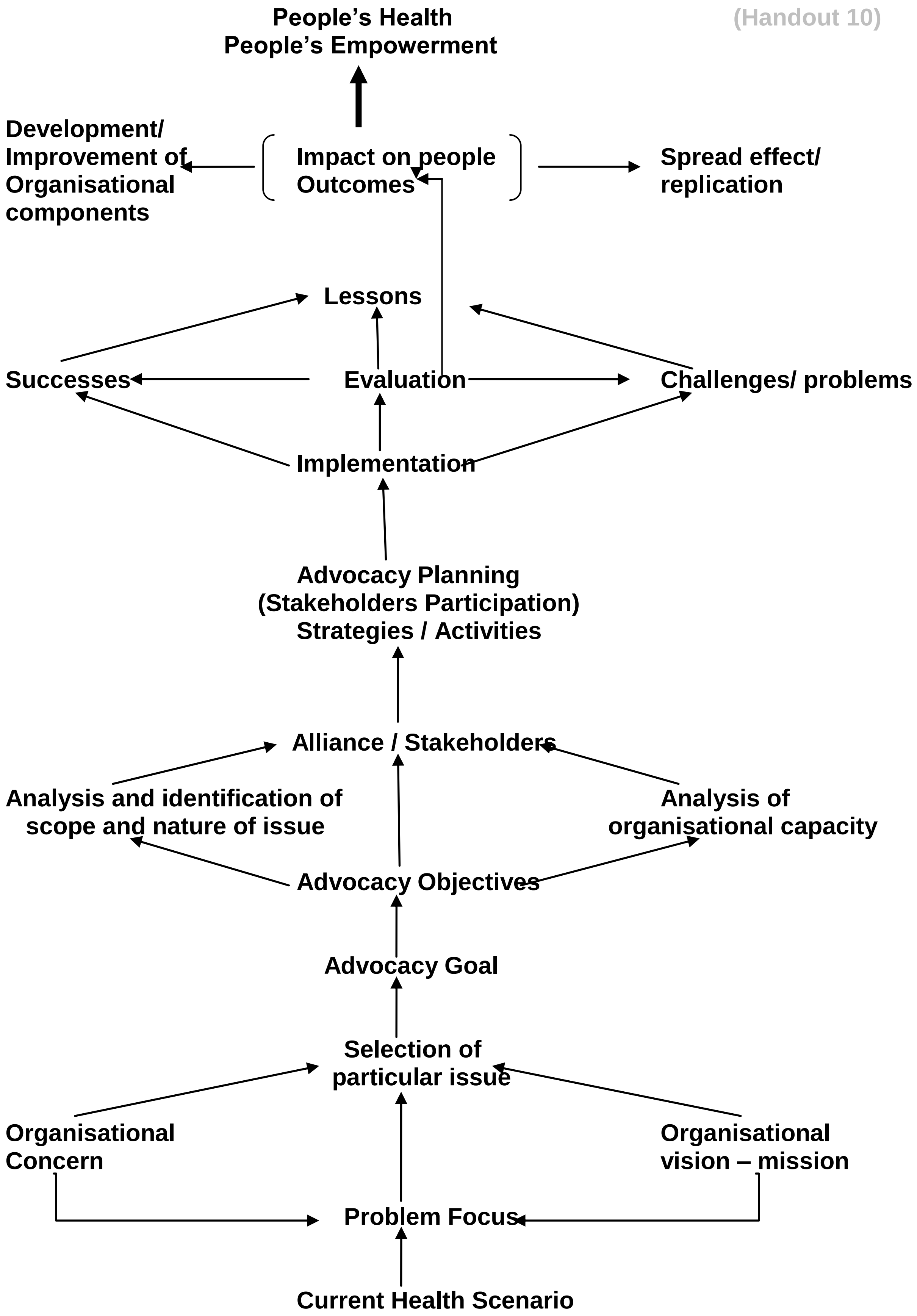
- Policy makers – such as politicians, legislators
- Project Managers
- Civil servants
- Religious leaders
- Business leaders
- Media
- Opinion leaders
- Programme implementers
- Researchers
- The public – community

The Empowerment Framework for Advocacy (Handout 9)

Dimensions	**Ingredients**
Political Power	Ethical accountable political leaders Government and public recognition of citizens' rights and knowledge Citizens' involvement in monitoring change Strong citizen organisations consulted regularly by government Legal, policy and state institutional reform
Empowerment	Reflection on actions Developing new leaders Building citizens' groups Lobbying Planning and implementing strategies Organising and communicating information about rights, laws and problems Gaining skills
Collective Consciousness	Analysis of common problems Questioning why things are the way they are Self reflection Dialogue with others
Individual Consciousness	

Source: Adapted from Margaret Schuler – Empowerment and the Law

(Handout 10)


People's Health
People's Empowerment
Development/ Improvement of Organisational components
Impact on people
Outcomes
Spread effect/ replication
Lessons
Successes
Evaluation
Challenges/ problems
Implementation
Advocacy Planning
(Stakeholders Participation)
Strategies / Activities
Alliance / Stakeholders
Analysis and identification of scope and nature of issue
Analysis of organisational capacity
Advocacy Objectives
Advocacy Goal
Selection of particular issue
Organisational Concern
Organisational vision – mission
Problem Focus
Current Health Scenario

Basic elements of advocacy (Handout 11)

- Goals and Objectives – including legitimacy
- Data & research – including law
- Audiences – including the media
- Messages
- Presentation
- Monitoring and Evaluation
- Fundraising
- Coalitions, alliances and networks

NB This can be presented as a wheel with advocacy in the middle

Framework for advocacy strategy

1 Select an issue or problem you wan tot address

2 Develop your goal

3 Analyse and research the issue/ problem/ your organisation (capacity)

4 Develop specific objectives for your advocacy work

5 Identify and analyse your targets and stakeholders

6 Identify your resources & develop alliances

7 Identify your allies and / or opponents

8 Participatory planning (involve stakeholders)

9 Create an action plan

10 Implement

11 Monitor (should be on-going) build in reflection and leraning

12 Evaluate

Adapted from sources including: Advocacy in Action Toolkit, International HIV/AIDS Alliance; Introduction to Advocacy Training Guide, SARA; and BOND's advocacy guide.

Putting advocacy work into context: The story of Rosario

Rosario, a one-year-old baby, is the fourth child of Lucy and Jaime. The family lives in an urban-poor community in Manila, Philippines. The water under the shanty towns serves as the sewage and toilets for most families living in the community. The people get their water supply from deep wells.

Jaime is a daily wage earner in a construction firm. His family migrated to Manila to try their luck in the city. However, life in the city has not been good for them either. Even though they budget for their expenses, they are still always buried in debts.

All of their four children are malnourished. They all have the same illnesses — they always have a cough, fever and diarrhoea, their tummies swollen like a drum. Tape worms emerge when they move their bowels, which Lucy believes to be normal because she was told that tapeworms help digest food in the stomach. Lucy did not breastfeed her children because she was told that she has heart disease and could not breastfeed.

The children have not been immunized. The one who always gets sick is Rosario. She is the skinniest, palest and always has diarrhoea. One day, Rosario gets ill from chicken pox. Lucy takes her to the nearest health centre, but they are not given free medicines. Lucy buys the prescribed medicines but when each runs out, she is not able to buy replacements because she had no money.

When Rosario does not recover well from her illness, she is taken to a private hospital because the community health centre will not admit her. The hospital demands a P1,200 (US$23) deposit. Fortunately the community captain, a usurer, lends them P1,500 ($28), but with interest to pay.

Because they are afraid that the hospital bill would rise further, the family decides to take Rosario out of the hospital even though she is not yet well.

After one week of continuous fever and diarrhoea, Rosario becomes weaker, dehydrated and eventually dies.

Quest How To Section V: Research methods (Handout 13)

A: Introduction to research process and methods

The How Tos in this section concern research methods: Conducting interviews, Developing a questionnaire, Conducting a focus group discussion (FGD) and Developing observation and listening skills. This introduction is relevant to all of the How Tos in this series.

'Research' often sounds difficult and threatening to people. The aim of this section is to demystify research and highlight the practical value of basic research skills. This introduction outlines basics of research that are relevant to all the How Tos that follow.

It clarifies terminology used such as 'open' and 'closed' questions, explaining their fundamental differences and situations in which each is appropriate.

The skills that you need for research are also useful for other aspects of your work and it is well worth spending time and effort developing them. They are transferable across fields and subject areas. Importantly, they will help you to better understand and know your intended beneficiaries. What is more, their value will be felt far more broadly than in Quest alone.

What is Research?

Research is a form of systematic and disciplined enquiry. Most people already have and practise certain 'researcher' skills, such as listening and observing carefully and being a questioning and thinking human being. However, these skills can always be improved!

Research does not occur in isolation from wider areas of work or from professional relationships that are developed. The skills and attributes discussed below will help you to become more aware of different community perspectives and experiences. You will become a more reflective practitioner and a better learner through close observation and active listening – crucial for any research exercise. Such skills will ultimately increase the impact of your work.

Key questions in any research

- **What do we need to know?**
- **Why do we need to know it?**
- **Who needs this information?**
- **Where will we find this information? From whom?**
- **How should we collect it? (Using what method/s?)**
- **What will we do with the results?**

Because research methods are tools (detailed in the four How Tos that follow), what is important is *how they are used*. Perfecting these skills and attributes is a life-long activity and none can be learned or perfected in one workshop. Experience and reflective practice are the best teachers!

In the box in the bottom left we highlight factors that need consideration before you start any research exercise.

Before you start

The following factors have an impact on any research. You need to consider them before you begin.

- Trust and rapport with participants: it is crucial to develop trust and rapport, whatever method you are adopting. This implies being respectful, honest (including about your limitations) and open to the information or results that emerges. Participants need to feel that you respect them and what they have to say, that they will not be judged and that information they share will be welcomed.

If participants feel they can trust you and that you really are interested in what they are sharing, they will be more open and the information they give you will be more trustworthy, comprehensive and useful. It is your responsibility to facilitate this.

• Context and sensitivity of issues: depending on what is being researched, it might be necessary to assure participants of confidentiality. Confidentiality means that no one will be able to be identified by name or by any unique characteristics, such as a particular way of speaking. Assuring participants of confidentiality is often essential and *participants need to be able to trust you about this*.

For moral and ethical reasons, if you assure participants of confidentiality, you must make sure you keep to this. If not, people will not be able to trust you. This would cause long term damage and affect your own organisation and any other NGOs or researchers working with the same group. It would also affect the credibility and quality of any information that is shared.

Confidentiality demands being open and honest about **why** you are collecting the information, **who will have access** to it (just yourself? your organisation? donors?), **what it is intended to be used for**, and **how anonymous** it will be. In general, *do not request or use people's names unless necessary*. This is particularly true when you are researching sensitive areas like sexuality, HIV/AIDS and domestic violence.

• Whatever method you choose for a particular situation, people often tell you what *they think you want to hear* rather than their true views. It is important to be aware of this and try to ensure that the atmosphere encourages open and honest sharing. *Do not make judgements about information that people share and try not to show signs of unease*.

Note: There are some exceptions to this. For example, if information is shared about practices that are clearly negative and damaging to health. It might be appropriate to address such issues in a focus group discussion (see How To V(c)).

• Differences between the facilitator/ researcher and the participant: there will always be some differences, which can create barriers. Even if you are not aware of these differences, many participants will be. These might be issues of class, educational background, literacy levels, age, gender, life experience or professional training. It is important to try to limit any potentially negative impact of such differences.

• In any research situation, people who participate may assume that this means something will be done about their problems. Be honest about what you can realistically achieve and explain what you intend to do with the information. Beware of raising expectations unrealistically.

• Clarify that there are no 'right' and 'wrong answers. Rather, you are interested in what different people think or do.

Basic research skills

The following skills are crucial to any research.
The more you can improve your abilities in these areas, the better quality of information you will obtain from participants.

• Be a good, active listener. All research demands this. You need to listen for issues that emerge, at which stage you may wish or need to prompt for further information. Participants are aware if you are actively listening, responding and following up on issues they raise, which will encourage people to share more.

• Do not assume anything about anyone. All communities are heterogeneous (mixed), made up of different, sometimes competing, interest groups. Beware of anyone who offers their opinion as 'representative' of their community! There are always different experiences, perceptions and opinions within groups, even groups that seem similar. It is important to recognise this when using particular methods and when writing up the findings.

• Keep a balance between being open to what emerges, and providing adequate guidance and direction. This means keeping the discussion or interview on track to ensure that you obtain the information you need. It often means stopping people who dominate or who won't keep quiet, in a sensitive manner. Useful expressions include: "Thank you for sharing that. It is an interesting point and although we cannot discuss it here today, we will follow it up another time", or "I am afraid we do not have time to go into that here, but perhaps you could bring it up next time", or "That is an interesting point, let's hear what other people think about that now". There is a need to *be polite and to keep the discussion or interview focused*.

• Only collect information that is useful and will be used. Pages and pages of notes to sit on a shelf are not helpful! Don't waste the precious time of yourself and your participants. With practice, you will develop your ability and skill to keep a discussion focused in a sensitive way.

• Record all interviews and FGDs. If the interview is not well documented, you will lose valuable information. Whenever possible have a note-taker present. This is a relationship you can develop over time if you can find someone who you can work with regularly. *Never rely only on a tape recording. Even when you can record the discussion on tape, you must take notes*! Tapes are often affected by poor sound quality, background noise, batteries running low, poor tape quality and so on, even though you may not be aware of this at the time.

It is also important to record **non-verbal information**, including the mood of the discussion, any high or low points and why they occurred, and background details of participants. Depending on the issue being addressed, the following details may be important to record: age groups, sex, educational background, experience, area/s of work, levels of confidence.

• The locations and spread of intended respondents. If you need to consult people in one area, interviews or FGDs should be

possible. However, if you need to consult people who are spread over a wide area,

telephone interviews or questionnaires may be necessary.

• Seek or develop a research support group. There will often be other people or organisations in your area that are also developing their research skills and interests. It is valuable to share experiences and to set up a mutually-beneficial support group. It is important to new researchers to reflect on research practice and experience, share with and learn from others. This can be done informally in small groups, but it is necessary to create space and time for this to happen.

Selecting methods

Interviews, questionnaires (sometimes called surveys) and FGDs are all valuable means of collecting information. You need to take into account the following factors when selecting which method is most appropriate to a particular research exercise and situation:

• Aim and purpose of the research.

• The kind and depth of information you need. This will help you decide whether to use open or closed questions, and therefore which method is more appropriate.

• How structured, semi-structured or unstructured your interview schedule or questionnaire needs to be. This depends on the topic of investigation, degree of existing knowledge about the issue/s, and the degree to which you need to be open to individual perceptions and experiences, much of which you may not be able to predict.

• The complexity and sensitivity of the issues being explored.

• Whether you know enough or can find out enough to develop an *informed* questionnaire or interview schedule, or whether you should conduct preliminary interviews first, to be able to develop appropriate questions.

• Characteristics of the target audience, including literacy levels, levels of formal education and their particular circumstances.
• Whether you need to consult many people – in which case the depth of the interview will not be as great – or whether it is appropriate to consult fewer people but in more depth. This demands careful thought. Many people equate 'research' with 'survey' or 'questionnaire'. In many instances far more valuable information would result from a few in-depth interviews with key informants than from a large-scale survey. To make your choice, consider the specific aims and purpose of your research.

• The degree of precision necessary. *Remember that it is better to get an approximate answer to the correct question, than a precise answer to the wrong question!* Again, do not assume that large numbers of responses are needed – see the point above.

• The mount of time and other supporting resources that are available for the research.

In some situations, depending on the degree of complexity of the issue or issues and the depth of knowledge needed, it is appropriate to combine methods that usefully complement and inform each other. This does not have to be a huge and costly exercise.

For example, a few interviews with select key informants can usefully inform what questions to include on a questionnaire. Following the completion of questionnaires, FGDs or interviews can help to clarify any areas of confusion that arise.

Issues that emerge in FGDs can be followed up in one-to-one interviews, and individual interviewees might raise issues that you wish to check more widely in FGDs afterwards.

People are much happier to talk in depth than to spend ages completing long open questionson questionnaires. For this reason, if the issues are complex and/or sensitive, interviews arepreferable. However, if you need to consult a lot of people but not in too much depth, questionnaires of mainly closed questions are better.

Types of questions

The phrasing of questions is very important and needs careful thought. It will directly influence whether you obtain the information you need and the honesty and quality of information provided.

Decide for each of your questions whether it should be asked in an 'open' or 'closed' way.

For example:

Open question:
Please describe how women are treated at the hospital..

Closed question 1:
Answer yes or no to the following: When women go to the hospital, are they treated well?
Yes/No

Or (better):

Closed question 2:
Circle A, B, C or D in answer to the following: How are women treated at the hospital?

A: Very politely B: Politely C: Not very politely D: Rudely

Closed question 2 above is a multiple-choice question. Note that the number of alternative answers given is an even number. Odd numbers are usually avoided, as many respondents will automatically pick the middle one. An even number pushes them into a decision that more accurately reflects their view.

It is far easier to compare responses to **closed** questions when analysing questionnaire results, so on a questionnaire most of your questions should be of this type. Sometimes, however, closed questions need to include 'Other: please state' as one possible answer, so that people can include something other than your suggested answers. When appropriate, use a few open questions in your questionnaire as they give people the opportunity to say what they really think, in their own words. For example, consider the following closed question: *Which of these do you think causes children to have diarrhoea?*

A: Teething B: Poor water supply C: Eating eggs D: Mosquito bites

Such phrasing does not allow for alternative answers, which may be very significant. For example, it might be believed locally that diarrhoea results from a failure to make appropriate offerings to the ancestors. To gain a truer picture of the views of your audience it would be better to use an open question. For example, in this instance: *'What do you think causes children to have diarrhoea?'*

If open questions are dominant on a questionnaire, you need to reconsider the choice of method and whether group or individual interviews would be more appropriate. If you find that you need to ask mainly open-ended questions, participants will be far happier to discuss these (which often imply unpredictable or long-winded responses), than to spend ages writing them down. This is true of well-educated populations and even more so where literacy levels are low and pen and paper can be perceived as barriers.

Try to avoid the following:

(i) Multiple ('nested') questions, which many people find confusing. For example:

Do you use your local health centre? Yes/No. If
"No" go straight to Question 8. If "Yes", answer
Questions 7a to 7f.

(ii) 'Leading' questions that encourage a particular answer. In this example, "Yes" is encouraged:
Do you think that there is an urgent need to address this terrible disease that is killing so many people?
Yes/No

In relation to each of your questions, consider carefully whether the **local socio-cultural context** may fuel any misunderstanding about what you are asking, or whether particular questions or language could cause offence. You are advised to pre-test your interview schedule or questionnaire in order to avoid this (see **Quest Stage 5 on Pre-testing**).

Types of data: qualitative and quantitative

Data is raw, unprocessed research findings – that is, the actual answers given. After it has been analysed, data becomes **information.** Data is either qualitative or quantitative.

Qualitative data is expressed in words, obtained from open questions to which interviewees often give widely varying responses. Reading and interpreting qualitative data – dividing it into themes – is time consuming and requires skill.

Quantitative data is numerical and expressed in numbers. Calculations can then be done to produce statistics, for example, of the average weight-for-age of children in a village. Quantitative data can be obtained from closed questions in questionnaires.

Neither qualitative nor quantitative data is in itself superior to the other. The type of data you collect should depend on the information you are looking for. In general, where you need to collect information with depth or detail, qualitative methods are more appropriate. This is often the case in NGO contexts.

Qualitative data is also useful when you are exploring community beliefs, perceptions and practices, which are often not predictable and which cannot be captured in numerical terms. Participants can respond as they like to open-ended questions, using their own words. In general, people are more familiar and happier to work with words than numbers. Qualitative studies can be complemented by quantitative data if appropriate.

Quantitative data is more useful for larger studies conducted over a large area (country/ region wide) or population. This kind of numerical data is often more suitable to government departments and large international agencies, which deal with large populations and that have the capacity to collect such data.

Think carefully about how much precision you really need before embarking on any quantitative research, and if your sources will support it. It is often enough to be aware of *trends*, which can inform your practice or spending. Don't waste time collecting exact numbers, which are never easy to obtain, unless absolutely necessary and unless you have the required expertise available.

Both qualitative and quantitative approaches and data have strengths and shortcomings.
It is important to be aware of their relative advantages and disadvantages, assess their suitability or unsuitability to your purpose and context. It might be appropriate to use different methods that complement one another.

Making sense of the results – analysing data

There are techniques that can help you analyse – make sense of – your findings. Some of the ones listed below you probably do already, although they can always be improved:

1. **Organise your material**, usually under themes. In other words, come up with several categories into which most of the answers will fit. For example, if mothers were asked what problems they face in keeping their children healthy, many of their answers will probably fit under themes such as:

(a) Lack of money for a balanced diet

(b) Lack of clean water

(c) Lack of time

(d) Poor access to healthcare

(e) Lack of money to pay for health care

(f) Other – local factors

2. Keep a note of any answers that do not fit under these themes, which are just as important and should not be lost. Sometimes these are the most important! You could put these in a category labelled 'other'.

3. If you have asked for open answers, several might stand out as describing in an effective or colourful way the points that others have tried to make. Keep a note of such answers, **in the respondent's own words**. These might be useful to quote in your report or resource. Good direct quotations, used appropriately, are always powerful.

4. Consider the answers and the process of organising the material into themes and think carefully about what you have learned from the exercise. What main points emerge from the material? What was expected? Are there any surprises? Are there obvious key themes emerging? Are there many anomalies (answers that do not appear to fit with, or even contradict, others)?

5. Assure quality. Beware that you should always work directly from the material your participants have come up with, and not from your own opinions or knowledge. This demands care when interpreting answers given. Otherwise the aim of the whole exercise is defeated! Make sure that the people doing the research and analysis do not hide or downplay any answers they may not agree with.

Using the gathered information

It is irresponsible to request people's time and energy for feedback, research or evaluation purposes, if you do not then make use of that information. Think carefully about how you can best use the information you have obtained through the research.

What were your original aims and purposes for conducting this piece of research? Have they been met? Do you have (enough of) the required information, or do you need to conduct further research at this point? What can you do with different bits of information that you have obtained through the research? Who might be able to make good use of the information? How?

Evaluating the exercise

Research is always a valuable learning experience. This is particularly true for those new to
research. For this reason it is important to reflect on the whole process and on the findings.
Consider what you have learned from the research, both in terms of content (findings) and process.
What would you do differently next time round? What support might you be able to access to
strengthen your research skills?

Glossary of research terms used in Quest

Analysis (of data) – Making sense of the data. What is it saying? What are the key points? Analysis of qualitative data (words) is usually thematic, that is, key themes are identified from the responses. Analysis of quantitative data (numbers) is usually statistical.

Closed question – A question that implies a short and relatively simple answer. The answer may be Yes/No, one from a multiple choice, or approximately one sentence in length. Closed questions are often used in questionnaires and studies that involve large numbers of respondents. They are more appropriate for relatively simple issues and questions. Distinguished from an open question (see page 8).

Data – Data is raw, unprocessed (unanalysed) information. That is, it is the words or numbers that people give in response to questions. Processed data becomes information.

Findings – Research findings are what you know as a result of the research.

Focus Group Discussion (FGD) – A guided (structured or semi-structured) group discussion, usually involving 7 – 10 participants and led by a facilitator.

Informant – A person responding to your questions, in an interview situation, a FGD or a questionnaire. A key informant is someone who is particularly close to the issue and is, therefore, well placed to answer the questions.

Interview – A structured or semi-structured question and answer session, usually on a one-to-one basis. The interviewer asks the questions and the interviewee responds. A group interview is called a Focus Group Discussion (see above).

Method – The tool you select to conduct the research. Research methods include interviews, FGDs, questionnaires, observation and listening. Different methods can be used to complement one another, in the same study. Particular methods generally give rise to particular types of data (words or numbers).

Non-verbal communication – All communication that is not spoken. This includes behaviour and attitudes, and mood of the discussion (angry, frustrated, satisfied, happy, excited and so on).

Open question – A question that implies a longer answer, in some depth and detail. This may be because you are researching local or individual perceptions, attitudes, opinions, beliefs and experience. It may be because the topic is a sensitive one and you are not sure how people will respond. It may be because you require detailed responses, or responses in people's own words. It may be because there is little knowledge or information about the particular issue/s being investigated. Open questions are often (but not only) used in interviews and FGDs, where more detail is required from a smaller number of people. Distinguished from a closed question (see page 7).

Question schedule – A pre-prepared list of questions to guide an interview or a FGD.

Qualitative (approach or data) – Based on words and language (rather than numbers). It is particularly useful when researching perceptions, experience, attitudes and opinions.

Quantitative (approach or data) – Involving numbers (rather than words).
Generally expressed in figures, amounts or quantities.

Questionnaire – A question schedule answered by many respondents and usually delivered on paper. It is typically made up of closed questions, or others that demand short and relatively simple answers.

Recording (on paper/audio cassette) – capturing what is said and observed, usually on paper and on audio cassette (tape).

Research – Disciplined and systematic enquiry. For research to be believable and acceptable to different audiences, care must be taken at all stages (planning, implementation, analysis and documentation). See Valid/trustworthy below.

Respondent – A person responding to the questions (usually in a questionnaire). In interview situations, respondents are called interviewees.

Sample group – A select smaller group of people, whose characteristics mean they can be said to represent a larger group of people.

Valid/trustworthy – For research to be acceptable to wider audiences, it must be seen as valid and trustworthy. That is, people must be able to trust your approach, methods and findings (or 'evidence'). How do outsiders know that your findings truly represent what you claim they represent? You need to think about possible biases and to assure quality throughout the research process.

B: Conduct interviews

It is **essential** that you read and absorb the **Introduction** to this section before proceeding with this guide to interviewing.

See also **How To V(e)** on becoming an effective listener, observer and note-taker.

This How To refers to one-to-one interviews. Group interviews are also known as Focus Group Discussions/FGDs (see **How To V(c)**).

As explored in the Introduction to this series, interviewing is one possible way of collecting information. The Introduction should have helped you to make an informed decision about what method or methods are most appropriate in the context of your work. This will be influenced by the aims of your research and the type/s of information needed.

Interviewing has many advantages, but demands careful thought and preparation. It is not an easy option. You need to think carefully about the exact wording and purpose of any questions to be asked in interviews.

Advantages of interviews

- Interviews are more familiar and 'natural' to many research informants than other research methods, as people everywhere are used to face-to-face communication. This is particularly true in areas where literacy levels are low and people are not familiar with written communication. In such areas, pen and paper (as used in questionnaires) can be seen as a barrier between professionals and community members, or be seen to reinforce differences.

- They provide an opportunity for open-ended and unpredictable responses. This is important, for example, where local beliefs and practice may differ from medical and health/development worker perspectives. It is important where knowledge about local (as opposed to professional) culture is limited and where the issues being explored could be considered sensitive (e.g. HIV/AIDS, sexuality, sexually-transmitted infections (STIs), domestic violence). It is important when detail may be required, or when interviewees may have a lot to say *that is relevant* to the issue they are being asked about.

- Open-ended questions allow the interviewee to decide what themes, images and words to use to describe their own feelings, thoughts and experiences. For example, questions like how do you feel about the project and what do you think of this initiative? They allow the interviewee much flexibility, which can be important.

- Well-conducted interviews can yield rich and in-depth qualitative data.

- Interviews are valuable for researching sensitive issues. When conducted in private (this is usual), they create a space for exploring issues that may be embarrassing and about which people may only feel free to speak in private and in confidence.

- Interviews present an opportunity to 'test the ground' and try out particular questions that afterwards may be asked of a wider audience. These can then be adapted, if necessary, before being included on questionnaires or asked in FGDs, as appropriate.

- Interviews bring your project into direct, face-to-face contact with community members. If you are starting to work in a new area, informal interviews can be a good way to get to know people. They are a useful way for people to get to know about your organisation's work.

- Where illiteracy levels are high,

questionnaires can be completed in an interview style whereby someone (the interviewer) reads out the questions and writes down the answers given by each 'interviewee'. (Note, however, that this is not recommended, unless unavoidable. Such an exercise is not an 'interview' as such.)

Challenges and difficulties of Interviewing

- A degree of expertise is essential. This is not to imply that staff cannot be trained up as interviewers. However, people without previous training or experience in interviewing will have to be enthusiastic, committed, trained in the basics and well supported. Inevitably it takes time, effort and support for people to develop as interviewers.

- Interviewing is time consuming and exhausting. There is work that must be done prior to and after each interview. For these reasons, commitment is essential.

- Interviewers need strong interpersonal skills. They need to help interviewees feel at ease, to encourage people to open up, to have good rapport and be able to direct/guide the interview as necessary, while allowing the interviewee as much flexibility as possible.

- Interviewers need to be able to handle issues appropriately. Interviews (particularly on sensitive issues) are often unpredictable and people may share sensitive, personal information. The interviewer will need to be able to manage this process, to sensitively stop the direction of conversation if it is not appropriate, to guide interviewees towards available support if appropriate and to manage sticky situations that may arise. Note that sometimes this will not be relevant. However, it is important to be aware of the possibility of sensitive issues arising, and for the interviewer to be ready to deal appropriately with any such issues. The topic of investigation should give some idea about whether this is likely to arise or not.

- Interviewers need to have keen listening and observation skills (see **How To V(e)**). They need to listen *actively* and prompt for

further information as required. They need to have some grasp of the issues and be able to listen and record key points (in writing) at the same time. Interviewers need to be analytical and able to grasp what lies behind what is being said (or not said), to prompt as appropriate.

- Recording is crucial. It is never enough to rely only on a cassette recorder. Interviewers need to write up notes during and immediately after any interview. This includes such aspects as non-verbal communication, the mood of the interview and any sensitive or unclear points.

Identifying, training and briefing Interviewers

As is evident from the above, potential interviewers need to be carefully selected (according to criteria mentioned above) and briefed.

The quality of interviewers will directly influence the quality of information you obtain through the interviews and, therefore, the value of the whole exercise.

Each interviewer needs to feel an active partner in the exercise. He or she should understand why the research is being undertaken and its value. He or she needs a grasp of the basics of research (see the Introduction to Research Methods, **How To V(a)**). Interviewers must display appropriate attitudes and be willing and able to devote time and energy to developing their interviewing skills. They will need some background training, support and encouragement to be able to perform well. If none of your project group has any research training or expertise, you are advised to try to secure the help of a professional qualitative researcher.

Time and energy spent developing research skills at an early stage will save time and avoid complications later on.

Steps in the interviewing process

1. Think carefully about exactly *what information you need,* where to find this (who to ask?) and how (using what questions?).

2. *Draw up a question schedule* to base the interviews on. Depending on the topic of investigation, how much you already know about the issue, how sensitive an area it is and whether you can make any assumptions about relevant knowledge and beliefs, the schedule will be more or less structured, and questions will be open and/or closed. See the introduction to this series for information on types of questions.

The following points are of crucial consideration when you are developing an interview schedule:

- The wording of questions is very important. An interview question is a way to encourage a response from the interviewee. Wording makes a big difference to the quality and depth of responses that are received. There is a need for focused questions that encourage genuine and relevant responses.

- Ensure that questions do not assume anything. For example, 'What is the most helpful service that the health centre provides?' assumes that some services are helpful to the interviewee.

- Questions must be clear and unambiguous (easy to understand), devised with the particular target group in mind.

- An interview is not an interrogation or quiz. Beware of closed questions that put the interviewee in a passive role, just confirming or denying what the interviewer is suggesting.

- Ordering the questions – begin with the most simple, non-controversial questions to make the interviewee feel comfortable and open up.

3. Whom will you interview?
The information you need will determine whom you interview. You cannot interview everyone within a community or a particular group and you will have to select a sample of individuals to interview. It is important to make sure that this group is representative of the group you are interested in. For example, if the target group is people living with HIV, you may need to include teenage/unmarried boys and girls, older/married men and women, commercial sex workers, and so on.

Particular people (or representatives of particular groups) who should be interviewed for specific reasons are known as 'key informants'. For example, if you are researching beliefs and practice relating to childbirth, traditional birth attendants, traditional healers, local religious leaders, mothers, grandmothers, midwives and doctors could all be key informants, depending on the local context.

Before drawing up an interview schedule for community members, you may wish to consult colleagues or staff of organisations working in similar areas, to help you develop a more informed interview schedule.

4. Pilot the question schedule – colleagues can be useful for this before piloting the schedule with your target group. Piloting means running a trial session, i.e. you expect to learn from this run and to improve your schedule and techniques on the basis of it. Piloting is essential to show up questions that might be confusing or unclear, even if this is not apparent to you.

Adapt the schedule and your interviewing practice on the basis of the piloting. In particular, check that all the questions are clear, relevant, and will produce useful information.

5. Be careful not to raise expectations unrealistically or to make promises that cannot be kept. Be honest about what will happen with the information you gather, who will have access to it, and the limitations of the exercise. For example, you may hope that the research will inform organisational policy, but other factors outside your control will have a large impact on whether or not this actually happens.

Practical planning

1. Before the interview

• Timing of interviews. Make as much effort as possible to fit in with the availability of your intended target groups. For example, it would be wrong to plan interviews with community members during harvesting season or other busy periods in their year. It would be wrong to ask mothers to be available for interview at times of the day when they are particularly busy with children and household tasks.

You need to fit the interviews into times that suit your interviewees and not expect them to participate at times that suit you. Times of the day, month, season and year must fit with local patterns and people's availability.

• Location of interviews. You are advised to find a quiet space, where you will not be disturbed during interviews. This is particularly important if the issues being investigated are sensitive. Try to use any 'ready opportunities' for interviewing, for example by finding space at a clinic, when a mother and children are already there and will not have to make much extra effort to participate. On the other hand for teenage girls, for example, a clinic may not be appropriate and a youth club setting (or similar) may be better. Think about locations that your participants will feel at ease in.

• Practical support to enable participation in interviews. This could be providing childcare, transport costs etc. Do not expect people to cover any extra expenses that their participation might result in.

• Time. You need to budget for adequate time, both during and between interviews. As an interviewer, the process will be draining and you need to take notes immediately after each interview (see (iii) below). For this reason, do not be unrealistic about what is possible. Attempt to allocate at least 20 minutes between each interview. You need some time to digest what has been shared, to take notes and to rest before the following interview. Active listening is exhausting!

• Check carefully any equipment (for example, tape recorder and electricity supply or batteries) that is to be used. Prepare a pack of necessary equipment (tapes, tape recorder, pens and paper).

• Read **How To V(e)** on note-taking, which highlights issues to consider and preparation needed to ensure that you appropriately document the interview (including verbal and non-verbal communication).

(ii) During the interview

Interviewers should be well prepared for the interviews, as highlighted above. This is both in terms of the skills an interviewer needs, issues they need to be aware of and the area/s that you are collecting information about.

• See above under 'Steps in the Interviewing Process' and make sure that all these issues have been taken on board.

• See above under 'Challenges and Difficulties of Interviewing' for the skills and attributes it is essential that the people conducting the interviews have.

• When preparing, try to ensure that you will not be disturbed during the interview.

• Do whatever you can to limit the impact of background noise (traffic, music, voices from a clinic, and so on). This is important if you intend to record the interviews on tape and to ensure that the interviewees are not distracted.

• Check carefully any tape recorder (and electricity supply/batteries) that you are using.

• Have a notebook ready to take notes during the interview.

• Have a list of interviewees and your schedule for the day readily available.

(iii) Immediately after the interview

When you are involved with several interviews
in a short period of time (as is common), it is very difficult to remember what happened, when and with whom. **You cannot rely on your memory!** It is vital that as much information as possible is captured.

For this reason, it is important to note the following as soon as possible after each interview. Any information captured now will greatly assist your analysis later on.

- Immediately note down any bits of the conversation that you can remember but which you did not manage to capture adequately at the time.

- Note down non-verbal behaviour that you observed. For example, did particular questions cause any unease? How comfortable or uncomfortable did the interviewee appear in general? What factors might have influenced this?

- Is there anything about the interviewee (gender, age, educational status, professional status, location of residence, occupation, background, and so on) that is relevant and that could be useful later on?

- Did the interviewee raise any 'new' issues that you now wish to check out with other interviewees? Should you add a new question to your interview schedule?

- Were any responses particularly surprising?

- It is useful to highlight important points at this stage.

- Highlight any direct quotations (that is, in the speaker's words) that you may wish to use later on.

Evaluating the process

- **What have you learned through the process of developing and using an interview?**

- **What was most challenging?**

- **What worked well and why? What did not work well? Why? How can you follow up to ensure that this does not happen again?**

- **Were the appropriate people involved?**

- **What would you do differently next time?**

- **What have you learned about your own skills in listening, observation and note-taking (if appropriate)?**

Recommended resources

www.mapnp.org/library/evaluatn/intrview.htm
– General guidelines for conducting interviews

C: Carry out a Focus Group Discussion (FGD)

It is **essential** that you read and absorb the **Introduction** to this section before proceeding with this guide to FGDs.

See also **How To VE** on Becoming an effective listener, observer and note-taker.

This How To refers to structured group interviews, otherwise known as Focus Group Discussions (FGDs).

As explored in the Introduction to this section on research methods, a FGD is one possible way of collecting information. The Introduction should have helped you to make an informed decision about what method or methods are most appropriate in your context. This will be influenced by the aims of your research and the type/s of information needed.

Focus group discussions (FGDs) are guided discussions involving select group members. Structured or semi-structured questions guide the discussion, to provide information on a particular topic.

Advantages of FGDs

- The discussion itself prompts thoughts and sometimes debate among group members, which you miss in one-to-one interviews and questionnaires.

- FGDs can yield rich, in-depth qualitative information through exploring knowledge, beliefs, concerns and attitudes.

- FGDs can encourage participants to generate and explore their own questions, to analyse their own experiences in their own words and terms. In this way, FGDs can give valuable insights into the language used by the community, into local concepts and understandings and into group norms and cultural values.
- FGDs can illuminate and explore significant differences (of understanding, belief, attitudes and practice) within the group, as well as similarities within the group.
This is important because particular communities are often assumed to be more homogeneous (uniform) than they are. It will highlight how resources may need to be distributed, to meet the needs and context of particular groups.

- For example, FGDs can identify and highlight local myths or beliefs about a practice or product that you may be unaware of.

- FGDs are often useful to obtain information from non-literate communities. The group can provide a 'cover' under which certain individuals might feel safer expressing their opinions. They can also be reassuring by revealing to participants that other group members have similar misunderstandings or feelings to their own, in other words, that they are not as isolated as they might have previously thought.

- FGDs can highlight different possible responses to questions, among a particular group of people. This can usefully inform a questionnaire schedule that is being sent out more widely.

- FGDs generate a lot of information quickly.

- FGDs can be valuable learning experiences for participants, for example, if any damaging inaccurate information is shared, you can discuss this in the session in a way that everyone learns from it.

- Because the discussion is flexible, you often discover opinions and attitudes that would not emerge in a formal questionnaire.

- FGDs are often well accepted by communities as a 'natural' form of face-to-face communication.

- Focus groups are often good fun!

• FGDs can be used to evaluate existing materials or drafts. They can usefully inform the development of interview and questionnaire schedules.

• FGDs, especially if undertaken with several different groups (of similar characteristics), can help to ensure that the resource being developed includes necessary, correct and appropriate information, presented in language and formats that are appropriate to the local context.

Challenges and difficulties of FGDs

• As with one-to-one interviews, much depends on the individual facilitator/researcher's skill and ability. If facilitation is weak, a valuable opportunity for rich discussion is lost and much time and effort is wasted.

• The impact of (inevitable) power dynamics. Strong facilitation skills and an awareness of issues in group dynamics is necessary, including how to control over-dominant or vocal group members and how to bring quieter group members into the discussion.

• Results must be interpreted carefully as, inevitably, more confident and articulate group members may dominate the discussion. Many participants will not wish to be 'too critical' in public and will not be used to being asked for their *own* opinions or perspectives.

• Some groups develop their own dynamic over which the facilitator has limited control, because of the agenda of particular group members. If an unhealthy or antagonistic dynamic evolves, for example, this will affect the whole discussion, how much certain individuals feel able to participate and how productive the exercise is.

• Focus groups can paint a picture of what is socially acceptable in a community, rather than what actually happens or is believed.

• FGDs can be inhibiting when exploring personal and sensitive issues, when one-to-one interviews might offer an opportunity for more honest, in-depth sharing. This will be more true of some group members than others.

• In a FGD it is advisable to have a facilitator and a note-taker, whenever possible. This is because the direction a FGD takes is impossible to predict and because a lot of information, from different sources, is typically shared in FGDs. It is generally important to note down who shares what information – the source – and his or her gender, age, work, background, and so on, as appropriate. This is so as to capture how open the discussion really is and whether you need to consult particular groups separately (for example, uneducated or younger women, who may not feel free to speak in front of men).

Facilitating FGDs

As is evident from the challenges and difficulties discussed above, effectively facilitating a FGD requires particular skills and strengths. It calls for a combination of strong facilitation expertise and research awareness and expertise. As with one-to-one interviews, the quality of facilitation will directly influence the quality of information you obtain through the FGD and, therefore, the value of the whole exercise.

Documenting FGDs

To be useful as a research exercise (as well as potential benefits of participation in the process), the role of the note-taker is crucial. In FGDs, inexperienced facilitators are advised to seek the support of a note-taker who is responsible for documenting the discussion. This leaves you free to focus on facilitation itself.

Note-taking demands adequately capturing what was said and expressed (verbally and non-verbally), by whom, the tone of the discussion (particularly over sensitive or controversial issues), observations on who was actively participating, who was not and factors that might explain any reactions, behaviour or attitudes. The note-taker should document group dynamics and the make-up of the group. Although names are generally not necessary, it can be important to record a group profile, including the age groups, gender and so on of group members, to note any differences in attendance and participation of particular people. See **How To V(e).**

For example, if very few younger women attended, what are the reasons for this? Do you need to hold another FGD with this particular group at another time? Was any information unexpected or particularly surprising? Why? What can be learned from the process about group behaviour? What is revealed about power differentials within the group?

Planning and running FGDs

1. Think carefully about the aim/s of the FGD.

What information do you need? Who should be involved? How many participants? How many groups? Will they have a similar or different make-up? How will you structure it – asking what questions?

2. Draw up a question schedule to inform the FGD. Depending on the topic of investigation, how much you already know about the issue, how sensitive an area it is and whether you can make any assumptions about relevant knowledge and beliefs, the schedule will be more or less structured. In general, five or six questions are recommended (each should inspire rich discussion and adequate time needs to be allocated for this). A FGD schedule should always be used flexibly.

The following are crucial considerations when developing a FGD schedule:

- The wording of questions is very important as it makes a big difference to the quality and depth of responses and discussion that will follow. Questions and prompts should inspire relevant and focused discussion (and sometimes debate).

- Ensure that questions do not assume anything. For example, 'What is the most helpful service that the health centre provides?' assumes that it provides services that participants consider helpful

- Questions must be clear and unambiguous. The schedule needs to be devised with the

particular target group in mind (considering complexity of language, and so on)

- A FGD is not an interrogation or quiz, it is a **discussion.** Questions and prompts should stimulate participants to respond and discuss among themselves

- Order the questions – begin with simpler, non-controversial questions to make people feel at ease and open up.

3. **Who will participate?** The information you need will determine who should participate in the FGDs and you will have to select an appropriate sample of individuals to be involved. It is important to ensure that members of the FGD are representative of those you are interested in. For example, if the target group is people living with HIV, you may need to include teenage/unmarried boys and girls, older/married men and women, commercial sex workers, and so on. This highlights another issue: it may be necessary to hold several FGDs with different groups, who may not be able or willing to participate freely within the same group. In the above example, you may need to hold FGDs with five different groups separately: unmarried but sexually active boys, unmarried but sexually active girls, married men, married women and commercial sex workers.

Consider whether you need to involve particular key informants (see **How To V(d)**).

4. **Pilot the FGD schedule**. It can be useful to pass this around colleagues for comment, before holding a trial run FGD with members of the target group. *Piloting means running a trial session, which you expect to learn from and improve your schedule and techniques as a result*.

Piloting is essential to show up questions that might be too sensitive, confusing or unclear, which may not be apparent to you.

Adapt the schedule and your FGD facilitation on the basis of the piloting exercise. In particular, check that all the questions are clear, relevant and will produce useful information.

5. **Be careful not to raise expectations unrealistically** or to make promises that cannot be kept. Be honest about what will happen with the information you gather, who will have access to it, and the limitations of the exercise. For example, you may hope that the research will inform organisational policy, but other factors outside your control will have a large impact on whether or not this actually happens.

Practical planning

1. **Before the FGD**

- The best size for a FGD is seven to 10 people. Invite a few extra people to allow for some dropping out.

- Identify who should participate (as above). Consult intended participants about, and inform, them of the date, place and time of the meeting as early as possible, and try to arrange transport or child care if necessary. FGDs should generally be 1 – 1.5 hours in duration. **Timing is very important if participation is to be maximised and the more you can fit with local schedules and availability, the better.** See if there are any opportunities you can exploit for the FGD. For example: opportunities when mothers and babies already gather and when mothers may be happy to participate.

- Think carefully about the make-up of the group. Participants should share certain characteristics, depending on the purpose of the FGD. People are more likely to talk freely and share experiences if they feel they have things in common with other participants.

This is especially true of sensitive issues, e.g. with sex and sexuality, where mixed sex or age groups are often not appropriate. Gender, age and educational background are important considerations here. Joint sessions can be organised later if appropriate.

- Arrange a comfortable and convenient meeting place where people can sit in a circle. It is important to create an atmosphere that will allow people to talk freely and openly about their opinions and experience. Church halls, village meeting places, community centres, health clinics and schools can provide space for FGDs.

- A FGD is a *discussion* rather than a question and answer session, but you still need to use a guide to structure the discussion and ensure it achieves its aims. The aim of the FGD will determine how structured or open (unstructured) it should be. This will influence how you facilitate the session and how much depth participants can go into.

- Identify an appropriate note-taker. Brief the note-taker thoroughly (see **How To V(e)**). It is important to make sure the note-taker understands that they are *not* a participant and should not interrupt the discussion unless absolutely necessary.

- Check any equipment to be used (for example, a tape recorder, tapes and batteries).

2. During the FGD

- FGDs should last between one and two hours (maximum).

- Introduce yourself. Explain the aim of the discussion, for example that it will inform the design of a community-based project, or check on the value of a particular health learning resource.

- Explain how the session is being recorded (usually in writing and on tape), why and who will have access to this information.

Ensure participants that all their contributions are valuable and important and that you are keen to hear about differences within the group. Emphasise that there are no 'right' answers. Your attitude and behaviour must support this.

• If appropriate, establish ground rules for the FGD. Because the session is a one-off occurrence, it can be useful to have ground rules to sustain focus and participation, in an atmosphere of openness and mutual respect. This is especially important if the issues being discussed might be considered sensitive and/or confidential. The following group rules may be appropriate:
(i) respect each other's contributions
(ii) keep focused
(iii) keep it confidential
(iv) get closure on questions
(v) finish at the time agreed.

• Set the context to open up the discussion. For example, 'We are all interested in improving the health of our children...'. Use your previously developed guide to focus the discussion. Avoid direct, personal questions. It is better to ask about what people think friends or other community members believe, or how they might behave, as this is less threatening.

• Encourage group members to respond to questions and talk as openly as possible. Try to give everyone the opportunity to speak. Remember the facilitator's role is one of active listener, prompt and recorder (if there is not a recorder present). You should not be actively involved in the discussion except to guide it, keep it focused and ensure that all participants speak and a few do not dominate.

• After each question has been answered, reflect back a *brief* summary of what you heard as the main points. This demands particular skill and the note-taker might assist here.

• Do not be afraid of silence. You can often use it to your advantage. A pause often encourages people to speak or expand on an idea. It enables all participants to gather their thoughts.

• Be selective about the types of questions you ask. Closed questions will give short answers – 'How many children do you have?'

– whereas open-ended ones will give longer, more thoughtful responses – 'What have you heard about oral contraceptives?'. In general, open questions are more appropriate in FGDs.

• Actively probe when you want more information or if you feel others (quieter group members) may have something to contribute to this point but have not yet done so. Use expressions like: "That's interesting, could you tell me more about it?" and "How do other people's experiences relate to that?" or "Does anyone have a different experience to share?"

• Avoid leading questions that will prompt participants to respond in a particular way.

• It is usually acceptable to use a tape recorder if you have one, but you must check this with participants. Make sure that no one minds being recorded and that they know exactly who will have access to the tape. Is it just for yourself, to type up the discussion afterwards? Do you want to capture exact quotes? Will the recording be destroyed afterwards? These issues are very important, as they will affect the quality and openness of the discussion.

Note: A tape recorder is not a substitute for good note taking! It will never pick up things about body language, whether people appear at ease, anxious or angry, and so on.

3. Immediately after the FGD

• It might be appropriate to immediately write up notes on how the discussion went, the mood of the discussion, points of confusion/anger/sensitivity, and so on.

• Check that the note-taker captured what you felt was important, including any non-verbal communication and issues.

- Did the note-taker record the group profile? If not, do this now.

- If you used a tape recorder, check that it is clear and has worked properly. If not, you will have to spend time capturing the issues immediately while they are fresh in your head.

- Make sure that no sensitive material is left lying around. This includes tapes.

There are advantages and limitations to using focus groups. Inevitably much will depend on the quality of facilitation, as the extent to which people feel safe and at ease will play a major role in determining the quality of the discussion and the value of information obtained through the process.

Note-taking skills are also important, as unless the discussion is well recorded, despite the value of participation in the process significant information will be lost.

Evaluating the process

- **What have you learned through the process of developing and using an FGD?**

- **What was most challenging?**

- **What worked well and why? What did not work well? Why? How can you follow up to ensure that this does not happen again?**

- **Were the appropriate people involved?**

- **What would you do differently next time?**

- **What have you learned about your own skills in listening, observation and note-taking (if appropriate)?**

Practical interviewing skills (Handout 16)

1. Preparation

Before interviewing, you need to consider what information you require and why. This will inform who you interview and how (what questions?). When interviewing there are a variety of different question types you can use, depending on the type of information you are trying to collect.

2. Prepare a topic guide

Brainstorm and create a topic guide suitable for fieldwork (see example in the box below). As well, consider the introduction, fact-finding and recommendation sections of the interview.

Sample topic guide: Young People and Sex

Note: Carefully worded questions will have to be created to explore these issues.
What do young people know about reproduction and sex?
What questions do they have?
What do they think about having sex before marriage?
Do young men and women have different feelings about this?
When do they start having sex?
What would help them to delay having sex?
What do they know about HIV, and do they feel at risk of infection?
What do they know about other sexually transmitted infections?
What do they know about safer sex and sexual activities that could be safer than intercourse?
Where do they get information?
Who would they like to teach them about sex?
Should young people have access to treatment for sexually transmitted infections, and do they?
What do they feel about people with HIV?
How would they like things to change in their communities?

Source: Starting the discussion: Steps to making sex safer, Healthlink Worldwide, 1996

3. Types of questions

(i) **Closed questions** are specific and require short and relatively simple answers (may be Yes/No answers). For example, “How old are you?” “Have you been given any information on HIV/AIDS?” These types of questions provide specific and short answers. They do not really promote discussion.

(ii) **Open questions** require longer answers, more detail and are more complex. They are appropriate if you wish to find out about knowledge, beliefs, attitudes and practice (behaviour) of the people being interviewed. They are often appropriate for unknown, sensitive and/or complex issues. They often begin with how or why. For example, "How do you think your school could improve sexual health education?" or "Where do you think young people would feel most comfortable talking about sex? With who?"

4. Being an active listener

A big part of interviewing is listening. Active listening involves encouraging the speaker to continue speaking until he or she has given all of his or her information that is relevant. For example questions like, "Then what happened?" and "Why do you think…?" will encourage people to talk more, if this is appropriate and necessary. This does not involve giving your own opinion about something, or arguing if you disagree.

Active listening means:

- Giving your full attention to the person speaking
- Concentrating on what the person is saying
- Respecting the speaker's point of view
- Checking that you have understood accurately
- Picking up unclear points and prompting for further information or clarity

5. Interviewing essentials

- Ethics - No Interview should ever do damage to any party involved. Beware, particularly in sensitive situations and about sensitive and private issues.
- Do not make promises you cannot keep and do not falsely raise hopes. This means being honest about what you can and cannot achieve. Think carefully about any folllow-up you promise (what is possible? what is appropriate?).
- If you need to and if you promise to ensure confidentiality, consider the implications. How will you make sure that only those who really need to see the data will see it? How will you make sure that all names/sources are kept confidential?
- Consider how you can make best use of the information you find out. Who can help? Is there a trained researcher you can bring in to support and advise?
- Think carefully about how you will introduce yourself, the organisation, the process and about what you hope to achieve through the interviewing. Be honest!
- How will you warm interviewees up to the topic and issues?
- Time keeping is important. Interviews that are too long are usually not focused enough. Only collect relevant and useful information (that is, not everything that the interviewee has to say!)

Exercise to practice Interviewing (groups of 3 people) (Handout 17)

In groups of 3. Each person will play each of 3 roles: Interviewer, interviewee, observer. Set a time limit per interview (maximum 10 mins).

Pretend you have never met. You should have decided upon a relevant topic for everyone to base their interviews on.

Instructions:

- Each person: Develop an interview schedule (topic guide) of about 5 key questions or areas of interest you want to cover. Write the questions carefully. These will act as your prompt.
- ABC in each group to role play. A = Interviewer, B = Interviewee, C = observer. Observers are not to say anything but to sit back, observe and take notes. The observer notes what is happening: is there active listening? Are correct question types being used? Did the interviewer explore what lies behind particular opinions?
- 10 mins? per interview, 1 min between each interview. *No discussion between the interviews (until all 3 people have played all 3 roles).*
- At end of the 3 interviews, discuss issues that arose. How did it feel to be interviewed? How difficult was the process of asking questions? How did it feel to be asking questions? Observers should feed back to the other two participants about what they noticed. All discuss how they think the 3 interviews went (strengths, weaknesses and learning points).

- In general plenary (whole group), all participants discuss the main learning points.

Field work – feedback preparation

In preparing for the field work, participants are reminded to focus on the following points while analysing the field work findings:

FACTS → What was said? What did you see?

↓

FINDINGS → What does it mean? How do you interpret this?

↓

RECOMMENDATION → What do we need to do? Who should we involve?

↓

POSSIBLE ADVOCACY ISSUES

Facts	Findings
Recommendations	Possible advocacy issues

Checklist for Choosing an Issue

Criteria	Issue #1	Issue #2
Result in a real improvement in people's lives		
Give people a sense of their own power		
Be widely felt		
Be deeply felt		
Build lasting organisation and alliances		
Create opportunities for women and marginalised people to get involved in politics		
Develop new leaders		
Promote awareness of and respect for rights		
Have a clear political and policy solution		
Have a clear target and timeframe		
Link local concerns to global issues		
Provide opportunities to raise funds		
Enable you to further your vision and mission		
Be winnable		

Adapted from 'Organizing for Social Change: A Manual for Activists in the 1990s' K.Bobo, J. Kendall, S. Max, Midwest Academy, Seven Locks Press, California, 1991. IN: A new weave of power, people and politics (Practical Action) (2007)

Developing Our Advocacy Strategy (Handout 20)

The questions below provide a quick reference guide for the first three stages of the advocacy cycle. This overview can help you to see the type of information you need and enable you to select the right tools.

Issue/Problem **What is the problem?**
Is it serious? Is it urgent?

Effects **What are the effects of the problem?**
How does the problem affect the poorest people? Does it have a great effect on certain groups? If so, who and how? Do you have enough information?

Causes **What are the root causes of the problem?**
What is the role of the policies and practices of the national government? What is the role of other groups? What contribution is made by cultural factors and environmental factors? Are the poor able to participate in decision-making?

Potential Solutions **What do you think needs to be done?**
What are your proposals? What are their advantages and disadvantages? Can you defend your position? Are your proposals realistic? How will you measure success? Do you have a clear plan about how change will come about?

Targets **Who has the power to do something to bring about change?**
Government, religious institutions, businesses, community leaders? Do you have access to them? Are they open to discussion? Do they agree they have responsibility for change? Are they able to do something?

Potential allies **Who is trying to address the situation at the moment?**
Can you work with them? Is their activity effective? What may need to change? Are there people who are not yet addressing the issue, but could be persuaded to help you?

Risks and assumptions **What risks are there in getting involved in advocacy?**
What have you done to reduce the risks? What are the risks if you do not try to address the issue using advocacy work? What assumptions have you made about the causes and effects of the problem, about those in power, and about your own abilities?

Methods **What methods can you see?**
Are you confident in using them? Have they worked before? Are there alternatives? Do you have the skills and resources to use them well?

Tearfund Roots Resources

Checklist of criteria for analysing an advocacy objective (Handout 21)

Criteria	Objective 1	Objective 2
Do qualitative or quantitative data exist which show that reaching the objective will result in real improvements in the situation?		
Is the objective achievable? Even with opposition?		
Will many people support the objective? Do people care about the objective deeply enough to take action?		
Will you be able to raise money or other resources to support your work on the objective?		
Can you clearly identify the target decision makers? What are their names or positions?		
Does the objective have a clear, realistic time frame?		
Do you have the alliances with key individuals or organisations needed to reach you objective? Will the objective help build alliances with other sectors, NGOs, leaders or stakeholders? Which ones?		
Is the objective easy to understand?		
Will working on the objective provide people with opportunities to learn more about and become involved with the decision-making process?		

Adapted from An introduction to advocacy: training guide, R.R. Sharma, SARA, 1995

Case Study Summary (Handout 22)

Criteria	Objective 1	Objective 2
	The Ministry of Food and Agriculture will start a national program to fortify salt with iodine in the next two years.	**The Ministry of Health will start a community-based nutrition education program to improve young child feeding practices in the next year.**
Do qualitative or quantitative data exist to show that reaching the objective will improve the situation?	Research shows that salt it produced and processed centrally. Data indicate that iodine deficiency is widespread and associated with neonatal mortality and reduced intellectual capacity. Fortifying salt could reverse these negative outcomes.	Program evaluations show that nutrition education can enhance child survival in areas where adequate food is available. Studies show that programs are more effective when educational messages are developed for specific audiences. Impact might be difficult to measure.
Is the objective achievable? Even with opposition?	Opposition to the cost of salt fortification could slow the time frame for achieving the objective, but it is achievable. Producers may oppose the regulation and quality control of salt production.	This advocacy objective involves working with the Ministry of Health and community organizations. Community leaders may oppose it if they are not involved early in the process.
Will the objective gain the support of many people? Do people care about the goal/ objective deeply enough to take action?	The general public will likely support salt fortification if prices do not increase. Food producers may resist if they must share costs; otherwise they will support this objective. People may take action because the objective is concrete and will have a significant impact on child survival and development	Women's organizations will be supportive. Nutrition education is recognized by donors to be an important part of child survival programs. In many communities, however, the problems and consequences of malnutrition are not well recognized.
Will you be able to raise money or other resources to support your work on the goal/ objective?	Several donors are currently supporting salt fortification.	Although donors recognize the need for nutrition education, funds are limited and most donors are supporting other child survival interventions. It will be difficult to raise funds so organizations may have to use their own.
Can you clearly identify the target decision makers? What are their names or positions?	To start a government-sponsored salt fortification program, the Prime Minister, and Ministers of Finance, Agriculture and Health will all have to approve the program.	To start a community-based nutrition education program the Minister of Health, district health officers and key community leaders will have to agree and approve the program.
Is the goal/ objective easy to understand?	The links between iodine deficiency and intellectual impairment and neonatal mortality have been widely publicized, so the general public will likely understand it. Some promotion will be needed to create demand for this product.	The links between young child feeding practices and child survival are proven but not as easy to understand. Careful qualitative research will be required to develop appropriate educational messages.
Does the objective have a clear time frame that is realistic?	The time frame to begin a salt fortification program is the next two years. It is realistic	The time frame to begin the nutrition education program is one year. It is an opportune time to advocate for such a program because district health officers are developing their five-year plans at the moment.
Do you have the necessary alliances with key individuals or organizations to reach your objective? How will the objective help build alliances with other NGOs, leaders or stakeholders?	This objective will strengthen relationships with NGOs, the private sector, key government leaders and the general public. We should seek support from salt producers since they must implement the program and can assist with advocacy efforts.	This objective will strengthen ties between community organizations and the health system and improve the general public's perception of the health system.
Will working on the objective give people opportunities to learn about and become involved with the decision-making process?	Advocating for a salt fortification program will open dialogue between researchers, the government, the private sector, and the public to find ways to solve an important nutrition problem.	Advocating for a community-based nutrition education program will bring community members together with district health officers to find ways to improve young child feeding programs.

Stakeholder Analysis

Aim: To understand the importance of the issue to each stakeholder and their level of influence

Once you have mapped your main stakeholders and have an idea of why they are interested in the issue and the position they are likely to take, you can draw up a stakeholder analysis table to help you to understand:

- How much each group **agrees** with your position – score them on a scale of -3 (strong disagreement) to +3 (total agreement) with 0 meaing undecided
- How **important** the issue is to them (L=low, M=medium, H=high priority)
- What level of **influence** they have (L=low, M=medium, H=high)

STAKEHOLDER	AGREEMENT	IMPORTANCE	INFLUENCE
	-3 -2 -1 0 +1 +2 +3	L M H	L M H
	-3 -2 -1 0 +1 +2 +3	L M H	L M H
	-3 -2 -1 0 +1 +2 +3	L M H	L M H
	-3 -2 -1 0 +1 +2 +3	L M H	L M H
	-3 -2 -1 0 +1 +2 +3	L M H	L M H
	-3 -2 -1 0 +1 +2 +3	L M H	L M H
	-3 -2 -1 0 +1 +2 +3	L M H	L M H
	-3 -2 -1 0 +1 +2 +3	L M H	L M H
	-3 -2 -1 0 +1 +2 +3	L M H	L M H
	-3 -2 -1 0 +1 +2 +3	L M H	L M H
	-3 -2 -1 0 +1 +2 +3	L M H	L M H
	-3 -2 -1 0 +1 +2 +3	L M H	L M H
	-3 -2 -1 0 +1 +2 +3	L M H	L M H
	-3 -2 -1 0 +1 +2 +3	L M H	L M H
	-3 -2 -1 0 +1 +2 +3	L M H	L M H
	-3 -2 -1 0 +1 +2 +3	L M H	L M H

Source: adapted from Practical Advocacy in Action, Tearfund Roots Resources

Audience Analysis – Communicating for Advocacy (Handout 24)

Audience	How to contact them?	What do you think they know already? What is their attitude towards the issue?	Potential concerns	Possible advocacy and communication message

NB: There maybe primary and secondary audiences – Continue overleaf if necessary

Tailor messages and materials to the information needs of various audiences

Example — Advocacy issue: immunization (from Advocacy for immunization..., GAVI, 2001)

Audience	Potential concerns	Possible messages
Decision-makers/politicians ● President/Prime Minister ● Minister of Health ● Minister of Planning ● Local administration ● Parliament and Congress	● Budgetary implications ● Public opinion ● Opportunity to show leadership and take credit for success ● Liabilities of inaction	● Most cost-effective intervention ● Right of every child ● Programme gaining access to children never reached before ● New vaccines are available that can save thousands of young lives
Donors ● Foundations ● Bilateral agencies (e.g. SIDA, USAID, DFID, JICA) ● Multilateral agencies (e.g. World Bank)	● Ability to document results ● Cost-effectiveness ● Feasibility of integrating with existing initiatives ● Sustainability of project ● Benefits of foreign aid	
Journalists ● Health reporters ● Foreign correspondents ● Editors ● Feature writers ● Columnists ● Economics/labour reporters ●Women's issues reporters	● News value and timing ● Potential controversy ● Has the story been told before? ● Are there good visuals and spokespersons?	● Key messages will depend on the outlet ● Stories on success of immunization and people who benefit from it ● News stories on outbreaks, trend ● Human interest stories about volunteers
NGOs ● Relief organisations ● Development organisations ● Human rights organisations ● Children's organisations ● Practitioners' organisations	● Donor and membership support ● Impact on beneficiaries ● How message fits with mission statement ● Common agendas and shared visions ● Potential to play a unique role	● Immunization depends on mobilising your communities ● Your constituents can help ● Help build local infrastructure to improve the health of your community
Health practitioners ● Public- and private-sector health workers ● Medical associations ● Research, academic institutions	● Feasibility of eradication ● Opportunities to use new research and innovations ● Financial and legal implications for one's work	● Immunization works ● Helps build health infrastructure,— surveillance systems, training for health staff
Corporations and industry ● Multinationals ● Local businesses ● Labour organisations **General public** ● Issues popular with the public find their way onto the political agenda and the ground swell of public opinion can have a strong influence on governments	● Impact on workforce ● Impact on markets ● Cause-related marketing potential ● Personal level of risk ● Response of government/ health authorities to protect the public ● A moral duty to help others	● A good, measurable social investment ● Your investment can help the local community ● Helping tackle problems in poor countries can make good business sense ● Immunization is a priority in countries where you work

How to… analyse legislation or policy (Handout 26)

Introduction

The first step in analysing and influencing a piece of legislation or policy is to understand what it is actually saying and consider whether it can be improved.

Questions to ask when reading public policy or legislation

The following list of questions may help you analyse a policy or legislation:

1. Who benefits from this legislation or policy (if anyone)?
2. Who loses (if anyone)?
3. What will be the consequences five years from now of enforcing this?
4. How does the legislation or policy affect marginalised groups?
5. Is this something that ordinary people can understand?
6. Who supports this law/policy, and why?
7. How did this issue first come to the notice of decision-makers?
8. What is the financial cost?
9. Can it be enforced? If so, by whom, and how?
10. What is the penalty if you don't obey this law/policy?
11. Does the law/policy violate the UN Declaration of Human Rights or any other convention signed by your country?
12. Is the law/policy consistent with your own country's Bill of Rights and/or Constitution?

How to use your analysis to influence legislation and policy

Once the answer to these questions have been agreed you need to act by writing a position paper to the policy-makers, sending a press release to the media, organising a meeting, giving a presentation, and so on.

SOURCE: Advocacy in Action, International HIV/AIDS Alliance, 2002

Key differences between scientific and advocacy communication (Handout 27)

Scientific

- Detailed explanations useful
- Extensive qualifications needed for scholarly clarity
- Technical language adds clarity and precision
- Several points made in a single paper
- Be objective & unbiased
- Builds case gradually towards conclusions
- Supporting evidence vital
- Hastily prepared research can be discredited
- Having celebrity support is irrelevant
- Many people believe science is objective

Advocacy

- Simplification preferable
- Extensive qualifications blur messages
- Technical jargon confuses people
- Limited number of messages is essential
- Present a passionate, compelling argument based on fact
- State conclusions first; then support
- Too many facts and figures overwhelm the audience
- Quick, accurate, preparation & action are needed to take advantage of opportunities
- Celebrity support may help
- Many believe political truth is subjective

A view of citizen centred advocacy (Handout 28)

Traditional development **Sees:**	**Citizen-centred advocacy** **Sees:**
Problems	Issues
Basic needs	Basic rights
Symptoms	Systemic causes
Poverty and welfare	Unequal distribution of power and resources
Projects	Strategies and actions
Static plans, definable results	Continuous planning and analysis
Mission	Vision for political change
Beneficiaries and clients	Citizens, constituents and allies
Education and information	Consciousness raising and organising
Consultation and partnership	Joint decision making, local leadership, complementary roles and alliances
Outputs	Political and social change to benefit maginalised
Satisfaction of needs	Transformation of power relations

SWOT (Handout 29)

One of the key analytical tools available, a SWOT analysis can be performed at a variety of levels – for example, in organisational strategic planning, in issue campaign planning or in project planning. Typically displayed in a 2 x 2 matrix, SWOT stands for:

S = Strengths

W = Weaknesses

O = Opportunities

T = Threats

Strengths and Weaknesses are internal to the organisation.
Opportunities and Threats are external to the organisation.

In some ciricumstances, it may be more useful to substitute Constraints for Threats (making it a SWOC analysis)

Research or brainstorming can be used to generate the factors, which should be listed as bullet points in each box.

Strengths	Weaknesses
Opportunities	Threats/ Constraints

PESTLE (Handout 30)

A tool often used in strategic planning is the PESTLE analysis. It provides a framework for looking at the external environment and mapping trends that may impact on your work.

PESTLE stands for:

- **P**olitical
- **E**conomic
- **S**ociological
- **T**echnological
- **L**egal
- **E**nvironmental

Political List the political factors and trends in the country (including government, legislature, judiciary and other government bodies, as well as other political movements and pressure groups).
Economic List the economic factors and trends in the country (including GNP, debt schedules, sources of government income, main private sector employers, income distribution, etc).
Sociological List the sociological factors and trends in the country (including demographic information, education and health statistics, employment rates, land ownership, and media, etc).
Technological List the technological factors and trends in the country (including information technology infrastructure, access to telecommunications and broadcast media, etc).
Legal List the legal factors and trends in the country (including laws and policies that guide the particular work at hand).
Environmental List the environmental factors and trends in the country (including deforestation and desertification, pollution, drought/flooding patterns, wildlife, agriculture, etc).

Having listed all the factors, you should then identify which of these may be significant to your work – either as opportunities or threats, You should then take account of these factors in your planning, and possible do more research on the factors.

Table of Advocacy Capacity (Handout 31)

CAPACITY	SCORE (1-5)
1. Vision, values, mission, strategy	
a. Clear mission and purpose of organisation or community group	
b. Clear and agreed values underpinning organisation or community	
c. Understanding of how advocacy links with the core values and mission and as a central part of development and social change	
d. Strategy for action, linking to mission and values	
e. Commitment to building capacity of others to speak for themselves	
2. Internal systems and structures	
a. clear and accountable process for decision making	
b. Commitment to advocacy at highest level	
c. Clear idea of who you represent and how you represent them	
d. Clear understanding of own legitimacy and what this is based on	
e. Participation by all stakeholders in advocacy work	
f. System for on-going monitoring and evaluation of work	
g. Experience in conflict resolution	
3. Skills, experience and understanding	
a. Understanding of how local, national and international policies affect local problems	
b. Understanding of policy making and power relations	
c. Understanding the views and influence of key decision makers	
d. Skills in research and access to good information	
e. Skills in community mobilisation and awareness raising	
f. Skills (or access to skills) in law	
g. Skills in strategy development	
h. Skills in lobbying	
i. Experience of working with the media	
j. Support from others e.g. partners and networks	

k. Understanding of risks and how to plan to reduce them	
4. Resources	
a. Human resources committed to advocacy	
b. Financial resources committed to advocacy	
5. External links	
a. Access to/ relationship with grassroots groups	
b. Access to/ relationship with policy – makers	
c. Access to/ relationship with other local NGOs	
d. Access to/ relationship with other international NGOs	
e. Access to established networks	
f. Relationship with journalists	
g. Committed membership which can be mobilised	
h. Access to experts on your issue	
i. Access to trainers and other advocacy resources in the region	

Source: adapted from Practical Advocacy in Action, Tearfund Roots Resources

The lobbying may be:

- 'Formal' such as making a pre-arranged visit to a decision maker's office
- 'Informal' such as waiting in the lobby of the decision maker's office to discuss an issue with him as he passes through on his way in/out of the office. It could also be networking at a seminar or talking with people at a community meeting.

Stages of lobbying:

1. Preparation for the meeting
2. The meeting itself
3. After the meeting

Preparation - The better prepared you are, the more confident you will be at the actual meeting. You will also be better prepared to remain focused on your key points during the meeting.

- Prepare the presentation
    - Make sure that you are clear what the issue is that you are lobbying on, that you can explain it clearly and be to the point.
    - Have evidence to back up your statements – why is it a problem, who does it hurt, what are the social and economic costs, what are the realistic solutions.
    - Limit number of requests / objectives and make these very clear
    - Practice your presentation
- Know your audience:
    - Know as much as you can about the people you are going to meet. If anyone in your group knows someone close to the target, use these connections to open doors.
    - Ensure you are meeting the right people. Classify these people on the basis of how much they know of your issue, where they stand on your issue and how much influenced they have as key decision makers themselves or in persuading others.
    - Ensure you know what it is you want from the decision maker.
    - Be clear what aspects you are willing to negotiate on and which are non-negotiable.
    - Cultivate relationships beforehand. Try and build a relationship over time by establishing yourself as a useful resource for the decision maker working on relevant issues, or through regular mailings, one-to-on briefings, or invitations to general events.
    - Think about previous experiences to see what contact has there been with that audience in the past and how successful has it been.
    - Anticipate their strategies to counteract on all levels
- Prepare materials that can be left behind with the decision maker e.g. Summary of the issue and main points, your contact information (business cards).
- Prepare the delegation – Decide who will participate in the visit based on their persuasion skills, their knowledge of the issue, their personality i.e. Someone who will not be nervous if faced by an aggressive decision makers. Ensure that everyone in your delegation group has the same views on the issue.
- Prepare for the meeting itself – Have a planned approach. Decide how to introduce yourselves, express appreciation for past support if appropriate. Decide how to start the meeting preferably with a general overview and then progress to specifics. Set

clear roles for each member of your delegation e.g. Note taker, lead speaker, facilitator.

Remember

- A lobbying meeting is just a moment in time. Use this moment to:
  - Build new relationships or strengthen existing ones
  - Listen and collect information so that you know what is important to your audience, what areas you agree or disagree on
  - Educate and provide information
  - Persuade instead of argue or you will lose your audience's interest

At the meeting:

- Be on time and do not stay too long
- Keep your aim in sight; do not lose track or let the dialogue stray off the subject
- Keep it simple. Do not use too many technical terms or overload the audience with information. Be creative if possible [In one case, advocates for clean water supplies, offered a decision maker a glass of polluted water to make the point that not even he would drink from the current supply that people had to use!]
- Do not address more than one or two issues
- Don't bring up new issues right at the end
- Demonstrate the power behind your demands e.g. by showing the audience petitions with thousands of names of supporters or statements of support from opinion leaders
- If you have a delegation, ensure that one person is a note taker
- Wrap up clearly with recap of whole meeting not just last point – reviewing orally those things agreed / understood
- Leave behind materials you have brought such as fact sheets, your contact details

After the meeting:

- Instant debrief after meeting with your delegation to ensure clarity and to do determine next steps / roles / timetable
- Send through minutes to your community with action points / deadlines agreed / understood positions
- Follow up with the decision maker by
  - Sending a thank-you letter for the meeting. Repeat your understanding of the commitments made at the meeting
  - Send information if offered or requested
  - Keep in touch sending annual reports or updated fact sheets
- Ensure that all commitments made in the meeting are met.

General pointers for effective lobbying

- *Keep an ear to the ground* – Whether by going to meetings, reading reports or talking to individuals, you should make sure that you remain updated with what's going on.
- *Know where and by whom the decision is being taken* – It is important to know whether the decision is being taken at local, national or international level, in addition to knowing who the key decision makers are. In many cases, lobbying is most effective when two or more levels are combined.
- *Know the timescale for decisions* – Find out when any key decisions on the issue will be made. This will enable you to strategically plan your short and long-term activities in the lead up to that.
- *Do your research* – Using credible facts and figures can help considerably in strengthening your argument, particularly if you are looking to present your evidence formally and in writing at a local or national level.
- *Form alliances and networks* – Demonstrate that other organisations share your view; this both increases your overall campaigning resources and the strength of your case.
- *Make it easy for others to help or join in* – Enabling members of the public to become involved in our work will demonstrate that there is wide support for your campaign.
- *Identify your relevant umbrella organisation* – Your umbrella organisation may have a national presence from which your campaign could greatly benefit. It may be able to advise you on strategies base d on its own past experience of campaigning.
- *Keep it going* – Ensure that the issues at the base of your campaign are kept fresh in the minds of the public. This means perseverance in using the strategies above.

Suggested Lobbying Guidelines

KEY PRINCIPLES	ACTION
Respect	Organisation staff should show respect. They can criticise actions and policies but should not make personal attacks on individual policy makers
Truthfulness	Staff should accurately represent their own position and that of others, providing evidence for any claims they make
Confidentiality	Staff should not reveal confidential information offered by a policy maker to a third party without permission
Integrity	Staff should ensure that any issues that they have asked decision-makers to address, should also be addressed internally
Consistency of positions / policies	Staff should not claim policy status for their views where no policy exists
Appropriate contacts	Staff should ensure that relevant teams / groups/ persons within their organisation are aware of intended meetings with policy makers. Where there is cause for doubt about the appropriateness of a meeting, senior personnel should decide whether it should proceed
Co-ordination	Staff should register significant feedback and copies of significant correspondence from the meeting so that the organisation can co-ordinate contacts and brief other staff where necessary

Source: Advocacy Toolkit. Practical Advocacy in Action. Tearfun

Lobbying role play: Scenario 1

Your organisation works to promote gender equality in rural areas. You hear that an international agency has planned a water and sanitation project in one of the communities where your organisation works. From the international agency you find out that there are no plans to incorporate a gender focus into the project design. You realise the project's potential value to the community, but feel that it would be more sustainable if an analysis of gender relations was included in the project design, monitoring and evaluation phases. There is to be a community meeting about the proposed project and your organisation has been invited to talk about the gender perspective you propose.

Prepare a 5 minute scenario of the community meeting and your efforts to convince the community of the value of gender analysis. Ask the audience to play the role of the community, but you may want to plant some supporters and critics of your proposal to make the role play more interesting.

Lobbying role play: Scenario 2

Your organisation works to promote the access of essential medicines to poor people at a price they can afford. Through on-going monitoring your organisation learns that a Health Committee is considering a piece of draft legislation. You are able to preview the legislation and realise that while it goes some way towards achieving your advocacy goal, it will not go far enough because it makes no provision for promoting the use of cheaper generic medicines over brand name medicines and therefore will not really change the situation for poor people. You are able to secure a meeting with the chair and vice-chair of the Health Committee to put your point across..

Prepare a 5-minute role play depicting your meeting with the Committee members where you try to persuade them of the need for stronger legislation.

Lobbying role play: Scenario 3

Your organisation works with poor urban communities to improve nutrition for babies and young infants, including promoting breast feeding. The infant mortality rate had been decreasing, but in recent years it has started to rise again. This rise has coincided with a relaxation in trade regulations, which has allowed for a higher level of imported goods and this has led to an increase in sales of imported powdered baby milk. One day, several members of your staff are in the airport departure lounge on their way to a regional conference, when they recognise the Minister for Trade, who is preparing to leave on a different flight. Your colleagues decide to approach the Minister and urge him/her to consider placing import restrictions on powdered baby milk.

Prepare a 5-minute role play in which you try to convince the Minister of the link between infant mortality and the change in import regulations.

Lobbying role play: Scenario 4

You represent an NGO that seeks to promote inclusive education for people with disabilities. Over the past year, the Ministry of Education has initiated a small-scale project to provide inclusive education in schools in one rural and one urban district. Your initial inquiries suggest that the Ministry does not intend to mainstream inclusive education due to perceived opposition from the public. In order to build public support and persuade the Ministry of Education to introduce its programme nationally, your organisation has organised a public debate on the advantages and disadvantages of inclusive education.

Prepare a 5-minute role play depicting the debate. Include how you manage the participation of TV journalists.

Negotiating skills

Good negotiating skills enable you to ensure that others understand the point you are making and help you to persuade others to take your suggested course of action. Bad habits in negotiating can quickly alienate those you are speaking to and undermine your message.

Helpful and unhelpful approaches to negotiating

Helpful	Unhelpful
WIN-WIN Seek solutions that will be beneficial to both parties. Be willing to compromise on some areas, but be very clear about what you will not negotiate. Try to think of what you can offer so that the other party is satisfied. **ASK QUESTIONS** so that you can identify areas where you may both benefit. This also helps you to avoid a spiral of attacking and defending. **SEEK PERMISSION** This puts you in control without having to battle to speak. 'I would like to suggest that…' or 'could I ask…?' **TEST AND SUMMARISE** Ensure that everyone has understood and interpreted things in the same way and agrees on action points. This helps build trust and avoids confusion and relationship breakdown later on. **EXPLAIN YOUR MOTIVES** to the other parties so that they are clear why you are proposing a particular course of action. Do not leave them guessing about hidden agendas. **BE SENSITIVE** to a change in mood, to unexpected revelations or reactions, to defensive responses, to boredom or lack of interest – and change your approach accordingly. **KNOW WHEN TO STOP** Be aware of how far you can push a particular line of questioning, and be prepared to meet again later on if necessary. **LISTEN AND ENGAGE** Listen to concerns and try and respond to them. Let them speak first if necessary.	**EMOTIVE APPROACH** Using subjective or emotive words adds nothing to your case but simply accuses the other side of being unfair or unreasonable. **DEFEND/ATTACK SPIRALS** If you do not listen to the other point of view and simply defend your own position, an argument can result and it is harder to persuade others. **LISTING** arguments, reasons and information to strengthen the proposal can annoy the listener and make them forget the main points. **COUNTER-PROPOSALS** If you counter every suggestion by the other party with one of your own, it will become harder to persuade them. **ANGER** Shouting at someone could discredit your message, and suggest that you have weak arguments. **RIDICULE/DISRESPECT** This will cause the other person to close up and they may even close the meeting early. **INTERRUPTIONS** This can annoy the person speaking, and others, who will think you are not listening, and they may do the same to you. **MAKING IT PERSONAL** This can lead to people being offended and insulted and does not necessarily address the problem.

Source: Advocacy Toolkit : Practical Action in Advocacy. Tearfund Roots Resources 2002

PREPARING A PRESS CONFERENCE (Handout 36)

Things to do and not to

Try to's		**Try no to**	
	Make sure that your press conference does not coincide with an important event that will prevent the journalists or speakers from attending		Have too many speakers – the messages can get confused!
	Call to check whether the announcement has been received – use this as an opportunity to encourage journalists to attend		Allow speakers to talk for more than 10 minutes
	Choose speakers carefully – they should be interesting, confident speakers and show the human face of the issue/ problem		Start late – journalists have deadlines
	Ensure that each speaker knows your key messages and coordinate each speaker to say something different		Allow speakers to answer the questions at great length – warn the chair of this as appropriate
	Capture attention with quotes, comparisons, examples or visual aids such as photographs or graphs		Let the press conference overrun in time
	Respond to questions clearly and simply		Allow the speakers to make conflicting statement - try to rehearse the key points with the speakers before the conference
	Make sure that the person chosen to deal with the media is clearly identifiable		Organise a press conference if there is a cheaper, more effective way to publicise the issue
	Make clear why the different organisations or people are involved if this is a joint press conference		Hold a press conference if you predict the majority of the journalists will disagree with your or present negative coverage
	Involve a journalist in advising you on how to organise and plan the press conference		

Adapted from the International HIV Alliance ADVOCACY IN ACTION toolkit

WORKING FROM INSIDE THE SYSTEM

Things to do and not to

Try to's		Try not to	
	To prepare before a meeting, by going through the agenda and planning what to say		Follow personal/ political objectives at the expense of the people who you represent
	Use facts and figures, personal testimony and other evidence to support your points		Keep your seat on a committee if you no longer have time to attend meetings – let someone else use that valuable opportunity
	Report back to the people you represent, soon after the meeting		'ambush' committee with surprise controversial proposals unless you are sure it is the best tactic
	Get to know other committee members		
	Assist the committee in its work – they will be more likely to support your proposals		

LOBBYING OR FACE-TO-FACE MEETINGS

Advantages and disadvantages

Try to's		Try not to	
	Begin by praising the decision-maker for any past support on your issue		Ask the decision maker to do more than one thing at a time. Unless he or she seems very eager to help you
	Begin by pointing out areas of agreement and mutual interest with the decision-maker		Confuse the decision maker with too many messages
	Listen as well as talk – you need to hear what your target thinks		Give too much information – for example graphs, statistics etc
	Link your objective to an issue the decision maker cares about		Use technical terms or jargon
	Know more about the issue than the decision maker		Give false or misleading information – it can cause you problems in the future
	Be willing to negotiate, but be clear bout how far you will compromise		
	Decide who will say what, if there is more than one of you		
	End by summarising what the decision maker has said or promised		

Adapted from the International HIV Alliance ADVOCACY IN ACTION toolkit

CARRYING OUT A MEDIA INTERVIEW
Things to do and not to

Try to		**Try not to**	
	Practice responding to questions; role-play with your colleagues!		Bluff! If you don't know the answer to a question - say so or avoid it
	Show some emotion for radio – it shows you care – but keep it under control		Agree to interviews that could stray off the topic that might lead you to make statements about issues you do not know about
	Sit upright with your hands in your lap for a TV interview		Get angry if a journalise tries to unnerve you – your message will become unclear and the audience will assume you are in the wrong
	Sit still and make sure you do not fidget or swing in your chair		Let a journalist 'put words in your mouth' – say firmly, "That is not what I am saying"
	To look happy to be there, and try not to look nervous		Look at the camera during a TV interview – look at the interviewer
	Be respectful and patient with the interviewer; they will not necessarily know the subject well – but then neither, perhaps, will the audience		Use extreme facial expressions during a TV interview
	Make sure you get your key messages across; if you are not asked relevant questions, add your key messages to the end of one of your most relevant replies		Wear jewellery or glasses if possible as these can distract the audience from what you are saying
			Try to cover too many points or give too much new information
			Wear patterned clothes on TV

Adapted from the International HIV Alliance ADVOCACY IN ACTION toolkit

PREPARING A BRIEFING NOTE/ POSITION PAPER

Things to do and not to

Try to's		**Try not to**	
	Use appropriate language for your target audiences		Distribute a position paper that contradicts what you have said
	Tailor your position paper/ briefing note to a particular audience for a particular reason		Include words 'advocating' or 'advocacy'
	Try to give full references of any research or information quoted		Include irrelevant information
	Be brief and to the point		Waffle – try to make clear points and highlight them with bullet points
	Ask others for ideas before writing		Quote people without their permission or break confidentiality in case studies
	Make sure the appropriate people have been consulted		Use abbreviations unless necessary
	Ensure that everyone in the organisation understands the position the organisation is taking		
	Read it carefully for mistakes before sending or using it		

Adapted from the International HIV Alliance ADVOCACY IN ACTION toolkit

WRITING AND USING A PRESS RELEASE (Handout 36 cont'd)

Things to do and not to

Try to's		**Try not to**	
	Provide the media with information they need in forms that they can use		Dictate terms – any good journalist will resent being told what to think or write
	Develop good relationships with journalists and be as helpful as possible		Be defensive, even if challenged, just state your position clearly
	Understand the pressures and limitations under which journalists work – respect their deadlines		
	Work with - rather than against, journalists whenever possible		

PERSUADING THROUGH DRAMA

Things to do and not to

Try to's		**Try not to**	
	Choose a clear advocacy objective		Let the drama be only education or awareness raising – make sure it has a strong advocacy issue or message
	Know your target audience		Confuse the audience with too many themes and messages
	Choose the topic of the drama carefully		Make the drama too long. It is longer than 10 minutes the audience will be bored, or there will not be enough time for them to discuss afterwards
	Make sure that all information contained in the drama is accurate		Worry about how good the acting is, the costumes, or the props; the topic or message or the play is the most important thing
	Allow enough time for discussion		
	Prepare that after-show discussion as much as the show itself		
	Choose discussion questions to bring out the advocacy issue		
	Adapt the performance to different audiences		
	Video the performance and discussion, if possible, to share with others		

ANALYSING AND INFLUENCING LEGISLATION OR POLICIES

Things to do and not to

Try to's		**Try not to**	
	Consult or involve people affected by the policy or legislation		Analyse a policy or legislation if you don't understand the issue
	Be positive about the good parts of policy or legislation		Suggest that the decision/ policy-makers may have any improper motives
	Ask for a meeting with decision-makers to present and explain your analysis		Criticise policies or legislation for individuals' personal reasons
	Only respond to policies and legislation when you have something concrete to say – this will help maintain or gain credibility for your organisation		
	Use the decision/ policy-makers' language when putting your points of view across, and support your statements with facts and evidence where appropriate		
	Offer solutions when analysing the policy or legislation		
	Develop contacts or allies who can show you draft policies and legislation		

How to...organise a press conference

Preparing for the press conference

- Give two to seven days' notice of the conference to relevant journalists (consider reporters, columnists, newscasters, editors) and send them an announcement including:
    - ♦ The purpose of the press conference
    - ♦ Date, time and where it will be held
    - ♦ Who will speak at/present/chair it.
- Choose a suitable venue including the following as required:
    - ♦ Easy location, access and adequate parking space
    - ♦ Low noise levels
    - ♦ Enough capacity – power points for TV lights, space, layout
    - ♦ Audio/audio visual equipment
    - ♦ Room for individual interviews
    - ♦ Helpful staff with experience of hosting press conferences and with technological expertise.
- Choose an appropriate time of day for the majority of media, i.e., so that they can write the story before their deadlines (but you will not be able to fit in with everyone's deadlines).
- Select and brief a chairperson and appropriate speakers. Work with them to identify and practise answering questions from the journalists – especially the difficult ones!
- Select a press officer/key contact person for the press to deal with.
- Prepare a press pack for journalists, including:
    - ♦ Press release (see Press Release Advocacy in Action Card 7)
    - ♦ Background on your organisation/coalition
    - ♦ A list of the key points you are making and sample quotes
    - ♦ Recommendations for future action
    - ♦ A list of contacts whom journalists can contact to discuss the issue
    - ♦ Any relevant photographs, statistics, graphs, etc. Take special care concerning confidentiality, and brief the chairperson and speakers about these issues where necessary.

Format of a press conference

1 Welcome, refreshments and distribution of the press pack.

2 Chairperson:
- ♦ Introduces the speaker/s
- ♦ Explains arrangements and proceedings
- ♦ Points out the press officer/key contact person for all enquiries
- ♦ States whether interviews are available afterwards
- ♦ Stresses confidentiality issues where appropriate.

3 First speaker.

4 Second speaker, etc.

5 Chairperson takes questions from journalists and gives them to one of the speakers to answer; other speakers may also add remarks.

6 Chair thanks the press for attending and closes the press conference.

7 Individual interviews with speakers.

After the press conference

- Send the press pack to the journalists who did not attend.
- Make a list of attendees and update your database where appropriate.
- Note down the names of journalists who asked particularly important questions/appeared sympathetic to your cause.

International HIV/AIDS Alliance: **Advocacy in Action Card 9** Preparing a press conference

How to...produce a briefing note/position paper

Position paper

Ideally a position paper should be written in full sentences and typed neatly. Follow the format for policy documents used in the target organisation, if you know it. Otherwise, use the format below. It should include:

1. **Statement of main recommendation:** One to two sentences.
2. **Background:** Explanation of why the position paper has been written. List of laws, international treaties, decrees, policies, etc., which support the recommendation.
3. **Evidence supporting the recommendation:** (see Step 2 of planning framework.)
4. *Quantitative evidence:* Facts and figures.
5. *Qualitative evidence:* Case studies, personal testimonies, anecdotes or examples supporting the recommendation. Ask for permission from individuals quoted, to protect confidentiality.
6. **Our position:** Logical explanation of how the evidence leads to the recommendations. Answers to possible questions or objections.
7. **Recommendations:** Specific, realistic actions that the decision-maker can take.
8. **Organisations and individuals supporting this position paper.**
9. The name of your organisation or coalition, and logo if appropriate.
10. The date.
11. A contact name, address, telephone and fax number, and e-mail address, where available.
12. The mission/goals of your organisation or coalition.

Briefing note

This document will only be seen by individuals within your organisation, or within your advocacy alliance, to assist them in delivering advocacy messages. Therefore it is acceptable to write notes instead of full sentences, and to use bullet points. Follow the same format as above, but also:

- Emphasise the most important points – for example, using bold type/underline or a coloured pen.
- Suggest possible strategies, tactics, minimum demands that cannot be compromised.
- Include possible questions that might be asked, and suggested answers.
- Include problematic issues that might arise, and suggest how to deal with them.

General advice

- Briefing notes and position papers should be as short as possible. People are less likely to read them if they are too long.
- Do not assume that the reader knows the subject well – make sure that sufficient background information is included for the reader to understand the issue without needing to carry out additional research. Try to keep this information concise.
- Separate fact from opinion. Provide supporting evidence to back up facts, and write opinions as quotes where appropriate.

International HIV/AIDS Alliance: **Advocacy in Action Card 2** Preparing a briefing note/position paper

How to...write and use a press release (Handout 39)

Content of the press release

Write a simple and interesting headline – this helps the journalist understand the story immediately.

The first sentence should summarise the most important facts of the story, i.e.:
? **Who** is involved?
? **What** is happening?
? **Where** is it happening?
? **When** is it happening?
? **Why** is this happening?

The main part of the press release should then explain these points in further detail. This information helps to persuade the journalist of the facts and importance of the subject, and why it is of interest.

Quotes can often make a press release more interesting and appealing to the journalist, because they may not have access to the relevant people or perhaps because the event has passed. Direct speech quotations from people involved in the issue or activity:
• should express an opinion, fact, or be able to support the view you have expressed in your press release
• allow you to give strong opinions that would look wrong in ordinary text
• give a human dimension to the story
• are better than indirect quotations.
Gain permission from a person affected by the issue, if you are quoting them.

Style

• Short sentences, maximum 20 words.
• Short paragraphs, maximum two to three sentences.
• Copy the format and story structure from a newspaper article.
• Use a good case study or anecdote as evidence to support your point of view.

Presentation

• Use headed paper so that it looks official and professional.
• Make sure that it is well laid out and easy to read.
• Type it, using double spacing, on one side of the paper only.
• Include the date and the name of the organisation.
• Provide a contact name, telephone and fax number, and e-mail address as available.
• Give an embargo time (the day/time when the journalists are allowed to use the information).
This should include the day, date and time.

Photographs

• Include photographs of key people, places or action mentioned in the press release if you have them.

NOTE: Once a press release has been written it should be distributed to selected journalists and press associations by fax or e-mail – you can telephone them to ask for these numbers/addresses. Once the journalists receive the press release they will consider whether to include the story in their media work. They may also contact you for further information.

Example: Writing and using a press release

When to involve the media in advocacy work	When not to involve the media in advocacy work
• When you are making gains on your issue. • When there is a burning issue. • When other methods are not working. • When looking for allies. • When you have begun your advocacy work.	• When you do not know how the media works. • When there are disagreements within the organisation on the issue. • When the timing is not right – for example, due to political circumstances. • When bigger issues are dominating the media, preventing your issue from getting the attention you think it deserves.

Reference: Adapted from an advocacy skills-building workshop for HIV/AIDS, International HIV/AIDS Alliance, Zimbabwe, July 2001

Advice for writing a press release

✔ **Try to** be clear about what you are trying to achieve when using the media in your advocacy work.
✔ **Try to** research the most relevant journalist(s) and send the release directly to them, using the correct contact details.
✔ **Try to** co-ordinate all your media work through one person so that there is one person for journalists to contact.
✔ **Try to** provide a 24-hour contact phone number on the press release if possible, so that you are contactable at all hours.
✔ **Try to** consult people directly affected by the issue or problem.

✘ **Try not to** hand write a press release.
✘ **Try not to** include jargon – if in doubt, explain technical words, abbreviations, initials.
✘ **Try not to** assume that the journalist knows about your issue – explain the key concepts or attach additional notes.
✘ **Try not to** quote someone without their permission.

Advice for working with journalists

✔ **Try to** provide the media with information they need in forms that they can use.
✔ **Try to** develop good relationships with journalist and be as helpful as possible.
✔ **Try to** understand the pressures and limitations under which journalists work – and respect their deadlines.
✔ **Try to** work with, rather than against, journalists whenever possible.

✘ **Try not to** dictate terms – any good journalist will resent being told what to think or write.
✘ **Try not to** be defensive, even if challenged, just state your position clearly.

International HIV/AIDS Alliance **Advocacy in Action Card 7** Writing and using a press release

Step 5: ENGAGING

POLICY AND DECISION MAKERS

Many important decisions are made at the policy level of governments, organizations, hospitals, schools, and communities. Reaching out to key decision makers is a fundamental strategy of any advocacy effort. Competition for a decision maker's time, therefore, is often fierce, and your interactions with decision makers must be well organized, professional, and productive.

The following activities focus on interactions with government-level policymakers but can apply to decision makers at any level.

> "Advocacy is an Action directed at changing the policies, positions, or programs of any type of institution."
>
> -SARA/AED Advocacy Training Guide

Schedule face-to-face meetings with policymakers or their staff

Policymakers, especially those elected by the public, rely on Relationships for support and information. Visits with policymakers are an effective way of building relationships and earning their trust and respect. Personal visits also tend to make policymakers more accountable for their actions, because they know who you are and that you are paying attention to their decisions. If you are unable to meet with policymakers, meet with their staff. In many countries, key staff people have tremendous influence over policymakers and remain in office longer than the policymakers themselves. Building relationships with staff sometimes produces greater and more long-lasting results than trying to connect directly with policymakers.

Clearly state the point of your visit

Be sure to clearly articulate what you are asking of the policymaker during your visit. Leave behind a simple, one-page outline of your request as a tangible reminder of your visit, and, if asked, provide additional information in a timely manner. Never misrepresent an issue to policymakers. If you do not know the answer to a question, tell them so. They will respect your honesty and learn to trust you as a valid source of information on immunization issues.

• **Select an appropriate spokesperson:** Choose a spokesperson who can relate to and earn the respect of the policymaker. Usually, this means sending a top-level person from your organization or coalition to speak about the issue.

• **Be informed:** Examine the policymaker's history of involvement in other health issues.
Note the type of initiatives the policymaker has previously supported, and learn which individuals and institutions seem to have some influence on him or her.

• Be prepared: Know your messages, know who your audience is, and know what you are asking for before you begin a meeting or presentation. Make sure the social and political relevance of your message is clear. Demonstrate that there is public interest in stronger immunization services and new vaccines.

- Organize your discussion points: Before you enter a meeting, make certain that you have time to meet with other members of your team, decide who is going to say what, and in what order.

- Be focused: Bring talking points and an agenda to help keep you focused. Meetings are frequently cut short, so state your main points early in the discussion. Repeat your main points again at the end of the meeting.

- Be on time: Whether you are meeting with the media, national decision makers, or local schoolteachers, be on time. It is a simple courtesy that signals you are serious about the issue and respectful of your host's time.

- Tailor messages to your audience: Ministers of health, ministers of finance, nongovernmental organization staff, health care providers, and mothers are concerned about slightly different aspects of the same issue. Remember to whom you are speaking, and address their concerns.

- Be persuasive: Clearly articulate the urgency of strengthening immunization systems and the cost-effectiveness of immunization programs.

- Recognize the policymaker's limitations: Recognize the bureaucratic, budgetary, and administrative constraints that exist in governments and other institutions. Be aware of the influence special-interest groups may have on the issue.

- Show how the policymaker might benefit from his or her involvement: Allude to the potential political benefits of showing leadership on an issue and the potential political consequences of failing to take action.

- Repeat key messages: Repeat your key messages several times during your conversation. Most people need to hear something five or six times before they fully understand it.

- Be relaxed: Try to be calm, confident, and conversational when you speak; it puts your listeners at ease and helps them focus on what you are saying.

- Speak slowly: You know what comes next in your presentation, but your audience does not. Allow time for your audience to write things down and absorb your statements.
  Add a pause before or after a particularly important phrase. Breathe.

- Be aware of your body movements: Pay attention to your gestures, body movements, facial expressions, and eye contact. Together, these nonverbal forms of communication say much more than your words.

- Do not get drawn into a debate: Keep coming back to your messages. Do not get mired in details and technical information. Tell a human story to dramatize the effects of the issue you are addressing.

- Leave pertinent information with your audience: Leave behind written information, visual charts and graphs, and stories that will help your audience better understand your issue.

- Keep track of meeting results: Develop a tracking system that enables you to record the details of each meeting for your own reference. After the meeting, jot down notes in the following categories: with whom you met with, what you discussed, what commitments were made, what information requires follow-up, and what information you left behind.

- Follow up with key players after the presentation: Write a personal thank you note, even if you met with a junior staff member. Call and ask if there is any other information you can provide to clarify your position.

Invite policymakers to visit immunization sessions and children’s wards

Policymakers often visit government facilities to give themselves a “real-life context” for the issues they deliberate. The visits allow them to see the implementation of important public policies they create. Visits to the field are an effective way to provide policymakers with a better understanding of the work being done (and not being done) in the public sector. Try to schedule visits so they do not conflict with other government business.

Communicate regularly with policymakers (letters, e-mails, phone calls)

Many policymakers are reachable by telephone, e-mail, or mail. A legible, well-written personal letter with your name, address, and phone number is still considered more effective than e-mail or phone calls in most advocacy circles. Be sensitive about the amount of communication you send to policymakers—you want to be helpful and informative—not annoying.

Advocacy for Immunization. Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunization (GAVI). 2001

ADVOCACY AND RELATED ACTIVITIES				
	Advocacy	**IEC**	**Community mobilisation**	**Networking & partnerships**
What can it change	*Policies, implementation of policies, laws and practices*	Awareness and behaviour	Capacity of communities to identify and address their problems	Isolation and duplication
Target group	*Decision-makers, leaders, policy-makers, people in positions of influence*	Particular age group, gender, residents of an are, etc	Members of a community	Individuals or groups who have a similar agenda
Does it mainly target people who have influence over others?	*Yes*	No	No	No
Typical indicators of success	*Policies, implementation, laws or practices which enable improved HIV/AIDS prevention and care*	Percentage of youth using condoms; changes in attitude to people with disabilities	A community problems is solved; more women attend community meetings	Members of the network or participation achieve more than if they worked alone

Source: Adapted from *Advocacy in Action Toolkit.* International AIDS Alliance

ELEMENTS FOR FORMING AND MAINTAINING NETWORKS

A. FORMATION STAGE

- Establish a clear purpose or mission
- Involve individuals and organization that share the mission
- Build a commitment to participatory process and collaboration

B. MAINTENANCE / GROWTH STAGE

Organization

- Define clear, specialized roles
- Establish a loose or fluid organizational structure; vertical, hierarchical structures don't build stronger networks
- Compile a skills inventory including the skills/expertise of individual members and institutional resources (fax, internet, meeting space, etc.)
- Prepare to fill expertise gaps by recruiting new members
- Establish a communication system (i.e., telephone tree)
- Create an NGO member database (name, address, organization's mission, type and focus of organization, etc.)

Leadership

- Share leadership functions (i.e., rotating coordinating committee)
- Set realistic goals and objectives
- Divide into sub-groups/task forces to take on specific tasks according to expertise
- Spread responsibilities across all members to avoid burnout
- Promote participatory planning and decision-making
- Foster trust and collaboration among members
- Keep members motivated by acknowledging their contributions

Meetings/Documentation

- Meet only when necessary
- Set a specific agenda and circulate it ahead of time; follow the agenda and keep meetings brief; finish meetings on time; rotate meeting facilitation role
- Keep attendance list and record meeting minutes to disseminate afterwards
- Use members' facilitation skills to help the network reach consensus and resolve conflict
- Discuss difficult issues openly during meetings
- Maintain a network notebook to document network activities, decisions, etc.

Coalition building

One of the most effective ways you can network is by participating in a coalition. A coalition is a group of several like-minded organisations working together to achieve common goals. Coalitions can be permanent or temporary, single or multi-issue, limited to certain constituencies or geographically defined. Coalitions can help you:

- Build on a continuing base of support
- Increase the influence of your campaign's efforts
- Develop new leaders for your campaign
- Broaden the scope of your campaign
- Increase your financial and programmatic resources.

Forming or joining a coalition

Before setting up/ joining a coalition, decide what the benefits may be:

- Will it help you to achieve your goals
- Raise money
- Strengthen activities
- Add credibility to your efforts.

It is not always appropriate to form or join a coalition unless you are sure that it will help you to achieve your goals and you are entirely comfortable with the coalition's goals. If your campaign is a new effort, you may want to wait to form or join a coalition until you have established your own identity. Instead, work on issues you can win on your own. This will build your resources, strength and capacity to make a meaningful contribution to a coalition in the future.

Participating in a coalition

Coalition efforts can be hard work. Make sure that you have resources you need to be a participating member of a coalition in terms of:

- Staff
- Administrative resources
- Time

Your campaign and your coalition's aims will benefit if you can:

- Have even just one part-time staff person to oversee its activities. Alternatively, designate a small sub-committee of the coalition to co-ordinate efforts.
- Choose a small number of unifying issues that bring members together to work for a common cause, rather than each group's separate agendas.
- Design activities in a way that uses the strengths of each participating group within the coalition. For example, if some organisations are more experienced and skilled at fundraising, let them take on that part of the activity.
- Ensure each organisation benefits and that each group feels like a valued member of the coalition and remains interested in participating. Give full credit where credit is due.

- With the group, clearly define your goals. Also clearly define the tasks and responsibilities of each group.
- It is probably sensible to find a new name for the coalition – one centred on the issues you have combined to work on together.

Example:
An attempt by anti-choice groups to introduce restrictive abortion law was met by a coalition of pro-choice groups. The pro-choice groups included those campaigning for abortion on demand, as well as those who believed contraception was an important way of reducing the demand for abortion.

- By agreeing on a limited goal of opposing restrictions to the existing law, the coalition was able to function with a single voice.

- The coalition was given its own name so that it was seen to be a separate body composed of different and equal organisations.

- One designated person from each organisation attended coalition meetings and took decisions on behalf of that organisation.

- Each organisation took responsibility for specific activities – the FPA provided secretarial support and undertook mailings to parliamentarians and the administration of the fundraising appeal.

Dealing with differences in coalitions

When two or more groups come together, there are bound to be some differences of opinion. Before joining a coalition, you should decide how flexible you can be – and how far you may be prepared to compromise. It is probably best to be clear about:

- How much are you willing to modify ideas in order to accomplish a 'common goal'?

- How far you are happy to share the credit and the limelight?

- How will you address disagreement/conflict among members if it occurs?

You will need to understand and respect other's institutional self-interest. Your organisation and campaign, like all the other participating organisations, brings its own history, cultures, values, agendas, and leadership to the coalition. It is important for all members to understand this and respect differences when they occur. When conflict does occur, use it as an opportunity to clarify different points of view or positions. Stress the positive aspects of working together and;

- Keep the coalition's efforts focussed on its common goal – make sure they know that's what is important to you.

- Discuss the problem among members and perhaps agree to disagree because some conflict is probably unavoidable in most coalition efforts.

Source: IPPF Advocacy Guide

MEDiCAM and Healthlink Worldwide Communicating for Advocacy training
Phnom Penh, 1st – 5th December 2008

Please give a score for how you rate your knowledge in the following areas:

Give yourself a mark out of 10 (1= no knowledge, 10 = a lot of knowledge)

Subject area	BEFORE THE WORKSHOP		AFTER THE WORKSHOP
Understanding of advocacy			
Developing an advocacy strategy/framework			
Advocacy skills			
Communication tools and skills			
Audience and stakeholder analysis			
Networking			

Thank you for your cooperation

MEDiCAM and Healthlink Worldwide
Communicating for Advocacy Workshop, Phnom Penh, Cambodia
1st – 5th December 2008

Final evaluation for participants

How useful were the sessions for your work? (1 is **not very useful** and 5 is **very useful**).
Please tick the relevant boxes.

Session	1	2	3	4	5
Challenges to accessing health for all in Cambodia					
Communication and advocacy definitions and clarification					
Advocacy framework					
The story of Rosario					
Fieldwork					
Analysis of fieldwork and presentation					
Stakeholder and audience analysis					
Working with the media					
Lobbying					
Preparing advocacy resources (practical)					
Presentations of advocacy materials/resources					
The power of networking					

1. What is the most important and/or useful knowledge or skill you gained in the workshop? Why is this so important/useful?

2. What is the least important and/or least useful knowledge or skill you gained in the workshop? Why is this not important/useful?

3. What did you enjoy most in the workshop?

4. How well did you learn during the workshop? What motivated you to learn? What prevented you from, learning?

5. How was the balance between instruction from the facilitator and working in groups? Should there have been more or less of something? Please specify.

6. Please comment on the resource materials/handouts provided.

7. How will you use the knowledge, skills, methods and insights developed in this workshop in your future work?

8. If this workshop was run again, would you recommend it to a colleague? Why? Would you make any changes? Please specify.

9. Do you have any other comments or suggestions?

Expectations

On the first day, a number of expectations were described. They are broadly categorised as objectives below. Please comment on how well you think these were achieved using a scale of 1 – 5 (1 = lowest, 5 = highest). Please tick.

Expectations	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
Learn more about effective communication and advocacy					
Increase skills/capacity					
Look beyond advocacy theory					
Tools and methods for practical advocacy					
Share experience					
Make contacts and develop individual network					

Appendix 2

Pre- and Post-workshop self assessment

At the end of the workshop, participants were asked to carry out an anonymous self assessment exercise, to rate their knowledge in these areas at the start and the end of the week, with 1= no knowledge and 10 = a lot of knowledge.

26 out of 31 participants responded. Those who did not respond had had to leave the workshop early.

The results show that participants felt that the course had increased their knowledge considerably in the defined subject areas, with most rating themselves 1-6 before the workshop and 7-10 at the end of the workshop.

Subject area	**Before the workshop**										**After the workshop**									
	1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**	**8**	**9**	**10**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**	**8**	**9**	**10**
Understanding of advocacy	3	4	6	4	7		2									2	5	8	6	5
Developing an advocacy strategy/framework	10	7	4	2	1	2									1	3	6	10	4	2
Advocacy skills	8	3	6	2	3	1	3								1	3	6	11	5	
Communication tools and skills	1	4	3	4	4	5	2	3							1		7	8	6	4
Audience and stakeholder analysis	7	2	4	4	4	3	1	1								1	6	9	4	6
Networking	1	1	3	5	8	3	3	2								1	2	10	8	5