Evidence Based Advocacy Strategy Module

Women's Voice and Leadership Project

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Acronyms

CTC Core trainer and Coach

EBAEvidence Based Advocacy

EBAS evidence Based Advocacy Strategy

ECD Ethiopian Center for Development

EWLA Ethiopian Women lawyers Association

NEWA Network of Ethiopian Women's Associations

SWOT Strength, Weakness, Opportunities and threats

ToT Training of trainer

UEWCA Union of Ethiopian Women Charitable Associations

WOs Women's Organizations

WVL Women's Voice and Leadership

Introduction to the Module

The purpose of this manual is to enhance the capacity of Women's Organizations (WOs) in evidence-based advocacy work. Through a step-by-step approach, this facilitator's guide aims to empower WO staff, management, and volunteers with the necessary knowledge and tools for effective evidence-based advocacy.

The manual is divided into four sections:

Section 1: Preliminary Activities

This section focuses on essential preliminary activities that need to be completed before delving into the core concepts of the training. It includes participant introductions, icebreaker exercises, mapping expectations, and establishing ground rules for the training session.

Section 2: The Concept of Advocacy

In this section, the concept of advocacy is explored in-depth. Participants will gain a comprehensive understanding of the principles, strategies, and approaches involved in effective advocacy work.

Section 3: Basic Evidence-Based Advocacy (EBA) Methodology

The third section introduces the fundamental steps of the evidence-based advocacy methodology for planning advocacy campaigns. It explores the why and how of designing an EBA strategy, taking into account the challenges and opportunities that arise throughout the process.

Section 4: Developing an Evidence-Based Advocacy Strategy Implementation Plan

This section delves into the practical aspects of developing an evidence-based advocacy strategy implementation plan. It covers building an advocacy strategy with clear objectives and activities, setting indicators for monitoring progress, and developing a comprehensive implementation plan. Additionally, it addresses the challenges and opportunities encountered in the process of evidence-based advocacy.

General Objective of the Module

By the end of this training, participants will be able to:

- Develop a thorough understanding of evidence-based advocacy and its significance for WOs.
- Apply the principles of evidence-based advocacy to plan and execute effective advocacy campaigns.
- Build a comprehensive evidence-based advocacy strategy with clear objectives and activities.
- Set relevant indicators and develop an implementation plan to monitor and evaluate advocacy efforts.

Approach

This manual adopts an inclusive and participatory learning approach. It encourages active engagement and contributions from all participants, irrespective of their formal education level. The facilitator serves as a guide, creating an environment that fosters knowledge sharing, critical thinking, and experiential learning.

Trainee-friendly language is used throughout, avoiding technical jargon and promoting inclusivity across genders, races, and cultures.

Training Participants and Expectations

Recognizing the value of peer learning, this training module emphasizes the importance of collective knowledge sharing and experience. The content of the manual is tailored to suit the specific needs of the target group. A thorough needs assessment is conducted to understand participants' knowledge levels and individual requirements. The facilitator ensures an inclusive approach that accommodates all genders, races, and cultures, creating a supportive and diverse learning environment.

Pre and Post-Assessment Questions

To ensure the effectiveness of the training, pre and post-assessment questions are included at the end of each session. Participants are required to respond to these questions before and after the training. The pre-assessment questions evaluate participants' initial knowledge and skills, while the post-assessment questions measure the impact and effectiveness of the training. By analyzing the responses, the facilitator can identify knowledge gaps, tailor the training content, and assess participants' progress.

Participants Introduction

- Creating a safe and inclusive learning environment is paramount for successful training. The following steps are recommended for participant introductions:

Introducing Participants:

- Participants introduce themselves by stating their name and the organization they represent.
- Participants are encouraged to briefly share their experiences with evidence-based advocacy.

Setting Ground Rules:

- Ground rules are established to foster a respectful and productive learning environment.
- Participants are invited to suggest ground rules, such as active listening, respect for diverse opinions, maintaining confidentiality, and minimizing interruptions.
- The facilitator records the ground rules on a flip chart or whiteboard and ensures they are visible throughout the training.

Expectations:

- Participants are invited to share their expectations for the training, including what they hope to learn, areas they need improvement in, and specific questions they have.
- The facilitator explains that pre and post-training assessments will be conducted to measure progress and identify areas for improvement.
- By following these steps, a positive and engaging learning environment can be created, allowing participants to fully benefit from the training.

Purpose of the Module

This manual has been prepared by the Women's Voice and Leadership (WVL) program, a global initiative that recognizes the power and potential of women and girls in promoting and protecting their human rights. The initiative is part of Canada's Feminist International Assistance policy, which acknowledges gender equality as a key approach to eradicating poverty. In collaboration with Global Affairs Canada, Plan International Ethiopia and Plan International Canada are leading the WVL - Ethiopia project, partnering with four Women's Organizations (WOs):the Network of Ethiopian Women's Associations (NEWA), the Union of Ethiopian Women Charitable Associations (UEWCA), the Ethiopian Center for Development (ECD), and the Ethiopian Women Lawyers Association (EWLA), collectively known as the "WO Collective."

The purpose of this manual is to bridge the gap in Women's Organizations' knowledge and practice by incorporating evidence-based advocacy into their programs and project objectives. It is based on a pre-assessment conducted with organizations working for the empowerment of women and girls, ensuring that the training manual aligns with their existing practices and knowledge in implementing evidence-based advocacy.

Women's Organizations are established to promote gender equality and address gender disparities in various contexts. To effectively tackle the underlying issue of gender inequality, these organizations require an advocacy platform grounded in evidence. Thus, it is crucial to equip them with organized knowledge on mainstreaming evidence-based advocacy. This manual aims to provide a practical understanding of basic definitions and strategies for evidence-based advocacy, enabling target women's organizations to gain practical knowledge in this area. The module is designed to enhance the capacity of WIO practitioners, including staff, members, and partners, in developing evidence-based advocacy procedures and effectively communicating their advocacy issues. Trainers, training-of-trainer (ToT) trainers, and community-level trainers can utilize this material to deliver training sessions.

Session 1: General Introduction

The first part of the evidence-based advocacy training module provides a general introduction to the training. It includes:

Welcome and introductory session

Participants' expectations

Training goals and objectives

Highlighting the methodology approach for the training

This section sets the foundation for the training, ensuring participants understand the purpose, expectations, and approach of the program.

Session1:General Introduction

1.1 Welcome and Self-Introduction

Objectives:

By the end of this session, participants will be able to:

- Introduce themselves and become acquainted with one another.
- Share their expectations for the training.
- Understand the participants' interests in the training
- Establish collective ground rules to build trust and create a safe learning environment.

Icebreaker:Participants introduce themselves by stating their name, place of origin, and role in their organization.Engage in an interactive icebreaker activity:

Participants raise their hands, stomp their feet, stand up, bang their desktops, or blow a whistle to respond to questions such as:Have you attended a gender training workshop before?

Did you arrive on time?

Are you happy?Have you ever slept at work?

Did you have lunch today?

1.2. Expectations from Participants

Prepare green and red cards labeled "Expectations" and "Worries" respectively. Distribute one green and one red card to each participant.Instruct participants to take two minutes to write two expectations they have for the workshop on the green cards, and two worries on the red cards.Ask participants to paste their cards on the respective flip charts when finished.Explain whether the workshop will address each of the shared expectations. If not, provide guidance on accessing additional knowledge. Address and reassure participants about any worries they have raised.

1.3. Setting the Norms/Ground Rules.

Explain the importance of following certain rules for a successful training.

Invite participants to suggest additional workshop rules or freedoms they would like to have.Write the following rules on a flip chart and explain each one:

Turn off cell phones.Be punctual—start and end on time.Actively include everyone through dialogue and discussion.Encourage the exchange of expertise, knowledge, and skills among all participants.

Relate examples to personal experiences and share lessons from daily and professional life.Discuss and reach a consensus on the rules.

Write the agreed-upon rules on the flip chart and post the final list on the training room wall.

Session 2: Understanding the Concept of Evidence-Based Advocacy

In this part of the module, we explore the concept of evidence-based advocacy, starting with the definition of advocacy. We discuss advocating based on evidence, the relevance of feminist and gender transformative approaches in evidence-based advocacy, and the fundamental principles of advocacy. The facilitator can use different methodologies and approaches to create a conducive learning environment and highlight the main points of the concept.

Session2: Understanding the Concept of Evidence-Based Advocacy (EBA)

2.1. What Is Evidence Advocacy?

Objective:
By the end of this session, participants will have a clear understanding of the concept of advocacy and its significance in influencing public policies and programs.

Methodology:

BrainstormingDiscussionPowerPoint presentation**Time**: 45 minutes

Session Activities 1: Advocacy

Step 1: Identify Synonyms for Advocacy (3 min)

Ask participants to brainstorm and suggest alternative words that can be used interchangeably with the word "advocacy." Encourage suggestions in Amharic.

Participants write their suggestions on sticky notes and post them on a flip chart for everyone to see.
Step 2: Sharing Synonyms (Facilitator-led)

The facilitator reads out all the suggested synonyms and briefly relates them to the conventional definition of the term by emphasizing the core words. Synonyms suggested: defending, decision-making, providing a solution, sensitizing, communication, exposure, change, attracting attention, building
support, lobbying, persuasion, selling an idea, influence, informing, interviewing.

Length of the Activity: 10 minutes

Materials Needed: Flip chart, marker, sticky note

Note for Facilitators

Advocacy refers to organized efforts by individuals or groups to influence the formulation and implementation of public policies and programs. It involves persuading and pressuring state authorities, international financial institutions, and other powerful actors.

Diagram

Advocacy encompasses various activities undertaken to gain access to and influence decision-makers on matters of importance to a particular group or to society in general. It is a tool for meaningful citizen participation in decision-making processes,
providing opportunities to influence policies or programs related to health, agriculture, or governance. Advocacy plays a crucial role in addressing community problems by establishing networks and fostering collaborations.

2.2. Forms/Types and Feminist Approach to Advocacy

There are multiple forms of advocacy that can be highlighted for this module. Here are a few examples:

Self-advocacy:

Involves individuals effectively communicating their own interests, desires, needs, and rights. Recognizes individuals as experts through their lived experiences and empowers them to speak out about issues important to them. Enables individuals to express their thoughts and feelings, ask for what they want and need, and articulate their perspectives.

Group Advocacy:

Involves individuals with shared experiences, positions, or values coming together in groups to discuss, listen, and collectively speak up about important issues.Aims to influence public opinion, policy development, and service provision.

Peer advocacy:

Refers to one-to-one support provided by advocates who share similar disabilities or experiences with the individuals using services.Trained and supported volunteers often offer peer advocacy as part of coordinated projects.Emphasizes the ability to empathize with individuals' needs, treating them as equals, and advocating passionately on their behalf.

Citizen advocacy:
Aims to involve people in their local communities, enabling them to have a voice and make decisions about matters that impact their lives. Citizen advocacy partnerships are long-term and flexible, lasting as long as desired by the citizen advocate and the individual .Citizen advocates are ordinary community members who operate with support from coordinated schemes.

Non-instructed advocacy

:Needed when, despite assistance and support, a person is unable to express their views and make their own decisions. In such cases, independent advocates use gathered information to represent the person.The aim is to secure the person's rights, promote their well-being, and ensure their wishes are fully considered.

Systems advocacy:
Aims to change policies, laws, or rules that impact how individuals lead their lives. Efforts can be directed at local, state, or national agencies, focusing on modifying laws, rules, and written or unwritten policies. The target of advocacy depends on the specific problem and the authority responsible for it.

Professional counselor advocacy:
Involves taking action to promote the counseling profession and remove or minimize barriers to counselors' ability to provide services. Despite receiving less attention, professional advocacy is equally important as other advocacy issues and requires equal efforts to secure the rights of professionals. Recognized approaches in advocacy include:

- Rights-based approach: Recognizing and measuring fundamental human rights .
- Person-centered approach: Building long-term, trusting, and mutually respectful relationships between advocates and individuals.

- Watching brief approach: Placing the individual at the center of decision-making about the best way to support them
- . Witness /observer approach: Observing or witnessing how individuals lead their li ves.
- Professional advocacy often involves paid independent advocates who support individuals in speaking up and representing their views, especially during times of significant change or crisis. Such advocacy is issue-based, and the advocate may work with the person for a short period of time.

2.3. Session Activity: Fundamental Principles of Advocacy

Objective:

To create a clear understanding of the basic principles of advocacy.

Methodology:

Brainstorming PowerPoint presentation

Activity Duration:50 minutes

MaterialsNeeded:

Flip chart Marker, Sticky notes

Step 1: Distribute the words related to the fundamental principles of advocacy to the previous groups. Allow them to discuss the meaning of each word in the context of eBA (electronic business analysis).
Step 2: Ask each group to present the outcomes of their discussions to the entire group (plenary)

Facilitator's Note

Key Principles of Advocacy:

Purposeful and Clear:

Advocates should clearly outline their objectives in the strategic document of eBV (electronic business venture).Advocates should ensure that the people they advocate for in terms of gender issues, protection, and social care services have information about the scope and limitations of the advocacy provider's role. Impartial and On Behalf of Others:
The advocacy provider should be structurally independent from statutory organizations .Conflicts of interest should be minimized in the design and operation of advocacy services, especially when the organization provides additional services such as housing provision. The advocacy provider should prioritize the wishes and interests of the people they advocate for. Advocates should be non-judgmental and respectful of people's needs, views, culture, and experiences. Empowerment and Equal Opportunity:

People accessing the service should have a say in the level of involvement and style of advocacy support they want, if able and willing. When clients lack the ability or capacity to influence the service, the advocacy provider should have a process in place to enable those with an interest in the person's

welfare to influence it. Providers should ensure that people who want to can influence and be involved in the wider activities of the organization, including at the Board level.

The organization should have a written equal opportunities policy that actively addresses all forms of inequality, discrimination, and social exclusion. Fair and equitable allocation of advocates' time

A should be ensured. Advocacy services should be provided free of charge and accessible to eligible individuals. The organization should aim to promote access for the population it serves through appropriate premises, policies, procedures, and publicity materials. Safeguarding and Confidentiality:

Clear policies and procedures should be in place to identify and address safeguarding issues.Advocates should be knowledgeable about different forms of abuse, neglect, and issues related to confidentiality. They should know what actions to take if they suspect a client is at risk.

Advocacy should outline how information about a person accessing the service may be shared, as well as the circumstances under which confidentiality might be breached. Advocates must also be aware of situations that require making a child or adult safeguarding alert.

2.4. Why Engage in Advocacy

Objective:

To enable participants to have a better understanding of why we engage in advocacy.

Methodology:Brainstorming, PowerPoint presentation

Activity Duration:30 minutes

Materials Needed:ComputerLCD projector

Ask participants:

Why do they think advocacy is important and who benefits?

Facilitator's Note

There are many reasons to engage in advocacy. Further explore with participants the possible reasons for embarking on an advocacy campaign or effort through brainstorming. Women's rights organizations and other civil society organizations undertake advocacy for various purposes, including:

Solving specific problems through concrete changes in public policies and programs .Strengthening and empowering civil society.Promoting and consolidating democracy.Advocacy also helps to:

Promote people's rights and enable them to maintain control over

2.5. Key Principles of Feminist Advocacy

Objective:

To create a clear understanding of the basic feminist principles of advocacy.

Methodology:

BrainstormingPowerPoint presentation

ActivityDuration:40 minutes

MaterialsNeeded:ComputerFlip chartMarkerSticky notes

Ask participants:

What does feminism and feministmean?What are the basic feminist principles of advocacy?Why are these principles important?

Facilitator's Note:

It would be beneficial for the facilitator to allow participants some time to reflect on these guiding principles, which also reflect the feminist principles guiding gender equality work. These principles guide organizations in undertaking gender transformative and feminist advocacy.

Credibility	This isclosely related totrustworthinessand expertiseofyour organizationinthe publiceyes.Itisalsoclosely linkedtothe information and datayou use and provideinyouradvocacyactivities.Howreliableor accurateisthe datayou are using? Yourcredibilityislikelytoincreaseif you sharedataand informationwithyourconstituencyorbetterstill, involve yourconstituencyinresearchand fact finding
participationand equal opportunity	Staff/beneficiaries/citizenparticipationis gainingacceptancein advocacymostimportantlymeaningfulones.Werethe voicesofthe marginalizedare heardand considered.Participationis not amere strategytoget consentorbuildconsensus,but includessharingpower, responsibilitiesand accountability,thuspromotingsolidaritytowards GeWe.
Iegitimacy,Inclusionand Diversity	Manyorganizationsbelievethattheyare ina positiontoadvocateon behalfofmarginalizedgroups. In order to gain legitimacy, it is Important to involve the beneficiaries and marginalized in the advocacy process. This encompasses ethics, legality or mandate and accountability to both the process and the product. Legitimacy is drawn from: (those who are directly affected by the issue) those with whom an organization or movement is directly working and those who identify with a particular cause or issue. the process should be very inclusive and diversetoinvolvea widerangeofpeopleregardlessof age,sex, identity,race,ethnicityamongothers.

2.6. Define Evidence-Based Advocacy (EBA)

Objective:
To help participants understand what advocacy and evidence-based advocacy are.

Activity Duration:
10 minutes

Materials Needed:

Flip chartMarkerSticky notes

Methodology:
Group discussion and PowerPoint presentation

Exercise:

Form small groups of 3-5 members.Post a short description of the term "EBA" on the wall and ask participants to read the definition and select core words.Definition 1: Evidence-Based Advocacy uses verified, concrete information as proof to trigger change. Data is gathered, organized, and analyzed to produce clear and accessible information that can influence leaders and decision-makers.Definition 2: Evidence-Based Advocacy is a process based on data and information. It assesses needs to advocate for improving current efforts and identifying gaps. The process integrates data from different sectors (research, policy, action groups, clinicians, practitioners, etc.) into an analysis to inform advocacy.Once they have finished mapping what "EBA" means, ask them to think of one date/information they wish to base their advocacy on throughout the training.For example: "1 in 3 women in the world face sexual and physical violence in their lifetime."

Facilitator's Note:
The reason why we engage in evidence-based advocacy is because:

Advocacy must be reliable and relevant to interest decision-makers, and evidence enhances credibility and professionalism.Evidence enables accurate representation of the needs, priorities, and interests of constituencies.

CaseStory 1 therapecrisisCentre

In Cape TownSouth Africa an organization named Rape Crisis Center was created in 1976 to provide counseling, public education, and awareness-raising for survivors of sexual assault and the broader community. It has been transformed over the years from a predominantly service oriented organization into one that has built diverse advocacy strategies into its daily functioning. Along with its partners, it has been instrumental in policy creation, change, education, and awareness about gender-based violence in South Africa.

The Rape Crisis Centre realized there were major stumbling blocks that interfered with their effective service provision. These stumbling blocks could themselves be characterized as women's rights violations or as impediments to women's recovery and subsequent participation in society.

They therefore established an advocacy branch, which worked in cooperation with the other branches within the organization, to establish which issues would become the focus of their advocacy efforts. They have used numerous successful advocacy strategies, targeting different audiences and entry points for diverse outcomes and impacts. The following are some examples:

• A review of international and national policy documents related to violence against women and detailed analysis of South African legislation which impacts on violence against women. They have made submission to parliament relevant to changing legislation, participated in developing National policy Guidelines for health, justice, police, correctional services, and welfare in the treatment of sexual assault survivors, as well as contributing to a National legal manual on Violence against Women.

• Identification of relevant non-governmental organizations and individuals for the purpose of securing support in advocating for victims of sexual offenses , as well as developing close and mutually beneficial working relationships with key stakeholders such as the Department of Justice, the ministry of Safety and Security, the Department of health, and the Department of Social Development.

• lobbying for change in legal and medical procedures that give better services to women complainants, writing letters to the press highlighting the extent of violence against women and balancing biased reporting, and giving radio, TV and press interviews on issues relating to sexual violence.

CaseStory 2: Mesraq Solidarity Network (MSN)

The Mesraq Solidarity Network (mSN) focuses on the promotion of fair labor practices in the garment industry in Mesraq factories and export processing zones in the global South. mSN was born in 1995 out of the consolidation of two separate networks and has had numerous successes in their advocacy efforts over the last few years. They employ a wide range of advocacy tactics, ranging from local concerns to international lobbying.

By focusing on very specific goals with their innovative "No Sweat Campaign", MSN was able to achieve changes with both local and global impacts. Achievements through Action:

- Supported students' lobbying efforts which resulted in the University of Toronto becoming the first Canadian university to adopt a code of conduct for the manufacture of products bearing the "U. of t." name. The code ensures that manufacturers meet basic labor standards, including prohibitions on child labor, forced labor, and discrimination, and rights to safe working conditions, freedom of association, and collective bargaining. the code also requires companies to disclose the names and locations of factories producing their goods, and to open them up to independent inspection.

- With partners in the South (Thailand, Mexico, etc.), MSN has successfully leveraged codes of conduct to improve labor practices in Mesraq factories.

- Through educational workshops and the distribution of campaign materials, MSN raised awareness of sweatshop abuses in Canada and internationally.

- through corporate campaigns, MSN has mobilized public pressure on retailers and apparel companies to clean-up sweatshop practices

2.7. Relevance of a Feminist Approach in Advocacy

Objective:
Understanding gender feminism and its relation to advocacy.

Length of the Activity:
45 minutes.

Materials Needed:
Flip chart, marker, sticky notes.

Methodology:
Group work based on case stories and PowerPoint presentation.

Exercise:
After discussing the following points, divide the participants into groups and have them read the case story

Step 1:Perhaps first ask participants what comes to mind when they think of "feminist advocacy," or they can write it down on sticky notes.

Step 2:Then share the definition with the plenary.

Step 3:Ask the following questions to initiate discussion:
What comes to mind when they think of "feminist advocacy"?What kind of people do we call feminists?What do feminists do?
They can directly respond or write down their answers on sticky notes and share the definitions

Step 4:Keeping in mind the feminist approach to advocacy, let the groups review the case story below and answer the following questions:

What was the impact of the coalition's work?What are the lessons learned?
Then ask them to present their findings to the plenary.

Facilitator's Note:

To clarify how evidence is used in advocacy or how to conduct evidence-based advocacy, help the participants think about the various steps that organizations would take to engage in evidence-based advocacy based on the case study. For instance, Step 1: Identify the problem. Step 2: Conduct research to collect data, etc.

Definition of Feminism:

Feminism encompasses lobbying, campaigning, researching, communicating, and alliance-building activities that seek to advance women's rights and gender equality.

Feminism is about all genders having equal rights and opportunities. It's about respecting diverse individuals' experiences, identities, knowledge, and strengths, and striving to empower

all individuals to realize their full rights. It's about leveling the playing field between genders and ensuring that diverse women and girls have the same opportunities in life available to diverse men and boys.

Feminism is a political stance and commitment to changing the political, social, cultural, and economic position of individuals of all genders, so that we can achieve gender equality.

A feminist approach to advocacy is concerned with ending injustices by advancing women's rights.

It involves infusing advocacy strategies with feminist values and aims to address the effects of policies, laws, corporate behavior, and other processes on the lives of individuals around the world.

Session 3: Importance of Advocacy Strategies

This module focuses on the importance of advocacy strategies. It covers the reasons for developing an advocacy strategy, different levels of advocacy, characteristics of effective advocacy strategies, steps in developing advocacy strategies, advantages of partnering and collective advocacy strategies, and key elements of an advocacy strategy. This session is essential for understanding evidence-based advocacy and addressing the question of why we need it and how to ensure quality. The facilitator can encourage participants to share their experiences and identify gaps to make the session practical and interactive.

Session3: Importance of Advocacy Strategies

3.1. Why Develop an Evidence-Based Advocacy Strategy?

Objectives:

Understand the necessity of developing a strategy while advocating for policy changes, implementation, and accountability mechanisms.

Methodology:

Brainstorming and discussion based on guide questionsMaterials:

Flip chartMarker penTime:15 minutes

Exercise:

Write "Why develop an evidence-based advocacy strategy and what do you hope to achieve?" on a flip chart.

Ask participants to share their answers.

Write down all responses on the flip chart without discussion.

Facilitator's Note:

Advocacy aims to bring about change, and it's important to differentiate between advocacy strategy and advocacy goals. While changing policies or laws is the ultimate goal of advocacy, having a focused and defined strategy is essential to achieve those goals. Capacity building, community mobilization, awareness raising, sensitization, and information sharing are valuable tools when used strategically.

They can empower rights holders, shape public opinion, and influence political decisions, cultural practices, and structural injustices. The strategy gives life to the goal.

3.2. The Different Levels of Advocacy

Objectives:

Ensure participants understand the different levels of advocacy and their interrelationships.Present a relevant advocacy initiative that impacted various levels and explain how.Methodology: Brainstorming and PowerPoint presentationTime:45-60 minutesExercise:

To illustrate the interconnections and complementarity between different levels of advocacy and aid in the development of an advocacy strategy, follow these steps:

Materials:

Solution tablesProjectorFlip chartMarkerpen

Process:

Divide participants into discussion groups of 3-5 people. Provide each participant with a chart and a marker, pen.Project the table and ask participants to fill in their understanding of the interconnections and complementarity between different levels of advocacy.Ask each group to present their discussions, while filling a larger version of the table visible to all participants.Engage in a collective discussion with participants about the interconnections between different levels (local, national, and regional/international).Facilitator's Note:

While there are several levels of advocacy, we can focus on the main seven levels. Understanding the links between these different levels is crucial for effective advocacy. Ignorance ofinternational frameworks, strong harmful traditional or religious beliefs at the local and community level, and a lack of national and local political will to achieve gender justice are significant barriers to implementation.

A multi-level advocacy strategy helps overcome these barriers by establishing connections between local, national, regional, and international levels. It also allows leveraging action at the regional/international level to influence the national level when advocacy at the national or local level is challenging or risky.

Advocating at various levels and linking them together enables the advocacy strategy to have a structural impact. Please refer to the materials listed in the footnotes for additional information.

3.3. Characteristics of Quality Advocacy Strategies

Objectives:

Ensure participants understand the characteristics of quality advocacy strategies.

Enable participants to incorporate the basic qualities of effective advocacy.

Methodology:

Brainstorming and PowerPoint presentation

Materials:Flip chartMarker pen

Time:45 minutes

Exercise:

Write "What are the Characteristics of Quality Advocacy Strategies?" on a flip chart.

Ask participants to share their answers.

Write down all responses on the flip chart without discussion.

Facilitator's Note:

A strong advocacy initiative should include activities at all levels, with particular emphasis on the "socio-political level

."Place activities in the tool based on the desired changes and target audience. There are four possible combinations:More people and individual level: Aims to change beliefs, behaviors, and attitudes, targeting a large number of people.Key people and individual level: Aims to change beliefs, behaviors, and attitudes, targeting individuals critical to the issue.More people and socio-political level: Aims to change policies and/or institutions, targeting a large number of people. Examples include targeting voting behavior, organizing petitions, and holding conferences on the political aspect of the issue.Key people and socio-political level: Aims to change policies and/or institutions, targeting individuals critical to the issue. Examples include lobbying for specific policy initiatives, hosting side events during international hearing processes, and developing policy documents to distribute among key decision makers.

3.4. Evidence-Based Advocacy Strategy Steps

Specific Learning Objectives:

Enable participants to understand the stages involved in developing an evidence-based advocacy strategy.

Methodology:

Brainstorming and PowerPoint presentationMaterials:

Flip chartMarker penTime:15-20 minutes

Exercise:

Ask participants to brainstorm the key stages involved in an evidence-based advocacy initiative, writing each stage on separate sticky notes or blank cards.Invite participants to place their sticky notes or cards in a logical sequence on the circle on the flip chart paper, grouping similar words or ideas together.Draw around the key groups of cards that represent the main stages in the advocacy strategy. Discuss the "Advocacy Cycle" and review it with the participants.Facilitator's Notes:

Conducting Situational Analysis

Specific Learning Objective:

Understand the need to conduct situational analysis/research to support advocacy efforts.Most evidence-based advocacy initiatives begin with conducting situational analysis/research, which involves comprehensive collection, organization, and preparation of evidence using quantitative, qualitative, and blended strategies.

It is crucial to have a detailed understanding of the issues to build an effective advocacy strategy. Research helps in understanding the context, identifying problems, priorities, and target audiences.

Exercise 3.1 - Adopted from Ghana CTC manual

Participants should work in pairs to discuss research-related questions.Questions to discuss:What is research and why is it important for CSOs to conduct research?What types of research ensure quality data/information?After the discussion, ask participants to share their answers on cards or flip charts.Facilitate a plenary session, summarizing their definitionsand addressing any questions.

Discuss other aspects of research that participants may not have covered.

Research also involves generating data throughout the advocacy process to strengthen messages, expand support, and monitor and evaluate progress. Research can take various forms, such as desk-based research, focus group discussions, interviews with stakeholders, or constituency research.

Identify the Issue

Steps Involved in Using the Tool:

Brainstorm the problems and write each problem on separate cards.Each participant should take turns sharing their perceived problems.Place the card with the core problem at the trunk of the tree.Identify direct causes of the problemand place them at the root of the tree.Identify direct effects/consequences of the problem and place them at the branches.Evaluate the independence of causes and effects.Consider specificity, clarity, and the amount of evidence to prove the problem.Analyze the issue, its causes, and possible solutions.Prioritize a problem based on feasibility, societal impact, and group motivation.Emphasize the importance of gender and intersectional analysis to understand root causes.

b. Analysis of Causes and Consequences:

Analyze the causes and consequences of the identified problem using guiding questions:Why did the problem arise?What are the main causes of the problem?What are its consequences?Use the "problem tree" to unpack root causes, the problem itself, and consequences.

Setting Evidence-Based Advocacy Objectives

Specific learning objectives:

Understand the process of setting evidence-based goals and objectives.Learn about SMART objectives.

Once the issue is identified, it is important to set advocacy goals that align with the desired change. These goals could involve changes in legislation, policy, programs, regulations, or funding. Goals can be categorized as short-term and long-term, and focusing on a small number of strong, specific issues will have a greater impact.

Advocacy objectives refer to the specific changes in policy and practice needed to achieve the goals in the short term. It is important to ensure that objectives are SMART:

Specific: Clearly defined and focused to allocate resources effectively.

Measurable: Indicators or criteria should be developed to measure progress towards the objectives

.Attainable: Goals should be achievable with the available resources.

Relevant: Goals should align with the organization's mission and serve the public interest.

Time-bound: Goals should have specific deadlines or target dates for completion.

Exercise: SMART Objectives

Ask participants to share examples of SMART objectives and discuss them.Network and Coalition Building

Specific learning objectives:

Highlight the advantages of partnering and collective advocacy strategies.At this stage, identifying allies who share similar goals and can help influence or pressure decision-makersis crucial. Networking and coalition building can create a powerful united voice and increase credibility, legitimacy, and representation. It also allows for the sharing of information, pooling of skills and resources, minimizing duplication and competition, and ensuring coordinated logistics.

Exercise:

Divide participants into small group

s.Ask groups to discuss the advantages of partnering and collective advocacy strategies.Have one person from each group present their discussion on a flip chart.Advantages of Partnering and Collective Advocacy Strategy:

Creates a powerful united voice with which to influence decision-makers.Reduces vulnerability, risk, and potential backlash.Combines diverse experiences and expertise.Enhances credibility, legitimacy, and representation by involving different communities.Strengthens unity, shared values, and affinity.Practical Advantages:
Sharing of information and relationship development.Pooling of skills, abilities, and contacts.Minimization of duplication and competition.Increased financial efficiency through resource mobilization and pooling.Ensuring coordinated logistics.Collaborative Advantages:

Opportunities to observe and learn from others with more advocacy experience.Provides a safe space to practice advocacy skills.Helps overcome fear and other barriers in advocacy.Encourages collaborative ways of working.Identifying the Target(s) and Linking Different Levels of Advocacy

To effectively advocate, it is essential to identify the target audience, which includes individuals and institutions with influence on the identified issue. The target audience may consist of policy makers, media, key constituencies, government bodies, and the general public. Each target audience may require a different strategy or approach.

Consider the dynamics and interests of stakeholders and decision-makers to determine:

Who needs to be convinced of the importance and value of your advocacy objectives?

How can you influence these individuals or groups?Who is already supportive of your advocacy objectives, and how can you mobilize their support?Which stakeholders present obstacles or risks, and how can you overcome them?Don't assume there is only one decision-maker; you may need to persuade multiple individuals or the leadership of a governing body.It is important to understand the perspectives, backgrounds, and interests of decision-makers to tailor your messages to them. Consider factors such as their power to influence the issue, their interests in the outcome, the volatility of their position, their profession or background, their stance on gender discrimination, whose opinions they value, their willingness and ability to act on gender-related issues, their valuesc(e.g., maternal health, women's rights, cost-effectiveness of public health programs, youth), whether they support gender equality, whether their positions may be affected by upcoming elections, and how to approach each decision-maker accordingly.

Linking Different Levels of Advocacy:

Advocacy is a deliberate process that aims to inform and influence decision-makers based on evidence. To develop an effective advocacy strategy, it is important to establish connections between the local, national,

regional, and international levels. The following exercise will help participants understand the interconnections between these different levels and their complementarity, ultimately aiding in the development of an advocacy strategy.

Exercise: Linking the Different Levels of Advocacy

- Divide participants into discussion groups of 3-5 people and provide each participant with a chart and marker.
- Project a table and ask participants to fill it in during their discussions.
- Request one person from each group to present their group's findings while filling in a larger version of the table that all participants can see.
- Facilitate a discussion with participants about the interconnections between the different levels (local, national, and regional/international).

Drafting Messages

- The message should be simple, consistent, and tailored to the audience.
- Use positive language whenever possible.
- Make the case for your issue by reflecting the problem, the solution, and the benefits.
- Develop position statements supported by evidence and facts.
- Focus on a few key messages that are presented in a compelling manner by credible sources.
- Remember that the audience is the policy-maker, not other advocates or experts.

Elements of an Effective Message:

Credible: Ensure the message is factually accurate, supported by evidence, and delivered by trusted individuals on the subject.

Concise: Keep the message clear and simple, avoiding lengthy discussions or excessive policy details.

Relevant: Start with the audience's existing knowledge and perspectives, then guide them towards the desired understanding.

Compelling: Create a message that inspires action and resonates with the audience on an emotional level.

Communicative of Values: Frame the message in a way that aligns with people's core values, such as fairness, equality, freedom, and honesty.

Choosing the Messaging Channel/Medium: Select the appropriate communication channel(s) and messenger to ensure the message reaches the intended audience effectively.

Resource Mobilization/Fundraising:Assess whether the necessary resources are available internally or if external sources need to be explored.

Consider potential donors or funding opportunities to support your advocacy efforts.Implementation Plan:

- Develop a plan outlining activities and monitoring strategies.Define what needs to be done, who will be responsible, the required resources (human and financial), and the desired impact.
- Tool for Understanding Implementation Plan:

  Project a table for participants and provide an example of how they can develop an implementation plan using the table as a guide.

advocacyGoal	listof Activities	interimOutcomes	impacts
example: policyimplementation	Organizingrallies	Issuevisibility	Improvedservices andsystems

Monitoring and Evaluation:

Continuous assessment of the impact of advocacy efforts is crucial to improve and adapt the advocacy plan.Advocacy monitoring and evaluation should focus on the journey rather than just the destination.

Tool for Monitoring and Evaluation:

Exercise: Distribute discussion groups of 3-5 participants.

Project a monitoring and evaluation table and ask participants to fill in the boxes based on their advocacy strategy.Note: Due to the dynamic nature of policy contexts influenced by factors like extremism, political instability, and poverty, the advocacy strategy should be a flexible and evolving document that can be reviewed and adapted to new policy context

Whatwillyoumonitor? Whatkindoftoolyouare goingtouse?	howareyougoingtodoit/ themethodologyuse are goingtouse?	Whenareyougoingtodoit?	Whoisgoingtomakeit happen?

s. Monitoring responses and being open to changing the strategy are essential, as chosen methods may not yield the expected results or the context may shift.

3.5. Elements of Advocacy Objectives

Objectives:

Highlight the main elements of advocacy objectives and communication strategies.Methodology:

Brainstorming, PowerPoint presentation.Items:

Flip chart, marker pen.

Time: 25 minutes.

Exercise:

Ask participants what they know about the elements of advocacy objectives.Write down their responses on the flip chart.Highlight the main elements of advocacy strategies.Note for Facilitator:

Elements of Successful Advocacy:

Maintain a moderate attitude and avoid emotional responses.Be flexible and open-minded, willing to listen to others.Demonstrate determination to solve the problem you are advocating for.Prepare adequate evidence to support your argument and have it readily available.Possess in-depth knowledge of the content related to the advocacy issue.

Other Key Communication Elements in Advocacy:

Content/Ideas: Determine the ideas you want to convey and the arguments that will persuade your audience.Language: Choose words that effectively and clearly convey your message. Consider words to use or avoid.Sources/Messenger: Identify individuals who the audience will respond to and perceive as credible.Format: Select the most impactful way to deliver your message, such as a meeting, letter, position paper, or presscstatement.

Time and Place: Consider the optimal timing and venue for delivering your message, taking into account credibility and political impact.

In general, ensure that your advocacy objectives incorporate the following elements:

Social Ties: Establish connections and build relationships with relevant stakeholders and allies.

Communications Grid: Create a structured plan for disseminating information and engaging with your target audience.

Common Language: Use terminology and language that resonates with your audience and avoids exclusionary or biased terms.

Clear Vision: Articulate a compelling vision that inspires action and communicates the desired change.

Shared Resources: Identify and leverage available resources, both human and financial, to support your advocacy efforts.

Actors: Determine the key individuals or organizations who can contribute to the success of your advocacy campaign.

Feedback Mechanisms: Establish mechanisms to gather feedback, evaluate progress, and adjust strategies accordingly.

These elements together form a framework that should be integrated into any advocacy objectives. By considering these factors, you can enhance the effectiveness and impact of your advocacy efforts.

Session 4: Developing Evidence-Based Advocacy Strategy and Implementation Plans

This section builds upon the previous one, which discussed advocacy strategies and core values. It aims to address the question of "how" by explaining the development of evidence-based advocacy. It highlights the importance of basing advocacy on evidence. Additionally, this section covers the process of implementing advocacy, along with the challenges and opportunities associated with it.

Session 4: Developing Evidence-Based Advocacy Strategy and Implementation Plan

4.1. Developing and Delivering Evidence-Based Advocacy Strategy and Implementation Plan

Objectives:

Demonstrate the process of developing an evidence-based advocacy strategy.

Discuss the specific methodology for delivering the advocacy strategy.

Methodology:

PowerPoint presentationDialogueExperience sharingChart

Note for the Facilitators:Sources of Data (Evidence)

ResearchPolicy documents

Case studies

How to Deliver Evidence-Based Advocacy Strategies?

Exercise:

Collect information to support the implementation of different strategies.Key Concepts:

What is a strategy?

Types of advocacy strategies.

Lessons learned from experience.

Practical Techniques:

Initial discussion of strategies.Socio-dramas about strategies.Learning Indicators:

Understanding of the five principal strategies of influence.Collection of information about current events and political, economic, and social trends for planning advocacy strategies.Activity:
The facilitator guides a reflection in the plenaryby asking the following questions:What is a strategy?Why do we design strategies before taking action?What are some common advocacy strategies?

The facilitator records the answers on newsprintsheets.The facilitator delivers a presentation on the concept of advocacy strategies using transparencies or cards.

Time Allowed: 30 minutes

4.2. Developing Advocacy Strategy (Objectives and Activities), Setting Indicators, and Developing an Implementation Plan

Objective:

Highlight how to develop and implement an advocacy strategy in gender equality activism.Create understanding of the basic components of an effective advocacy strategy.Enable participants to learn how to set goals during the development of Evidence-Based Advocacy (EBA).

Methodology:
Group work and discussion

Items:
Flip chartsNotepadsPensMarkersDuration of the Training: 1hour and 30 minutes

Exercise:

Note: Participants are already familiar with the main components and basic elements of terminologies like gender equality, gender equity, feminism, gender transformative approaches, advocacy, and evidence-based advocacy. Divide the participants into groups of 3-4 members (based on the size of the participants) and provide each group with the following questions to discuss and reflect upon:

What are the prerequisites for developing an evidence-based advocacy strategy?How do you set goals and objectives to develop an effective advocacy strategy?How do you manage the implementation of Evidence-Based Advocacy Strategies (EBAS)?

Note to the Facilitator:
Evidence-Based Advocacy: As the name suggests, evidence-based advocacy uses verified, concrete information as proof to drive change. Data is gathered, organized, and analyzed to produce clear and accessible information that can influence leaders and decision-makers.

Advocacy Strategy:
An agreed-upon course of action and direction that helps manage the relationship between an organization and its environment. The goal is to achieve alignment or synergy to ensure optimal resource flow to the institution.

NB: The core components in developing an evidence-based advocacy strategy involve identifying and completing necessary steps. Here are some steps in developing EBAS:

Advocacy Issue:
When choosing an issue, ensure you have reasons supported by data evidence and justify why it is a priority.Advocacy Goal Framework:
To establish your goal framework, the following elements are needed:

a. Goal:
Your advocacy goal builds on your advocacy issue by specifying who (e.g., person, institution, or office) will make the policy change, how the policy change will be made (e.g., through a specific bill, guidance, or

regulation), and when it will be achieved.

b. Objectives:
Objectives are the smaller steps that must be completed to reach your overall goal. You will know that you are on target to achieve your goal if you are meeting your objectives. Objectives should be clear, focused, and include the desired change, the agent of change, and the timeframe for achievement. Limit the number of objectives (no more than three).

c. Indicators:
Indicators are measures used to judge progress toward your advocacy goal. The more specific your indicators, the easier it will be to evaluate your achievements. Make sure to identify potential sources of evidence for monitoring indicators.

Partner Tracker:
Consider who to involve at different levels (when appropriate) - local, national, regional, and global.

Targets:
Specify specific targets (e.g., a person, newspaper, department, committee, etc.). Avoid using general terms like "the public" or "the government" as they are too broad. Prioritize targets by primary and secondary importance when primary targets are not accessible.

Messages:
Road test your messages to see how they work in practice. Imagine that you are in a real-life scenario with one of your targets (or create a relevant situation for your issue).

Activity Plan:
Consider the following points when writing the activity plan:

What activities and tactics are most appropriate to reach our targets?Does this activity align with the basic communication approach (engage, persuade, convince, monitor,or neutralize)?

Does it align with my advocacy method (public/private)?Are we acting safely in our current political environment and national context?

Are we being realistic about the number of activities we're undertaking?

Activity Budget:
Revisit the budget throughout the project to incorporate updates.

Advocacy Roadmap:
Your advocacy roadmap will help you outline your strategic path for the duration of your advocacy project, providing a clearer picture of how all the components come together over time. Additionally, create step-by-step actions that you and your partners need to take to carry out the planned activities.

The second action above can be done through group work. Identify gaps that require advocacy, and assign specific issues to each group. Within the group, prioritize the issues through voting and gather sufficient supporting evidence. Then, the group can design an evidence-based advocacy project for the specific issue.

Setting Indicators:
To track advocacy progress, set indicators to measure progress towards objectives. Indicators may measure what has been done and how well it has been done (outputs). Ensure clarity on how to collect relevant information, frequency of collection, and responsible parties. Indicators can be set as follows:

Specify the different advocacy activities (e.g., meetings with a certain number of policymakers and officials on the target issue).Short-term and intermediate outcomes (e.g., number of co-sponsors on a bill, percentage change in influential people's belief in your message about the target issue through a survey).Long-term policy change outcomes and impact (e.g., changed policy or legislation, policy/legislation implemented, increased governmental funding for the topic area, and, in the long term, positive change in people's lives resulting from policy/legislation change).

4.3. Gathering Evidence and Data to Support the Advocacy Strategy and Monitoring its Implementation

Objective:

Highlight how to monitor the implementation of evidence-based advocacy (EBA) through gathering appropriate data.Methodology:

Brainstorming discussionItems:Flip charts, notepads, pens, and markersDuration of the training:30 minutes

Exercise:
Ask participants to reflect on the following points and write their responses on flip charts without any discussion:

What inputs are important when gathering data to implement EBA?What tools can be used to monitor the progress of EBA implementation?

Note for the Facilitator:

The advocacy strategy involves steps:
A. Prioritize the advocacy issue.
B. Establish the advocacy goal framework (Goal).
C. Define objectives (e.g., Objective 1, Objective 2, Objective 3...).
D. Determine indicators and evidence required.
To monitor and evaluate advocacy, consider the following:

Ensure rigorous planning to overcome risks and collect evidence along the way.Incorporate a mid-project review into the roadmap in case adjustments are needed.Celebrate milestones and involve network partners in sharing success.Conduct an end-of-project review to evaluate the entire advocacy project.

4.4. Challenges and Opportunities

Objectives:

Emphasize the importance of objective and self-critical self-analysis in advocacy initiatives.Share key elements to consider when identifying strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats and devising solutions.Apply criteria for conducting a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) analysis using a hypothetical example or a specific advocacy initiative.Methodology:

Experience sharing, group work, group presentationItems:Cards, flip charts, paper

Time:30 minutes

Exercise:

Self-Analysis: Identification of Internal Strengths and Weaknesses.Identification of Opportunities and Threats in the Political Environment.Lessons Learned from Experience.

Note for the Facilitator:

Practical Techniques:
A. Introducing the Self-Analysis Process:

Facilitator poses the question in a plenary session: "What are the most important aspects to consider when conducting a self-analysis of our group or coalition?"Participants write their answers on cards (maximum of three cards per person), addressing one important aspect on each card.Participants display their cards on a sheet of newsprint or a blackboard, and the facilitator groups similar ideas and eliminates duplicates, resulting in five or six key aspects.Facilitator prepares a sheet of newsprint with the "Table for Participatory Self-Analysis" (refer to Worksheet 1 for an example) and hangs the cards under the "Key Aspects" column.Participants mark an "x" next to each aspect to indicate whether it is a strength (right-hand column) or weakness (left-hand column).Emphasize that the purpose of this exercise is to assess the group's capabilities for a specific advocacy initiative.Facilitator initiates a discussion in plenary, asking about the group's most important strengths and reasons behind those assessments. Consider input from others who might perceive the same aspects as weaknesses.Reach a consensus and post the most important strengths and weaknesses on a sheet of newsprint divided into two columns.

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Annex

Pre- and Post-Evaluation Questions:

1. What is your understanding of advocacy and its role in creating social change?
2. Have you previously been involved in any advocacy initiatives? If yes, please briefly describe your experience.
3. How familiar are you with the concepts of gender equality, gender equity, feminism, and gender transformative approaches?
4. What do you perceive as the main challenges in developing an effective advocacy strategy?
5. On a scale of 1-5, with 5 being very confident, how confident are you in your ability to set goals and objectives for an advocacy strategy?
6. How comfortable do you feel with gathering evidence and data to support your advocacy efforts?
7. What are your expectations for this training module on advocacy?
8. How would you rate your current knowledge of evidence-based advocacy?
9. How would you describe your understanding of advocacy after completing this module?
10. Did this training module enhance your knowledge and skills in developing and implementing an advocacy strategy? Please provide specific examples.
11. How has your perspective on gender equality, gender equity, feminism, and gender transformative approaches evolved through this training?
12. Did you encounter any challenges while developing your advocacy strategy during the training? If so, how did you overcome them?
13. On a scale of 1-5, with 5 being very confident, how confident do you feel now in setting goals and objectives for an effective advocacy strategy?
14. How comfortable do you feel now with gathering evidence and data to support your advocacy efforts? Please provide specific examples.
15. To what extent did this training module meet your expectations? Please elaborate.
16. Did the group work and discussions contribute to your understanding and application of advocacy concepts? Why or why not?
17. How do you plan to apply the knowledge and skills gained from this training module in your future advocacy work?
18. What aspects of the training module did you find most valuable or impactful? Why?
19. Were there any topics or areas that you would have liked to see covered in more detail? If yes, please specify.
20. What recommendations do you have for improving this training module on advocacy?