Plan Your Power

A Toolkit for Women's Rights Advocacy Planning

Acknowledgements

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All links correct at time of publication

Contents

Planning

SECTION 1:

How to use this toolkit

This section explains how to use this toolkit and provides a step by step guide to each stage of the advocacy planning cycle.

This toolkit is based on a women's rights approach to advocacy which recognises the need for longer term structural change if women's rights are to be fulfilled.

- It is intended to support the advocacy planning of women's rights organisations, and coalitions, alliances and networks who want to advocate for change.

- It is also intended for broader advocacy organisations who want to prioritise women's rights and gender equality in their advocacy work, and to do so in ways that strengthen the work of women's rights organisations and movements.

Part 1 of the toolkit explains each stage of the advocacy planning process, suggesting additional resources and indicating which of the exercises in **Part 2** will support each step (see Figure 1). There is also a glossary of terms at the end of **Part 1**.

The exercises in **Part 2** are designed to form a complete planning process when used in conjunction with the information in **Part 1**, with some optional exercises depending on time. This could be done in a two or three day workshop either for your organisation or with your coalition, alliance or network partners. **Part 3** provides templates for the tables used in the exercises in **Part 2**.

However, the exercises in **Part 2** can also work as standalone exercises and you can pick and choose what works for you and integrate them into your existing planning process.

There are many cross-references within the toolkit – numbered **sections** can be found in **Part 1**; **exercises** are in **Part 2** and **templates** are in **Part 3**. The numbering in **Part 2** corresponds to **Part 1** so that it is clear which exercises relate to each section in **Part 1**.

This toolkit builds on Womankind Worldwide's *Women's Rights Advocacy Toolkit* (2011) and you will find references to this earlier toolkit for further reading and additional tools within each section. This toolkit incorporates new approaches, analysis and tools which have been developed through advocacy planning practice and learning by the International Women's Development Agency (IWDA), Womankind Worldwide and partner organisations and the contributions of other coalitions and alliances over the past nine years.

Figure 1: Step by Step Guide

Section 2: Why women's rights advocacy is different		
	2.1	**Why do women's rights advocacy?** Understand how to use a women's rights approach to advocacy rather than just advocating on women's rights.
	2.2	**Before you begin: resources, risks and living your values** Be realistic about what resources you have, what risks you face, and how to live your values.
	2.3	**Understanding and using power analysis** Women's rights advocacy relies on strong power analysis. Choose an appropriate exercise to build your understanding of power.

Section 3: Defining your advocacy aim		
	3.0	**Defining your advocacy aim** This is the long term change you are seeking to achieve, ideally involving a shift in power creating a positive change in the lives of a group of people.

Section 4: Planning your advocacy		
	4.1	**Power analysis and context** Build your understanding of the power context within which you are operating, including your own power and the oppressive and transformative power of others.
	4.2	**Defining your objectives** Identify your objectives – the changes that need to happen to achieve your aim including who will make the change, what they will do, how they will do this, and by when.
	4.3	**Power mapping – your targets and allies** Map out who has the power to achieve your objectives, who can influence them, who your allies are and who will oppose you.
	4.4	**Agree on strategic approaches** Agree on the outcomes or stepping stones (those are the smaller actions by others that need to take place so that your objectives can be achieved) and your strategy for achieving these.

Section 4: Planning your advocacy		
	4.5	**Risk identification and mitigation** Throughout your planning, identify the risks that could occur as part of your advocacy work, and ways that you will avoid them or reduce their impact. These could be risks to the success of the advocacy work, or risks to yourselves and your allies.
	4.6	**Choosing your advocacy activities** Consider what activities your organisation, alliance, network or coalition will do in order to achieve your outcomes and hence your objectives and aim.
	4.7	**Developing core messages** Define your core messages - explaining who you want to do what, by when, and why.

5.1

MEL for advocacy planning

Monitor, evaluate and learn from your advocacy planning process - to what extent has your planning helped you to be effective advocates and build transformative power?

5.2

MEL for implementation

Monitor action against your planned activities and evaluate what change has occurred from each activity to help you reach your advocacy outcomes and objectives. Do you need to make adjustments?

5.3

Understanding impact and learning

Reflect on the impact of your advocacy strategy and outcomes and use your learning at each stage of the advocacy cycle to change and adapt your plans.

Using the Icons

There are a number of icons throughout this toolkit to help you navigate through the planning process.

Indicates there are suggested exercises to support this step in the planning process. You can find these tools in **Part 2: Exercises.**

Signposts resources which provide additional information and further reading.

If you are a broader advocacy organisation, rather than a women's rights organisation, this icon includes additional tools and suggestions to support working in ways that strengthen the work of women's rights organisations and movements.

At each planning step there is a transformative power check to encourage you to think about how you will build transformative power through your advocacy.

Advocacy can bring risks. This icon encourages you to assess risks at each stage of the planning cycle and to consider mitigation strategies.

Section 5 specifically focusses on monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEL). However, it is important to consider and plan for MEL at each step in the process. This icon acts as a reminder to integrate MEL throughout your planning.

Section 5 on monitoring, evaluation and learning includes some tools to support evaluating and reflecting on your planning process. Before you begin planning, read **Section 5.1.1** which will support you to gather information and reflect along the way.

Why women's rights advocacy is different

This section explains what we mean by women's rights advocacy and encourages you to think about what is possible given your context, resources and existing relationships.

It also introduces the different forms and locations of power and the importance of understanding the power context, and your role in this, for your advocacy planning.

2.1 Why do women's rights advocacy?

Advocacy is a set of organised activities designed to influence the policies and actions of others to achieve change.

In a context of new global challenges, closing civil society space in some countries and increasing backlash against women's human rights and feminist agendas seen through attacks on women human rights defenders and women's rights organisations, advocacy for gender equality and women's rights is critical.

Global obligations in relation to women's human rights are clearly set out in international frameworks such as the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and the Beijing Platform for Action. Newly adopted international development frameworks, such as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), also recognise the importance of gender equality and provide increased momentum for change.

What's different about women's rights advocacy is that we know that to be successful, it must be done in a way that recognises unequal power relations and structures that perpetuate inequality and oppress women and girls[1]. It must also recognise that women face intersecting

discriminations based on multiple layers of identity, such as race, class, sexuality, disability, age, gender identity and other forms of inequality, that shape each woman's individual experiences.

A women's rights approach to advocacy, based on power analysis, recognises the need for longer term structural change to challenge and transform the barriers of unequal power relations and structures, rather than just climbing over them.

Movements and alliances create more sustainable social transformation and women's collective action has secured some of the most important advances in women's rights. Movement strengthening is therefore an important element of women's rights advocacy.

And women's rights advocacy must have at its heart the expressed priorities of women themselves, particularly those facing intersecting discriminations.

For these reasons, women's rights advocacy requires a different approach to advocacy planning. This toolkit therefore adapts mainstream advocacy planning processes to incorporate a deeper understanding of gendered, and other intersecting, power relations.

Advocacy planning from a women's rights perspective

Women's rights advocacy isn't just advocacy about women's rights, it also requires a different way of planning and implementing your advocacy. Methods and processes are political.

In order to do women's rights advocacy, staff will need to understand and be able to articulate gender power dynamics and intersectionality. If your organisation, or partners you are working with, have not worked on women's rights before, you might want to use the JASS We Rise toolkit https://werise-toolkit.org/en/toolkit and find exercises that support your needs. You should do this before you begin your advocacy planning. **Section 2.3** explores power in more depth.

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1   Note any reference to 'women' in this toolkit also refers to girls as appropriate.

What makes women's rights advocacy planning different?

✓ Understanding the various forms and locations of gendered **power** – and how gender and other discriminations intersect.

✓ Tackling the underlying structural causes of inequality.

✓ Knowing that methods are political – what language or strategies we use will themselves create or hinder change.

✓ Knowing that backlash is likely, and that progress will never be linear.

✓ Recognising that **building transformative power** must be part of advocacy if change is to be sustainable.

✓ Working in alliance with others to maximise transformative power.

✓ Supporting women's rights movements as part of advocacy objectives.

✓ Putting first the **priorities of women** - recognising that they face intersecting discriminations.

✓ Prioritising inclusive, participatory methods for women to connect experiences, learning and knowledge with action.

What do we mean by women's rights organisations and movements?[2]

Women's rights organisations are women-led organisations working to advance women's rights and gender equality. This can include both formally registered organisations as well as unregistered and grassroots groups.

Women's movements are broad social movements led by women and their organisations that campaign for women's rights and gender equality at national, regional and international levels. They include women rights organisations and other actors, including activists, academics, journalists, lawyers and trade unionists.

Key characteristics of women's movements include gendered political goals and strategies, a change agenda built from gendered analysis, women's leadership at all levels and women most affected by marginalisation ideally are the key constituency of the movement.

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2   Definitions from Womankind Worldwide (2019), *Stronger Together: The power of feminist programmes to strengthen women's movements in Kenya, Uganda and Zimbabwe* and, Srilatha Batliwala, *Movements & Why They Matter*, Presentation, IWDA WAVE workshop 2019.

As you plan your advocacy, think about the process as well as the purpose and outcomes. To ensure your advocacy is both credible and relevant, you will need to assess whether you have included the right people and voices in your planning, particularly when agreeing your aim. This should include meaningful consultation with the women and communities that the planned advocacy intends to impact – to ensure women's knowledge, needs and interests are at the core of your advocacy planning.

Meaningful engagement with women and women's rights organisations requires moving beyond extractive or tokenistic consultations towards meaningful dialogue. The *Beyond Consultations Tool* is a self-assessment tool designed to support a range of actors, including power holders and duty bearers who carry out consultation exercises and INGOs and civil society organisations wanting to improve their approach to engaging with women and women's groups locally.

https://www.beyondconsultations.
org/images/Beyond_Consultations_
Tool.pdf

Part of living your women's rights values when working together is to create a space which is conducive to mutual learning, sharing and a safe, respectful environment for participants and which responds to the different needs of participants (such as disability-related needs including physical access, interpreters, signers and helpers). If you are a facilitating the planning process, it is also crucial to acknowledge your own power as a facilitator and the impact this may have.

Exercise 2.1 is a Facilitator Checklist to support creating a safe space.

The concept of **intersectionality** helps us to both understand and respond to complex and multifaceted identities. It shows us how gender inequality and patriarchy intersect with other systems of oppression (such as race, socioeconomic class, ableism, sexual identity and other factors) and how these intersections then contribute to unique experiences of discrimination (GADN, 2017).

You may find these resources useful:

GADN (2017), *Intersectionality Reflections from the Gender & Development Network:*
https://static1.squarespace.com/
static/536c4ee8e4
b0b60bc6ca7c74/t/5a130e9d53450
a0abd9c0f8f/1511198367912/
Intersection
ality+GADN+thinkpiece+November
+2017.pdf

AWID, *Intersectionality: a tool for gender and economic justice:*
https://www.awid.org/sites/default/
files/atoms/files/intersectionality_a_
tool_for_gender_and_economic_
justice.pdf

Video: Kimberlé Crenshaw, *What is Intersectionality?:* https://www.
youtube.com/watch?v=ViDtnfQ9FHc

2.2 Before you begin: resources, risks and living your values

We know that long term transformative social change takes time. When planning your advocacy, it is important to keep sight of the longer-term structural change you are trying to achieve. However, it is also important to be realistic about what you can achieve in the short and medium term depending on your context, resources and existing relationships.

Figure 2: Timeframes for your advocacy planning

Short term (Less than 2 years)

If you are new to advocating on a particular area or aiming to establish your credibility with specific targets, a short term campaign may be a good starting point. This could focus on a policy or legal change which you think is easily achieveable in a short time frame with some existing interest/support from targets or influencers.

Medium Term (3-5 years)

Most advocacy objectives, as the stepping stones to your long term aim, will be focussed on achieving change over a 3 to 5 year period. This typically aligns with the length of an organisational strategic plan and provides the flexibility to adapt plans and strategies to changes in context.

Long Term (10 years +)

We know that changing the attitudes, beliefs, norms and practices that underpin gender inequality is a slow process and requires long term, coordinated action and long-term funding.

Resourcing

Effective advocacy requires money, people and skills, access to knowledge and information, and relationships. It is important to know your strengths as an organisation and to build on these and to identify where there may be gaps. Assessing these gaps and deciding whether you can fill them is important – not only for the success of your advocacy but also for the collective care of your staff and partners. Trying to do too much with too few resources can lead to stress, staff burn-out and the break-down of relationships with coalition partners. It can also result in reduced impact.

Women's rights organising is significantly under-funded. Fundraising for advocacy activities is difficult. Few donors will fund an advocacy-based organisation or project. Where funding is available, it is usually highly competitive because there are so few opportunities available.

AWID has developed this database for women's rights organisations to find potentially aligned funders that support their priorities, populations or locations: https://www.awid.org/fund-me

Advocating in coalition, alliance or in networks with others can be a means to amplify your impact and to share resources and knowledge. For example, partnering with a research institution can provide research expertise, partnering with a like-minded organisation with a strong social media presence can expand your campaign reach, or working with another women's rights organisation can help strengthen the women's movement in your country or region. Submitting joint funding applications may also increase the likelihood of obtaining funding.

Fundraising for MEL can be challenging. Think about how you will incorporate MEL into your project budgets, timeframes and funding applications.

Exercise 2.2.1 may assist you to ensure that your planning is realistic, based on what resources and strengths you have and any limitations such as human or financial resourcing.

Identifying, Assessing and Mitigating Risk

At each stage of the advocacy cycle it is important to identify and assess risks. Advocacy can bring specific risks depending on the issue, the context and your existing workload.

Advocacy on women's rights brings risks particularly in a context where women's rights organisations are facing growing backlash. The space for civil society is also increasingly being restricted in some countries with governments using policy and legal frameworks to constrain the voices of civil society organisations and human rights defenders. Working through coalitions, alliances and networks at national, regional and international levels can provide some protection against this and in some cases help claim back rights, and framing your advocacy using regional and international human rights frameworks can also be a useful tool.

At each stage of the planning cycle, there are prompts to assist with thinking about potential risks and mitigation strategies.

Exercise 4.5 also provides support with identifying risks associated with any action you will take and strategies on how to mitigate these risks. You can find a printable risks assessment and mitigation template in **Part 3**.

How do you live your values through advocacy?

If you want to avoid reinforcing the very power inequalities you are trying to challenge, then it is important to consider how the process for planning, implementing and learning from your advocacy aligns with values which promote equality and justice.

Reflecting on these values and considering how you will carry out your advocacy work in a way which promotes these values is an important first step.

Exercise 2.2.2 can help you to do this and there are also some examples of women's rights values included overleaf (Figure 3).

It may be helpful to consider your organisational values as well as the values articulated in international human rights frameworks such as the Conventional on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) or regional women's rights statements including the African Feminist Charter: http://awdf.org/wp-content/uploads/AFF-Feminist-Charter-Digital-%C3%A2%C2%80%C2%93-English.pdf or the Charter of Feminist Principles for Pacific Feminists: http://www.fwrm.org.fj/images/PFF/PFF-Charter-Final-2Dec2016.pdf

If you are doing joint advocacy planning with other organisations, it is a good idea to take the time to articulate the values which will inform your joint advocacy strategies and ways of working together. You may even decide to formalise this in a memorandum of understanding.

Exercise 2.2.2 is designed to remind participants of their shared women's rights values and identify ones that may be particularly relevant to advocacy planning.

Figure 3: Women's rights advocacy values

Promote and strengthen women's rights and gender equality	Respect the diversity of women's experience and listen to women and their organisations	Empower women to advocate for themselves
Make power relations visible, including reflecting on personal power	Be transparent, open and accountable	Collaborate and partner with women and women's rights organisations and networks
Acknowledge women's contributions in achieving change	Prioritise inclusive, participatory methods to connect knowledge with action	Provide opportunities to develop self and collective care strategies
Engage in ongoing processes of self and collective reflection and act on learning	Identifying your advocacy values will also help to guide your approach to communicating for advocacy (see **Section 4.7**)	

2.3 Understanding and using power analysis

Women's rights advocacy recognises the different forms of power that exist, and the different spaces in which power is exercised. Challenging the **oppressive power** that people with resources or formal authority have – and exercise over others – is central to most advocacy. Women's rights advocates also recognise the importance of **transformative power** based in people's capacity and agency to drive social change together through collective action.

With women's rights advocacy we recognise that 'wins' are not sustainable if they only persuade those with oppressive power to change their behaviour at that point in time, leaving space for future reversals. Sustainable advocacy requires a shift or disruption in power so that it is more balanced in the longer term. Building **transformative power,** often through alliances and movement building, is a way to shift the power balance.

A deeper understanding of gendered power relations reveals that power is exercised on three levels. Formal or **visible power** includes legal processes and government actions and is often the focus of advocacy work. But informal or **hidden power** is just as important – such as behind the scenes corporate influence on government decision making. For women's rights advocacy, **invisible power** is particularly important. This describes the web of values, beliefs, attitudes and social norms that entrench and legitimise discrimination (for example, violence) and inequality. Invisible power is often institutional in nature.

Table 1 explores these expressions of power in more detail and considers what this means for your advocacy planning. If you are new to power analysis or to women's rights advocacy, there are several useful tools listed at the end of this section that provide a practical introduction to power analysis in more detail. Also see the gender at work framework (Box 1) which will help you think about different locations of power.

Exercise 2.3 is designed to ensure that all participants have a similar understanding of power and how it operates before moving further in the planning process.

Table 1: Power analysis and your advocacy planning

Forms of Power	Expressions of Power[3]	What does this mean for advocacy planning?
Oppressive Power	**Power over:** This is the easiest form of power to recognise. It is often exercised by people and structures such as political and religious leaders, parents, and corporations. It is about domination and control – directly or indirectly controlling the actions and choices of others. It is usually based on formal authority or control of resources Power over can be **visible** (such as policy makers enforcing laws which contravene human rights), **hidden** (such as corporates shaping consultation processes) and **invisible** (such as the media reinforcing gender stereotypes). These forms of power occur in both public and private spaces.	Much advocacy work focuses on changes within existing structures of oppressive power – persuading those with oppressive power to change a particular action – rather than challenging the power itself. Redistributing control over resources and changing formal lines of authority by opening decision making processes will provide more fundamental challenges to oppressive power. It is important to expose hidden power (such as corporate lobbying) or challenge invisible power (such as discriminatory social norms) as part of advocacy. There can also be oppressive power operating within women's alliances, networks, coalitions and movements. It is important to acknowledge and address these power dynamics as part of your planning processes.
	Power under: Most oppressive power is 'power over', however there is a very complex expression of power, which recognises the cycle of violence and power which can emerge when people who have experienced abuse, discrimination, oppression and trauma gain power themselves.	We need to reflect on our own use and abuse of power, as part of our advocacy planning and implementation. Abuse of power is not just something that has to be changed in the wider community, it also needs to be recognised and addressed within ourselves and our organisations.

Forms of Power	Expressions of Power[3]	What does this mean for advocacy planning?
Transformative Power	**Power with:** This is about collective power. It is the power of enabling and working in solidarity with others to challenge injustice. Most of the major changes in favour of gender equality and women's rights over the past decades have occurred as a result of collective power.	Movements are essential to the transformation of gender power relations in a sustainable way and their strengthening needs to be an integral part of planning. This may mean working with others to strengthen the work of local women's rights organisations and networks such as mainstream INGOs, CSOs and informal groups with a focus on specific issues and regional and global networks. Using a famous person to champion your issue, may get the change you want in the short term – but is it building the movement's transformative power or just that of the individual person? It can also involve working to ensure a safe environment for women human rights defenders and women's rights organisations to challenge oppressive power and to take part in collective action without facing violence or threats to their security.
	Power to: This refers to the potential of every individual to speak up or take action. It is sometimes referred to as – 'agency' and builds on power with and power within. It is about recognising individual strengths and the power of individual action for mobilising people towards a transformative agenda.	In your advocacy planning, consider how you can empower individuals to act collectively in support of your advocacy objectives. Collective safe spaces for planning and reflection are valuable tools. It is also important to respect and learn from the diversity of women's experience and acknowledge how an individual's experience of power is unique and informed by their intersectional identities.
	Power within: This refers to power located within us – our individual or collective sense of self-worth, value and dignity. It is the individual capacity for resilience and a source of strength and resistance in the face of challenges. Power within can include power within yourself, your organisation, the community you are working in and within the women's movement.	As women's rights advocates, we need to harness our power within and consider how we support others to connect with their own inner power. Creating personal and collective spaces for planning and reflection, practising self-care as a component of advocacy, feminist organisational strengthening, and sharing knowledge and access to information can all contribute to increasing power within.

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3   Draws on Srilatha Batliwala (2019), *All About Power: Understanding Social Power and Power Structures*, CREA, https://reconference.creaworld.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/All-About-Power-Srilatha-Batliwala.pdf and, JASS, *We Rise Toolkit*, https://werise-toolkit.org/en/toolkit.

Box 1: Gender at Work Framework

This framework provides a useful tool to think about the different locations in which power is exercised.

In order to achieve long-term structural change for women's rights, change needs to occur in all four quadrants (see diagram below) – individual's consciousness; access to resources and opportunities; formal laws and policies; and informal cultural norms and exclusionary practices. This requires building transformative power to disrupt oppressive power in the different quadrants.

Oppressive power operates in all four quadrants in different ways. Oppressive power on the left side of the diagram, in the informal spaces, tends to be hidden or invisible power. On the right, in the quadrants relating to formal rules and policies, oppressive power will usually be more visible.

Similarly, different forms of transformative power are needed to affect change in the four quadrants. Power with (collective power) is particularly important for affecting change in the bottom two clusters relating to systemic change. The top two quadrants, relating to the individual, require a focus on power within (both individuals and organisations) and power to (individual agency to demand change).

Individual

Informal ←——————→ Formal

| Consciousness Capabilities | Resources |
| Informal Norms & Exclusionary Practices | Formal Rules & Policies |

Systemic
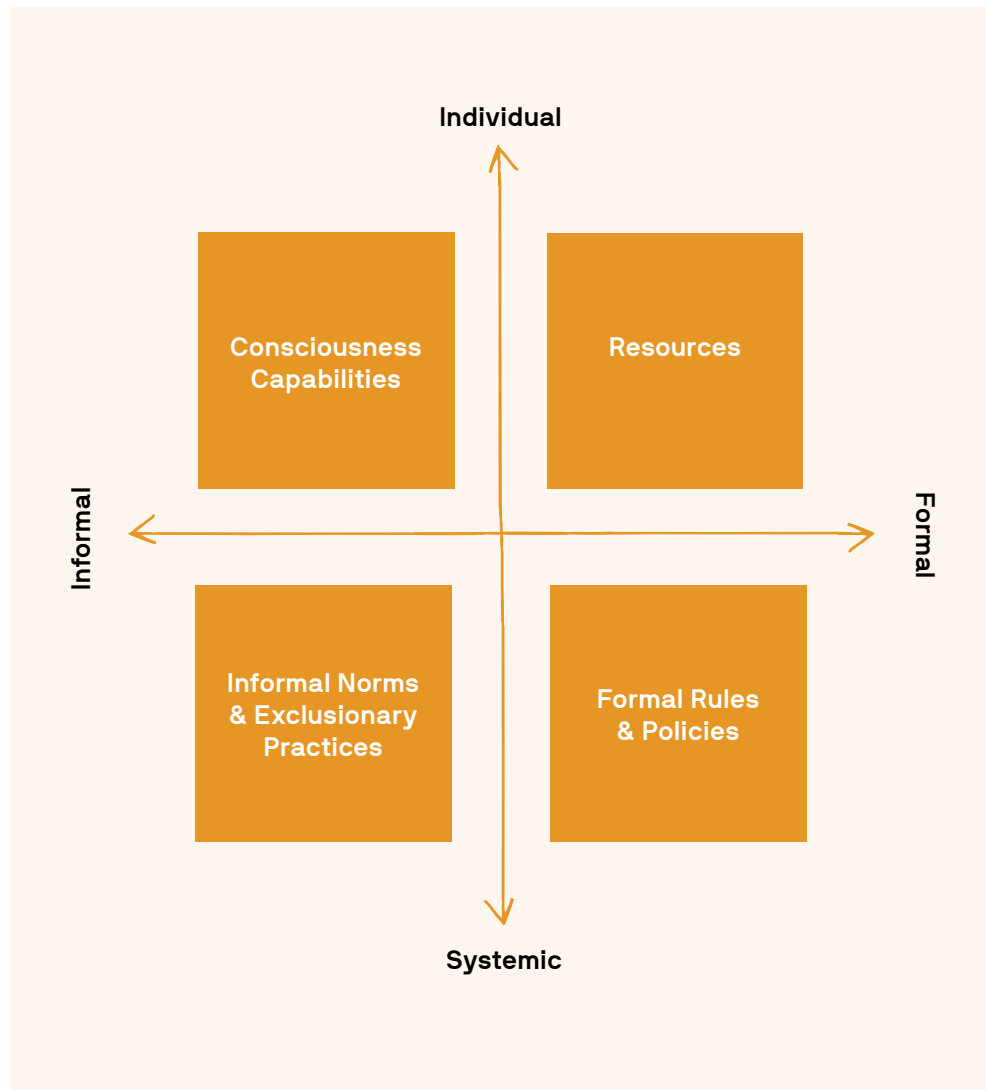
Image: Gender at Work Framework. Adapted from Rao, A., Sandler, J., Kelleher, D. & Miller, C. (2016), *Gender at Work: Theory and Practice for 21st Century Organisations*. Routledge, Oxon

See also Section 2, Pages 13 to 20 of the Womankind Worldwide Advocacy Toolkit.

You can find background information on power on pp 42-45 of the JASS toolkit: https://justassociates.org/sites/justassociates.org/files/07chap3_power_final.pdf

Srilatha Batliwala (2019), *All About Power: Understanding Social Power and Power Structures*, CREA, https://reconference.creaworld.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/All-About-Power-Srilatha-Batliwala.pdf

Oxfam (2018), *The Oxfam Guide to Feminist Influencing,* https://www.oxfam.org/en/research/oxfams-guide-feminist-influencing contains a section around developing a feminist MEL.

As part of your MEL it is important to monitor and reflect upon how your advocacy planning is building transformative power. There are questions in **Section 5.1** (see also **Exercise 5.1.1**) to support you to assess how you are including diverse voices and meaningfully engaging with women and women's rights organisations as part of the planning process.
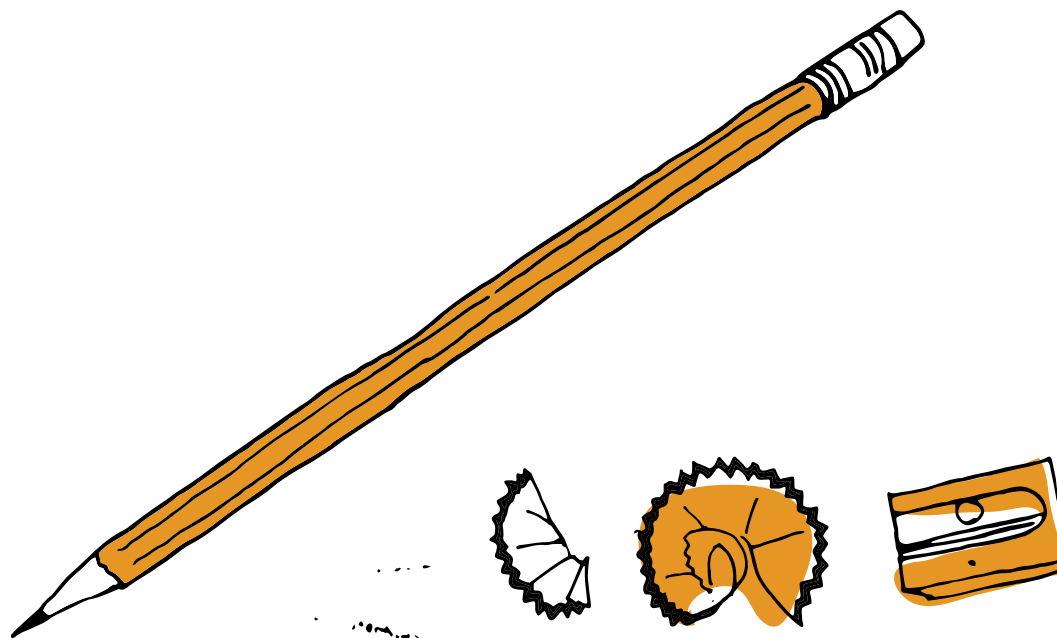
Defining your advocacy aim

This section is about defining the structural change you are trying to achieve in the long term – the aim of your advocacy.

You probably already have a good idea of the issue you want to work on and know a great deal about what needs to change. However, you need to turn this into a specific aim. It can be useful to start with making sure you agree the problem that you want to solve and then identifying the solution – this will be your aim.

Your aim should be a structural change which challenges discriminatory social norms and unequal power relations and structures and results in a lasting change to the balance of power.

Steps to define your advocacy aim:

Identify your problem area

Write your problem statement and develop your aim

Sense check and prioritise
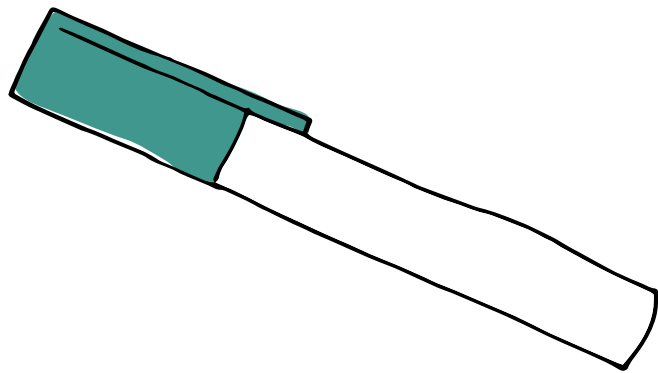
STEP 1:
Identifying your problem area

If you are not yet sure what problem you want to focus on or feel you don't know enough about the issue, you will need to spend time identifying and researching the problem area before you start your planning (see below for some useful resources to help with this).

As a starting point, talk with your partners, staff and other key stakeholders and reflect on past evaluations of your work. This can provide valuable information as to where your power lies and where you can be effective. If you or other organisations have recently conducted a research project, the research findings and recommendations could identify an issue area where change is needed and where you are well-placed to add value.

It is much better to choose the problem area before you start a joint advocacy planning session as you will need time to carry out research in advance of the session.

📖 **Researching the problem area**

You may discover that further research is needed before you can identify your problem area. Feminist Participatory Action Research (FPAR) is a research methodology designed to generate knowledge to inform action for social change. It recognises the expertise of participants and involves participatory inclusive methods to enable women in local communities to lead and shape research agendas and identify 'problems' and 'solutions' themselves.

You can read more about FPAR here:

→ APWLD, p.90: http://apwld.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/2017-BOOM-RIW-FPAR-Regional-Report.pdf.

This is an example of an IWDA program evaluation which utilised an FPAR approach:

→ *WAVE Mid-Term Reflection:* https://iwda.org.au/assets/files/WAVE_Mid-Term_Reflection_Executive_Summary.pdf

This is an example of a Womankind Worldwide research project that used an FPAR approach:

→ *Digging Deep: The impact of Uganda's land rush on women's rights:* https://www.womankind.org.uk/docs/default-source/resources/reports/digging-deep-the-impact-of-uganda's-land-rush-on-women's-rights.pdf?sfvrsn=0

For more on research to inform advocacy see:

→ JASS https://justassociates.org/en/resources/new-weave-power-people-politics-action-guide-advocacy-and-citizen-participation, Chapter 5.

→ ACFID, *SDGs Toolkit on Systems Thinking and Collaborative Approaches*: https://acfid.asn.au/learning/sdg-toolkit

STEP 2:
Write your problem statement and develop your aim statement

Once you have identified your problem area, you need to write your **problem statement**. This is a short description of the problem in your specific context.

The **aim statement** is then the positive alternative to your problem statement – the long-term structural change you are working towards. You can find some example problem and aim statements included overleaf (Table 2).

Exercise 3.1 assists with identifying what you are trying to achieve with your advocacy in the long term (and with developing your problem and aim statements).

When drafting your aim statement, it is important to think about timeframes for your advocacy. Your aim will be the long term change you are seeking, this could be in ten years, or a slightly shorter time frame (see **Section 2.2**, Figure 2).

STEP 3:
Sense check and prioritise

Exercise 3.2 will be useful to help you prioritise if you have more than one potential aim. If you have already identified an aim, use this exercise to sense check and refine your aim.

Transformative power check

✓ Would achieving this aim support women to increase their own power?

✓ How does this aim support the strengthening of women's movements?

Check your aim reflects women's stated needs and strategic priorities, rather than just using women as examples. Meaningfully engage and consult with women and women's rights organisations including listening to the voices of women who face intersecting discriminations, to understand the problem and the long term change which is needed as well as any unintended impacts which may result from advocacy on this issue.

Section 2 of this briefing provides useful information on developing a campaign aim with a gender lens – Gender and Development Network, *Ten steps towards integrating gender equality into campaigns:* https://static1. squarespace.com/static/536c4ee8e 4b0b60bc6ca7c74/t/5464d445e4b0 96d333366da5/1421669190985/ GADN+Ten+steps+towards+integr ating+gender+equality+into+campa igns.pdf

Table 2: Example problem and aim statements

Problem Area	Problem Statement	Aim
Women's under-representation at all levels of government in the Solomon Islands	There are only two women in national parliament in the Solomon Islands and women are under-represented at provincial and local levels. Politics continues to be seen as a male space and women candidates are judged more harshly than their male counterparts. Money politics also acts as a barrier to women's participation.	There is an increase in the representation and meaningful participation of women and girls in leadership and decision making positions at all levels in the Solomon Islands.
The high incidence of sexual violence in Cambodia	Sexual violence is a significant problem in Cambodia affecting women in all communities, yet it remains a hidden issue and perpetrators act with impunity.	Communities and leaders in Cambodia act to prevent and respond to sexual violence including punishing perpetrators and empowering survivors of violence.
Women are displaced from their land without consultation or compensation in Uganda	Women do not have a legal right to their land and there are no legal mechanisms in place for compensation if they are displaced.	Women's legal right to their land is recognised and enforced in Uganda.
Lesbian, Bisexual, Trans and Queer (LBTQ) women lack access to human rights in Zimbabwe	LBTQ women are excluded from social, cultural, religious, economic and political life in Zimbabwe, and face multiple and intersecting forms of stigma, discrimination and violence. LBTQ women face persistent and deliberately targeted attacks by state and non-state actors. There is low societal awareness of LBTQ women's rights, and the media perpetuates negative attitudes towards them.	There is an improvement in LBTQ women's access to their human rights in Zimbabwe.

Identifying, assessing and mitigating risk

→ Will advocating on this issue put staff or women in the communities you work in at risk?

→ Are there any risks for your organisation such as potential funding cuts or risks to your reputation?

→ Is this aim realistic with the resources you have and the time available?

Think about information you can collect to assess whether in developing your aim you have included diverse and marginalised voices and meaningfully engaged with women and women's rights organisations (see **Section 5.1** and **Exercise 5.1.1** for ideas).

Exercise 4.5 can assist with identifying and mitigating risks.
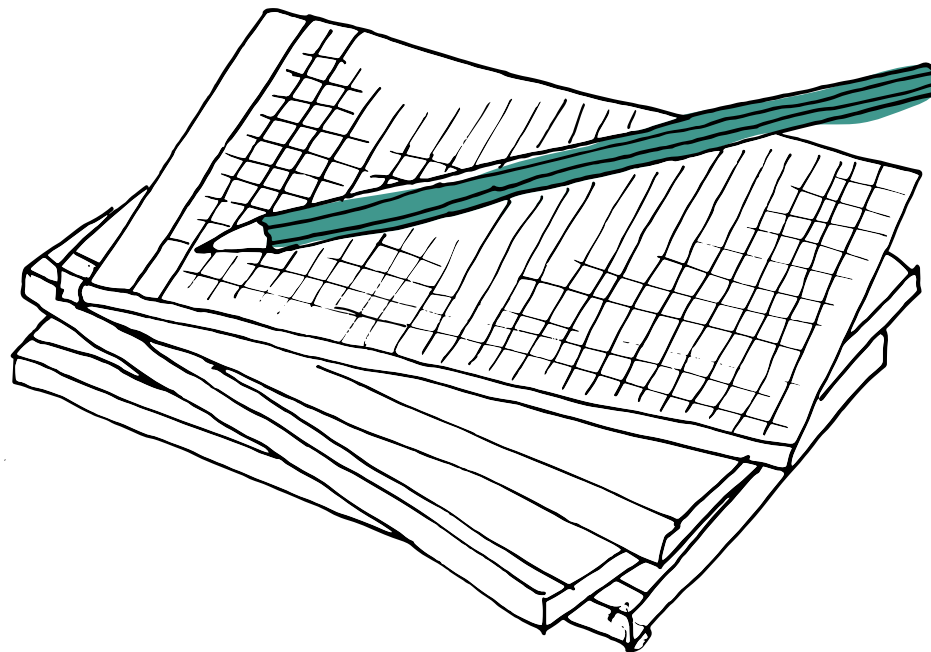
Planning your advocacy

This section takes you through the steps to plan your advocacy from analysing your context, identifying your objectives, targets and allies to developing your strategies, activities and core messages.

The sub-sections below correspond to the following planning steps.

Advocacy planning steps

| 4.1 Power analysis and context | 4.2 Defining your objectives | 4.3 Power mapping – your targets and allies | 4.4 Agreeing strategic approaches | 4.6 Choosing your advocacy activities | 4.7 Developing core messages |

4.5   Risk identification and mitigation

How long you need to spend on this section will depend on how long you have for your planning and how much work and thinking you have already done.

In **Part 2: Exercises** you will find exercises to support each of the steps and an Advocacy Planning Table. This table is designed to be completed at each stage of the planning process, a template for the table is available in **Part 3.**

4.1 Power analysis and context

Power analysis is critical to understanding the context in which your advocacy will take place. In order to challenge unequal power relations and structures, we need to identify and understand the existing forms and expressions of power, so that we can tackle the root causes not just the 'symptoms' of gender inequality.

Any of the exercises you completed in **Section 2.3**, together with **Exercise 4.1**, can assist with understanding this power context. If you have time constraints, be careful not to spend too much time on context mapping or you may run out of time for the strategic decision making later. In a workshop setting, workshop participants may be able to do some pre-reading to inform this stage of the process.

Exercise 4.1, force field power context, is an exercise to assist with analysing the different forms of power in your advocacy context, including formal, hidden and invisible forms of power.

If you discover you have evidence gaps that you need to fill in order to understand your context, consider how you can find out what you need to know. You may need to undertake further research (see 'Researching the problem area,' in **Section 3**, Step 1), interview power holders or women and their communities most affected by the problem, or take some time to discuss the issue with women and women's rights organisations in the community.

Many of the traditional tools used for context power analysis focus on oppressive forms of power, particularly power under, such as formal decision-making power and access to resources. While this analysis is important, it is equally important to think about transformative power – including your power as individuals, staff and as members of a coalition, network or alliance (see **Section 2.3**). It is also important to assess the power between women rights actors and how this helps or hinders what you are trying to achieve.

Transformative power check

✓ How does your own power impact on the context in which your advocacy is taking place?

✓ How are you creating space for the perspectives, skills and experiences of women, in all their diversities, to be included in your analysis?

✓ What relationships and knowledge do you already have on this issue within your own or partner organisations? How can you share and build on this?

Consider power in social, economic, political and cultural spheres and the relevant processes you might be trying to influence. Understanding these processes is important so that you can think about the most strategic points for engagement. For example, if you are trying to influence a decision-making process, such as the passage of new legislation through parliament or a community development planning and budgeting process, you may find it useful to map out the stages of this process and identify the points at which key decisions will be taken. You can find an example of this at page 41 of the *Womankind Worldwide Women's Rights Advocacy Toolkit*.

⚠ Identifying, assessing and mitigating risk

→ Do recent social, economic, political or cultural events and decisions suggest there may be increased risk for your organisation, partners or the women you work with in advocating on this issue?

→ Can working with others help to mitigate this risk?

For MEL purposes, how will you document the process you have used for your context power analysis? How have you included diverse and marginalised voices in this analysis? Is there anything you would change about the process next time?

📖 Mapping the external context

There are many other tools to support mapping the external factors which may affect your advocacy work including:

PESTLE analysis (*page 36 of the Womankind Worldwide Advocacy Toolkit*).

See also pages 36-43 of the *Womankind Worldwide Women's Rights Advocacy Toolkit*.

Political Economy Analysis (see SIDA (2013), *Power Analysis practical guide*, pp.49-50, www.sida.se/contentassets/83f0232c5404440082c9762ba3107d55/power-analysis-a-practical-guide_3704.pdf & UK National School of Government International (2017), *The Beginner's Guide to Political Economy Analysis (PEA)*, https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/766478/The_Beginner_s_Guide_to_PEA.pdf.

📖 Additional resources to support advocacy planning from a feminist perspective

JASS is a feminist organisation that works with local organisations in developing advocacy and so is a rich source of tools and background information on women's rights advocacy. https://justassociates.org/en/resources/new-weave-power-people-politics-action-guide-advocacy-and-citizen-participation and *We Rise toolkit* https://werise-toolkit.org/

Oxfam (2018), *The Oxfam Guide to Feminist Influencing,* https://www.oxfam.org/en/research/oxfams-guide-feminist-influencing is very useful for larger mainstream organisations wanting to develop feminist advocacy.

GADN (2014), *Gender and Campaigning Pack,* http://gadnetwork.org/campaigning-on-gender-equality/ includes ideas on campaigning from a gender equality perspective.

4.2 Defining your objectives

Now you have identified your aim and spent time thinking about your advocacy context, the next step in the planning process is to define your advocacy objectives.

Advocacy objectives are the changes which need to be made in order to reach your aim. It can be useful to see them as stepping stones. You should have between 1 to 3 objectives for each advocacy planning cycle.

How you approach your objectives will depend on the time frame you are working with, and the resources you have. Identifying objectives which sit within a 3 to 5 year timeframe is usually manageable given organisational planning and funding cycles.

If your aim is focussed on long term structural change, taking at least 10 years to achieve, your objectives may be short to medium term stepping stones to get you closer to your aim. If you are a larger organisation you may be able to achieve two or three objectives in your 3 to 5 year time frame. If you are a small organisation, with limited resources, you may wish to phase your objectives, so that you focus on planning to achieve one objective at a time. If you decide to focus on one objective, the objective you prioritise first will be the one you focus on as you go through the later stages of the planning process.

Defining your objectives

Step 1: Identify potential objectives

Step 2: Draft objectives

Step 3: Make your objectives SMART-TR

Step 4: Prioritise your objectives

STEP 1:
Identify your potential objectives

Exercise 4.2.1 can assist you to identify your objectives.

Your objective may be possible within existing power structures (such as a legal or policy change) or it may seek to challenge 'power over' (for example, advocating for a public inquiry into an issue or the introduction of regulations to curb corporate lobbying). It is vital to get your objectives right or you could spend years trying to achieve something which will not get you the result you are looking for.

Central to women's rights advocacy is recognition of the need to increase transformative power by strengthening women's movements or working in alliance with other movements. Your broader objective could include an element of movement strengthening within it. Or you could decide to have an additional objective that specifically seeks to strengthen the capacity of women's movements to advocate for transformative change.

Movement strengthening objective:

You may decide to have an objective which is specifically designed to strengthen the advocacy capacity of your movement or a movement you work with.

It will be vital that you define who is in the movement, and then take their lead on what they need when defining objectives. If you are part of the movement yourselves, then be clear on what the consultation and negotiation process is.

In addition, when identifying a movement strengthening objective make sure your discussion includes:

✓ A clear and specific description of the movement and its members

✓ Recognition of the ongoing needs of the movement

✓ The current phase of movement building

The JASS We Rise Toolkit[4] is an excellent resource that some of your team could use before starting the strategy process and defines four phases of movement building. Womankind Worldwide's five movement strengthening pillars[5] can also inform this process by helping identify ongoing needs (see **Section 4.4.4**, Box 2).

We have not included a specific exercise in **Part 2** on how to set your objectives as it will need to be led by the processes, policies and priorities of the movement itself. However you may find it useful to adapt the ideas in the rest of **Section 4.2** – steps 2 and 3. The objective setting can still use elements of the SMART-TR approach and should include who the movement is, what needs strengthening, how this will be done, by whom, and by when.

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4   JASS, *We Rise Toolkit*, available at: https://werise-toolkit.org/en/toolkit
5   Womankind Worldwide, *Theory of Change: inputs for movement building,* available at: https://www.womankind.org.uk/docs/default-source/default-document-library/womankind-theory-of-change.pdf

> **Example of a movement strengthening objective:**
>
> To build the collective power of the Solomon Islands women's movement to advocate for increased representation of women in Provincial Government by 2020.

Once a movement strengthening objective has been agreed you can skip to **Section 4.4.4** and **Exercise 4.4.4** which look specifically at strategy for movement strengthening objectives

Transformative power check

✓ Will your objective(s) lead to a long-term transformational shift in power?

✓ Will your objective enable you to work collectively with others to ensure the change is sustainable?

✓ Will achieving this objective support women to increase their own power (with or within)?

If you are a broader advocacy organisation, your movement strengthening objective may relate to how your advocacy work can strengthen the work of women's rights organisations and movements. However, be careful that your strategy to achieve this objective is informed by meaningful engagement and dialogue and led by the needs and priorities of women's rights organisations and movements.
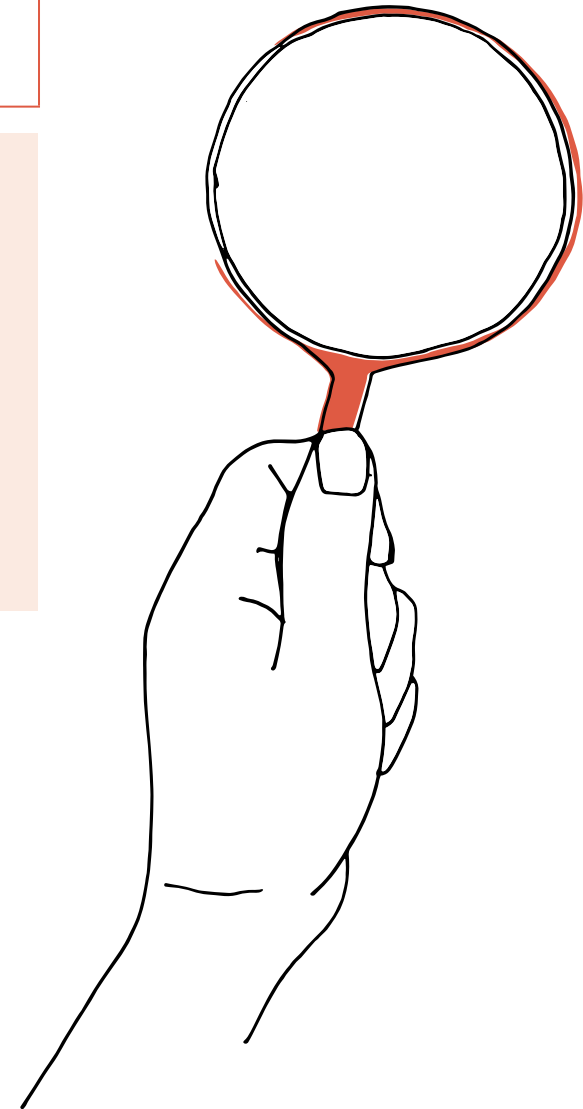
STEP 2:
Draft your objectives

Your objectives should be a change not an activity – what you want to see happen, not what you are going to do.

Each objective should include what, who, when and where:

✓ **What** action is needed?
If done, will it contribute towards achieving the aim?

✓ **Who** will take the action?
Make sure that the action is to be taken by someone other than yourselves. Actions you will take are activities not objectives and will be discussed later in the process.

✓ **When** and **where** will they take the action?

And consider **how**:

✓ How will your objective lead to a long term (transformational) shift in power?
Or will it be a transitory change that can be reversed?

Example objective:

Who	What action is needed	Where	When

Minister of Finance to **increase the allocation** in **Parliament's April budget** for prevention of and response to gender-based violence.

Example movement strengthening objective:

Who		What action is needed

Cambodia women's organisations are **adequately resourced to collectively undertake a gender budget analysis** after the release of Parliament's **April budget.**

When

Exercise 4.2.1 will assist you to identify the things that need to be changed in order to reach your aim, making sure that you look at all forms of power.

Exercise 4.2.2 will then assist to further define your objectives so that they are clear and describe exactly what you will achieve with your advocacy.

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Additional resources to support objective setting

See pp. 43-46 of the Womankind Worldwide *Women's Rights Advocacy Toolkit*.

The UNICEF advocacy toolkit includes a different method for doing a problems and solutions tree: https://www.unicef.org/cbsc/files/Advocacy_Toolkit.pdf (page 19).

Care International (2014), *The Care International Advocacy Handbook,* https://insights.careinternational.org.uk/media/k2/attachments/CI_Global_Advocacy_Manual_Web.pdf

Plan International *Advocacy Toolkit* at https://plan-international.org/publications/advocacy-toolkit#download-options.

The obligations contained in international agreements such as the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), the Beijing Platform for Action, The Sustainable Development Goals and United Nations Security Council Resolutions on Women, Peace and Security, can provide useful language for the framing of your objectives.

STEP 3:
Check that your objectives are SMART-TR

Most advocates ensure that their draft objectives are SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound). Women's rights advocates go for SMART-TR (smarter) objectives by also making sure they are transformative (See Table 3 and Figure 4 on page 35).

Transformative objectives shift power away from oppressive power and towards transformative power by creating more equitable relationships and structures.

By doing this they ensure that the changes made will be sustainable – not beholden to the inclinations of those with oppressive power. Such objectives are most likely to be achieved by acting collectively with others – in all their diversity of experience, ability and identity.

SMART Objective:

Ensure that civil society organisations are meaningfully consulted in the budget decision-making process

SMART-TR Objective:

Increase the capacity of civil society organisations to scrutinise the budget and propose alternatives which promote women rights

Exercise 4.2.2 (Step 3) is designed to assist you with applying the SMART-TR principles to your draft objectives.

Figure 4: The SMART-TR approach

S	**Specific:** a precise not a general change	• While your aim is general, your objective more narrowly defines what you want to see happen. • Don't use jargon or words which could be misinterpreted.
M	**Measurable:** so you know if it's been achieved	• Your objective must be measurable either by quantitative or qualitative methods. • See **Section 5** for more information on monitoring and evaluating your advocacy work.
A	**Achievable:** realistic within the timeframe	• Think about breaking your journey towards your aim into closer stepping stones that are achieveable in the timeframe.
R	**Relevant:** will contribute to your aim	• Your objective must be a stepping stone towards achieving your longer term aim - not just something that gives you a 'quick win.'
T	**Time bound:** to happen by a particular date	• Most advocacy planning identifies objectives that might be achieved within 3-5 years. • You may want to link your objective to a particular event such as a budgeting cycle or an election or to your planning cycle.
TR	**Transformative:** aims to create more equitable realationships and structures	• If achieved, will this objective create transformative change for women, including the realisation of women's rights? • Will it build transformative power and therefore be sustainable?

Table 3: Example objectives

Aim	Objective
There is an increase in the representation and meaningful participation of women and girls in leadership and decision making positions at all levels in the Solomon Islands.	The Western Provincial Government agrees to the use of temporary special measures (TSMs) to increase women's leadership in Western Province by 2020.
Improve LBTQ women's access to their human rights in Zimbabwe.	LGBT organisations in Zimbabwe develop and agree a shared LBTQ Charter of Demand by 2020.

STEP 4:
Prioritising

Use this step if you have more than three objectives and need to prioritise.

Exercise 4.2.2 (Step 4) can assist with prioritising your objectives.

If you are using this toolkit as part of a joint planning workshop, you might also want to prioritise which of your objectives you focus on for the remaining steps in **Section 4**. Choose the one that it is critical to work on now, and/or the one that would benefit from wider group input. It may be that you could work through the same process with your other objectives separately with a smaller group and bring back for peer review. If you have two objectives which are very closely related you might be able to take them both through this process at the same time.
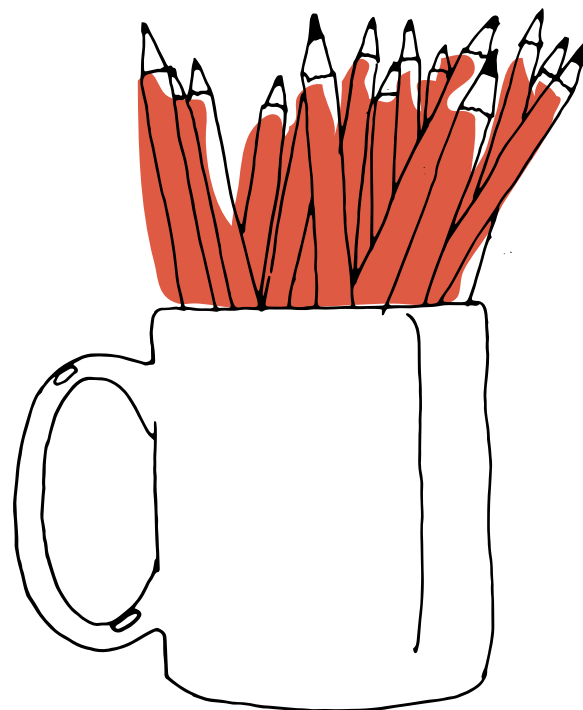
4.3 Power mapping – targets and allies

Having identified the change you want to see, we now need to look at who has the power to achieve your objectives, who stands in the way and who you could build relationships with to help you.

This stage of the advocacy planning process focusses on two key steps. Firstly, you need to identify who your advocacy targets (power holders and influencers) and allies are, and secondly, you need to understand as much about them as possible. This will inform exactly what you will do (your strategic approach) in **Section 4.4**.

Table 4: Power holders, influencers and allies

Who really has the power to achieve the change you want?	These are your **Power holders**. They can be individuals, groups of people, organisations or institutions, such as politicians, officials, community leaders or business leaders.
Who has the power to influence the power holders?	**Influencers** are individuals, groups or institutions who can influence your power holders. This may include political advisors, personal contacts, the media, private sector and academics. Your **Influencers** and your **Power holders** are your advocacy **targets**.
Who shares your goals and can work with you to influence your targets?	**Allies** are individuals, organisations, institutions or networks, alliances and coalitions who can help you to achieve change. For example, other CSOs, women's ministries, politicians with a commitment to women's rights, women's rights networks and coalitions, alliances and networks at local, national, regional and international levels.

Look at what is really happening using the power analysis in **Section 2.3**; not just who has the power on paper. Targets might be at local, national, regional or international levels. There will also be visible, invisible and hidden power at play and both oppressive and transformative power.

Be as specific as possible – try and narrow down to a particular individual, institution or groups of individuals (for example, a specific staff member in a department rather than a whole government department, or a chair of a powerful parliamentary committee).

Exercise 4.3.1 can help you to use your power analysis to identify who are your targets, influencers and allies. See also pages 46-51 of the Womankind Worldwide Advocacy Toolkit.

When thinking about which influencers to target or work with, consider how this choice is contributing to your long-term aim. For example, focussing resources on a women's rights group who has a relationship with a target may be better than working with, and therefore increasing the power of, a celebrity.

You will also need to identify potential allies, including strategic partners for collective action. Some may share your values and long-term goals, particularly around movement strengthening and others may just share your immediate objectives. In **Section 4.4**, we will consider strategies that build and strengthen transformative power of your own organisation, your allies and the wider women's movement.

Transformative power check

✓ Who should you work with to build transformative power to influence your targets?

✓ Who shares your goals and can work with you to influence your targets?

✓ Which allies will enable women's collective mobilisation and diverse voices to inform your strategy?

✓ Can you identify allies who contribute skills, resources, access or information that you don't have and vice versa?

As you are identifying your advocacy targets and allies, it is also important to think about who might oppose your advocacy. Considering your opponents and their likely strategies and tactics is important for your risk assessment and mitigation and also to inform the strategies which you prioritise.

Opponents

AWID, together with the Observatory on the Universality of Rights, has developed a resource outlining key opposition strategies and tactics: *Rights at Risk: Observatory on the Universality of Rights Trends Report* 2017, Chapter 3: https://www.awid.org/sites/default/files/atoms/files/ours_trends_chapter_3_en.pdf

The Ally Social barometer wheel is a visual tool which can help you think about aligning tactics according to whether individuals/groups are active or passive opponents or allies. *See In the Tiger's Mouth: An Empowerment Guide for Social Action:* http://sjwiki.org/images/9/9c/Allies_chart.jpg

What influences your targets?

Once you have identified your targets, the next step is to consider what influences them. This is all about understanding as much about each target as possible and the different areas of influence (see Figure 5 below). For example, do they have specific interests? Do you have common allies? Do they have a personal or political motivation for taking action (such as getting re-elected)? Is there particular evidence which might resonate with the target's individual interests, belief system or experiences? What constraints are they under? Is your target happy to make the change you want if you frame it in the right way? Most decision makers like to look good – they might be more willing to make a change if they can take credit for it than if they have appeared to back down in the face of pressure such as a public advocacy campaign. But be careful, a change made for self-interested reasons can easily be reversed.

Understanding your targets will also be important when developing core advocacy messages which will resonate with each target (see Section 4.7).

Figure 5: What influences your targets?
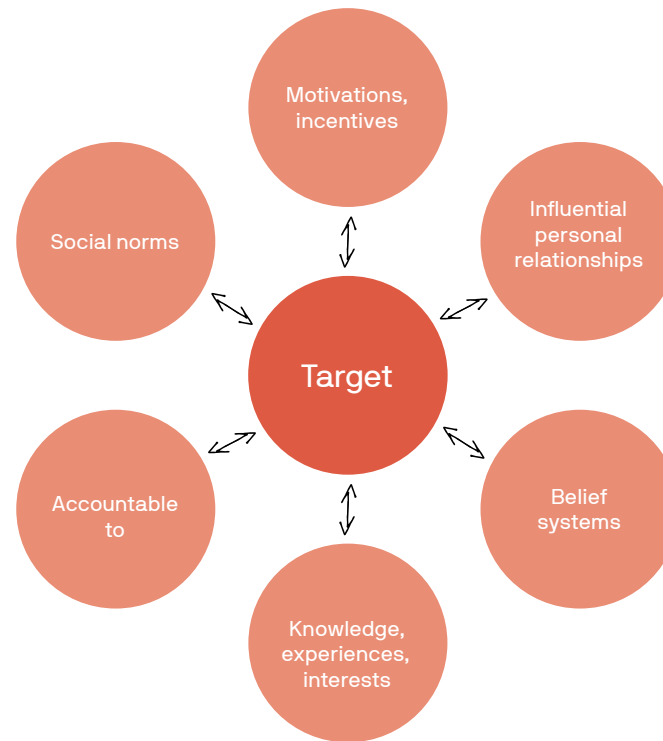
Exercise 4.3.2 will assist with thinking about how to influence your targets.

Exercise 4.3.3 is an additional exercise to deepen your knowledge of your targets even further.

Identifying, assessing and mitigating risk

→ Working with others who have different values and goals, but who want to achieve the same objective as you, can bring risks for your reputation and the long-term change you are trying to create.

→ Consider whether the aims and values of potential allies are compatible with your own and whether you should develop a memorandum of understanding to guide your work together.

→ Consider who your opponents are – do they have the power to stop you achieving your objectives? Can you develop counter-strategies to mitigate this risk?

For MEL purposes, document the choices you made in identifying your advocacy targets and allies. Have you included strategic partners for collective action as allies? What did you learn as individuals or as an organisation during this step of the planning process?

4.4 Agree on strategic approaches

This section focusses on what you will do to persuade your targets to carry out your objectives. This is your role in achieving the objectives you developed in Section 4.2.

Your strategic approach is your organisation's path to achieving the objectives. It is based on how you can use your strengths and work with allies, to influence your targets to make the changes needed to achieve your objectives. It is *not* just a list of activities.

Methods are important. Women's rights advocacy is about creating new power relationships and new ways in which power holders are influenced. It is also about changing who those power holders are. This makes your strategy more complicated – but ultimately more likely to succeed.

In making choices about how to allocate your resources most effectively you will need to start by looking at the external context including timeframes; influencing opportunities and pegs and then at the current advocacy context in which your work will be located. This will then allow you to define your strategies and outcomes. A different approach to defining strategy is then suggested if one of your objectives is movement strengthening.

4.4.1 Timeframes, influencing opportunities and pegs

Align your strategy with the timeframes of the processes you are trying to influence or with key opportunities that may make your targets more likely to engage. Sometimes you may be trying to influence the outcome of the process – as with consultations. At other times you will be using a formal process, like an election, to get your views across. If you are trying to influence a decision-making process or an election, you may have mapped this process in **Section 4.1**, and this can help with determining your timeframes.

Local, national, regional and international events, meetings and policy forums can provide an opportunity for influence. Targets will need to prepare for these events and there may be increased scrutiny and media attention. For example, if your country is being examined by the CEDAW Committee or will be presenting its Voluntary National Review Report at the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development. Identifying these moments in advance helps you to set the agenda and strategically use these entry points. Remember that the time to influence is at the start of the decision makers' preparation process – not at the final event. Even if, for example, governments

are required or encouraged to consult with civil society, they may not do so. You also need to be ready to adapt your advocacy strategy if your context changes or if key opportunities do not go ahead.

Pegs are events you can use to get your message across to your target audience; they are not events that you need to influence in themselves. Pegs used by women's rights organisations for collective action often include international days such as International Women's Day (8 March), International Day of Peace (21 September), International Safe Abortion Day (28 September), International Day of Rural Women (15 October), and the 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence (25 November to 10 December).

Complete Exercise 4.4.1, Timeline, to identify key moments, decision points and opportunities in working towards your aims/ objectives.

National processes and international processes and institutions

There is further information about using national policy making processes and how international institutions and processes can be useful for your advocacy in Section 6 and 7 of *Womankind Worldwide Women's Rights Advocacy Toolkit*.

For resources in relation to the Sustainable Development Goals (adopted in 2015) see:

Womankind Worldwide, *Implementing the Sustainable Development Goals to advance women's rights and gender equality: An advocacy guide*, https://www.womankind.org.uk/docs/default-source/resources/sdg-implementation-advocacy-toolkit.pdf?sfvrsn=4

IWDA, *Advocating for Action: Gender Equality and The Sustainable Development Goals,* Forthcoming.

4.4.2 Current advocacy context

Locating your advocacy in the current context will help you to determine where you are on the advocacy continuum (see Figure 6 below) and therefore what kind of strategy you need to use. For example, if you are being ignored, a polite letter to a Minister is unlikely to have impact. Being opposed is better than being ignored – it shows you are making progress. It also reminds you that backlash is likely to be part of the process. Where you are on the advocacy continuum will impact on the strategies you choose (**Section 4.4.3**). For example, if you are at the 'opposed' stage and wanting to make as much noise as possible, you are more likely to focus on outsider strategies (see Table 5 in **Section 4.4.3**).

Use Exercise 4.4.2 to locate your advocacy in the current context.

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Figure 6: The advocacy continuum

Ignored

If no-one is interested in your issue then your strategy may need to involve making as much noise as possible – you don't need to be too nuanced. Your issue will not even be on the political agenda and you have little to lose.

Opposed

If decision makers are opposing you that is progress! It means you've had an impact and they are worried. Hold your nerve. You may need to continue to make noise until you are firmly on the political agenda, but at some point it will also be time to start engaging with your influencers and giving your detailed policy message to counter the opposition and show you are credible.

Misunderstood

Your issue is now on the political agenda – but not necessarily in the way you would like it to be. Your real message has not got through yet.

Acted on

If the changes you want are actually made you've met your objectives!

Heard

When a decision maker promises to act on what you say you are nearly there – but make sure they follow through. Politicians' promises are often broken or back-tracked on. One common trick is to watch out for funds being re-promised or re-packaged.

Absorbed

In some ways, the hardest phase is if your language is being used and co-opted – but to mean something other than what you want to say. This can often be the case with women's rights work where lip service is paid to women's needs with no real understanding of the problem. Decision makers may also say that they are on your side but then find all sorts of reasons to do nothing.

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4.4.3 Defining your strategies and outcomes

Once you have thought about your advocacy timeline and context, **Exercise 4.4.3** can assist with bringing together all your work so far in order to define the approach you will take to achieving your objectives. In addition, if you have an objective in relation to movement strengthening, see **Section 4.4.4** for ideas on how to define your associated strategies.

STEP 1:
Defining your strategies

The kinds of strategies you use will reflect your organisation's or coalition's strengths and values. You might use mostly insider or outsider strategies. 'Insider' refers to working inside the system (such as official policy spaces and processes) and 'outsider' refers to working outside of these official spaces and processes to pressure for change. Insider strategies can be efficient but pose the danger of cooption and may be less effective in building transformative power as they tend to operate within existing power structures. On the other hand, outsider strategies can alienate targets and exclude you from future

access. A mixture of both can be effective especially in an alliance, but it's then important to ensure that everyone respects each other's methods (see Table 5).

In addition to any specific objective on movement building it is also important in women's rights advocacy to ensure that building transformative power is integral to all advocacy strategies. Table 5 provides an example of how to make movement strengthening an integral part of *all* advocacy work.

Table 5: Insider and outsider strategies and building transformative power

Influencing advocacy targets	Possible activities (see Section 4.6)	Examples: building transformative power through movement strengthening
Insider Working directly with policymakers and institutions 'inside' official policy making spaces. This may include making yourself useful to the advocacy target by showing you can help them to achieve their own objectives and working with them to find solutions.	Research and evidence to inform policy making ▪ Undertaking research projects ▪ Providing technical and advisory support ▪ Piloting new approaches ▪ Direct influencing of parliamentarians and/or policy spaces ▪ Face to face formal and informal meetings ▪ Briefings or letters ▪ Attending events ▪ Inputting into existing consultation processes ▪ Taking part in official processes and forums ▪ Presenting research, evidence or referring to international commitments or progress reports	▪ Collaborative research projects ▪ Sharing research findings and policy analysis, tools and learnings ▪ Participatory approaches to research which prioritise methods to enable women in local communities to lead and shape research agendas ▪ Facilitate access for others to meetings with Power holders ▪ Share any information resulting from your influencing efforts ▪ Convene joint reflection and planning spaces ▪ Ensure you remain accountable and connected to grassroots women's rights organisations and networks
Outsider Working outside the system to create political pressure using evidence, external opportunities, public mobilisation and media attention to get an issue on the agenda.	Public actions & education ▪ Campaign materials with key messages ▪ Marches, events and community forums ▪ Public actions such as petitions & pledges ▪ Publicly releasing research reports and recommendations ▪ Media engagement (including press releases, media appearances, social media & digital campaigning) ▪ Tools and training to support community and workplace activism	▪ Organise joint activism / collective actions (on and off-line) ▪ Make space for others on the platform ▪ Share tools and training materials ▪ Ensure public campaigns and actions are led by women in the community (including young women and those most affected by the issue) ▪ Support connections between women's movements and other social movements ▪ Using creativity as a means to attract attention in innovative ways.

You can read more about defining your strategic approach in **Section 5** of the *Womankind Worldwide Women's Rights Advocacy Toolkit.*

Here are some examples of strategies that IWDA and Womankind Worldwide partners have used:

✓ Research and evidence such as collaborating to produce CEDAW shadow reports, research examining public perceptions of women in leadership in Timor-Leste, Solomon Islands and Cambodia, and feminist participatory action research focused on the impact of Uganda's land rush on women's rights.

✓ Direct influencing of parliamentarians such as a mentoring program for female parliamentarians in Myanmar and Timor-Leste or attempts to make women's rights a high-profile issue during elections through the development of a women's election strategy by the women's movement in Zimbabwe.

✓ Public activism with our partners such as the WAVE Our Voice campaign which, during the 16 days of activism, called for violence against women to be recognised as a barrier to women's leadership across five countries in Asia and the Pacific.

✓ Gaining media coverage to create interest among the public such as an exhibition of the outfits worn by survivors at the time of their rape which sparked wide coverage on rape culture in general, and on victim-blaming in particular, on many Ethiopian media outlets.

✓ Movement strengthening such as providing opportunities for connection among women activists in safe spaces (such as grassroots women's forums) and support for appropriate information and communications technology (ICT) to facilitate network and alliance building.

STEP 2:
Defining your outcomes

Strategies (Activities)

Outcomes

Objectives
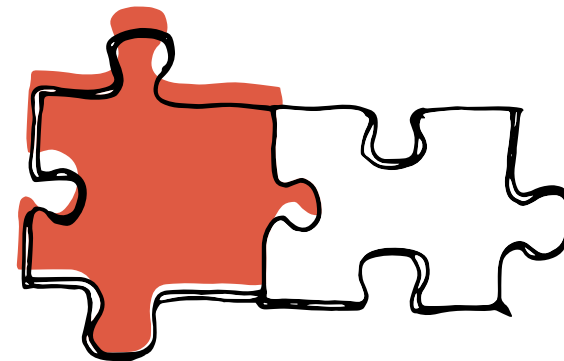
Exercise 4.4.3 supports you to think about the strategic **outcomes** you are working towards.

- ✓ A **strategy** is what you are going to do to achieve your desired outcome - and how you will get your targets to make the change. It will involve a number of different activities (such as holding a public meeting or producing a briefing) that together create the change.

- ✓ An **outcome** is a change that will contribute towards achieving your objective – a stepping stone. You will need to work out what change you want to see or what action you want your target to take. Some organisations call these intermediary objectives – people use language in different ways - what matters is that you, as an organisation, are clear in what you mean.

- ✓ Looking at strategies and outcomes together makes sense. There is no point in thinking of a good outcome if you can't achieve it, nor of developing a feasible strategy if success won't contribute towards achieving your objective. In **Exercise 4.4.3** you will find some examples of strategies and outcomes.

Exercise 4.4.3 will assist with identifying possible outcomes you want to achieve, and the strategies you will use.

4.4.4 Defining your strategy for your movement strengthening objective

If you have decided to have a movement strengthening objective, you will need to define your outcomes and strategy for this objective in a different way to the process outlined in **Section 4.4.3**.

In defining your objective, you will need to have developed a clear and specific description of the movement and who it includes. If you are not part of the movement, then you will have meaningfully consulted with the movement and will have taken their lead on what they would like to achieve. If you are part of the movement, then you will have already worked collectively to develop your objective and processes for joint action and reflection.

It is important to ensure transparency in decision making and to agree how you will negotiate and navigate any differences of opinion that may arise in relation to resourcing, different views on feminist strategy and perceived misuse of power between different generations of women. Womankind Worldwide's report, *Stronger Together* provides useful examples of lessons learned in relation to movement strengthening across three country contexts.[6]

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6   Womankind Worldwide (2019), *Stronger Together: The power of feminist programmes to strengthen women's movements in Kenya, Uganda and Zimbabwe,* available at: https://www.womankind.org.uk/docs/default-source/resources/reports/stronger_together_movements_learning_paper_march_2019.pdf

In developing your strategy, it will also be useful to consider:

- The ongoing needs of the movement; and
- The phase of movement building you are currently in.

Womankind Worldwide suggests seven movement strengthening pillars relevant to all women's rights movements (see Box 2) while Figure 7 will help in identifying different stages of movement building. There are also some specific resources to support you to develop your movement strengthening strategy.

Exercise 4.4.4 suggests how to identify your desired outcomes and strategies for a movement strengthening objective.

Strategies to strengthen movements

Womankind Worldwide's seven movement strengthening pillars

See Womankind Worldwide, *Theory of Change: inputs for movement building,* available at: https://www.womankind.org.uk/docs/default-source/default-document-//library/womankind-theory-of-change.pdf

1. Women activists are supported and encouraged to understand the political importance of self-care and well being.
2. Opportunities are provided to movement actors to connect with each other in safe spaces.
3. Appropriate communications and ICT support is provided to facilitate network and alliance building and action.
4. Key actors in the women's movement are mapped and issues of intersectionality are raised, understood and addressed.
5. Feminist documentation and research form the core of umbrella initiatives to bring women rights organisations together.
6. Women's movement actors are given the opportunity to connect to wider platforms for movement building and learning.
7. Support is given to the women's movement to access, and input into sustainable and progressive funding and financing models.

Figure 7: Key steps in movement building[7]

Planning for movement strengthening

Womankind Worldwide (2019), *Stronger Together: The power of feminist programmes to strengthen women's movements in Kenya, Uganda and Zimbabwe,* available at: https://www.womankind.org.uk/docs/default-source/resources/reports/stronger_together_movements_learning_paper_march_2019.pdf

Srilatha Batliwala, *Movements & Why They Matter*, Presentation, IWDA WAVE workshop 2019.

JASS We Rise toolkit contains in-depth learning about movement strengthening and numerous tools to support the phases of movement building.

AWID, *Changing Their World: Concepts and Practices of Women's Movements,* available at: https://www.awid.org/sites/default/files/atoms/files/changing_their_world_2ed_full_eng.pdf

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7   Srilatha Batliwala, *Movements & Why They Matter*, Presentation, IWDA WAVE workshop 2019.

4.5 Risk identification and mitigation

As discussed in **Section 1.2**, women's rights advocacy can bring specific risks depending on the issue, the context and your existing workload.

At each step of the toolkit, there have been prompts to assist you with thinking about potential risks and mitigation strategies. Before you move onto **Section 4.6** and plan your activities it is a good idea to revisit risks you have identified and to agree if you can, and if so how to, mitigate them.

Exercise 4.5.1 can assist with thinking about potential risks and identifying mitigation actions. You should consider risks to your organisation but also to staff and the people you work with.

Transformative power check

✓   Are there specific risks for people with multiple and intersecting identities?

✓   Do you need to allocate time and resources to navigate internal power dynamics with your allies to mitigate risks of relationship breakdown?

✓   As you plan your activities in **Section 4.6**, make sure you include any risk mitigating actions and the resources and staff time that will be needed to support these.

Resources to assess and mitigate risks to Women Human Rights Defenders (WHRDs)

See also Womankind Worldwide *Women's Rights Advocacy Toolkit*, p.64-65.

AWID and the Women Human Rights Defenders International Coalition have produced a mapping and assessment of types of resources and strategies available to respond to urgent situations of violence against WHRDs: https://www.awid.org/publications/urgent-responses-women-human-rights-defenders-risk

List of Materials and Resources for Women Human Rights Defenders is a compilation of resources and manuals dealing with issues such as the security and protection of WHRDs, well-being and self-care and how to document and monitor women's rights violations: https://www.awid.org/resources/list-materials-and-resources-women-human-rights-defenders

XYZ is a space for practical tools to navigate digital security and privacy from a gender perspective: https://xyz.informationactivism.org/en/

JASS has developed tools to support collective protection and safety: https://werise-toolkit.org/en/cycles-movement-building/shaking-up#key_idea_06

4.6 Choosing your advocacy activities

This section focusses on choosing activities to support your strategic approaches developed in Section 4.4.

Now you have identified your priority strategies and outcomes, the next step is to plan the activities which will help you achieve your outcomes. Don't choose an activity just because you have always done it, make sure that it is a strategic way of achieving your desired outcome. Also check that your activities meet your longer term ambitions of building transformative power. For example, think about who you ally with and therefore whose power you are building.

Table 6 gives some examples of the types of activities you might want to engage in, with some resources explaining them further.

Exercise 4.6 will help you plan your activities, identify the resources you need and any risks to consider, and prioritise.

It is important to prioritise activities and check whether they are realistic and achievable. Consider:

✓ Do you have the necessary resources for a particular activity?

✓ Do you have the capacity? Are the timeframes achievable or do you have multiple activities taking place at the same time?

✓ Who will take the lead? Is this leadership shared and does it reflect the intersectional nature of the discrimination women face? Identifying who is responsible is really important for ensuring an activity happens.

✓ Are you considering risks and the mitigating actions that might be necessary?

Transformative power check

✓ Have you included activities that build transformative power? Are your methods in line with your values?

✓ Table 6 includes examples of different activities and resources which may support you to develop your activities. Section 6 of the *Womankind Worldwide Women's Rights Advocacy Toolkit* also provides ideas on how to carry out different activities. However, remember you know your context best and know what activities are likely to work for you.

Table 6: Types of activities and further explanations

Type of Activity	Examples	Links and Resources
Research	• Participatory policy and evidence analysis • Joint research publications and participatory tool development. • Undertaking research projects using an FPAR approach. • Partnering with research institutions. • Providing technical and advisory support to power holders. • Presenting at conferences and opening space for women's voices in these forums. • Piloting new approaches and sharing learning.	IWDA Feminist Research Framework: https://iwda.org.au/assets/files/FeministResearchFramework_online_minustemplates-1.pdf APWLD, p.90: http://apwld.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/2017-BOOM-RIW-FPAR-Regional-Report.pdf. The CARE International Advocacy Handbook, Tool 8, page 30: https://www.care-international.org/files/files/Care%20International%20Advocacy%20Handbook.pdf Womankind Worldwide *Women's Rights Advocacy Toolkit* p.87-90.
Direct influencing of parliamentarians / duty bearers	• Face to face formal & informal meetings. • Sharing information with allies and the wider movement. • Briefings or letters. • Attending events & opening space for under-represented women to attend. • Inclusive input into existing consultation processes. • Attending regional and international policy forums as a delegation which includes under-represented women.	Writing a policy brief: http://www.fao.org/3/i2195e/i2195e03.pdf Womankind Worldwide *Women's Rights Advocacy Toolkit* p.90-98. Bretton Woods Project, *Gender-Just Macroeconomics: Engaging the IMF and World Bank:* https://www.brettonwoodsproject.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/Gender-Just-Macroeconomics-final-1.pdf IWRAW, *Overview of how NGOs and women's rights organisations can use or engage with CEDAW,* available at: https://cedaw.iwraw-ap.org/for-ngos/ Women's Major Group, *Engaging with the Voluntary National Review Process: A Guide for Members of the Women's Major Group*, available at: http://www.womenmajorgroup.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/IWHC_WMG_Guide_M3_Spreads_Preview.pdf

Type of Activity	Examples	Links and Resources
Activism (including campaigning and public outreach)	▪ Campaign materials with key messages. ▪ Community-led marches, events and community forums. ▪ Public actions such as petitions & pledges. ▪ Media engagement (including social media & digital campaigning). ▪ Tools and training to support community and workplace activism. ▪ Convening spaces (such as women's forums) to connect with constituencies. ▪ Fostering connections across movements by sharing knowledge and tools and opening space. ▪ Collective care and reflection debriefings. ▪ Engagement with creative industries.	JASS, *Ways to do out-reach and mobilisation*, available at: https://justassociates.org/sites/justassociates.org/files/20chap14_outreach_mobilization.pdf Womankind Worldwide *Women's Rights Advocacy Toolkit* p.98-111. International Centre on Nonviolent Conflict, *198 Methods of Nonviolent Action,* available at: https://www.nonviolent-conflict.org/198-methods-of-nonviolent-action/ MobLab Campaign Accelerator training and resources: https://mobilisationlab.org/training-coaching/campaign-accelerator-training/resources/ JASS, Media messaging: https://justassociates.org/sites/justassociates.org/files/19chap13_media.pdf

Identifying, assessing and mitigating risk

→ What additional risks might you be imposing on women by virtue of reaching a broader audience through digital campaigning?

→ If you are planning a campaign stunt, consider if this will undermine your credibility with power holders, and whether the risk is worth it.

After you have planned your activities, take some time to consider what MEL processes you will put in place to monitor and evaluate the impact of your advocacy work. See **section 5.1 (Step 2) and Exercise 5.2.1** for ideas.

4.7 Developing core messages

This section focusses on developing your core advocacy message and tailoring this message for different audiences.

Communicating your ideas effectively is essential for advocacy. A campaign works best when you have key messages you repeat over and over again. You may become bored of them, but your target needs to hear it several time before it has any impact.

Well-developed core messages are an important way of ensuring that all your different advocacy activities are directed towards your agreed objective. It is therefore essential that your core message accurately reflects what you are trying to achieve with your advocacy, with your targets and strategy in mind. Look back at **Section 4.3** and the work you did to understand your targets and think about the message which will resonate.

Each message should include – what, when, why and how to act. It should capture people's attention and persuade them of the argument.

The advocacy values you articulated in **Section 2.2** may also be a useful reference point as you develop your core message and think about how you will communicate with different audiences. International women's rights agreements (see **Section 4.2**) can also provide useful rights-based language to inform your messaging.

Exercise 4.7 is designed to help you to be able to present your case in a few sentences that you will repeat again and again. This will be your core message.

Once you have your core message, you can tailor and adapt this for different audiences. The tone, length and style you use will depend on the audience, but the basic message should remain the same, as in Figure 8.

Core message example:

Sexual violence against women and children in households and communities is a significant problem in Cambodia. Communities and leaders must act to prevent and respond to sexual violence, but this requires resourcing! The Provincial Government must increase the funding for addressing gender-based violence in the next budget.

Figure 8: Tailoring your core message

Messages for individual decision-makers

Messages for the public

Policy asks

Core Message

Messages for the media
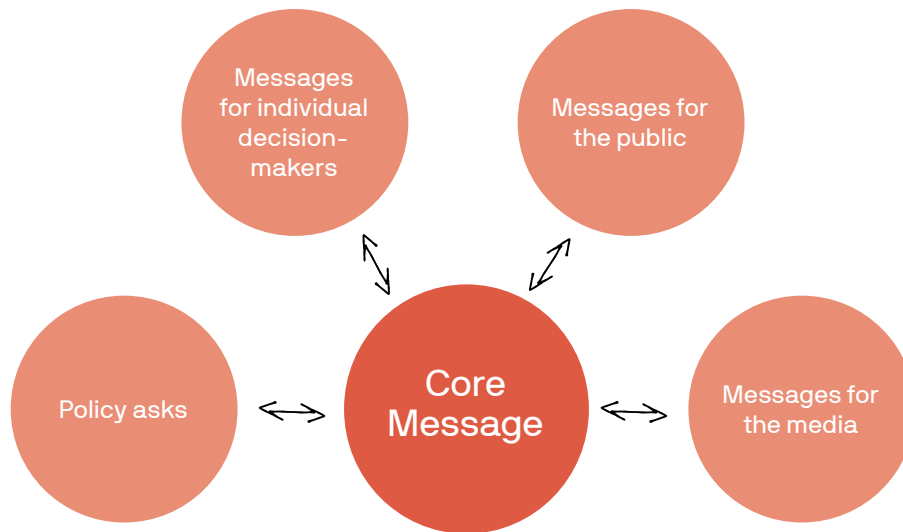
You might tailor the message in a particular way for individual targets when you know a specific framing is important. For example, if a politician is worried about re-election, you could frame your message by talking about the potential popularity they could win by acting! Or you may know a certain policymaker will understand more if you use a personal story to get their attention. Most people act out of self-interest, you just need to think about what that interest is. In framing a message for decision makers, you could also anticipate counter-arguments and be ready to respond (see page 71 of the Womankind Worldwide *Women's Rights Advocacy Toolkit*).

It is a good idea to develop different framing of messages for audiences such as the media and the general public. You could think about developing a **slogan**. For this you need a message that's emotive, eye-catching and that will inspire people to take action. Think about what each of these audiences might be interested in and focus on this.

Just make sure your messages are all saying the same thing (and supporting your long term aim) – just framed in different ways. Caution needs to be exercised in relation to taking an instrumentalist approach to framing your advocacy (that is, using arguments such as the instrumental benefits of investing in women and girls). You can read more about this at page 70-71 of the Womankind Worldwide *Women's Rights Advocacy Toolkit*.

If your advocacy objective includes proposing a specific policy or legal change to a decision maker, you will need to develop a **policy ask**. This will have your core message at its heart but will often be more technical than messages for other audiences. A policy ask should be specific and time bound and should closely reflect your objectives. You may also need to develop a position paper or a policy brief to provide supporting evidence and information (see page 67 of the Womankind Worldwide *Women's Rights Advocacy Toolkit*). This can be particularly useful if you are working in alliances as it provides a point of reference for everyone to share.

How can your campaign messaging build on feminist approaches including framing women as leaders and knowledge holders, trusting the ideas and expertise of women, and amplifying women's voices?

UN Women's Virtual Knowledge Centre to End Violence against Women and Girls contains some useful guidance on do's and don'ts: https://endvawnow.org/en/modules/view/3-campaigns.html

Communicating your messages

Having agreed your core message you will need to think about how to communicate it, and what channels you will use. The earlier work you did on understanding your targets will have revealed who they listen to, which may give you ideas. Combine this with the existing knowledge and contacts you have, such as in local or national media. Think about using social media too (there are some useful resources highlighted in **Section 4.6** on activities). Make sure though that you focus on the communication channels that actually influence your targets – not the ones that appeal to you.

Communicating to build transformative power

The way you communicate in your advocacy (and in your broader communications) can be a powerful movement strengthening tool. JASS' *ICTs for Feminist Movement Building Activist Toolkit* suggests your communication for change should aim to:

- Amplify women's voices – making sure women can share their own stories in their own voices.
- Educate and shift public opinion by uncovering invisible and hidden power.
- Share women's experiences to provide evidence as to how a specific policy or action is affecting women and make a case for change.
- Generate and communicate our own knowledge as feminist activists – educating others on issues and analysis which is often ignored.

- Mobilise people to act through communication.
- Include a focus on internal communications inside our organisations and movements.
- Communicate for urgent action when women human rights defenders face threats or risks to their safety.

The JASS ICTs for Feminist Movement Building Activist Toolkit aims to assist activists to think through their communication strategies in a way that supports movement building (including a practical guide to writing a communication strategy): https://justassociates.org/en/resources/icts-feminist-movement-building-activist-toolkit

Further guidance from JASS on media advocacy can be found here: https://justassociates.org/sites/justassociates.org/files/19chap13_media.pdf

Common Cause is an approach which explores the power of using intrinsic values for communication in order to affect change: https://valuesandframes.org/resources/CCF_communications_toolkit.pdf

APWLD have suggestions on using mobile phones to organise: http://apwld.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/09/Mobilise-pamphlet-FINAL.pdf

Gender Links also have media training tools: https://genderlinks.org.za/what-we-do/media/training/

Transformative power check

✓ Do you have a plan for how you will communicate internally with the many different individuals, organisations and allies you are working with?

✓ Can you use communication strategies to connect local struggles to global solidarity?

✓ Are women's experiences and stories visible, presented respectfully, and are women telling their own stories?

✓ Are communication skills shared and is everyone equipped to use technology safely?

For MEL purposes, document your answers to the transformative power check questions above. How do you anticipate your advocacy communication will build transformative power?

Identifying, assessing and mitigating risk

→ Profiling a woman's story can place her at risk. Make sure you have full and informed consent and consider using a pseudonym.

→ Consider whether you may be imposing additional risks on women by virtue of reaching a broader audience through social or popular media? Make sure you consult with women to assess any risks before launching public actions.

→ Once your work is in the media you will be open to public scrutiny. Make sure you have all your facts and figures right, or you may risk losing your reputation in public.

Monitoring, evaluation and learning

This section is focussed on monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEL) during the planning, implementation and reflection phases of your women's rights advocacy.

This section of the toolkit is designed to help you think about MEL at each stage of the advocacy cycle.

5.1 MEL for advocacy planning

Read this section before you begin your advocacy planning.

These tools can be used at any stage during the advocacy plannng process.

5.2 MEL for implementation

These MEL tools are designed to support you to monitor and evaluate the implementation of your advocacy activities.

5.3 Understanding impact and learning

These MEL tools are to help you reflect on the impact of your advocacy strategy and outcomes and to learn for future advocacy planning.

In Figure 9, there are suggested evaluative questions to focus your approach during each of these phases, but, in reality, your MEL will be inter-related and each stage will impact the next in a continuous cycle. Due to the complexity of bringing about both formal and informal change, there are challenges in attributing changes directly to your advocacy work. This is particularly the case for women's rights advocacy focusing on long term structural change. It is important to adopt MEL approaches which measure the extent to which you contributed to or influenced a change.

MEL is everyone's responsibility. Involve as many staff as possible in developing the MEL approach for your advocacy work, in collecting and analysing the information, and in applying the learnings to your work.

This section focusses particularly on supporting women's rights organisations with MEL for advocacy. If you are a large international NGO with existing MEL processes, the resources in this section can support you to integrate a women's rights perspective into current MEL practices.

Box 3: MEL is different because women's rights advocacy...

✓ Challenges hidden as well visible power and so changes are not always easy to identify.

✓ Challenges the balance of power which means that change will not be linear. There may be backlash, but this could be because your advocacy is having an impact.

✓ Involves building transformative power and the recognition that short-term wins may not be sustainable without structural change in the long term.

✓ Is frequently an iterative and complex process and therefore difficult to identify who is responsible for a change, particularly if working as part of a network, alliance or coalition.

✓ Recognises it is not always strategic or safe to take credit publicly for change which has taken place.

✓ Is built on partnership which is about sharing rather than claiming credit.

✓ Recognises that methods are political and resists the pressure to use methods simply because they are 'attributable' or high profile.

✓ May require strategies to shift in response to opportunities, and therefore your MEL plan will need to be responsive to these changes.

✓ Recognises that achievements such as policy change may take a long time to become apparent and are difficult to 'attribute' to one organisation's work, therefore it is important to be able to measure how your advocacy 'contributed' to change or reached outcomes identified in **Section 4.4**.

There are many existing tools designed to support the MEL of advocacy work. This section suggests some tools, but it is important that you use methods for your MEL which suit your organisation, resources and context. It is not the quantity but the quality of the information which matters and finding tools which are simple and which staff feel confident to use is important.

An effective way to create MEL processes for advocacy can be to build on your existing organisational processes, such as integrating reflection on key questions about your advocacy into a staff meeting and documenting as part of your meeting notes, or collecting information from coalition / alliance or network members or policy makers on the reach and relevance of your advocacy activities when you next meet.

Figure 9: Key questions to guide the MEL process

Monitoring: What follow-up did you do?

How did you record and share your story of change?

Is it safe to do so?

Learning: What did you learn?

What does this learning mean for future advocacy objectives, partnerships, and risk management?

Monitoring and Evaluation:

Has significant change occurred? If so, how much did your activities contribute to this change?

Tools: 5.3.1, 5.3.2 and 5.3.3

Key questions:

How did your advocacy strategy contribute or hinder to positive changes to women's rights and gender equality?

Did you challenge oppressive power and build transformative power through your advocacy? If so, how?

What opportunities did you utilise, and what challenges did you face? How did you overcome or learn from them?

Impact and Learning

Planning

Implementation

Learning: What did you learn?

Do you need to change or adapt your strategy as a result of an activity?

If so, how will you change your advocacy plans and processes?
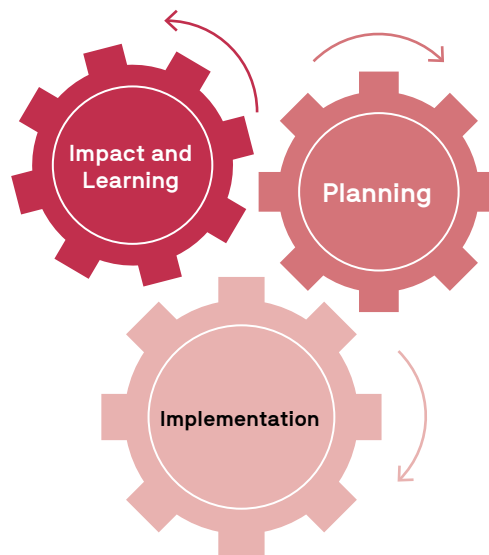
Learning: What did you learn?

Did you identify the necessary time, resources and skills?

Are there other voices you need to include?

How will you plan differently next time?

Monitoring and Evaluation:

Will your planning help you to be effective advocates and build transformative power?

Tools: 5.1.1

Key questions:

Did your planning help everyone have a shared understanding of what information is required to tell our story of change, when it will be collected and analysed, and by whom?

Did you have a sound evidence-base to inform your advocacy planning?

Did you include the voices and priorities of diverse women?

Did participants feel their contribution was valued?

How comfortable were participants with the strategies that were agreed?

Was the planning process participatory and inclusive?

Monitoring and Evaluation:

Did you do what you said you were going to do, and has that created changes along your path to your advocacy objectives?

Tools: 5.2.1 and 5.2.2.

Key questions:

Did you reach your advocacy targets?

Was your advocacy messaging relevant and accessible to your advocacy targets?

Did you achieve your expected outcomes from your activities? If not, why not?

Did you experience backlash or negative changes?

Did you work well with others? Are you building the strength of coalitions/alliances or social movements?

5.1 MEL for advocacy planning

This section will help you answer the question: Will our advocacy planning help us to be effective advocates and build transformative power?

There is a MEL icon at each stage of the planning cycle with key questions to support the integration of MEL throughout the planning process.

During the advocacy planning phase, it is useful to think about MEL in two ways:

STEP 1
Monitoring, evaluating and learning from the planning process

To ensure your advocacy is both credible and relevant, during planning you will also need to assess whether you have included the right people and voices.

Think about the information you will collect at each stage of the planning cycle to answer these questions:

1. Have you included diverse and marginalised voices in your context power analysis and in setting your aims and objectives?

2. Have you included strategic partners for collective action in setting your aims, objectives, strategies and as allies?

3. Have you identified activities which build transformative power as well as targeting oppressive power?

4. How have you contributed to movement strengthening?

5. Do your core messages reflect diverse and marginalised voices?

The transformative power check questions in each section also provide a useful reference. You might find it useful to discuss and document the answers to these questions as you progress through the planning process.

At the end of each planning step or at the end of the planning cycle, reflect on what you have learnt as individuals, an organisation or as members of an alliance using the exercise below. Did you have the necessary time, resources and skills to support evidence-based and inclusive advocacy? How might you plan differently next time? To what extent was your planning a participatory collaborative process which enabled meaningful participation by women in all their diversity of experience, ability and identity?

Exercise 5.1.1 provides a useful tool to assess whether your planning process enabled empowering participation. You could use this tool at the end of a planning workshop or at the end of a planning process.

STEP 2

Putting in place processes to enable MEL of the implementation (5.2) and impact of your advocacy (5.3)

Before you can monitor and evaluate the impact of your advocacy work, you need to identify what progress will look like towards your outcomes. Using the exercises in **Section 4**, including the Activity Table Template (**Exercise 4.6**) and the Advocacy Planning Table, look back at your objectives, strategies and outcomes. Determine what change you can measure in pursuing your strategy to achieve your outcome, and how you will measure that change. Make sure everyone has a shared understanding of what information is required, when it will be collected and analysed, and by whom. This will support your MEL in the implementation phase.
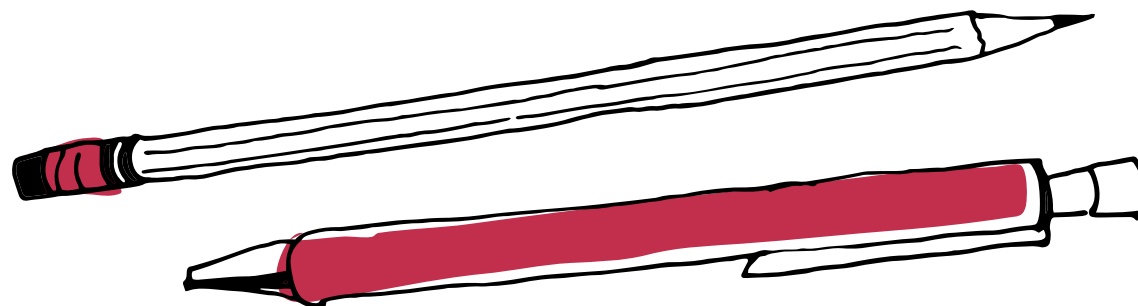
5.2 MEL for implementation

This section will help you answer the question: Have you done what you said you would do, and has that created changes along the path to your advocacy objectives?

This stage involves both monitoring action against your planned activities and evaluating what change has occurred from each activity that will help you reach your advocacy objectives.

It is often helpful to think about your advocacy activity in terms of reach and relevance. For example, did you reach your advocacy targets and was the information found to be relevant and accessible? You may collect and analyse information such as: How many targets did you reach with your advocacy activity and who did you reach; are they power holders or influencers? Was the right information included and was it found to be credible? Was it communicated using the most effective method, and was the timing strategic? Did the core messaging resonate with your intended audience?

Exercise 5.2.1 is an example of an activity log to assist with monitoring your advocacy activities.

You can also keep a log or journal which records information about activities. This could include observations, quotes, reflections, feedback and quantitative information such as event attendance or material dissemination.

Next, it is important to assess what changes resulted from your action. These may include coalition building; shaping the policy agenda; influencing policy makers and duty bearers; increasing media coverage; increasing access to information; challenging or changing attitudes and behaviours; or contributing to a stronger social movement. Were these changes consistent with your intended outcomes or were they unintended or even negative?

Also explore process learning, such as how well did you work with others? Do you need to make any changes to future activities as a result of your learning? Self-care should also form part of any reflection on your advocacy work. To what extent has your advocacy work (resource pressures, time requirements and any risks) impacted on staff's well-being and what collective care strategies can be implemented to support staff.

Exercise 5.2.2 is an after action reflection to help you understand the changes which resulted from your action, and to create learning for your advocacy plans and processes.

5.3 Understanding impact and learning

This section will help you answer the question: Has significant change occurred? If so, how much did our activities contribute to this change?

5.3.1 Impact

Evaluation of advocacy impact is difficult, and it is very challenging to prove that a significant change occurred as a result of a particular action or organisation. For example, decision makers may not want to admit what really influenced them for political reasons or you may not want to reveal the role you played in changing their minds, either for strategic reasons or to protect your safety. Moreover, the more your advocacy challenges power, the longer it may take to show significant positive change. Backlash or holding ground can be a sign of success or a small success could actually result from a power holder making a concession to prevent you from achieving your long-term objective. It is important to track reversals, holding ground and unexpected outcomes and think about how these fit within the long-term structural change you hope to contribute. You will also need to think honestly about what other factors or actors contributed to the observed change, and whether your actions really made the difference.

Exercise 5.3.1 encourages outcome harvesting to reflect on what change has occurred and your contribution to this change.

The **Gender at Work Framework** can be a useful tool to think about the MEL tools which may be most useful to evaluate change, depending on the type of outcome you are working towards (see **Section 2.3**, Box 1). Table 7 provides example of MEL tools, mapped against example advocacy strategies, for the four quadrants - individual's consciousness; access to resources and opportunities; formal laws and policies; and informal cultural norms and exclusionary practices. For example, if you are working to change formal laws and policies by persuading a parliamentary committee to hold an enquiry into a government department, political will tools (such as the bellwether method or the policymakers rating (see Table 7) can be useful to measure changes in policy maker attitudes as a result of your advocacy.

Table 7: Tools for evaluating change in the four Gender at Work Quadrants

Gender At Work Quadrant	Example Advocacy Strategy	Example MEL Tool
Women and men's consciousness	Persuade village council members to support the introduction of a quota for women's representation in the council.	Knowledge, Attitude and Practice Surveys (KAP) are used to better understand how a group of people might see or experience an issue. Step by step guidance to the design of a KAP survey: http://www.stoptb.org/assets/documents/resources/publications/acsm/ACSM_KAP%20GUIDE.pdf
Women's access to resources and opportunities	Influence the community development budget to include allocated funding for a VAW safe-house.	Budget monitoring analyses the implications of public spending and revenue-raising for women relative to men. See Handbook for Analysing Pubic Budgets in Sexual and Reproductive Health: https://www.ippfwhr.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/Budget_Analysis_Guide_English_FINAL_WEB_0.pdf and http://oneworldaction.org.uk/JustBudgetsTool.pdf
	Increase the engagement of young women in the development of the next community development plan.	Ladder of Participation is a tool which can be used to monitor how effectively women, men or groups report they are participating in decision making: See tool in Working effectively with women and men in water, sanitation and hygiene programs Resource Guide (p.23)

Gender At Work Quadrant	Example Advocacy Strategy	Example MEL Tool
Formal laws and policies	Persuade the Provincial Governors in three provinces to support the introduction of reserved seats for women at the provincial government level.	Tools to measure political will: (a) Bellwether Method is a tool to understand what policy makers think about your key issues and to track change in support over time. (b) Policymakers Rating assesses political will among a defined group of policy makers. See guidance in CARE International, Monitoring and Evaluation for Advocacy and Influencing: Guidance Document p.14-16, https://www.carenederland.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/MEL-for-Advocacy-Guidance-2018.pdf ROMA, A Guide to Policy Engagement and Policy Influence, ODI, p.53, available at: https://www.odi.org/sites/odi.org.uk/files/odi-assets/publications-opinion-files/9011.pdf.
Informal cultural norms and exclusionary practices	Persuade male business leaders to champion the importance of women's leadership during the next village council elections.	Most significant change involves generating and analysing personal accounts of change and deciding which of these accounts is the most significant – and why. See MSC User Guide: https://www.clearhorizon.com.au/all-blog-posts/msc-user-guide.aspx

5.3.2 Learning

It is vital that you use the learning at each stage of the advocacy cycle to change and adapt your plans. Continual learning is a crucial part of the MEL process and flexibility and adaptability are important. You may need to change activities as a result of a change in circumstances, both opportunities and threats, or your own learning.

'Most significant learning' (**Exercise 5.3.2**) is a useful tool which supports reflection on situations where a prior assumption about something turned out not to be true. When reflecting on the impact you have achieved and the effectiveness of your advocacy approach, it is also important to consider how your assumptions were tested and any setbacks along the way.

Tools such as after-action reflection (**see Exercise 5.2.2**) encourage learning and reflection after each advocacy action, however, it is also useful to plan for specific spaces to explore your broader advocacy strategy and approach (including how your advocacy is continuing to contribute to the goals of the movement), such as reflection workshops. These can be helpful at specific points in the advocacy cycle, such as after a major advocacy event, or you may want to schedule these at regular intervals where you can adapt your plans according to your findings.

Exercise 5.3.2 encourages you to select one specific learning from your advocacy work and to consider it more deeply.

Exercise 5.3.3 relates to a reflection workshop.

> 📖 **Additional resources to support MEL from a women's rights perspective**

See page 80-81 of the *Womankind Worldwide Women's Rights Advocacy* Toolkit.

Oxfam (2018), *The Oxfam Guide to Feminist Influencing* https://www.oxfam.org/en/research/oxfams-guide-feminist-influencing contains a section around developing a feminist MEAL.

Batliwala, S. and Pittman, A. (2010), Capturing Change in Women's Realities: A Critical Overview of Current Monitoring and Evaluation Frameworks and Approaches, AWID: https://www.awid.org/sites/default/files/atoms/files/capturing_change_in_womens_realities.pdf

AWID (2011), *Strengthening Monitoring and Evaluation for Women's Rights: Thirteen Insights from Women's Organisations:* http://www.forum.awid.org/forum12/wp-content/uploads/2013/03/MnE_ThirteenInsights_womens-org_ENG.pdf

Wakefield, S. & Koerppen D. *Applying Feminist Principles to Program Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning*, Oxfam Discussion Paper.
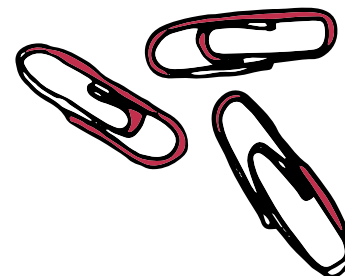
Glossary

Advocacy is a set of organised activities designed to influence the policies and actions of others to achieve change.

Aim is the long term change you are seeking to achieve, possibly over a ten-year period and ideally involving a shift in power creating a positive change in the lives of a group of people. Some organisations call these 'goals.'

Objective is the medium term (3-5 year) change that needs to happen in order to achieve your aim. This usually specifies who will make a change, what they will do, how they will do this, and by when.

Outcomes are the changes that will contribute towards achieving your objective. They describe the smaller actions that need to take place by others so that your objectives can be achieved – like stepping stones. Some organisations call these intermediary objectives.

Strategy is what you are going to do to achieve your desired outcome - and how you will get your targets to make the change. It will involve a number of different activities that together create the change.

Activities are what you, your organisation and your movement will do yourselves in order to achieve your outcomes (and hence, your objectives and aim).

Core messages are a short summary of who you want to do what, by when, and why. They provide a reference point for your advocacy work from which slogans and other messages can be developed, to ensure that all your communications messaging is consistent.

Pegs are opportunities to get your message across to your target audience – such as an international women's day celebration – they are not events that you need to influence in themselves.

Risk assessment and mitigation is a process to identify the risks (to yourselves, your organisation or your allies) that could occur as part of your advocacy work, and ways that you will avoid them or reduce their impact.

Monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEL) are processes where you keep track of what you are doing, assess your impact, and then reflect on any changes you should make.

Power holders are those who have the power to make the change needed to achieve your objective.

Influencers are those who are able to persuade the power holders to take the actions you want them to take.

Targets includes both the power holders and influencers.

Allies are individuals, organisations, institutions or networks, alliances and coalitions who can help you to achieve change.

Opponents are those who will try to prevent the change you want to see from happening.

Transformative power is the power that – often groups of – people build to bring about lasting positive change. It is the power of enabling and working in solidarity with others to challenge injustice.

Oppressive power is the power that is used negatively over others. It is about domination and control – directly or indirectly controlling the actions and choices of others.

Visible power is the formal rules, institutions, and procedures of decision-making and law enforcement.

Hidden power is when powerful people and institutions exercise their influence by controlling who gets to participate in decision making and what priorities inform the agenda.

Invisible power describes the web of values, beliefs, attitudes and social norms that entrench and legitimise discrimination (for example, violence) and inequality.

Terminology

There are many different terms used to describe advocacy and this will depend on your context. In some contexts, the word advocacy may have negative connotations and words such as 'influencing' may be more useful.

You may also hear terms to describe advocacy approaches such as:

→ Social Justice advocacy – advocacy which is informed by experiences of poverty and exclusion.

→ Participatory advocacy – advocacy which is led by marginalised people to influence decisions that affect their lives**.**

→ Public interest advocacy – advocacy which is focussed on achieving a common good or goal in the interest of the public.

→ Policy advocacy – advocacy which is focussed on influencing a principle or action adopted or proposed by a government, political actors, or business.

→ Budget advocacy – advocacy which is focussed on influencing budgeting and resourcing decisions.

Women's rights advocacy can include all of these advocacy approaches. What matters for women's rights advocacy is how you plan and implement your advocacy.

PART 2:

Exercises

1:
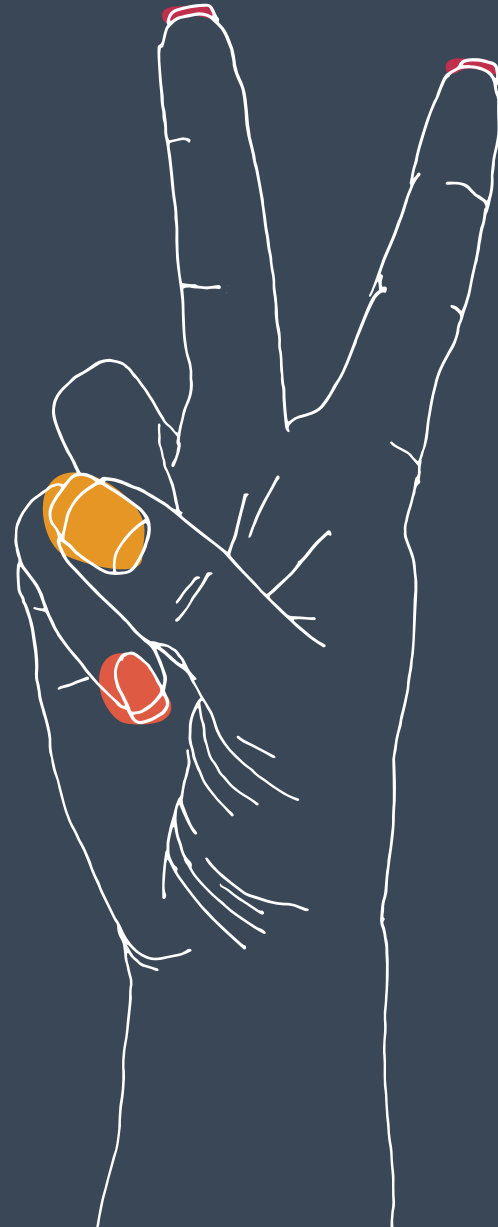
Getting started

1.1 Understanding the exercises

How to use the exercises

The exercises in **Part 2** of the toolkit are designed to form a **complete planning process** (for example, as part of a planning workshop) when used in conjunction with **Part 1**, with some optional exercises if you have time.

However, the exercises can also work as **standalone exercises** and you can pick and choose what works for you. This should be a useful way of ensuring that your existing planning process uses a more feminist approach to understanding power.

At the start of each exercise, you will find information on the estimated time the exercise will take. If you are planning a workshop this will assist with planning your sessions and prioritising the exercises you have time to include. There is also information for each exercise in relation to materials which will be useful. This is just an example of materials you may wish to use and can be replaced with similar materials you have available. Cross-references are also provided to the relevant section in **Part 1** which will provide more background. All numbered references to **Sections** are for **Part 1**, **Exercises** are in **Part 2**. The numbering in **Part 2** corresponds to **Part 1** so that it is clear which exercises relate to each section in **Part 1**.

You will collect lots of information and ideas on flip charts throughout the exercises. Number and label the flip charts carefully so that they can be written up later to inform your written strategy and plans. Agree at the start of the process how the outcome of your planning session will be written up and finalised – think about who should be included in the final decisions and how you will ensure accessibility and inclusivity throughout the planning process.

In **Part 3** of this toolkit, you will find templates which can be printed or copied. These support particular exercises.

Before you begin the planning process, you should also have considered how you will include the right people and voices in your planning. This should include meaningful consultation with the women and communities that the planned advocacy intends to impact – to ensure women's knowledge, needs and interests are at the core of your advocacy planning (see **Section 2.1**).
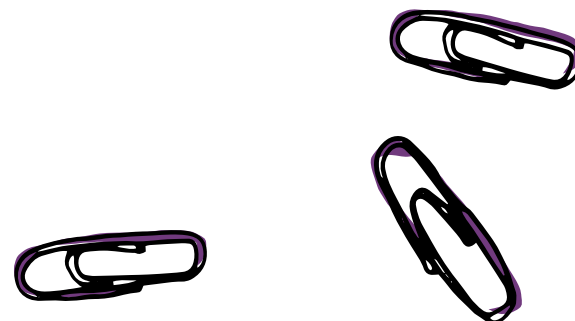
Advocacy Planning Table

You will find an Advocacy Planning Table in **Part 3 (Template 1)**.[1] This is designed to be completed as you work your way through the planning process. Before you commence your planning, print copies of the Advocacy Planning Table for each participant. You will need one table for each advocacy objective. If you are facilitating a workshop, you may also wish to create a large version of the planning table (such as by using 4 flip charts) to put on the wall at the front of the room.

Throughout the exercises in **Part 2** you will find this icon. This indicates when you should complete the next part of the Advocacy Planning Table. Examples are also provided to assist with filling in the table.

Completing this table as you go will enable you to reflect on decisions made at each step of the process and also means when you reach the end of the planning process, you will have a record of your Advocacy Plan.

If you are just selecting a few exercises from the toolkit – for example on setting objectives and identifying targets - you can also adapt and use the Advocacy Planning Table.

If you decide on a movement strengthening objective, the process will be slightly different. You can use **Template 2** to plan for this objective.

---

1   Credit: Oxfam (2018), *The Oxfam Guide to Feminist Influencing,* page 15, available at: https://www.oxfam.org/en/research/oxfams-guide-feminist-influencing adapted by Jessica Woodroffe.

2.

Why women's rights advocacy is different

2.1 Why do women's rights advocacy?

Facilitator Checklist 2.1

Part of living our women's rights values when working together is to create a space which is conducive to mutual learning, sharing and a safe, respectful environment for participants.

This checklist highlights some key aspects for you, as a facilitator, to think about in order to support inclusivity and accessibility:

☑ Ideally the workshop space should be welcoming, comfortable, well-lit and ventilated. Plan for childcare needs as well as all disability-related needs including physical access, interpreters, signers and helpers (as needed to meet individual support needs).

☑ Consider the safety of the venue and the surrounding area for participants.

☑ Introduce yourself, the organisation, the purpose of the discussion and the way it will be facilitated.

☑ Participant consent forms, an external support list (with medical & psycho-social support contacts) and a security checklist for the venue should be prepared in advance.

☑ If a translator, guide or interpreter will be used, meet with them prior to the workshop to discuss their role, how you will work together and the importance of confidentiality in the workshop space. A debrief at the start of each break may also be useful.

☑ If possible, arrange chairs in a circle (this is a good way of creating a sense of connection and shared space).

☑ Think carefully about introductions. This is an important step and can create connections and feelings of safety among participants at the outset.

☑ Discuss the agenda for the workshop with participants to check that the agenda and desired outcomes reflect a shared understanding. Allow time for participants to add to or change the agenda and continue to create space for reflection on the workshop process and any changes needed throughout the day(s).

☑ Early in the workshop, open discussion on what participants feel creates a safe space – ask about principles and what would make them feel safe and comfortable. You may like to read the poem, *Invitation to Brave Space*.

☑ Schedule regular reflection, self-care and energiser sessions throughout the workshop. You might like to appoint a couple of participants per day to lead these sessions.

☑ Ensure there are refreshments breaks so that participants can relax and re-fuel.

☑ Consider approaches that encourage the integration of mind, heart and body which can help to stimulate creative thinking, community and heart/head connections.

☑ It is also crucial to respect and create space for participants' own contextual understanding, knowledge and lived experiences.

☑ As a facilitator you should also reflect on the power you bring to the space. Be non-judgmental, reflect points back to participants so that they know they are being heard and work at using inclusive language (and avoid using jargon).

> **There are many tools which support creating a safe workshop space including:**
>
> GAPS UK, Women for Women International, Amnesty, Saferworld & Womankind Worldwide, *Beyond Consultations: A tool for meaningfully engaging with women in fragile and conflict-affected states* - https://www.beyondconsultations.org/images/Beyond_Consultations_Tool.pdf
>
> Micky ScottBey Jones, *An Invitation to Brave Space*.
>
> JASS, *We Rise Toolkit,* 'Creating Safe Spaces tool'- https://werise-toolkit.org/en/toolkit
>
> IWDA, *Feminist Organisational* Capacity Strengthening Modules (forthcoming).

2.2 Before you begin: resources, risks and living your values

⏱ **30 min**

Exercise 2.2.1 Assessing resources[2]

Purpose: To ensure that your planning is realistic, based on what resources and strengths you have and recognising any limitations such as budget.

Time: 30 mins

Preparation and material: One flip chart for each of your six types of resources (see table below) divided into two with the headings 'Opportunities' and 'Risks.'

Working together in a large group:

- Taking each resource type in turn, consider the prompt questions below and then fill in your flip charts – first, identifying any opportunities to improve your resources and then any risks and how to mitigate them. (When writing up the results of your exercise you could use the table below. A printable version of this table can be found in **Part 3**, **Template 3**).

Assessing resources table (see Template 3)

Resource		Opportunities – how could you fill in any gaps?	What risks do you face and how will you mitigate them?
Money	*Is your budget realistic?* *Do you have sufficient funds?*		
People and skills	*Who will do the work?* *Do they have the right skills?*		
Information and knowledge	*Have you done the research needed?*		
Partners and relationships	*What existing partnerships do you have?* *Are you working well together?*		
Reputation and relationships	*What do target audiences think of you?* *Do you have good relationships with those with power?*		
Time	*Are there internal time constraints like funding deadlines?*		

2   Credit: Womankind Worldwide (2011), *Women's Rights Advocacy Toolkit*, p.56.

30 – 40min

Exercise 2.2.2 Reflecting women rights values[3]

Purpose: To remind participants of their shared women's rights values and identify ones that may be particularly relevant to advocacy planning.

Time: 30-45 mins.

Preparation: If your organisation already has agreed women's rights or feminist values or has signed on to a charter like the African Feminist Charter or Charter of Feminist Principles for Pacific Feminists then write up to 10 'values' on a flip chart at the front. Alternatively use the 10 'values' we suggest below.

Materials needed: Flip charts

Suggested prompts for values:

- In small groups, discuss the values. Why are these important? How might you put these values into practice through advocacy? Are there any values you think are missing?

- Working together as a large group, share your reflections on putting these advocacy values in practice. Are there any new values discussed that you want to include? Are there any you don't think are as relevant or important?

- Following the group discussion, ensure the flip chart at the front of the room reflects the agreed advocacy values of the group. Leave these up on the wall as reminders throughout the workshop.

Promote and strengthen women's rights and gender equality	Respect the diversity of women's experience and listen to women and their organisations	Empower women to advocate for themselves	Make power relations visible, including reflecting on personal power	Be transparent, open and accountable
Collaborate and partner with women and women's rights organisations and networks	Acknowledge women's contributions in achieving change	Prioritise inclusive, participatory methods to connect knowledge with action	Provide opportunities to develop self and collective care strategies	Engage in ongoing processes of self and collective reflection and act on learning

3   Credit: Developed by Sharon Smee.

2.3 Understanding and using power

Exercise 2.3 Reflecting on power [optional – if you have time]

Purpose: To ensure that all participants have a similar understanding of power and how it operates before moving further in the planning process.

Preparation: Facilitator needs to ascertain ahead of time the previous experience of the group with power analysis and therefore which, if any, exercises are needed and how much time to spend.

Materials: Once you have assessed the needs of the group, print the relevant exercise(s) at the links below.

Even if participants have a strong understanding of power analysis it may be useful to look at **Section 2.3**, Table 1 to remind participants of the different forms of power and its different locations.

If your organisation isn't used to talking about power and gender, or you want to refresh and consolidate understanding, consider using one of the exercises designed by JASS. Links are provided below, and the exercises are also included in the Annexure. You can also find more background on power in the JASS *We Rise Toolkit*, pp.42-45*:* https://justassociates.org/sites/justassociates.org/files/07chap3_power_final.pdf

Oppressive and transformative power

Basic exercise on what power is:

JASS, "Defining Power and its Sources Activity", *We Rise Toolkit*, Available at: https://werise-toolkit.org/en/system/tdf/pdf/tools/Defining-Power-and-its-Sources.pdf?file=1&force=

Recognising power within and how to use it:

JASS, "Sources of transforming power Activity," *We Rise Toolkit,* Available at: https://werise-toolkit.org/en/system/tdf/pdf/tools/Sources-of-Transforming-Power.pdf?file=1&force=

Visible, hidden and invisible power

*Exercise on the three forms of power (visible, hidden and invisible) as the basis for using power analysis (a version of this is used in **Section 4**):*

JASS, "Understanding "Power Over": An Introduction to Power Analysis Activity," *We Rise Toolkit*, available at: https://werise-toolkit.org/en/system/tdf/pdf/tools/Understanding-Power-Over-an-Introduction-to-Power-Analysis_0.pdf?file=1&force=

3.

Aim

Exercise 3.1 – From problem to solution[4]

Purpose: To identify what you are trying to achieve with your advocacy in the long term. Before you start, the group as a whole, should have some idea of the issue that you are going to advocate on, the point of this exercise is to refine and define it.

Time: 1hr

Preparation: This exercise assumes that as an organisation or alliance you have already agreed what issue or issues you are considering doing advocacy on, based on your experience, research and current priorities. Try to get agreement on these before the day starts. If you can't agree on only one issue, you can use this exercise for a number of issues, and then use **Exercise 3.2** to help you prioritise.

Materials: Flip charts and coloured pens.

STEP ONE:

In small groups (If you have more than one issue that you are considering then each group should work on just one of the issues):

→ Agree the problem. You don't need to think yet about the causes of the problem, just make sure that you are all agreed on what is actually happening.

→ As an optional warm-up activity for the groups, you may like to take 15 minutes to design a picture or word map that visually represents the problem.

→ Then ask each other why the problem exists - think about all the forms of power that may be at work (refer to **Section 2.3**, Table 1 for guidance on the forms of power) and note these on flip chart paper. You will use this later when deciding on your objectives in **Exercise 4.2.1** and **4.2.2**.

→ Looking at the causes of the problem that you have identified, write a 'problem statement' (see **Section 3**, Table 2 for examples).

→ Now you are going to flip the problem statement into a positive change. What would the heading be in a newspaper if you achieved the change you want to see? Write this on the flip chart and then develop it into an aim statement (see **Section 3**, Table 2 for examples).

STEP TWO:[5]

Working together in a large group:

→ If there was just one group working on each issue, ask each group to present their aim statement and check that everyone agrees with it.

→ If there was more than one group working on the same issue (and taking one issue at a time if you have been working on more than one issue), ask each group to present their aim statement and check whether they are similar. If they aren't, discuss and underline the best bits from each statement and use these to develop a new aim statement for the issue which the whole group agrees with.

4   Credit: Adapted from Womankind Worldwide (2011), *Women's Rights Advocacy Toolkit*, p.34.
5   Credit: Adapted from Womankind Worldwide (2011), *Women's Rights Advocacy Toolkit*, p.30.

45–60min

Exercise 3.2 – Prioritisation and sense checking your aim

Purpose: If you have more than one potential aim, this exercise will help you to prioritise. If you have already identified an aim, you may wish to use this exercise to sense check and refine your aim. Otherwise skip this exercise.

Time: 45-60 mins (assuming you are starting with just two aim statements).

Preparation: This exercise assumes that you have one or more aim statements (developed from the previous exercise).

Materials: For each aim, use two flip chart papers stuck together, with the table below copied on to them (you can also print or copy this table using **Template 4**). Pens.

Working together in a large group, progress through steps one and two.

STEP ONE:
Assessing and prioritising

→ Write each of your aim statements up on flip charts. (If you already have an agreed aim you can use this process to sense check and refine it - just skip c) below).

→ Discuss each aim statement one by one. Looking at the first criteria in the table on next page, consider the strengths of the aim and if there are any areas of concern. Then agree how strongly the aim meets this criteria – out of 5. Repeat for the other five criteria (aiming to spend no more than five minutes on each criteria). Then repeat the whole process for the other aims.

→ Once you have completed the table for each separate aim, ask everyone to take a moment to reflect on what has come out. Use the information you have gathered to agree which aim you will prioritise. Don't total up the marks - each criteria won't have equal weight for your organisation. For example, you may want to veto any option which is not important or transformative. Whereas you may want to rewrite an aim if it's not achievable, but you think it has the potential to be the strongest one. Having an aim which is easy to communicate is probably least important at this stage.

STEP TWO:
Refining your aim

→ Once you have agreed on your aim, reflect on the areas of concern that you have noted and refine your aim statement if you need to.

→ By the end of the exercise you will have one clearly written aim statement to take forward into your planning phase.

Aim prioritisation table (see Template 4)

Aim Statement

Criteria	Explanation	Strengths	Areas of concern	Marks out of 5
Important	*Would achieving this meet the practical and strategic needs and priorities of the women we work with?*			
Transformative	*Will there be a shift in power either by increasing transformative power or reducing power over (or both)*			
Achievable	*Is this feasible in the time frame?* *Do we have influence over the decision makers?* *Are there major opportunities or pegs coming up?*			
Easy to communicate	*Can we make our target audiences interested in this issue, do we have the evidence to back up our claims?*			
Added value	*Can our organisation or coalition offer something not already being done by others?*			
Organisational fit	*Does this aim fit with our vision, mission and values?* *Does it build on existing work?*			

Once you have your aim statement, write this aim into the first line of your **Advocacy Planning Table** on page 138.

4.

Planning your advocacy campaign

4.1 Power analysis and context

⏱ **30min**

Exercise 4.1 - Force field

Purpose: To understand the power context in which your advocacy will take place before choosing your objective, using the concepts of power in **Section 2.3** (Formal, hidden and invisible power and oppressive and transformational power).

Time: 30 mins.

Preparation: This exercise assumes that you have a clearly written aim statement (recorded in your Advocacy Planning Table, if you are using this) developed from **Exercise 3.1**. You could also write up on a flip chart the definitions of visible, invisible and hidden power and of oppressive and transformative power (**Section 2.3**, Table 1).

Materials: Flip charts and black, green and red pens.
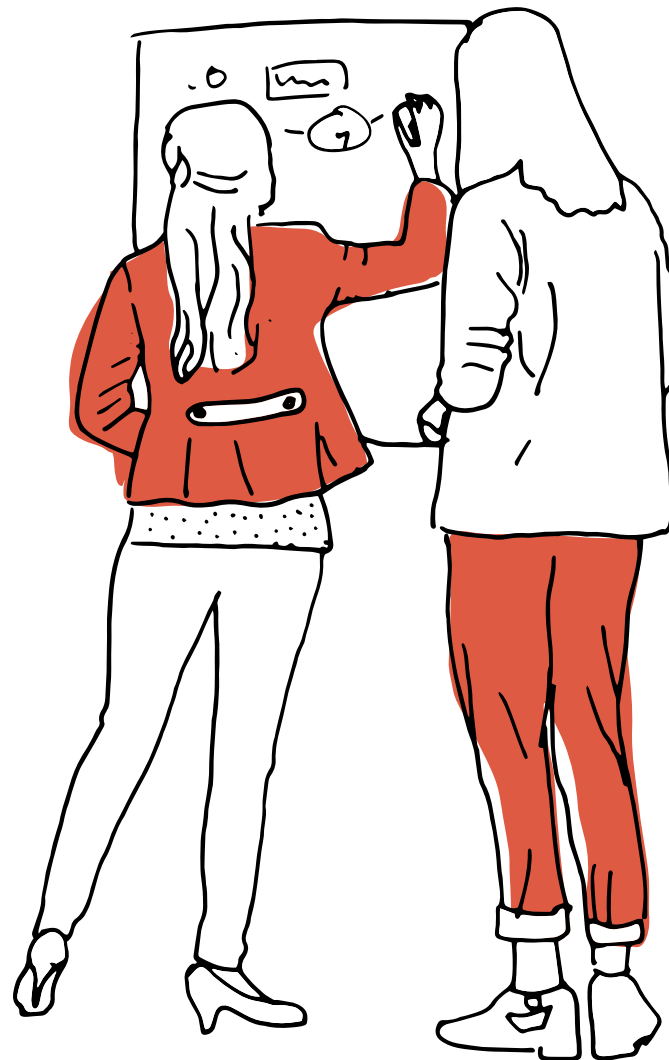
Working together in a large group:

→ On a large sheet of paper draw a horizontal line with your aim statement written across it

→ Brainstorm the forces and factors that are stopping change and write these above the line in red pen. Put visible power on the left, hidden power in the middle and invisible power on the right. Make sure you look at government policy and practice, laws, social norms, and restrictions on women's own power with and within.

→ Brainstorm the forces and factors that will support change and write these under the line in green pen. Make sure you think about transformative power such as collective power with others and women's own power within.

→ Now put a ring round the strongest forces stopping progress and the strongest forces supporting progress. Put two rings if you think there are any of these that you could influence.

→ Put this flip chart up on the wall to refer back to later when setting your objectives in **Exercise 4.2.1**
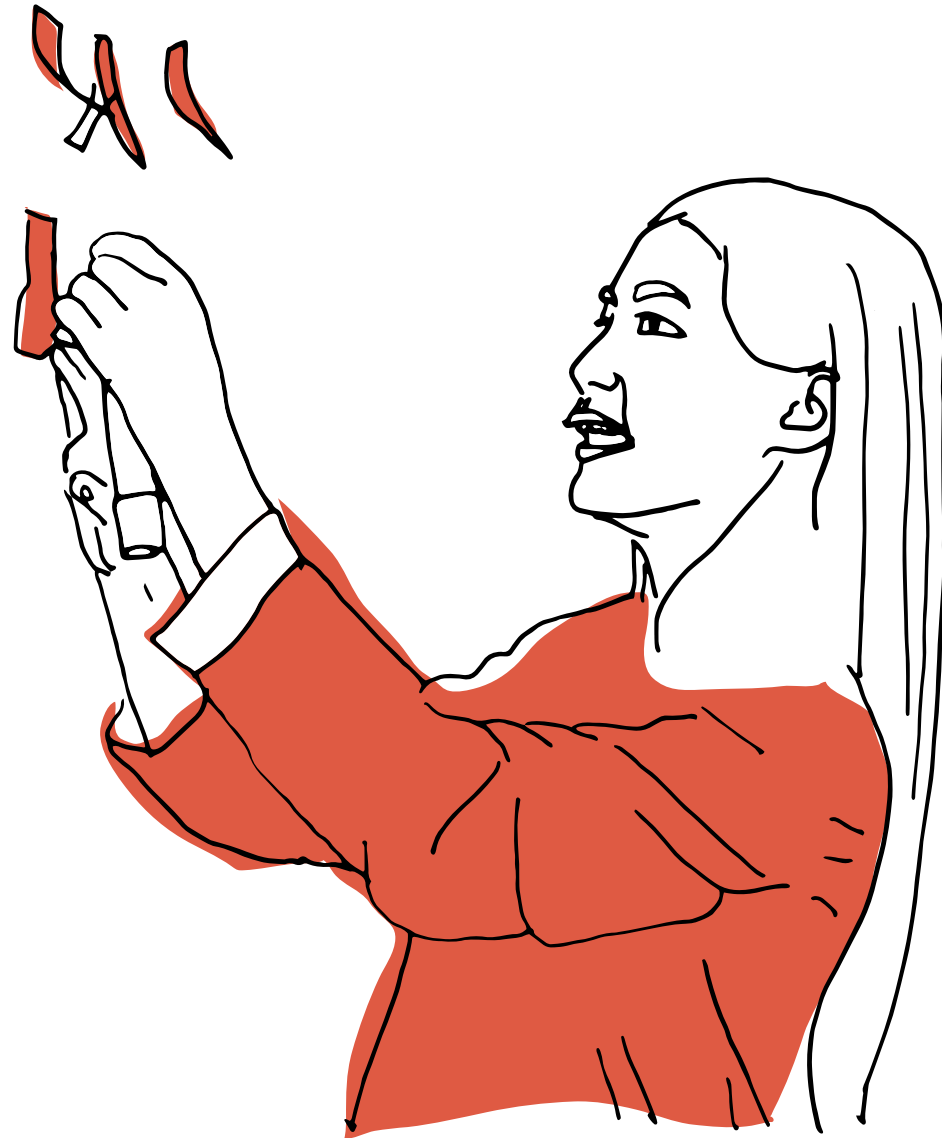
Example of a force field power context exercise in relation to violence against women (VAW)

VAW is seen as a 'private' not a public matter due to social norms.

The justice system is under-resourced and does not respond to women's needs.

The budget of the women's ministry, with responsibility for action on VAW, has been cut.

Services and support for VAW survivors are not available in rural areas.

The police force do not take this issue seriously.
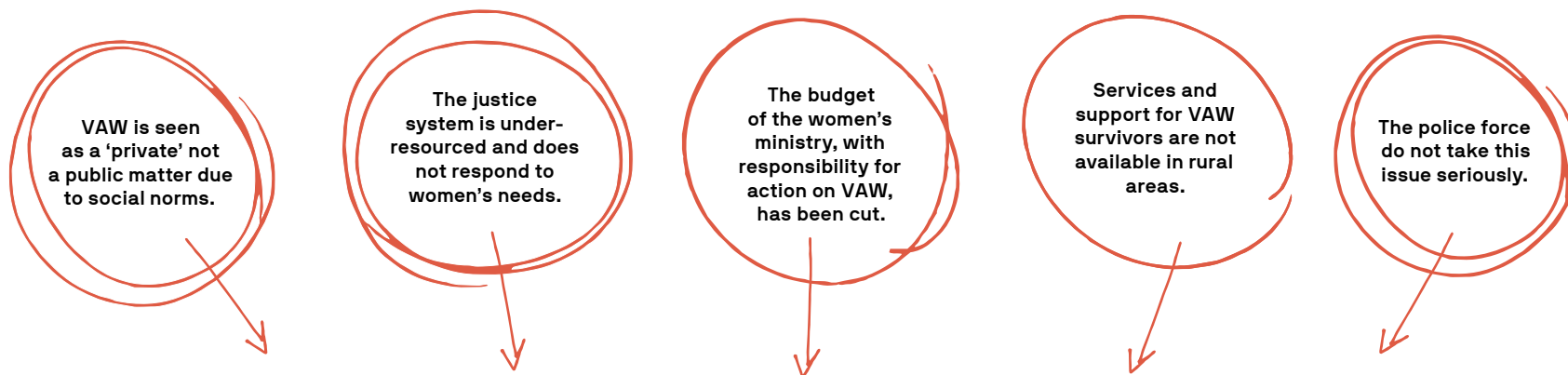
Women live free from violence and the fear of violence.

Women's rights organisations have enabled women to recognise the issue and organise around it.

NGOs have prioritised this issue and have formed a coalition.

A major newspaper has published an article on the issue of violence against women.

A Parliamentary committee has called for an expert hearing on this issue.

4.2 Objectives

⏱ **60min**
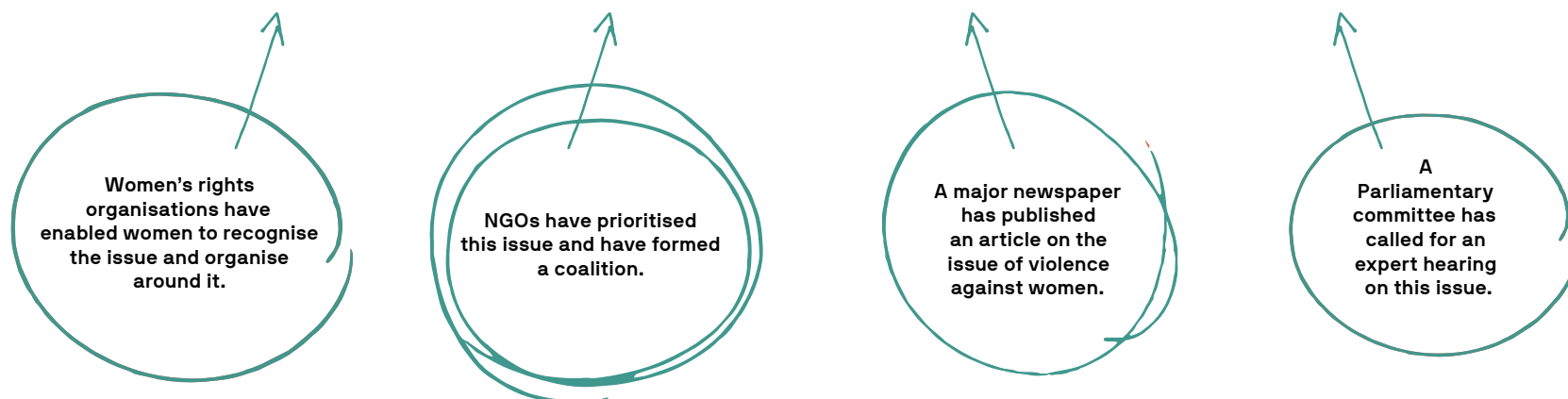
Exercise 4.2.1 - Identify the things that need to be achieved in order to reach your aim

Purpose: To identify the objectives that you will try to achieve in order to achieve your aim, making sure that you look at all forms of power.

Time: 1hr

Preparation: The more time that you have had ahead of this exercise to research your issue, the better the result. If this is a new topic you may need to draw on outside support in the meeting. Have the flip charts from the **Exercise 4.1** up on the wall where people can see. Have the flip charts from **Exercise 3.1** which identify the causes of the problem you are trying to solve up on the wall too. You will also have your agreed aim in your Advocacy Planning Table, if you are using this. Before you begin the exercise, discuss as a group how you will ensure you include the voices of those most affected in the process.

Materials: Stick two flip chart papers together and draw the outline of a large tree with a broad trunk, roots and branches in pencil (see example overleaf). You also need different coloured marker pens.

Working together in a large group:

→ For the trunk of your tree write your aim (you could add your problem statement in brackets if it helps).

→ Then create the roots of the tree. These will be the things that are causing your problem to happen. Refer to the flip charts on the wall where you identified the causes of the problem and if you have time, you can expand on these. The more important each cause is, the wider the root should be. Look at your force field power context in **Exercise 4.1** - at invisible and hidden power. For example, are there social norms that are preventing women's voices from being heard? For each of your initial roots dig deeper to ask 'why?' and 'what causes that'? Then draw a deeper root beneath it. Think about where power lies to ensure that you have all the causes.

→ Now move on to your branches. Here you identify how the barriers can be removed. Use the main, thicker branches to write the most important ways to achieve your aim (these could be either practical or political). Then make other smaller branches where you write how to achieve what is written on the main branches. For one of the main branches think about how to build transformative power. For another, think about how to reduce power over (creating political space or developing accountability may be an important component).

→ Now draw different coloured rings around those branches that you think are:

- Most important to the women that you work with.
- Transformative - reflecting a shift in power.
- Most likely to change (perhaps because there are less vested interests in achieving it).
- Easiest for you and your allies to achieve (drawing on your transformative power).

→ The branches with rings around them (particularly if they have more than one ring) are your potential objectives.

→ Keep your tree – you will use it again in later exercises.

Example of a completed aim and objectives tree

Government funding for support services for VAW survivors is increased

Women are encouraged to take cases to court by their communities

Community leaders speak out against VAW

The media highlights the issue of VAW in the community

Women's rights organisations advocate with community leaders and the police to change attitudes

Women feel able to take cases to court

There is social pressure on perpetrators to stop

Women act collectively to condemn the perpetrators of violence and to support survivors (building transformative power)

Women human rights defender networks are formed in communities to support survivors and raise community awareness

Affordable legal advice is provided to survivors

The law has stronger provision against VAW

More perpetrators are convicted

The police are held accountable for preventing and responding to VAW (challenging oppressive power)

VAW cases progress to court

Police and judges view VAW as a crime

Women can live free of violence and the fear of violence

A parliamentary body is established to scrutinise Police response to VAW

Police and the judiciary do not view VAW as a crime

Current law does not recognise marital rape

Laws are not sufficient and are not enforced

Survivors are blamed for the violence

Survivors of VAW don't report the crime

Long distance to courts

Intimate partner violence is treated as a private matter

Community leaders don't support women

Mediation between the survivor and perpetrator is encouraged by the community

Lack of funding for support services means women don't get the support they need to report

The police are hostile to survivors

Perpetrators believe they have impunity

15min

Exercise 4.2.2 - Defining your objectives

Purpose: To develop clear and useful objectives describing what you will achieve with your advocacy.

Time: Step one – 15 mins, Step two – 40 mins, Step three – 1hr, Step four – 1hr (optional).

Preparation: This exercise assumes that you have identified your potential objectives (developed in **Exercise 4.2.1**). Write an example objective on flip chart paper, labelling the different parts of the wording (see step one below).

Materials: A4 cards, green and red stickers, flip chart, pens.

STEP ONE:
Identifying objectives

Looking back at your tree from **Exercise 4.2.1**, discuss the branches with rings around them. See if you can agree on no more than five of these potential objectives to take forward as part of your planning. If you can't narrow down your objectives at this stage, you can use Step 4 of this exercise to prioritise. However, bear in mind that the more objectives you have, the longer this exercise will take.

You may decide to have an objective which is specifically designed to strengthen the advocacy capacity of your movement or a movement you work with. It will be vital that you define who is in the movement, and then take their lead on what they need when defining objectives. If you are part of the movement yourselves, then be clear on what the consultation and negotiation process is. We have not included a specific exercise here on how to set your objectives as it will need to be led by the processes, policies and priorities of the movement itself, as explained in **Section 4.2**. For movement strengthening objectives you can skip the next exercises and go straight to **Exercise 4.4.4**
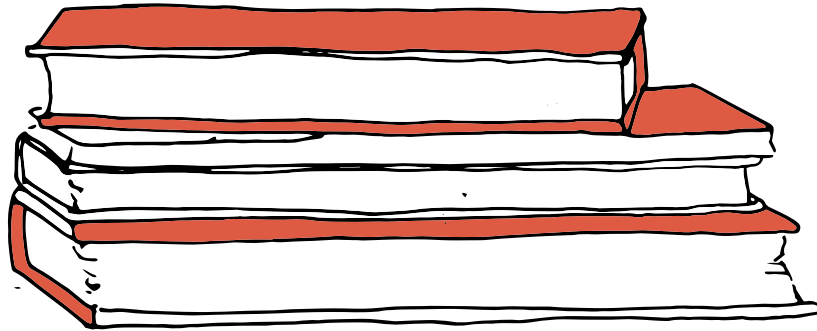
⏱ **30–40min**

STEP TWO:
Drafting objectives

Working together in a large group, facilitator to:

→ Talk through an example of how to word an objective (for example: Minister of Finance to increase the allocation in Parliament's April budget for prevention of and responses to gender-based violence.) Point out that the wording should include: what action is needed, who will take the action, and when and where they will take it.

→ Explain the difference between an objective (an action that you want a target to take) and an activity (something that you undertake to help achieve the objective)

Example objective:

Who	What action is needed	Where	When

Minister of Finance to **increase the allocation** in **Parliament's April budget** for prevention of and response to gender-based violence.

Example movement strengthening objective:

Who		What action is needed

Cambodia women's organisations are **adequately resourced to collectively undertake a gender budget analysis** after the release of Parliament's **April budget**.

When

🕐
60min

In small groups (each taking one of the potential objectives):

→ First, draft the wording for your objective on a piece of A4 card. Each draft objective should include:

→ What action is needed? (If the action is taken, will it contribute towards achieving the aim?)

→ Who will take the action? (Make sure that the action is to be taken by someone other than yourselves. Actions you will take are activities not objectives and will be discussed later in the process.)

→ When and where will they take it?

→ Second, when you have drafted your objective, check back on the wording:

- If you are successful in achieving this objective, will it lead to a long term (transformational) shift in power or a transitory change that can be reversed?

- Have you identified an objective rather than an activity?

→ Third, re-word your objective if necessary (keeping any activities for later).

Working together in a large group:

→ Hear back from each group on their draft objective. Check whether the rest of the group have any comments on the broad substance of the objective (if suggestions focus around making it SMART-TR, pause the discussion and move onto step three)

STEP THREE:
Making SMART-TR[6]

Working together in a large group:

→ Introduce the concept of 'SMART' (see **Section 4.2** (Step 3) and the diagram – The SMART-TR Approach - overleaf). Most advocates ensure that their objectives are SMART. Women's rights advocates go for SMART- TR (smarter) objectives by also making sure they are transformative.

In small groups (each group taking a different objective than the one they focused on in step two):

→ Decide whether the draft objective meets each of the SMART criteria. If it is not sufficiently 'specific', 'measurable' etc, then edit the objective (in a different colour pen). If there are lots of amendments, rewrite the objective on a fresh piece of A4 card.

Working together in a large group:

→ Stick the annotated cards on the wall and discuss whether everyone is happy with the amended wording for each objective or if they need more changes. Ask the question: If we achieve this objective, will we really be closer to achieving our aim? Will this change be sustainable?'

→ Now focus on 'TR' and, looking across the objectives, ask: 'Will at least one of our objectives shift the balance of power rather than working within it?

→ Amend the objectives if necessary.

6   Credit: Jessica Woodroffe.

The SMART-TR approach

S	**Specific:** a precise not a general change	• While your aim is general, your objective more narrowly defines what you want to see happen. • Don't use jargon or words which could be misinterpreted.
M	**Measurable:** so you know if it's been achieved	• Your objective must be measurable either by quantitative or qualitative methods. • See **Section 5** for more information on monitoring & evaluating your advocacy work.
A	**Achievable:** realistic within the timeframe	• Think about breaking your journey towards your aim into closer stepping stones that are achieveable in the timeframe.
R	**Relevant:** will contribute to your aim	• Your objective must be a stepping stone towards achieving your longer term aim - not just something that gives you a 'quick win.'
T	**Time bound:** to happen by a particular date	• Most advocacy planning identifies objectives that might be achieved within 3-5 years. • You may want to link your objective to a particular event such as a budgeting cycle or an election or to your planning cycle.
TR	**Transformative:** aims to create more equitable realationships and structures	• If achieved, will this objective create transformative change for women, including the realisation of women's rights? • Will it build transformative power and therefore be sustainable?

60min

STEP FOUR:
Prioritising [optional – if you have more than three potential objectives]

Use this step if you have more than three objectives.

Working together in a large group:

→ Ask people to suggest some 'decision making criteria', which will help you prioritise between the objectives. These could be the same ones that you used in choosing your aim (see **Exercise 3.2**):

   - Important in making a difference to the women with whom you work

   - Transformative in shifting power

   - Achievable in the time frame you have

   - Easy to communicate to your audiences

   - You can add value either alone or by joining a coalition or alliance

   - It fits with your organisational strategy and workplan.

In pairs:

→ When you have agreed on the criteria, ask people to spend a few minutes reflecting on how well each objective meets the criteria. (If you have more time, you could go through each criteria, in turn, and discuss the extent to which each objective meets it).

Working together in a large group:

→ Then give each participant two green stickers and one red sticker. Ask them to place the green stickers on the objectives that they think best meet the criteria and the red sticker on what they feel is the weakest objective.

→ Once everyone has 'voted' with their stickers, step back and reflect on what has come out. Quickly rule out any objectives that have little support, then discuss and prioritise the final one to three objectives.

→ If you are a relatively small organisation you may want to *phase* your objectives, so you also need to work out which one to start with. (This will be the one you focus on as you go through later stages of the planning process.) Discuss whether there is an opportunity in the near future which suggests that you should focus on a particular objective first. Are any of your objectives dependent on something else happening – and does this suggest approaching them in a phased order?

→ If you are a larger organisation with more resources, then think if you have been ambitious enough. Are you trying to shift power as well as work within existing power structures?

Write out your objective in your Advocacy Planning Table (Template 1). You'll need a different table for each objective.

You may have decided that one of your objectives should involve movement strengthening. This will follow a different planning process – see **Exercise 4.4.4** (Template 2).

4.3 Power mapping power holders, influencers and allies

You might want to prioritise which of your objectives you work on here. Choose the main one, or the one that it is critical to work on now, and/or the one that would benefit from wider group input. It may be that you could work through the same process with your other objectives separately with a smaller group and bring back for peer review. If you have two objectives which are very closely related you might be able to take them both through this process in parallel.

Exercise 4.3.1 - Identify where power lies

Purpose: To identify which power holders and influencers are most important, what motivates them, and who are your allies.

Time: Step one – 30 min, Step two – 45 min.

Preparation: This exercise assumes that you have identified your objectives (and recorded these in your Advocacy Planning Table if you are using this). See also **Section 4.3** for definitions of power holders, influencers and allies. Check you have your tree diagram from **Exercise 4.2.1** on the wall.

Materials: Step one - flip chart paper with three concentric circles drawn on it (see example below), step two - flip chart paper with a power matrix drawn on it (see below) and different coloured post-it notes.

Having identified the change you want to see, we now need to look at who has the power to achieve your objectives, who stands in the way and who you could build relationships with to help you.

influencers

key influencers

power holder

30 min
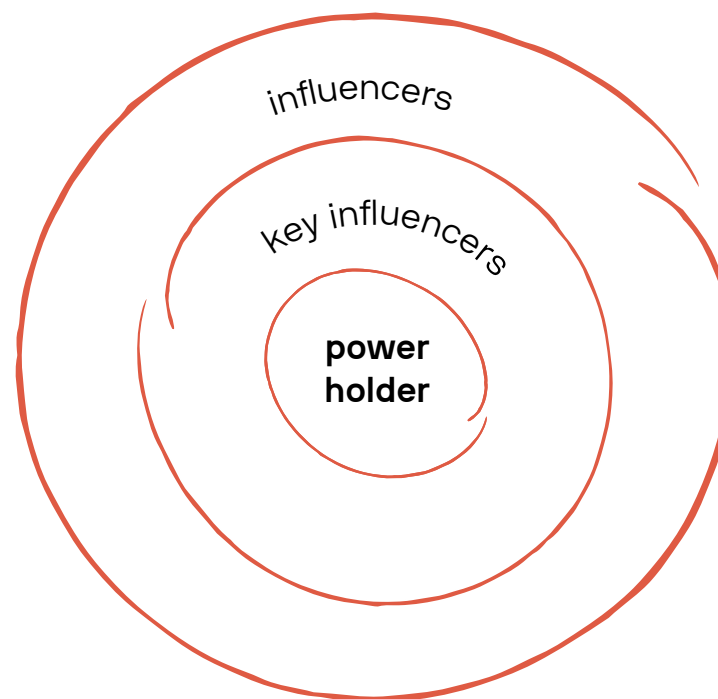
STEP ONE:
Identify the power holders[7]

Working together in a large group:

→ Discuss and agree who has the ultimate power to make the change you want in order to achieve your objective. (Go back to your 'tree' diagram from **Exercise 4.2.1** for ideas). This is your power holder(s). If it is an organisation or institution, then break this down into component parts (e.g. bureaucrats and political decision makers). Get a balance between targeting individuals and realising that they may move on. It can also be helpful to ask who is benefitting (such as financially or through increased status) from the current situation / system? Write who your power holder(s) is/are on a post-it note(s) and place in the central circle of the flip chart.

→ Then brainstorm all the key influencers of the power holder – those who have a direct impact on the thinking and decisions of your power holder. (Again, you may want to go back to your 'tree' diagram). Using a different colour of post-it notes to the power holder, list all of these key influencers down, each on a separate post it note and place them on the second inner circle. Think about those that have transformative power – like women's movements – as well as

formal power holders. A key influencer may not just be a person - it may also be social norms or public opinion.

→ Now brainstorm who your allies are. Some may share your values and long term goals, particularly around movement building and others may just share your immediate objectives. On a third colour of post it notes, write down each of these allies and place them in the relevant circle on the flip chart – are they key influencers? Or even power holders? Make a note of these on a flip chart to come back to when you look at strategy in **Exercise 4.4.3**.

→ Finally, brainstorm who else influences the key influencers, write these on a fourth colour of post-it note and place them in the third circle.

→ Spend some time reflecting on your mapping. Move the post-it notes around to indicate:

- Spheres of power – are there a cluster of powerful interests that group together? For example, a group of politicians who work closely together or a politician and a newspaper owner who collaborate? Move these post-it notes closer together and draw a circle round them all.

- Channels of influence – who influences who? Place post-it notes near each other to indicate

relationships of influence, or even draw lines between influencers and power holders.

→ Based on this discussion select about two-thirds of the most important targets (power holders and influencers) and allies you have identified and consider them in the next exercise. By selecting only the top two-thirds you don't waste your time on the 'outliers'.

7 Credit: Beverley Duckworth.

45min

STEP TWO:
Using the power matrix to assess how supportive power holders and influencers are and how much power allies really have

Preparation: Before starting either take a photo of the circles you have created in step one – or otherwise copy all the power holders, influencers and targets onto new post-its. Prepare a power matrix chart (see below)

Power matrix chart

More influence

Opponents
/blockers

Allies/
actively
supporting

No influence
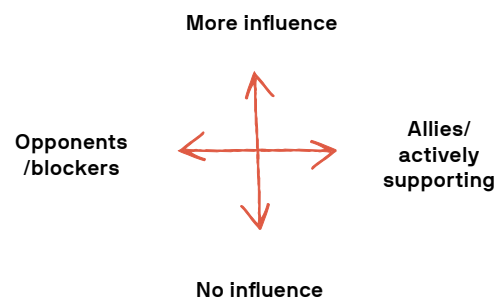
Working together in a large group:

→ Now that you have identified those with power, it is useful to also undertake a power mapping to assess who are your best allies and your most important targets.

→ Using the post-it notes that you created from the previous exercise (or copies) place each post-it on the power matrix according to how influential and supportive they are.

→ Once all the post-it notes are up, move them around if necessary, according to their relative positions. Check that X really is more supportive than Y. Are the NGOs really that influential?

→ Now draw a circle around those that you have connections with or are most likely to be able to influence.

→ Then look at each quadrant and decide who you should focus your efforts on. Which targets (power holders, influencers) and allies have you drawn circles around? Note that:

 - In the top right-hand quadrant are the people you most want to work with – so are most likely to be your targets and allies. Your priority target might be the one nearest the top right-hand corner – but also think about which one you have most influence over.

 - Can you do anything to change the minds of those in the top left-hand quadrant? If you think you can then consider adding them to the table

 - Those placed towards the top of the central vertical line are the influential, neutral players who you could prioritise getting on board, particularly if you have any connections to them.

 - Those in the bottom right hand quadrant may be your priority allies, particularly if you can help to increase their transformative power, for example, by working in coalition or alliance or calling for more accountability and increasing their participation in decision making.

 - It's not worth spending time on those in the bottom left hand quadrant.

→ Based on this information, identify five to seven priority targets (up to one or two power holders and three to five influencers) and three allies. Think about your level of resources and choose fewer targets if you have limited resources.

→ The table below provides some illustrative examples of power holders, influencers and allies.

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Examples of targets and allies

	Priority Target: **Power holder** who has the power to achieve the objective	Secondary Target: **Influencers** who influences the power holders	**Allies** who shares your objectives
Visible/formal	Government	Public officials	Parliamentarians
		Parliamentary committees	Trades unions
		Independent watchdogs	Other women's rights organisations
Hidden/Informal	Corporations	Consumers	
		Shareholders	
		Media	
Invisible	Traditional leaders	Women's movements	

In your Advocacy Planning Table add one or two power holders (column 1), three to five influencers (column 2) and up to three allies (column 4).

60min

Exercise 4.3.2 - Understanding what influences your target[8]

Purpose: Understand how to influence your targets.

Time: 1hr

Preparation: This exercise assumes that you have identified targets (power holders and influencers identified in the previous exercise). These will be written in you Advocacy Planning Table if you are using this.

Materials: Flip chart paper, coloured pens, post it notes.

STEP ONE:
Think bubbles

In small groups (each working on one of the targets that you identified in the last session):

→ Draw a quick picture of the target.

→ Imagine that a CSO representative comes to ask the target to make the change needed. Draw think bubbles around the target – what is making them say no? Capture the reasons in the think bubbles.

→ Others are whispering in the target's ear. Who do you think is supporting your message and who is blocking it?

→ Ask questions to prompt the think bubbles (making sure you have covered visible, hidden and invisible power such as:
  - Who – or what - influences them (sometimes it is their children or a celebrity)?
  - What about the evidence?
  - What keeps them awake at night (for corporations it might be about sales figures)?
  - Who are they accountable to – both in theory and in practice?
  - What social norms are influencing them?

  - What motivates them (for many politicians it is that they want to be re-elected or want to leave a legacy project)?
  - Do they have personal experiences or areas of expertise/interests that you can build on?
  - What constraints are they under (again look at all three forms of power)?

→ Working together in a large group, ask each group to give feedback on what they have concluded – write up the key points from the think-bubbles on post it notes.

STEP TWO:
Role play (optional depending on time)

If you have time you could try a role play – put yourself in this person's shoes. One person could be the target another the advocate. The advocate asks the target to make the change you want. Why does the target say no? Ask what would change their mind using the questions above as prompts.

✏ In your Advocacy Planning Table, summarise the information from your post-it notes from step three into column 3 in the same row as the relevant target.

8   Credit: Jessica Woodroffe, Sharon Smee and Beverley Duckworth.

⏱ **60min**

Exercise 4.3.3 - Deepening your knowledge of your target [optional][9]

You should know your targets (power holders and influencers) well by now. If you have time, this exercise will help you understand them even better. But if you are short on time you could leave this out

Purpose: To understand who and what influences your targets.

Time: 1hr

Preparation: Draw the 'What influences your targets?' diagram on flip chart paper (one per target, with the target written in the centre of each). Use your Advocacy Planning Table, if you are using this, to remind you of your targets in columns 1 and 2.

Materials: Diagram (on next page) on flip charts and pens.

In groups (there should be the same number of groups as targets) - assign each group one or two outer circles from the diagram to focus on (for example, (1) social norms and (2) belief systems). Give each group the diagram for one target (see preparation step above).

→ Starting with one of the assigned circles (for example, social norms) discuss things that influence the target in that area. Choose the most important one or two, write these on post-it notes and place them against the relevant circle on the flip chart diagram. Repeat this with your other allocated circle (for example, belief systems).

→ Then pass the flip chart to another group in a clockwise direction, so that each group works on a new target (but focuses on the same circles – so if you have been assigned social norms and belief systems you will work on these two areas for each target).

→ Repeat until each target flip chart has been worked on by all the groups.

Working together in a large group:

→ For each target, prioritise which of the post-its are the most important and circle them.

🖉 In your Advocacy Planning Table write down your circled post-it notes in column 3 in the same row as the relevant target.

9   Credit: Jessica Woodroffe.

What influences your targets?

- Motivations, incentives
- Social norms
- Influential personal relationships
- Target
- Accountable to
- Belief systems
- Knowledge, experiences, interests
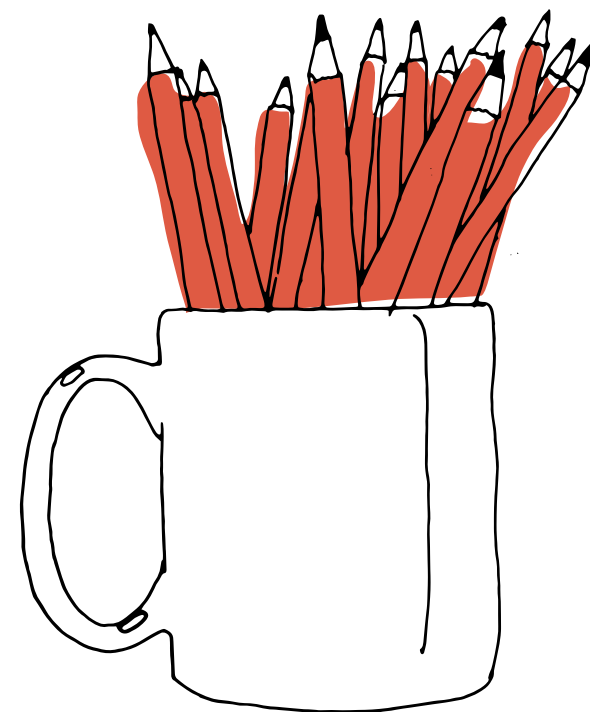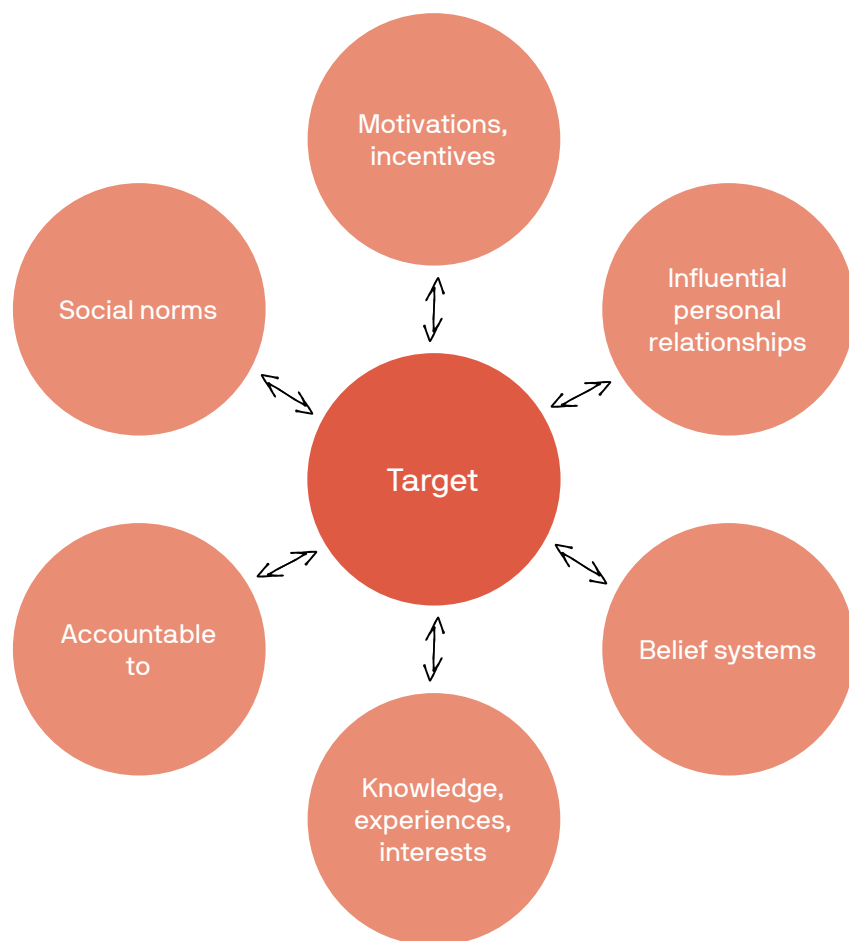
4.4 Strategic approach

30+30min

Exercise 4.4.1 - Timeline

Purpose: To identify key moments, decision points and opportunities in working towards your aims/objectives.

Time: 30 mins.

Preparation and material: Flip chart paper and coloured pens. Put four or five flip charts on the wall horizontally.

Working together in a large group:

→ Draw a horizontal line midway across the paper with the start of your project on the left and the end date on the right.

→ Above the line put key external pegs and events, for big events think about when the decision-making process starts and add that in, don't only mark the final event. Think about the hidden decision making too. This could include when a bill is written and then debated in Parliament, or when a budget is negotiated and then approved by the government. Think about economic, political and social spheres (See **Section 4.4.1**).

→ Then with another coloured pen go back and think about what is happening with visible and hidden power – can you add any key moments?

→ Below the line put your internal key decision points or events and events for your allies, such as coalition events or international days of action – especially anything where you are building your transformative power.

→ Now circle in red the key moments.

→ This can be a quick exercise – focus on the key points not on everything you can think of. Put this up on the wall to inform later planning in **Exercise 4.4.3**.

Exercise 4.4.2 - Your advocacy context[10]

Purpose: To ensure you locate your advocacy in the current context.

Time: 30 mins

Preparation: Write the words - Ignored, Opposed, Misunderstood, Absorbed, Heard, Acted on – on a flip chart paper turned lengthways.

Materials: Flip chart paper and pen

Working together in a large group:

→ Discuss where you sit with each of your targets at the moment on the continuum - Ignored, Opposed, Misunderstood, Absorbed, Heard, Acted on. Are you being ignored? Or are you likely to be heard? Use the discussion at **Section 4.4.2** and the definitions overleaf for support.

→ Write on the flip chart where each target is sitting on the continuum.

→ Discuss what does this tell you about what kind of advocacy you need to do – and what reactions you might expect? Note these on a flip chart to come back to in **Exercise 4.4.3** when you develop your strategy.

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10   Credit: Jessica Woodroffe in Womankind Worldwide (2011), *Women's Rights Advocacy Toolkit,* p. 61

The advocacy continuum

Ignored

If no-one is interested in your issue then your strategy may need to involve making as much noise as possible – you don't need to be too nuanced. Your issue will not even be on the political agenda and you have little to lose.

Opposed

If decision makers are opposing you that is progress! It means you've had an impact and they are worried. Hold your nerve. You may need to continue to make noise until you are firmly on the political agenda, but at some point it will also be time to start engaging with your influencers and giving your detailed policy message to counter the opposition and show you are credible.

Misunderstood

Your issue is now on the political agenda – but not necessarily in the way you would like it to be. Your real message has not got through yet.

Acted on

If the changes you want are actually made you've met your objectives!

Heard

When a decision maker promises to act on what you say you are nearly there – but make sure they follow through. Politicians' promises are often broken or back-tracked on. One common trick is to watch out for funds being re-promised or re-packaged.

Absorbed

In some ways, the hardest phase is if your language is being used and co-opted – but to mean something other than what you want to say. This can often be the case with women's rights work where lip service is paid to women's needs with no real understanding of the problem. Decision makers may also say that they are on your side but then find all sorts of reasons to do nothing.

Exercise 4.4.3 – Defining the strategy[11]

What kind of strategy you use varies greatly depending on your context, strengths and size of organisation. This is the hardest part of the process and likely to need the most guidance from the facilitator. See section 5 in the Womankind Toolkit for more on strategy if needed. Prompt questions are supplied in this exercise to help discussion.

Purpose: To bring together all your work so far in order to define the approach that you will take to achieving your objectives.

Time: Step one – 20 min per target, Step two – 40 min, Step three – 25 min.

Preparation: Put the flip charts from power mapping **Exercises in 4.3.1, 4.3.2** and **4.2.1** up at the front so that everyone can see them. Take a look at the Advocacy Planning Table so far (if you are using this) and ideally give participants time to look back at everything they have done prior, (see the exercises listed in step two overleaf in particular) perhaps over a break.

Materials: Flip chart paper and pens.

Introduction

Working together in a large group:

→ Facilitator to introduce the definition of an 'outcome' and 'strategy' – see **Section 4.4.3** (Step 2), and check that everyone is clear what an outcome is and what a strategy is before you start, and how they differ from activities. Explain that in this exercise you will look at outcomes and strategies together. There is no point in thinking of a good outcome if you can't achieve it, nor of developing a feasible strategy if success wouldn't contribute towards achieving your objective. In this exercise you will identify possible outcomes, and the strategies to achieve them, then in step two you will prioritise which strategies work for you. This will then determine which outcomes you prioritise. For women's rights advocacy we propose that all strategies should be a combination of challenging oppressive power and building transformative power, so in thinking about what strategy to use to influence your target use methods that build transformative power (see **Section 4.4.3**, Table 5 for examples). You will probably have identified one or two power holders and three/five influencers as your targets.

STEP ONE:
Possible outcomes

→ For each of your priority power holders, think of the different changes that they could make in order for your objective to be achieved, using the work you did in **Exercise 4.2.1** to identify the smaller 'branches' in your objectives tree. You should aim to identify about three of these possible outcomes or actions per power holder. Note: these are possible outcomes that you will prioritise at step three overleaf.

→ Write these possible 'outcomes' on a flip chart. These are the actions that you may want to persuade your target to take.

→ Be strategic about which outcomes you choose - in deciding on your priority outcomes, you should take into account:

- What most needs to happen in order for your objective to be achieved?
- Which changes does your target have the power and ability to make?
- Which changes can realistically be done within your time frame?
- Where would your priority influencers have most impact?

90min

→ Are there two complementary outcomes that can reinforce each other (such as media publicity and a Parliamentary enquiry)?

→ Which of these changes are transformative – leading to a long-term change in the balance of power not just immediate changes that can be easily reversed?

STEP TWO:
Possible strategies

→ Now for each of these outcomes think how you could make your target take the action needed. You need to focus on what you and your allies can achieve, not just on what you would like to happen. You will probably come up with a number of different options for each outcome. In deciding how to get your targets to act you should take into account the information you have collated in your Advocacy Planning Table and also:

- Your resources (**Exercise 2.2.1**)

- Your allies (**Exercise 4.3.1** and Advocacy Planning Table column 4)

- What influences your targets (**Exercise 4.3.2** and Advocacy Planning Table column 3)

- Opportunities from your timeline (**Exercise 4.4.1**)

- Where you are on the advocacy continuum (**Exercise 4.4.2**)

- Make sure you have covered all the options. Check:

- Is there an easy way – might your target already be willing to act?

- What route would play to your strengths and experience?

- Can you be creative and think of an unusual route or new allies to work with?

- Are there any cross-overs with your movement strengthening objective that you will focus on in **Exercise 4.4.4**)

→ Having identified some strategies try and develop them further. For each of the strategies you could ask yourselves:

- What type of power is most significant in preventing change – and what power do you and your allies have to shift this?

- How could you encourage the target to take your action – the carrot approach?

- Are there weak points in your target's armor that you can take advantage of – the stick approach?

- Can you reduce the oppressive power of your target or increase transformative power of your allies – the power shift approach?

- Did you identify any other influencers that you could now use to influence this priority target?

- Have you taken advantage of any external opportunities or pegs?

- What are the target's reactions going to be? (Is it against their self-interest, so acting on it would damage or lose them support? Will they see it as unsolvable and think nothing can be done? Do they not see it as a problem, so nothing needs to be changed? Will they feel it is inappropriate for them to take action, for example if it's a family matter? Is it a low priority or them? Or will they be in agreement?)

→ Write up all your possible strategies on flip charts

25min

STEP THREE:
Prioritising your top three strategies and targets

Working together in a large group:

→ You will now have about six possible strategies to achieve six different outcomes. Depending on your resources you can probably only carry out three strategies, and these may need to be one after the other.

→ Now prioritise your top three strategies for the objective you are working on. You might want to ensure that at least one of these strengthens transformative power.

→ Use the following prompt question to help you prioritise:

- Is there one strategy on the list that will influence several of your targets?

- What strategy do you think will most influence your target?

- Have you considered all the different locations of power, and building transformative power?

- Which strategy could make the most of timing and opportunities?

- Which strategy plays most to your strengths and value add?

- Do any of the strategies pose too great a risk?

→ Are there any targets for whom you didn't prioritise a strategy? They may still be important targets but if you don't have a good way to influence them, think if there are allies who you might be able to persuade to influence them instead.
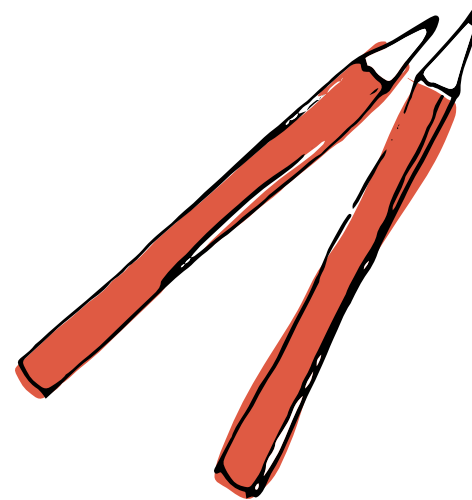
Examples of strategies for different objectives

Below are three examples of strategies for three *different objectives* to show how they might work with different locations of power (visible, invisible and hidden), and how to link strategies for challenging existing power and building transformative power.

	Power Holder	Influencer	What influences them?	Allies	Strategies to challenge existing power	Strategies to build transformative power	Outcomes
Objective: To prevent threatened budget cuts from leading to cuts in government funding for VAW prevention and response measures							
Visible/ formal	*Government Minister*	Parliamentarians	Parliamentary accountability Desire to be re-elected	INGOs	*Persuade Parliamentary Committee to hold an enquiry into a government department, and encourage and support more women's rights organisations to be involved in the consultation process to influence the outcome*	INGOs to share knowledge of parliamentary process with women's rights organisations and call for space for these organisations to meet with decision makers while women's rights organisations form a coalition with clear policy positions	Parliamentary Committee holds an enquiry into the government department, involving women's rights organisations in the consultation process. Some of the recommendations proposed by the women's rights coalition are adopted by the Committee
Objective: To stop the proposal of a new Act which would restrict women's access to communal land							
Hidden /Informal	*Mining corporations*	Shareholders Media	Accountability to shareholders Public profile in the media	CSOs	*Share information with a journalist about the extent of corporate lobbying on government ministers to propose a new Land Act restricting women's access to communal land and contact sympathetic shareholders*	Make alliances with land rights movements engaged in public protests	(1) Corporates break ties with government minister to avoid bad publicity. (2) Shareholders put pressure on the company to change its position at the next Annual Meeting

	Power Holder	Influencer	What influences them?	Allies	Strategies to challenge existing power	Strategies to build transformative power	Outcomes
Objective: To achieve more equal sharing of domestic work within households							
Invisible	*Media advertising*	Consumers	Consumer pressure	Consumer groups	*Persuade popular household product to challenge social norms around domestic work as women's work in their advertising by threatening consumer action*	Hold awareness raising programs with women's groups and makes alliances with consumer organisations	Soap powder company starts advertising campaign using images of men doing the washing that challenges social norms

In your Advocacy Planning Table, fill in columns 5 and/or 6 with the three priority strategies that you have decided on (three in total not three per column). Then put brackets around the power holders and/or influencers that have been de-prioritised as a result of this process.

In the Advocacy Planning Table fill in column 7 with the outcomes that correspond with the strategies, and identify possible allies who might take action against any de-prioritised targets. You will now have a completed table ready to use when you write up your strategy and workplan.

⏱ **40min**

Exercise 4.4.4 – Strategy for movement strengthening[12]

*If one of your objectives is to build transformative power through movement strengthening, then you will need to have agreed your objective using the movements' own processes. Once your objective has been agreed this exercise can help you define the strategy. **Section 4.4.3** will help you understand the difference between outcome and strategy.*

*The JASS We Rise Toolkit is an excellent resource that some of your team could use before starting the strategy process to identify where you are in the different phases of movement building. Womankind Worldwide's five movement strengthening pillars (see **Section 4.4.4, Box 2**) can also inform this process.*

Purpose: to identify what you need to do to meet your movement strengthening objective

Time: 40 min

Preparation: You can do this exercise focused initially either on your own organisation or on the alliance that you are already part of – decide ahead of time which you will do.

Materials: Pre-prepared SWOT diagram (see below) on flip chart on wall, post-its, coloured pens, optional - Gender at Work Framework for wall (see **Section 2.3**, Box 1)[13].

Strengths and weaknesses chart

| STRENGTHS | WEAKNESSES |
| OPPORTUNITIES | THREATS |

---
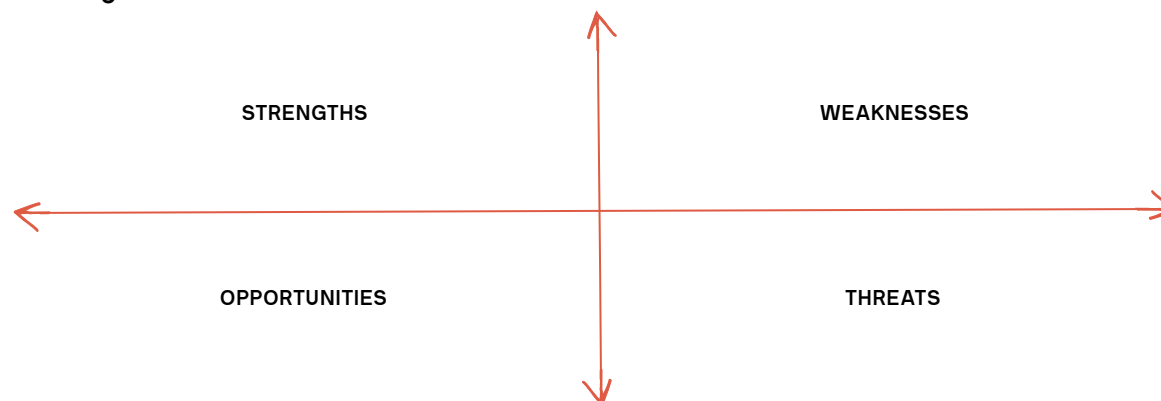
12   Credit Sharon Smee & Jessica Woodroffe.
13   Gender at Work Framework. Adapted from Rao, A., Sandler, J., Kelleher, D. & Miller, C. (2016), *Gender at Work: Theory and Practice for 21st Century Organisations*, Routledge, Oxon

STEP ONE:
Identifying strengths and weaknesses

In small groups:

→ Think about the transformative power that you and your allies have, and where your power is weak, and put these on post-its.

- Consider what phase you are at in movement building using the JASS We Rise Toolkit or **Section 4.4.4**, Figure 7.

- Consider also Womankind Worldwide's five movement strengthening pillars (**Section 4.4.4**, Box 2). You may have strengths in some pillars but have less focus or gaps in other pillars.

- You may find it useful to consider your power in each of the four quadrants in the Gender at Work Framework outlined in **Section 2.3**, Box 1. For example, have you collectively achieved legislative change on VAW but have failed to connect with women human rights defenders working to shift communities' norms on VAW in rural areas? As an alliance, have you mapped the skills and resources across your organisations and are using these strategically but have not focused on self and collective care for over-worked staff?

→ Put your three most important answers for where your power is strong and where your power is weak on post-its and add these to the SWOT chart on the wall – put strengths on one side of the chart and weaknesses on the other. In deciding which are most important use the following prompt questions:

- What are all our sources of transformative power- power with, power to, power within? (See **Section 2.3**, Table 1).

- How can we build our power within our organisation?

- What work are others currently doing? Who could we work in alliance with? How could we mobilise joint resources?

- What are the conflicts within the movement that we need to navigate or can help resolve?

→ Keep the SWOT flip chart as you will use the weaknesses section again when looking at risk mitigation in **Exercise 4.5**.

STEP TWO:
Identifying opportunities and threats

In the same small groups:

→ Now look externally – what opportunities are there to build your own power or challenge the power of others? (Are there funding opportunities for alliances, or externally organised events that you could join?) Similarly think about what external threats you could be facing – who or what may undermine your power (these could include funding cuts, a closing of civil society space, security threats or direct threats on women human rights defenders). If you have already done a timeline for another objective (**Exercise 4.4.1**), where you identified key events with your allies, consider if anything is relevant as an opportunity or threat.

→ Discuss and agree your top five opportunities and threats. Each group can put a maximum of five post-its in Opportunities and five in Threats in the SWOT chart up on the wall.

STEP THREE:
Building your strengths and mitigating your weaknesses

Working together in a large group: Discuss what is on the chart. Put a circle around each of the three to five strengths that excite you most and a circle around each of the three to five weaknesses that you fear most.

→ Now look at your opportunities and threats – is there anything in the opportunities quadrant that can help you build on your strengths or mitigate your weaknesses? Put a ring around them and draw a connecting line to the relevant strength or weakness. Is there anything in the threats quadrant that might undermine your strengths or further exacerbate your weaknesses? Will they have a major impact, and could you do something about them? If so then put rings round those and draw a connecting line to the relevant strength or weakness (see example of SWOT diagram on page 118)

→ Choose five pairs (either strength plus opportunity/threat and weakness plus opportunity /threat) and write these onto a new flip chart with a circle in the middle for the outcome which makes the most out of the two factors. Choose pairs that are most likely to succeed in building transformative power given your resources (see example of outcomes on page 119)

→ Your outcome will be something that will strengthen your movement – not an external change (see outcome examples below)

→ Now see if you can prioritise the top three pairs. These will be your priority strategies.

→ Consider any allies you can work with to achieve your strategy as well as any risks you may need to monitor and/or mitigate.
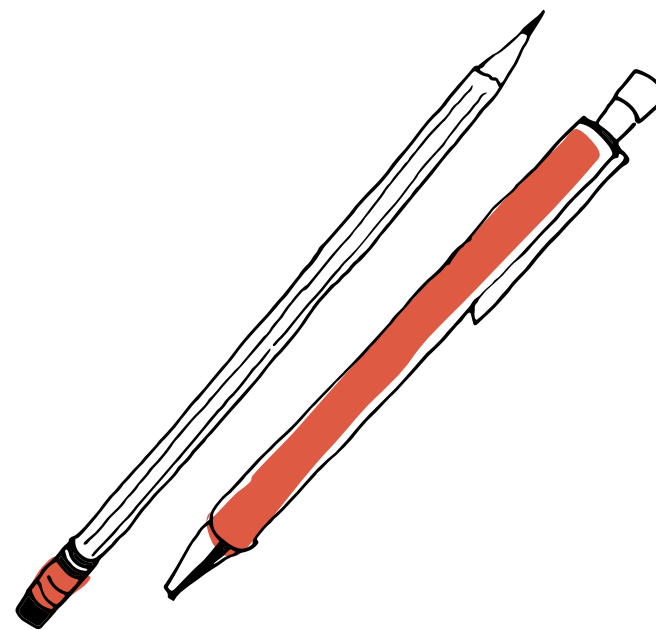
Example of SWOT diagram with pairs

STRENGTHS

WEAKNESSES

Topical
Issue

Shared
Values

Brave Staff

Insufficient
Resources

Confused
decision
making

Consutation
Process

NGO
willing to
provide
funds

Physical
threat to
human rights
defenders

Opponents
exploiting
weakness

National Day
of Action

OPPORTUNITIES

THREATS

Example of outcomes:

Strength/Weakness	Outcome	Opportunity/Threat
Strength: Within the alliance we share values and aims.	Joint policy position.	**Opportunity:** Government consultation on VAW.
Strength: Our staff members are brave and passionate.	Increased visibility and therefore security is brought to our work through engagement with the global women's movement.	**Threat:** There is a threat to the safety of human rights defenders in our country. **Opportunity:** International women's movements are interested in our work. security is brought to our work through engagement with the global women's movement.
Strength: Our issue is topical	Our alliance grows in numbers as more organisations hear about us.	**Opportunity:** National day of action on VAW organized by government.
Weakness: There is confusion over how decisions are made in the alliance.	Our decision making processes are improved through formal structures and memorandum of understanding.	**Threat:** Opponents seek to use lack of clarity against us.
Weakness: Insufficient resources.	Funding application approved that reflects the alliance's priorities and ways of working.	**Opportunity:** An INGO is interested in funding work in our area.

In **Part 3**: Templates, you will find **Template 2:** Movement Strengthening Planning Table. Use this template to record your priority strategies so that you can refer to these throughout the rest of the planning steps.

Example using Movement Strengthening Planning Table (Template 2)

Aim: The women's rights movement in our geographical area has stronger advocacy capacity.				
Objective: To develop a shared position for joint advocacy on ending violence against women by the movement by 2021.				
Strengths/Weakness	**Opportunity/threat to respond to**	**Outcomes – what we will need to achieve**	**Allies**	**Risks**
Alliance shares values and aims in relation to ending VAW.	*Government consultation on VAW.*	*The advocacy work of the movement is strengthened by developing a joint policy position on ending VAW to influence Government.*	*Other CSOs who are focused on this process in the country.* *Clerk to the VAW consultation process who will share information.*	*Other CSOs see us as too close to government by being involved in formal process.* *Differences in opinion around resource use and decision making processes prevent agreement being reached on a shared position.*

4.5 Risk mitigation

60+min

Exercise 4.5 - Identifying and mitigating risk

Purpose: To identify risks associated with any action you will take and agree how to mitigate them

Time: 1hr (longer if there are a lot of risks).

Preparation: Copy risk mitigation chart onto a flip chart or print copies (**Template 5**). You could also put any flip chart of weaknesses from **Exercise 4.4.4** on the wall.

Materials: Risk mitigation chart, post-its and coloured pens.

In small groups:

→ Discuss what risks may occur as a result of your advocacy, both to your organisations but also to staff and the people you work with.

→ Think back to risks that you may have thought about or noted down during any of the planning steps. There are some questions which may be useful prompts at the end of each section in the toolkit.

→ If you completed the movement strengthening planning table in **Exercise 4.4.4**, you may also want to consider any weaknesses you identified.

→ Select up to five risks. Be as specific as possible in thinking about what the risk is and who it will impact.

Working together in a large group:

→ Hear back from the small groups and write up all the suggested risks in column one of the risk assessment and mitigation table (see **Template 5** for a version to print or copy).

→ Now discuss as a group the likelihood that you think this risk will happen (high, medium or low) and then discuss the impact if it does happen (high, medium or low). Fill in columns 2 and 3 on the chart after you have reached agreement.

→ Then pick the top five risks based on their probability and impact (that is, the risks with the highest likelihood of happening and with the greatest impact). You could agree to monitor other risks but not to take any specific measures at this time unless the risk assessment changes.

In small groups (with one risk per group)

→ Think about how you can mitigate the risk both by reducing its likelihood and minimising the damage it will cause. Is there any risk so serious that you should go back and change your plans?

Then return to working together in a large group:

→ Agree up to three mitigating actions for each risk. There should also be a risk holder for each risk. If there is not time to agree the risk holder during the exercise or you if you need to consult with others to do this, make sure this is noted as an action for follow-up after the workshop / planning session.

Risk Assessment and Mitigation Table (see Template 5)

	Potential risks – think about risks for those with different identities	Likelihood it will happen (High/Medium/Low)	Impact if it happens (High/Med/Low)	Actions planned to mitigate risk	Risk Holder
1					
2					
3					
4					
5					

4.6 Methods and activities

🕙 **90min**

Exercise 4.6 - Activity Table[14]

Purpose: To identify the actual activities that your organisation will carry out, and the resources needed to do it.

Time: 1.5 hrs.

Preparation: Copy the Activity Table (**Template 6**) onto flip chart paper. Ensure everyone has their completed Advocacy Planning Table (**Template 1)** and Movement Strengthening Planning Table (**Template 2)** (if you have used these tables) and/or put flip- charts from **Exercises 4.4.3** and **4.4.4** on the wall.

Materials: Post-it notes, and pens.

STEP ONE:

Refer the group to the outcomes and corresponding strategies identified in **Exercises 4.4.3** and **4.4.4** (which will now also be in their Advocacy Planning Tables columns 5,6 and 7, if you have used this). In small groups, each taking one outcome (or you may prefer to do this together, as a large group):

→ Consider the outcomes you've been allocated and the strategies to achieve this outcome. Write the strategies on flip chart paper. For each strategy, brainstorm a list of activities that you might do as part of this strategy. Write each of these on a separate post-it note and stick it on the flip chart. Examples of activities you may use include direct influencing of parliamentarians, petitions, public campaigns, boycotts, protests, press releases and education campaigns (see **Section 4.6**, Table 6 for more ideas).

→ Now prioritise the list of activities. Think about the following questions:

- Why will this activity contribute to the desired outcome?

- Have you got the skills needed?

- Have you got the resources?

STEP TWO:

Working together in a large group:

→ Hear back from each group on the prioritised activities and check if the wider group has any questions or comments.

→ Write the prioritised activities in the Activity Table on the flip chart. For each activity, decide on the deadline, the person responsible and the resources needed. Identify any risks there might be and think about how you can mitigate against them in your activity planning.

→ Use the Table to do a reality check. For example, if three activities have a deadline in the same month; this may not be feasible. If responsibility for the majority of activities is sitting with one organisation in your coalition; how can this be shared more equally? If you don't have the resources, should the activity still go ahead?

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14   Credit: Womankind Worldwide (2011), *Women's Rights Advocacy Toolkit,* p.74.

Example of Activity Planning table

Outcome	Activity	Deadline	Persons Responsible	Resources Needed	Risks
Watchdog body holds an enquiry into a government department	*Brief covering main arguments is produced and disseminated to the Watchdog Committee* *Meeting held with influential member of the Watchdog who is also sympathetic*	*30 June 2017*	*Policy Manager*	*Staff time* *Design and printing costs* *Meeting costs*	*Civil servants in the department hear of the proposal and try to discredit your organisation*

4.7 Core messages

🕐 **45min**
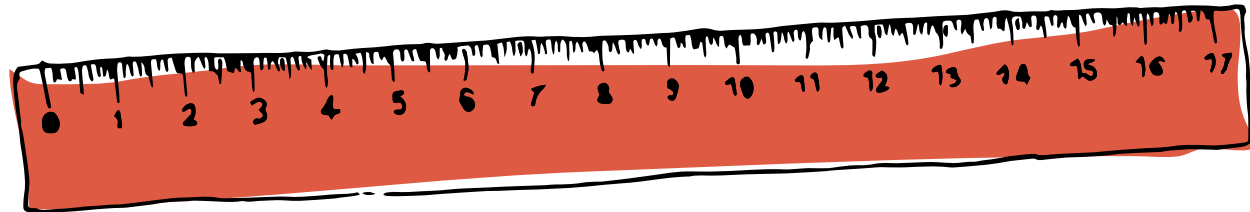
Exercise 4.7 - Core message development[15]

Imagine if someone in power asked you what you wanted – you need to be ready with a clear explanation. Use the chart on the next page to build your core message.

Purpose: To be able to present your case in a few sentences that you will repeat again and again.

Time: 45 mins

Preparation: If you completed **Exercises 4.3.2** and **4.3.3** put the flip charts from these exercises on the wall. Also ensure everyone has their completed Advocacy Planning Table (if you have used this).

Materials: Flip chart and pens. Core Messages Table (**Template 7**) written up on flip charts –make sure there is one table per small group.

In small groups or working together in a large group:

→ If the group has completed **Exercises 4.3.2** and/or **4.3.3**, invite them to review the factors they identified as influencing their advocacy targets. These will be in column 3 of the Advocacy Planning Table, if you have used this. Keep these factors in mind when thinking about the message which might resonate best.

→ Using the questions in the table below (**Template 7)** start by filling in each box using post-it notes so you can move or remove them.

→ Gradually refine them until you have one agreed upon sentence for each white box. Don't worry if it doesn't read well yet. This isn't your final version.

→ Your core message will now include all these four points. It does not have to be four separate sentences - see if you can combine your points to make the core message as sharp as possible. (You can try to do this together as a large group, but it is often better to let one or two people who are good writers have a go at this. Just make sure they include all the agreed points.)

---

15   Credit: Sharon Smee & Jessica Woodroffe.

Core Messages Table (Template 7)

Identifying core messages		
		Ideas for part of your core message
Why change is important	*This could be your problem statement*	
Evidence or example	*A punchy fact or figure or human example (optional)*	
What would solve the problem	*This could be taken from you Aim*	
Action needed	*Who do you want to do what, and when – is there a particular time when the action needs to be taken by?*	

Core message	*Your couple of sentences which combine these messages*	

5.

Monitoring Evaluation and Learning

5.1 Planning[16]

⏱ **15min**

This exercise could be used at the end of a planning session or workshop

Exercise 5.1.1: Participant reflection

Purpose: To assess whether your planning process, has enabled empowered participation by participants and other key stakeholders

Time: 15 mins to complete at the end of a planning session or workshop.

Preparation: Develop a participant reflection sheet. This is a sheet with a list of questions that you hand out to participants to prompt reflection on a particular activity. Below are some suggestions of questions you may wish to include. Make sure you include time at the end of a workshop or activity for this reflection space.

You may also want to consider using the 'Ladder of Participation' tool[17] (see **Section 5.3.1**, Table 7) in your session to help measure change over the advocacy cycle.

At the end of your planning session or workshop:

→ Distribute the reflection sheet to all participants and provide a space for individual reflection.

→ Stress that the reflection is voluntary and anonymous, unless the participant would like to discuss further with a member of staff or share with the workshop group.

→ Collect the reflection sheets and compile the results in a summary report.

→ Make sure you share this summary with the participants later and provide a space for discussion and reflection on how the process can be improved for next time.

Example of questions you may wish to include:

→ Did you think we had a sound evidence-base to inform our advocacy planning?

→ Did you feel we included the voices and priorities of diverse groups of women?

→ How comfortable were you with the strategies that were agreed?

→ Did you feel the planning process was participatory and inclusive?

→ Is there anything you are concerned about?

→ Did your planning help you understand what information is required to support MEL as we implement our advocacy plan including when it will be collected and analysed, and by whom?

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16   Credit: All exercises in this section - Tracy McDiarmid & Sharon Smee
17   Ladder of Participation: See tool in *Working effectively with women and men in water, sanitation and hygiene programs Resource Guide* (p.23)

5.2 Implementation

Exercises 5.2.1, 5.2.2 and 5.2.3 should be used after you have started your advocacy – for example after each advocacy activity is completed. As part of the planning process, you should identify who has responsibility for monitoring and how you can build it into existing organisational processes.

Exercise 5.2.1: Activity log

Purpose: To monitor the implementation of your advocacy activities and reflect on what was achieved.

Time: 30 mins to complete after each main advocacy activity

Preparation: Prepare Activity Log (**Template 8**) as a flip chart or print out copies for participants.

In a group,

→ Record information about your advocacy activities, in conjunction with the Activity Table you completed in **Exercise 4.6**

Activity Log (Template 8)

Date	Activity	Expected Outcome	Persons Responsible	Activity Outputs	Assessment of outcome
Date activity takes place	*Details of the activity*	*Why did you do this activity?*	*Who was responsible*	*Qualitative and quantitative data on the activity*	*Did you achieve your expected outcome? What did you learn?*

30min

Exercise 5.2.2: After action reflection

Purpose: To develop and document reflections and learning from your advocacy activities.

Time: 30 minutes

Preparation and material: Develop 'After Action Reflection' questions for your organisation or coalition.

This is a quick exercise which can be conducted after each activity, using the following steps:

→ Convene a meeting of key people involved in the activity (or use an existing space such as a staff meeting).

→ Make it clear that this is a reflection and learning space, where the most important thing is to learn from advocacy work and be open and honest.

→ Discuss the after-action reflection questions (see examples below).

→ Record the discussion as well as any feedback received during the activity.

Example of 'After Action Reflection" questions:[18]

→ Did we do what we said we would do?

→ Did we reach our advocacy targets?

→ Was our advocacy messaging relevant and accessible to our advocacy targets?

→ Did we achieve our expected immediate or intermediate outcomes from our activities? If not, why not?

→ Did we experience backlash or negative changes?

→ Did we work well with others? Are we building the strength of coalitions or social movements?

→ What have we learnt? What would we do differently?

→ Do we need to change our activities or strategy as a result of this activity? If so, how?

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18   Adapted from Ross, J. (2013), *Advocacy: A Guide for Small and Diaspora NGOs,* PLP, p.14, available at: https://www.bond.org.uk/resources/advocacy-guide-small-and-diaspora-organisations

5.3 Understanding impact and learning

60min

*Exercises **5.3.1, 5.3.2** and **5.3.3** would normally done at the end of a planning phase in your advocacy, so that the findings can influence the next phase of your planning process*

Exercise 5.3.1: Outcome harvesting

Purpose: To collect evidence as to what has changed and to determine if your advocacy strategy contributed to this significant change.

Time: 1 hour (plus pre-work and follow-up to collect evidence).

Preparation: Ask participants to bring along any evidence, such as secondary sources, interviews with, or feedback from, key informants, which may be useful.
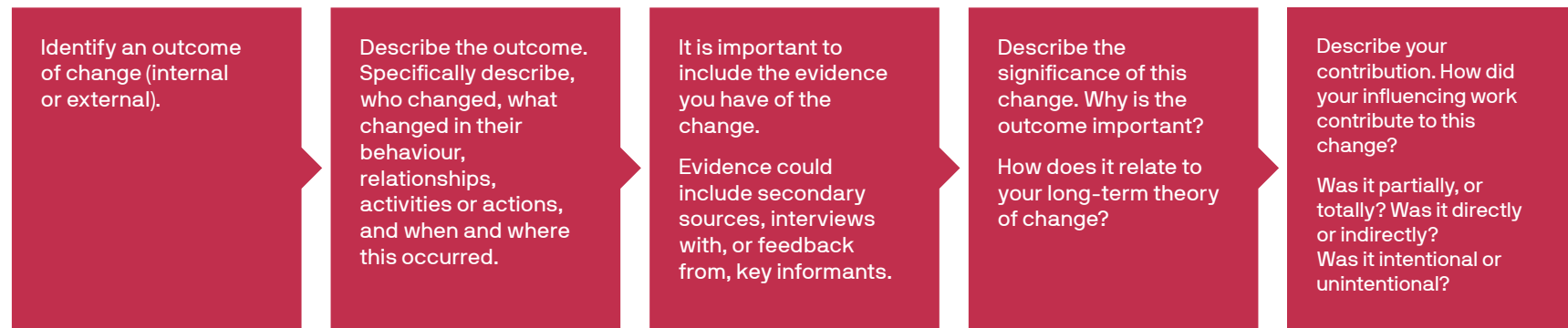
Outcome harvesting is a participatory group activity which enables the group to discuss what has changed and then to work backwards to determine if your advocacy work contributed to this change.

The outcome(s) can be the intended outcome identified as part of your planning process (such as in **Exercise 4.4.3**), or unintended changes that occurred. They can be positive or negative, but there needs to be a reasonable and convincing connection between your influencing work and the outcome. You also need to have evidence from multiple sources to support this connection.

Below is an example of information which should be included in an outcome harvest. As a group, discuss these questions and the evidence you have brought along. Write up this discussion in the form of a 'story.' There is no set structure for your outcome harvest story, but you may wish to use the questions below to guide your narrative.

Information to include in an outcome harvest story

| Identify an outcome of change (internal or external). | Describe the outcome. Specifically describe, who changed, what changed in their behaviour, relationships, activities or actions, and when and where this occurred. | It is important to include the evidence you have of the change.

Evidence could include secondary sources, interviews with, or feedback from, key informants. | Describe the significance of this change. Why is the outcome important?

How does it relate to your long-term theory of change? | Describe your contribution. How did your influencing work contribute to this change?

Was it partially, or totally? Was it directly or indirectly? Was it intentional or unintentional? |

You can find further useful information on outcome harvesting here: http://outcomeharvesting.net.

Exercise 5.3.2: Most significant learning

Purpose: To select one specific learning from your advocacy work and to consider it more deeply.

Time: 1 hour. This activity could form part of a reflection workshop.

Preparation: Develop a list of questions to be used in pair interviews and create a prompt sheet.

Most significant learning (MSL) is about collecting stories about learning and, in particular, reflecting on situations where we held an assumption about something that turned out not to be true.

→ For this exercise, participants should form into pairs. One person is the interviewer and the other the interviewee.

→ The interviewer should ask the interviewee the questions on the prompt sheet and jot down the key points. This exercise is about telling a story so prompts such as 'tell me more about that,' can be very useful.

→ After 15 mins, the participants should swap so the interviewer becomes the interviewee and repeat the process.

→ At the end of the exercise, the group comes together to share their significant learning stories and to see if group agreement can be reached on the most significant learning or learning(s).

→ Spend the remaining time discussing what this learning might mean for future advocacy work.

The following types of questions can be useful prompts[19]:

→ Please list any assumptions/hunches that you held that turned out not to hold true, over the last three months. What do you think was your most significant learning?

→ Can you tell the story of how you discovered this assumption wasn't holding true?

→ Why did you choose this learning in particular? That is, why was it significant for you?

→ How did this learning affect you/ your organisation's work?

→ What difference will it make going forward?

19   Credit: Adapted from Clear Horizon Consulting, Most Significant Learning Activity. This approach is currently being piloted by the Australian Department for Foreign Affairs and Trade.

½ **day to a day**

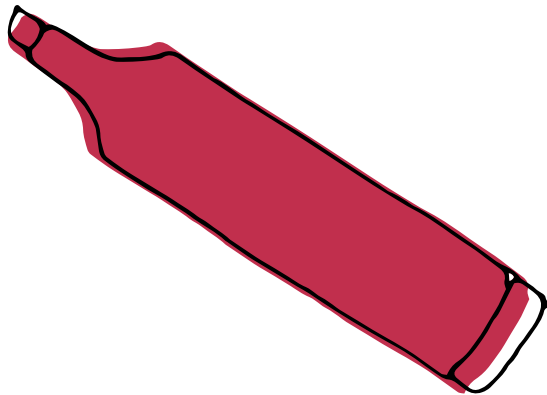### Exercise 5.3.3: Reflection workshop

Purpose: To create a dedicated space for reflection to learn how to adapt your work in the future.

Time: ½ day to a day.

Preparation: Agenda development and workshop logistics including facilitation.

What you choose to focus on in the reflection workshop will depend on your organisational needs and priorities. This may include:

→ Questioning how you did or did not challenge oppressive power and build transformative power through your advocacy?

→ Looking at what opportunities were utilised and what challenges were faced?

→ Considering the need for changes to your strategy and/or your ways of working as an organisation and with others.

→ Using this as a space to undertake **Exercise 5.3.2** on Most Significant Learning.

→ Revisiting the principles which are guiding your MEL and the extent to which these have impacted on your MEL practice.

→ Considering whether your MEL tools are meeting your needs or whether you need to adapt or change them.

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PART 3.

Templates

Template 1: Advocacy planning table

Aim:							
Objective:							
	1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**
	Power holder (Identify 1 or 2)	**Influencers** (Identify 3 to 5)	**What influences them?**	**Allies**	**Strategy to challenge existing power**	**Strategy to build transformative power**	**Outcomes**
Visible/ formal power							
Hidden/ Informal power							
Invisible power							
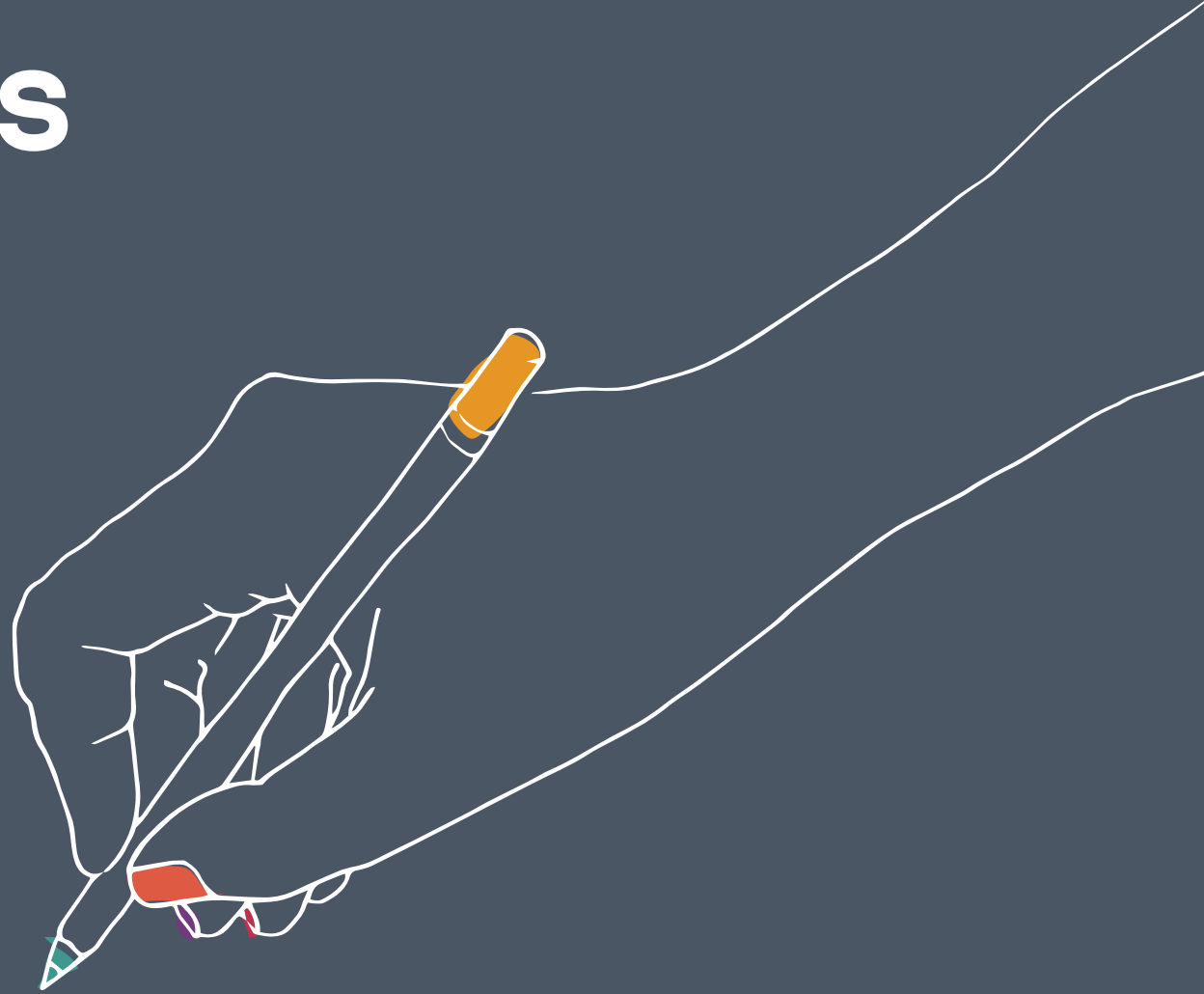
Template 2: Movement strengthening advocacy planning table

Aim				
Objective:				
Strengths/Weakness	**Opportunity/threat to respond to**	**Outcomes – what we will need to achieve**	**Allies**	**Risks**

Template 3: Assessing resources table (see Exercise 2.2.1)

Resource	Questions to consider	Opportunities – how could you fill in any gaps?	What risks do you face and how will you mitigate them?
Money	*Is your budget realistic* *Do you have sufficient funds?*		
People and skills	*Who will do the work* *Do they have the right skills*		
Information and knowledge	*Have you done the research needed?*		
Partners and relationships	*What existing partnerships do you have?* *Are you working well together?*		
Reputation and relationships	*What do target audiences think of you?* *Do you have good relationships with those with power?*		
Time	*Are there internal time constraints like funding deadlines?*		

Template 4: Aim prioritisation table (see Exercise 3.2)

Aim Statement				
Criteria	**Explanation**	**Strengths**	**Areas of concern**	**Marks out of 5**
Important	*Would achieving this meet the practical and strategic needs and priorities of the women we work with?*			
Transformative	*Will there be a shift in power either by increasing transformative power or reducing power over (or both)*			
Achievable	*Is this feasible in the time frame?* *Do we have influence over the decision makers?* *Are there major opportunities or pegs coming up?*			
Easy to communicate	*Can we make our target audiences interested in this issue, do we have the evidence to back up our claims?*			
Added value	*Can our organisation or coalition offer something not already being done by others?*			
Organisational fit	*Does this aim fit with our vision, mission and values?* *Does it build on existing work?*			

Template 5: Risk Assessment and Mitigation Table (see Exercise 4.5)

	Potential risks – think about risks for those with different identities	Likelihood it will happen (High/Medium/Low)	Impact if it happens (High/Med/Low)	Actions planned to mitigate risk	Risk Holder
1					
2					
3					
4					
5					

Template 6: Activity Table (see Exercise 4.6)

Outcome	Activity	Deadline	Persons Responsible	Resources Needed	Risks

Template 7: Core Messages Table (see Exercise 4.7)

Identifying core messages		
		Ideas for part of your core message
Why change is important	*This could be your problem statement*	
Evidence or example	*A punchy fact or figure or human example (optional)*	
What would solve the problem	*This could be taken from you Aim*	
Action needed	*Who do you want to do what, and when – is there a particular time when the action needs to be taken by?*	
Core message	*Your couple of sentences which combine these messages*	

Template 8: Activity Planning Log (see Exercise 5.2.1)

Date	Activity	Expected Outcome	Persons Responsible	Activity Outputs	Assessment of outcome
Date activity takes place	*Details of the activity*	*Why did you do this activity?*	*Who was responsible*	*Qualitative and quantitative data on the activity*	*Did you achieve your expected outcome? What did you learn?*

This toolkit was crafted by Viola Design

IWDA

Level 1, 250 Queen Street,
Melbourne, Victoria, Australia

PO Box 64, Flinders Lane,
Victoria, Australia 8009

advocacy@iwda.org.au
+(61) 3 8373 2500

iwda.org.au

Womankind

Wenlock Studios,
50-52 Wharf Road, London,
N1 7EU, United Kingdom

info@womankind.org.uk
+(44) 203 567 5930

womankind.org.uk