

PRACTICAL GUIDE TO STRATEGIC ADVOCACY PLANNING

Acknowledgments

This practical guide aims to provide NCD civil society with an understanding of the steps to plan and conduct successful advocacy campaigns, leveraging examples from NCD Alliance's global network of national and regional NCD alliances. NCD Alliance thanks the civil society advocates and alliances that provided information and examples of their work as cases. The practical guide was conceptualised, managed, and edited by NCD Alliance's Luis Manuel Encarnación, Linda Markova, Cristina Parsons Perez and Katie Dain. Elizabeth Leitman and Alessandra Durstine, from Catalyst Consulting Group (external consultants), developed the case profiles, tools, and examples, and wrote the content. Jimena Márquez and Mar Nieto undertook the graphic design and production. This practical guide was made possible thanks to NCD Alliance's partnership with the Leona M. and Harry B. Helmsley Charitable Trust.



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ADVOCACY INSTITUTE

Introduction

Noncommunicable diseases (NCDs) are a major global health and development challenge, accounting for 41 million deaths each year (74% of all deaths globally)¹, and causing half of all global disability. NCDs include diseases such as cancers, diabetes, cardiovascular diseases, chronic respiratory diseases and mental health and neurological disorders.

The main modifiable risk factors contributing to NCDs are tobacco use, alcohol use, unhealthy diets, lack of physical activity and air pollution. The deaths from NCDs are projected to escalate to 52 million - 75% of all deaths - in 2030. Almost a quarter of all people currently live with at least one NCD, and the number of those living with more than one NCD has steadily increased over the past 20 years to become the new normal in many parts of the world. Although the burden is universal, low- and middle-income countries (LMICs) are hit the hardest, with over three-quarters of all NCD deaths occurring in these countries. NCDs are impacting health systems, reducing human capital, undermining economic development, and threatening global security, and civil society organisations play a critical role in leading strategic advocacy, awareness and accountability campaigns to raise the profile of NCDs and demand high-level political will and action to address NCDs and their risk factors.

The NCD Alliance is a unique civil society network, dedicated to shaping a world in which everyone can live a healthy and productive life, free from the preventable suffering, stigma, disability, and death caused by non-communicable diseases (NCDs). It brings together over 300 members in 81 countries, including a network of 66 national and regional NCD alliances, forming a respected, united, and credible global civil society movement.

This Practical Guide to Strategic Advocacy Planning supports NCD Alliance's aim to strengthen NCD civil society advocacy efforts to drive transformative change at the global, regional, and national levels. It presents the eight main steps to advocacy planning, with examples, case studies from the network, advocacy tools and other resources.

Role of civil society in NCD prevention and control

Civil society plays a key role in four major areas in the prevention and control of NCDs (the four A's):



ADVOCACY

Driving systemic change, such as through influencing legislation, funding, or policy for NCD prevention and control and amplifying voices of people living with NCDs



ACCOUNTABILITY

The cyclical process of monitoring, review, and action. It entails tracking national and global actions of the public and private sectors against internationally or nationally agreed political commitments and standards; and subsequent identification of what works and why, what needs improving, and where increased action is needed.



ACCESS

Including the delivery of health services, medications, patient support, legal support, practical support, access to healthcare in humanitarian situations, etc.



AWARENESS

Targeting the general public or specific populations with initiatives aimed at increasing knowledge and changing attitudes or behaviours; raising public demand for improved rights and services.

What are the objectives of this Practical Guide? →

Who should use this guide? →

How is this guide structured? →

What are the objectives of this Practical Guide?

PROVIDE GUIDANCE to NCD civil society, particularly national and regional NCD alliances, to plan and carry out successful and strategic advocacy campaigns

PRESENT KEY STEPS in planning and conducting strategic advocacy

DEVELOP THE SKILLS of NCD alliances to plan and implement advocacy campaigns for law and policy changes related to NCD prevention and control

PROVIDE PRACTICAL TOOLS for NCD advocacy campaign planning

INSPIRE NCD ALLIANCES to act as effective NCD advocates

Who should use this guide?

INTENDED AUDIENCE

NCD alliances and civil society at all levels, from newly formed groups to the very established

ADAPT IT

Modify approaches according to the specific realities of your context and your advocacy priorities and opportunities

How is this guide structured?

The guide takes you through the **eight steps of strategic advocacy planning**:

WHAT IS ADVOCACY?

Advocacy is about seeking systems change, it is how civil society can influence the adoption (or strengthening) of policies, programmes, regulations, legislation and even funding allocations. Advocacy helps advance NCD prevention and control through broad scale change and impact. It requires following a thorough and well-thought approach to promote and defend a specific issue, based on a clear understanding of the surrounding social, public health, political and policy context, building support of key constituencies to influence key decision-makers in taking a specific action to achieve a desired change.

There is power in numbers, and as global health and NCD advocates we are encouraged to partner and collaborate with other NCD civil society organisations and health and development groups. This will ensure our advocacy efforts are stronger and that we create a policy environment that is conducive of greater health benefits for all, especially those communities in greatest need.

Advocacy is not a one-off event or activity, but a strategic process following a plan designed to achieve a desired change. This Practical Guide will expand on NCD Alliance's eight recommended steps for strategic advocacy planning.

What are some characteristics of advocacy?

Seeks change

About achieving system transformation.

Partnership

Promotes collective action and finding common ground .

Strategic

Follows a strategic approach, but is also dynamic.

Unpredictable

Frequently carried out in rapidly changing environments, rarely is a linear process.

Timely

Timing is paramount in advocacy, and it seeks to leverage windows of opportunity; addressing openings in the policy process that create possibilities for influence over directions and outcomes (e.g., key dates for a government decision, elections, or other important circumstances related to your advocacy priorities). Windows of opportunity allow advocates to push policy solutions and draw attention to their issues.

ART

Advocates need to be creative and innovative in leveraging available resources to reach their advocacy objectives and in demonstrating flexibility amongst rapidly changing policy and political environments.



Successful advocacy involves following a plan, a series of recommended strategic steps to increase the chances of achieving systems change.

Examples of NCD Advocacy

- Direct meetings and outreach with policy- and decision-makers
- Appearing before government committees, commissions, and legislative bodies, and ensuring a space for meaningful engagement of civil society and communities (such as people living with NCDs and youth) in decision-making
- Public mobilisation through street or online demonstrations
- Using traditional and social media to raise the profile of NCDs among a diverse target audience
- Litigation to exercise citizens' rights, defend or oppose policies
- Address action or inaction on the part of governments or unhealthy commodity industries

What are the different types of desired advocacy results?

- **Advocacy gains:** Incremental steps towards achieving your overall advocacy goal, such as agenda setting (e.g., positioning your issue higher on the political agenda through issue framing, the development and dissemination of policy messages, prioritisation of policy options) or getting the public support of a key decision-maker, securing a civil society seat at an advisory committee, etc.
- **Advocacy wins:** Ultimate accomplishments such as a new policy enacted, or a new law approved as a result of an advocacy campaign.

Read this Case Study 1 to learn what the Healthy Philippines Alliance (HPA) accomplished through the roll-out of a strategic and successful advocacy campaign mobilising different NCD civil society groups towards a shared goal of attaining Universal Health Coverage for all, and targeting the legislative and executive powers for the passage of the Universal Health Care Law in 2019.

CASE STUDY 1

How advocacy works: Healthy Philippines Alliance (HPA) and the Universal Health Care Law, 2019

About Healthy Philippines Alliance

In 2018, as part of the first phase of Advocacy Institute's Seed Programme, the NCD Alliance supported an initiative to consolidate different NCD groups in the Philippines resulting in the formation of the Healthy Philippines Alliance (HPA). The alliance brings together 15 members and focuses on joint advocacy for health-promoting public and fiscal policies. As in many countries around the world, NCD civil society groups in the Philippines had long worked alongside but separately from each other. Coming together to form HPA required finding common ground and negotiating priorities among organisations of different sizes, constituencies, and thematic priority areas.

Background on UHC advocacy

Universal Health Coverage (UHC) was first proposed for inclusion in the national agenda of the Filipino government in 2009. For many years, the UHC debate had been focused on curative services and risk protection alone, while NCD prevention and health promotion was largely overlooked, and there was little public support to increase the country's tax on tobacco and alcohol products.

The advocacy win

With the formation of HPA, its members decided to focus their joint advocacy efforts on reorienting the national debate on UHC toward NCD prevention and health promotion. Discussions to legislate UHC began in 2017, and after two years of dedicated political and technical work, the national UHC Act (the first of its kind in the Western Pacific region) was passed in 2019. The act automatically enrolls all Filipino citizens in the National Health Insurance Program and prescribes complementary health system reforms, providing access to the full continuum of health services and protection from financial hardship. In June 2019, President Duterte approved a gradual yearly increase of the tax on tobacco and e-cigarettes to help finance the implementation of UHC, an important win for NCD prevention, as the tax is designed to reduce NCD risk.

The strategy

HPA created a comprehensive advocacy strategy with several objectives, including:

- **Unite many voices into one clear message:** Joining forces under the umbrella of the HPA, member organisations focused on conveying one clear message to members of the congress and the public: place NCD prevention and health promotion at the heart of the new UHC scheme, and utilise revenue from a tax increase on tobacco products and alcoholic beverages to fund implementation.
- **Mobilise people living with NCDs:** HPA was able to capitalise on greater awareness of the importance of health promotion among patient groups, which traditionally have focused more on care. Bringing the voice of people living with NCDs to policy discussions helped significantly to reframe UHC discussions.
- **Engage the media:** While support for tax reforms was initially low in 2016, HPA and other health advocates took advantage of official budget projections indicating a shortfall in funding for UHC. Capitalising on the strong popular support for UHC, HPA strategically engaged the media to put forward the argument that if politicians were supporting UHC, they needed realistic strategies for financing it.
- **Cultivate political champions:** Equipped with evidence-based advocacy asks, HPA cultivated a network of trusted members of congress and senators to become health promotion and NCD prevention champions. HPA also utilised their existing close relationship with the Ministry of Finance to advocate for the tax increase.

The eight steps of Strategic Advocacy Planning

These eight steps help provide building blocks for civil society to plan and conduct advocacy efforts. As advocacy is rarely a linear process and there is need to adapt to rapidly changing environments, organisations can use these steps sequentially or refer to specific ones to guide them during their advocacy campaign at specific stages or when revising existing plans.

Gather data and assess the current status of NCD prevention and control, the policy and legal environment, stakeholders, potential partners, and other factors in your setting to plan your overall advocacy strategy.

Based on what you learn in your advocacy situation analysis, select your advocacy issue, and determine your goals and objectives for your advocacy campaign.

Actively map out those who have direct decision-making capacity or influence over your selected NCD advocacy issue.

Successful NCD advocacy involves forming partnerships for a common purpose, both within and beyond the NCDs and health sectors, to achieve your advocacy goals and objectives.

Select your advocacy tactics and create your advocacy messages to tell those who have the power to make a change why you want the change and how it will help prevent or control NCDs, or improve the lives of people living with NCDs, etc.

Develop a strong workplan and budget to take concrete steps towards making your NCD advocacy campaign a reality.

Assess when the time is right to launch your NCD advocacy campaign (a window of opportunity).

Keep track of your NCD advocacy campaign activities and assess your progress through monitoring, make adjustments when needed, and measure your overall achievements and lessons learned through evaluation. Do not forget to celebrate progress and advocacy wins, thanking champions and allies, and ensuring continued motivation of partners.

STEP 1 ADVOCACY SITUATION ANALYSIS

OVERVIEW

- Take stock of what is happening in terms of NCDs in your local area, country, or region
- Assess the policy and legal environment, key stakeholders
- Use this evidence and data to identify and select your advocacy issue, understand the policy environment, determine who can help or hinder your advocacy efforts, and plan your overall advocacy strategy

What is a situation analysis?

- **Research:** Involves collecting and assessing data and evidence to understand the landscape in which you are developing your advocacy campaign
- **Describe:** Establishes a realistic picture of the opportunities, challenges, gaps and resources related to NCD prevention and control in your context
- **Inform:** Guides the identification of priorities for your NCD advocacy work and steers all the steps in your advocacy plan

A situation analysis gathers information on the following areas

- **The problem:** Its magnitude, severity, and its possible causes
- **The people:** Those touched by the problem and those who have the power to change or influence it
- **The context:** The social, political, legal, economic, cultural setting in which the problem occurs
- **Barriers/opportunities:** The factors preventing or promoting change
- **The landscape:** Policies, programmes, regulations, laws in place

“Try to engage in consultations and share preliminary findings with key government and civil society stakeholders to enable buy-in for the findings and next steps. Situation analyses that focus on policy will not be particularly effective unless policy decision-makers and advocates in the field are brought on to the same page.”

HeartFile/Pakistan NCD Alliance

Why conduct a situation analysis?

- **Choose your issue:** Select your priority NCD issue to advocate on and make the case for support
- **Describe your issue:** Demonstrate the extent to which your issue makes an impact on people in your local setting, country, region or globally
- **Frame your issue:** Understand the health, development, policy, regulatory and legal environment surrounding your issue to contextualise it
- **Understand stakeholders:** Identify the key players and evaluate their positions relative to your issue in order to form your advocacy strategy
- **Form partnerships:** Identify and select partners for advocacy campaigns

1. Conduct a desk review

Search

Conduct a desk review by using keywords to search and identify quantitative and qualitative data sources about the problem and people affected by it, and relevant legal and policy documents. Data sources can include:

- Large-scale, population-level studies (STEPwise [Approach to NCD Risk Factor Surveillance, STEPS](#))
- WHO reports and data portals ([WHO's NCDs 2020 Progress Monitor](#), [WHO NCD Country Capacity Surveys](#))
- National NCD policies and strategies
- Reports on national, regional, district or health facility-level indicators
- Published research in peer-reviewed journals (e.g., [Allen et al's 2021 Lancet article on the implementation of NCD policies between 2015-2020](#))
- Unpublished studies by local CSOs, academic institutions, etc.
- Media reports

Review

Read through health and demographic data, survey results, study findings, relevant laws, regulations, policies, strategies, and other available data to understand the NCD landscape in your setting.

Analyse

Write up your findings, noting information and policy gaps and opportunities, which could be the foundation of your advocacy campaign.

When conducting a situational analysis pay attention to:

- **Geography:** Areas with high levels of mortality and morbidity due to NCDs
- **Indicators:** Prevalence and incidence of NCDs in your setting
- **Risk groups:** Populations most affected by various NCDs
- **Priorities:** Government health priorities, and where NCDs fall on the list
- **Trends:** In NCD and other public health initiatives, laws, and policies, and overall NCD indicators over time
- **Relevant constituencies and decision makers:** To complement the review of policies and programs, assess who is responsible for each of the steps of the policy process (from design and implementation to enforcement and monitoring).

2. Engage key informants to collect data on the NCD landscape

- **NCD stakeholders**
- **Government officials**
- **People living with NCDs**
- **Academics**
- **Service providers**
- **Private sector**
- **Policy-makers**
- **CSOs**

Empirical data such as lived experience and testimonials play a strong role in advocacy. They can illustrate how a problem affects people in the community and how proposed solutions may benefit those they are meant to reach. They can inform what proposed solutions are most feasible and acceptable from a community and end-user perspective. They can complement data and evidence from reports, surveys, etc, bringing them to life and affording urgency to an issue.

Methods of collecting data from key informants:

- In-depth interviews
- Focus groups
- Community conversations
- Stakeholder workshops

Questions to assess the scope of the NCD problem in your setting:

- What is the available evidence? Is it conclusive? Does it come from a reputable source?
- Is there any regional or local evidence that complements the national data?
- What is the burden of disease? How severe is the problem? Are there geographic areas or specific populations of greater need within your country?
- What barriers do people face in accessing prevention and control of NCDs?
- Who or what has an impact on the problem?
- How has the problem changed over time?
- What are the main consequences of the problem?

What is your government doing regarding NCDs? What could be improved?

- **Establish baseline:** Answer the questions below to gain a baseline understanding of the policy and legal environment for NCDs in your setting.
- **Assess openings:** Then you will be better able to anticipate upcoming windows of opportunity for advocacy related to NCD policy development.

Questions to assess the NCD legal, policy, regulatory environment:

- To what extent are NCDs integrated into your country's policies, laws, legislation, and regulations? What is missing? What could be improved?
- Is the government planning or proposing to change these policies?
- Are existing policies, laws, legislation, and regulations following international commitments and recommendations? How could they be better aligned to global health frameworks, such as the Global Action Plan for the Prevention and Control of NCDs, and other disease and risk factor specific technical packages?
- What is the outlook on the current political landscape in your country? Are there expected incoming changes on the political horizon, such as government or cabinet changes due to elections?

NOTE: One important part of the situational analysis is political mapping, which will help make it even more robust. Political mapping helps identify from the onset who the stakeholders and decision-makers are that have influence over your policy issue, and how to best reach out and collaborate with them, and even to counter their efforts if they are against your proposed policy solution. This will be further addressed in **Step 2 – Political Mapping.**

[Click here for Tool 1](#)

Questions to assess the NCD legal and policy environment

[Click here for Tool 2](#)

Benefits and challenges of selected data sources for NCD advocacy

[Click here for additional recommended resources](#)

to expand your knowledge and skills on conducting situation analyses for advocacy efforts

Read Case Study 2 to learn how four NCD alliances in different parts of the world have conducted and used the results of situation analyses to further their NCD advocacy campaigns: Egyptian NCD Alliance and NCD Malaysia (focused on strengthening the healthcare workforce); HeartFile/ Pakistan NCD Alliance (focused on trans fatty acids policies); and Rwanda NCD Alliance (focused on Universal Health Coverage and NCDs).

CASE STUDY 2

Lessons learned from situation analyses: the cases of Egypt, Malaysia, Pakistan and Rwanda

Background

These four NCD alliances conducted advocacy situation analyses to ground their advocacy strategies in evidence:

- **Egyptian NCD Alliance & NCD Malaysia:** To better understand the gaps and challenges of strengthening the NCD health workforce to progress towards UHC.
- **HeartFile/Pakistan NCD Alliance:** To assess the policy landscape of trans fats in the country, providing a base of evidence for their elimination.
- **Rwanda NCD Alliance:** To assess the NCDs and Universal Health Coverage (UHC) policy, programme, and political landscape in Rwanda.

Challenges in conducting and interpreting the results of their situation analyses:

- **COVID-19 pandemic:** The restrictions and health workforce demands imposed by COVID-19 presented challenges in conducting situation analyses. The alliances in Egypt and Malaysia dealt with the limited availability of physicians to participate in interviews and surveys, and other restrictions preventing them from doing in-person interviews and face-to-face focus groups.
- **Stakeholder lack of awareness:** Rwanda NCD Alliance faced difficulties in reaching and communicating with some stakeholders, not only due the pandemic, but also because of low levels of awareness about their own roles in the NCD programmes.
- **Lack of data:** HeartFile identified a lack of data on trans fats consumption, which later presented challenges in refining the findings of their situation analysis.

Lessons learned and experiences conducting situation analyses:

- **Situation analyses strengthen advocacy activities:** Alliances found that situation analyses enabled them to better plan and

implement advocacy activities, helping to determine priorities and serving as a source of evidence for campaign planning.

- **Conducting situation analyses can help build coalitions:** Situation analyses help establish consensus on specific advocacy issues, including on key data points and advocacy recommendations, as well as to map key stakeholders to identify allies within government, civil society, media and other health and development groups.

Recommendations for conducting successful situation analyses:

- **Engage a wide range of stakeholders to strengthen the outcomes of the situation analysis and the advocacy strategy:** Alliances in Egypt and Malaysia recommend seeking insights from healthcare workers at all levels to provide a comprehensive understanding of the entire landscape. The alliance in Rwanda recommends using a participatory approach to identify and involve key NCD stakeholders in advocacy planning, especially fellow CSOs and people living with NCDs.
- **Involve key decision-makers and advocates early on to build consensus:** HeartFile recommends involving key stakeholders within government and regulatory bodies before starting a situation analysis, ensuring support and future consensus of results.
- **Spend time locating the source of the problem to conduct a better, more precise analysis:** Make sure to identify where the source of the problem requiring a policy, legislative and/or regulatory change comes from, and exhaustively map out the precise policy domains and jurisdictions involved.
- **Guard against industry interference in data collection and agenda setting:** Always take steps to ensure unhealthy commodities industries cannot influence the analysis or the recommendations.
- **Make sure to share the results widely:** Validating and disseminating the results of a situation analysis is important to build strong foundations for any advocacy plan.

STEP 2

SELECT PRIORITY ISSUE, GOAL, AND OBJECTIVES

OVERVIEW

- Based on the results of your advocacy situation analysis, select your priority advocacy issue, and then determine your advocacy goal and the specific objectives for your campaign
- The issue identifies the problem and its solution to address through advocacy
- The goal is your long-term vision for change, and the objectives are the short-term steps to address the solutions to your issue, and thus advance towards achieving your goal

Questions to explore:

- How do you define and select an advocacy issue? What needs to be changed?
- What do you want to accomplish through your advocacy campaign?
- How do you define your advocacy goals and objectives?

What is an NCD advocacy issue?

- The focus of your advocacy work or campaign
- A change you want to see happen: a policy solution to an identified problem that can be solved through the intervention of a target institution or organisation
- NOT just a broad topic (i.e., "NCDs"), it combines a specific problem and its proposed solution

PROBLEM + SOLUTION = ADVOCACY ISSUE

NOTE

As you consider solutions to your NCD-related problem, make sure to:

- Keep the needs and recommendations of people living with NCDs central to the solution
- Choose policy solutions that are supported by evidence

EXAMPLE OF AN ADVOCACY ISSUE

Legislation to tax sugar-sweetened beverages in order to address overweight and obesity.

An advocacy issue is identified via the situational analysis conducted as part of Step 1, by conducting research and analysing the problem, and by defining possible policy solutions. While identifying the different policy solutions, it will be important to assess their feasibility in terms of evidence available, existence of a conducive policy environment, policy interest and will, among other factors. To make sure that your issue is specific, create a brief statement of the main problem and then identify its root causes to clarify your issue.

To identify your advocacy issue, you will need to consider:

- **Specific problems:** What occurs, to whom, where does it happen, when?
- **Root causes:** Keep asking why to get to a deeper level of causation.
- **Barriers:** What is preventing problems from being solved (political, economic, cultural, social factors)?
- **Solutions:** Which approaches will work? How, who, what, where, when?
- **Opportunities:** Are there windows of opportunity to influence the issue?

What are some criteria for selecting your NCD advocacy issue?

- **Scope:** How pervasive is the issue? Can you quantify its impact on communities, people living with NCDs?
- **Evidence:** Is the solution based on evidence? Can it be confirmed by data?
- **Feasibility:** Is the solution realistic and winnable?
- **Communication:** How easy is the issue to explain and understand?
- **Appeal:** Will it draw support? From whom?
- **Demonstrate:** Can you show how the solution will help prevent and/or control NCDs and benefit the community, people living with NCDs?
- **Partners:** Do civil society networks related to the issue exist?
- **Opportunity:** Is there an opening to influence the issue?
- **Risk:** How would it impact the reputation of your alliance or organisation?

[Click here for Tool 4](#)
Checklist for selecting/prioritising
an NCD advocacy issue

Once your advocacy issue is defined, the next step will be to identify your advocacy goal.

- Involves a long-term (5-10 years) vision for policy change on NCDs
- The subject of your advocacy efforts
- Cannot be achieved by one group alone, but by a collective
- Exists outside of your alliance or organisation
- Orients an advocacy alliance over the long-term

EXAMPLE OF AN ADVOCACY GOAL

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): Goal 3, Target 3.4

By 2030, reduce by one-third premature mortality from NCDs through prevention and treatment and promote mental health and wellbeing.

Once your long-term advocacy goal is defined, it is time to delineate your advocacy objectives:

- Short-term (generally 1-2 years), action-oriented targets
- Smaller incremental steps to complete that will help progress towards your advocacy goal
- Describe the **change you want** to achieve, **who** will make the change and **when** it will happen

What are SMART objectives?

Make sure that your NCD advocacy objectives are “SMART,” which stands for:



SPECIFIC

What do you want to do?
Clearly state what you want to accomplish.



MEASURABLE

How will you know when you have reached it? Track and monitor progress.



ACHIEVABLE

Is it in your power to accomplish it?



REALISTIC OR RELEVANT

Can you reasonably achieve it? Is it in line with your NCD alliance's mission?



TIME-BOUND

By when will you accomplish it? Set a timeframe to meet it.

EXAMPLES OF NCD ADVOCACY OBJECTIVES

- Secure congressional approval of an alcohol and tobacco tax package to finance Universal Health Coverage by October 2022.
- By the second year of the administration, ensure the adoption by the Ministry of Health of a new national and multi-year costed NCD Strategy with clear measurable objectives.

[Click here for Tool 5](#)

Worksheet for defining advocacy issues, goals, and objectives

To measure progress for each of your advocacy objectives, and incremental steps towards your advocacy goal, you will need to set indicators of success that will help measure relevant gains and wins within your advocacy campaign. The more specific your indicators, the easier it is to evaluate your progress. Indicators will be addressed more fully in **Step 8 – Monitor and Evaluate**.

Read Case Study 3 to see how an NCD alliance can leverage windows of opportunity to advance on an advocacy issue, using the example of NCDs-Vietnam and their advocacy campaign on the 2019 alcohol control law.

CASE STUDY 3

Leveraging windows of opportunity to advance on an advocacy issue: NCDs-Vietnam and the 2019 alcohol control law

Background

With alcohol consumption on the rise in Vietnam (an estimated 50% increase between 2002 and 2016), a draft law to curb alcohol consumption, under development since 2008, was released to the public in April 2018. Seizing this advocacy window of opportunity, NCDs-Vietnam (NCDs-VN) devised a strategy to counter alcohol industry opposition to the bill and to build public support for its passage. Facing a lack of public awareness of the benefits of the law coupled with the alcohol industry's misinformation campaign targeting the National Assembly, NCDs-VN built a strong civil society coalition to raise public awareness, refocus the debate on scientific evidence, help dispel the myths perpetuated by the industry, and expose industry manipulation of the policy process. This advocacy contributed to the successful passage of the law in June 2019, and while it was significantly weakened throughout the drafting process with many of the WHO Best Buy policy measures removed, the law is considered a critical milestone, accelerating the country's commitment to NCD prevention by reducing an important NCD risk factor.

Advocacy strategy

NCDs-VN rolled out a phased campaign with distinct triggers. The first phase of the campaign seized the momentum of the 2018 United National High-Level Meeting on NCDs to target the National Assembly's first vote on the bill. A series of four alcohol-related teenage rape cases and accidents in the month before the Assembly's final vote on the law triggered the next phase of the campaign. Some of the specific tactics they used include:

- Leveraging community-based evidence to expand the evidence base beyond the scientific literature and producing relatable narratives, to educate the public and policymakers on why the law mattered.
- Inviting reporters to workshops with victims of alcohol-related harm and their families to ensure that their stories appeared in official and social media.

- Sending public letters to decision-makers and industry spokespeople to respond to misinformation and attempts to derail or weaken the law.
- Linking advocacy efforts to an anti-corruption campaign run by the Ministry of Politics and exposing industry sympathisers within the government system.
- Using social media (Facebook) as a tool to expose industry interference in policy development, update the public on the discussions of the law at the National Assembly, and raise campaign resources.

Analysis

NCDs-VN planned an innovative advocacy campaign tracking the law from start to finish. The initiative displayed agility and swiftness in responding to the advocacy triggers and seizing the windows of opportunity, such as the 2018 United Nations High-Level Meeting on NCDs, National Assembly meetings, and the tragic alcohol-related deaths.

The alliance also displayed flexibility in employing a variety of strategies: working with the Ministry of Health, voicing NCD civil society views at government and National Assembly workshops, writing letters to political leaders, using the media, and enabling victims of alcohol harm to speak at political platforms.

Recommendations

NCD-VN's campaign offers key lessons in how to leverage strategic windows of opportunity, employing triggers and planned phases, and piggybacking on the anti-corruption platform to advance NCD policy advocacy against opposition from unhealthy commodity industries. Some specific recommendations include:

- Capitalise on political or social momentum to launch a campaign on an issue with great potential for a win.
- Use anti-corruption platforms to identify and expose pro-industry players.
- Augment international evidence and resources with local data and contributions.
- Use social media to get around mainstream media blocks.
- Release communication with the government to the public for education, transparency and advocacy purposes.
- Build your own infrastructure for live shows for swift dissemination via social and mass media.

STEP 3

POLITICAL MAPPING

OVERVIEW

- A subset of advocacy situation analysis, in which you actively map out your primary and secondary target audiences who have direct decision-making ability or influence over your NCD advocacy issue.

QUESTIONS TO EXPLORE:

- What is political mapping for NCD advocacy?
- How can you use political mapping to build your NCD advocacy campaign?
- How can your alliance or organisation identify the appropriate policy audiences (primary and secondary) to reach through your campaign?

When conducting your situational analysis and identifying your NCD advocacy issue, it is not only important to understand the health and policy landscape, but also to understand and evaluate the political system and the power and political dynamics that relate to public health decision-making and that might impact your advocacy campaign. Part of this analysis entails identifying the key decision-making and government bodies, as well as individuals, involved in your advocacy issue, and that have a direct decision-making ability or influence over it.

Such constituencies include individuals like the Minister of Health or the President of the Health Committee in Congress, as well as the bodies and offices they represent, such as the Ministry of Health, Department of Health, Health Committees, and any other decision-making body that is involved in your policy matter. Conducting a political mapping of such stakeholders is key to understand their power, influence and even their motivation to engage or not in your advocacy issue, as well as the formal and informal mechanisms they have at hand to do so.

What is political mapping for NCD advocacy?

- **Identify:** Determines policy audiences (decision-makers and “influentials”) with the power to make or influence the change you are seeking.
- **Investigate:** Involves understanding policy-making processes and researching and creating profiles of targets, their areas of work, power dynamics and trends, position, interests, relationships, views, opinions, and actions that are relevant to your policy issue.
- **Categorise:** Useful for identifying your champions, allies, and opponents.
- **Plan:** Provides relevant information on policy audiences and policy-making mechanisms to help select your advocacy tactics, and to develop and modify effective advocacy messages.
- **Inform:** A dynamic map that needs to be updated throughout your advocacy strategy, as targets’ positions may change over time.

Understanding your advocacy targets:²

What is a primary target?

- The person **who has the power to make the change you are advocating for**, such as a decision-maker with the direct authority to influence the outcome of your advocacy objective (e.g., government officials, ministers, country leaders, UN representatives, etc.)
- **Always a person** and not an institution (e.g., Minister of Foreign Affairs, Head of the Health Commission, etc)

What is a secondary target?

- Person or group with the **power to influence the primary target** (e.g., the media, relevant powerful organisations, a family member of the primary target, other decision-makers, experts, opinion leaders, etc)
- Have the **potential to become partners** in your advocacy plan

² Adapted from: Cancer Advocacy Training Toolkit for Africa, Africa Oxford Cancer Foundation (AfrOx), The African Organisation for Training and Treatment in Cancer (AORTIC), The European Society for Medical Oncology (ESMO) and the Union for International Cancer Control (UICC) https://www.esmo.org/content/download/7981/166776/1/Cancer_Prevention_Advocacy_Training_Toolkit_for_Africa.pdf

EXAMPLE OF PRIMARY AND SECONDARY TARGETS

Advocacy objective:

In a two-year period, enact legislation through the parliament to integrate NCD services into the national Health Insurance Scheme, to advance towards Universal Health Care (UHC).

Primary target:

Congresswoman XX, chair of the Health Committee

Secondary targets:

Members of the Health Committee and other parliamentarians; key decision-makers inside the Ministry of Health (especially the Health Insurance Scheme unit); members of government agencies in charge of budget allocations, etc.

Key questions to consider when researching policy audiences:

- Who are the decision-makers with influence or a direct say in your issue?
- What is their profile and main areas of work related to your policy issue?
- What are their strengths and weaknesses as advocacy targets?
- What degree of power do they have over your policy issue?
- Would you consider them allies, opponents or neutral?

Click here for Tool 6
NCD Alliance's Advocacy Institute Pocket Guide on
Political Mapping

STEP 4

BUILD SUPPORT AMONG CONSTITUENCIES

OVERVIEW

- Due to the scale and complexity of the NCD epidemic, partnerships and NCD alliances are crucial to achieve coordinated and effective action
- Successful NCD advocacy involves working in partnership towards a common purpose
- Identify and approach relevant stakeholders to become partners and allies in achieving your NCD advocacy goals and objectives

What are partnerships?

- Organised cooperation among different groups to work together to accomplish a common goal.
- May involve organisations from the same sector (health and/or NCDs) or other sectors (environment, gender, development, etc), and engage a range of actors, including people living with NCDs, CSOs, community groups, professional societies, academia, media, relevant private sector, government agencies, and multilateral and international organisations.

NOTE: When developing and rolling out your advocacy plan, consider the potential benefits of partnerships by thinking outside the box: Which stakeholders within and beyond the NCDs and health sector could be partners?

Why work in partnerships for NCD advocacy?³

- **Share** complementary information, advocacy intelligence, ideas, credibility, opportunities, skills, contacts, and resources
- **Develop** new ideas and ways of thinking about your issue
- **Access** greater knowledge, experience, and resources
- **Build a community base**, reaching people living with NCDs, youth, and other communities
- **Augment** the power and efficacy of your NCD advocacy campaign by broadening your base of support
- **Coordinate** a platform for unified NCD advocacy and action

³ Adapted from: ACT!2015 Advocacy Strategy Toolkit by Restless Development, PACT, UNAIDS
https://www.unaids.org/sites/default/files/media_asset/advocacy_toolkit_en_0.pdf

EXAMPLES OF OTHER NCD STAKEHOLDERS TO MOBILISE AND/OR PARTNER WITH

Individuals, groups, or organisations that are affected by or affect NCD policy, programmes, or service delivery, with partners bringing their own resources, networks, experiences, expertise, and institutional values to the stakeholder mix:⁴

- People living with NCDs and families, communities affected by NCDs
- Medical community and professional societies and associations
- CSOs and alliances or coalitions⁵ working on NCDs and related health and risk factor issues (e.g., food equity and nutrition) or related development issues (eg poverty, humanitarian issues, etc.)
- Relevant private sector⁶
- Public health experts (academics, government, research institutions, etc.)
- Government policymakers (Health, Transport, Finance, Agriculture, etc.)
- Transnational bodies (United Nation's agencies, World Health Organization)

How can you identify and analyse NCD stakeholders?

- **Stakeholders:** Who are the key players in NCDs in your setting?
- **Power:** What is their level of power, influence, and interest in NCDs?
- **Expertise:** What are their main activities and areas of work?
- **Assessment:** What are their strengths and weaknesses?
- **Partnership potential:** Could they be involved in your advocacy work?

How can you identify partners for your NCD advocacy plan?

- Use **stakeholder mapping** to gather information on stakeholders' profiles, activities, strengths, needs, challenges, and opportunities for NCD action.
- Based on your stakeholder mapping results, select appropriate partners.
- Conduct a **needs assessment of potential partners** to facilitate this process.

⁴ Adapted from: Cancer Control: Knowledge into Action: WHO Guide for Effective Programmes: Module 6: Policy and Advocacy. Geneva: World Health Organization; 2008. PMID: 24716264, <https://www.who.int/cancer/FINAL-Advocacy-Module%206.pdf>

⁵ Check NCD Alliance's "Practical guide on how to build effective national and regional NCD alliances" for more information on the benefits of working in coalitions.

⁶ Relevant private sector can become allies in your advocacy campaigns. Nevertheless, not all private sector is the same. NCD advocacy attracts the interest of unhealthy commodity industries that will try to block, delay and prevent policy change affecting their interests. Always protect your advocacy efforts from their undue influence and be attentive to potential cases of conflict of interest that can hamper your work and integrity.

Stakeholder mapping – identifying potential members and allies of NCD alliances

As NCDA's [Practical Guide on How to Build Effective National and Regional NCD Alliances](#) suggests, once the need for an alliance/partnership is identified, it is time to determine who could be part of it. Members and allies of alliances need to share common interests and linkages with NCDs, their risk factors and related health and development issues. If you are forming a new alliance or expanding an existing one, it is important to consider CSOs and other relevant allies who:

- Are already addressing NCDs and their risk factors actively in the country
- May or may not be active but are critical to accelerate the response
- Work on other issues that are relevant to the NCD response
- Share an interest in partnering on the issue
- Are respected and well-positioned
- Will not hinder your efforts or present any conflicts of interest (e.g., CSOs funded and formed by unhealthy commodity industries)

The following Figure 1 helps expand the stakeholder mapping by placing them on a matrix according to their level of influence/power and interest/will in your advocacy area. All stakeholders who might have an influence over your advocacy issue can be placed in the matrix, helping to prioritise those that can become potential allies and primary and secondary advocacy targets.

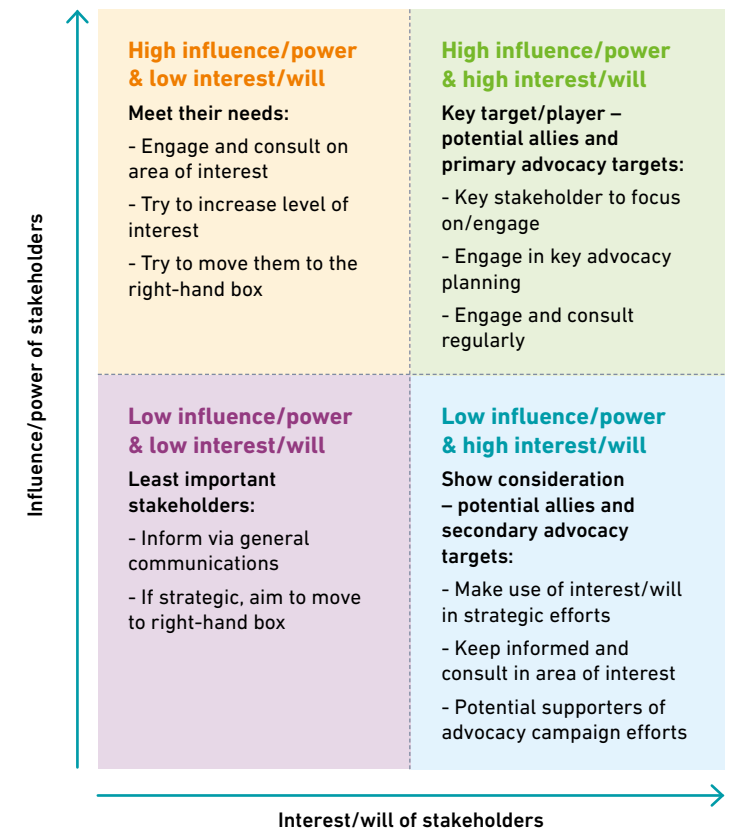


Figure 1 – Stakeholder mapping matrix⁷

⁷ Adapted from: IIED (April 2018). Advocacy toolkit - People centred advocacy for a more sustainable food system. Available from: <https://pubs.iied.org/sites/default/files/pdfs/migrate/G04301.pdf>

Information to gather while conducting a stakeholder mapping:

- **Relationship:** Do you have existing partners working on NCDs or another area? If not, how could you connect with them?
- **Shared interests:** Do you share a common goal?
- **Connections:** Do they have relationships with actors that you want to involve? Do they have relationships with key NCD decision-makers?
- **Issue:** What are their opinions about your selected NCD advocacy issue? What, if any, activities have they done related to the issue?
- **Expertise:** What are their main skills and strengths? Are these complementary and beneficial to your alliance or organisation?
- **People living with NCDs:** Do they have a history of working with and meaningfully involving people living with NCDs and communities?
- **Participation:** Do they work with vulnerable or geographically remote populations that could extend your network and increase participation?

How can partners work together effectively?

- **Planning:** Select strategic partners and set attainable goals at the beginning
- **Manage expectations:** Establish clear expectations for roles, contributions, and methods of working together
- **Participation:** Encourage active involvement among all partners
- **Monitoring:** Delegate responsibilities and keep track of results
- **Cooperation:** Promote collective leadership
- **Involve experts:** Use credible speakers from each partner organisation
- **Scheduling:** Follow an agreed upon timetable for planning and action
- **Communications:** Develop a mechanism for regular updates and meetings
- **Inclusion:** Create a sense of ownership, commitment, and trust

Click here for additional recommended resources to expand your knowledge and skills on building support across different constituencies.

Read Case Study 4 to see how NCD alliances can identify allies and mobilise support for NCD prevention and control. The Africa NCDs Network overcame geographic and linguistic obstacles to mobilise allies and partners across Africa to position NCDs on the region's agenda, especially at the WHO Regional Committee Meeting for Africa.

CASE STUDY 4

Mobilising civil society support for NCDs across Africa

Background

The Africa NCDs Network (ANN) is a coalition of 14 national NCD alliances working on regional advocacy efforts to advance on NCD prevention and control on the African continent. Conceived in 2015 at the East Africa NCD Alliance Conference, the ANN was formally established in 2020.

The ANN has worked to identify relevant civil society groups and alliances on the continent and mobilise them toward common advocacy goals on NCD prevention and control, and Universal Health Coverage. The alliance has identified members representing the four WHO AFRO sub-regions (Center, West, East and Southern), and has decided to involve members from Francophone Africa so both English and French speaking civil society are engaged, thereby ensuring a more united voice and platform of support.

Challenges

Given its vast geographical reach and the consequent need to coordinate members who speak different languages and live in different time zones, the ANN faced initial challenges in engaging its membership.

Solutions

To address obstacles, the ANN has focused on building trust among members and bridging differences through emphasising the shared goal of strengthening NCD prevention and control in Africa through advocacy. They mobilised support for advocacy priorities by working closely with the national alliances and fostering links with the Ministries of Health, United Nations country missions, and other health sector stakeholders.

Recently, the ANN successfully mobilised its diverse membership to participate at the 2021 WHO71 Regional Committee Meeting (RCM) for Africa by organising a virtual multi-stakeholder side event on NCDs and UHC ([more information here](#)). The side event attracted 130 participants, including organisations working on NCDs throughout Africa and a representative from the Ministry of Health in Ghana. As a result of this side event, the ANN developed a civil society advocacy statement co-signed by NCD Alliance, ANN and its 40 CSO members, highlighting the support of the signatories to Member States in the fight against cervical cancer and other NCDs, particularly through the implementation of the Global Strategy in the African region, laying the groundwork for advocacy throughout the African region. This work was supported by NCD Alliance's Advocacy Institute Seed Programme, thanks to its partnership with the Leona M. and Harry B. Helmsley Charitable Trust.

Recommendations

To mobilise stakeholders across sub-regions, the ANN recommends:

- Develop a robust and flexible organisational structure allowing for meaningful participation of members and allies, and even people living with NCDs.
- Secure strong leadership that defines and supports the alliance's vision of partnership.
- Rely on the established structures of members and allies to identify and mobilise additional allies and engage in meaningful advocacy work.

STEP 5 ADVOCACY TACTICS AND MESSAGES

OVERVIEW

- Considering the results of your situation analysis, political mapping, selected issue, goal, and objectives, now is the time to select your advocacy tactics (activities to achieve your objectives).
- Create advocacy messages to tell those who have the power to make a change why you want the change and how it will help prevent and control NCDs, or improve the lives of people living with NCDs, etc.
- Frame your messages for greatest support among different audiences, seek appropriate messengers, and communicate with the media.

Questions to explore:

- What are advocacy tactics?
- How do you create an advocacy campaign?
- What are advocacy messages? How can you develop and adapt effective advocacy messages?

What is an NCD advocacy campaign?

- A series of actions and activities carried out to achieve lasting systemic change
- Aims to meet your advocacy objectives and contribute to your overall goal
- Mobilises the community for broad public support

What are advocacy tactics?

- Influencing activities to achieve your objectives, steps in your plan
- Present decision-makers with an ask for support; actions targeting decision-makers so they give you what you want
- Always demonstrate power (e.g., organisations involved, public support, support of influential people, etc.)
- Can involve a mix of 'insider' and 'outsider' tactics to meet the advocacy objectives and goals:
 - 'Insider' tactics involve using dialogue and cooperation with those you wish to influence, working with a few key partners and building positive and constructive relationships with decision makers, establishing your organisation as an adviser. Includes face to face meetings, high-level dialogue (roundtables, conferences), participation in decision making bodies and processes, etc.
 - 'Outsider' tactics (as in an advocacy campaign) generally mean mobilizing broad support through highly visible activities (such as publicity and media stunts, or online campaigning). These aim to raise public awareness of an issue and raise demand for a decision-maker to take action. Includes public campaigning, petitions, mobilisations, media, social media etc.

Examples of advocacy tactics:

- Face-to-face meetings
- Participation in formal decision-making mechanisms that include civil society
- Shadow reporting and consultation responses
- Public meetings, conferences, or turnout events
- Patient juries and public hearings
- Petitions and letter writing
- Communications to frame debate (e.g., letters to the editor, newspaper insertions)
- Media and social media advocacy
- Demonstrations and marches
- Events with media (e.g. press conferences)

What are some criteria for selecting advocacy tactics?

- **Appropriateness:** Is it the right approach for your specific policy audience?
- **Effectiveness:** Will it force the decision-maker to act?
- **Inclusivity:** Does it reflect the voice of people living with NCDs?
- **Forcefulness:** Is there power behind a specific demand to the target?
- **Flexibility:** Can it be adapted to changing circumstances?
- **Feasibility:** Will it work?
- **Resources:** Are there sufficient resources available to make it happen?
- **Opposition:** Who might oppose or resist? How strong is the opposition?

How can you make the most of the tactics that you choose?

- **Focus:** Determine your tactics with your targets clearly in mind
- **Fit:** Plan a variety of activities that are appropriate to your context
- **Scheduling:** Plan tactics to build on each other in sequence
- **Timing:** Schedule a series of tactics in advance
- **Nimbleness:** Be open to unexpected opportunities
- **Partner:** Use allies to carry out your tactics and minimise opposition

How can you convey your advocacy messages to the right audiences?

- **Research:** Delivering strong messages means understanding your audience
- **Reflect:** Imagine yourself in their place to understand their motivations
- **Consider:** How much do they know about NCDs and your specific issue?
- **Simplify:** How much time do they have to read or scroll through materials?

How can you create effective NCD advocacy messages?⁸

- **Clarify:** Create compelling arguments with a clear call to action
- **Strategise:** Consider your goals and objectives, what do you want to achieve?
- **Analyse:** Who is your policy audience? What motivates them? What benefits them? What will prevent them from acting? What are their demographics?
- **Tailor:** Adapt your messages to your target audience's level of understanding
- **Connect:** Honour your audience's values, political views, cultural beliefs
- **Demonstrate:** Show clearly and with evidence (conflict-of-interest free), what can be achieved through action that they have the power to implement
- **Portray:** Illustrate the stories of community groups (e.g., people living with NCDs and youth), incorporating calls to action to address their needs
- **Specify:** Be specific about projected outcomes and results, and emphasise how the action will contribute to the prevention and control of NCDs
- **Unify:** Deliver messages that cross regional and programmatic boundaries and bring together different stakeholders
- **Simplify:** Avoid lengthy, vague, or overly complex messages
- **Educate:** Explain why it is critical to act and how they will benefit



Who is an appropriate messenger?

- **Value integrity:** Choose someone who is credible, well spoken, convincing
- **Be strategic:** Select messengers for different audiences or geographical or political levels. Enlist influencers for your target audience (e.g., use a prestigious cardiologist to speak to the Minister of Health, or a national economist to speak to the Minister of Finance, etc.)
- **Be selective:** Messages can have a different impact, depending on who delivers them
- **Honour the lived experience:** People living with NCDs draw upon their lived experience to bring urgency to an issue

The benefits of media advocacy and strategic engagement with media:

- **Outreach:** Reach large numbers of people quickly and cost-effectively
- **Influence:** Shape the public debate around your advocacy issue
- **Educate:** Raise public awareness of your issue
- **Compel:** Put pressure on decision-makers to take action
- **Clarify:** Dispel myths or misinformation about your issue
- **Publicise:** Enhance credibility and increase your name recognition

Monitor media coverage by answering the following questions:⁹

- **Slant:** How is your advocacy issue being covered in the media? How is it portrayed? What are the main arguments and concerns?
- **Saturation:** How much news coverage has the issue received?
- **Outlets:** Which newspapers, websites, blogs, social media apps, TV and cable stations have had stories about your issue?
- **Opportunities:** Do you have relationships with the journalists, bloggers or influencers covering the issue?

What are some strategies to engage the media?¹⁰

- **Be helpful:** Cultivate relationships with journalists, bloggers, influencers by offering your expertise on NCDs and providing requested information
- **Monitor the media:** Look for opportunities to promote your message (e.g., breaking research on NCDs)
- **Use social media:** Use Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, TikTok to spread your campaign messages, engage the traditional media, and find new supporters
- **Use real stories:** Showcase the lived experience of people living with NCDs
- **Draft comment and opinion pieces:** Editorials and letters to editors
- **Do their job:** Write press releases in the style they use
- **Offer a new angle:** Provide new data, experts with new insights, etc.

^{9,10} Adapted from United Patients, "Engaging the Medical Community as Advocacy Partners, Communicating Successfully with Decision Makers and Using Data for Advocacy Purposes: A Step by Step Guide to Advocacy for Patient Groups," https://unitedpatientsacademy.org/upfiles/UnitedPatientsToolkit_4-4-2018_FINAL.pdf

Tools to help position your advocacy issue in the media agenda:

- Press releases, social media, websites, blogs, press conferences, letters to the editor, paid or earned insertion in media outlets, interviews (on TV, radio, social media), newsletters, and events (conferences, seminars, workshops).
- Such communication tools will need to highlight a news angle within your advocacy issue, be adapted to the specific media target (print, radio, TV, cable, social media), and be objective, concise, and factual, using evidence and data.

For an example of a press release from the NCD Alliance [click here](#)

What are some tips for in-person meetings with decision-makers?

- **Keep it simple:** Convey the problem you are addressing, the change you want, why the change is important, and who will benefit from it
- **Call to action:** Tell them exactly what to do to support your issue and the consequences of not taking action
- **Make your case:** Support your messages with data from credible sources and bring it to life with a lived experience story
- **Prepare counter-arguments:** Use credible data to support your points
- **Plan carefully:** Meet beforehand to review key points, roles, potential challenges
- **Stay on message:** Make the most important points first in case time runs out
- **Bring an influential:** A respected person may influence the decision-maker
- **Listen:** Allow the decision-maker time to talk

- **Leave information:** A fact sheet to help them remember your key points
- **Follow-up:** Send a thank-you note and any requested information

What are some tips to develop relationships with decision-makers?

- **Provide assistance and be available:** Offer help with other issues that they care about, while promoting your own priorities
- **Be credible:** Be a trustworthy source of data on NCDs and risk factors, and of compelling stories to make the case for change
- **Network:** Develop contacts with influential people in a variety of fields
- **Check in:** Keep in touch

[Click here for additional recommended resources to expand your knowledge and skills on advocacy tactics and messages](#)

Read Case Study 5 to see how the Mexico Salud-Hable Coalition, seizing the advocacy opportunity presented by general elections in Mexico in 2018, selected tactics and created messages for different audiences via their #VotoSaludable (#HealthyVote) Campaign, which became a successful advocacy campaign focused on the inclusion of NCDs in candidates' policy agendas. Additionally, **Case Study 6** showcases how NCD alliances can become strong civil society voices for government accountability and monitoring of NCDs, using the example of ACT Health Promotion's effective use of civil society shadow reports on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and NCDs in Brazil.

CASE STUDY 5

Selecting advocacy tactics and creating advocacy messages: Mexico Salud-Hable Coalition and its #HealthyVote campaign

Background

Seizing the opportunity of simultaneous national and Mexico City elections in July 2018, the Mexico Salud-Hable Coalition launched a campaign to raise the profile of NCDs and hold candidates accountable for NCD commitments in their election manifestos, which despite escalating rates of NCDs, were weak on NCD prevention and control policies. The alliance mobilised public interest through an online platform in which they publicised candidate positions on NCDs. They also approached candidates with a civil society agenda for action on NCDs (Healthy Agenda or Salud-Hable Agenda) for endorsement in their manifestos. This campaign led to increased public and political acknowledgement of NCDs, including the first ever inclusion of health as a topic in the presidential debates, and UN recognition for its impact on NCD prevention and control. This work was supported by NCD Alliance, via its Advocacy Institute Accelerator Programme (2017-2019).

Approach

In April 2018, Mexico Salud-Hable launched the [#VotoSaludable online platform](#), consisting of a dedicated website, Facebook page, Twitter, and YouTube channel at a press event. The launch was accompanied by an intensive social media campaign, questioning candidates about their NCD proposals, and inviting them to endorse the Salud-Hable Agenda. The initial social media messages carried a hook to attract the public to the platforms, followed by action-oriented messages on key NCD facts, policy issues and demands using attractive infographics. The alliance called on candidates to publicise their proposals addressing NCDs, and then monitored, verified, and published the statements and manifestos of all candidates on the platform to inform citizens about candidate positions on NCDs.

Some of the innovative tactics used by the alliance include:

- Replacing traditional in-person public discussion forums with candidates with a digital campaign to allow a greater reach for messages to the public and candidates.
- Using a digital platform to monitor candidates' proposals on NCDs.
- Using Twitter hashtags creatively to gain public and political attention, tagging candidates in social media posts and adding links to the campaign site to draw attention to the Salud-Hable Agenda.
- Delivering copies of the Salud-Hable Agenda with personalised letters containing the logos of more than 50 supporting organisations directly to candidates' campaign offices and seeking meetings with the candidates.
- Taking photos during visits to campaign offices and disseminating them with short press releases, and encouraging candidates to share them in their press briefings.
- Holding press conferences using different spokespersons representing a range of sectors and disease groups to appeal to different audiences (researchers, health professionals, CSOs working on different NCDs, people living with NCDs and their primary caregivers, young people, social activists, etc.).
- Tailoring messages to candidates to include information about the economic as well as the health benefits of addressing NCDs.
- Encouraging voter participation through buttons on the platform launching pre-set tweets to candidates seeking clarity on their health and NCD agenda, as well as calls for public support of the NCD policy demands.

Recommendations

Mexico Salud-Hable recommends the following when tailoring messages to different audiences and selecting appropriate tactics:

- Encourage the active participation of a wide range of stakeholders in the design, organisation and implementation of the campaign and its messages, and invite them to participate in specific tactics.
- Design messages that appeal to a broad base of support, for example, point out that candidates tend to ignore health issues because they are not politically expedient.
- Provide training workshops for new spokespeople to diversify the messengers, and identify real, credible, and eloquent representatives of different sectors.
- If faced with limited resources, effective campaign tactics can be carried out on the street to prompt media coverage, such as through demonstrations in front of political party headquarters, at campaign offices or outside of media buildings.
- Use popular characters, mascots or musical groups to draw attention to your activities and to get the general public and the media interested and engaged.
- Consider using a digital campaign based on election cycles to raise the profile of any NCD concerns directly with the electorate and candidates.

CASE STUDY 6

Accountability as a strategic tactic to monitor progress on SDGs and NCDs in Brazil

Background

Civil Society Status Reports (CSSR) are critical advocacy tools that help compile civil society perspectives on the progress on NCDs, and complement and support government surveillance, monitoring, and reporting. CSSRs help inform the public, disseminate results and promote the implementation of evidence-based policies. **“Alternative reports are a way of putting pressure on public powers to implement the obligations they have undertaken. Alternative reports that are based on evidence can inform effective public policies.”**

ACT Health Promotion in Brazil has a long history of monitoring government commitments, and its first shadow report addressed the country’s implementation of the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control. With the expansion of its mission beyond tobacco control in 2014, the alliance started monitoring NCDs through CSSRs. Its latest Civil Society NCD Status Report for Brazil was launched at the 4th Intersectoral Forum on the Fight Against NCDs, organised by the Brazilian Public Health Institute in April 2019 (following similar reports in 2014, 2015, and 2017). The report examined the state of NCD prevention in Brazil using health surveillance data collected during 2011-2017 through VIGITEL, an annual telephone survey of the Ministry of Health on risk factors and prevention, and via interviews with key NCD actors from government, academia, and civil society. Researchers from Rio de Janeiro State University and Federal University of Santa Catarina contributed to the data analysis.

In 2017, the alliance, as co-facilitator of the Civil Society Working Group for the 2030 Agenda, also began producing annual Spotlight Reports analysing the status of the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in Brazil. These reports aim to shed light on the implementation and gaps and provide possible solutions on how to move forward.

Impact

The alliance recognises that CSSRs help showcase gaps and setbacks that tend not to be reported through official government channels. The Spotlight Reports have become valuable given that the government has not yet submitted voluntary national reports to the United Nations High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development, so the civil society report stands by itself as an assessment of SDG implementation in the country. Similarly, when the Brazilian National Plan for NCDs was slated to end in 2022, the government extended it to 2030, to align with the 2030 Agenda, and invited the alliance as a civil society representative to participate in the hearing process and launch of the revised Plan.

The evidence from its CSSRs has also been used to strengthen its advocacy campaigns for health promoting policies, both at the national and state levels. These include campaigns for the introduction of soda taxes, labelling of ultra-processed foods, adoption of a law to establish soda-free schools (the campaign drew much public attention and its hashtag #EscolasSemRefrigerante trended on Twitter in October 2019), and others.

Recommendations for monitoring government commitments via CSSRs

- **Share the CSSR results** widely with your networks and with government, as information sharing leads to a multiplier effect to strengthen advocacy efforts.
- **Use report data in campaigns**, opinion articles, declarations, events, and media advocacy to build a stronger case for politicians to address NCDs.
- **Include a set of recommendations in CSSRs**, which reinforces the importance of civil society participation in policy-making spaces in a democratic environment.

STEP 6

CREATE AN NCD ADVOCACY WORKPLAN AND BUDGET

OVERVIEW

- Developing a comprehensive workplan and budget will enable you to take concrete steps towards making your NCD advocacy campaign plan a reality.

What is an advocacy workplan?

- **A roadmap** with activities to directly contribute to making your SMART advocacy objectives happen
- **Items to include:** List your issue, goal, advocacy objective, allies, opponents, and advocacy targets. For each advocacy target, list the different tactics/ activities, timeline, roles and responsibilities, and resources (budget and inputs associated).
- **Purpose:** Keeps you on track to achieve your goals and objectives
- **Prioritise:** Select the most urgent, pressing and priority advocacy issues and activities to make your plan as specific and strategic as possible

As you develop your advocacy workplan, it is essential that you also identify the resources needed to roll it out, from human knowledge to economic resources. Working in partnerships and alliances will help you have a pool of resources you can tap into at all stages of your advocacy campaign.

While working out a budget for your campaign, ensure you have sufficient funds to support activities as planned. A detailed breakdown of costs helps assess true financial needs, as well as areas for change.

Click here for Tool 7

[Advocacy workplan template link](#)

Click here for additional recommended resources
to expand your knowledge and skills on creating an
advocacy workplan and budget link

STEP 7

ROLL OUT THE ADVOCACY PLAN

OVERVIEW

- After developing a workplan and budget, assess when the time is right to launch your NCD advocacy campaign (a window of opportunity)

Questions to explore:

- How and when should you launch your NCD advocacy plan?
- How do you decide when the time is right?

Factors to consider when launching your NCD advocacy plan:¹¹

- **Timing:** Based on your situation analysis, use windows of opportunity
- **Responsiveness:** Be able to rapidly respond to changing external environments, needs and priorities
- **Flexibility:** Be open to new avenues of political support; be open to adapt your advocacy plan to changes in the environment and landscape
- **Controversy:** Capitalise on contentious debate to bring attention to your issue, or to time the launch of your advocacy plan
- **Communications:** Schedule regular meetings (in-person or virtual) or phone calls to inform and motivate your advocacy partners
- **Monitor media coverage:** Publicise positive new developments, look for windows of opportunity brought about by news stories
- **Tracking:** Keep a record of successes and failures to learn from your experiences, and to allow others to do the same
- **Acknowledgements:** Give credit to policymakers, partners in successes

Factors that may lead to an open advocacy window of opportunity:

- A new problem is defined, or an old problem is reconsidered
- A solution is developed and available in the policy community
- A change in government or the national mood, or a crisis occurs
- Potential constraints are lessened

Factors that influence the potential success of an advocacy campaign:¹²

- **Functioning decision-making mechanisms:** Legislative, legal, and regulatory institutions must work for advocacy to be effective
- **Window of opportunity:** External events create demand for the solution
- **Feasibility:** A viable solution has been developed with supporting data and community buy-in
- **Strong advocacy plan:** A flexible advocacy strategy is in place
- **Strong campaign leadership:** Ability to implement the strategy
- **Effective influencers:** Allies can sway decision-makers
- **Mobilised public:** Active support for the solution
- **Champions:** Decision-makers who support the solution
- **Clear implementation path:** The decision-making institution has the commitment and ability to execute the solution

Click here for additional recommended resources to expand your knowledge and skills on rolling out an advocacy plan

Read Case Study 7 to see how NCD alliances adapt their workplans when confronted with unexpected changes, using lessons learned from the Healthy Caribbean Coalition, the Tanzania NCD Alliance, and the Healthy India Alliance as they moved quickly to adapt their advocacy workplans in response to the unforeseen circumstances presented by the COVID-19 pandemic.

CASE STUDY 7

Adapting advocacy workplans due to unforeseen circumstances: Alliances in India, Tanzania and the Caribbean and the impact of COVID-19

Background

The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted the way organisations operate and conduct advocacy. NCD alliances worldwide adapted to the new environment shaped by COVID-19, by strengthening their coalitions and forming appropriate partnerships, engaging in virtual advocacy activities, and retooling NCD priorities to address the intersections between NCDs and COVID-19.

The Healthy India Alliance (HIA), Tanzania NCD Alliance (TNCDA) and the Healthy Caribbean Coalition (HCC) moved quickly to adapt their workplans in response to the pandemic starting in 2020. HIA, as part of NCDA's Our Views, Our Voices initiative, adapted its advocacy plan by replacing planned in-person consultations, with virtual community conversations to build a community-led narrative on COVID-19 and NCDs. TNCDA, supported via NCDA's Advocacy Institute NCDs and UHC Accelerator Programme, faced an unpredictable environment brought about by the death of the former President Dr. John Magufuli resulting in changes in the new Cabinet, while also having to deal with the restrictions imposed by COVID-19. HCC, supported by NCDA's Civil Society Solidarity Fund on NCDs and COVID-19, launched a Transformative New Agenda to adapt their NCD response to the realities of the pandemic (learn more here).

Projects adapted to COVID-19

HCC adapted its advocacy workplan around what they called a Transformative New Agenda (TNA), by designing a slogan to build on the uncertainty and urgency, especially for those living with NCDs: "Now More Than Ever". HCC decided to adapt its planned advocacy campaign and developed and launched a regional long-term strategy making the case for a new approach to NCD prevention and control, and calling for the integration of NCDs into broader health agendas, such as health security and pandemic preparedness, to contribute to building back better during and beyond COVID-19. The vulnerability of people living with NCDs to

COVID-19 strengthened the messaging of its TNA digital campaign to prioritise policies that prevent NCDs and protect people living with NCDs, using rights-based and equity focussed language. According to HCC, due to the pandemic, the campaign timeline, target audiences and key messages were all modified for the better.

When the pandemic restricted HIA's plans to convene in-person consultations, it pivoted to hosting virtual community conversations in which trained champions were invited to build a community-led narrative on COVID-19 and NCDs, thus promoting the meaningful involvement of communities in building back better. Given that no in-person events were scheduled during the pandemic, HIA seized the opportunity to adapt budget allocations to support the time commitment of people living with NCDs as experts. At the same time, HIA engaged more with sub-national governments and non-government stakeholders to harness local advocacy opportunities to call for a people-centred NCD response. These sub-national efforts allowed to identify potential members and local host organisations, providing an opportunity to expand the alliance's membership base.

TNCDA had to react fast to respond to the changes in the political landscape and global pandemic, assessing their implications to its workplan and taking precautions to avoid putting staff and community at risk. It leaned into existing partnerships and political will it had created with government agencies over time to continue promoting NCDs even with these changes. The alliance continuously reached out to policy makers, including parliamentarians, to evaluate the implications of political changes to NCD prevention and control programmes, as well as to continue positioning itself as a key ally in any government response. According to the Tanzania NCD Alliance, **"If the roots are planted deep in the soil nothing can change due to the change in weather! Similarly, any initiatives that are related to the community and civil society MUST be sustainable, irrespective of change in political leadership."**

Recommendations

- When timing and framing advocacy activities consider that societal events have a political aspect, even if we are not aware of it. Even those events that are not overtly political (holidays and celebrations) can be used to elevate the status of NCDs as a topic of concern among decision-makers and citizens.
- Forecast challenges as best as you can and speak with donors about flexibilities in grant timelines and budgets as early as possible to allow for reprogramming.
- Make collaboration a priority. Leverage your network, membership, and partners to develop joint solutions to maximise project impact, including with policy makers and institutions.
- Assess the implications of new circumstances to re-evaluate needs and align advocacy campaigns to the current situation, such as by engaging in digital advocacy efforts.
- Although unforeseen events might lead to changes in an advocacy workplan, use the impetus created, as an opportunity to advocate for NCDs as part of national and regional post-pandemic recovery plans, and by involving people living with NCDs.

STEP 8

MONITOR AND EVALUATE

OVERVIEW¹³

- Keep track of your NCD advocacy campaign activities and assess your progress through monitoring, make adjustments when needed, and assess your overall advocacy achievements and lessons learned through evaluation
- Do not forget to celebrate progress and advocacy wins, which will help your allies and partners stay engaged, motivated, and interested in taking part in the next steps of the advocacy campaign or even in future campaigns. It's also important to thank champions and allies, especially those with decision-making power, as they will see the benefits of supporting your advocacy efforts.

Questions to explore:

- What are monitoring and evaluation for NCD advocacy?
- What is their role in NCD advocacy campaign strategies?
- What are some ways you can share your lessons learned with others?

What is monitoring for NCD advocacy campaigns?

- Measures progress and incremental gains towards achievement of set objectives and your ultimate advocacy outcome
- Ongoing systematic gathering of information and measuring of activities to check if the campaign is going according to plan
- Notes which activities are going well or not, so they can be adapted
- Generates trend data to assess progress over time and achievements attributable to your own advocacy efforts
- Continued accountability effort to allies and supporters of your advocacy campaign, which can help ensure and increase the quality of your work

What is evaluation for NCD advocacy campaigns?

- **Assesses:** Overall results and lessons learned
- **Judges:** Quality and impact of activities
- **Measures:** Degree of success and progress towards achieving goals
- **Process evaluation:** Why did some activities go well? Why did others not go well? Assesses how you worked.
- **Impact evaluation:** Why did some activities have the impact you wanted? Why did others not? Assesses **what changed**.

¹³ Content of this Step is adapted from: Adapted from: ACT!2015 Advocacy Strategy Toolkit by Restless Development, PACT, UNAIDS, https://www.unaids.org/sites/default/files/media_asset/advocacy_toolkit_en_0.pdf and Cancer Control: Knowledge into Action: WHO Guide for Effective Programmes: Module 6: Policy and Advocacy. Geneva: World Health Organization; 2008. PMID: 24716264, <https://www.who.int/cancer/FINAL-Advocacy-Module%206.pdf> and United Patients, "Engaging the Medical Community as Advocacy Partners, Communicating Successfully with Decision Makers and Using Data for Advocacy Purposes: A Step by Step Guide to Advocacy for Patient Groups," https://unitedpatientsacademy.org/upfiles/UnitedPatientsToolkit_4-4-2018_FINAL.pdf

What should be measured in advocacy?

- **Advocacy gains:** Foundational level outcomes that are essential to advocacy, but wouldn't be considered wins, including but not limited to agenda setting and building support for policy changes (e.g., issue framing and prioritisation of policy options, development and dissemination of policy messages, recruitment of new champions).
- **Advocacy wins:** Mainly policy adoption as the final advocacy outcome (legislative, judicial, or administrative).

What are performance indicators or targets?

- Variables with characteristics of quality, quantity, and time
- Measure changes in a health situation directly or indirectly
- Help assess the extent to which your objectives are achieved
- Provide a basis for developing plans for improvement
- **Examples:** Number and type of supportive statements made by policymakers; number of spokespeople trained; number of media hits; increased level of funding in government budget for your issue; number of people with lived experience meaningfully involved in decision-making

Types of monitoring methods:

- **Recording:** Document meetings and communications with targets
- **Tracking:** Note when target audiences use your advocacy messages
- **Conducting surveys and interviews:** Determine the impact of your activities and any recognition they have received
- **Media monitoring:** Track coverage of your issue

What are some monitoring and evaluation tips?¹⁴

- Make sure your advocacy objectives are SMART ([see Step 2 - Select priority issues, goals, and objectives](#))
- Collect evidence along the way to assess progress against selected indicators
- Refine the strategy as you go along, based on progress achieved
- Build time into your advocacy plan for a mid-campaign review, assessing results of activities, revising your strategy, and adapting your approaches if needed
- Conduct an end-of-campaign review to evaluate activities from start to finish
- As you monitor progress, keep focused on your overall goal and objectives
- Consider working with new partners or changing target decision-makers or tactics if you are not making progress

¹⁴ Adapted from: Cancer Control: Knowledge into Action: WHO Guide for Effective Programmes: Module 6: Policy and Advocacy. Geneva: World Health Organization; 2008. PMID: 24716264, <https://www.who.int/cancer/FINAL-Advocacy-Module-6.pdf>

How can you share your lessons learned?¹⁵

Write up the results of your NCD advocacy campaign, considering the following:

- **Expectations:** What did you think would happen with the campaign?
- **Reality:** What actually happened?
- **Achievements:** What worked well in the campaign? Why?
- **Going forward:** What should be continued in the future?
- **Challenges:** What didn't work well in the campaign? Why?
- **Improvements:** What could you do to enhance the approach in the future?
- **Recommendations:** What advice do you have for others seeking to conduct a similar campaign in a different setting?

Click here for Tool 8
Advocacy tracking template

Click here for additional recommended resources to expand your knowledge and skills on monitoring and evaluating your advocacy efforts

¹⁵ Adapted from: ACT!2015 Advocacy Strategy Toolkit by Restless Development, PACT, UNAIDS, https://www.unaids.org/sites/default/files/media_asset/advocacy_toolkit_en_0.pdf

List of resources

Links to selected NCDA resources on NCDs, UHC and COVID-19:

- Global NCD Agenda for Resilience and Recovery from COVID-19
- NCD Atlas - Bridging the Gap on NCDs through Civil Society Action: Initiatives of National and Regional NCD Alliances
- Bridging the Gap on NCDs: From global promises to local progress - Discussion paper
- Protecting Everyone: Integration of Noncommunicable Diseases into Universal Health Coverage in the era of COVID-19
- Shaping the health systems of the future: case studies and recommendations for integrated NCD care
- Advocacy Agenda of People Living with NCDs
- Briefing Note: Impacts of COVID-19 on people living with NCDs

→ **Click here** for the chart “**Audiences and Considerations**” from the World Health Organization’s publication, Stop the Global Epidemic of Chronic Disease, A Practical Guide to Successful Advocacy. ISBN 92 4 159446 2, ISBN 978 92 4 159446 2. Geneva: WHO; 2006, page 51.

→ **Click here** for the chart “**WHO Messages That Can Be Tailored To Specific Audiences**” from the World Health Organization’s publication, Stop the Global Epidemic of Chronic Disease, A Practical Guide to Successful Advocacy. ISBN 92 4 159446 2, ISBN 978 92 4 159446 2. Geneva: WHO; 2006, page 52.

→ **Click here** for the chart “**Potential Messengers for Specific Audiences**” from the World Health Organization’s publication, Stop the Global Epidemic of Chronic Disease, A Practical Guide to Successful Advocacy. ISBN 92 4 159446 2, ISBN 978 92 4 159446 2. Geneva: WHO; 2006, page 55.

→ **Click here** for “**WHO Template for Deciding on Possible Methods of Advocacy**” from the World Health Organization’s publication, Cancer Control: Knowledge into Action: WHO Guide for Effective Programmes: Module 6: Policy and Advocacy. Geneva: World Health Organization; 2008, page 30.

- **Click here** for “**Mapping of NCD CSOs: Mapping of NCD Civil Society Organisations in the WHO South East Asia Region**” from the NCD Alliance Practical Guide on How to Build Effective National and Regional NCD Alliances.
- **Click here** for “**Make the Case for Partnership Table**” from the NCD Alliance Practical Guide on How to Build Effective National and Regional NCD Alliances.
- **Click here** for “**Stakeholder Assessment Matrix**” from the NCD Alliance Practical Guide on How to Build Effective National and Regional NCD Alliances.
- **Click here** for “**Partner Tracker**” from the UNAIDS publication, ACT!2015 Advocacy Strategy Toolkit by Restless Development. PACT, UNAIDS, page 38.
- **Click here** for “**PATH’s Advocacy Strategy Template**” from the PATH publication, Stronger Health Advocates Greater Health Impacts, A workbook for policy advocacy strategy development. 2014, page 57.
- **Click here** for “**Our Activity Budget Template**” from the UNAIDS publication, ACT!2015 Advocacy Strategy Toolkit by Restless Development. PACT, UNAIDS, page 83.
- **Click here** for the sample “**Healthy India Alliance Workplan**” from the NCD Alliance Practical Guide on How to Build Effective National and Regional NCD Alliances.

LIST OF TOOLS

TOOL 1

Questions to assess the NCD legal and policy environment¹

Instructions: Consider the questions in the left column and write your answers in the right column.

QUESTIONS	ANSWERS
Who is responsible for NCDs at the Ministry of Health?	
What NCD laws, policies, programs, and guidelines currently exist? Are they comprehensive, integrated and of good quality? Are they being funded and implemented?	
Is there a multisectoral mechanism for NCDs? What are the opportunities for civil society engagement in decision making processes?	
What NCD-related goals, targets, and indicators is the government currently tracking?	
Is there a national surveillance system that tracks risk factors related to NCDs?	
How engaged is your Ministry of Health in NCD prevention and control?	
How engaged or interested are other relevant ministries and government bodies in NCD prevention and control?	
Who funds NCD prevention and control in your setting?	
How much funding is available for NCD prevention and control and what is it primarily spent on?	
What is the level of awareness about NCDs among the population?	
Among government officials, influential people, organisations and the public in general, what is the level of understanding of, and commitment to, comprehensive prevention and control of NCDs?	
What advocacy activities are currently being undertaken, and which organizations and individuals are involved? What are their goals, objectives and target audiences? What has been their impact to date?	
What are the barriers to and opportunities for advocacy work?	

¹ Adapted from United Patients, "Engaging the Medical Community as Advocacy Partners, Communicating Successfully with Decision Makers and Using Data for Advocacy Purposes: A Step by Step Guide to Advocacy for Patient Groups," https://unitedpatientsacademy.org/upfiles/UnitedPatientsToolkit_4-4-2018_FINAL.pdf

TOOL 2

Benefits and challenges of selected data sources for NCD advocacy¹

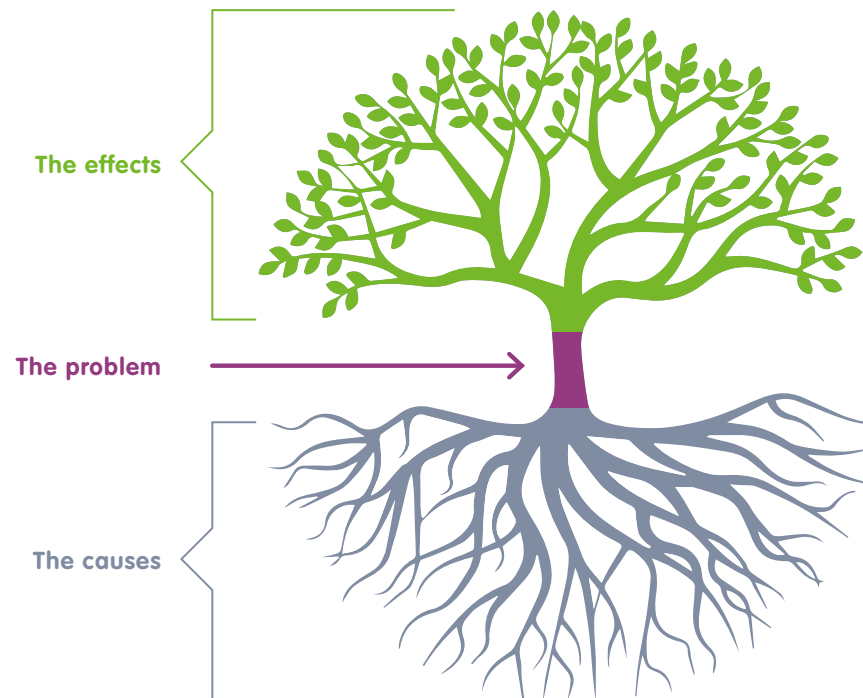
Type of Data	Benefits	Challenges
National level statistics (i.e., registries)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Comparable, can show trends 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Not always reliable due to underreporting, etc. → Does not address root causes of problems
Country, regional level statistics from global bodies (i.e., WHO)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → From well-respected, non-partisan source → Easy to obtain 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Provides overall snapshot, but does not explain root causes → Findings may be presented in lengthy, technical reports
Focus groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Provides attitudinal and anecdotal information → Shows participants' emotions, motivations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Small sample sizes make it difficult to generalize → May be time consuming to conduct and analyse
In-depth interviews	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → May establish rapport with participants to gain insights → May provide understanding of attitudes, perceptions, motivations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Time consuming to transcribe, organize, analyse, report → May be costly → Need to avoid participant selection bias
Surveys	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Provides statistical baseline → Provides behavioural information → May be from respected institution (e.g., University) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Findings may be subject to widely differing interpretations → Depth may be constrained by closed-ended questions
Local clinic or project reports or surveys	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → May highlight trends → Provides information on patient services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → May be subject to errors in collection and analysis → May be costly

TOOL 3

Problem tree: Understanding problems, causes, and effects

Instructions

Choose the main problem related to NCDs that you have identified in your broader analysis. The problem tree exercise will help you break it down, facilitating discussion to co-create advocacy priorities. Create a problem tree by writing the central problem to analyse in the trunk (write it in the centre of a flip chart). Then list the causes by asking 'why?' to identify the different causes of the problem, and the causes of the causes. Write these onto sticky notes and stick to the roots of the tree at the bottom of the flip chart. Now list the effects or consequences of the problem, writing these onto sticky notes and sticking them to the branches of the tree at the top of the flipchart. After drawing your tree, examine the root causes of your problem and identify the areas in which advocacy is needed. Ask: Which causes of this problem can be addressed with advocacy? Which cause and advocacy action will you prioritise and why? Then study the tree branches – the effects or consequences of the main problem. Ask: If a root cause in the trunk is resolved through advocacy, how will that change the branches? Do the effects or consequences of the problem show who might be some of the stakeholders that could be interested in your advocacy work? Once you have completed your problem tree, you can convert it into a solutions tree, where you reformulate your root causes into solutions and the consequences into outcomes.



TOOL 4

Checklist for selecting/prioritising an NCD advocacy issue¹

Instructions: Take a possible advocacy issue and consider the criteria listed in the left column by answering the questions listed in the second column. Based on your answers, rate each criterion high, medium or low, according to your response. For instance, for the 'Data' criterion below, if you have access to ample data demonstrating the extent of the problem, select the "high" rating for that particular question. In the third column, write notes about your reasons for selecting or rejecting a possible issue. When selecting an advocacy issue think about: the level of motivation and preparation of your organisation to engage in the issue; appropriateness to the current political, social and economic environment; and the potential impact and benefits.

Criteria	Question	Reason for selecting	High, Medium, Low
Data:	Do you have access to data that demonstrates the extent of the problem? Do the data show that the proposed solution will lead to improvements?		
Scope:	Does the issue affect many people? Do enough people feel affected to act?		
Understandable:	Is the issue easy to understand and explain? Are you able to frame the issue so that people comprehend it and its solution?		
Specificity:	Is the nature of the required policy change clear and very specific?		
Resources:	Will you be able to raise enough funds to support work on this issue? Do people care enough to donate resources?		
Targets:	Are you able to clearly identify the key decision makers (individuals) to address this issue? Do you have their names and contact information?		
Networks:	Do you have existing alliances with other stakeholders or key individuals based on this issue?		
Values:	Does the issue reflect your organisation or alliance's mission statement and values?		
Potential for success:	Is the issue and its proposed solution feasible and winnable given the current political, social and economic climate? How likely?		

¹ Adapted from: (a) CEDPA Advocacy Training Manuals – "Advocacy: Building Skills for NGO Leaders," and "Social Mobilization for Reproductive Health, A Trainer's Manual" and from ACS and Midwest Academy, ACS Direct Action Trainers Manual, 4th Edition, February 2008, "Choosing Problems and Issues," pp. 6-11 and https://unitedpatientsacademy.org/upfiles/UnitedPatientsToolkit_4-4-2018_FINAL.pdf and https://www.unaids.org/sites/default/files/media_asset/advocacy_toolkit_en_0.pdf; and (b) Adapted from: ACT!2015 Advocacy Strategy Toolkit by Restless Development, PACT, UNAIDS https://www.unaids.org/sites/default/files/media_asset/advocacy_toolkit_en_0.pdf

TOOL 4

Checklist for selecting/prioritising an NCD advocacy issue¹

Future:	Does work on this issue have the potential to build momentum for future campaigns?		
Commitment:	Do people care enough about the issue to take action?		
Participation:	Does the issue offer an opportunity for the meaningful involvement of people living with NCDs and does it reflect their lived experience? Does it offer an opportunity to mobilise the local community?		
Partnership:	Are there opportunities for many sectors of civil society to become involved in the issue? Do you have the potential to form strong partnerships?		
Level of effort required:	How many people will need to work on the campaign? How much time will be needed to succeed?		
Level of public support:	How supportive is the public of the issue? Does it have wide-ranging appeal?		
Level of decision-maker support:	How supportive are the key decision-makers of the issue?		

TOOL 5

Worksheet for defining advocacy issues, goals, and objectives¹

Instructions

1) List your advocacy issue at the top of the table.

Example: *Advocacy Issue: Advocate for inclusion of specific NCD services that are currently left out in the UHC benefit package.*

2) Write your advocacy goal in the box in the table below.

Based on your advocacy issue identified above, establish a clear long-term goal and SMART (specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, and time-bound) objectives that will help guide your advocacy work from the beginning. The rest of your advocacy plan should then be designed to achieve your goal and objectives. When identifying your goal and objectives, keep the following question in mind: “*What are the policies you want to influence or actions you want to implement?*”

Your goal should be the long-term change you are trying to achieve; for example:

Goal: Prevent catastrophic health expenditure for people living with NCDs upon accessing the health services, medication and care they need in my country.

3) Now list your three main advocacy objectives and write them in the table below. For each advocacy objective listed, use the Checklist provided in the third column to assess whether your objective is SMART. If needed, reformulate an objective to make it SMART.

Take time to decide on clear, specific objectives that are incremental steps towards the long-term goal. The effectiveness of your work will depend on how well-defined and specific they are. SMART objectives should be:

- Ambitious but realistic and achievable (this is vital for effectiveness, allowing you to build on success and maintain morale)
- Tailored to your own circumstances
- Progressive and innovative (be creative!)

SMART objectives examples:

- *Secure congressional approval of an alcohol and tobacco tax package to finance Universal Health Coverage by October 2022.*
- *By the second year of the administration, ensure adoption by the Ministry of Health of a new national and multi-year costed NCD Strategy with clear measurable objectives.*

TOOL 5

Worksheet for defining advocacy issues, goals, and objectives

Your advocacy issue:

Your advocacy goal:

Your advocacy objectives

Checklist

1.

Specific	Did you clearly state what you want to accomplish?
Measurable	Are you able to track the change and monitor progress?
Attainable	Can this be accomplished in your timeframe?
Realistic	Is it possible at all?
Time-bound	When do you want to meet this objective?

2.

Specific	Did you clearly state what you want to accomplish?
Measurable	Are you able to track the change and monitor progress?
Attainable	Can this be accomplished in your timeframe?
Realistic	Is it possible at all?
Time-bound	When do you want to meet this objective?

3.

Specific	Did you clearly state what you want to accomplish?
Measurable	Are you able to track the change and monitor progress?
Attainable	Can this be accomplished in your timeframe?
Realistic	Is it possible at all?
Time-bound	When do you want to meet this objective?

TOOL 6

Pocket guide on political mapping

NCD Alliance's Advocacy Institute Pocket Guide: POLITICAL MAPPING

WHAT?

Political mapping is a key component of a strategic advocacy campaign, which helps you identify policy audiences and targets and their level of power. These are the main stakeholders that can help you achieve your policy objective, or that have an influence over that objective.

Who has the power to give what you want?

PURPOSE?

Political mapping helps create a profile of policymaker targets, and their level of power, position, and interests that are relevant to your policy objective.

It helps you identify your champions and allies, and even your opponents. It provides information to select your advocacy tactics, and to develop and tailor effective advocacy messages. It is a dynamic mapping that needs to be revised and updated throughout your advocacy strategy, especially since targets' positions could change over time.

ANALYSIS OF ADVOCACY TARGETS

It is necessary to identify primary targets (*key decision-makers*) and secondary targets (*influentials*):

Political mapping is a key component of a strategic advocacy campaign, which helps you identify policy audiences and targets and their level of power. These are the main stakeholders that can help you achieve your policy objective, or that have an influence over that objective.

PRIMARY TARGETS

Decision-makers (always a person!) with direct authority to decide the outcome of your advocacy objective. They are responsible for approving policy and legal changes, or resource allocations (e.g., Heads of State and Government, Ministries, parliamentarians).

SECONDARY TARGETS

Individuals or groups that influence the views, decisions, and actions of primary targets, and could be inside policy circles (e.g., advisers or fellow Ministers) or outside of these circles (e.g., First ladies, media, colleagues, relatives).

TOOL 6

Pocket guide on political mapping

POLITICAL MAPPING MATRIX

A basic classification of your primary and secondary targets includes:

Sector	Role	Power level	Position	Your level of influence over target
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public (Executive, Legislative, Judicial) Social Private 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minister of Health Congressmen Media anchor First Lady Other: _____ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> High Medium Low 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Opposition (high, medium, low) Neutral Support (high, medium, low) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> High Medium Low

Always think beyond the usual NCD and health stakeholders!

Key political mapping questions:

- Who are the main political figures that influence your policy objective?
- What are their profiles and main activities/areas of work related to your policy objective?
- Can you identify their position and power over your policy objective?
- Can you identify their strengths and weaknesses as advocacy targets?
- Would you consider them as allies, opponents or neutral to your policy objective?

Political assessment matrix for an advocacy strategy

Instructions:

- For each objective in the advocacy plan, define your primary advocacy target. For each target, identify individuals or groups who can influence that target.
- If a key advocacy target is not directly accessible, it may be necessary to work through others (secondary targets) to reach the key decision-maker.
- Consider their position on your advocacy issue, their motivations and interests, and the content and format of the message required to persuade them.

TOOL 6

Pocket guide on political mapping

An extended political matrix can be as specific as needed, considering the following:

Name	Sector	Role	Academic background	Experience			Power level			Position			Other	Contact info
				Health	Political	Private sector	High	Medium	Low	Opposition (high, medium, low)	Neutral	Support (high, medium, low)		

Other elements of the matrix could include: Familiarity with your organisation/alliances; Knowledge of your policy objective; Potential benefits and risks for your target if they support your policy objective.

TOOL 7

Advocacy workplan template

Instructions: For each objective within your goal, fill out the matrix below to create your advocacy workplan. Develop a list of tactics/activities for each of your targets. Add more rows as needed.

Issue:

Goal:

SMART objective 1:

Partners/allies

Possible barriers/opponents and mitigating measures:

Primary target:

Secondary targets:

Tactic/activity	Person responsible	Schedule/timeframe	Resources needed
1.1			
1.2			
1.3			
1.4			
1.5			
...			

TOOL 8

Advocacy tracking template

Instructions: After you complete an advocacy campaign, fill out the table to keep track of your campaigns, achievements (success indicators) and lessons learned.

Note: Track your achievements in terms of process indicators and advocacy gains and wins, as described below.

Process evaluation:

Why did some activities go well? Why did others not go well? Assesses how you worked.

Example of process indicator:

Number of meetings held with decision-makers.

Impact evaluation:

Identify advocacy gains and wins. Why did some activities have the impact you wanted? Why did others not? Assesses what changed.

Example of advocacy win:

MOH approved policy to expand NCD benefits in UHC package.

Advocacy objective:

Advocacy achievements (indicators)			Details	Lessons learned
Process	Advocacy gain	Advocacy win		