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Module 4

Campaign

Implementations -

Tactics, Skills,

Deliverables

ADVOCACY
An E-course



Module 4: Campaign Implementation – Tactics and Skills

Learning Objectives:

- Understanding the development of an Action Plan.
- Understanding the considerations for different steps in the campaign.
- Understanding the diversity of tactics and activities available.

Implementing Action Plan

By this point, you should know how to develop a strategy and an action plan. Make sure that your action plan will achieve strategy outcomes and that it answers the following:

- **What** is to be done (actions and targets)
- **Who** is to do it (responsibilities & recruiting; organisational structure; organisational/campaign alliances; etc.)
- **When** it is to be done (a time line; establish milestones)
- **At what cost** (in terms of financial and material resources, but also in terms of social, emotional, human energy etc. costs).

This should also be documented for the participants involved. It is useful to make sure that the Action Plan (or sometimes several Action Plans) is well documented and can act as a reference point for activities between meetings. It will also be useful as an evaluation document for discussion at meetings to see what has been achieved, what went wrong, how we can improve, etc.

Engaging stakeholders/community:

Raising awareness, as described in the last module, is an essential step in an advocacy campaign. Below, you will find some concrete activity ideas to raise awareness. However, first of all, it's helpful to know how to engage the community or other 'stakeholders' (such as government officials, business groups, churches or unions) and this involves a series of steps. In practice these often occur in parallel – but it is useful to separate them in order to clarify the process of engagement. We begin by creating awareness and we want to end up with motivating people to take action in support of the campaign goals. The elements, in order, are:

Awareness

↓

Understanding

↓

Acceptance

↓

Support

↓

Action

Mobilizing people

Mobilizing people and groups of people can be relatively easy or extremely difficult (as often happens in situations where significant life-style changes might be required or where general



support is present but people don't feel strongly enough to suffer the 'discomfort' of taking action).

A wide variety of activities can help with mobilizing people. Often simple tactics, like obtaining signatures on a petition, prepares people for more active roles later. Activities need to be developed which are specially suited to different groups. For example, young people might be easier to involve in organizing a music concert in support of the campaign than in attending a public meeting; elderly citizens might be more willing to hold a film night or listen to speakers than to march in the streets. Depending on the nature of the campaign, there are usually activities to suit each group of supporters.

There is often considerable interest in establishing specific work groups or sub-committees to undertake such activities. These usually work best when the most affected people manage them, with adequate support to ensure the activity is successful. For example, adult support for a rock concert will often be necessary to ensure access to the appropriate facilities or committee support for an elderly citizens film night is often required to ensure the initial funds are available for facility, transport or film hire.

The process of mobilizing people becomes more difficult as success seems further away and tactics escalate.

Petitions are less threatening than public meetings and public meetings are less threatening than street marches. As the campaign gains momentum the strategy often requires more 'uncomfortable' or 'threatening' tactics and this requires greater commitment from people.

It is often wise to build up to such tactics fairly slowly, ensuring that the decision to escalate the tactics is proposed and supported by the more cautious and conservative members of the community rather than pushed through a meeting by the most radical sector. The aim, for example, is not simply to have a street march, but to mobilize substantial numbers of community members into the street. The people whose decisions you are trying to influence are less likely to be impressed by 100 radicals marching down the street than 1,000 'average' members of the community and families marching.

The situation becomes more difficult as a campaign reaches the end of the possibilities for protest.

There comes a time when protest is not availing anything because the decision makers refuse to be influenced by the protesters or advocacy groups. The time may come when the advocacy group has to decide whether to negotiate some form of settlement (if this is an option), whether to simply give up, or whether to escalate from protest to resistance. In this course, we want to encourage you to try and negotiate for policy change or to bring government officials or other influential people to a particular event that you are planning.

Maintaining the organization and campaign

Often the most difficult part of a campaign consists in maintaining the campaign when excitement disappears, setbacks occur and motivation diminishes.

There are many reasons why campaigns fluctuate in their overt support or ability to mobilize. Many people expect rapid success from their protest activity; they expect that the politicians are genuinely motivated by democratic ideals and will therefore listen to what the community has to say. When this proves not to be the case, as so often occurs, they become demoralized and lose hope. This



becomes even more of a problem when there are ‘serious’ setbacks. For instance, when the decision makers openly announce that they will not accept the advocacy group’s arguments and will not acceded to the groups’ demands.

However, any demoralization threat can turn into a further motivational exercise towards to benefit the campaign.

Another problem with maintaining a campaign’s momentum can arise when legal or other bureaucratic processes need to be engaged in. Processes such as inquiries, research programs, government reviews or health and environmental impact statements, can all serve to demobilize a community. These processes usually only involve a select few (those who have the time, skills, experience and/or resources). Because they often occur over an extended period, putting everything else on hold until they are completed, they tend to demobilize most of those people who are excluded from direct participation.

One of the most neglected aspects of maintaining a community campaign is the need for fun and social activities. The conducting of social activities, such as picnics, excursions, trivia nights (which also raise funds), dances, etc. can play a major role in maintaining a campaign, especially during the more tedious or demoralizing times.

Culmination

The culmination of a campaign is not always simply when it is won or lost. It is also the penultimate action or the ‘last throw of the dice’.

In many campaigns there comes a time when the group has to decide whether to give up or to ‘go for broke’. This might involve a decision to find a face saving way out, perhaps by accepting a (somewhat unpalatable) ‘compromise’ or it might simply be an admission of defeat. But often before this occurs there may be value in holding one final, spectacular or high-impact action. Perhaps a large, ‘do or die’ rally or march, perhaps a mass resistance activity. If facing such a situation it is important to consider the impact of the action, and the potential risks, on the community and the advocacy group. Sometimes it is better to survive to fight another day than to face total defeat and discredit and to self-destruct through an act of futile desperation.

It is important to plan the culmination process, whether it is a victory party, a face-saving withdrawal or simple surrender.

Post Campaign

There are often post-campaign requirements for the advocacy group. There may be simple organizational issues (such as accounts to settle, thank you letters and acknowledgements to send) but there may also be more substantial activities. In some campaigns there have been serious consequences for one or more members (these could be legal, occupational, personal), which the group might need to address. Often there are ‘loose ends’ in terms of new policies or practices required.

The ‘post campaign’ activities can involve a number of members in preparing submissions, sitting on advisory committees and generally advocating new policies to consolidate the victory made from the campaign. In some cases, you might also want to consider what to do with the organizational network that helped you with the campaign. While it is understood that the majority of those involved in the campaign would want to take a ‘long rest’, there might be a core of



activists who wanted to build on the victory and continue with the community activities, particularly if you manage to win support for specific HIV/AIDS programming in the community.

Tactics and Activities

There is virtually an infinite number of tactics and activities that can be used in campaigns: the limit is largely determined by activists' imaginations.

It is best to have a varied and flexible range of tactics and to avoid repeating the one tactic too often. For example, mass marches can play an important role in an advocacy strategy, but it has been observed in many instances that when such marches are repeated frequently and closely spaced in time that numbers decrease rapidly, especially when they are not complemented with other tactics.

The important thing to remember is that rarely will one tactic achieve the goals of the campaign. There is generally a need for a range of tactics within the advocacy strategy.

Some of the types of tactics worth considering are:

Fun tactics

Tactics that use humor or create fun for participants can play a very useful role. They assist in keeping a campaign 'user friendly', especially where family involvement is desired. They also serve to maintain morale and commitment. Fun activities include:

- Street or workplace theatre and satire
- Video/movie exposé or satire
- Art shows (schools can often provide useful opportunities for this)
- Music, concerts, dances
- Spectacles (e.g. Greenpeace)

Lobbying

Lobbying is often a very important part of an advocacy campaign. Politicians are human beings like everyone else, and they are often interested in meeting and consulting their constituencies. Such activities include:

- Petitions, letters, phone calls
- Direct meetings with public officials
- Mass meetings
- Rallies and marches
- Ballot box protests
- E-campaign (using internet and email)

Direct Action

Direct action is a more serious and radical tactic and may create conflict within a campaign between 'radical' and more 'conservative' members. Nevertheless, it can also play an important role in drawing rapid attention to an issue or a set of demands. Direct action can include:

- Boycotts (see Nestle example below)
- Sit-ins, occupations work-ins, strikes
- Blockades (e-blockade have also been suggested recently)



Resistance

Resistance is often the ‘last resort’ when decision-makers have refused to listen effectively to the protest or advocacy proposals. To ensure that resistance is not simply an empty threat or a temporary nuisance (making it another form of protest) it is important to prepare adequate numbers of people for such activities and to spend considerable time obtaining the resources required to make it enduring. Resistance activities include:

- Refusals to participate (draft resistance, ID Card, etc.)
- Tax resistance
- Pickets to prevent entry, construction, work, etc.
- Work-ins, strikes

There are no simple rules for choosing the best advocacy methods. Your choice will depend on many factors: a) the target person/group/institution; b) the advocacy issue; c) your advocacy objective; d) the evidence to support your objective; e) the skills and resources of your coalition and f) timing – for example, external political events, when a law is still in draft form, immediately before a budgeting process, time of year, stage of advocacy process. Below is an example of the strengths and weaknesses of some methods for a particular advocacy objective and targets. Remember that every case is different.

<p>Advocacy objective: To persuade managers of the 10 largest companies in the Andhra Pradesh state to end compulsory testing of workers and dismissal of HIV+ workers.</p> <p>Direct targets: General managers of companies.</p> <p>Indirect targets: Labour unions, boards of directors, personnel managers.</p>		
Method	Strengths	Weaknesses
Analysing and influencing legislation and policies or their implementation	If analysis shows that a company's current practices are costing them money, this can be powerful evidence Beneficiaries can provide expertise	Criticism of policies could anger managers Not useful for managers who dislike formal policies
Position paper or briefing note	Suitable for presenting to senior directors and managers Useful background briefing for journalists Ensures that public statements by allies always agree	Can easily be lost among other paperwork Some managers do not like reading papers Difficult to involve beneficiaries
Working from inside	Some managers will listen more closely to people they know Many opportunities within labour unions	Limited opportunities in companies – all policy is made by managers and directors
Lobbying or face-to-face meetings	Opportunity to present 'human face' of the issue and to build a personal relationship Beneficiaries can explain their case directly	Managers often too busy to attend Board members not interested in the issue, and afraid of HIV+ people
Presentation	Opportunity to present the issue in a controlled way, direct to decision-makers Beneficiaries can speak directly	Managers often too busy Difficult to gain permission for presentation to board of directors
Drama	Emotional appeal works with some managers Suitable for mass meetings of labour unions Beneficiaries can advise on story, or perform	Some decision-makers will feel that drama is only for the illiterate Difficult to find opportunity to perform to managers or directors
Press release	Useful for organisations needing public support Useful to launch a campaign or for quick reaction to opposition or new developments Inexpensive	No use for companies who do not need/want public support Difficult to involve beneficiaries
Media interview	Same as for press release Useful at times when advocacy issue needs 'a human face' Inexpensive	Can have negative impact if the interviewee is not prepared or does not deliver message well Can be manipulated by journalists
Press conference	Same as for press release Good for presenting evidence, esp. case studies/examples Useful to launch a major campaign or for reaction to serious opposition or major new developments Easy to involve beneficiaries and allies, and give them public recognition	As for press release Requires high level of organisation Expensive



At this point, we will provide you with several ways to 1) Raise Awareness and 2) Take Action. We expect that after the course, you will be able to implement at least two awareness-raising activities and one action. If these suggestions do not seem appropriate in your cultural context, you are free to suggest other activities and we will certainly support and guide you in implementing after the course. However, we encourage you to choose from what we suggest in this module. For all suggestions, please apply what you learned in the module to implement them!

I. Local Gatherings are networking opportunities to inform other local youth organizations about the issues and involve them in a community-based or even national based campaign. By having people provide information about their work, their objectives and aims, the gatherings provide a space for new partnerships and alliances to bolster existing projects or develop new ones. Organizing a local gathering is a great way to promote your advocacy campaign. As we suggested earlier, building partnerships and allies to plan and implement your campaign is very important and we have highlighted the benefits of new partnerships and networking including access to other institutions, people, places and resources, fresh, new ideas and perspectives, new knowledge and skills, influence, higher profile or political leverage to strengthen the campaign.

To organize a local gathering, take the following steps:

- a) Identify several (15 or more) existing youth-led and/or youth-serving organizations in the nearby area who work on HIV/AIDS interventions. These might include (student councils, religious groups, arts groups, family and friends, sexual and reproductive health educators).
- b) Find a date and a space for the gathering. You do not need to pay for a location necessarily. In fact, schools and organizations are often more than happy to let somebody use their rooms at no cost (especially if it's for a good cause)¹
- c) Invite a member or two from each organization to attend the gathering and explain its purpose.
- d) Explain your political advocacy campaign and how it relates to UNGASS DoC, including needs and outcome you are seeking from the local gathering to help with the campaign. The objective of the gathering should be very clear – to inform, inspire and involve local and national community members with similar interests to implement a campaign.
- e) Brainstorm and identify mutual objectives, goals and ways for present organizations to get involved in the campaign.
- f) Arrange follow up plan with roles, responsibilities and several date benchmarks. Use the action plan suggestions in the previous module to do this.

School workshops or presentations on UNGASS DoC and Political Advocacy – This is a great way to educate young people about UNGASS DoC and involve more young people in the advocacy campaign. You should try to ask your local school headmaster or teacher about either facilitating a workshop on UNGASS commitments and progress your country has made or provide some materials for the teacher to share with his/her class. It would be good if you could focus on this activity in institutions that typically do not have access to communicational technologies. This process will educate and also publicize the advocacy campaign.

¹ MDG Youth Action Guide



To do so:

- a) Identify 3 teachers in schools or colleges that would be interested in having a youth leader facilitate a session covering: Brief outline of HIV/AIDS statistics in the country and a review of commitments such as UNGASS DoC and WPAY, focusing on activities that can help to hold government accountable. It is preferable that such a workshop has not been done in the school or college
- b) Use TakingITGlobal's workshop kit to learn how to organize and facilitate the workshop. Click here to download:
<http://www.takingitglobal.org/action/workshopkit/>
The workshop is also available under 'Documents' section the project page
- c) Be sure to hold a post-workshop discussion on student perspectives on the issues and what they suggest should be done about it, what kinds of challenges and risks (if any) they face in sexual health and how government is or is not addressing them
- d) Recruit students who would like to get more involved in the campaign and assist with it

Additionally, other young people in the community can also be trained to hold such workshops via local gatherings with interested youth from either local networks, organizations, or from previous workshops

Promotion, Marketing and Media Campaigns²: Media is an important tool to emphasize the issues one is advocating on in the community. In western communities there has developed a tendency to resort to mass media campaigns at every opportunity. This is largely due to the pervasive influence that the mass media has in developed nations and the belief that mass media publicity will significantly assist advocacy activities.

The use of the mass media should be a result of deliberation and discussion, not simply a response to a 'media opportunity'. It is often not difficult to obtain media coverage, but it is not nearly so easy to retain media or audience interest beyond the quick headline.

At the same time, the use of **local** print or electronic media is often extremely valuable in communicating with members of the community. On the other hand, the local media (like the mass media) are not always willing to report local issues favorably (from an advocacy viewpoint) and can rarely be relied upon as the sole means of communication

When considering whether to use the media (whether mass media or local media) there are some useful questions to consider:

- How will this advance the campaign or advocacy program? Consider the long term as well as the short-term impacts. Could it become a diversion from our main strategy and mobilizing efforts?
- Who is the intended audience and what do we expect them to do with the media message?

² A lot of information for this section was taken from OIYP's 'Advocacy in the 21st Century' E-course and MDG Youth Action Guide



Are we asking for a specific response or are we simply trying to raise awareness?

- What are our ‘opponents’ (assuming we have some) going to say in response? Remember that the media will usually provide opposing viewpoints.
- What is the media’s motivation in giving us this opportunity? Is it simply to get some sensational headlines? Is it to ‘set us up’ for criticism? Is the journalist genuinely understanding of our viewpoint (and will the editors allow this to be reflected in the final media story)?
- What will be the impact on the organization or coalition’s internal dynamics? Sometimes media coverage elevates one or two ‘spokespeople’ into the limelight and can create internal rivalries and distrust.

Nevertheless, despite potential pitfalls and the possibility of diverting the campaign, there are often also considerable advantages in obtaining mass media coverage. For further information about how to make the most of mass media opportunities refer to:

<http://www.fair.org/activism/communicate.html> and
<http://www.spinproject.org/resources/tutorials.php3> (useful tutorials on media work from the “Spin Project”).

Also, it might be smart to hold off on media outreach until you have built up some momentum. Media tends to focus on stories that already have some support behind them or have already achieved measurable results³.

Other ways of Promoting Events⁴:

- Door-to-door visits
- Flyers (to be provided) and posters to publicize
- Make public announcements in church or school
- Website (i.e. blogs, other portals through www.TakingITGlobal.org)
- Local radio stations (see InfoCard I)
- Discuss with family and friends
- Local youth media to publicize UNGASS DoC and mobilize more young people in the process
- Hold a seminar with local government officials to discuss UNGASS issues and exchange (see InfoCard II below on ‘Preparing a Briefing Paper or Position Paper’)
- Perspectives between officials and young people. Objective should be to exchange information, bring about awareness between both parties and conclude with a follow up plan
- Use of local methods such as street theatre/drama, song, dance or music to build awareness about the issue (see InfoCard III)
- After a ‘buzz’ has been created around your event, reach out to local and national newspapers, TV stations, magazines and websites (see InfoCard IV)
- Write a good press release using provided tips (see InfoCard V)
- If helpful, write a letter to the Editor of a local newspaper. Letters should be persuasive, brief and use statistics from reputable sources. A prominent member of the community could be asked to write a letter, or sign a letter drafted by another campaigning member

³ Taken from MDG Youth Action Guide

⁴ The used InfoCards are taken from ‘ Advocacy in Action’Toolkit, ICASO



- Adopt a statement supporting the DoC and encourage local health clinics, especially those with HIV/AIDS services for youth to issue a statement showing their support for UNGASS DoC and that they are contributing to achieving the commitments

Twinning Project: Twinning fosters mutual understanding and cooperation between partners to strive for social justice around a particular issue.⁵ GYCA aims to create a solidarity network among young people who will organize and implement political advocacy campaigns abroad and in the United States. If you choose to have such a partnership, it will can result in either one or more of the following:

- a) Letter-writing campaign to the country to help you lobby or advocate for reform, including lobbying to increase number of youth on delegations to the UNGASS +5 meeting in June
- b) Fundraising – to assist e-course participant with organizing an event, developing promotional materials for advocacy campaign
- c) Cross-cultural information exchange on HIV/AIDS topics – US students will have the change to learn from ‘the field’ about HIV/AIDS challenges in another country where the pandemic is exacerbated and where assistance is meager
- d) More effective projects can be coordinated to achieve justice in health-related issues using a similar model to the one used to increase healthcare access for Coca-Cola workers in Africa

This will not only create a more global awareness about UNASS DoC but will forge new beyond-border projects that will transform into long-term partnerships

Taking Action

Following the above points, you should be aware about the following dates and take action using the knowledge, tools and resources in this e-course. For each action, follow these four points which is an outline of some components of this course:

- 1) Use of **research methodology** from the e-course to identify commitments made, challenges in achieving those commitments, expected results and objectives from government collaboration. In order to do this, one will have to⁶:
 - Ensure that the issues can be resolved through advocacy efforts
 - Consolidated amount of evidence on the issue and be well-informed
 - Can objectives be achieved through political advocacy? If not, why?
 - Advocacy Plan including objectives, targets (persons, institutions, reforms), actions to be taken, resources, time frame and expected outcome
- 2) Identifying the main **target of influence** (I.e. members of parliament or government officials, public health officials including members of National AIDS Council and/or of Ministry of Health)
- 3) **Informative campaign** to remind government officials about their commitments and demand action (refer to awareness actions above)
- 4) **Plan for follow-up**, including time frame with set benchmarks to achieve objectives (as small [i.e. setting up phone call with a public health official’s] assistant or big [i.e. arranging a panel with youth HIV/AIDS activists and a member of the National AIDS Council] as they may be)

⁵ <http://www.ifsw.org/Info/Twinning.html>

⁶ Pg. 98 Toolkit



Political Breakfasts: This action is taken from a successful campaign for HIV/AIDS reform in Honduras led by a UNFPA Global Youth Partner.⁷ Using the four-point model outlined above, you can invite government officials for a breakfast on a bi-monthly basis to discuss and negotiate the issues that they identify in Point 1 (Use InfoCard 6 & 7). Such an event can be co-organized with an existing youth council (if one exists) or with members of civil society (i.e. people who partake in the local gathering) to invite government officials (identified in Point 2 of the model above). Over the course of 4-6 months⁸ the breakfasts can be organized and used as follows:

- 1) **Follow** the 4-point strategy to invite government officials
- 2) Using **awareness actions** suggested above, plan a representative audience for the breakfast
- 3) Find a **good space** to host the breakfast. If you are near a mission or embassy, perhaps they might be willing to host the event. A UN office might also be willing to host such an event. If neither is available, use a local council space. However, any indoor or nicely decorated outdoor space should do.
- 4) **Find food/drink** donations from within the local community to cater for the breakfast
- 5) **Plan the breakfast** – try to get several key government officials to attend. If more than one or two can attend, split up the breakfast into several groups and ensure that young HIV/AIDS activists are assigned to engage each group in discussion about a specific local or national HIV/AIDS issue, particularly if it is UNGASS related.⁹
- 6) If the breakfast is a success, try to arrange a follow up – either breakfast or meeting, depending on what the outcomes will be (i.e. what is negotiated, agreed upon – this depends on what you thought about in Point 1 – objectives and Point 4 – Follow up)

Getting Youth on Delegations for the UNGASS + 5 Meeting: This process takes several months of lobbying the government. However, use the information in InfoCards 6 and 7 and keep in mind that when you plan to set up a meeting with a government official to discuss this, you must think about the value-added to the government. Specifically, you should emphasize building awareness for the government about existing youth-led HIV/AIDS initiatives so that the government understands the added value that young people provide by participating in interventions. Local youth organizations/and or networks should have concrete achievements and examples of impact from their work before they can convince the government that young people should be part of the official delegations. Some suggestions for initiating this process and accomplishing it:

- Follow the four point model above to organize an event with influential officials
- The event should be informative and should be **collaborative** in the sense that it should include as many youth-serving and youth-led organizations and networks as possible. However, it should also be **well planned**. Brainstorming for this process can occur at a local gathering. Use suggestions made above in Raising Awareness and Actions

Several main points should be kept in mind in order to be convincing in the face of government officials to obtain support for a youth delegate:

⁷ Please refer here for more information - <http://www.unfpa.org/hiv/gyp/>

⁸ Depends on local context. I.e. availability of a particular official, political situation and need

⁹ This is based on the UNGASS + 4 Breakfast for Young People during the UNGASS Roundtable Review in New York in June 2005. A young person headed each table with other young people and adult attendees of the Roundtable



- Presenting value-added of youth interventions in HIV/AIDS
- There are some delegations (particularly Scandinavian and other European countries) that have a history of supporting young people to attend large UN events such as the General Assembly. Research what were the outcomes of these delegations and short-term as well as long-term impact
- If you were supported to attend as a youth delegate, what would be the outcome? Clear outcomes and objectives from attending should be decided on, depending on the national context. This includes a post-meeting follow up plan for when the youth delegate returns back to his/her country. Otherwise, such lobbying will seem tokenistic. As mentioned before, getting support of surrounding organizations for this initiative is crucial

Funding might be cited as a challenge by governments. If this is the case, it is important to find out what the expenses are and how much they are (or an approximation). For this to be realistic, the same three points stated above must be addressed and presented in a proposal manner to any potential funder. Other funding mechanisms include lobbying European governments who typically send several youth delegates.

These activities require you to contact and work with government officials. Keep these tips in mind when dealing with government and legislators¹⁰:

- **Be gracious.** Always begin by thanking the legislator for providing the opportunity to hear your ideas, opinions, etc. Legislators who support adolescent reproductive and sexual health, in particular, receive a lot of negative attention from the opposition. A sincere “thank you” will be greatly appreciated.

- **Be professional.** Be professional in both dress and manner; don’t say negative things about other legislators or public figures.

- **Be focused.** Stick with one issue per call or letter. Information about more than one topic will only confuse the message and dilute your point.

- **Do your homework.** As part of your preparation, research the legislator’s position on your issue. You can find out through voting records, speeches, newspaper articles, debates and other organizations that work on this area. Advocacy organizations, particularly those with Political Action Committees often track legislator’s votes, and can provide voting guides. Explore the legislator’s personal connections with the issue: Has he/she been affected by HIV/AIDS? Frame your presentation for maximum effectiveness based on your knowledge about the legislator’s constituency, views, background, interests. Different arguments are compelling for different people; use the most persuasive argument for this person. It might help to role-play what you want to say at the meeting, and practice responses to possible comments.

- **Make a personal connection.** No matter how insignificant you may feel it is, if you have friends, relatives and/or colleagues in common, **let the legislator know!** In particular, let the legislator know if you are a constituent. The legislative process can be very informal and, although a personal connection makes no difference in your presentation, it may make the difference in your effectiveness.

- **Consider yourself an information source.** Legislators have limited time, staff and interest in any one issue. They can’t be as informed as they’d like on all the issues—or on the ones that concern you. **YOU** can fill in the information gap. Encourage the policy maker to ask questions about the program or the issue.

¹⁰ From Advocates for Youth Toolkit on Advocacy



- **Be specific in what you ask for.** If you want a vote, information, answers to a question, signature on a petition; whatever it is make sure you ask directly and get an answer.
- **Follow up.** It is very important to find out if the legislator did what they said they would. Send a thank you letter after your conversation, restating your position. It is also very important that you thank the legislator for a supportive vote, or ask for an explanation of an unsupportive vote.
- **Don't burn bridges.** It is easy to get emotional over issues you feel strongly about. That's fine, but be sure that you leave your relationship with the legislator on good enough terms that you can return to them on that or another issue. Don't get into a heated argument with a legislator, and never threaten them. Your strongest opponent on one issue may be a great proponent on another!

During Face-to-Face Visits:

- **Schedule a meeting.** Call the legislator's office and schedule a meeting enough in advance that you have time to prepare. Make appointments well enough in advance to prepare, confirm the meeting and invite other people working on this issue. Keep a record of who attended, what information was shared and any actions promised.
- **Be flexible.** Expect interruptions, changes in schedule or staff availability. If you can't meet with a legislator, try to meet with an appropriate staff member or reschedule for another time. Staff people are extremely important, and may have great influence on a legislator's views.
- **Be prompt.** Don't be late, as it sets a bad tone for the meeting before it has even started. If you are running late, call ahead and let the legislator's office know.
- **Be prepared.** Make the most of your visit: plan your presentation in advance and divide up roles for group members to take on, including a note taker. Plan a 5-minute presentation (10 minutes at the most) and expect to spend no more than 15 minutes with the legislator. Make your important points in a clear and succinct manner. Note personal relationships and constituents.
- **Take advantage of opportunities.** Meetings with legislators can take place anywhere — in the state house hallways, the district office or the local grocery store. Take advantage of unexpected opportunities to speak with legislators.
- **Leave something behind.** Develop a handout packet to leave with the legislator. It should include a short (1-2 pages) summary of your group, the issue you are working on and your request for action, background information about the issue, and press clippings such as editorial support for your position.

By Telephone:

- **Identify yourself** using your name and address. If you are a constituent, say so.
- **Identify the issue** you want to talk about; when referring to a bill use its number and its title.
- **State both your position** and how you would like the legislator to vote.
- **Ask for the legislator's position** on the bill or issue. If supportive, ask for a commitment to vote for your position. If opposing or undecided, thank them for the information—don't argue with them on the phone. Ask what information would be helpful in helping the legislator become a proponent. If the legislator is unavailable, **leave a detailed message** with a staff member. The staff member may be able to describe the legislator's position.
- **Follow up** by sending a note thanking the legislator for their time. Include any information that the legislator can use to solidify their position or which may move them to support your position



The Advocates for Youth Advocacy Toolkit is very helpful and includes a lot more useful information about communicating with legislators and dealing with opposition and criticism. It is focused on the US and on sexual and reproductive health but you might find it helpful for your work. It's in the Documents section on the project page.

Conclusion

At this point, you have been given the tools, knowledge and resources to plan a full-fledged advocacy campaign with a focus on UNGASS Declaration of Commitments as they relate to young people. You should know who to approach, how to approach them, which issue you will advocate for and the methodology for having the understanding and the information to organize a real campaign. The idea of this e-course is that you build up on the knowledge you have with each module so that by the end of this course, you are fully equipped and confident to approach policy makers, show them their accountability and organize a variety of events as part of a campaign to make a change and help governments keep their promise! Please refer to the InfoCards as the separate document and the Exercises.



Exercise 4

Consider and respond to the following questions:

1. What are your most-used tactics? Why are these used the most? Why do you consider them effective?
2. Has your group or campaign used the Internet? If so, for what purpose and how effective has the use of the Internet been?
3. How has your group or campaign used the mass media? If so, for what purpose and how effective has the use of the media been?

(In considering the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats involved with using the internet or mass media you might find it useful to employ a brief, point-form SWOT analysis (using the tools in Appendix 1).)

4. What level of engagement do you think your community has for the campaign you are planning?
5. Which two awareness activities might you implement?
6. Which action event(s) do you see yourself implementing?
7. How might you maintain the campaign's momentum if you run into obstacles?
8. How will you mark the end of the campaign, regardless of whether you have been successful or not?

Now you have answered all of these questions you are in a position to draw up an Action Plan for a Campaign. If you believe it will be useful to your work consider completing the following exercise.

ACTION PLAN

Draw up an Action Plan applying the steps outlined in the notes, from “preparation” through to strategy development and tactics. It is often useful to set up a ‘table’ or grid that can indicate the ‘what’, ‘how’, ‘who’ and ‘when’ of the activities. Do this for one awareness action and one action from the ones offered in this module. Refer to the framework offered in Module 3.