

# Building Skills to Advocate for Change with Health Data

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Global Health & Innovations Conference  
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# Learning objectives

- Describe the 6 elements of an advocacy strategy
- Develop 4 elements of an advocacy strategy
- Describe a tool to identify and engage stakeholders
- Understand the importance of assessing the effect of advocacy activities



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# Agenda

- 5:15 – 5:20 Welcome, agenda, introductions
- 5:20 – 5:50 Presentation – Elements of an advocacy strategy
- 5:50 – 6:20 Activity P1– develop an advocacy strategy
- 6:20- 6:35 - Activity P2 – develop an elevator speech & present it to the group
- 6:35 – 6:40 Presentation - Assessing the effects of advocacy activities
- 6:40 – 6:45 Workshop evaluation & adjourn



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The logo for MEASURE Evaluation, featuring a stylized green icon of three people standing together, with the text "MEASURE Evaluation" below it.

# Influencing decision making

- Decision – a choice between two or more courses of action
- Ideally information is considered in decision making process and decision based on data
- Influencers
  - Culture, politics, individual behaviors, norms, technical issues, etc.

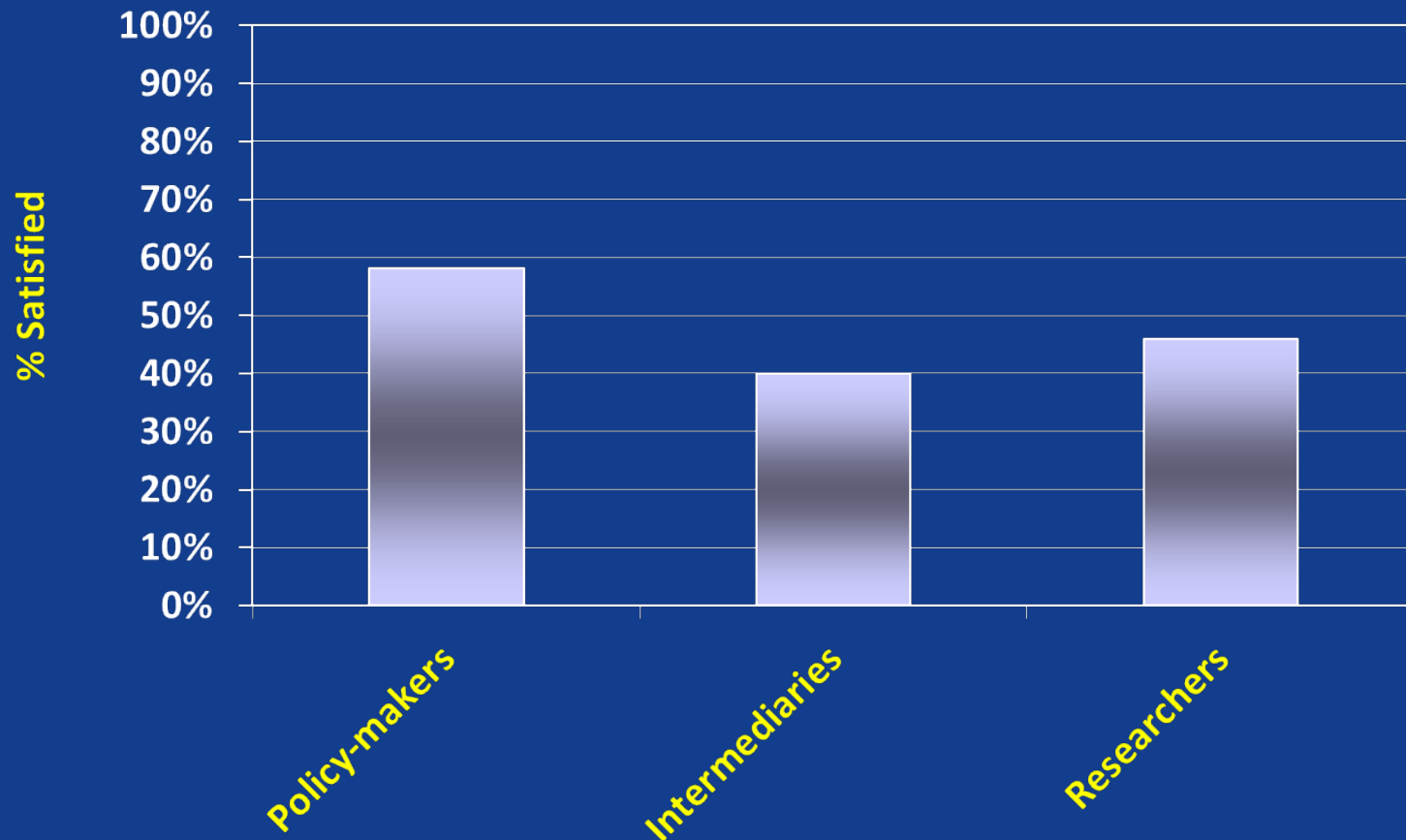


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# Satisfied that Policy is Based on Scientific Evidence



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# What is advocacy?

Advocacy is the deliberate process, based on evidence, to directly and indirectly influence decision makers, stakeholders and relevant audiences to support and implement actions that contribute to advancement of an issue or cause.



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# What is evidence?

- Data – raw observations and statistics collected together for reference or analysis
- Information – results of analysis or synthesis of those observations
- Bodies of evidence – synthesis of information about a specific topic



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# Value of data-informed decision making

*“... without information, things are done arbitrarily and one becomes unsure of whether a policy or program will fail or succeed. If we allow our policies to be guided by empirical facts and data, there will be a noticeable change in the impact of what we do.”*

National-level Policymaker, Nigeria



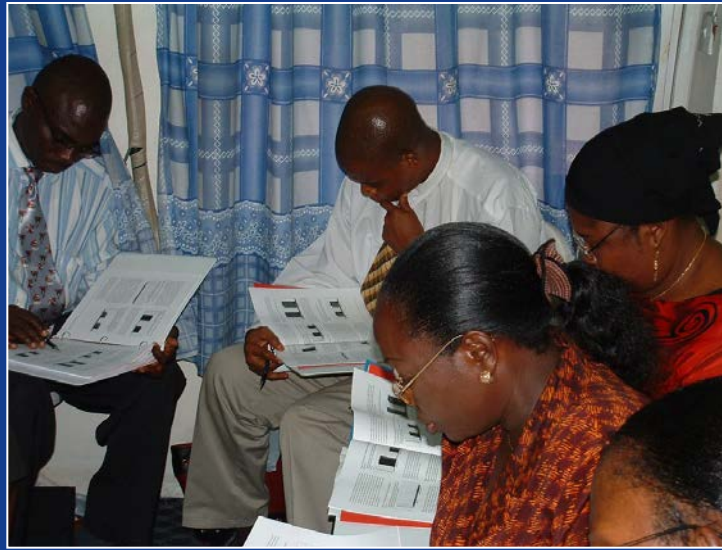
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# Developing an Advocacy Strategy



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# Why an advocacy strategy?

- Planning
- Secure resources
- Minimize risks and maximize opportunities
- Understand context, timing, organizations
- Align efforts with other initiatives

Assumption – starting with data not an issue

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# Advocacy strategy - six elements

1. Develop a communication objective
2. Identify the target audiences
3. Develop a message
4. Identify the appropriate channels of communication
5. Consider the advantages and challenges
6. Assess information use



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# 1) Develop a communication objective

- Identify the main findings – storyline
- 2 to 3 recommendations
- What do you want to see happen?
- 500 to 700 word opinion piece



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## 2) Identify target audiences

- Who can translate the information into action?
- Who has influence and resources that can support the action?
- Who can affect the outcome of this action?
- Who will oppose this action?



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# Importance of Knowing Your Stakeholders

- View activities from different perspectives
- Have different degrees of understanding
- Need / want different information
- Need information at different levels of complexity
- Have different intensities of interest
- Have different roles in the decision-making process



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# Stakeholder Analysis Matrix and Engagement Plan

## Purpose:

- To ensure that needs and values of relevant stakeholders are understood to support data use in decision making

## Description:

- Identify relevant stakeholders in the process.
- Determine appropriate strategies for engaging with stakeholders.



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# Stakeholder Analysis Matrix

<b>Name of Stakeholder organization, group or individual</b>	<b>Stakeholder description</b> Primary purpose, affiliation, funding	<b>Potential role in the issue or activity</b>	<b>Level of knowledge of the issue</b>	<b>Level of commitment</b> Support or oppose the activity, to what extent, and why?	<b>Available resources</b> Staff, money, technology, information, influence



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# Stakeholder Engagement Plan

Stakeholder organization, group, or individual	Potential role in the activity	Engagement strategy How will you engage this stakeholder in the activity?	Responsible for follow-up strategy and feedback



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## 2) Identify target audiences

Understand your audience

- Segment by characteristic
- Target groups with similar characteristics
- Consider communication context for target audience



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## 2) Identify target audiences

Understand your audience

- Tailor message to individual:
  - Knowledge base
    - Experience with issue
    - Health and data literacy
  - Core values



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# 3) Develop a message

- Align message with information needs of target audience:
  - Accountability
  - Convince or persuade / raise awareness
  - Educate or inform
  - Clarify reasons for success / failure
  - Lessons learned
  - Gather support



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# 3) Develop a message

- **Goal:** Overall program or policy improvement that you want to take place
- **Objective:** Specific communication outcome you aim to produce to achieve the overall goal
- **Strategy:** Approach to achieve objective



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# 3) Develop a message

- Brief on how new information affects specific individuals/group/public's health
  - What's wrong & new?
  - Why does it matter?
  - What should be done about it?



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# 3) Develop a message

- Write like a journalist:
  - 20% problem and 80% solution
  - Call for action
  - Simple and short sentences
  - Active vs. passive voice
  - Avoid technical jargon



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# 3) Develop a message

- Review your story:
  - Current consensus on health topic
  - How much data tells the story?
  - Limitations of data
  - Assess scope/resources needed to support effort



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# 4) Communication channels

- Email
- Face-to-face
- Presentation
- Final Report
- Executive summary
- Newsletter
- Social Media
- Brochure
- Poster
- Video
- Photographs
- Public Forum



# Channel - Program managers

## Information Needs

- Design
- Planning
- Improvement
- Management
- Operations

## Communication Methods

- Audiovisual presentation with charts & graphs
- Summary reports
- Executive summaries
- Detailed report with site-specific

information



# Channel - Government / private sector

## Information Needs

- Policy development
- Resource allocation
- Strategic planning
- Show health or financial impact

## Communication Methods

- Dissemination workshop
- Face-to-face meetings
- Policy forums
- Policy briefs, brochures, & executive summaries
- Audio  
visual



# Channel - General public

## Information Needs

- Public awareness
- Enable people to make evidence-based decision about own health
- Generate support for policy initiatives

## Communication Methods

- Print/social media
- Television/Radio
- Web-based media
- Public forum



# Channel - Donors

## Information Needs

- Assess accountability & program effectiveness
- Investment decisions
- Future-oriented projects/interventions
- Database for public access

## Communication Methods

- Peer-reviewed article
- Research database
- Presentation at conference
- Websites
- Distribution lists



# Policy advocacy - tips

- Background research policy maker
- Network and relationships
- Understand preferences for (in)formal communication and timing
- Coordinate with allies
- Seek media attention to support strategy
- Listen to the opposition



# Test the message

- Ideas resonate with target audience
- Hear what you want them to hear
- Elicits intended response
- Choose the setting where you hope to expose the audience to your message



# Activity:

## Develop an advocacy strategy

Answer advocacy strategy questions 1-4

### 1. What is the communication objective?

- main findings, recommendations, what you want to see happen

### 2. Who are the target audiences? (primary)

- Who can translate information into action?
- Who has influence and resources that can support the action



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# Activity:

## Develop an advocacy strategy

3. What is your message? (250 words)

- What's wrong & new? Why does it matter?
- 20% problem, 80% solution
- Call to action, info needs of audience

4. What are appropriate channels of communication & why? (2)

\*\* Activity time 25 minutes



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# Activity:

## Develop an elevator speech

- Brief and to the point quickly
- Be definitive
- Avoid technical jargon
- Use data & local examples
- Anticipate opposition / prepare responses

Activity time: 10 minutes

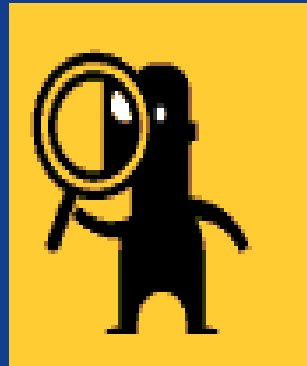


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# Assessing the Effects of Advocacy Efforts



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# Why assess effect?

- ✓ Validates the intervention
- ✓ Provides additional evidence that using data can improve decision making
- ✓ Demand for future data informed activities
- ✓ Helps identify best practices in data communication & use



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# How can you assess program effects?

- Did the target audience see and understand the message?
- Was it understood that the message was based on data?
- Were recommendations acted upon?
- Has there been an evaluation of the impacts of such action?
- Has the program status changed?



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# Methods for assessing effect

- Key Informant Interviews
- Focus Groups
- Survey or Questionnaire
- “Data Use Log”
  - Ad hoc mentions
  - Mass media tracking
  - Feedback from stakeholders



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# Session evaluation

Thank you!



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# Keep in touch

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