

Foundation module 5

Advocacy

Section 5 The steps to achieving change

Handout 1



Setting advocacy aims and objectives Tips to help you be SMART, change oriented and child focused

Specific

- Watch out for jargon or rhetoric. Words like **sensitise** and **empower** are vague. Say what you mean in the clearest terms possible.
- Watch out for words that can be interpreted in a variety of ways, eg. reproductive health, accountability, transparency. If you use them, say what you mean.

Measurable

- Be as exact as possible about who, what, where, when and how. For example, an objective might state, '*educate children about their rights*'. Whenever possible, estimate the number of children you are helping, what they will be able to do as a result, and the geographic range of your effort.
- Where you have very large numbers (eg. 50 million children neglected) use manageable numbers as well, such as a school, province or jurisdiction. This makes it easier to grasp for both advocates and decision-makers. It makes it real.
- Objectives that refer to a state of mind and a process, like '*empower*', are almost impossible to measure because they are subjective. However, process objectives are appropriate for advocacy, particularly when the process is the desired outcome. For example, '*bring together grassroots women in small groups to voice their concerns and define their common priorities*'. In many places that in itself is a major accomplishment. **Group formation** or **strengthening** can be a good indicator for process words like '*empowerment*'. So, when you use words that refer to a state of mind you should ask yourself: '*What does an empowered person do? Sensitise for what?*' Use the answers to formulate your objective more clearly.

Achievable

- The clearer you are about who, what, where, when and how, the more achievable your objective will be. Process goals like empowerment and awareness raising are long-term and elusive. Imagine signposts along the way of what an empowered or an aware person does and make those your objectives.





Realistic and resourced

- Changing attitudes and behaviour is a long-term endeavour. Try to be realistic when you decide how many people you plan to influence.
- Realistic objectives should be achievable in the planned timeframe and reflect the limits of your funding and staff.

Time bound

- A clear objective should include a clear timeframe within which the change should be achieved (within two to three years or longer if the objective is more ambitious). Remember that the timeframe must also be realistic.

Change oriented

- Your objective should be worded in terms of what you hope to achieve, not what you intend to do. Consider what change you want to bring about.
- For example, '*Decision-makers X, Y and Z will clearly demonstrate their awareness of the implications of child rights by supporting calls to increase the funding for primary education for boys and girls*' is change oriented, while '*to raise awareness of decision makers about child rights*' is activity oriented.

Child focused

- Wherever possible your objective should make it clear that your focus is on children.

This handout is adapted from L VeneKlasen and J Miller, *A new weave of power, people and politics*, Just Associates, 2002

