

# Public Health Media Advocacy Action Guide

## Elements Of A Media Advocacy Campaign

What You Need to Know

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### About the Guide

Changing public health policy is one of the most effective ways to improve public health on a population-wide scale. Moving a public health issue onto the policy agenda and through the policy making process requires a well-planned strategic advocacy campaign. The components of an advocacy campaign are the same regardless of the advocacy goals. This guide is designed to help civil society organizations plan and conduct effective advocacy campaigns that will result in the adoption and implementation of strong effective public health policies.

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### How to Use the Guide

The guide has been designed to provide an overview of key components of a successful policy advocacy campaign. Depending on your needs and resources, you may only use some of the tools and suggestions as part of your advocacy campaign.

We hope this guide will provide you and your partners a roadmap to achieving your policy objectives.

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### Brief Description of the Authoring Organization

The Global Health Advocacy Incubator advances public health policies to build a healthier and safer world. Drawing on our extensive global experience, we offer strategic support to develop and execute advocacy campaigns to pass laws and policies that save lives. GHAI supports civil society organizations in advocating for evidence-based policies to improve public health and decrease death and disease.

This mission is accomplished by providing training and technical assistance for organizations working on public health policy, identifying new partners where needed, and assisting in the development and implementation of strategic advocacy campaigns to promote the adoption and implementation of public health policies.

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# Media Advocacy Guide

## What you need to know

### I. Why Is Media Advocacy Important?

The effective use of media in advocacy is an integral element of a policy advocacy campaign. Strategic utilization of the media can help create a favorable environment for policy change.

Achieving policy change can be an extended process, and as a result it is important to identify how your campaign is progressing toward your objectives. Engaging stakeholders through the media can raise awareness of your issue, mobilize support and influence policy makers. Key stakeholders, such as policy makers and key opinion leaders can be drawn to your issue through the media, and at the same time innovative communications activities can build public awareness and inspire people into direct action to support your campaign. The Global Health Advocacy Incubator (GHA) Campaign Monitoring and Evaluation tool outlines the role of media as an indicator of progress in advocacy campaigns.

Utilizing the media can also allow for greater interaction in your campaign with a broad range of stakeholders, and as a result make the issue more visible to the public. This broader public buy-in can in turn inspire others to join your cause and allows your policy campaign to remain engaging.

### Glossary of Terms

Term	Definition
Media advocacy	Media and communications activities that support a policy advocacy campaign
Media angle	The way the media covers a particular issue. Can also refer to a way to frame your issue to attract the media.
Go live	Launch your media advocacy campaign or activities
Hook	A way to frame your issue to attract journalists
Editorial stance	The position a particular media organization takes in relation to an issue
Digital advocacy	Engaging your audience through electronic or internet-based communication channels to take action on your policy issue
Grassroots	Audiences of large numbers of the public, sometimes grouped by common interest or demographic (e.g. mothers, youth). Tactics targeting grassroots populations are broad in nature, with single messages and engagements targeting the entire audience.
Grasstops	Individuals or small groups of individuals who have a direct role in a decision-making process, or audiences who have influence over decision-makers. Tactics targeting grasstops will be specific to an individual or a small group of individuals based on their type of influence.
Channels	Media channels include newspapers, radio and television stations and social media sites such as Facebook or Twitter

## II. How Does Media Advocacy Fit Into an Overall Advocacy Campaign

The effective use of the media in your advocacy campaign must be planned and integrated within your broader advocacy strategic plan. Like policy maker meetings, letter writing and issuing position papers, media advocacy represents a range of tactics that can be used to meet your policy objectives.

The GHAI tool Setting Policy Priorities: A 3-Step Process can help you and your policy partners to define your campaign's policy objective.

The setting of media advocacy objectives, strategies and activities should be done with the advocacy team and with buy-in from management. The construction of a Media Advocacy Action Plan (see Section 1 page 6) is a good way of understanding how these activities integrate with other advocacy efforts.

What Media Advocacy Does and Doesn't Do	
Does	Doesn't
Reinforce social and political responsibility	Emphasize individual responsibility
Focus on advancing policy change	Tell individuals what they should think
Give people an active voice in holding policy makers to account	Guarantee policy change based on new information
Raise public awareness	Act as a sole strategy for policy advocacy

## III. Resources for Successful Media Advocacy

Building a Media Advocacy Plan also helps to clarify the resources necessary for success. Like any other strategic tool in your advocacy campaign, media advocacy must be sufficiently resourced, both in terms of budget and human resources, to achieve results. Unfortunately, media advocacy is too often considered as separate from the overall advocacy campaign, and is therefore not sufficiently resourced, and communications staff are often left on the fringes of the core campaign staff.

All organizations are different, however good practice dictates that any advocacy campaign should have at least one dedicated communications staff member. Media advocacy is, by nature, often fast paced and must be flexible. Ensuring that media activities have dedicated staff ensures that your activities have a far greater chance of successfully contributing toward the realization of your advocacy objectives.

It is also important to consider external resources that may assist in your work. Hiring external experts for selected tasks does have a cost that must be factored into your budget, and it is important to note that you do not necessarily need all of these services. It can be dependent on budget constraints however they can be useful to assist in the timely completion of tasks. External media advocacy services include:

- Public Relations/Communications firms – these organizations can assist with media mapping, media monitoring and to assist in paid media activities, such as advertising
- Graphic designers – can assist with design of printed and online publications
- Web and digital media consultants – can assist in the delivery of a high impact digital campaign, and to ensure that your digital presence is strategically used to support the advocacy campaign
- Copywriter – if you are planning to produce a number of media outputs, such as fact sheets or magazines/newsletters, or if you are focusing on digital advocacy, a copywriter can assist in producing text based on your direct guidance.

#### IV. Three Types of Media Used in Advocacy Campaigns

##### Paid Media

Paid media are essentially media opportunities that you purchase through known media channels. The purpose of paid media is to provide further attention to your advocacy activities to ensure they gain further amplification and promote your target audience(s) to take action.

Paid media can take the form of outputs such as:

- Paid editorial in a newspaper or magazine
- Advertisements
- Social media advertising ‘boost’ options
- Out-of-home advertising, such as billboards



A billboard ad developed by Alianza por la Salud in Mexico

Pros:	
●	Can control the message
●	Can ensure when and how your output is presented
●	Can use to leverage more attention on other forms of media advocacy and other advocacy activities
●	Can reach a very targeted group (age/income/geographic)
●	Can have a large reach
Cons:	
●	Not considered to be genuine coverage of your issue, perceived to be advertisement
●	Does not engender buy-in from media organization which can follow to more opportunities
●	Requires repetition to have significant impact, which can result in high cost

### Earned Media

Often seen as the most ‘credible’ form of media advocacy, earned media refers to coverage you have received through word of mouth or as a result of reaching out to the media. Earned media is often a result of your advocacy activities, including activities such as press conferences, media events and can also result from paid and owned media if you are able to use these activities to encourage further media coverage. For instance, if you publish a paid editorial in a newspaper you may want to send it to media contacts to encourage them to report on the issue further.

Earned media has the added benefit of legitimacy in the eyes of audiences, as it is judged that if the media have chosen to cover your issue, then it must be important and therefore worth taking notice. It is also beneficial as earned media is often from a ‘known’ or ‘trusted’ media brand (such as a major newspaper) and as such your issue can be seen as more important in the eyes of key stakeholders given the coverage in these channels.

Earned media can take the form of:

- Newspaper articles on your activities
- TV and radio coverage
- Social media posts from traditional media and key opinion leaders
- Editorials and opinion articles

The screenshot shows a news article from THANH NHIEN NEWS. The article is titled "Vietnam launches national child helmet action plan" and is dated Friday, January 14, 2015. The article includes a photograph of a meeting and a caption: "Representatives of relevant agencies at the launch of National Child Helmet Action Plan in Hanoi on January 13. Photo credit: AIP Foundation". Below the photo, there is a summary of the action plan and a "RELATED NEWS" section with links to other articles.

<b>Pros:</b>
● Appears legitimate as it is from the voice of the media, not your organization
● Potential for wide reach
● Potential for further engagement, ie with journalist interested in your campaign
● Can be leveraged in future owned/paid media as well as in advocacy activities
● Opportunity to engage influential journalists in the debate
<b>Cons:</b>
● Cannot control the message
● Unpredictable
● Can be difficult to gain attention of media to obtain earned media opportunities

An example of earned media is this coverage of a press conference from Vietnam launching a helmet action plan

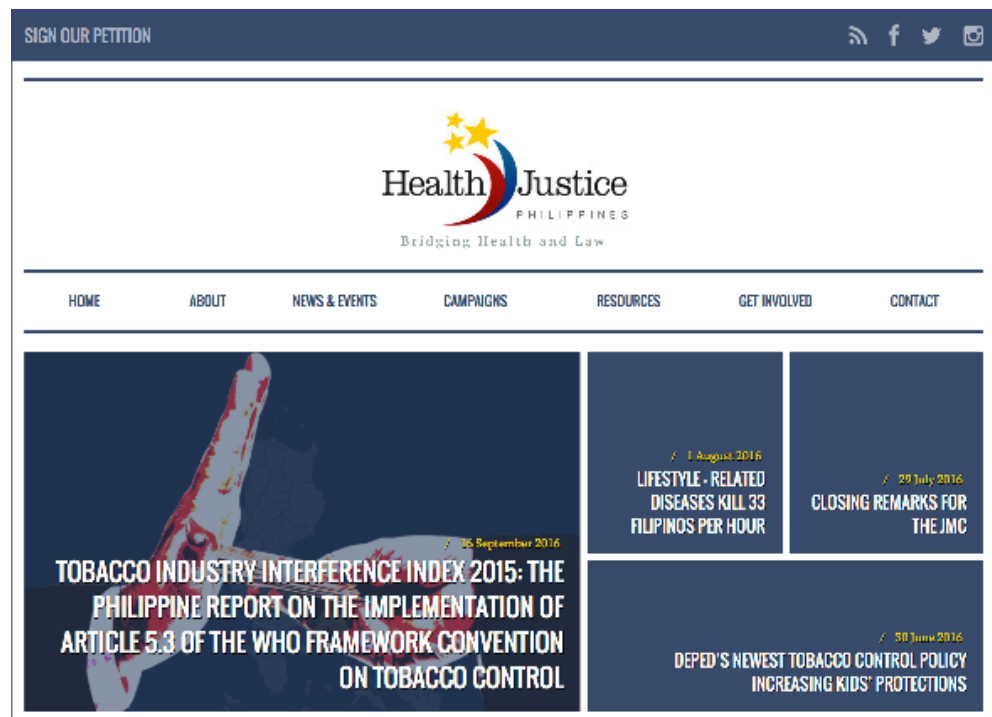
### Owned Media

Owned media is content that is fully under your control. These outputs are designed, developed and disseminated through your internal communication channels, allowing you full control of the editorial stance and advocacy messaging.

Owned media can take the form of:

- Organizational social media channels
- Newsletter
- Organization website or blog
- Organization YouTube channel
- SMS platform

An example of owned media is this website developed by Health Justice in the Philippines. The focus of this particular campaign was on tobacco industry interference on tobacco control laws.



#### Pros:

- Full control of messaging, timing and editorial process
- Can include organizational branding
- Can easily track success

#### Cons:

- Not considered to be genuine media coverage of your issue
- Can suffer from limited exposure if organization's media channels do not have wide reach
- Does not attract prestige of 'media brand'
- May not be accessed by key stakeholders

# Developing a Media Advocacy Action Plan

## What you need to know

### Why is it Important?

The media advocacy action plan is the centerpiece of your media advocacy work. It provides the context for your activities and ensures that all outputs are linked to identified strategies and objectives and ultimately your policy goal. Communications activities take considerable time and resources and should not be conducted in isolation from your overall campaign strategy. The question 'Does this activity help in achieving our objective?' should always be considered, and the media advocacy action plan allows you to capture this in a document that provides guidance on your activities.

The action plan also allows you to judge whether you are reaching all of your identified audiences, and provides a structured way to consider which channels and messengers will be most suitable for each activity. It can also provide insight into strategic timing of your activities in relation to identified key events and opportunities

The action plan allows you to see all of your media advocacy activities in one place which can help to inform your resource decisions and whether your plan is realistic as well as impactful.

### What Needs to Be Done?

Starting a media advocacy action plan can seem overwhelming. There are many elements to consider and a significant amount of activities you could potentially conduct. As such, your starting point should be the advocacy plan for the overall campaign, to ensure that your objectives and strategies are unified. The GHAI tool Setting Policy Priorities: A 3-Step Process can help you and your partners to define your campaign's policy objective

With the advocacy plan as a starting point, you should then:

- Conduct planning sessions with your advocacy team to identify media advocacy strategies to support the campaign objectives
- Under each strategy, develop a range of media advocacy activities. These are generally linked to other advocacy activities that would benefit from greater public awareness to add impetus to the campaign.
- Link each activity to a target audience, channel and identify which messenger(s) are suitable for that activity.
- Identify when the activity will be executed and who is responsible

The GHAI Media Advocacy Action Plan tool provides the opportunity to capture this information so that you can use it to directly inform your work, and provides a step-by-step guide to how to complete the plan.

The following sections of this toolkit will provide you with guidance on how to populate the media advocacy action plan.



#### HELPFUL HINT:

Ensuring that the leadership of your organization are involved in the development of the communication action plan is critical. Their buy-in will make it more likely that your activities are supported with sufficient resources and will ensure that your plan meets the objectives of the advocacy campaign.





**SPOTLIGHT**

An integral element to capture in your media mapping is which media channels are consumed by your target audiences. If your campaign is advocating for a public health law and you are trying to engage a member of Parliament then it is important to know which channels they pay attention to. For instance, if a particular newspaper is seen as the most credible amongst policymakers, then focusing your earned media activities on this publication makes sense.



**HELPFUL HINT:**

Media mapping can be a significant undertaking that will have an impact on your financial and human resources. Communications and public relations firms in many countries conduct media mapping and have the infrastructure in place to make the process fast and useful.

# Conducting Media Mapping

## What you need to know

### Why is it Important?

Preparing for a media advocacy campaign can feel overwhelming. There are many different channels to consider, some inherent risks to factor in to your planning, and a question of how to best utilize your resources. Conducting media mapping during the early planning stages of your campaign can provide clarity by helping you understand the landscape and channels through which you should communicate to your key stakeholders, be they policy makers, key opinion leaders or the general public.

Media mapping will allow you to:

- Understand the communication channels you can access
- Understand which media your audience consume
- Provide insight on the best channels to access your audience
- Make informed choices about which communication channels are most suited to different hierarchy of audiences (for instance national Member of Parliament compared to State secretary)
- Understand regional differences in communication channels

Of course, media mapping is only useful if it is put to use. Mapping should be used in decision making regarding each tactic or activity that will be conducted in your campaign. For instance, if you need to engage the public in a particular city to stage a march to place pressure on a local government, you would use your media mapping to understand which channels are consumed in that area. This can potentially save resources as you may avoid spending a large amount of money on a TV campaign if your mapping indicates most people prefer social media.

### What Needs to Be Done?

Undertaking a comprehensive media mapping involves developing a landscape of the channels available in the country/city or region and can also include research into audience behavior, specifically focusing on what communication channels they consume.

Research into the available communication channels should provide you with information on:

- Profiles of the main radio stations, TV channels, newspapers and news websites
- The most popular and trusted sources of news and information
- Media outlets that command significant national, regional, ethnic and religious audiences

- Media outlets which have strong influence on opinion formation in the ruling elite
- Contact details for each media outlet
- Languages to use in both local and national broadcasts
- Popular social media channels

The GHAI media mapping tool gives you more information and guidance on how to construct a media mapping document that will assist in your campaign.

# Developing a Media Contacts Registry

## What you need to know



### HELPFUL HINT:

The media industry is continually evolving, with new organizations and media staff and journalists constantly moving. Your media contact registry will only be useful if it is up-to-date and includes any changes that are relevant. Be prepared to continually update the registry as your campaign continues. Also, ensure that you also include the media staff's stance on your issue and any examples of past work that shows what angle they take.

### Why is it Important?

Maintaining an up-to-date list of media contacts ensures that when you are ready to engage with the media you will be able to know whom to contact and what their stance on the issue is. A lot of work goes into activities aimed at attracting earned media, so you don't want to be in a position where you don't know who to contact to pitch a story when you are ready to 'go live'.

If you are working in a coalition or partnership with other organizations, a media contact registry will help define which of your organizations has primary contact with journalists or editors. This will result in less overlap and ensure consistency in approach. It also allows for each organization to foster strong relationships with the media and know that other coalition groups will not endanger these relationships.

### What Needs to Be Done?

There are a number of ways to collect media contacts to input into your registry:

- Conducting media mapping will provide you with a comprehensive list of media channels and which channels are preferred by your target audience(s). Use this list to identify journalists and editors that may be relevant to your campaign.
- If you attend an event, particularly press conferences or media-focused events, introduce yourself to the journalists present and ask for their contact details. If they are assigned to your issue it is likely that they will be interested in future engagement to obtain ideas for stories.
- Use media monitoring to see which news outlets and journalists are covering your issue.
- Read articles produced by journalists who cover relevant topic areas to understand their 'angle'

The media contact registry should include the following information:

- Name
- Title
- Organization
- Stance or 'angle' taken on your issue
- Preferred time to contact/send stories
- Contact details
- Digital handles
- Who is our contact to reach them

The GHAI media contact registry tool gives further guidance on developing your media contact registry.

# Selecting Your Target Audience

## What you need to know

### Why is it Important?

Identifying the target audience you are trying to engage through your media advocacy is the starting point for developing your media plan. Too often, organizations start their media planning based on which channels they want to use. Until you have identified who it is that you are trying to communicate with, then what channel you use is irrelevant.

As part of your advocacy planning you should have conducted a political mapping exercise (the GHAI Political Mapping: How to Guide tool provides guidance on how to undertake political mapping for an advocacy campaign). This mapping should directly inform the development of your target audiences. At the same time, there are new audiences that you may want to engage in your media work to influence your stakeholders. For instance, you may be engaging a Member of Parliament through meetings, however another way to capture their attention may be to stage a media event in their electoral district, engaging key opinion leaders and the public.

### Primary Audience

Primary audiences are those that you want to directly impact and are critical in the achievement of your policy objectives. They should always have dedicated communications activities that specifically aim to engage them in the issue.

Primary audiences in media advocacy campaigns can include:

- Prime Minister
- Finance Minister
- Health Minister
- Other Members of Parliament
- Other public health professionals such as doctors

### Secondary Audience

Secondary audiences are individuals and groups that have the potential to influence your primary audience. They may be key opinion leaders, celebrities or those with a strong passion about the issue who can capture the attention of your primary audiences and inspire them to address your issue.

Secondary audiences in public health media advocacy campaigns can include:

- Health Minister
- Parliamentary staff
- Key opinion leaders, such as public figures, media identities
- Victim groups



#### HELPFUL HINT:

Identifying the key opinion leaders that policymakers rely on is an important step in a policy advocacy campaign. Public health advocates should consider potential key opinion leaders such as radio or television hosts, influential public figures and even family or friends of a policy maker.



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#### What Needs to Be Done?

Using your political mapping gather your team and conduct a brainstorming session to map out all the people who can potentially directly or indirectly have an influence in achieving your policy objective. Think specifically about who can realistically be engaged through the media and make a list of your primary and secondary target audiences.

The GHAI Selecting your Target Audience tool can be used to understand what connection the audience has to the issue. This helps to inform the tactics you will use to engage them in the issue.



**SPOTLIGHT**

An example of a short, memorable message:

- Everyone has the right to breathe clean air, free from the proven dangers of secondhand smoke.
- Our province has the nation's highest smoking and lung cancer rates. It's not something to be proud of. It's time for a smoke-free law.
- Each year, smoking costs our province \$3.8 billion in medical expenses and lost productivity. Not having a smoke-free law is hurting our health and economy.



**HELPFUL HINT:**

Using one convincing fact or figure in a key message can be very powerful. But including more than one statistic can cause a message to become confusing and lose its effectiveness.

## Developing Key Messages

### What you need to know

#### Why is it Important?

A critical component of your advocacy campaign is developing and delivering the messages to communicate your policy goals to the people who can make the changes that will help you meet your objective.

Identifying your target audiences, formulating key messages, and choosing the most effective spokesperson and channel to communicate those messages are all important pieces of your advocacy campaign. Once you know your target audiences, your next step will be developing convincing messages specific to each. Depending on your audience and the action you want them to take, your message may change slightly. Your method of delivering the message will also vary, based on the most effective means of reaching your audience.

#### What Needs to Be Done?

To formulate your key messages, you'll need to answer the following questions:

- What is the problem?
- Why is the problem important to your target audience?
- What is the action that needs to be taken?
- When does this action need to be taken by?

In your project team, first develop a top-line, or overall, message. The top-line message sums up what policy needs to change, outlines the campaign's objective, and describes why it's important. All other secondary messages focused on specific audiences should be developed from this one. After the overall key message is formulated, more specific secondary key messages can follow. The GHAI Developing Key Messages tool provides comprehensive guidance on the process of how to develop key messages for your policy campaign.

During the campaign, you'll want to review your message at various times, based on changing circumstances. For example, there may be times when a law is being debated but does not include the non-negotiable provisions that make up a strong and effective public health law. In response, you may consider revisiting your messages and tailoring them to that situation.

Lastly, re-evaluating your messages from time to time is good practice during any campaign. Most often, if your key message is strong enough it will withstand any changes to the campaign, but at times it may be useful to update secondary messages to remain relevant. When faced with opposition or criticism from opponents that ultimately do not impact your policy objective, it is important to stay on message and not diverge.

# Selecting your Media Advocacy Tactics

## What you need to know

### Why is it Important?

Planning your media advocacy tactics strategically is important to ensure you maximize the impact of your outputs. Understanding the different tactics available and choosing those that will most effectively engage the audiences you require is critical. You must evaluate each potential opportunity and tactic as it relates to the audience and your objective. Planning your tactics is also important as you must consider what is reasonable to potentially execute in relation to your resources. There is no point planning a large TV campaign if you don't have the budget. Similarly, if you don't have staff to manage a social media account then you don't want to commit to a large digital campaign.

### How Do I Do it?

Tactical planning should take into consideration your policy objective and the audience(s) you are trying to target. The GHAI guide to Selecting Media Advocacy Tactics will assist you to make informed decisions about which tactics to use for each strategy in your advocacy campaign. Keep in mind that building momentum in an advocacy campaign is important. Scheduling a large scale media event every week is not feasible or desirable. Timing your activities to continuously work toward a select few key campaign events is a good approach to ensure that stakeholders remain informed, and then are effectively engaged at important moments.



#### HELPFUL HINT:

Once you have compiled a list of strategic tactics cross reference them with key dates in your campaign. These could include parliamentary sitting dates, UN World Days, the release of major studies/research, or other major events that you can leverage your campaign and bring attention to your issue. It is not possible to conduct high profile, high resource media activities all of the time, so it is important to select opportunities most likely to give a spotlight to your outputs.

#### Media advocacy tactics include:

- Press conference
- Press release
- Opinion editorial
- Radio talkshow
- TV talkshow
- Media roundtable
- Social media
- Media event
- SMS/WhatsApp campaign
- Paid advert

#### Media advocacy resources include:

- Fact sheets
- Testimonials/case studies
- Interviews with those impacted by your public health issue

## Selecting Media Channels

### What you need to know

#### Why is it Important?

Once you have finalized your list of target audiences you can consider which channels are best to engage them through your media outputs. You want to ensure that resources that you expend on media activities are going to reach the right stakeholders and meet your objectives. The purpose of strategically selecting your communication channels is also to ensure that you have a diversification of channels, and you are maintaining a balance of earned, owned and paid media. All three forms can play an important role, and by identifying the different channels and linking them to the relevant stakeholder you can see which channels will be most relevant to your campaign.

#### How Do I Do it?

Once you have conducted media mapping and/or media monitoring (the GHAI Monitoring and Responding to the Media tool provides guidance to complete these steps) you can refer to this and highlight which channels are available and who is consuming them. For instance, if you want to build public awareness of your campaign and your research indicates that most people listen to a popular radio station, you should select this as one channel. This could then be supplemented with owned media support, so you might post a status update on Facebook indicating that the radio show is coming up and will focus on your advocacy issue.

These decisions can greatly affect the effectiveness of your resources. For instance, if the radio show costs a large amount but is proven to be more effective, then it may be worth spending on that show and not on a variety of editorials in newspapers that are not targeting your audiences.

If you do not have the resources to conduct media mapping or monitoring then you can conduct some small scale research, such as asking other organizations or people who have engaged with your audiences which types of media they consume. For instance, if a staff member of a Member of Parliament (MP) indicates that they read a certain newspaper each day, then you should assign this channel for media activities targeting that MP.

Communication channels should be included in the Media Advocacy Action Plan to ensure you, and your partners, are aware of all the channels being targeted and can identify if there are any gaps.



#### HELPFUL HINT:

Non-media communications channels can also be useful in campaigns. Fact sheets that you can take to an advocacy meeting and leave with your stakeholder can be an effective way of ensuring they learn about your issue. See the GHAI guide to Executing Media Advocacy Tactics for further guidance.



SPOTLIGHT

With only two months' notice that delays and potentially a dilution of India's landmark graphic health warning law were imminent, India tobacco control civil society groups sprang into action to launch an aggressive digital mobilization campaign to build public awareness and public pressure on the Prime Minister's administration.

The objective was to build public awareness and pressure on the Prime Minister Modi and his administration to implement an 85 percent graphic health warning for tobacco products. A concentrated campaign launched to build grassroots awareness and mobilization, as well as to engage decision makers and rally key opinion leaders online.

As a result, 38,000 petition signatures were collected calling on the government to not delay pack warning policy implementation. Two separate tobacco topics began to trend on Twitter, meeting they were one of the five most talked about issues nationally online for that day. The participating from key opinion leaders and government officials via social media in supporting the campaign and policy objective were a defining element of this campaign.

## Selecting Social Media Channels

### What you need to know

#### Why is it Important?

Digital advocacy is defined as engaging your audience through electronic or internet-based communications channels, which are usually owned media channels, and inspiring them to take action (online and offline) around your issue, cause or brand.

While starting a social media account bears little to no upfront costs, there are significant resources and staff commitments required to successfully run a digital advocacy campaign.

#### How Do I Do it?

When considering a social media advocacy campaign, it is important to first evaluate the local landscape for a potential campaign. Conducting research to answer the following two key questions is an important first step:

1. What is the potential to mobilize the public via digital tools and channels? Which channels are most actively used by my target audience?
2. What is the precedent in my country for using digital tools in this type of advocacy campaign? Are there examples of social media campaigns in other issue areas that have been successful?

Once a thorough landscape analysis is complete, identifying the strategic role of social media channels is an important next step. Social media tactics can be categorized into four types of activity:

- Grassroots Awareness: content that builds public awareness and urgency to the core issues of your campaign.
- Grassroots Action: widespread mobilization of public to take a tangible action that has an impact on the decision-maker or decision-making process of the policy campaign
- Grassroots Decision-Makers/Key Opinion Leaders: directly engaging decision-makers or key opinion leaders (those who hold sway over decision-makers) via social media
- Grassroots Traditional Media: integrating social media activities with traditional media targets





**HELPFUL HINT:**

While you are selecting your messengers it is also beneficial to consider whether they would benefit from media or message training. This would ideally include not only tips on public speaking and talking to the media, but also detailed guidance on key messages for the campaign. If you are using external messengers, you will also need to consider how to train them on your key messages and the objectives of your campaign. If they are questioned as to why the topic is important, it is critical they understand the reason for the campaign and what it will achieve.

## Selecting Messengers

### What you need to know

#### Why is it Important?

When delivering an advocacy message you need to determine who will be the most credible source in the eyes of the target audience. If people don't trust the person who delivers a message, the actual message does not get through effectively. Sometimes policy skills are important, but at other times first-hand knowledge of the problem, technical expertise, celebrity, relationship with your target audience or seniority within an organization matter more. It is also important to have diversity in who delivers the messages. Combining different voices together can show widespread support of your issue. For instance, combining two messengers who complement each other, one who is knowledgeable about the subject matter and the other knowledgeable about the target audience, can give more impact to your activity.

#### How Do I Do it?

Start by looking at your list of target audiences. For each audience select who the most relevant messenger would be. Who will that person or group trust and find credible? You should consider this for potential messengers both within your organization, such as a CEO or Project Manager, or externally, such as a key opinion leader or someone personally affected by your issue.

For those external to your organization it is important to deeply consider potential risk and reward. It might be extremely beneficial to your campaign's public profile to engage a celebrity as a messenger, however there is also a higher risk that they may stray 'off message' or that coverage of your media event centres on that person and not the issue.

Being realistic in your selection of messengers is also important. When selecting your messengers you should consider questions such as: Is it possible to always have your CEO available for comment to the media? Can you rely on key opinion leaders from outside your organization to be available for a media event or press conference?

In general you want to ensure that the messenger you select relates to as many of the list below as possible:

- Messenger is known and trusted by or will appeal to target audiences
- Messenger can demonstrate knowledge and insight into the issue
- Messenger is a source whose opinion target audience will value
- A clear link exists between the messenger and the groups affected by the issue
- Messenger will refrain from political comments unrelated to the issue



#### SPOTLIGHT

Partner coordination in media advocacy is beneficial as different spokespeople can be more credible with different audiences. For instance, if you partner with a child rights organization, their 'voice' may be more effective as a media advocacy tool in relation to the safety of children. Similarly, partnership with a victim group may prove effective when communicating the personal toll of the public health issue you are working on.



#### HELPFUL HINT:

While it is potentially beneficial to partner with other organizations in your media advocacy work, it is important to clearly outline consistent messaging and make a plan to ensure each organization has a distinct and defined role. Problems can arise when partner organizations are not 'on message' and may take media attention to another aspect of the issue. Detailed planning for media activities must take place and should identify the scope and timing of each organization's media work, and what the consistent 'call to action' will be in all communications.

## Effective Partner Coordination

### What you need to know

#### Why is it Important?

Successful policy advocacy campaigns often result from a group of organizations working together toward a common goal. A partnership is a group (formal or informal) of organizations and individuals that come together for a period of time to collaborate in order to achieve changes in policy, law, programmes, or funding streams for a particular issue.

In media advocacy, it is beneficial to be able to draw on multiple organizations to support your campaign. Having different stakeholders talk about your issue shows that support is widespread and varied, which gives more authenticity to the campaign as an issue of public importance.

#### How Do I Do it?

The first step is to identify the right partners that suit the needs of your campaign. In the GHAI Building an Advocacy Partnership tool there is an advocacy self-assessment tool, which guides you on how to understand where partnerships may help in your campaign.

Once you have your partners engaged in the campaign two critical elements must be completed before media work commences.

#### Roles and Responsibilities

There are inherent risks in engaging the media in your campaign. One inopportune comment or activity can potentially harm your public support and therefore your chance of convincing policy makers to enact change. Detailed planning of the roles and responsibilities of each partner is crucial and should reflect the objectives and strategies detailed in your policy advocacy plan. Planning should include the identification of nominated spokespeople, ensuring media activities support partners' activities and not do not overlap, and an agreed function to respond to critical incidents or developments in the media.

#### Messaging

Ensuring all groups remain on message is essential in ensuring media advocacy supports your campaign. Partners can and should identify their specific 'angle' on the issue, however the core message and 'call to action' must be consistent to ensure there is no confusion among the public or policy makers. The consistent messaging should be guided by your policy advocacy objectives and strategies and agreed upon by all partners.

Establishing a protocol for your partner coordination is important. Potential coordination activities to consider include:

- Regular media advocacy coordination calls to discuss progress and activities including media advocacy as an agenda item in overall advocacy campaign meetings
- Sharing regular updates of media advocacy activities via email



#### SPOTLIGHT

A good approach is to categorize reportage into categories, such as 'Policy change' or 'Advocacy campaign'. This will allow you to easily scan the relevant stories to your campaign. Make sure you review the reports as they arrive to see if there is anything you need to respond to, or whether it requires revised activities or planning.



#### HELPFUL HINT:

Sharing reports and your analysis with partner organizations is critical to ensure consistency of approach. It may also be possible to share the cost of a professional service with partners and ensure that you are all receiving notifications on media coverage that will inform your messaging and activities.

# Monitoring and Responding to the Media

## What you need to know

### Why is it Important?

Monitoring and responding to the media is an important element of your media advocacy work as it informs both planning and execution of your campaign.

### Planning

As you plan to expend human and financial resources on media advocacy activities it is informative to understand the media landscape you are attempting to engage and how the issue is talked about in the media. Media monitoring allows you to see what aspects of your issue gains media attention and secondly how the media then frame the issue. For instance, you may find that the media is interested in large scale statistics that show annual death rates, as it will shock their readers. However, they may then focus the blame for this on user behavior rather than lack of strong policies or enforcement. Knowing this will help to develop your messaging and will allow you to target the media you identify as interested in the issue.

### Execution

Once your media advocacy activities are underway media monitoring will allow you to judge the impact and reach of your outputs. Did your press release result in news articles? Was there media coverage of your press conference? Did your digital campaign engage any journalists? Media monitoring allows you track your performance and adjust your plan as needed. For instance, if a major development in your campaign arises, such as the passage of a public health bill in Parliament, you can actively respond to any negative issues raised in the media. Identifying the way in which the media are reporting on your issue can also assist in your planning of how to engage the media in your campaign. If you have seen they are more interested in one particular 'angle' then using this as a 'hook' to pitch your earned media activities is a worthwhile approach.

### How Do I Do it?

Media monitoring can be set-up through Google Alerts or through a professional service usually provided by a communications or public relations firm. The Google Alerts service is free and will allow you to nominate key words, which when found by Google will automatically send you an email notification. Professional media monitoring services allow for greater individualized data, including geographic areas and specific outlets (such as newspapers, digital, radio etc). These can often be accompanied by periodic reports which gives you greater detail about the trend of reporting on your issue.

It is important to remain flexible in the selection of your key words and topics. If the campaign has changed, or if a significant development occurs, you should include new key words in your monitoring to ensure you capture media coverage.

Whichever system you use, it must be produced in a format that works for your organizations and is easy to read. Media monitoring is only useful if you use it!

The GHAI guide to Monitoring and Responding to the Media gives further guidance on approaches to take when dealing with the media.

**HELPFUL HINT:**

Monitoring progress in a media advocacy campaign can be difficult as there is often not a direct correlation between activities and impact given the multitude of factors that influence the policy process. As a result, ensuring your monitoring is capturing a variety of indicators, such as whether your activities were conducted and how well they were received, is important to understand how your campaign is tracking.

## Evaluating Media Advocacy

### Why important?

Monitoring and evaluating your progress is an essential part of any policy advocacy campaign and ensures that planned actions are taking place at the correct time. It also helps you know whether you are gaining support over the course of what may be a long campaign. Assessing the impact of the campaign on the media environment and the level of support of the public and policy makers represents one of the key indicators of progress in an advocacy campaign. In concert with the impact of your project design and implementation, successful media advocacy is a key factor that leads to policy advocacy success. In this process, a good monitoring plan can tell you which of your strategies are working best to meet your objectives, and which may need to be adjusted.

For example, you may find that you need to change your channels because information is not reaching your target audience. Or an evaluation could show that your information is being framed in a way that is not helping you advance your policy objective. Successful strategies are informed by evaluation and should be a continual process of adjustment based on the findings of your monitoring and evaluation.

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#### How to Do it?

Evaluating your media advocacy activities needs to take into consideration how well you have planned and executed your media advocacy action plan, and whether your activities have had an impact and are contributing to the realization of your advocacy campaign objectives. At the same time,

The GHAI Campaign Monitoring and Evaluation tool provides detailed guidance and templates to conduct monitoring and evaluation on both of these elements of the campaign. Important elements to consider include:

- Have you developed and delivered effective advocacy messages to target audiences?
- Do you use different channels to deliver your message?
- Have you proactively built relationships with journalists and become their go-to resource for your public health issue?
- Has there been increased coverage of your issue?
- Have you gained earned media?
- Is the public actively supporting the policy through social media?
- Are your media activities resulting in more active participation in campaign events?

Ensure that monitoring and evaluation is planned and executed throughout your campaign and that results are directly fed back into your program design and refinement.