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Government of Dubai
Community Development Authority

Toolkit
Systemic Advocacy for People with Disabilities

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Section 1: Structure

Introduction

Advocacy has been a cornerstone of disability rights since the beginning. The core idea of disability advocacy is that individuals with disabilities are the best experts on their needs, and have the right to make their own choices to fulfill those needs. If an individual is unable to fulfill a want or need, advocacy is the answer. Advocacy requires specific skills and strategies, as well as practice and patience. Advocacy can come in many shapes and forms, because it is about using an individual's strengths to achieve their goals. There is no one right way to advocate. In fact, many people advocate every day without knowing that what they are doing is called advocacy.

Before attempting to advocate, an individual must first educate. This may mean a few different things. Individuals may need to educate themselves on what, exactly, they need or want. They may need to understand the strengths that will help them achieve their advocacy goals, which could mean figuring out if they are a strong writer, public speaker, organizer, or creative thinker. In addition, this could mean learning more about the resources available to help them advocate or gather more information on the issue, and learning more about the others in the community who may also be affected. Sometimes what began as an individual goal could lead to the opportunity to change the system to benefit the wider community. But an important part of advocacy, no matter if the goal is to help one person or many, is establishing a confident voice, developed and supported in a community of peer support.

Toolkit Overview

This toolkit was created as a Dubai-focused resource for people with disabilities, their families, NGOs, CDA, and other key stakeholders in developing the knowledge, skills, and habits to become effective disability advocates, at whatever level and degree of commitment they are willing to make.

Whether you are new to advocacy or have been working for many years to secure a solid place for disability access and inclusion in Dubai, this toolkit will help to improve your advocacy skills. You will be given the opportunity to explore your voice, build confidence, and display your skills both verbally as well as in written form. The intent is to provide a safe space among peers and trusted facilitators to introduce, discuss, and implement the concept of disability advocacy.

Content within this toolkit will be individualized, demonstrated, and discussed during Dr. Kupferman's in-person visit to Dubai.

How to Use this Toolkit

This toolkit covers a broad range of disability-related advocacy topics within the following four sections: (1) Structure, (2) Content, (3) Process, and (4) Outcomes. It has been designed to provide both an overview of disability-related advocacy efforts, as well as more specific information and tools on key elements within the context of Dubai. Depending on your needs and resources, you may walk through the overview and each tool, or only use specific tools at certain points in the advocacy process. Helpful printable worksheets are included within the appendix as well.

Work Together: The best way to use this toolkit is in small work groups during a five-day workshop following the agenda below:

- **Day 1**: Introduction to Advocacy, Key Principles, and Advocacy Framework Development (Part 1)
- **Day 2**: Advocacy Framework Development (Part 2), Advocacy Habits, Partnerships and Collaboration
- **Day 3**: Advocacy Plan Development (Part 1)
- **Day 4**: Advocacy Plan Development (Part 2)
- **Day 5**: Evaluation Process, Outcomes, Case Examples, Next Steps

Plan Your Time: Some advocates may find that they speed through the first half of the toolkit because they already have done a lot of this thinking in their communities. Others will need to take some time to do research, seek support from partners, and deliberate over the key decisions. Still others may choose to dip in and out of different sections at random. What matters is that you do not have to do this all in one go, so take your time.

Toolkit accessibility: This toolkit is designed to meet and exceed accessibility standards, including the W3C Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0. Accessibility features include, but are not limited to proper heading structure that allows ease of navigation via screen reading technology (H1, H2, H3), alternative text for images, and readable/OCR text that allows for text-to-speech and magnification usage. Alternative formats of this toolkit are available upon request.

What is Advocacy?

Advocacy is the promotion of an idea that is directed at changing a policy, position, or program. Advocacy is a strategy that aims to draw attention to or educate a policymaker on a particular issue. Advocacy includes educating policymakers and the public about evidence-based policy. Advocacy can often be non-partisan and based in research and analysis. Effective advocacy can do the following:

- Build relationships with policymakers;
- Educate and influence a policymaker or lawmaker's decision;
- Alter existing policies, laws, and budgets; and

- Encourage the creation of new disability programs and services.

Advocacy is about:

- Giving people a voice about the issues that affect them.
- Building evidence on what needs to change and how that change can happen.
- Positive change in society towards greater social justice and equality.
- Influencing people with power and changing how they think and act.

Advocacy involves:

- Speaking up, drawing a Dubai's attention to an important issue, and directing decision makers toward a solution.
- Active participation directed at changing policies or positions of an institution in support of a specific policy goal.
- Putting a disability-related problem on the agenda, providing a solution to that problem, and building support for acting on both the problem and the solution.
- The process of people participating in the decision making processes that affect their lives (especially people with disabilities advocating for their own lives);
- Presenting, defending, or recommending an idea to other people.
- A strategy to influence policy makers as they make laws that affect people's lives.

Individual advocacy:

It is important to define and describe individual advocacy within the context of this systemic advocacy-focused toolkit. Individual advocacy revolves around assisting people with disabilities in learning how to advocate for themselves and make informed choices. Additionally, individual advocacy helps people with disabilities in obtaining necessary support services and conflict resolutions at work, at school, and within the community. Individual advocacy can also include representing people at administrative and informal hearings and appeals, attending meetings, or writing letters on behalf of individuals. It is important to note that individual advocacy is NOT case management and is not direct services.

Core Beliefs of Advocacy

This toolkit builds on the idea that advocacy must address the root causes of disability-related barriers, including the social, environmental, medical, functional, and psychological factors. The core beliefs central to disability advocacy are:

- *Equity*: Advocating for equality of access, participation, and outcomes and for the reduction of inequalities in all facets of society.
- *Creating Partnerships*: Enabling people, communities, and organizations to participate in decision-making which impacts disability-related access and inclusion.
- *Inclusion*: Working in partnership with people, communities and organizations to ensure inclusion across sectors, communities, individuals, and representative organizations.

- *Choice-Making*: Ensuring that every person has the right to make and pursue choices affecting their own life.
- *Communication*: Facilitating communication in some mode, their choices and preferences for all individuals, no matter their disability.

Key Principles

The development of this Dubai advocacy toolkit is based upon the following key principles:

- *Activate prior knowledge*: Each individual brings prior knowledge and experiences, which form the basis for new learning. Effective advocacy training connects new learning to prior knowledge.
- *Elaborate new knowledge*: Process of actively working with, discussing, and practicing new advocacy knowledge, skills, and attitudes, especially within new advocacy situations.
- *Learning in context*: Learning that occurs in relevant advocacy situations facilitates encoding that is readily retrieved and applied – the advocacy situation will approximate as much as possible the actual advocacy situations in which it will be applied.
- *Observation*: This reflects the basic principle that underlies the importance of advocacy role modeling and its powerful effects on how we think, act, and develop systemic advocacy opportunities.
- *Feedback*: Advocacy learning is facilitated by feedback from other advocates that is specific, based on direct observation, in close proximity to the systemic advocacy opportunity, both reinforcing and corrective.
- *Self-efficacy*: Self-efficacy is our perception of our ability to perform a given advocacy activity and is informed by experience, observation of others' advocacy abilities, and encouragement from others. Self-efficacy influences the types of advocacy goals and our persistence in achieving those advocacy goals. This highlights the importance of clear expectations, feedback, and encouragement within the toolkit.

Advocacy Framework – Essential Elements

Below are essential elements of an advocacy framework. Building upon these essential elements, a Dubai-specific advocacy framework will be developed within an interactive small group format during the training.

Essential Elements

Active Participation: Working with people with disabilities, their families, NGOs, and other key partners in Dubai communities to develop the capacity to advocate on their own behalf.

Advocacy Capacity Building: Using training and mentoring to increase the ability of disability advocates to lead, adapt, manage, and implement advocacy efforts.

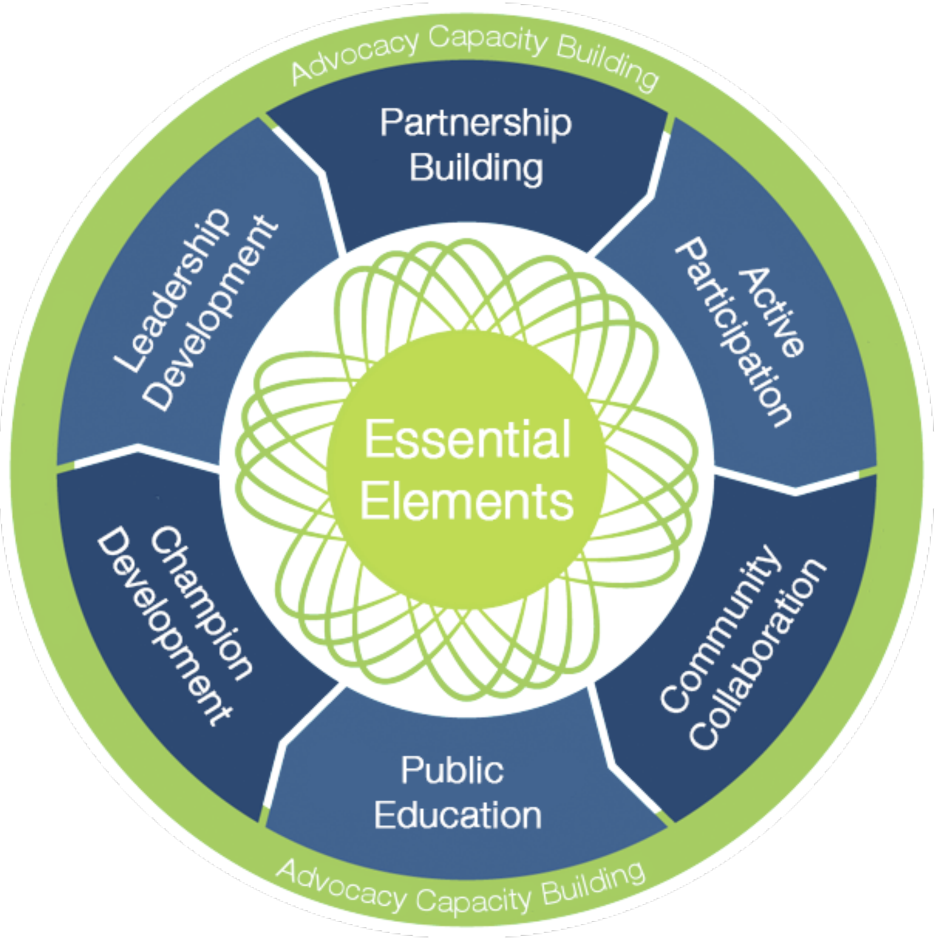
Champion Development: Recruiting members of the community to adopt an issue and publicly advocate for it.

Community Collaboration: Creating or building upon a network of community partners to support a disability advocacy-related topic.

Leadership Development: Increasing the capacity through training, and mentoring of individuals (people with disabilities, their families, NGOs, other key partners) to lead advocacy about a disability-related topic.

Partnership Building: Unifying disability advocacy voices by bringing together people with disabilities, their families, and NGOs that agree on a particular disability-related advocacy issue or goal.

Public Education: Educating the public about a disability-related advocacy topic.



Section 2: Content

Habits of Disability Advocates

Effective disability advocates have habits of active participation that are the foundation for their success. Developing these habits will enhance your ability to influence change.

Habit 1: Know Your Beliefs

Effective disability advocates know their beliefs or principles. It is impossible to advocate for something unless you know what you believe in and can clearly articulate it. Knowing your beliefs helps you differentiate between what is sacred and what can be compromised. Disability advocates hold fast to their beliefs but recognize that at times they may need to be flexible in their advocacy positions. You can assess the appropriateness of a recommended compromise to see if it is consistent with or contrary to your principles. If the compromise undermines your beliefs/principles, you can seek an alternative. Your beliefs should be the guide for your active participation.

Habit 2: Make Advocacy a Daily Priority

Effective disability advocates understand that advocacy is a daily, ongoing responsibility and plan time for it. Although they are busy with their daily responsibilities, they know that every day, some unanticipated big thing tends to come up. They make it a habit to block out "contingency time" each day for advocacy activities such as collecting information or responding to an active participation alert.

Habit 3: Gather, Verify, and Share Information

Your disability advocacy is only as good as your information. Effective disability advocates gather and verify information on subjects that are relevant in any way to disability-related topics. They keep their antennae raised to identify valuable information from a wide range of resources and share the information widely. Having current information at their fingertips helps disability advocates take advantage of spontaneous advocacy opportunities, be alert to potential challenges, and choose appropriate active participation.

Gathering Information

For effective disability advocates, the news is like air. They can't survive without it. On a daily basis, they gather relevant information from radio, television, and Internet news. They mark favorite media websites and subscribe to online newspapers, journals, and clipping services to gain local, state, national and international perspectives. In addition, they listen regularly to sources that are likely to offer opposing views so they can anticipate concerns and sharpen their arguments. It is your job to read and listen to the news. Framing a local matter in a broader

Dubai and/or international context can help others to see the big picture. It's up to all of us to be informed so we can draw those connections.

In today's world, we have instant access to a variety of resources on the Internet. By simply using a search engine, typing in an area of interest, and skimming the numerous "hits" that result, we can read, review, and select information to support disability rights. Reviews, reports, and surveys inform our thinking. Read (or at least skim) research reports and surveys, even if they relate, only indirectly, to your area of interest. Often, reports from other interest groups and organizations can help us imagine new possibilities or connections. By making it a habit to gather information, we obtain the knowledge required for our disability advocacy work.

Verifying Information

Conducting research and collecting data empower disability advocates and give credibility and validity to views about disability-related topics. You can uncover helpful facts and figures to support your case, but failing to verify them before acting can be embarrassing or even undermine efforts. Rather than accepting information at face value, effective disability advocates approach newspaper articles, polls, surveys, and reports with a healthy skepticism—they ask questions and seek clarification. For example, did the local newspaper include all the important information? Does the data actually support the conclusions? Could the results be interpreted differently?

Effective disability advocates know which sources can be trusted to support their messages with facts. They know which organizations disseminate data-based research which is carefully articulated, checked, and ready to roll out. The United Nations Division for Social Policy as well as the World Institute on Disability routinely share information with their constituents via print and electronic newsletters. Many organizations also share the latest research, news, legislative active participation, and quotes about disability-related topics through regular email communications.

Sharing Information

One of the most powerful things disability advocates do with information is to organize and share it. When disability advocates share the results of their information gathering with others, they become a valued resource for policymakers and other advocates. For example, a policymaker may want to support a disability-related proposal, but needs data to justify that support. You can help by providing current statistics and a bulleted list of talking points that support the proposal.

In addition, effective disability advocates develop the habit of providing individuals and organizations they hope to persuade with easy access to resources they have developed, such as data, reports, quotes, images, and talking points. Advocates organize information in ways that make it easy for others to use. Sometimes, the very thing we don't know will be a topic of discussion with a policymaker. It is okay to say that you need to do a little more research and will get back in a timely manner with the answer. By being honest, you demonstrate integrity.

Habit 4: Be Organized and Responsive to All Communications

Being organized is critical to effective disability advocacy. Effective disability advocates have habits that keep information flowing and manageable. They are good information organizers and respond to requests in a timely way.

Effective disability advocates use systems that help them to navigate in a swelling sea of information. Each of us has a different method of organization that suits our needs. Whatever method you prefer, use it every day. Act on all messages you receive, sorting them according to the active participation required. You may:

- Refer information to others
- Adapt information for other uses
- Act now on information
- Act later on information
- File information
- Delete information

Effective disability advocates also make it a habit to save copies of their correspondence as records of their work and refer to it later when the same or a similar issue emerges. What may seem to be finished business today may emerge again in some new form. By keeping records of correspondence you will be ready to resume the conversation.

Habit 5: Create and Use a Working Agenda

Disability advocates are most effective when they create and use a working agenda—a prioritized list of tasks, persons responsible, and a corresponding timeline. The agenda makes it easier for people to work with you by clarifying what needs to be done, organizing the tasks in manageable increments, and identifying needed resources.

A working agenda changes with time. Active participation items under each broad category change with the calendar, the political season, ongoing developments, or a lack of them. A working agenda allows disability advocates to concentrate on what is pressing at the moment and to plan for what is coming next.

Keep in mind that some items on the working agenda will need to be done quickly as particular issues arise, while others will need to be attended to on an ongoing basis, such as gathering information, collecting personal stories, developing networks and allies, and creating contact lists of individuals, groups, and media.

Habit 6: Understand that Advocacy is Time-Sensitive…The Calendar Rules

The policy-making process is time sensitive. Effective disability advocates know the steps of the process and when they occur. For example, if your goal is to influence access to educational accommodations for students with disabilities, you need to know when school district budgets are developed. If your goal is to influence funding for disability services at the legislative level, you need to know when hearings are scheduled and when budgets are debated.

Habit 7: Build Long-Term Relationships

Effective disability advocates continually look for opportunities to solidify relationships and establish new ones that enlarge their sphere of influence. They recognize the critical importance of developing ongoing, meaningful relationships with decision-makers.

Building Relationships with Legislators

The job of legislators is to stay in touch with and represent the interests of their community. By determining their priorities and concerns, advocates can explore how messages promoting disability-related topics fit into the complex array of competing interests that legislators are trying to serve.

Whether or not there is pending legislation or a budget issue directly affecting disability-related topics, effective advocates take time to develop rapport and lines of communication with key legislators. At each legislative session, advocates find friends of disability-related topics among the legislators and set about making new friends. Habits of establishing or maintaining ongoing relationships help advocates ensure that disability access and inclusion is represented right from the start, whenever important issues are raised.

As disability issues become more complex, many decision-makers have staff members that coordinate the flow of information on a topic. As a result, developing relationships with well-informed staff is also critical. Staff members often make local visits or attend meetings. Plan to contact the staff person responsible for disability-related topics and ask for a meeting to discuss relevant topics, or invite the staff person to visit a disability program or service in advance of inviting the legislator. Regular, thoughtful communications help develop relationships and can leave a positive impression with officials and their staffs.

Developing Relationships with the Media

Developing ongoing relationships with reporters in the local media is a critical habit. Disability advocates must become trusted resources on disability-related topics that media representatives can turn to when they need a story or an insider perspective. Find out which media sources the public relies on for information. Cultivate a relationship with these reporters, writers, radio hosts, bloggers, and local TV personalities. Stay in contact and give them information that piques their interest. Invite them to see disability programs and services in active participation. Connect them to charismatic self-advocates, parents, educators, professionals, legislators, and community leaders. Regularly send them information on work being done in your community, pending legislation, the latest disability research.

Habit 8: Choose Roles Consistent with Your Knowledge, Skills, and Commitment

Effective disability advocates understand the various roles advocates play as well as the degree of knowledge, skill, and commitment needed to carry out each role. Every person taking active participation can make a difference. Some individuals are more comfortable working on their own, while others are ready to work as part of a network, and still others are ready to assume leadership positions. Whatever role you choose; you can make a difference.

Strong Partnership Coordination

Why is it important?

Successful disability-related advocacy often results from a group of NGOs/organizations working together toward a common goal. Collaboration is valuable because it will help you reach and persuade a wider set of decision-makers and influencers, increase resources, strengthen your legitimacy with target audiences, and add specific skillsets and expertise — potentially filling your organizational gaps. By adding organizations, you can expand the scale and diversity of support for your issue, especially if partners are from different sectors (especially non-disability-specific sectors). Effective disability-related advocacy often engages a range of self-advocates, their families, professional and business groups, human rights groups, economic/employment leaders, and scientific/research sectors.

Ways of working together

There is a spectrum of different types of cooperative working; what will be appropriate for you will depend on how much your aims and objectives align. For example, if you are working on improving accessible public transportation within Downtown Dubai and another organization is working on increasing retail-related employment outcomes for people with disabilities; you might want to share information but you probably wouldn't have a coordinated campaign.

However you decide to work with others, you should engage in sharing information and regular communication with one another. By exchanging information, you can make sure you know when other organizations active in disability-related topics are having events or launching reports so that you can support each other and not compete. It will not help your advocacy efforts if other organizations are asking the same decision-makers for different legislative changes at the same time. This is why it is advisable to go one step further than just sharing information, and to be formally cooperating and coordinating. If you can harmonize what you are asking for so that you are all focusing on the same aim, then you are giving decision-makers a much clearer message, which in turn makes it much harder for them to avoid taking active participation. When your disability-related advocacy aims are completely aligned then it is possible to be in a collaborative partnership. In other words, if your aims are the same and you are each bringing different skills to the table, then sharing resources and helping one another becomes the natural path.

Level 1: Information Sharing and Communication

- Talk with one another
- Willingness to help on an ad hoc basis

- Share information

Level 2: Cooperation and Coordination
- Undertake joint planning on specific advocacy activities
- Coordination meetings
- Factor in what partners are doing when planning and operating advocacy activities

Level 3: Collaboration
- Informal/formal joint planning
- Joint activities and events
- Joint statements, press releases, and/or briefing documents
- Defined roles and responsibilities between different organizations sharing different roles within advocacy activities

Advocacy Coalitions and Networking

Why Coalitions and Networking?

A variety of advocacy strategies are needed depending on whether an issue is singular (such as convincing a principal to be offer accommodations and modifications for a student with a disability) or systemic (such as establishing an infrastructure to help people with disabilities remain independent within their own homes rather than residing within a nursing home). Individuals can be effective advocates for singular issues. In contrast, it requires a network of people with a range of skills (such as the ability to conduct research, draft policy, navigate the policy-making process, and assess budgets) to advocate for more complex, systemic issues.

Although it is unlikely everyone in a coalition will agree on every issue, you will find some issues that all can agree to act on together to achieve greater impact.

Extending the Network

In addition to working with natural allies (such as disability rights organizations), disability advocates benefit by extending their networks to those in other fields with whom they share common interests.

Parents

Parents can be natural allies for your disability-related cause. In some communities, parents, grandparents, other family members, foster parents, and legal guardians are well organized through associations, school site councils, or through informal social networks. These groups can be mobilized, highly visible, and vocal in promoting disability-related topics. In other communities where parents are less formally connected, disability advocates must begin to establish networks.

Quality, access, and equity matter to parents. They are deeply invested in their children's access and inclusion within educational and social settings. Parents want their children to have every opportunity to learn and to advance in school, work, and life. No parents want to feel that their child has less access to opportunities or is receiving a lower quality education than other children. By extending the network to parents, the voice for disability rights is strengthened.

Self-Advocates

Although we often tap people with disabilities (aka: self-advocates) to describe their own experiences in addressing disability-related barriers, we sometimes overlook them as constituents to be cultivated as part of disability advocacy efforts. Self-advocates' first-hand knowledge about what is happening in their communities makes them excellent advocates. They know how disability advocacy can result in positive outcomes. They know what resources and program improvements are needed. As you think about ways to approach self-advocates to extend your network of allies, you can build upon their desire to be part of a group and their interest in connecting with like-minded peers. Many self-advocates are members of formal and informal associations and networks and are increasingly well connected to each other via the Internet, social networking sites, and other media.

Business and Community Leaders

Business and community leaders are influential people within the community who wield power and have access to valuable resources. When advocates identify business and community leaders who might join disability advocacy efforts, they can cast a wide net across many sectors—health, human, and social services; commerce, tourism and real estate; business and community development; government, law enforcement, parks and recreation; and cultural, philanthropic and religious organizations. Business and community leaders are usually highly visible spokespeople actively involved in shaping public opinion. Many have deep roots in the community and can tap into large existing networks, such as Chambers of Commerce, associations, employee groups, corporate foundations, and unions. This is a wide-ranging group; they have a vested interest in the growth and well-being of Dubai and as a result, share a concern about access and inclusion for people with disabilities. The goal is to engage business and community leaders in using their positions to influence decision-makers and become spokespeople and advocates.

Checklist of Partners – Example List

Below is an example list of partners. However, an actual checklist will be developed within an interactive small group format during the training.

Allies

- ☐ Dubai, UAE, and international professional disability associations
- ☐ Dubai, UAE, and international disability agencies and organizations
- ☐ Disability-related professionals
- ☐ Other:

Potential Allies

- ☐ Dubai, UAE, and international organizations that address human rights issues
- ☐ Print and broadcast media, public television
- ☐ Educators, current and retired
- ☐ Service providers (including health, social, and rehabilitation)
- ☐ Higher education faculty in education, sociology, medicine
- ☐ Self-advocates
- ☐ Community groups
- ☐ Business leaders
- ☐ Local civic leaders
- ☐ Other:

Starting the Advocacy Dialogue

General questions:

The questions below serve as prompts for engaging potential partners within the disability advocacy process. Discussion and related activities will be conducted within an interactive small group format during the training.

- Why is this issue important to you?
- How does this issue affect your life?
- How does it affect the lives of others in your community?
- What might a solution be—what do you want someone to do to resolve the issue?
- Have you ever had a problem?
  - Securing accessible, affordable, integrated housing?
  - Securing needed home care services?
  - Getting and keeping a job?
  - Getting into or through public venues, stores, government offices, etc.?
  - Finding accessible parking?

What CAN YOU do?

- Struggle as individuals trying to conform to the demands of an able-bodied world?

  Or…

- Mobilize a community wide effort to remove barriers?
- Pick priorities and fight for them?
- Educate the community about living with a disability?

Tips to remember:

- Anyone can be a leader

- Invest people by using their strengths
- The most important victory is the group itself
- “Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.” – Margaret Meade

Communication Approaches

Start to think about which communication approach will be most effective for making your case to your potential partners within the disability advocacy process.

Engage: If your advocacy target population is fully in favor of your position and has high interest in the disability-related issue, you should seek to include them in your advocacy planning network! They may be able to open valuable doors for you.

Persuade: If your advocacy target population is interested and somewhat agrees with your disability-related advocacy goal, you should try to persuade them by increasing their knowledge and showing them that your advocacy objective is the appropriate solution.

Convince: If your target is on the fence in relation to your disability-related advocacy goal but only has medium-to-little interest in it, you should try to convince them by showing that your cause is supported by people or institutions that are relevant to them. This can include constituents, other decision-makers, power groups, or public opinion leaders.

Monitor: If your target is against your position but has little interest in the disability-related issue, you might want to devote a bit of energy towards monitoring them, especially if they are powerful or influential. They may suddenly choose to move towards other sections of the spectrum, meaning you will need to rethink your approach.

Neutralize: If your target is against your disability-related position, has a lot of power and is interested in your issue, you may need to neutralize their influence. This can be difficult—you must avoid unethical practices and putting yourself (or others) at risk. This does not deserve a lot of your energy, so be careful how much you focus on this in your activities.

Section 3: Process

Creating a Disability Advocacy Plan

Hands-on experiences related to this section, in particular, will be provided in-person during the training. Further, Dubai strategy mandates and focus group topics generated by people with disabilities and NGOs will help steer this process.

Change doesn’t occur by chance. When it does occur, two related conditions are usually present. First, there is a broad-based organized coalition working in conjunction with policy-makers who support change. Second, active participation of the coalition is guided by a disability advocacy plan that answers these questions:

- What is the issue?
- What is your goal? What are you trying to achieve?
- What information do you need to make your case?
- Who do you want to influence? Who is your target audience?
- What is your message?
- How will you target the message?
- How will you deliver the message?
- What is your timeline? What resources will you need?
- How will you assess your success?

Answers to these questions will become clearer, your plan of active participation more complete, and your advocacy more effective during the training. Specially, an interactive small-group format will be utilized.

What is the issue?

A disability advocacy plan begins with a focus on the issue. The issue can be overarching (such as the importance of accessible healthcare for people with disabilities) or it can be specific (such as inaccessible sidewalks in a particular neighborhood). Find out the current policies on the various Dubai sectors/levels relevant to the issue. Keep in mind that an issue is not the same as a message. It is critical to determine the issue before jumping to the message.

What is your goal? What are you trying to achieve?

In the disability advocacy plan, goals—what you hope to achieve—are articulated. You may have substantive goals (e.g., secure a policy change) or process goals (e.g., introduce a bill for purposes of organizing support and solidifying the cohesiveness of a newly-formed disability coalition). Identifying the goal gets the disability advocacy started, unifies the members of the existing network, forms the basis for expanding the network, helps guide the activities on the appropriateness of a given strategy or tactic, and serves as the basis for judging success. It is essential that the disability advocates identify and reach consensus on the “prize.” At the end of the advocacy efforts, what do the disability advocates hope to accomplish? For example, is the “prize” an incremental step that lays the foundation for subsequent active participation; a new or expanded program; increased funding for an existing program; a more informed and supportive community; a bill or a public law; a policy change; securing enactment of an existing policy; getting the issue on the policy radar screen; or ensuring implementation of a law?

An issue is not the same as a message. It is critical to determine the issue before jumping to the message.

What information do you need to make your case?

The next step in the disability advocacy plan is to gather objective information that will help make the case. Collect specific data (e.g., costs, numbers of people with disabilities affected, etc.) and results from empirical research. The information should be evidence-based as opposed to opinion-based. Gathering information about successful disability programs and services in other communities may also be helpful for comparison purposes. Also collect relevant information about the current status and past history of policies and programs as well as the likely opposition to your goal.

Current Status

Answers to the questions below will be answered and reflected upon within an interactive small-group format during the training.

Local Level
- What opportunity for disability-related services and programs is offered in the community?
- What is the duration and frequency of these offerings?
- Which/how many people with disabilities are reached? Not reached?
- Are there any disability-related policies at the local level?
- What are the current and past funding levels?

Regional Level
- What are the disability-related policies at the regional level?
- Are disability-related services and programs assessed at the regional level?
- What are the current and past funding levels?

Past History
- What is the history of disability-related services and programs in the community? Have they increased or decreased over the years?
- What caused the change?
- What were the strengths/challenges in prior services and programs?
- What were the previous funding levels?

Likely Opposition
- What will be the likely opposition to your goal?
- What are the arguments?
- What information is needed to counter the arguments?

Who do you want to influence? Who is your target audience?

A disability advocacy plan identifies the policy-makers that have the power to make decisions about your advocacy issue. The potential audience of decision makers is broad. It encompasses any appointed or elected official representing the community such as disability services administrators, school board members, local and regional legislators, etc. The plan should identify key power brokers who have the respect of and can influence the policy-makers for or against your position, as well as influential public figures and members of the media.

Policy-makers are inundated with constituents and interest groups that identify problems and proposed solutions. Getting a policy-maker involved does not occur by chance. It takes a concerted effort. Help policy-makers get involved via these strategies:

- Describe how disability access and inclusion connects to a keen personal interest of the elected officials or staff members.
- Convince elected officials that sponsorship or involvement will result in positive publicity and will transform them into a heavyweight—a "player."
- Organize interest groups to contact elected officials to endorse your proposal for active participation.
- Obtain an endorsement from experts and opinion leaders respected by elected officials.
- Arrange for constituents who have political power, personal relationships or are campaign contributors to make calls to policy-makers.
- Ask constituents to send handwritten correspondence, and to attend and speak at open forums in policy-makers' home districts.

What is your message?

Advocates can cite countless reasons why access and inclusion is essential for every person with a disability. The challenge is to select which information is the most appropriate to support each advocacy message. All messages should be crafted with the following principles in mind:

- Messages should not assume prior knowledge of disability-related topics. Messages help inform and educate your target audiences. Be aware that audiences may or may not be aware of the importance of access and inclusion or the status of the disability-related topics within Dubai. Avoid using special terms/jargon that may be unfamiliar.
- Messages must be simple and direct and state what you want. The message must be easy to understand and remember, and communicate what you are asking for. For example, do you want your legislator to sponsor a new piece of legislation to support disability-related funding? Do you want the president of a local Dubai company to sponsor a disability forum for other business leaders?
- Messages should personalize the issue. Messages should inspire audiences by using personal profiles that help advance the goal. By including authentic voices and real life stories, you can personalize the issue and mobilize target audiences to take active participation.
- Messages should communicate that the change is doable and reasonable. Be clear that the desired outcome is reasonable (not radical), viable, and can be implemented.
- Messages must reflect current priorities. Ensure your message reflects current Dubai values, concerns, priorities, and trends. This enables advocates to frame and deliver disability-related messages more effectively in a larger context.

How will you target your message?

Each audience requires a message that is targeted for their interests and needs. Your research, planning, and preparation are critical. Invest the time to know and understand each distinct audience. Disability advocates should speak from where your audience is listening, tapping into key priorities, interests, opinions or needs to make your case. You must know what information—data, quotes from influential people, personal stories, images, performances, research, etc.—will be convincing and memorable to a particular audience.

Targeting messages

Consider these guiding questions when you begin to target your message:

- Who is the target audience?
- What matters most to this audience? What do they care about?
- What disability-related messages will be most important to them?
- What supporting information do they need to hear?
- Where do disability-related goals/interests intersect with theirs? Could disability access and inclusion be important to them?
- What are we asking of them?

Targeting Messages to Policy-Makers

Since much disability advocacy work is ultimately directed at policy-makers, do your homework to determine which message will resonate. Knowing their background and personal interests gives you clues about ways to target the message. From their perspective, how would improving the rights of people with disabilities help them reach their goals? Are they concerned about issues beyond access and inclusion? Can you make the connections between disability-related topics and other issues such as economic growth, social well-being, medical innovations, etc.?

In framing messages for policy-makers, the trick is standing out in a crowd of important and sometimes competing concerns. Remember, policy-makers are concerned with the region they represent. The ability to connect your messages on disability-related topics with other interests and needs will help policy-makers help you. They rely on facts. Be prepared to share data on the impact of disability access and inclusion. This will help policy-makers envision the results of their decision-making and leadership.

Targeting Messages for Families

Families are interested in their children's future. Your message should help parents and other family members to draw connections between disability rights and their children's future success.

Targeting Messages to Self-Advocates

People with disabilities (self-advocates) are interested in being successful. They aspire to improve their lives, build on the success of their families, use their talents, and have opportunities to express their unique vision. Your message should stress how full and equal access to all the societal possibilities of education, employment, and independent living will help them reach their full potential.

Targeting Messages to the Media

Media outlets work in a competitive market where the public has many choices for obtaining news, information, and entertainment. By helping the media uncover the kinds of stories that will appeal to their audiences, you can gain the kind of coverage your messages deserve. Disability-related programs can yield fascinating personal interest stories that embody important community issues. They connect with a range of areas—education, community, community development, business, youth, and personal interest news. Research the target audience for media outlets in your community and target your messages accordingly.

How will you deliver your message?

There are many ways to deliver a message. Some delivery mechanisms reach a wide audience while others are more targeted. Some messages are strongest when they are delivered face-to-face; other messages are best delivered in print, on the Web, or on film. Many times, messages are strongest when multiple delivery mechanisms are planned. Your challenge is to select the most appropriate, powerful, and effective delivery method.

The Media

Gaining access to the general public through the media is always a key component of any disability advocacy effort for several reasons. The media can help create a positive impression about your issue and they can help garner the attention of policy-makers. If elected officials read an article in the newspaper or see an issue on television, they are more apt to pay attention to it. Additionally, the media have the power to move the disability rights agenda into the public arena and affect public opinion. Today's media includes print (newspapers, magazines, reviews, etc.) and increasingly online sources (Websites, Podcasts, and blogs). Your media contact list should also include professionals working in television and radio. Like policy-makers, most media sources have staff members assigned to disability, health, education and/or social inclusion issues. Writers, reporters, editors, bloggers, and radio and media personalities have many options for stories, features, and interviews, but must manage many competing priorities.

Some delivery strategies to consider:

Personal delivery
- Telephone calls
- Meetings
- Workshops
- Presentations to groups

Print/Newspaper
- Letters to decision-makers
- Newsletters
- Letters to the editor

- Articles for newsletters of potential allies
- Media releases
- Annual update reports

Radio
- Public Service Announcements (PSAs)
- Media releases
- Interviews

Electronic
- Emails
- Newsletters
- E-news alerts
- Media releases
- Web sites
- Blogs
- Social networking sites
- Podcasts

How Will You Assess Your Success?

Along the Way

Comprehensive evaluation information will be shared later in this toolkit. However, it is important to note that throughout the course of any advocacy effort, it is necessary to continually review the effectiveness of advocacy strategies and tactics in relationship to the overall principles and goals. Once a strategy is in place, disability advocates should be open to change, but at the same time, resist overreaction. The major question should be whether strategies for reaching the goals are still appropriate and timely.

At the End

You did it. You planned, conducted research, gathered your friends and made new ones, and became an active participant, either personally or as part of a network. Now it's time to celebrate your success, thank your supporters, and reflect on your experience.

To what extent were you able to meet your goal? For example, did you accomplish:
- Passage of a bill just as you would have it written?
- Inclusion of language in a policy that supports access and inclusion for people with disabilities?
- Education of a key group of stakeholders to better understand the value of disability-related topics?
- Development of new partnerships and advocates for disability rights?
- An increase in financial support for disability-related initiatives?
- Movement towards achieving a policy change?
- Placement of an issue on the public radar screen?

- Engagement of new allies?

Before You Begin Again

Remember that success does not always come in a neatly wrapped package. In fact, it often comes with a new set of issues to be resolved. Before you begin on the next task, take some time to strengthen the relationships that have been built. Remember to say thank you to those who helped with the work—the advocates, the behind-the-scene workers, and the policy-makers. Many times after the passage of legislation, legislators report that no one calls or writes to thank them. Express your gratitude. Remember, even if you didn't get what you asked for, you educated people, made connections, and found opportunities to promote disability rights.

Consider helping others by sharing what you've learned from your experience:
- Share results of your work with other alliances as a replicable effort.
- Capture your successes in a document that can inform future work.
- Write about your success for inclusion in a newsletter

Measuring Success Take-Aways:
- Establish attainable goals
- Goals need to be in line with community priorities
- Quantify what can be quantified
- Know your goals!
- Monitor progress regularly
- Celebrate the victories

Advocacy Plan Activity

The template below will be used during the in-person training as an activity to create your own advocacy plan. You can include activities that have already taken place. Additional templates and worksheets are included within the appendix.

Your Goal	**Next Steps/Resources**	**Who?**	**When?**	**Completed**
We have an understanding of the importance of advocacy and have created messaging to use in advocacy efforts				Yes/No
We have taken steps to make sure our key stakeholders know what a difference we make				Yes/No
Our efforts have worked with decision-makers to secure sustainability for our future				Yes/No
We have developed a network of disability advocates willing to contribute time to disability-related efforts				Yes/No

We recognize the potential value of statistics and other measurements of success and use this data actively in our advocacy messages				Yes/No
We have developed messages, including media tools, to share with decision makers in the community and with local leaders and funding providers at meetings				Yes/No
Our staff knows how to initiate and cultivate relationships with people in positions of power on behalf of the disability-related advocacy goal				Yes/No

Developing a Strategic Advocacy Campaign

Once a disability advocacy plan has been formulated, your next step is to develop and implement a strategic advocacy campaign. A “campaign” is a concerted advocacy effort to move your disability-related topic forward, particularly within policy/legislative realms.

1. Gather background information: Before you begin a disability advocacy campaign, do your research. You need to be certain that policy change is the best way to solve the problem. You’ll also need to know the latest research and best practices in support of your disability-related issue, the current laws and regulations, and what gaps may exist. Research any past advocacy efforts on the same issue, so you know what worked…and what didn’t.

What Needs to Be Done?

The focus of your campaign will help determine what information you need to gather. However, the following types of information are generally useful for an effective campaign and provide a good place to start:

- Up-to-date and credible data about the disability-related problem you want to address, as well as any evidence-based solutions. Potential Sources: respected bodies such as the United Nations, World Health Organization (WHO), ministries, or agencies overseeing the issue.
- Existing laws and regulations related to your disability-related topic. Potential Sources: online data sources, parliamentary or legal libraries, and connections with decision-makers, technical leaders, and legal experts.
- Background on previous, related campaigns—both successful and unsuccessful—including what works, what didn’t, and the opposition. Potential Sources: key informant interviews with campaign leaders and participants; media reports.

Helpful Hint: Consider working with a legal or issue expert to support you in gathering information, obtaining copies of existing policies, and connecting with individuals responsible for implementation of current policies. Doing your "homework" early will help familiarize you with gaps and policy areas that need to be strengthened.

2. Set clear policy objectives: A successful disability-related campaign starts with clear objectives that are specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound. Make sure your objectives are linked to policy change and existing evidence, and that they include the following: a policy actor(s) or decision-maker(s), the active participation or decision you want them to take, and a timeline by which you want them to act or decide.

What Needs to Be Done?

Analyzing the background information you have gathered will help you identify the best policy objective(s). Ideally, your policy objective will address a gap or weakness in the existing policy environment and provide an evidence-based solution.

As a guiding framework, check to make sure your objectives are all SMART, or Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Timebound. Policy objectives should also always contain three key items:

- A policy "actor" or decision-maker – the person(s) or decision-making body with the power to make your desired change a reality. Examples: Member of Parliament, minister, relevant parliamentary committee, sub-national legislature, or ministerial office.
- A policy "active participation" or decision – the specific active participation you want them to take or decision you want them to make Examples: enact, amend or repeal a policy, allocate funds, or issue a mandate to affect change.
- Timeline for change – The date by when you want them to act or decide. Examples: the day, month, project quarter, or year.

Helpful Hint: If your disability policy objective contains these three items and is based on your background information, it will almost always be SMART. SMART stands for:

- Specific—to avoid different interpretations
- Measurable—to monitor and evaluate them
- Achievable—realistic and with enough time and resources
- Relevant—to the problem, the goal, and the organization
- Time-bound—there is a specific time frame to achieve them

3. Build strong partnerships: Working in coalition or partnership with others is the best way to demonstrate support for your issue. Identify a core group of disability-related and human-rights organizations that will work together to drive the campaign forward on a day-to-day basis. Next, identify a range of old and new allies willing to speak out in favor of your objectives. To identify those allies, look to civil society and professional or business groups from the health, education, and economic and scientific sectors.

What Needs to Be Done?

You will want to form a core group of partners that will act as the leadership group for the disability-related advocacy campaign. This should be a small number of select allies; otherwise, it will be challenging to make decisions and get things done quickly. To be most effective, the leadership group should:

- Agree to support a common disability policy objective and commit to being engaged in the campaign on a day-to-day basis.
- Have contacts with key decision-makers and strong knowledge of the policy environment and the policy issue.

In addition to the core leadership group you will likely want to build a broader network of disability advocates and active supporters. While these partners may not be engaged in day-to-day decision-making, they can play vital roles at strategic moments of a campaign. These additional organizations often:

- Represent a mix of traditional allies and more ‘unusual’ allies (non-disability-specific) that help to demonstrate wide and diverse support for your issue.
- Are mobilized by the core group to raise their voices at opportune moments, reach select decision-makers, or carry out specific activities or strategies.

Helpful Hint: Before recruiting new partners, the leadership group should have a draft campaign plan in place and know what each current member brings to the campaign. This strategy will provide insight into the types of organizations you will want to recruit to your network. Ideally, new organizations can help to fill existing gaps. On occasion, they may also bring new ideas and activities to the campaign.

4. Know the political landscape: Understanding the policy-making process and which decision-makers and influencers to target is key to achieving your objectives. Once you understand the political landscape, strategize about when during the process you can successfully engage, intervene, and influence your targets. You will also need to know decision-makers’ positions on your disability-related policy change objectives and identify any opposition you will encounter.

What Needs to Be Done?

Political mapping takes time and resources, but the more comprehensive the mapping, the better prepared you will be to carry out a strong campaign. Mapping will vary depending on Dubai’s political system, the kind of change you are seeking, and the type of information that is openly available to the public. But no matter the format you use, always try to include:

- The steps a proposed policy must pass through in order to be approved and implemented. These steps may vary depending on the type of policy.
- The decision-makers that matter in each step of the process, their interests and concerns, and their position on your issue: Are they supportive, opposed or neutral?

- The individuals — like government staff, political party leaders, and quasi-state or select non-governmental representatives — who advise or are well positioned to persuade decision-makers throughout the process. These individuals are often called “influencers.”

Your political mapping should also review any opposition you might face. You will want to consider:

- Individuals and groups that might oppose you and their reasons for doing so.
- Your opponents’ messages, tactics, and connections with key decision-makers, which can help you to develop powerful counter messages and think of ways to lessen their influence.

Helpful Hint: Monitor your target decision-makers’ position on your disability-related issue, as it may change over time. Also, continue to monitor your opposition for new messages and activities. Establish strong working relationships with decision-makers’ staff, as they can provide useful information about your key targets, including useful information about the opposition’s influence on decision-makers. Regularly update your mapping as you receive new information. Consider working with a legal expert or political “insider” to ensure this document is up-to-date.

5. Help develop legislation or regulations: Early on in the process, you’ll want to prioritize drafting of the actual policy, using the strongest wording possible. As an advocate, the role that you will play during this phase is likely to vary. Having a lawyer or disability policy expert as a resource is very important. At a minimum, they can help you analyze the strengths and weaknesses of existing or emerging policies in accordance with evidence-based best practices.

What Needs to Be Done?

Depending upon your role within the Dubai legislative process, assist with:

- Drafting policies
- Reviewing or providing comments on policies
- Monitoring policies

Additionally, consider working with supportive decision-makers or friendly staff that you have identified through political mapping to share drafts and provide unofficial or informal feedback. Whatever your role, you need to be very clear on the disability provisions you want to see included in laws and regulations. Each provision you suggest should be supported by evidence and best practice legislation from other jurisdictions. Knowledgeable lawyers or supportive legal experts can help you gather and frame evidence, as well as help you analyze text and ensure that policies contain strong language to achieve the change you want. Remember that even very minor changes in wording can significantly affect a policy’s impact.

Helpful Hint: Use your political mapping to help identify openings within the policy-making process for you to provide input on disability laws and regulations. Try to monitor the draft policy at each and every step of the process so you can ensure the final version contains your desired language. The actual text in a draft policy often becomes weaker as it proceeds through the process, and you will want to continue to advocate for the strongest, most effective language possible.

6. Determine what is non-negotiable: Compromise is sometimes necessary in advocacy. However, it is important to know your limits. You won't necessarily help your cause if you support the passage of weak policies. You and your core partners will need to determine together what is non-negotiable, ideally early in the disability advocacy process.

What Needs to Be Done?

During the policy-making process, your campaign's leadership group will often be required to make quick decisions about whether to support a proposed compromise. Anticipating possible compromises and agreeing in advance on how best to address them will reduce the risk of disagreement among your core partners at key moments. Conflict within your group – even when temporary – can weaken your group's overall negotiating position and the policy you are trying to promote.

Ask yourselves the following questions to help decide if you want to support a
potential compromise:

- Does the compromise undermine meaningful progress on our issue?
- Does the compromise set a harmful precedent for Dubai?
- Does the compromise make it difficult to come back later and revise or strengthen the policy?

If you answer yes to any of these questions about the proposed compromise, it is likely a nonnegotiable for your campaign's leadership group. You and your core partners may choose not to support and even oppose the potential law or regulation.

Helpful Hint: Once your campaign's leadership group has determined your nonnegotiable issues, keep this information strictly confidential. Wide distribution could give the opposition an advantage and weaken your chances of achieving the strongest possible disability-related policy.

7. Identify legislative sponsors and policy champions: Strong sponsors willing to champion a disability policy throughout the process are valuable assets for any disability-related campaign. Seek out influential and respected policymakers on relevant committees or in key positions who you can trust to act as loyal partners and effective champions. Remember that it takes time to cultivate such champions. Meet with them regularly to understand their concerns and needs, agree on how best to work together, and share information. Always be available to act as a resource for your champion.

What Needs to Be Done?

Your political mapping can help you identify sponsors for your law or regulation. A thorough political mapping will indicate decision-makers that are supportive of your campaign's policy objective and who may become active champions. Take time to meet with your potential sponsor(s) in order to better understand:

- Their interests in, and reasons for, supporting your policy objective.
- The provisions they would like to see included in the policy and how they might differ from yours.
- Their suggested strategic approach to passing the policy.
- Their ideas about how best to work together.
- How to keep each other informed throughout the campaign.

In order to have a positive and trusting relationship with your sponsor(s), you need to serve as a resource for them throughout the policy-making process and should communicate that clearly. You can act as a resource to your champions by doing the following:

- Providing or securing issue expertise to inform policy development
- Providing background research, fact sheets, or policy briefs on the issue
- Drafting policy language and/or reviewing drafts and providing comments
- Building public support for the policy objective
- Educating other decision-makers on the issue
- Engaging the media to cover the issue
- Mobilizing audiences for legislative hearings and providing public testimony
- Engaging in joint strategizing to advance the policy throughout each step of the process

Helpful Hint: Developing a sponsor or policy champion takes time and usually requires multiple meetings. Consider designating 1-2 liaisons from your organization that can commit to building trust by communicating regularly with your target sponsor's office. (Two focal points are useful in case one person is unavailable or leaves the organization.) That way, you will not have to start completely over building your organization's relationship with your sponsor.

8. Develop your key strategies: Persuading decision-makers to take active participation is essential for affecting changes in disability policy. There are many ways this can be done, but most successful disability campaigns employ some combination of the following three strategies: 1) direct interaction with decision-makers and influencers, 2) using media and social media to influence decision-makers and the public, and 3) grassroots mobilization to engage a strong base of supporters and organizational allies to encourage change and counter opposition or indifference.

What Needs to Be Done?

Direct communication with decision makers can be a powerful outreach strategy and might include the following activities:

- Letter writing
- In-person meetings or phone calls

- Briefings, workshops, and conferences
  Providing testimony at hearings
- Attending receptions or other events where decision-makers are present
- Providing position papers and other forms of information and data.

Grassroots Mobilization

In addition – or as an alternative – to reaching decision makers and the public through media, grassroots mobilization can be an effective strategy in places where decision-makers are responsive to voters or public opinion. To find out whether this strategy makes sense for your campaign, first consider the types of individuals and organizations your target decision-makers care about most. Membership groups and interest groups can be extremely powerful and influential, particularly if you can mobilize them to advocate to your target decision-makers during critical campaign moments. Sending active participation alerts to supporters through social media is a great way to engage them in meaningful active participation and keep them up to date throughout the policy process. To further spread your message, ask your partners to disseminate active participation alerts to their networks and write to policy makers on their letterhead.

Helpful Hint: A multi-strategy approach is usually the most effective to reach a variety of decision makers. Remember to keep track of your decision makers' positions as you engage in your persuasion efforts so you'll be certain how many supporters you have when it's time to make key decisions.

9. Prepare to communicate effectively: Effective communication underpins every successful disability advocacy campaign. First, define your different audiences and work to understand their information needs, interests, concerns, and the best communication channels to reach them. Using this information, you can then design targeted, persuasive messages and identify the most compelling messengers and spokespeople. Make sure you have collected the most up-to-date and accurate information to use in your communication activities, and consider commissioning your own reports if you lack credible information supporting your argument. Message research such as focus groups or polling can help you ensure you have chosen the most compelling messages. Finally, it's important to monitor media and social media engagement on your issue so you know what is being said about your disability campaign and can respond quickly.

What Needs to Be Done?

The most important principle of effective communication is to know your audience. Depending on your chosen strategies, your audiences may range from decision-makers to journalists and community members. These groups each have different communication needs; the materials and messages that work for one group won't necessarily work for another. The more you know about your audience, the more targeted and effective your advocacy outreach will be.

Once you have determined your audiences, gather the following information:

- How best to reach them (e.g. TV, radio, print media, social media, SMS)

- The questions, concerns or attitudes they have about your issue and the specific information they will need in order to take active participation.

Your target audience members are likely busy people. This means you need to develop short, simple messages to inspire them to learn more or take active participation. Though the specific content of your message will vary for each audience, your messages should generally contain the following:

- A short problem statement about what you want to change and why
- A few key attention-grabbing facts that illustrate the problem or potential solution
- A specific active participation that the audience can take to help
- A human story that highlights how the issue has impacted individuals. (This is optional but can be quite effective.)

Your messengers are equally as important as your messages. To most effectively reach your target audience, identify and deploy individuals or groups that they will listen to and believe.

Helpful Hint: After you develop your best messages, share them with partners and emphasize the importance of a unified, limited set of messages. Delivering one strong message many times is more effective than sending a multitude of messages. Use focus groups or polling to help identify your most effective messages and instill message discipline.

10. Formulate your campaign active participation plan: The disability campaign active participation plan is your roadmap for the campaign, leading from objectives to strategies and then to messages. Carefully consider all the elements of your plan in collaboration with your core group of partners. In addition to key activities, the active participation plan should also outline the necessary resources, responsible persons, and timeline. Remember that your plan is a living document that should be reviewed regularly and updated as the political landscape changes.

What Needs to Be Done?

Campaign active participation plans can differ in format and level of detail, but at the minimum your plan should include the following:

- Your policy objective
- Your target decision-makers and influencers
- Your opponents and their planned tactics
- The timeline for relevant policy process
- Your core partners and your agreed process for communicating and decision-making

An active participation plan should also include a detailed work plan that is based on your selected advocacy strategies and anticipated communications. It should highlight:

- Planned activities and their timelines
- Persons/partners responsible for carrying out the activities

- Required resources for the activities and who is providing them
- Indicators for monitoring activities and tracking progress

Helpful Hint: The campaign process is dynamic and ever changing, and your leadership team should regularly revisit your shared active participation plan and adjust it based on current circumstances.

11. Run your campaign: With a detailed plan in place, it's time to implement. Keep in mind that a successful campaign requires strategic planning alongside strategic implementation. The campaign process is dynamic and ever changing, and every campaign will require you to respond to unanticipated events, disagreements within your network, changing decision-makers and new opposition. Don't be afraid to be flexible, revisit your plan and update it as needed.

What Needs to Be Done?

Common situations often arise during a campaign that can require you and your partners to make quick, strategic decisions. They might include:

- Timing: Your core partners may be pressured by members of your advocacy network, your target decision-makers, and your policy champions to move forward despite lacking the necessary votes or support.
- Policy content: You may face pressure to significantly weaken the proposed policy in order to ensure passage. Similarly, you may be asked to consider changes to your policy to secure a vote or support from a decision-maker. Now is the time to refer back to what items your core group decided were nonnegotiable. If a proposed change appears to be minor or consistent with the compromises your network has previously agreed upon, arrange a meeting with your sponsor to discuss your options.
- Opposition: You might face opposition tactics that could jeopardize your efforts. Respond immediately and proactively, and maintain regular contact with supportive policymakers and key "influentials" that may know about opposition maneuvers designed to disrupt your efforts. Be prepared to help your sponsors troubleshoot these and other types of unanticipated events as your policy moves through the process.

Helpful Hint: Carefully track and monitor the policy process in collaboration with your sponsor's office. Get on the distribution lists for the committees and other bodies that will consider your proposed legislation or regulation and check their websites regularly.

12. Monitor and evaluate progress: Monitoring and evaluating implementation of your disability advocacy plan will be one of the most critical activities of your campaign, but is often overlooked. Reviewing your progress at regular points will not only help to hold you and your partners accountable for planned active participation, but will also reveal whether or not your active participation is accomplishing your goals. If your campaign is not making progress, you'll need to reassess and adjust your plan.

What Needs to Be Done?

There are many ways to monitor and evaluate progress. At a minimum, your core group of partners should conduct:

- Regular collection of information to measure progress according to indicators in your campaign active participation plan.
- After- active participation debriefs following big campaign moments, such as the launch of a report or event with parliamentarians, to discuss what went well, what should be improved and any important outcomes.
- Periodic, routine check-ins to make sure your campaign activities are progressing according to plan and resulting in the desired outcomes.

If this active participation reveals that your campaign is not making steady progress, take the time to ask why and be prepared to make changes. This may include shifting strategies, updating your messages and messengers, or planning new active participation to counter emerging opposition. It may also involve adjusting timelines or responsibilities. If a partner is not able to carry out their assigned roles or planned active participation, you may need to shift responsibility to keep moving forward. This is a decision best discussed and determined by a core group.

Helpful Hint: Sometimes even when you and your partners have done everything "right," your desired disability law or regulation will not pass at the preferred moment. Don't give up. As a result of your efforts, many stakeholders will now believe in your cause. In addition, the media, public and decision-makers will be more educated on your issue, which will put you in a better position when the next opportunity arises.

13. Celebrate success and remain engaged: Successful disability advocacy campaigns take time. Even if you don't secure your policy change right away, you will have made progress in educating decision-makers, the media, and the public on your issue. Celebrate milestones both big and small, and make sure you thank supporters for their ongoing commitment. Once you have achieved your disability policy change, ensuring successful implementation is the next objective. A campaign doesn't end with the change in law or policy change: Now it's time to push for implementation.

What Needs to Be Done?

Make sure to acknowledge and thank your supporters along the way. Your aim is to keep people motivated. Activities may include:

- A formal thank you letter to a decision-maker
- Using social media to congratulate grassroots supporters
- An award and ceremony for supporters who have supported your campaign in some special way
- An event to celebrate achievement of the campaign's policy objective

Remember that when the policy objective is achieved, your work as an advocate is not over. In fact, that moment is likely to usher in an entirely new campaign to ensure successful implementation. As an advocate your role in successful implementation might include:

- Ensuring that additional laws or regulations are drafted, approved and released at various levels of governance
- Countering any active participation to repeal or amend the policy in order to lessen its impact
- Encouraging the agency responsible for implementation to both educate stakeholders about the new policy and provide training to those who will carry it out or enforce it
- Monitoring implementation of the law and reporting violations
- Documenting any industry or opposition attempts to circumvent the policy
- Working with the media to publicize implementation activity, or lack thereof

Advocacy Campaign-Specific Activity

The activity described below will be described and completed during the in-person training.

Clarify Campaign Issues

You probably already have strong ideas about the disability issue for your policy advocacy campaign. But no matter how strongly you feel about a certain issue, it is important to take the time to clarify and refine your issue. How well your issue is defined is a major determinant of its success or failure. After completing background research, you now have an array of risk factors and policy gaps related to your issue. Write a sentence describing each of the factors or gaps identified in your review: _________

Evaluate Priority Issues

Is there strong evidence that addressing the issue will have a positive impact on improving access and inclusion for people with disabilities? Please describe: _________

What is the expected impact of addressing the issue (e.g. how many people will it affect, what type of difference will it make in people's lives or a country's human rights status)? Please describe: _________

Does tackling this issue address existing disability-related inequities in a significant way? Please describe: _________

Will work on the issue result in an outcome that is greater than the human and financial resources needed to achieve the change? Please describe: _________

Is policy change among the best ways to impact the issue? Please describe: _________

Is there political will to address the issue? Please describe: _________

Is there support among key political stakeholders to address the issue? Please describe: _________

Is it possible to reasonably address the issue in the near-term (e.g. three to five years)? Please describe: _________

Does your organization have experience, expertise, and reputation to reasonably advocate on the issue? Please describe: _________

Are there potential partners willing and able to collaborate with you on addressing this issue? Please describe: _________

Rank Priority Issues

Once you have answered the above questions for each of the identified risk factors and policy gaps, it is helpful to make a relative comparison using the following criteria: strength of evidence, disability impact, political feasibility, your organizational capacity and partnership potential.

Write the potential issues (e.g. the risk factors or political gaps) in the top row. If you would like to assess more than three, use extra scrap paper to make additional columns. Use the criteria in the left column to rate each of the issues as high, medium, or low – keeping in mind the answers to the questions above. Then total the number of highs, mediums, and lows.

Use the scores as a guide to choose the risk factors or policy gaps that would be best to target with policy advocacy and write that in the bottom box. While there are no absolutes, focusing on the gaps with the most highs and mediums usually brings the greatest chance of success. Make sure you do not choose too many issues.

1. Strength of Evidence (Rank for Issues 1, 2, 3): _________
2. Disability Impact (Rank for Issues 1, 2, 3): _________
3. Political Feasibility to Make Change (Rank for Issues 1, 2, 3): _________
4. Organizational Capacity to Advocate (Rank for Issues 1, 2, 3): _________
5. Partnership Potential (Rank for Issues 1, 2, 3): _________

Total Score (Tabulate for Issues 1, 2, 3): _________

Final Advocacy Issue(s): _________

Define Goals

Now it’s time to articulate your campaign goal. Remember your campaign goal is the long-term result, or impact on disability-related access and inclusion, that you hope to see emerge from the advocacy effort. It describes your vision for change. They will serve as inspiration for you, your partners, and your policy targets over the course of your campaign. Write your campaign goal(s) below: _________

Develop Policy Objectives

Now it is time to develop your policy objectives. A policy objective is different from your campaign goal. While your campaign goal identifies the big change you want to see in the world, your campaign objectives articulate the policy change that will help reach that goal. Your objective should be Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound or SMART. Policy objectives should also always contain three key items:

- A policy "actor" or decision-maker – the person(s) or decision making body with the power to make your desired change a reality.
- A policy "active participation" or decision – the specific active participation you want them to take or decision you want them to make. Examples include enact, amend or repeal a policy, allocate funds, or issue a mandate to effect change.
- Timeline for change – the date by when you want them to act or decide. Examples include the day, month, project quarter, or year.

To develop your policy objectives answer the following questions. If you are developing multiple objectives, use additional paper and answer the questions for each objective.

Who are the decision-makers or the decision-making institution with the authority/ability to make your desired change a reality? Provide your answer below: _________

What is the specific policy-related active participation they should take to help accomplish the desired change? Provide your answer below: _________

What is the desired timeline for their active participation to occur? (Keep in mind the steps of the policy-making process in order to set a realistic timeframe.) Provide your answer below: _________

Now combine your answers into a concise statement describing your policy objective. Provide your answer below: _________

Determine Advocacy Policy Campaign Strategies

Having prioritized your policy targets, now it's time to determine the high-level strategies you will use to reach, influence and mobilize decision makers. Examples of strategies include:

- Providing policy support by drafting legal or technical language
- Monitoring implementation of policies and highlighting gaps in follow-through to decision-makers, media and the public
- Cultivating key policy champions to lead efforts
- Building support for your policy objective within key government agencies
- Conducting outreach with policy-makers to marshal support or votes

- Using media to activate public dialogue and influence policy-makers
- Mobilizing grassroots supporters to voice support for your policy
- Building coalitions of key stakeholders to conduct outreach and build support
- Gathering, packaging and disseminating evidence

Be creative in designing strategies, but remember to carefully consider your policy targets' interests, your campaign team's advocacy strengths and weaknesses, and any cultural and political factors that are specific to Dubai. Usually a combination of three to five strategies is most effective.

Section 4: Outcomes

Evaluating Advocacy Efforts

By evaluating disability advocacy efforts, you will have the opportunity to clearly see your progress toward meeting outcomes, assess challenges, and improve your advocacy efforts overall impact. Through evaluation you will have the opportunity to judge your own effectiveness and learn from your successes and mistakes. Evaluating your advocacy efforts will allow you to provide effective information for funding reports and will provide effective data that can be used to support a search for funding. By evaluating every step of the way, you can modify your approach if you discover any problems. You will also be able to track the impact of your message, whether you've reached your intended audience, and whether they have taken any active participation in response to your efforts. If you discover that your message lacks impact with its intended audience or does not reach them at all, you will know that you have to re-examine your message and method of delivery before you commit additional resources or replicate the project.

Evaluation also helps demonstrate to stakeholders that your disability advocacy work is cost-effective. If you are able to measure the impact of your message money saved or made through policy changes you can better justify the campaign's value. Sometimes charting this type of change on a large-scale presents a challenge. By focusing on the individuals or smaller groups of people with disabilities positively impacted, stakeholders can still get a sense of your advocacy activities' worth.

Finally, by comprehensively evaluating the entire system you are attempting to modify with your advocacy efforts, you can identify other influences beyond your control that may have inadvertently improved or diluted your advocacy impact.

Evaluation Methods

The most basic and inexpensive evaluation method is a *process evaluation*. A process evaluation measures what is happening, to whom, how often, and for how much money. Qualitative data from a process evaluation can reveal the sentiment of a coalition or a legislator's attitude towards your cause. Quantitative data is simply how many people are showing up at disability advocacy meetings, how many meetings are held, and how many legislators or key stakeholders attend such meetings.

An *outcome evaluation*. Data gathered from an outcome evaluation will show whether the disability advocacy is meeting stated intermediate goals. Findings of an outcome evaluation will address whether an organization's policies have changed through the influence of your advocacy work.

Lastly, an *impact evaluation* takes a look at the far reaching goals of disability advocacy. In an impact evaluation, the advocacy activities' effect on broad determinants of human rights, health, policy, and programming goals are usually examined. Due to the wide scope and reach of an impact evaluation, they tend to be the costliest evaluation method. Impact evaluations may occur during the disability advocacy efforts, at the conclusion, or even years later.

Advocacy **Capacity** Self-Evaluation Tool

What can the advocacy capacity self-evaluation tool be used for?

- Identify areas of capacity to strengthen in order to accomplish the NGO/organization's advocacy goals.
- Help develop a plan for building advocacy capacity.
- Help determine the organization's role in advocacy efforts and identify where to seek partners.
- Provide groups with a baseline evaluation to use in conversations with funders about strategic investments in your capacity.
- Spark discussion about advocacy within the organization

What is the relevance of the indicators and measures?

Specific indicators or measures will vary in their relevance to each organization. Some will be more or less important for a particular group's disability advocacy work depending on:

- The type of disability advocacy work in which an organization is engaged.
- The size of the organization (staff and budget).
- Where the organization is in its life cycle.
- Where an organization is in the development of its advocacy work.

Due to the unique nature of disability advocacy work, an organization could be very strong in all of the assessment indicators, and still have few advocacy wins because of what's occurring in the external environment. Or an organization might have overall limited capacity, but have numerous advocacy wins because of strategic use of partnerships or just plain luck. However, when groups build those capacities most critical to their disability advocacy goals and objectives, they will be more likely to be effective and to sustain efforts.

What rating scale does this evaluation use?

This evaluation uses a four-point scale:

4 = Very Strong/Always
3 = Moderately Strong/Usually
2 = Somewhat Strong/Sometimes
1 = Not Strong/Rarely/Never

Different individuals might define each rating differently. For example, one person might think the organization is somewhat strong in one area, while someone else thinks it is very strong. Discussing these different perceptions can help everyone gain a shared understanding of the group's capacity. When comparing one organization to another, it's also important to keep in mind the subjective nature of the rating scale. One organization might consistently rate itself high while a similar organization consistently rates itself low. Honest ratings of organizational capacities will contribute to gaining the most benefit from the survey.

As you begin this evaluation, keep these two questions in mind:

What are your long-term and short-term advocacy goals?

For example: a housing advocacy group may have a long-term goal of obtaining policy to provide enough accessible housing for all of the people with disabilities in Dubai, and a short-term goal of stopping proposed legislation to decrease the current appropriations for accessible housing modifications.

How can your organization uniquely contribute to accomplishing these goals?

Factors to consider: This includes the type of role (mobilizer of networks, legislative strategy leader for a coalition, lone advocate on a narrow issue, public leader versus behind the scenes player, etc.) your organization wants to play, what other groups are doing, where your expertise lies, etc.

Evaluation Items

1. Preparation: Introduces key elements of basic preparation for engaging in advocacy.

- ☐ The organization identifies and articulates its mission and goals.
- ☐ The organization has basic knowledge about its subject matter, including how its issues affect constituents.
- ☐ The organization understands the overall policy environment related to its issues, including trends, possible allies and opponents, and other organizations working towards the same goals.
- ☐ The organization identifies its existing advocacy capacities, including staffing, skills and knowledge, and strength of field operation.

☐ The organization has a long-term vision or plan for its advocacy goals and for increasing its advocacy over time.

2. Agenda: Introduces the importance of having a clear, written agenda that defines advocacy goals and prioritizes activities.

☐ The organization has a written advocacy agenda, approved by the organization's leadership that identifies its goals and priorities.
☐ The organization gathers information and recommendations from constituents and other stakeholders in the development of its agenda.
☐ The organization shares its agenda or segments thereof, with decision-makers, constituents, partners, and media, as appropriate.
☐ The organization adjusts its focus on particular agenda items in response to internal and external changes.
☐ The agenda includes one or more priorities that are proactive rather than reactive.
☐ The organization has an agenda setting process that is understood throughout the organization.

3. Plans, Strategies, and Adaptability: Introduces the importance of developing a flexible plan to carry out the written agenda.

☐ The organization analyzes what it will take to accomplish each written agenda item, including who has the power to make decisions in legislative, administrative, electoral, litigation, and other areas.
☐ The organization develops a plan for how it will strategically advance each written agenda item. The plan identifies appropriate targets, tactics, major activities, and expected results.
☐ The organization monitors internal and external changes in the policy environment and adapts its strategies as needed.
☐ The organization has a plan for assessing advocacy capacity and for strengthening its capacity as needed.
☐ The organization plans to test new, improved strategies and tactics, such as new methods of communication or of mobilizing networks.

4. Research and Analysis: Assesses the extent to which the organization researches and gathers information and conducts analyses on its issues.

☐ The organization researches, compiles and analyzes information about specific issues.
☐ The organization researches and analyzes the impact of current policies, the policy environment and opportunities for advancing its goals.
☐ The organization employs a process for verifying that its issues or issue analyses and other materials are accurate and reliable.
☐ The organization shares information, analyses and supporting materials with decision-makers, constituents, and partners, as appropriate.

- ☐ The organization conducts in-depth research and produces reports or other materials related to its advocacy agenda.

5. Field Operation: Assesses how the organization communicates with, educates and engages its network and the public.

- ☐ The organization has a network or various networks of individuals and organizations that it can activate to advocate or collaborate on key policy issues.
- ☐ The organization communicates with its network on the status of advocacy efforts, opportunities to engage, messages and results.
- ☐ The organization identifies segments of the public to educate about its agenda.
- ☐ The organization conducts phone banks, informational mailings, online communications and/or canvassing to educate and mobilize their network ad gain public support.
- ☐ The organization implements a plan to expand the size and diversity of its network.
- ☐ The organization works to expand the issue knowledge and advocacy skills of those in its network.
- ☐ The organization activates segments of the public to influence decision makers in support of organizational priorities.

6. Advocacy Partners and Coalitions: Assesses the extent to which the organization has partnerships—with other nonprofits, businesses, professional associations, etc.—that advance its goals.

- ☐ The organization identifies other stakeholders that have similar goals, including those with complementary knowledge and skills, with which it could collaborate.
- ☐ The organization participates in coalitions that share one or more of its goals and provide value to the organization.
- ☐ The organization actively seeks support for its priorities from its coalition partners.
- ☐ The organization exchanges information with its partners, as appropriate.
- ☐ The organization seeks support from stakeholders who may not be traditional allies, but with whom it could partner on a particular project.
- ☐ The organization plays a leadership role in establishing and/or managing a coalition.

7. Messaging: Assesses how the organization develops and delivers its advocacy messages.

- ☐ The organization develops clear, compelling and concise messages tailored to its target audiences.
- ☐ The organization bases its messages and materials on reliable, credible and up-to-date information.
- ☐ The organization identifies and uses effective messengers and spokespeople.
- ☐ The organization chooses a variety of paid and/or earned media strategies to communicate its messages.
- ☐ The organization conducts polling and focus groups to develop and test effective messages.

8. Media Relations: Assesses the extent to which the organization communicates effectively with the media and uses various media to advance its policy goals.

- ☐ The organization monitors media coverage related to its issues.
- ☐ The organization identifies, develops and maintains a list of media contacts relevant to its program issue(s).
- ☐ The organization distributes information to a wide range of media outlets—including online, broadcast and print media—to communicate its messages.
- ☐ The organization has a written media plan with objectives, targets, and timelines.
- ☐ The organization identifies, builds and maintains relationships with key personnel in online, broadcast and print media.
- ☐ The organization maintains an active social media presence.
- ☐ The organization has developed a crisis communications strategy for effectively dealing with negative press or an internal crisis.

9. Influencing Decision-Makers: Assess the extent to which the organization builds influential relationships with targeted decision-makers.

- ☐ The organization monitors the active participation of decision-makers related to the organization’s agenda.
- ☐ The organization builds working relationships with decision-makers by providing information.
- ☐ The organization consistently nurtures relationships with decision-makers throughout the year.
- ☐ The organization deliberately builds relationships with elected officials without regard to political affiliations.
- ☐ The organization identifies and builds relationships with influential individuals and groups who can persuade decision-makers.

10. Organizational Commitment Assess the organization’s operational commitment to its advocacy work.

- ☐ The organization’s governing structure is committed to advocacy.
- ☐ The organization has at least one staff person whose job description includes specific responsibilities for advocacy.
- ☐ The executive director and relevant staff have a clear understanding of the basic federal and state rules and regulations that govern lobbying, election-related work, and other advocacy activities.
- ☐ The organization invests in staff, board, and volunteer development to strengthen its advocacy work.
- ☐ The organization allocates increased staff time to strengthen its advocacy work.
- ☐ The organization’s mission or strategic plan includes advocacy.

This self-evaluation tool will help you identify the current extent of your knowledge and skills in relation to the practice of disability advocacy. The key knowledge and skills needed for effective advocacy for each of the model's steps and tasks are listed in the next section. You can rate your competence in each of these areas of advocacy, using the following scoring system:

What rating scale does this evaluation use?

This evaluation uses a four-point scale:

4 = Very Well Developed
3 = Fairly Well Developed
2 = Somewhat Developed
1 = Not Developed

List of Advocacy Competencies

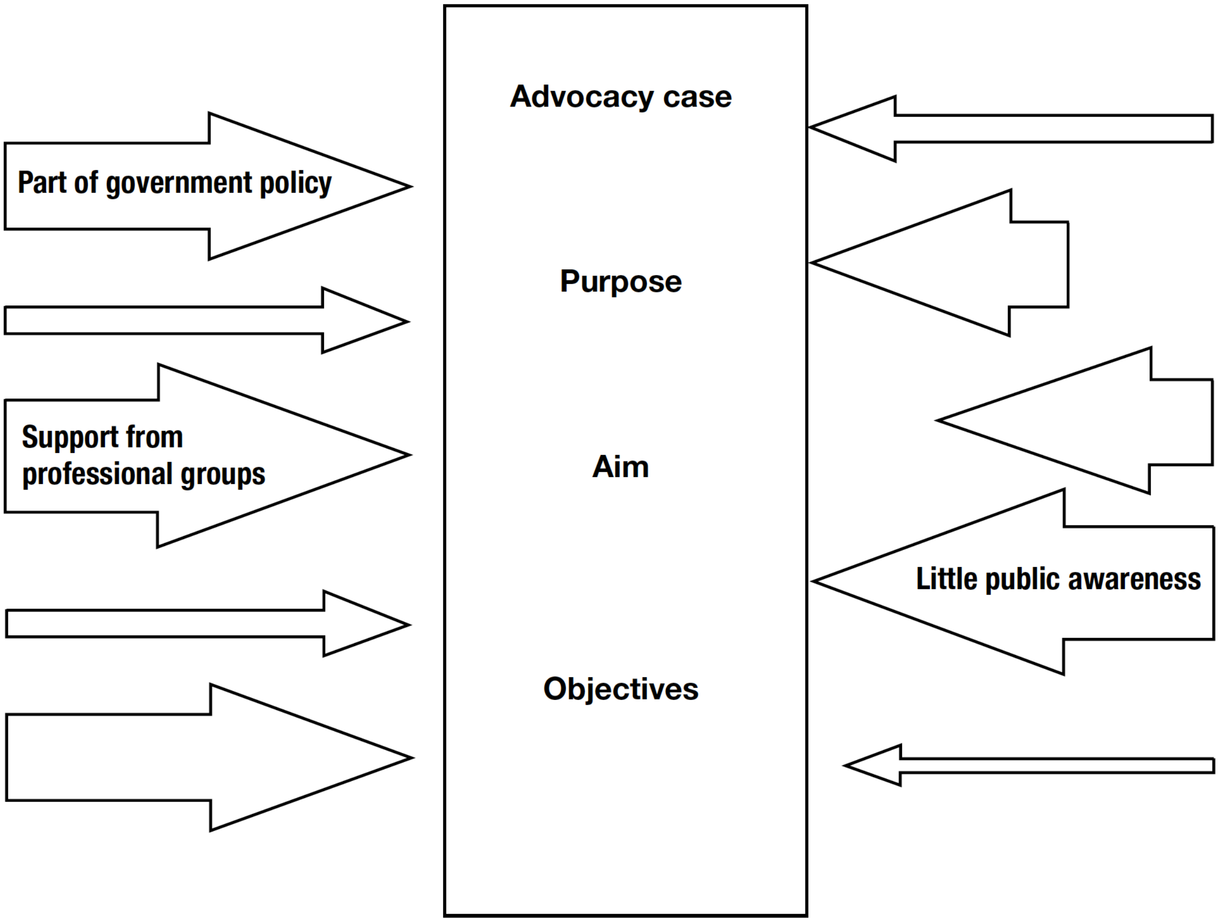
- ☐ Acting ethically
- ☐ Analyzing policy
- ☐ Assessing service impact
- ☐ Assessing impact on equality
- ☐ Assessing research
- ☐ Applying research and analysis
- ☐ Assessing impact on environment
- ☐ Assessing opportunities
- ☐ Assessing risk
- ☐ Brainstorming
- ☐ Building/managing budgets
- ☐ Coalition building
- ☐ Coordinating
- ☐ Collecting and analyzing data
- ☐ Communicating effectively
- ☐ Communicating an inspiring vision
- ☐ Conducting meetings
- ☐ Coordinating active participation
- ☐ Developing information resources
- ☐ Developing a value clarification system
- ☐ Developing a vision
- ☐ Environment scanning
- ☐ Facilitative leadership
- ☐ Facilitating community development and involvement
- ☐ Formulating policy theory and local and national practice
- ☐ Fund raising
- ☐ Gathering/reviewing the evidence base

☐ Goal setting
☐ Group planning/objective setting
☐ Implementing a value clarification system
☐ Influencing
☐ Information sharing
☐ Information technology
☐ Issue framing
☐ Listening effectively
☐ Lobbying
☐ Maintaining lobbying
☐ Managing conflict
☐ Managing information and knowledge
☐ Managing projects
☐ Managing publicity
☐ Managing resources
☐ Managing time
☐ Marketing
☐ Monitoring
☐ Negotiating effectively
☐ Networking
☐ Organizing
☐ Organizing events
☐ Preparing and delivering briefings
☐ Preparing written advocacy materials
☐ Priority setting
☐ Problem solving
☐ Providing feedback and giving constructive criticism
☐ Providing leadership
☐ Resource management
☐ Stakeholder analysis
☐ Story telling
☐ Strategic planning
☐ SWOT analysis
☐ Tactical planning
☐ Team building
☐ Understanding group dynamics
☐ Undertaking consultation
☐ Undertaking evaluation
☐ Undertaking research and analysis
☐ Undertaking social research
☐ Using the Media effectively
☐ Using the media effectively, including letter writing, public speaking and debating
☐ Utilizing information technology

- ☐ Utilizing spreadsheets
- ☐ Working in partnership for collaboration
- ☐ Writing reports

Informal Evaluation: Force Field Analysis

Force field analysis has many uses. In advocacy work it can be used to identify the pros and cons for the process as a whole or any part of it. It helps identify the people, NGOs/organizations, policies, and other factors that can support your aims, the *driving forces*, and who and/or what may cause difficulties – the *restraining forces*. With this information you can decide how the driving forces can be used to help strengthen your activity and identify ways of overcoming and influencing any opposition highlighted in the *restraining forces*.

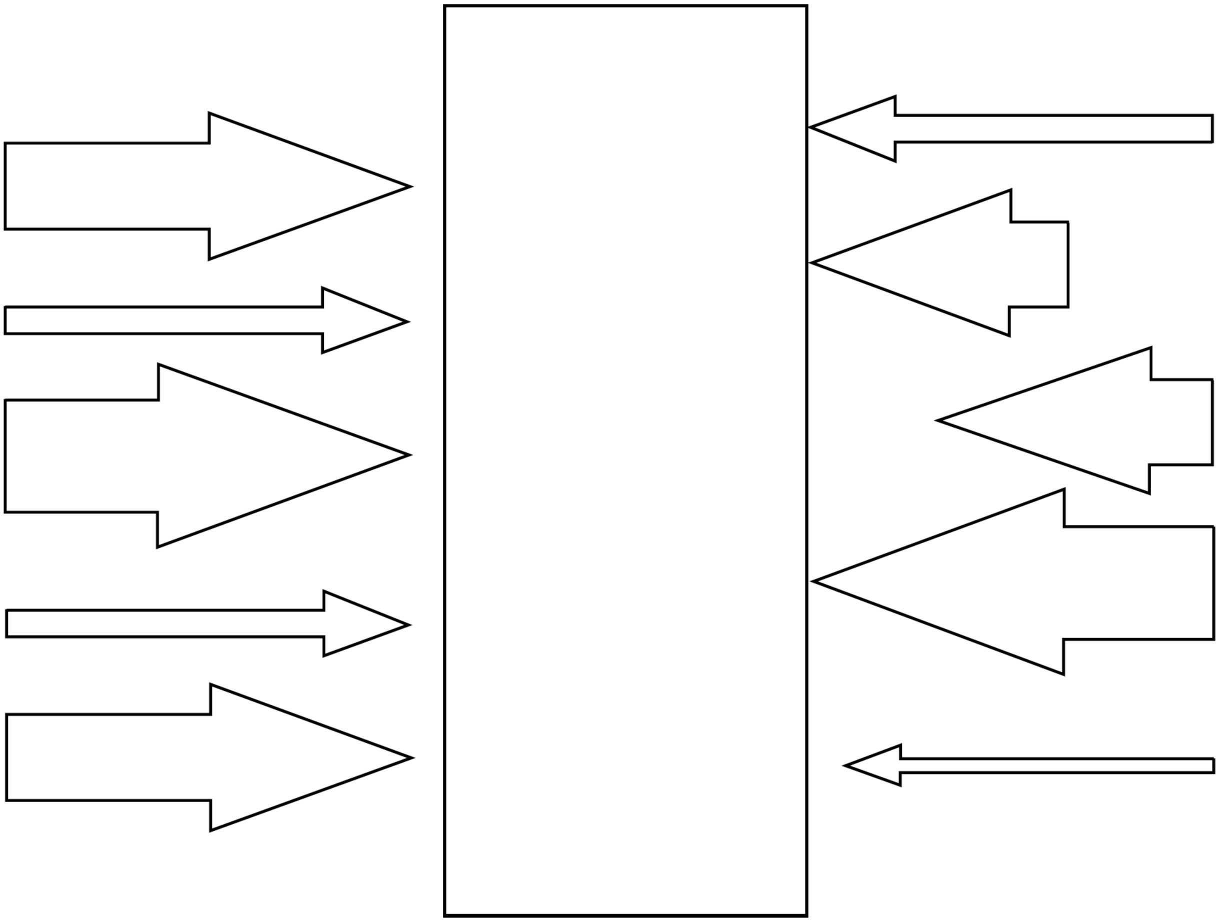


Advocacy Evaluation Activity

Complete your own Force Field Analysis:

- Clearly state your purpose, aim and objectives
- Identify who and/ or what are the driving forces?
- Identify who and/or what are the restraining forces?

- Place the driving/restraining forces you have identified in the larger/smaller arrows depending on how you estimate their importance.
- When you have completed analysis you can begin to plan to use the driving forces and deal with/negate the restraining forces to support your work.



Analyzing Evaluation Results

Don't get too focused on the numbers! The objective here is to identify organizational strengths and weaknesses, where to build disability advocacy capacity, and understand the range of disability-related advocacy competencies – not to get the highest score.

For the indicators in which you are the strongest – i.e., you have the highest scores – think about the following:

- Why are you strong in this area? Because you have invested in it? Because current staff have strong capacity? Because it's simply been your organization's tradition or habit?
- What has it taken to build your capacity in these areas and what has been the benefit?
- Are there other ways that you might take advantage of this strength?

- Is this area critical to your future advocacy work? If so, what do you need to do to sustain your capacity in this area?

For the indicators in which you are the weakest – i.e., you have the lowest scores –think about the following:

- Why are you weak in this area?
- Because you have not considered it before?
- Because you are primarily relying on partners?
- Because it's less critical to the success of your advocacy work?
- Because you have not had the resources to invest in building this capacity?
- Because others in your community (whether geographic or issue-area) are doing this work?
- Will strengthening your capacity in this area help you accomplish your current advocacy goals and objectives? If so, how? Which measures are most important to strengthen to benefit your efforts?
- Is this area critical to your future advocacy work?
- Should you now make a strategic choice to invest in this area? If so, which measures should you focus on improving?
- Should you do more work with partners in this area
- What would it take to build your capacity in this area?

Outcomes, Definitions and Example Indicators

The table below includes a list of outcomes that follow disability advocacy efforts. Definitions and example indicators are aligned to each outcome.

Outcomes	Definition	Example Indicators
Changed Attitudes or Beliefs	Target key stakeholders' feelings or affect about an issue or policy proposal.	• Percentage of key stakeholders with favorable attitudes toward the issue or interest • Percentage of key stakeholders saying issue is important to them
Collaborative Active Participation Among Partners	Individuals or groups coordinating their work and acting together.	• New organizations signing on as collaborators • Advocacy agenda alignment among collaborators • Collaborative active participation taken among Dubai organizations (e.g., joint meetings, aligning of messages)
Increased Advocacy Capacity	The ability of an organization or coalition to lead, adapt, manage, and technically implement	• Increased knowledge about advocacy, mobilizing, or organizing tactics • Improved media skills and contacts • Increased ability to get and use data

	an advocacy strategy.	
Increased Knowledge	Key stakeholder recognition that a problem exists or familiarity with a policy proposal.	• Percentage of key stakeholders with knowledge of an issue •Website activity for portions of website with advocacy-related information
Increased or Improved Media Coverage	Quantity and/or quality of coverage generated in print, broadcast, or electronic media.	• Number of media citations of advocate research or products • Number of stories successfully placed in the media (e.g., op-eds) • Number of advocate (or trained spokesperson) citations in the media • Number of media articles reflecting preferred issue framing
Increased Political Will or Support	Willingness of policymakers to act in support of an issue or policy proposal.	• Number of citations of advocate products or ideas in Dubai policy deliberations • Number of elected officials who publicly support the advocacy effort • Number of issue mentions in policymaker speeches (or debates) • Number and party representation of bill sponsors and co-sponsors • Number of votes for or against specific legislation
Increased Public Will or Support	Willingness of a (non-policymaker) target key stakeholders to act in support of an issue or policy proposal.	• Percentage of key stakeholders willing to take active participation on behalf of a specific issue • Attendance at advocacy events (e.g., public forums, marches, rallies)
New Political Champions	High-profile individuals who adopt an issue and publicly advocate for it.	• New champions or stakeholders recruited • New constituencies represented among champions • Champion active participation to support issue (e.g., speaking out, signing on)
Stronger Coalitions	Mutually beneficial relationships with other Dubai organizations or individuals who support or participate in an advocacy strategy.	• Number, type, and/or strength of organizational relationships developed • Number, type, and/or strength of relationships with unlikely partners
Successful Mobilization of Public Voices	Increase in the number of individuals who can be counted on for sustained advocacy or active participation on an issue.	• New advocates recruited • New constituencies represented among advocates • New advocate active participation to support issue

Advocacy Case Example

The Problem

Significant challenges exist in developing a systematic approach to disability advocacy in the setting of an unforeseen disaster. While the role of the disability advocate can be one of overcoming opposition to change, doing so in an international context, in a situation of dramatic human loss, precipitous social change, and multiple competing needs, can present particularly difficult decisions and ethical dilemmas. This case example describes the experience of transnational team members of an international disability organization who used an initial emergency response after the 2010 Haiti earthquake to advocate for immediate mental health care along with greater organizational commitment and a national planning effort for long-term mental health services for people with psychiatric disabilities.

The Context

Zanmi Lasante (ZL), founded in 1983, provides disability-related services in Haiti's Central Plateau and Artibonite Valley with a staff of approximately 5,000 providers, including 2,500 Community Health Workers (CHWs) through 11 hospitals in partnership with the Haitian Ministry of Health (also known as Ministere de la Sante Publique et de la Population, or MSPP). For more than 25 years, ZL has collaborated with Partners in Health (PIH), an international disability/health care organization founded in Haiti in 1987 and based in Boston that works in 12 countries. PIH works to strengthen collaboration between nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and local public systems in order to facilitate sustainable approaches and local disability-related capacity building. In January 2010, a major earthquake struck Haiti crumbling the city of Port-au-Prince and causing massive casualties. PIH's experience in disability service delivery and program implementation in Haiti enabled it to be among the first responders to the crises following the earthquake. Prior to the earthquake the ZL mental health programs were developed to focus primarily on socioeconomic, educational, and psychological needs of children and families affected by HIV/AIDS and tuberculosis; these served as a platform upon which to expand dedicated mental health services following the disaster. With regard to mental health, PIH had only a nascent program.

Advocacy Efforts

In the weeks following the earthquake, a small group comprised of Haitian and U.S. nationals within the organization began to advocate both within and outside the organization for mounting a sustained mental health service response to the disaster. Immediate linkages were made with like-minded organizations in Haiti that had some experience. In the first month following the earthquake initial needs assessments were completed, including surveys of current disability-related services within and outside of ZL and through meetings with Haitian mental health service leaders. A month after the earthquake, representatives of that team met with the Minister of Health for Haiti, facilitated by PIH's medical director. At that meeting the Minister acknowledged that the mental health needs of people with psychiatric disabilities had been neglected prior to the earthquake, and requested the organization's support in developing a national mental health response to the disaster. The team proposed an effort by which the organization would use an initial organizational response as a foundation for a sustained, longer-term organizational commitment to development of mental health services, and for the development of a model community-based mental health care structure that would be shared with the Ministry, as part of a broader planning effort organized and led by the Ministry.

The team advocated internally for a significantly increased commitment to mental health services for people with psychiatric disabilities. This included initial lobbying of the organization's leadership, and external advocacy to foundations for start-up support of services. PIH added a new Boston-based mental health director, disability case workers, and rehabilitation counselors to support the Haitian team. In the 6 months following the earthquake, PIH/ZL expanded capacity to deliver mental health services to people with psychiatric disabilities through its programs by hiring additional staff and bringing staffing numbers to 17 psychologists (from three) and 50 social workers and rehabilitation counselors (from 20).

The team understood that building mental health systems of care in Haiti in the context of the disaster would require a systematic, integrated, evidence-based, and multi-sectoral approach, as well as cooperation and expertise beyond what any one organization, institution, or government could provide. In the weeks after the earthquake, PIH/ZL began meeting biweekly in Port-au-Prince with representatives from other organizations in the United Nations cluster group process to plan and strategize. In collaboration with MSPP, the World Health Organization, and the Pan-American Health Organization (PAHO), PIH/ZL worked with other organizations to encourage a process that would lead to the drafting of a national plan for decentralized mental health services. Early in the process PIH/ZL offered the group some suggestions for the care pathways upon which a national mental health plan could potentially be developed.

Following PIH/ZL's increased service commitment, they teamed up with people with psychiatric disabilities who benefited from mental health care. Alongside clinicians, people with psychiatric disabilities advocated for the importance of these services by speaking openly about their positive service and program-based experiences in the community. People with preexisting psychiatric disabilities prior to the earthquake who received care spoke about how it helped them to reintegrate into meaningful community activities such as church, work, and school. The improvement of their social functioning reduced stigma and informed not only members of the community but also disability service professionals, most of whom had never received formal mental health training. Efforts by the PIH communications team to share the stories of these people with psychiatric disabilities in a non-stigmatizing way raised awareness within and beyond the organization's administrative structure about the initial successes of mental health care delivered by PIH/ZL.

By six months after the earthquake a proposal was developed for a systematic, collaborative process leading to the development of a scalable model for development of safe, effective, community-based, and culturally sound mental health services in the ZL system. This proposal was presented to potential funders, with a clear programmatic financial commitment having already been made by PIH/ZL to mental health service delivery. PIH leaders were recruited to advocate for foundational support toward this endeavor. Despite the limited human resource capacity of the mental health team, within a year after the earthquake several psychiatric disability-related academic publications and research proposals had been developed and submitted.

The Results

At one and one-half years after the earthquake, ZL staff had provided approximately 20,000 individual services for people with psychiatric disabilities. Buy-in of organizational leadership permitted the formal integration of mental health into the health system strengthening the mission of the organization, now with the ZL and PIH Mental Health programs having their own structures and dedicated budgets.

Initial public and private grant support was obtained through active engagement with the PIH development and communications teams, and organizations expressing interest in post-earthquake mental health services. The Digicel Foundation and One-x-One provided support for the systems-building proposal, which integrated the collective strengths of a Haiti-based NGO (ZL), a social science research group (the Interuniversity Institute for Research and Development, INURED), MSPP, and several U.S.-based academic medical centers. As a result, a qualitative study of local beliefs and perceived needs in the community was completed, leading to the creation of a screening tool for mental disorders for use by CHWs. Through dedicated foundational support and internal financial commitments, a stepped care model for psychiatric disability services with articulation of provider tasks along a continuum of care is being developed, with accompanying treatment algorithms, decision supports, training and curriculum products, outcomes measurement tools, and provision of long-term planning support to MSPP. In October 2016, MSPP and ZL/PIH observed World Mental Health Day under the banner “With a clear mind, your body is stronger (Ak tet kle ko a pi djanm).”

Practice Makes Perfect

Although this toolkit provides best practices for disability advocacy, some elements require multiple opportunities for practice and reflection. The elements listed below will be practiced and reflected upon within an interactive small group format during the training.

- Consider a disability-related advocacy issue that interests you. Who are the main constituents? Who are the other stakeholders? What outcomes would be desirable and how will you know when you have achieved them? What are the obstacles you can think of? In other words, why has this issue not moved forward already?
- Engage and persuade a decision maker: Practice the “elevator talk” by delivering your argument out loud for a given disability-related cause in under two minutes.
- Create a media pitch: Develop three metaphors, analogies, or interesting facts that you can use to convey the importance of a given disability-related cause.
- Write a problem definition/summary on a disability-related issue that you are interested in. Make a list of potential alliance partners to work on that problem.

- Imagine the research findings you would like to have in hand to advocate for a disability-related cause of interest to you. What student would be ideal to conduct in order to reach that conclusion?
- Choose a disability-related issue that really resonates with you and develop a “fact sheet,” using research evidence to support your position.
- Choose a research article, either a qualitative or quantitative study, and write a “story” using the findings of the study. Discuss with your colleagues whether or not the story was helpful in understanding the findings within the context of advocacy activities/outcomes.

Toolkit Take-Away Points

- Develop good communication skills by thinking out clearly what your expectations are.
- Be clear and specific about what you want or are requesting.
- Know what the possible consequences may be.
- Do not be unreasonable. You need to give as well as take.
- See the other side of the situation and keep your sense of humor.
- Contact people in agencies for help and information.
- Keep a notebook of whom you called, what you talked about or wrote to them about and when you talked or wrote to them.
- Build and maintain good relationships with others who work directly with you.
- Be positive, even when you have a complaint, present it in a polite, constructive, assertive manner.
- Get to know people who work in a broad range of organizations; such as secretaries, service providers, and administrative assistants and administrators.
- Advocacy is a cycle; there is no end to the process.

Self-Advocacy Supplement

Although this toolkit focuses on broader systemic disability-related advocacy, this supplemental section describes the important and related topic of self-advocacy. Self-advocacy refers to people with disabilities taking control of their own lives, including being in charge of their own care in the educational, employment, independent living, and health care decisions. The self-advocacy movement is (in basic terms) about people with disabilities speaking up for themselves. It means that although a person with a disability may call upon the support of others, the individual is entitled to be in control of their own resources and how these are directed. It is about having the right to make life decisions without undue influence or control by others. The self-advocacy movement seeks to reduce the isolation of people with disabilities and give them the tools and experience to take greater control over their own lives.

Self-advocacy is built on the principles of self-determination:

1. Freedom to plan a real life: The ability for a person with a disability, along with freely chosen family and friends, to plan their own lives, with necessary support, rather than purchase a program.

2. Authority over resources: The ability of a person with a disability to control a certain sum of money in order to purchase support.
3. Support for building a life in your community: The arranging of resources and personnel both formal and informal that will assist a person with a disability to live a life in the community that is rich in social associations and contributions.
4. Responsibility to give back to your community: The acceptance of a valued role in a person's community through competitive employment, organizational affiliations, and general caring for others in the community, as well as accountability for spending public money in ways that are life enhancing for persons with disabilities.

In basic terms, self-determination is:

- Having a choice
- Knowing more about yourselves
- Having dreams and goals and going after them
- Being in control
- Making your own decisions

Redefining the Problem

The self-advocacy movement has redefined the “disability problem” as being less about rehabilitation and more about equality. Society said that people with disabilities must change to fit into society; they have said, “No, it is society that must change its attitudes and practices and accept us”. One way that self-advocates have redefined the “disability problem” is through reclaiming the language used to describe them. If disability is important in describing someone, it should be secondary to the person. Rather than “disabled people”, self-advocates prefer “people with disabilities”.

Like other civil rights movements, the self-advocacy movement (through many independent groups) has identified issues and developed strategies for creating change. The following is a sample of issues pursued by self-advocacy groups:

- Closing institutions;
- Creating legislation to prevent abuse in group homes and large public institutions;
- Changing stereotypes of disability;
- Changing the criminal justice system to protect people with disabilities;
- Receiving real pay for underpaid employees;
- Demanding “real” health care and real jobs;
- Increasing membership in local civic groups;
- Creating inclusive public schools.

Glossary

Advocacy: A combination of individual and social active participation designed to gain political commitment, policy support, social acceptance and systems support for a particular disability-related goal or program.

Capacity: all of the resources available to an organization, service or community including people, money, equipment, expertise, skills and information.

Collaboration: A process through which parties who see different aspects of a problem can explore constructively their differences and search for (and implement) solutions that go beyond their own limited vision of what is possible. Collaboration is a mechanism for leveraging resources; dealing with scarcities; eliminating duplication; capitalizing on individual strengths; building internal capacities; and increasing participation and ownership strengthened by the potential for synergy and greater impact.

Community: Group of people living or working in a geographically defined area (geographical community) or who have a characteristic, cause, need or experience in common (community of interest).

Community development: The process of enabling or empowering people to actively work for social change which will improve the quality of their lives, the community in which they live and/or the society of which they are a part. It is a collective process that recognizes the interdependence of people. It helps people to identify and articulate their needs and influence the decision- making structures that affect them, their communities and wider society.

Community involvement: Entails both consultation and participation, with local people participating in the development of policies to improve the disability-related access and inclusion within their community as well as having a say in the prioritizing, planning and delivery of services.

Community organizing: Educating and mobilizing individuals to influence disability-related public policy.

Competencies: The knowledge and skills needed to undertake disability advocacy.

Consultation: Canvassing the views of stakeholders and clients in the process of developing sound public policy or active participation. Public consultation is part of, but not necessarily the same as, public involvement.

Empowerment: A process through which individuals and/or groups are able to express their needs, present their concerns, devise strategies for involvement in decision-making, and achieve political, social and cultural active participation to meet those needs.

Environment: The circumstances or conditions that surround us. The complex of social and cultural conditions affecting the nature of an individual or community.

Equality: The degree to which a resource is equally distributed.

Equity: Refers to how fairly resources are distributed among people. Initiatives to address disability access and inclusion try to distribute resources, opportunities, access, etc, fairly (according to need) but not necessarily equally.

Evaluation: Assessing whether an advocacy effort or intervention achieves its aims. Process evaluation is an ongoing examination of the processes, activities, methods of planning and implementation of an intervention and includes advocacy quality and cost effectiveness. Impact evaluation measures the immediate or midterm effects of an advocacy effort or intervention. Outcome evaluation is an assessment of the long-term effects of an advocacy effort or intervention or some aspect of an intervention.

Evidence base: The best current research information available based on a systematic analysis of the effectiveness of a disability-related topic, service, or any other intervention in order to produce the best outcome, result, or effect.

Facilitative leadership: A facilitative decision making style which indicates a joint effort between leaders and staff, with both providing input to make a shared decision. It is important that all have access to the information required to make the decision and should also have some degree of expertise and/or motivation to ensure the best decision is made.

Grassroots Lobbying: A communication with the general public that reflects a view on specific disability-related legislation and includes a call to active participation that encourages people to contact their legislative representatives or staff in order influence that legislation.

Issue advocacy: An organization communicating positions on issues of social, economic or philosophical concern that are related to the organization's charitable or exempt purposes. The term is commonly used to mean all policy-related activities that are not intended to intervene in an election for or against a candidate for public office.

Legislative advocacy: Efforts to change policy through the legislative branch of government. This may include lobbying or other communications with the legislative branch that do not meet the definition of lobbying.

Lobby: To try to influence those with power to take a certain active participation.

Model: A way of showing different parts of complex ideas and how they relate to each other. In the toolkit the model shows the links between the processes, steps and tasks required to undertake advocacy for disability-related topics.

Monitor: Collecting and reviewing relevant information to find out if the targets/outputs specified have been met.

Network: A grouping of individuals, organizations and agencies organized on a non-hierarchical basis around common issues or concerns, which are pursued proactively and systematically, based on commitment and trust.

Participation: Having the opportunity to fully contribute to, and share in the decision making process.

Partnership: A partnership is a voluntary agreement between two or more partners to work cooperatively towards a set of shared disability-related outcomes.

Stakeholders: People who have an interest in disability-related organizations, project or activities, e.g. self-advocates, families, partners, and employees, shareholders, the Government, the voluntary sector, local government, schools and businesses.

Strategic leadership: Involves the ability to anticipate, envision, maintain flexibility, and empower others to create strategic change and multi-functional work that involves working through others.

Team: A group that works in collaboration to achieve a disability-related objective or goal. The necessary qualities of a successful team are clear understanding by every member of the roles and functions of all members, harmony, mutual support, and ideally, capacity for individual team members to assume other roles and responsibilities when unusual circumstances make this necessary.

Values: The beliefs, traditions, social customs held dear and honored by individuals and society collectively. They include beliefs about the sanctity of citizenship and the role of families in society.

Appendix

Priority Disability Advocacy Issue

Disability Advocacy Goal Framework

Disability Partner Tracker

Messages Log

Disability Advocacy Activity Plan

Learning and Improving Items

Notes

DUBAI ADVOCACY TOOLKIT - APPENDIX

Print this Appendix out to complete as you work through the toolkit.

PRIORITY DISABILITY ADVOCACY ISSUE

PRIORITY ADVOCACY ISSUE	

DISABILITY ADVOCACY GOAL FRAMEWORK

GOAL	
OBJECTIVES	***OBJECTIVE 1:*** ***OBJECTIVE 2:*** ***OBJECTIVE 3:***
INDICATORS & EVIDENCE NEEDED	****** Re-visit this throughout your project to add updates *****

*** Re-visit this throughout your project to add updates ***

DISABILITY PARTNER TRACKER

PARTNER Name, organization, etc.	**AREA FOR COLLABORATION** e.g. political or media connections, technical expertise, resources or funding, connection to those affected by your issue	**CONTACT INFORMATION** Phone, email, address, etc.	**TRACKING COMMUNICATION** Notes on how our partnership is progressing, important things to take forward so that we can build the relationship, etc.

Feel free to continue this table on another sheet of paper if you have identified more partners that you'd like to build a network with...

*** Re-visit this throughout your project to add updates ***

MESSAGES LOG

TARGET	APPROACH	TAILORED MESSAGES

Feel free to continue this table on another sheet of paper if you have identified more targets to create messages for...

*** Re-visit this throughout your project to add updates ***

DISABILITY ADVOCACY ACTIVITY PLAN

	TARGET	DATE	RESOURCES
OBJECTIVE 1			
OBJECTIVE 1			
OBJECTIVE 1			

** Re-visit this throughout your project to add updates **

LEARNING AND IMPROVING ITEMS

STOP

What didn't work so well that we should consider stopping in the future, and why?

CONTINUE

What worked well that we could continue to do in future?

START

What could we start doing to improve?

NOTES