4 Monitoring and evaluating advocacy and campaigns

Duration: 2 hours

Introduction

This session looks at how to monitor and evaluate advocacy and learn from our experiences. It explores some of the challenges inherent in monitoring and evaluating (M&E) advocacy work, and the approaches that can be used. You will learn how to develop a Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning (MEAL) framework for advocacy, how to construct advocacy objectives and indicators and what types of evidence and data to collect. Finally, the session explains the purpose of the Save the Children-wide Advocacy Monitoring Tool (AMT), and how to use it. The session has a number of activities that you might consider doing together with an M&E specialist.

Learning Outcomes for this session

Knowledge and understanding

When you have studied this session, you should be able to:

1. Recognise the importance of monitoring and evaluation to achieving your goals.

2. Understand challenges and approaches to monitoring and evaluating advocacy work.

3. Understand the principles of designing a MEAL framework for advocacy, including setting objectives, and identifying appropriate indicators, data sources and collection methods.

Professional and practical skills

When you have studied this session, you should be able to:

4. Develop a basic MEAL framework for your advocacy

5. Use the Advocacy Monitoring Tool (AMT) to report on your advocacy efforts.

Duration: 2 hours

1 How can we monitor and evaluate advocacy?

Why is monitoring and evaluating advocacy important?

Monitoring and evaluating advocacy is important for performance management, learning and accountability. It enables you to understand what factors and approaches lead to change, helps you improve your advocacy strategies, and enables you to be accountable to donors and internal and external stakeholders.

Ongoing monitoring and real-time information gathering are particularly important for advocacy as political opportunities can change quickly, requiring you to react and 'course correct' your strategy swiftly.

Advocacy evaluation can also help donors understand the complexity of policy change and manage expectations about what grantees can accomplish in what timeframes.

You should consider monitoring and evaluation when you are planning an advocacy strategy. This will ensure that everyone working on the strategy has a shared understanding of what your strategy is trying to achieve and how success will be measured and documented.

Who is responsible for monitoring advocacy?

Advocates and campaigners are responsible for the day-to-day M&E of an advocacy initiative, such as documenting their activities and monitoring evidence of changes in the policy environment. M&E specialists can help advocates develop advocacy Monitoring Evaluation, Accountability and Learning (MEAL) frameworks, advise on data collection methods and tools, and ask critical questions to assess the strength of evidence about an advocacy initiative's contribution to policy change.

Activity 1 M&E challenges

Thinking about your work as an advocate or a campaigner, what unique challenges do you see in monitoring and evaluating advocacy? Please take 3–5 minutes to write down some thoughts. You might consider doing this exercise together with an M&E person from your office.

Comment

Please read on to learn more about some of the challenges of advocacy M&E. Were the challenges you identified different from the challenges outlined in the next section? If you conducted the exercise together with an M&E specialist, were the challenges they identified different from yours?

What are some of the challenges in monitoring and evaluating advocacy?

As an advocate or a campaigner, you know that advocacy initiatives are typically complex, and involve a number of players, often working in coalition. The policy process is influenced by many factors and influences, many of which are beyond our control. Advocacy strategies are rarely static and typically evolve over time. Strategies and objectives can shift quickly depending on changes in political opportunities.

Policy change is also a long-term process. Accordingly, advocacy initiatives often take place over long periods of time, and policy changes may only become apparent after an advocacy initiative has ended.

Decision makers, who are usually the direct targets of our advocacy work, can be our adversaries in some cases. This can have implications for data collection, and gaining honest feedback from policy makers. We will explore these challenges in the following sections.

Links between policy-influencing activities and policy changes

Policy change is a highly complex process shaped by many interacting forces and actors. The nature of advocacy work also means that we often aim to work in partnership with others, as this is a more sustainable way of creating change. The main challenge in evaluating advocacy interventions is that we often will not know for sure that our actions **caused** a policy change. We can track our own activities and we can also track changes in the decisions taken by policy makers. However, knowing how far to **attribute change** to our activities can be difficult.

Proving **attribution** (i.e. to what extent we caused the policy change) is challenging, in part, due to the difficulty of constructing robust counter-factuals, the state of the world in the absence of the intervention. Because of this, is difficult to prove that a policy change occurred primarily or exclusively as a result of a specific organisation's work. For this reason, we generally try to identify how we '**contributed**', i.e. how an advocacy initiative helped or influenced (along with other factors and actors) to achieve a policy change.

Getting honest feedback from advocacy targets

Decision makers, who are the main targets of our advocacy, may not be willing to make honest judgements about the factors shaping their policy choices. This is why it is often difficult to get honest feedback from policy makers about the effectiveness of our advocacy work. In certain instances decision makers may also be our adversaries, making data collection even more difficult. Overall, judging the degree of your influence over a policy decision involves a large element of subjectivity, and different stakeholders may have very different perceptions about what constitutes influence and how significant it was (Jones, 2011).

Activity 2 Addressing the challenges

Please take 3–5 minutes to think about how you would address the challenges outlined above if you had to monitor and evaluate an advocacy initiative.

Comment

We have provided some solutions in the following section. Did you think of any other solutions?

Solutions: how we can monitor and measure advocacy

Track and measure intermediate outcomes

At the start of this section we explained that policy change takes a long time and may become apparent only after the advocacy initiative has ended. Equally, advocacy initiatives do not often achieve exactly what they intended to achieve. For instance, you may have not achieved the budget change you advocated for, but you might have built some key relationships with the Ministry of Finance and built the capacity of other civil society organisations (CSOs) to do budget tracking.

As the process of influencing policy change and translating policies into practice can be a very long and iterative one, it is important that we document incremental progress towards our advocacy objectives to ensure that we are moving in the right direction. In order to measure progress towards your final advocacy objectives and assess what you have achieved on the way, you need to define, track and measure intermediate outcomes. Examples of these are described in Table 1 (overleaf).

Table 1 Long-term and intermediate outcomes for advocacy

Examples of long-term and intermediate outcomes to monitor in advocacy	
Long-term outcomes	Tipping points • Change in policy • Change in legislation • Budgetary commitments • Implementation of commitments
Intermediate outcomes	Coalition building • New or stronger networks • More effective network
	Shaping the policy agenda • Changes in oral and written rhetoric • New items appear in political discussions • Items are framed in new ways within policy arguments • Coverage of issue in the media
	Influencing policy maker attitudes and behaviour • Key decision makers change rhetoric in public and in private • Key decision makers change knowledge, attitudes and behaviours
	Building a social movement • Communities acquire new information • Communities change attitudes • Communities change behaviours Communities acquire a new strength within democratic processes (voting, speaking to their MP, getting involved in decision-making processes)

Adapted from Stachowiak (2007)

Document your activities and collect multiple sources of evidence

Even if it is hard to establish absolute scientific evidence that our advocacy intervention influenced a policy change, there are things that you can do to get around this challenge. It is important that you document your activities on an ongoing basis and collect evidence of the policy changes they may have inspired. As much as possible, you should aim to collect multiple sources of evidence (anecdotal, documentary and evidence from different sources) to build a credible evidence base to support your judgements of influence.

Ongoing monitoring and real-time evidence gathering are particularly important for your advocacy strategy. Political opportunities are changeable, requiring you to react and 'course correct' your strategy swiftly.

Use policy experts as sources of information

You may find it challenging to get 'honest' evidence from your direct advocacy targets about the factors shaping their choices. One solution could be to try to consult other policy experts or 'bellwethers' who are not directly linked to the policy process that you are engaging in. Bellwethers are knowledgeable thought leaders whose opinions about policy issues carry substantial weight and predictive value in the policy agenda, and who know the issue and context well (Harvard Family Research Project, 2007).

The 'bellwether' methodology provides information about an advocacy strategy's success to date and information for shaping its future strategy. The method was developed to determine where a policy issue or proposal is positioned on the policy agenda, how decision-makers and other influential actors think and talk about it, how likely they are to act on it, and how effectively advocates have increased an issue's visibility (Harvard Family Research Project, 2007).

Measure contribution

As discussed above, there are challenges in attributing policy changes directly to our advocacy work and we can only realistically measure the extent to which we contributed to or influenced a policy change. The evidence you collect will help you or an external evaluator assess your contribution to the policy outcomes.

Contribution analysis assesses the contribution an intervention made to observed outcomes that were achieved. It involves identifying the specific role that you played and the contribution you made. This is also important if you worked in a coalition or a network. Alternative explanations for what may have caused the policy change should also be assessed, and the evidence supporting these explanations weighed up.

Good contribution analysis is often a comprehensive evaluation process that takes time and resources. If you are having difficulties in collecting all the necessary information yourself, or coming up with alternative explanations, or if different lines of evidence point in different directions, an external evaluator can help you to answer the contribution question (Mayne, 1999).

To enable us to conclude that an advocacy initiative has influenced a policy decision, we would need a 'credible performance story'. Such a story would include:

- a well-articulated presentation of the advocacy initiative's/campaign's context and its aims

- a plausible theory for how the policy change happened

- evidence that there is an association between the advocacy initiative's activities and the outcomes that have been achieved

- an explanation of how the alternative explanations (for the outcomes came about), have been ruled out or had a limited influence (Mayne,1999).

If you are interested in reading more about advocacy evaluations, please see Session 7 'Evaluations and baselines' in the Evaluation Monitoring course, which provides further resources on advocacy evaluation and contribution analysis.

2 How to design a MEAL framework for advocacy

The following section will help you understand good principles of a MEAL framework for advocacy and demonstrate how to design one. A MEAL framework sets out the results you are working towards, the indicators you will track, and the information you will collect to monitor progress. If you follow this approach and track your work on an ongoing basis, you will have information about your progress at your fingertips. The annual Advocacy Monitoring Tool (AMT) reporting process will also be much easier.

If you are interested in reading more generally about MEAL plans, please see Session 4 'MEAL planning and budgeting' in the Monitoring and Evaluation course

The first step is to work out what your work is trying to achieve, and set your objectives (see Session 3 'Planning your advocacy strategy').

> The government increases investment in
> maternal and child health to 30% of the annual heath budget by
> 2015

Figure 1 A SMART advocacy objective

Define your long-term and intermediate outcomes

Long-term outcomes are what you need to see before your advocacy objective is achieved. These could be changes in the content and procedures of existing or new policies. You should define, track and measure intermediate outcomes (e.g. changes in decision maker knowledge, behaviour and attitudes, media coverage, etc.) to assess your progress towards your long-term objectives.

Intermediate outcomes can be regarded as progress markers or milestones that you need to reach before long-term outcomes are achieved. These might be strengthened relationships with policy makers or the establishment of a network of community-based advocates or a CSO coalition. Table1 'Long-term and intermediate outcomes for advocacy' above gives you some examples.

Activity 3 Defining outcomes

Using the principles above, define a couple of long-term and intermediate outcomes that you would need to reach before achieving a long-term objective. (You can use the SMART advocacy objective example above or your own.)

Choose your indicators

After you have defined your objectives and outcomes, you should set indicators to measure them. Indicators are the keys to knowing that you are making measurable progress towards desired results. If you are interested in reading more generally about setting indicators, please refer to Session 5 'Objectives and indicators' in the Monitoring and Evaluation course.

Advocacy indicators can be defined at different levels of results (**process, output, and outcome**). Advocacy indicators are often qualitative, i.e. people's judgements or perceptions about a subject, or measure commitments made or changes in the attitudes and behaviours of decision makers. These are harder to measure in a robust way than quantitative indicators

and are context-specific (i.e. one indicator may be relevant in a particular context, but not in another). In general, using a combination of quantitative and qualitative indicators will enable you to assess your progress more fully. Table 2 outlines examples of advocacy indicators.

Table 2 Examples of advocacy indicators

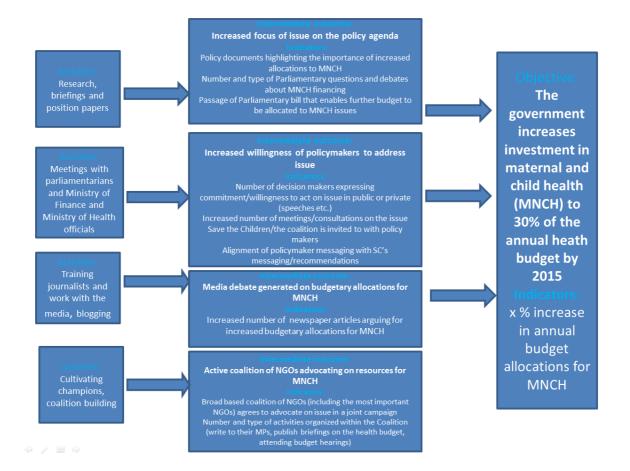| Indicator	What the indicator measures	Example
Process/ output	Assess progress against specific operational activities; measure and verify the quantity of outputs	• Number of meetings held with policy makers • Number of people trained • Number of people you contacted with a certain advocacy/campaign message • Number of people who took action in a campaign
Outcome	Measure changes in the medium to longer term; assess progress against specified outcomes, such as policy and funding changes, policy maker attitudes; and help verify that the change has taken place	• **Intermediate outcomes:** • Number and type of supportive communications and statements made by policy makers • Number and type of meetings and consultations advocates are invited to • Number and type of action taken by local NGOS/NGO coalitions to track budgets, publish the results and discuss these with policy makers • Number and type of action taken by local citizens to attend local authority meetings and voice their concerns about government services **Long-term outcomes:** • Policy is passed or a law is ratified • Level of financial resources in the budget for an issue • Extent to which issues that you advocated for are prioritised in a new policy

You need to choose indicators that are meaningful in your context, and decide how many levels of results you need to define them for. Although it is ideal to define SMART indicators, this is often more difficult in advocacy initiatives, where the pathway to change is less certain. Therefore, you should choose indicators that reflect the broad areas of change that you are working towards. You will also need to consider whether you will be able to collect information on an indicator and when this data will be available. Further resources on advocacy indicators can be found at end of this document.

Activity 4 Choosing indicators

Based on the SMART advocacy objective above and the intermediate outcomes you suggested in Activity 3, please choose indicators (as many as you think are necessary to adequately measure the outcomes) to monitor progress towards these.

Comment

Figure 2 'Causal chain for advocacy' provides examples of intermediate outcomes and indicators for an advocacy initiative working to influence the government to increase budgetary allocations to maternal and child health. How did yours differ from these? (overleaf)

Choose your data collection methods

After defining your indicators, you should think about what kinds of data you will need to access to find out how far you have come towards your outcomes, and how you will collect this data. As outlined above, you need to gather evidence to understand whether your advocacy interventions influenced policy changes and to build a credible evidence base to support your claims of success.

You should use both formal and informal data collection mechanisms. For instance, records and minutes of meetings that you organise with policy makers can be used as a data source. You could scan policy makers' speeches and announcements, as well as parliamentary discussions. As far as possible, you should ensure that you are collecting multiple sources and types of data, i.e. both documentary and anecdotal evidence from different sources.

You should find out when different types of data – such as routine government data- are available to decide how often you can collect the information. Table 3 outlines a number of possible data sources, and collection and analysis methods.

If you are interested in a more in-depth discussion about general data collection methods, please refer to Session 4, 'MEAL planning and budgeting' in the Monitoring and Evaluation course

Issue	Data source and collection method
Issue prioritisation in policy documents and strategies	• Speeches, policy documents and strategies, budget documents • Textual analysis of policy documents/strategies and speeches to see whether language/advocacy that you advocated for were included
Changes in behaviours, attitudes, commitments of decision makers as reflected by anecdotes, comments, commitments made by them	• Minutes of meetings and events, speeches, parliamentary discussions • Keep a record of comments, anecdotes and feedback received from external actors in an impact log. These comments and reactions can be gathered at meetings with decision-makers, from their speeches or statements online or at public events • Interviews and surveys with decision makers and 'bellwethers'
Debate on issue in the media	• Monitoring how many times the organisation and/or its members are mentioned in the media and how many and what kinds of articles are written on a campaign issue, quoting or referencing the organisation's messages, members or research
Social media and online debates/traffic on issue	• Facebook, blog and twitter feed analysis (numbers of Facebook likes, re-tweets on twitter, profile of those re-tweeting messages, number and type of comments on blogs, numbers of supporters joining an online campaign, etc.)

Activity 5 Data collection

Please write down what kinds of data sources and collection methods you would use to collect data on the indicators you chose to monitor in Activity 4.

Comment

In the case I've been commenting on, I thought it would be important to document communications between Save the Children and our key policy targets, as well as writing good minutes of the meetings that we attended with policy makers. As we engage with parliamentarians in our advocacy to increase the MNCH budget, I chose to monitor parliamentary discussions. I also thought it would be important to document our NGO coalition meeting minutes, statements, events and activities.

I also chose to continually monitor our target policy maker speeches, especially at key moments in the budget process, to see whether any of the language or issues that we are advocating for had been integrated.

When the new Ministry of Health strategy is launched, I will analyse it to see whether our advocacy asks have been addressed.

Because we are doing a lot of media work, I decided to monitor a couple of the key national newspapers, to see whether they started publishing an increased number of articles arguing for increased budgetary allocations for maternal and child health.

Set a baseline

After you are clear about what you want to achieve and what the indicators are, you should set the baseline. The baseline is the first measurement of an indicator that sets the current condition against which future change can be tracked. It is difficult to set targets and to measure progress robustly without a baseline.

You do not necessarily have to conduct studies to do a baseline. Setting a baseline can be as simple as doing a policy analysis and listing what the current gaps are in policies. Sources of information could be policy documents, budget documents, national statistics, and information from meetings with partners and policy makers.

Your might want to conduct a power mapping or a stakeholder analysis, which might also help set a baseline. For instance, if you are seeking to improve your collaboration with the Ministry of Health, you might record current contacts and joint activities with the Ministry.

Develop your activities and check your intervention logic

After you have set your results at different levels and defined the activities you will be conducting, you should check your intervention logic, i.e. whether it is plausible that if you do x activities and produce y medium-term outcomes, they will lead to the final outcomes that you want to achieve. Drawing a graph such as Figure 2 'Causal pathway for advocacy' above may be useful.

Finalise your MEAL framework

Activity 6 Completing the framework

When you have gone through the steps outlined above, you are ready to complete an advocacy MEAL framework. The framework below is an example, and you may also use other formats, such as a logical framework. Please complete the framework. Then please compare it with the completed example on page 18. What was different in your version?

Objective	Long-term outcomes	Long-term outcome indicators	Data collection method and source	Intermediate outcomes	Intermediate outcome indicators	Data collection method and source	Activities	Baseline

Objective	Long-term outcomes	Long-term outcome indicators	Data collection method and source	Intermediate outcomes	Intermediate outcome indicators	Data collection method and source	Activities	Baseline
The government increases investment in maternal and child health to (MNCH) to 30% of the annual heath budget by 2015	The budget for MNCH programmes in the Ministry of Health's 2013 budget increases to 15% of the total Ministry of Health budget	X% increases in budget for MNCH in the annual Ministry of Health budget New Ministry of Health strategy includes a strong focus on MNCH services (as a priority objective, increased service provision and budget) **Baseline:** Ministry of Health budget currently allocates only 10% of the annual health budget to MNCH services The Ministry of Health does not prioritise MNCH services in its strategy, particular policy gaps are immunisation of children and services to new mothers	Annual Government budget documents Government policy documents Government health and development strategies	Increased focus on need for financial investment on MNCH on the policy agenda	Passage of Parliamentary bill that enables further budget to be allocated to MNCH issues Number and type of Parliamentary questions and debates about MNCH financing Policy documents highlighting the importance of increased allocations to MNCH	Parliamentary discussions Parliamentary bills Policy documents and strategies	Research into the funding and policy and programmes gaps in MNCH services Health budget analysis Briefings and position papers Meetings and events with parliamentarians and Ministry of Finance and Ministry of Health officials Cultivating parliamentary champions	Save the Children has mapped Members of Parliament against and for increased focus on strengthened MNCH services The Parliament has not discussed these issues even once in 2012
	New Ministry of Health Strategic Plan priority objectives focus on increasing the quality and scope of MNCH services and are backed up by a costing and an action plan			Increased support to issue from policymakers	Increased number of meetings/consultations on the issue that Save the Children/the coalition is invited to with policy makers Number of decision makers expressing commitment/willingness to act on issue in public or private (speeches, etc.) Level of alignment of policymaker messaging with SC's messaging/recommendations	Meeting invitations, reports and minutes Policymaker speeches Policy documents and strategies	Research into the funding and policy and programmes gaps in MNCH services Health budget analysis Briefings and position papers Cultivating policy champions Meetings and events with parliamentarians and Ministry of Finance and Ministry of Health officials	Save the Children has mapped those policy makers in the Ministry of Health against and for increased focus on strengthened MNCH services Save the Children does not have relationships with the budget team in the Ministry of Health or the Ministry of Finance, and has not been previously invited to strategy consultation meetings
				Media debate generated on budgetary allocations for MNCH	Increased number of articles in newspapers arguing for increased budgetary allocations for maternal and child health	Newspapers Websites Blogs	Cultivating celebrity champions Training journalists on MNCH issues and gaps	The main national newspapers only had two articles addressing maternal and child health in the country in 2013, and

					Increased number of favourable comment pieces in newspapers and websites by influential people		Work with the media/press releases Blogging	these did not critique the government's MNCH services Coverage of these issues is very rare in regional newspapers
				Active coalition of NGOs advocating on resources for MNCH	Broad-based coalition of NGOs (including the most important NGOs) agrees to advocate on issue in a joint campaign Number of CSOs who write to their Members of Parliament, publish briefings on the health budget, etc. Number and type of activities jointly organised on the issue within the coalition (attending public budget hearings, etc.)	Coalition meeting minutes and reports Records of coalition statements, events and activities	Coalition building Issuing joint statements Blogging Organising events Health budget analysis Position papers	There has been no joint effort or campaign on MNCH, only two NGOs (one of them Save the Children) advocate on these issues actively

Comment

You can see that the framework I have produced has quite a number of intermediate outcomes and indicators that I have chosen to track and measure. In your country, you might choose different or fewer strategies and therefore your MEAL framework will also be much simpler. My framework can act as an example or a menu of outcomes and indicators that you might consider tracking.

Please note that a MEAL framework is a kind of a hypothesis or an assumption about how you expect change to happen in your campaign or advocacy work and what things you think will be important to track and measure.

As you know from experience, the reality on the ground may not end up reflecting exactly what is in your MEAL framework. External factors and other unexpected events can affect your activities and hinder or promote the achievement of results. The political opportunities in your country will also change on a regular basis, and may mean that you have to adjust your strategy.

It is therefore a good idea to review your strategies, periodically, reflect on the information you are collecting on a regular basis and make any changes needed to your activities, strategies and objectives, and indicators.

Data analysis and reporting

At the end, you will need to allocate roles and responsibilities in your advocacy and campaigns team for tracking, data collection and analysis.

Collecting the information is one step, but you also need to analyse the data. You need to think about what the information tells you and whether you should modify your strategies and activities.

Based on your reporting needs, you will use the information to prepare internal and donor reports, as well as the annual Advocacy Monitoring Tool (AMT). You should also agree how you will disseminate the information and in what format.

Review and reflection

Review and reflection should happen throughout your advocacy initiative. This means you should meet and share findings with your colleagues, and reflect on your progress, successes and learnings.

Evaluation

If enough time has lapsed in your advocacy initiative or campaign, and your initiative is large scale or strategically important (and you have the resources), you might consider conducting an external evaluation, either at the mid-term point or at the end.

Evaluations build on monitoring data to provide causal explanations about why and how certain intended (and unintended) policy outcomes were achieved or were not achieved. In advocacy, you would use a theory-based evaluation approach, such as contribution analysis or process tracing. You can read more about contribution analysis and process tracing by exploring the links provided at end of this document.

Session 12 'Baselines and evaluations' in the Monitoring and Evaluation course provides a more in-depth account of different types of evaluation approaches, including those for advocacy.

3 The Advocacy Monitoring Tool (AMT)

The Advocacy Monitoring Tool (AMT) is the main tool Save the Children uses to track and report on our advocacy work across all countries and members. The AMT is used for reporting policy change outcomes that were influenced by our advocacy work in different sectors at the national and/or state/provincial or district level in the previous year.

Outcomes reported in the AMT must relate to advocacy work performed by Save the Children staff either exclusively or in association or coalition with others. Work reported can also be related to advocacy undertaken by local partners or groups of children that have been supported by Save the Children. Advocacy is reported by theme and space is provided for cross cutting advocacy efforts that are not clearly linked to a specific thematic area.

Purpose of the AMT

The AMT has a number of purposes and uses:

- Documenting what kind of advocacy work we are doing
- Reflecting on what we have achieved and what strategies have been effective
- Planning and reporting
- Communicating Save the Children's work over time
- Sharing lessons learnt and best practices.

How to use the AMT

The AMT is made up of Excel worksheets with questions on the type of advocacy activities you have conducted, their results, challenges and lessons learnt. Advocacy leads are expected to complete the AMT for each of their advocacy initiatives. This is part of the annual Country Annual Reporting process, taking place in January/February every year.

Filling in the annual AMT will become much easier if you follow the process outlined in the previous sections, constructing a MEAL framework for your advocacy initiative, and routinely tracking and documenting your work and the changes it is influencing.

You can access the AMT and associated guidelines on OneNet:
https://onenet.savethechildren.net/whatwedo/me/Pages/AdvocacyMeasurementTool.aspx

Quality criteria for an AMT

A good AMT should:

- Have a SMART advocacy objective
- Make explicit which 'global' advocacy objective the work reported is linked to
- Clearly identify and explain Save the Children's role in an advocacy initiative
- Be result-orientated, attempting to analyse what milestones or intermediate outcomes have been achieved
- Analyse Save the Children's contribution to the results and provide any available evidence of this
- Clearly outline the key lessons, including the challenges and how these were addressed.

Activity 7 Assessing an AMT

Please take an example of an AMT submission from your or a country and critically assess it based on the quality criteria we have outlined above. Please answer the following questions:

1. Is the objective SMART?

2. Does the description of activities explain clearly what has happened over the past year?

3. Does the response explain Save the Children's role in the advocacy work?

4. Does the submission answer all the questions?

5. Are you aware of this work? If so, do you think the submission is an adequate description of the work?

Summary

- Ongoing monitoring and real-time information gathering is important for advocacy as political opportunities change quickly, requiring you to react and 'course correct' your strategy.
- Advocacy initiatives typically involve a number of players, the policy process is influenced by many factors and influences, and it can often be difficult to attribute advocacy successes directly to our work. To address these challenges, we need to document our activities, collect multiple sources of evidence, track incremental change towards our objectives and try to identify our contribution.
- Designing a MEAL framework for advocacy involves setting objectives and outcomes, and identifying appropriate indicators, data sources and data collection methods. The Advocacy Monitoring Tool (AMT) is Save the Children's main tool to track and report on our advocacy work across all countries and members.

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Further resources

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