Advocacy and MDG Campaigning

**Purpose**

- Increase knowledge and understanding of definitions, concepts and strategies
- Discuss examples of advocacy avenues and tools for MDGs

**Method:** Presentation

**Timing:** 45 minutes

**What you will need:** Handouts of PowerPoint slides printed out 1 set per participant.

**Suitable for:** UNCT

**When to use:** To introduce advocacy; definitions and concepts

**Note to the facilitator:**

Make the presentation interactive so you build on what participants already know and respond to their issues and concerns. The Blue Book: A hands-on approach to advocating for the Millennium Development Goals. UNDP 2004 has been used as a reference in this module.
Note that **Advocacy and Campaigning** is one of the **four** elements of the core strategy of the UN system for achieving the MDGs and has a mutually beneficial relationship with the other three elements.

The other elements are: **Monitoring**- Systematic and sustained tracking and review of progress; **Analysis**- Definition and assessment of the policy dimensions of achieving the MDGs; and **Operational activities** - Goal-driven assistance to address key constraints to progress on the MDGs.

Monitoring results need to be communicated to policy makers and other stakeholders; this will spur implementation and influence operational activities.
Working Together for Greater UN Impact

Photo: MDGR for Bhutan
Purpose

- Increase knowledge and understanding of definitions, concepts and strategies
- Discuss examples of advocacy avenues for MDGs and the tools
Tell participants what you plan to discuss.
Tell them if they may interrupt with questions or wait till the end.
If you want to have an interactive presentation/discussion (highly recommended) and build on what your audience already knows about advocacy, follow the questions in italics

Ask questions before exposing the next slide
Questions may be:
• What are your perceptions of advocacy?
• What do you understand by advocacy?
• What is advocacy?

Jot down participants responses then expose the slide Advocacy is defined as......
Advocacy is...

- An action directed at changing the policies, positions or programmes of any type of institution
- Presenting, defending or recommending an idea before other people
- Speaking up, drawing attention to an important issue and directing decision makers towards a solution
- A strategy to influence policy makers as they make laws that affect peoples lives

Advocacy is also working with other people and organizations to make a difference.

Advocacy means putting a problem on the agenda, providing a solution to that problem and building support for acting on both problem and solution. Advocacy can involve many specific, short-term activities to reach a long-term vision of change.

*Ask before exposing next slide*

*Why do advocacy?*
Why advocate?

- Create demand for action and accountability
- Reform existing policies, laws, budgets and develop new programmes
- Create more democratic open and accountable decision–making structures and processes
- Obtain broad participation and support for initiatives that affect peoples lives
- Create awareness of and build support for issues such as human rights and gender equality

In addition to what participants have suggested, these points describe why we engage in advocacy.

Next slide: In MDG work, it is necessary to educate as well as advocate, very often, at the same time, in the same campaign. The next slide examines what education and advocacy communications mean.
Can you think of an example of when education and advocacy were used together or separately.

Often, you have to educate and inform your audience before you persuade and mobilize for achieving change. This is specially true of MDG related work. This is when MDG Reports come in useful and monitoring is an integral part of the core strategy for achieving MDGs.

Information and education are needed to create a support base for MDGs; to mobilize public support for changing policies and budgets or improve programmes to make them more relevant to peoples needs.

Next slide: What is a Campaign
A campaign is

- a programme with elements of education or advocacy that is planned to have maximum effect toward a specific goal within a defined time frame.

The aim of the Millennium Campaign is:

*Increase public awareness of the MDGs and public pressure on Governments to deliver on their commitments*

What are ongoing campaigns that you are aware of? What are their goals?

Above is the goal of the Millennium campaign which is part of the strategy for achieving the MDGs.

The Millennium Campaign helps to bridge the analytic, communication and advocacy efforts of the UN system with partners, by disseminating data and analysis emerging from the substantive efforts of the UN system, such as the Secretary General's Reports, the Millennium Project and MDG country reports.

A feature of the Millennium Campaign, as with Millennium Project, is that it is sponsored by the UN system, but is not a UN entity, hence, not a part of UNDP or any other UN agency or department. This gives the Campaign greater freedom to think and act.

It also means that their statements and actions do not represent official UN policy.

The Millennium Campaign has assembled a core team to build partnerships and to mobilize constituencies including parliamentarians, government ministers, religious leaders, media, trade unions and research institutions.

*What are the avenues for advocacy that you know of? Next slide*
Advocacy avenues for MDGs

• Social mobilization - grassroots movements
• Garnering public attention - press coverage
• Working with special interest groups - women, environment, artistes
• Working on technical issues - policy analysts, academics
• Behind the scenes - lobbying high level partners

Which of these have you used?
In addition to these what advocacy avenues are you aware of that promote MDG achievement nationally?
Can you give examples that illustrate advocacy through these avenues? Which of the examples you mentioned involved education as well as advocacy?

Ask before next slide
At what levels do you apply advocacy strategies?
Applyng advocacy strategies for MDGs

- At organisational level
- Local or community
- Regional
- National
- International level or
- Personal

Do you know of any successful advocacy strategies that brought about positive changes?

Next slide:
What are some advocacy tools?
Advocacy tools and opportunities

- MDG Reports
- PRSP
- National Human Development Reports (NHDR)

What are some opportunities for advocacy in your country using these or other instruments?

What opportunities exist for advocacy using these or other instruments? Some examples?
What opportunities would you explore in the future?

Next Slide
What are the components of an effective advocacy strategy?

What opportunities exist for advocacy using these or other instruments? Some examples?
What opportunities would you explore in the future?
Key steps of an advocacy strategy or campaign

- What are the issues facing MDG’s
- Setting an objective
- Collecting data about the problem and the context
- Building a coalition
- Identifying the audience
- Developing your message
- Presenting your message to the audience
- Mobilizing resources
- Is it in sync with other efforts
- Monitoring and evaluating success

Working Together for Greater UN Impact

We will examine each one of these components through the group work and exercises included in Module 4 of this Tool Kit

- **Setting an Objective**
  Clarify ultimate goal, and set time frame

- **Collecting Data**
  Collect data on the problem you want to address and whom you want to influence

- **Building a Coalition**
  Whom you want in your coalition and why

- **Identify your Audience**
  To whom will you target your message

- **Develop your message**
  Content and form, what will work for your audience

- **Presenting the message**
  This involves, preparing tools, placing stories in the media, organizing conferences, meetings, calendar and time lines

- **Mobilizing resources**
  Where will you find the money

- **Monitoring and Evaluation**
  Measuring success. Learning
When communicating, remember:

- Have an effective message
- Be consistent
- Repeat the message
- Prioritize, coordinate and orchestrate how and when you communicate
- Every action carries a “message” pay attention to what you intend to communicate

Communication is more than talking to the media or sending out a press release. When you are trying to educate or mobilize the public in support of the MDGs keep in mind that everything you do communicates a message, weather you intend to or not.
Advocacy is action that is directed at changing attitudes or behaviors

It often involves educating the audience and building coalitions of like-minded partners

MDG reports and other data are useful tools when planning advocacy campaigns

Advocacy strategies can be planned at different levels; from national to personal

Good communication is important if advocacy is to succeed
Self-Assessment
Advocacy Knowledge and Skills

Purpose

Raise awareness on knowledge and skills needed by UNCT for using advocacy as a tool for MDG achievement

Method: Individual work

Timing: 30 minutes

What you will need: Advocacy Knowledge and Skills sheet, 1 copy per participant

Suitable for: Anyone interested in improving advocacy skills

When to use: At the beginning of a session on advocacy

Note to the facilitator:

Self-Assessment tools are useful in raising an individual’s awareness of his own learning needs. But, there may be some discomfort around sharing this information with others. The facilitator needs to pay attention to this when introducing the tool. Used correctly, it may empower and motivate the learner.

After individual work, ask for voluntary reports.
Advocacy Knowledge and Skills

*Knowledge of decision-making processes of government and how to influence those processes; UN resolutions or conventions on Human Rights, which the national government is a signatory to:

Skill in advocacy techniques such as; coalition building, message development, lobbying, and media relations and policy research

Build and maintain contacts with civil society, national think tanks and opinion leaders

Familiarity with and ability to explain country specific MDG indicators and disaggregated data, the MDGR and the NHDR

Practice communication and networking skills

Design strategic action plans to implement within your own organization, region, or country

* Adapted from the School For International Training’s International Policy Advocacy Skills Programme
Designing an Advocacy Strategy

Purpose

Learn how to design a strategy and build a coalition for advocating MDGs.

Method: Group work

Timing: 2 hours 30 minutes (2 hours for group work and introduction. 15 minutes for reporting. Plenary discussion 15 minutes)

What you will need: Flip charts and markers and 1 copy per participant

Suitable for: Can be used for any group

When to use: After introducing definitions and concepts of advocacy.

Note to the facilitator:

This exercise is in several steps. Do step 1 with the entire group. The other steps are set out for participants in the Instructions sheet and should be done by them in the small groups.

Step 1. Select a problem for which you want to develop an advocacy strategy. [10 minutes]

Ask: What are the key problems facing MDGs in your country?
Brainstorm and list.

Select 3 problems by voting. Divide participants in 3 groups to work on the problem of their choice.

**Step 2 Set an objective**
Ask each group to set an objective for the advocacy campaign.

It needs to be
- Realistic
- Achievable
- Concrete
- Clearly formulated

Sample Objective: *Mobilizing rural poor to take an active role in tracking the poverty goal*

**Step 3 Collect data**

Data should:
- Relate to the problem and conform to the goal
- Assist in identifying community needs
- Help identify causes of the problem
- Define potential for change

What should you collect data on?
Answer may include
- Existing problem
- Environment causing the problem
- Who are the audiences/target groups?
- What are attitudes and interests of the audiences?
- Who are the decision makers?
- Who (persons/organizations) is interested in resolving the problem?
- Who are the community organizations? NGOs? Donors?
- Who may be supporters? Opponents?
- What is the legal/policy framework related to the problem?
- What are the economic and social forces connected to the problem?

What are data sources?
Answer May include
- General Public
- Statistical Department
- Government and UN System Reports
- MDGRs
- Human Rights Reports
Step 4 Who could be a coalition member?

Who are the persons/organizations having similar interests?
Who has similar objectives? Common vision?
Who are supporters interested in the same results?
Who are persons influencing decision makers?
Who are experts, specialists?
Who are activists? Community leaders?

Using the grid, map the coalition members according to their attributes. If they are active but negative, you need to find a way of neutralizing the negative aspects and turning the activism into a positive. If they are positive but passive you need to find a way to making them into active coalition members.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Active Positive</th>
<th>Active Negative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Passive Positive</td>
<td>Passive Negative</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Step 5 Identify the audience

Whom do you want to influence?
Types of audiences may include:
  - General public
  - Decision makers
  - Beneficiaries, target group,
  - Government, NGOs CBOs
Step 6 Develop a message

Is it targeted to the interests and hopes of your audience?  
How and when will it be delivered?

Activity 4 in this Module is on how to develop a message. If participants are unsure how to proceed, tell them to work through the remaining steps of the strategy and then follow up with activity 4 immediately after that.

Step 7 Presenting the message-Planning

What is the main idea of the presentation?  
What type of presentation will it be? What tools will be used- (posters, brochures, letters, website)  
When will the presentation of the message be made? (location, time)  
Who will prepare them? (give interviews, organize meetings with civil society)  
Who will participate in the presentation?  
What is the agenda? Set time lines  
How much will it cost?  
What will the constraints be?

Step 8 Mobilize Resources

How much funds will you need?  
Where will you find the resources?

Step 9 Relate to other efforts

Is it in sync with other efforts to promote MDGs?  
Can it benefit from other UN system programmes in this region or elsewhere?  
Are there any initiatives in this region that may be running counter to your own efforts?

Step 10 Monitor and evaluate success

How will you monitor if you are succeeding?  
When will you evaluate your effort?  
What will indicate success? What changes will you observe that inform you that your effort has been successful?
De-brief

Ask for group reports or if time is scarce, ask participants to write clearly and post flipcharts in the room.

Everyone moves around the room reading and noting points of interest.

Discuss the significant points in plenary.
Instructions to Participants

Assignment

Design an Advocacy Strategy for the MDG issue/problem you have been given. Use the steps to guide you. Note that developing the message, an essential part of the strategy is not in this, because it is dealt with in another activity.

Step 2 Set an objective

Set an objective for the advocacy campaign.

It needs to be
- Realistic
- Achievable
- Concrete
- Clearly formulated

Sample Objective: *Mobilizing rural poor to take an active role in tracking the poverty goal*

Step 3 Collect Data

Data should:
- Relate to the problem and conform to the goal
- Assist in identifying community needs
- Help identify causes of the problem
- Define potential for change

What should you collect data on? Make a list.

What are the data sources? Make a list

Step 4 Who could be a coalition member, map key actors

Who are the persons/organizations having similar interests? Who has similar objectives? Common vision? Who are supporters interested in the same results? Who are persons influencing decision makers? Who are experts, specialists? Who are activists? Community leaders?

Using the grid, map the coalition members according to their attributes. If they are active but negative, you need to find a way of neutralizing the negative aspects and turning the activism into a positive. If they are positive but passive you need to find a way to making them into active coalition members.
Module 4
Activity 3

Active Positive

Active Negative

Passive Positive

Passive Negative

Step 5 Identify the audience

Whom do you want to influence? Make a list.

Step 6 Develop a message

Is it targeted to the interests and hopes of your audience?
How and when will it be delivered?

Step 7 Presenting the message

What is the main idea of the presentation?
What type of presentation will it be? What tools will be used? (posters, brochures, letters, website)
When will the presentation of the message be made? (location, time)

Who will prepare them? (give interviews, organize meetings with civil society? Etc?)
Who will participate in the presentation?
What is the agenda? Set time lines
Step 8 Mobilize Resources

How much funds will you need?
Where will you find the resources?

Step 9 Relate to other efforts

Is it in sync with other efforts to promote MDGs?
Can it benefit from other UN system programmes in this region or elsewhere?
Are there any initiatives in this region that may be running counter to your own efforts?

Step 10 Monitor and evaluate success

How will you monitor if you are succeeding?
When will you evaluate your effort?
What will indicate success? What changes will you observe that inform you that your effort has been successful?
Developing a message

**Purpose**

Learn how to develop primary and secondary messages for three different scenarios

**Method:** Group work

**Timing:** 1 hour 30 minutes

**What you will need:** The note on Developing a message, 1 copy per participant, Instruction to Participant’s sheet. Flip charts and markers

**Suitable for:** UNCT

**When to use:** After introducing definitions and concepts of advocacy

**Note to the facilitator:**

Describe the purpose and method.

Deliver the contents of the note as a lecturette or ask participants to read it. Each person will select the scenario he wants to work on and move to the relevant group. Make sure that there is a balance in numbers among the groups.

Ask the group to develop a message for the situation described in the Participants Instructions Sheet. They may use the planning sheet as a guide.
Some suggestions for de-briefing:

- Note the differences among the messages; note how the objective, audience and the circumstances shape the message.
- Discuss when to use education and advocacy communication.
- Discuss what messages are used within the country by the UNCT to advocate on MDGs.
- Would they make any changes in the way they advocate MDGs after this session?
What is a message?

A message is the overall perception an audience has of your position. A good message is simple and direct. It starts out small, gains power as it touches people and ultimately changes their perceptions, lives and communities.

When developing a message

- Identify the idea
- Focus on what will work (Attract attention)
- Focus on your audience/goal/ be results oriented
- Be concise, specific to the target audience, simple
- Be positive
- Don’t use jargon or acronyms (MDGs, G8, PRS etc)
- Decide the time and location for delivering the message

A message doesn’t stand without any further explanation. A primary message is often supported by secondary messages that soothe fears, meet needs and build passion and confidence in the audience.

Secondary messages talk about how the objectives of the primary message will be met. They are targeted to the needs, perceptions and preferences of a specific group whose support is crucial to the success of your campaign. See the example below:

**UN Systems’ Primary message on the MDGs:** The Millennium Development Goals are a blueprint for building a better world for all people rich and poor in the 21st century

**Secondary key message (1) the MDGs to the Governments of poor countries:** The Millennium Development Goals offer developing countries a means to accelerate the pace of development and lift millions of people out of poverty if they have the political will to carry out necessary policy and institutional reforms.

**Secondary key message (2) on the MDGs to donors and donor governments:** The Millennium Development Goals are achievable by the 2015 deadline, but only if rich countries follow through on their funding commitment to fulfill the funding requirement of an additional 60 billion dollars an year.

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*The Blue Book: A Hands On Approach To Advocating the Millennium Development Goals UNDP 2004*
Secondary key message: being a partner

The UN system is working with a wide range of partners to help create coalitions for change to support the goals at global, regional and national levels, to benchmark progress towards them, and to help countries build the capacities, policies and programmes they need, to achieve them.

The messages you create may be used for two types of communications: public education and advocacy.

**Education communication** spreads knowledge, information and expertise to its audience. The intent is not to persuade but to educate and help others understand needs. Education communication is most frequently used to create attitudes that inform opinions and decision-making.

**Advocacy communications** does not educate; it persuades, requests and demands solutions, often very specific ones. Advocacy is very focused on one message, one goal and the actualization of that goal. Advocacy communication sets out to change opinions based on attitudes and mobilizes others to action.

Both education and advocacy are essential for creating support for the MDGs.
Instructions to Participants

Scenario 1

A member of the UNCT has been invited to a small gathering of important national figures, one of whom is very influential, has a great deal of moral authority and respect in the country. Although he has been active in the area of reforming the legal framework and anti-corruption legislation, he has never been heard to express any opinions in public that shed light on his awareness or support for poverty or human development initiatives. You know that winning his support for the MDGs will be significant for building national support for advocating MDGs. You are eager to meet him and hope to have an opportunity to interest him in the MDGs. You know that many of the people at this gathering will be waiting to talk to him and that you would not have a lot of time for a long discussion.

Your challenge is to communicate your message in a short time, to capture his attention enough to be invited to another meeting to talk more details.

Scenario 2

Choma has just become the newest nation in the world to export oil. The government will at the end of this year earn one hundred million dollars, a 40% increase in revenue, from the export of oil. The UN system knows that if invested in education, healthcare and poverty eradication, this country which is a landlocked HIPC, can make dramatic progress in achieving the MDGs. The UNCT needs to devise a plan to urge the nation’s leaders and educate the people of Choma about investing the newfound wealth in the MDGs. Develop a message or messages.

Scenario 3

Islandia, except for one region, is on track to achieving the MDGs. The people of this region are unlikely to have even heard of the MDGs. They are ethnically different from the majority, are suspicious of the government and believe that they have been neglected by successive administrations and do not trust the development plans made by the national government. A regional administration exists but was not democratically elected. The people have for two decades relied on their own resources; these include a network of small businesses and foreign remittances from residents working abroad. While averages show that progress is being made, poverty has actually increased among women and rural people. The UN System works with NGOs and with the regional leadership, which is the "unofficial" government of this region. Develop a message or messages to reach the people of this region.
Instructions to Participants

Develop a primary message and a secondary message for the scenario you have selected.

Use the planning sheet to guide you.

1. What is the goal of the advocacy?

2. Who is your audience?

3. What’s in it for them? How do they benefit?

4. How will you reach them?

5. Is your message purely to persuade or is it to educate, or both?

Primary message or messages

Secondary message or messages
Key Opportunities to advocate MDGs using appropriate tools

Purpose

- Increase understanding of communication and identify key opportunities for advocating MDGs
- Discuss which tools are appropriate

Method: Brainstorming and discussion in a large group

Timing: 1 hour

What you will need: Flip-chart and markers

Suitable for: UNCT

When to use: After presenting "What is Advocacy?" Module 4 Activity 1

Note to the facilitator:

Give participants time to read the note on the Fundamentals of Communication. Ask for comments and questions then conduct a discussion in the large group. For more information please refer http://www.undg.org/documents/2442-Albania_MDG_Campaign.doc
Part 1 Exploring opportunities for advocating MDGs

Ask the group “What are key opportunities to advocate for MDGs?

Brainstorm a list. Post it in the room. May include the following:

- Launch of Government /UN programmes
- Formulation and launch of MDG Reports
- Media discussions of local events, such as business ventures, economic issues.
- Design of PRSs, national budgets, passage of laws, parliamentary debates
- Global events
- Elections
- UN summits, meetings
- Meetings with donors, aid conferences
- Others, such as sports events

From what we have learnt in the presentation on Advocacy what are some ways we want to expand advocacy on MDGs? List and discuss.

Alternative: you may want to focus on a few of the listed “opportunities” and discuss specifics for each item in groups.

Key opportunities to advocate for MDGs
List and post

What are ways in which we want to expand advocacy for MDGs?
List and post
Part 2 Use of appropriate advocacy tools

Ask the group, what factors should we consider when determining the most appropriate advocacy tools?

List and discuss. The list may include the following:

- Is it relevant to the interests and needs of our audience?
- Does it reflect the message we want to convey?
- What is our method of dissemination?
- Is this advocacy effort in sync with other efforts for reaching the same audience/ disseminating the same message?
- Who are our partners?
- Is it within our budget?

Part 3 What is UNCTs role in Advocacy?

- Should UNCT have an advocacy role?
- If yes, why? If no, why not? List pros and cons
- What is the appropriate advocacy role of the UNCT or individual UN programmes and agencies at the national level?
- How does the role of the UNCT as a listener and a facilitator impact on the Team’s role as an advocate for MDGs?
**Note** Fundamentals of Communication

Here are six rules that apply to communicating an advocacy message on the MDGs

Rule #1 Everything speaks. Every action taken, letter written, idea floated, word uttered, event attended or meeting held is an opportunity to communicate and opportunity for others to judge the value and worth of your information, knowledge, values and goals

Rule #2 Everything must speak the same language. The only way to raise your group’s voice above the cacophony of others is to sing in unison

Rule #3 Everything must be repeated. Communications is about persistence and repetition. Your message must be omnipresent and unavoidable. It needs to come from all directions and from a variety of sources to build urgency and attention. Your message is finally heard by others long after you are tired of hearing it yourself.

Rule #4 Everything that speaks must speak in turn. Effective communications depends on effective orchestration.

Rule #5 The message is everything and everything is the message. Effective communication depends on an effective message. The message dictates how you communicate and how you orchestrate

Rule #6 Stay on the message until the message gains power and influence. Give power to the message on the MDGs by speaking repeatedly one voice

An integral part of communication is listening. In order to understand issues, engage stakeholders and facilitate inclusion, development practitioners need to listen as well as advocate.

Resources for Module 4

The Blue Book: A hands-on approach to advocating for the Millennium Development Goals. UNDP 2004


For examples of advocacy and public awareness campaigns as well as helpful suggestions please go to
http://www.undg.org/documents/2345-MDG_Net_Consolidated_Reply_Taking_the_MDGs_to_the_People_-_CR.doc