

# Taking Action

Finally, all of the elements of advocacy strategy – concrete objectives, a solid analysis of your audiences, effective partnerships, a thoughtful message and media approach – need to be assembled together in a concrete plan for advocacy action.

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## I. What are Your Options?

First, look at the full list of options you have for action:

### *Inside Strategies*

- Informal meetings with decision makers
- Organized lobbying visits
- Providing information and proposals
- Providing testimony

### *Outside Strategies*

- Release of a public report
- Media work
- Organizing public support
- Public criticism
- Public pressure

## II. Strategic Considerations

Then subject these options to an evaluation based on a set of important strategic considerations:

- Where are there some specific opportunities to be exploited?
- What is most likely to have an impact?
- What will build your partnerships?
- What will build your connections to your key audiences?
- What builds your power?

In general it is always smartest to employ a strategy that involves the least effort and the least political tension that still gets the job done.

## III. Institutional Considerations

- What will help build those internal capacities?
- What are your current capacities for action?
- What capitalizes on the UNICEF 'brand' and fits within UNICEF protocol?

Advocacy actions need to fit not only the context but your organizational realities as well.

#### **IV. What information and materials do you need?**

"Evidence-based advocacy" begins with assembling the evidence. Take stock at the start of what you need and how you will put it together. Give consideration to the following:

1. What do you need to know for policy reasons?
2. What do you need to know for strategic reasons?
3. What exists that is useful?
4. What gaps are important to fill?
5. What formats – written, video, published, Internet, etc.?

#### **V. Putting Together Your First Actions**

Then you have to just begin. One of the most important challenges in a new advocacy effort is to get past inertia and start. Here are some useful considerations in developing a plan for initial action:

- Pick an action that will deliver something tangible within six months.
- Do it jointly with your new partners.
- Begin the conversation with your target audiences.
- Allocate the resources required.

#### **VI. Evaluate your Progress.**

- What is your theory of how "change" happens?
- What are the measurable building blocks of that theory (meetings, media, partnerships, commitments)?
- What are the measurable building blocks of that theory (meetings, media, partnerships, commitments)?
- How has the context changed: new opportunities and challenges?

*Remember, it is also important to see unexpected opportunities and seize them!*