



Training course
29 June - 2 July, 2023
Bakuriani, Georgia

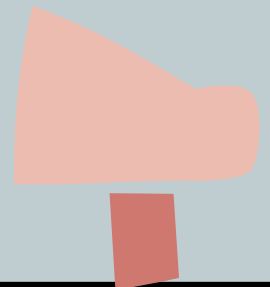


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About the project:



This booklet has been created in the scope of the Training course "Advocacy-Up" which is funded by Youth and Environment Europe (YEE) in the program "Showcasing the Unheard."

The project took place in Bakuriani, Georgia from the 29th of June to the 2nd of July, 2023 hosted by the Georgian youth organisation Umbrella.

This booklet is divided into sections that cover essential aspects of advocacy, including understanding advocacy, developing effective strategies, building partnerships, communicating messages, and evaluating impact. Each section provides valuable insights, practical examples, and actionable steps to guide you on your advocacy journey.

The project aimed to empower 15 marginalised young people living in rural areas with the knowledge and skills necessary to become effective advocates for their rights and interests and to inspire them to continue their advocacy work in the future.



The objectives of the project:

- 1) Building the capacity of young leaders and activists to engage in effective advocacy work through training and skill-building activities.
- 2) Developing a strong sense of community and solidarity among the participants, and empowering them to become leaders and change agents in their communities.
- 3) Creating a toolkit with best practices for advocacy that can be shared with other young people and organisations in the future.



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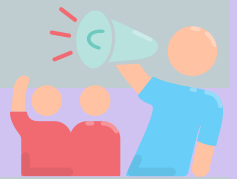
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Introduction to Advocacy



Advocacy plays a crucial role in driving social change and shaping policies and decisions that impact individuals, communities, and society as a whole. At its core, advocacy involves actively promoting and championing specific causes or issues to bring about desired outcomes. By understanding the fundamentals of advocacy, individuals can become powerful agents of change and contribute to creating a more just and equitable world.



Advocacy can be defined as the deliberate and organised effort to influence policies, systems, and practices in order to address social, economic, environmental, or political issues. It goes beyond simply raising awareness; it aims to create a tangible impact by challenging existing norms, promoting policy reforms, and ensuring the rights and well-being of individuals and marginalised groups.



Advocacy serves as a catalyst for social change by empowering individuals and communities to address systemic injustices and promote inclusive policies. It provides a platform for marginalised voices to be heard and their needs to be addressed. Through advocacy, individuals can challenge power structures, drive policy reforms, and create an environment that fosters equality, justice, and human rights.

Types of Advocacy and Their Objectives



- **Policy Advocacy:** This type of advocacy focuses on influencing legislative and governmental policies to address societal issues and promote positive change. It involves engaging with policymakers, lobbying for policy reforms, and advocating for the implementation of laws and regulations that align with the desired goals.
- **Grassroots Advocacy:** Grassroots advocacy emphasizes mobilising communities and individuals at the local level to create change. It involves raising awareness, building networks, and empowering individuals to take collective action and influence decision-making processes.
- **Public Advocacy:** Public advocacy aims to generate public support and engagement on specific issues. It utilizes various communication channels, such as media campaigns, social media platforms, and public events, to raise awareness, educate the public, and garner support for the cause.
- **Legal Advocacy:** Legal advocacy focuses on using the legal system to protect and advance the rights of individuals and communities. It involves engaging in litigation, providing legal representation, and advocating for legal reforms to ensure justice and equality.



Role of Advocates in Influencing Policies and Decisions

Advocates play a crucial role in shaping policies and decisions at local, national, and international levels. They act as catalysts for change, bringing attention to critical issues, amplifying the voices of marginalised communities, and advocating for policy reforms. Advocates engage with policymakers, community leaders, and other stakeholders to influence decision-making processes and promote policies that reflect the needs and aspirations of the communities they serve.

By understanding the fundamentals of advocacy, individuals can become effective advocates for their causes. They can work towards creating a more inclusive and equitable society, influencing policies, and driving social change. Advocacy is a powerful tool that empowers individuals to stand up for what they believe in and make a positive impact in their communities and beyond.



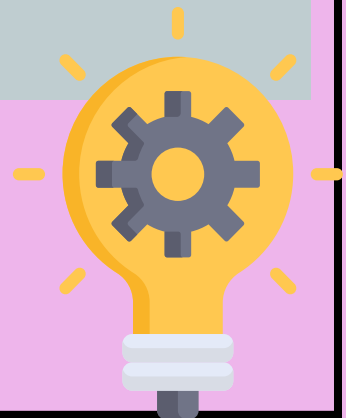
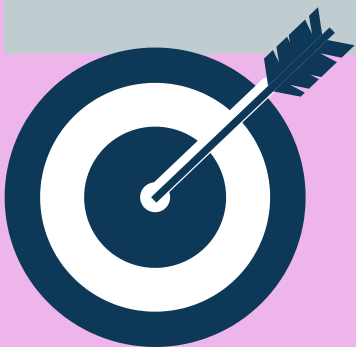


Strategies for Effective Advocacy



Advocacy campaigns are most impactful when they are guided by well-planned strategies and effective approaches. By understanding and utilizing proven strategies, advocates can maximise their influence and drive meaningful change.

- **Various Strategies and Approaches:** Advocacy encompasses a range of strategies, including grassroots mobilisation, coalition building, policy research, and media engagement. Each approach offers unique opportunities to drive change and make a difference.
- **Goal-Setting and Planning:** Clear objectives are essential in advocacy campaigns. Setting measurable goals helps advocates stay focused and track progress. Identifying target audiences and developing comprehensive plans are vital steps in achieving advocacy objectives.
- **Successful Advocacy Examples:** Learning from successful advocacy campaigns provides valuable insights. By analyzing impactful messaging, strategic partnerships, creative tactics, and long-term sustainability, advocates can adapt proven strategies for their own initiatives.



By employing these strategies, advocates can enhance their advocacy efforts, create meaningful change, and make a lasting impact on the issues they care about.



Examples:

- **Advocacy for Accessible Preschool Education in Mountainous and Ethnic Minority-Populated Regions of Georgia:** The Center for Civic Activities and Mtis Ambebi are collaborating on an advocacy campaign to address the lack of access to preschool education in rural regions of Georgia. Through evaluations, community engagement, and multimedia storytelling, they are raising awareness and advocating for solutions. Petitions have been submitted, and positive steps have been taken in some municipalities. Despite challenges, local activists continue their fight for accessible preschool education. The recent governmental program to construct and rehabilitate kindergartens brings hope, and Mtis Ambebi is monitoring the situation and providing support.
- **Tbilisi Pride March:** In recent years, the Tbilisi Pride March has become a prominent platform for advocating LGBTQ+ rights and raising awareness about the challenges faced by the community in Georgia. The march brings together LGBTQ+ individuals, allies, and activists from across the country to peacefully demonstrate their demands for equal rights, non-discrimination, and social acceptance.

Building Alliances and Partnerships



Building alliances and partnerships is essential in advocacy to drive meaningful change through collective action.

- **The Value of Collaboration:** Advocacy benefits from diverse perspectives and resources. Collaboration allows advocates to pool their knowledge, expertise, and networks, amplifying the impact of their initiatives.



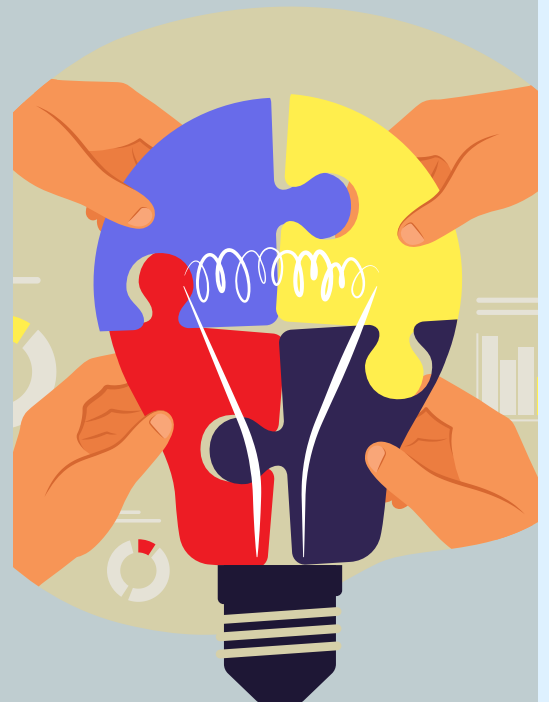
- **Identifying and Engaging Stakeholders:** Effective advocacy requires understanding key stakeholders. Identifying individuals, organisations, and institutions with influence and a vested interest in the cause is crucial. Engaging with stakeholders involves cultivating relationships and involving them in advocacy efforts.
- **Forming Alliances:** Building alliances go beyond partnerships. It involves connecting organisations, community groups, and individuals who share common values and goals. By collaborating and aligning strategies, advocates create a unified front that amplifies their voices.
- **Benefits of Alliances:** Alliances enhance credibility and legitimacy, provide access to expertise and resources, and foster a sense of collective ownership and shared responsibility.

Through collaboration, identifying stakeholders, forming alliances, and leveraging collective strengths, advocates can build a strong foundation for their advocacy work.



Examples:

- **Network for Gender Equality:** A network of women's rights organisations and activists in Georgia came together to form a strong alliance advocating for gender equality in 2013. The network collaborates on various initiatives, including raising awareness about women's rights issues, lobbying for gender-responsive legislation, and supporting grassroots initiatives for women's empowerment. Their collective efforts have led to increased visibility of gender equality issues and have influenced policy changes to promote gender equity and women's rights.
- **Environmental Advocacy Platform:** Environmental organisations in Georgia have formed a platform to collaborate and advocate for environmental protection and sustainability. The platform brings together various stakeholders, including NGOs, community groups, and experts, to collectively address environmental challenges, advocate for policy changes, and raise public awareness. Through their collaborative advocacy, they have successfully influenced the government to adopt more environmentally friendly practices and policies.





Communication and Messaging in Advocacy

Effective communication is vital for successful advocacy.

- **Key Messages:** Advocates must develop clear and impactful messages that resonate with their target audience. These messages should highlight the urgency of the issue and offer actionable solutions.
- **Target Audience Engagement:** Understanding the demographics, interests, and motivations of the target audience helps advocates choose the most effective communication channels and approaches.
- **Communication Channels:** Advocacy communication leverages both traditional and digital channels, such as media platforms, websites, and social media. Choosing the right channels ensures messages reach the intended audience.

By mastering communication techniques and tailoring messages to the target audience, advocates can effectively raise awareness, mobilise support, and drive positive change through advocacy.





Monitoring and Evaluation in Advocacy

Monitoring and evaluation are essential for effective advocacy. They help advocates track progress, assess impact, and make necessary adjustments.

- **Importance:** Monitoring and evaluation provide valuable insights, allowing advocates to gauge the success of their efforts and make informed decisions.
- **Indicators and Metrics:** Advocates identify specific measures to assess outcomes, such as policy changes, shifts in public opinion, or increased awareness.
- **Data Collection:** Various methods, such as surveys and interviews, help gather data for monitoring and evaluation. Quantitative and qualitative information is collected and analysed.
- **Evidence-Based Advocacy:** Monitoring and evaluation produce evidence that strengthens advocacy initiatives. It enhances credibility, engages stakeholders, and supports policy change.



By implementing monitoring and evaluation practices, advocates can continuously improve their campaigns and achieve meaningful social change.



Examples:

- [The Human Rights Education and Monitoring Center \(EMC\)](#) in Georgia conducts outcome evaluations to assess the impact of their advocacy efforts. They collect data through surveys, interviews, and focus groups to measure changes in public attitudes, policy reforms, and improvements in human rights practices. Through their Advocacy Outcome Evaluation, EMC demonstrates the effectiveness of their initiatives, identifies areas for further attention, and informs future advocacy strategies. Since its establishment in 2012, EMC has focused on protecting the rights of socially vulnerable and marginalised groups, advocating for systemic reforms, and combating institutionalised violence and social oppression.
- [Transparency International Georgia](#) an organisation focused on anti-corruption efforts, conducts regular assessments to evaluate the impact of their advocacy initiatives. They use a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods to assess the outcomes and effectiveness of their advocacy campaigns. By systematically monitoring and evaluating their advocacy work, they gain valuable insights into the effectiveness of their strategies and identify areas for improvement.



Conclusion:

This booklet has provided a comprehensive overview of advocacy and its role in creating social change. We have explored various topics and strategies essential for effective advocacy, emphasising the importance of collaboration, communication, monitoring, and evaluation. Advocacy is a powerful tool for influencing policies, raising awareness, and mobilising communities. We hope that this booklet has equipped you with valuable insights, practical tools, and inspiring examples.



Thank you for reading this booklet!

Please share the booklet on social media to promote it among the youth with fewer opportunities in order to improve their advocacy skills.