**Phase 1: Build Consensus**

**Step 1: Understand the Landscape**

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| **1.1 Assess the Landscape for Your Issue** |
| **Use evidence and knowledge to understand how to focus your advocacy.** Use the table below to detail and consider everything you know or can learn about your issue—from official statistics to expert opinions to knowledge from fellow advocates.  |
| **Environment** | **Evidence** |
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| **Actors** | **Policy** |
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| **1.2 Find Advocacy Opportunities** |
| **Identify strategic openings.** What advocacy opportunities and obstacles do you see in your landscape? Which of these opportunities—new leadership, policy developments, community needs—would allow you to achieve an advocacy win *within the next six to 12 months*? Weigh opportunities against the obstacles. |
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**Step 2: Decide Who to Involve**

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| **2.1 Inventory All Stakeholders**  |
| **Who do you need in an advocacy working group to reach your opportunity?** Brainstorm individuals and organizations that can be potential allies. Add their contact information to the chart below and put a check in the “Priority for Inclusion” column if the contact is critical to your advocacy.  |
| **Individual’s name** | **Organization and position** | **Phone**  | **E-mail** | **Priority for inclusion**  | **Notes** |
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**Step 3: Set a SMART Objective**

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| **3.1 Agree on a Long-Term Goal**  |
| In the space below, state a concise long-term advocacy goal to help guide and focus your first SMART objective.  |
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| **3.2 Create a SMART Objective** |
| Let’s review your landscape. **What is the first step to reaching your goal?** What is achievable in a six- to 12-month time frame?  |
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| **3.3 Assess Your Objective’s “SMART-ness”**  |  |
| **Is the objective SMART? To find out, answer these questions:**  | **Check if****Yes**  |
| **Specific***Does the objective clearly lay out the desired outcome, including the decision-maker’s name and position and the action or decision you seek?* |  |
| **Measurable***Are there specific quantitative or qualitative indicators that can measure or verify whether your advocacy objective is met, and to what extent?*  |  |
| **Attainable***Is the objective feasible within the determined time frame, given the current landscape and available resources?* |  |
| **Relevant***Based on available evidence, will the objective contribute to the overall goal of the advocacy effort?* |  |
| **Time-bound***Does the objective explicitly state an anticipated date by which the advocacy objective will be achieved?* |  |

**Phase 2: Focus Efforts**

**Step 4: Know the Decision-maker**

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| **4.1 Confirm Your Decision-maker** |
| Review how decisions are made on your issue. Who proposes actions and who has the final authority to act on and achieve your SMART objective? Do you have the connections and access to focus immediately on the highest level of decision-maker, or is there a more accessible or more appropriate entry point? Do you need more than one decision-maker to achieve your objective? **Write in your decision-maker and their name, position, and location.** If you have more than one decision-maker, decide which of them you will approach first and why.  |
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| **4.2 Get to Know Your Decision-maker** |
| Write down what you know about the key decision-maker. Tap into your network to gather any information you are missing. Your group may not know all the answers to the questions below. Note the items that may require more research or outreach. |
| **What do you know about the decision-maker?** |
| What is their **background/profession**?  |  |
| What is their level of **authority** in their organization? |  |
| Have they taken any **actions** that suggest they could act on your request? |  |
| Have they made any **statements** for or against the objective or issue you are addressing? List any relevant statements. |  |
| Are they **willing and able to act** on issues that they care about?  |  |
| Who is in their **social/political circle**? Whose opinion do they value most? |  |
| **What does the decision-maker value?** |
|  | **Check if yes** | **Evidence of their stance** |
| **Socio-economic development**Is your decision-maker driven by advancing the country’s economy or social development? |  |  |
| **Cost-effectiveness**Is your decision-maker known to be budget-conscious? |  |  |
| **Youth**Are young people central to your decision-maker’s agenda? |  |  |
| **Health**Is your decision-maker concerned about public health?  |  |  |
| **Human rights or religious beliefs**Has your decision-maker used human rights or faith-based arguments to justify their actions or position?  |  |  |
| **Career advancement**Could policy action on your issue help advance the decision-maker’s career or reputation? |  |  |
| **Others**Are there public statements, policy actions, or off-the-record intelligence that explain the decision-maker’s values? |  |  |
| **What is your decision-maker’s core value?**  |
| Of all the values you assessed for your decision-maker, which value appears to be their driving force? Select their “core” value and enter it below. |
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| **How will saying yes to your ask benefit the decision-maker?**  |
| Your argument should focus on the positive and convey that a decision-maker’s leadership can make a difference. |
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**Step 5: Determine the Ask**

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| **5.1 Ways to Argue Your Case—the Three E’s** |
| People decide to take action for a variety of reasons, and thus respond to different types of arguments—evidence-based, emotional, and ethical. **Write down evidence-based, emotional, and ethical arguments that will support your case.** |
| **Evidence** What facts support your objective? | **Emotion** How can you humanize the need for the action that you seek? | **Ethics** Which religious, cultural, or ethical arguments support your objective? |
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| **5.2 The Five-Point Message Box**  |
| **The Five-Point Message Box pulls together all the groundwork you completed in Steps 3 through 5 and synthesizes the information to get to your ask.** Complete the following questions to develop your tailored advocacy message. |
| 1. Identify the decision-maker
 | Referring to the decision-maker by name, and not title alone, helps to tailor the message more accurately. See your answer from 4.1. Write it in the box to the right.  | (Name and position) |
| 1. Identify decision-maker’s core value
 | What do they care about? Copy your decision-maker’s core value from 4.2. | Core value: |
| 1. Anticipate objections and prepare response
 | Review the evidence-based, emotional, and ethical arguments that you identified in 5.1 and anticipate your decision-maker’s potential objections. With the objections in hand, write out potential responses. Provide only the information most relevant to the values of the decision-maker and the challenges they face.  | Objection: |
| Response: |
| 1. Articulate your SMART ask
 | The SMART ask is a reiteration of your SMART objective but framed as a request for your decision-maker. In the box at right, write your SMART ask and then check it against the SMART criteria below.  |  |
|  | Place a check by each criterion that the ask meets. |
|  | * Specific
 |
|  | * Measurable
 |
|  | * Attainable
 |
|  | * Relevant
 |
|  | * Time-bound
 |
| 1. Answer the question: ‘’To what end?’’
 | What are the benefits that match the decision-maker’s core value? Tell a decision-maker why acting on your request benefits the decision-maker and reinforces their values, as identified in 4.2.  |  |

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| **5.3. Select a Messenger** |
| List the individuals who are most likely to influence your decision-maker to act and prioritize the one or two to whom you have access or who are most influential with the decision-maker. In the notes column add relevant information (e.g., their relationship to the decision-maker or who will reach out to them if they are not a member of your Advocacy Working Group.) |
| **Name** | **Title** | **Phone/Email** |  **Notes**  |
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| **5.4 Practice Your Advocacy Ask** |
| **Role-play a meeting with your decision-maker. Divide into pairs and select one person to serve as the decision-maker and one as the messenger.** Use arguments from the Five-Point Message Box to persuade the decision-maker to act. The decision-maker should use the values from Step 4 to respond to arguments, ask questions, and raise objections. Take notes on what worked and what did not work in the role-play.  |
| **Role-play notes** |
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**Step 6: Create a Workplan**

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| **6.1 Map Your Resources**  |
| **What assets will you need to support your advocacy effort? What funding, staff, skills, etc. can your organization or working group members and their organizations contribute?** **Do you have the time, clout, and access needed?** This internal review also covers the challenges that you may face in not having sufficient influence, funding, or time to carry out your advocacy strategy. In the form below, indicate “yes” or “no” to answer each question and describe the resource in the next column to the right. If you answer “no,” brainstorm how your advocacy working group will obtain the resource.  |
| What resources do you have in your advocacy working group? (individuals, organizations, or collectively) | Yes/No  | Describe here  | If no, how will you get it?  |
| * Do you have the financial resources?
* Do you have the time?
* Do you have the data to support your ask?
* Do you have the human resources to implement your advocacy strategy?
* Do you have access to your decision-maker and those who influence them?
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| **6.2 Create a SMART Work Plan** |
| **Create a detailed timeline with assignments for specific activities.** Assign one individual or organization to coordinate the strategy and see that all activities of the work plan are implemented**.** Estimate costs for each activity. Then, list who is responsible for implementing the activity. Set deadlines to track your progress.  |
| **Strategy Coordinator:** |
| **Activity**  | **Estimated cost** | **Persons responsible and their affiliation** | **Timeline** |
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**Phase 3: Achieve Change**

**Step 7: Present the Case**

**Step 8: Monitor the Plan**

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| **8.1. Outputs.** Refer back to the activities listed in your SMART work plan. Select three key activities most important for you to monitor. What product(s) will you generate as a result of activities implemented? What sources, tools, or means will you use to measure or verify your output(s)? |
| **Objective:**  |
| **Activity** | **Output** | **Data source or means of verification** |
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| **8.2. Outcomes.** Select at least two outcomes that you expect to observe if/when the objective is achieved. Start with the outcome directly associated with your SMART objective; then, consider subsequent outcomes that may follow as a result of the win. What sources, tools, or means would you use to measure or verify your outcome(s)? |
| **Objective:**  |
| **Intended outcome** | **Outcome indicator(s)** | **Data source or means of verification** |
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| **8.3 IMPACT.** To translate your goal to statements of anticipated impact, describe the most relevant realities that are measurable and observable if the goal is achieved. As multiple advocacy wins are achieved, which indicators demonstrate impact? What new or existing sources, tools, or other means will you use to measure, verify, or illustrate your impact? |
| **Intended impact (goal statement)** | **Impact indicator(s)** | **Data source or means of verification** |
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**Step 9: Capture Results**

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| **9.1 Draft Your Story** |
| Use the worksheet below to outline the advocacy story.  |
| **Key audience**  |
| Who do you want to reach with your story (e.g., donors, advocacy working group members, policymakers, other organizations) and why? |
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| **Format**  |
| What is the best way to tell your story (e.g., case study, blog, video, news article)? |
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| **Dissemination plan** |
| How do you plan to share your story with the key audiences (e.g., presentation, website, email, podcast, social media)? |
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| **Headline** |
| In 10 words or fewer **summarize the advocacy outcome** and why it is important. Make it as specific and measurable as possible.  |
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| **Summary and key message**  |
| **What is the significant change you are reporting?** The summary should be one to two paragraphs and expand on the information in the headline. It should be simple, direct, and answer basic questions: Who? What? When? Where? Why? Who made what decision on what date in which jurisdiction? Include details about the population potentially or actually affected by the change (if available). |
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| **Context** |
| **What context is necessary to understand the significance of the advocacy win?** What was the situation prior to the advocacy win? Provide relevant baseline data, if available. Provide comparative data or background information, as appropriate, to help contextualize the data and story being presented.  |
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| **Strategy and recognition** |
| **Briefly explain key aspects of your advocacy strategy.** What did your working group do to achieve the win? What was your organization’s role (if any)? How did you apply the SMART Advocacy approach? What was the role of other partners and policymakers? Include the names of all relevant partners and policymakers who should receive credit. |
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| **Implications and next steps** |
| **How will this affect your future activities or ability to reach your goal?** What is expected to happen next? Are there any immediate next steps to ensure that the win is followed through or implemented? (e.g., if midwives are now allowed to provide postpartum family planning, will their training curriculum need to change? Is funding needed to train them?) |
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| **Quotes, photos, graphics** [optional] |
| **Quotes can be a dynamic addition to a news summary**. They can provide insight on impact (answering the question, “Why should we care?”) or lend color to the content. Examples of those who might be quoted include a local champion or government representative. Be sure to get the quote approved by the person to whom it is attributed. Photos can draw the reader in and amplify recognition of the decision-maker or issue being addressed. Do not use photos of private citizens without their permission. Graphics can make your results and potential impact easier to understand and should present only one key point. |

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| **Progress Monitoring Template** |
| **SMART Advocacy Objective:**  | **Objective status** Mark with an “X” the objective status below\_\_\_**Ongoing** Date advocacy effort started: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**Achieved** Date advocacy win achieved: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**Changed** |
| **Key Activities**Insert key activities from your work plan.  | **Outputs**What product(s) will you generate as a result of activities implemented? | **Data source or means of verification**What sources, tools, or other means will you use to measure or verify your output(s)? |
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| **Outcomes**Start with the outcome directly associated with your SMART objective; then, consider subsequent outcomes that may follow as a result of the win. | **Data source or means of verification**What sources, tools, or other means would you use to measure or verify your outcome(s)? |
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| **Reflections**Periodically reflect on what you have experienced and learned during the advocacy process. Describe any expected or unexpected opportunities and challenges. Use your reflections to confirm that you are on the right track or need to reassess or refine your advocacy strategy. |
| **Opportunities** |
| **Challenges** |