



This newsletter is sent to you by **Insideout**, as part of our commitment to building greater understanding of monitoring and evaluation practice. We hope that the information will be helpful to you in the work that you do.

### GREETINGS FROM INSIDEOUT!

In this issue we will be talking about monitoring and evaluating advocacy efforts. Specifically we will be looking at:

- Why is it challenging to monitor and evaluate advocacy efforts?
- What are some standard ways of conceptualising expected outcomes of advocacy work?
- What are some examples of possible indicators for the expected results?
- What are useful questions can guide monitoring and evaluation?

## ISSUE #8: HOW TO MONITOR AND EVALUATE ADVOCACY EFFORTS

### Why is it challenging to monitor and evaluate advocacy efforts?

- **Long term nature** of advocacy work: In most cases effecting changes in policy or legislation takes a number of years. It is therefore crucial to monitor and evaluate the incremental changes/results one would expect before policy change itself.
- Advocacy is a **dynamic process**
- It is **difficult to establish causal relationships** with advocacy work: Attribution is one of the hardest issues to face in evaluating advocacy work. The complexity of issues makes it difficult to determine cause and effect between advocacy initiatives and outcomes. It is very difficult to know precisely what causes policy changes and precisely what impact those changes have in reality - many different forces are at play in any situation. This is especially hard when attempting to influence general attitudes and values in society.
- The expected **outcomes** are **less tangible** and therefore more difficult to monitor than outcomes for service delivery programmes which are more tangible: For example, building civil society to hold decision makers accountable and changes in the mindsets of decision makers and society, which is an essential outcome before policy change, is less tangible and therefore difficult to monitor.

### What are some standard ways of conceptualising expected outcomes of advocacy work?

#### Three broad outcomes:

- Building civil society to hold decision makers accountable
- Changing the mindsets of decision makers and society
- Changes in policy and whether the implementation of policy change has resulted in improving the lives of beneficiaries.

More comprehensive breakdown of the expected outcomes are provided in the two examples below.

#### Example 1:

- Heightened awareness about an issue
- Contribution to debate
- Changed opinions
- Changed policy
- Policy change is implemented Positive change in people's lives<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> How and Why of Advocacy. Bond. Guidance Notes 2.1: <http://www.bond.org.uk/pubs/guidance/2.1howwhyadvocacy.pdf>

### **Example 2:**

- Shifts in social norms
- Strengthened organisational capacity
- Strengthened alliances
- Strengthened base of support
- Improved policies
- Social changes<sup>2</sup>

### **What are some examples of possible indicators for the expected results?**

#### **Monitor your target**

- Record and observe changes in the discourse and rhetoric of your target audience.
- Keep a file of their statements or speeches over time.
  - What are they saying about you and your campaign?
  - Are they moving closer to your position, adapting to or adopting any of your language or philosophy?

#### **Monitor your relationships**

- Record the frequency and content of conversations with external sources and target audiences.
  - Are you discussing new ideas?
  - Are you becoming a confidante or a source of information or advice?

#### **Monitor the media**

- Count column inches on your issue and pro and anti commentary.
- Count the number of mentions for your organisation.
- Analyse whether media is adopting your language.

#### **Monitor your reputation**

- Record the sources and number of inquiries that you receive as a result of your work.
  - Are you getting to the people you wanted to get to?
  - How and where have they heard of your work?
  - How accurate are their pre-conceptions about you and your work?

#### **Monitor public opinion**

- Analyse the public opinion through telephone polling, or through commissioning surveys.

#### **Monitor the strength of civil society and movements:**

- Organisations and individuals are more able to engage in advocacy
- They participate in public decision-making
- They are able to monitor the implementation and enforcement of reforms
- They are able to hold public and private institutions accountable.
- Increasing 'social capital' – the relations of trust and reciprocity that underpin the cooperation and collaboration necessary for advocacy and for working collectively.

#### **Monitor the formation of groups:**

- Group commitment to policy stance: 'one voice'
- Group carries out activities
- Group sets up or joins other groups
- Movement is launched
- Groups of poor are involved in framing legislation and have control over resources.
- Membership drives, formal registration, creating a community infrastructure
- Changes in the growth of community activities, the roles and regulatory of meetings, and the use of community centres.

#### **Monitoring policy changes**

- Specific changes in the policies, practices, programs or behaviour of major institutions that affect the public, such as government, international financial bodies and corporations.

#### **The need to consider long term results: Beyond policy changes to implementation**

A campaign's success is frequently evaluated against a single short-term goal, such as changes in legislation and policy – a definition of success that ignores the long-term means to sustain such gains.

Without strong systems or NGOs/grassroots groups able to hold government accountable, policy victories can be short-lived. Incorporating other dimensions of success, such as gains in the strength of grassroots organisations or increased opportunities for civil society to get involved in future decision making, allows a more complete analysis and understanding of a campaign's effectiveness and potential for long-term impact.

<sup>2</sup> A Guide to measuring Advocacy and Policy Work.: [www.organizationalresearch.com/publications/a\\_guide\\_to\\_measuring\\_advocacy\\_and\\_policy.pdf](http://www.organizationalresearch.com/publications/a_guide_to_measuring_advocacy_and_policy.pdf)

### What useful questions can guide monitoring and evaluation?

- **Are the techniques being used functioning well?**  
This may include assessment of the level of media coverage, the level of support (as measured through telephone calls, letters etc.) from those being directly lobbied, including decision makers. Most of this requires no more than simple record keeping on a day- to-day basis.
- **Are the people being reached those at whom the campaign is targeted?**  
This begins to assess the quality of the advocacy efforts and whether it is reaching those who matter. Are they being reached at the right time in the right place? Are they taking action?
- **In retrospect, were the targets selected for the campaign the most appropriate?**  
New targets in the policy making process emerge all the time and should be considered. Do you need to change your strategy?
- **Are you involving, or collaborating with, the right people, organisations or bodies?**<sup>3</sup>

### On line resources

The Evaluation Exchange (A periodical on emerging evaluation issues) provides a number of articles dealing with the evaluation of advocacy in the Spring 2007 issue:

[www.gse.harvard.edu/hfrp/content/eval/issue34/spring2007.pdf](http://www.gse.harvard.edu/hfrp/content/eval/issue34/spring2007.pdf)

The following link takes you to a guide to measuring advocacy and policy work, which is the first in a two part guide: [www.organizationalresearch.com/publications/a\\_guide\\_to\\_measuring\\_advocacy\\_and\\_policy.pdf](http://www.organizationalresearch.com/publications/a_guide_to_measuring_advocacy_and_policy.pdf)

The following link takes you to the second part of the guide which deals with tools for measuring advocacy and change work: [www.organizationalresearch.com/publications/a\\_handbook\\_of\\_data\\_collection\\_tools.pdf](http://www.organizationalresearch.com/publications/a_handbook_of_data_collection_tools.pdf)

The Innovation Network provides a list of articles on advocacy and links to the websites at:

[www.innonet.org/index.php?section\\_id=101&content\\_id=480](http://www.innonet.org/index.php?section_id=101&content_id=480)

### WHO IS INSIDEOUT?

**Insideout** is a consultancy, specialising in services including:

- Conducting programme evaluations
- Developing monitoring frameworks
- Running M&E training courses

### CONTACT US

**t:** +27 21 448 4577 | **f:** +27 21 447 1040 | **e:** [natasha@insideoutresearch.co.za](mailto:natasha@insideoutresearch.co.za) | [www.insideoutresearch.co.za](http://www.insideoutresearch.co.za)  
**a:** 225 Lower Main Road, Observatory, 7925, Cape Town, South Africa.

You are receiving this newsletter because you signed up telephonically or at [www.insideoutresearch.co.za](http://www.insideoutresearch.co.za). If you want to unsubscribe to this newsletter, please send an email with UNSUBSCRIBE as the subject to [chantel@insideoutresearch.co.za](mailto:chantel@insideoutresearch.co.za). Feedback and comments are very welcome.

---

<sup>3</sup> Monitoring and Evaluation: A scoping Study: <http://www.preval.org/documentos/2237.doc>