Media Advocacy

How to Develop an Action Oriented Media Advocacy Plan and Messages
Advocacy: working to influence a change in a policy, legislation or program
Speaking up; drawing attention to; directing decision makers towards an issue
Putting a problem on the agenda
Media Advocacy: do public health issues get the attention they deserve in public media?

What can be done to position these issues in the media for attention and action?
What is Media Advocacy?

* Process of disseminating policy-related information through the communications media, especially where the aim is to effect action, a change of policy, or to alter the public's view of an issue.

* Use of Mass Media to advance public policy initiatives.

* Use of Mass Media to influence opinion, mobilize community activists and influence decision makers to create a change in policy.

* Purposeful and planned use of mass media to bring problems and possible policy solutions to the attention of the community and policy-makers.
What is Media Advocacy?

- Strategic use of mass media to support community or groups of individuals working to advance a social or policy initiative
- Goal is to stimulate dialogue, debate, diagnosis of the problem
- Media advocates target policymakers and those who can be mobilized to influence them
- Media advocacy treats audiences as citizens in a democratic process designed to change policies that shape environments

**Important:** have to reach the right decision maker with the right message at the right time
The goal of media advocacy is to refocus the framing of a problem and its solutions from an individual level to policy or environmental level.

* **Goal**
Long-term outcome to describe the overall mission or purpose of a project, usually supported by several objectives

* **Objective**
Brief statement of intent describing the specific outcome sought

* **Quick Win**
Discrete, critical policy or funding decision that must occur in the near term to achieve a broader goal
SMART Objectives

- **Specific** - indicates what will be achieved and by what means
- **Measurable** - framed with quantitative or qualitative descriptors
- **Attainable** - is within reach
- **Relevant** - contributes to the overall goal of your advocacy efforts
- **Time-bound** - sets a specific date for achievement
Why the Media and Advocacy?

* Issues are not considered by the public and policymakers unless they are visible. Media has the capacity to bring issues to light.
* Media highlights issues of public concern.
* Media instigates action where other avenues may have failed therefore the media practitioners' role as advocates.
* Media advocacy is practiced at all levels, national to community-based campaigns.
* The main targets of most media advocacy are politicians and other decision makers.
* The strategic position of the media in reaching politicians, decision-makers
Developing Action Oriented Messages

Key Elements

* What ideas do you want to convey? Why?
* What arguments will you use?
* What words will you use to get the message across clearly?
* How will you deliver the message?
* What are the likely reactions (positive and negative)?
* When is the appropriate time to deliver the message?
* What platform/channel will give the message credibility and more political impact?
* What action do you want the audience to take?
Developing Action Oriented Messages

- Review the context
- Know the Decision maker
- Determine the Ask

Key Question: what do you want the audience to do?
Reporting on Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights

Messages can be:

* Rational arguments: Use facts or evidence
* Emotional arguments: Use evocative stories and photos
* Ethical arguments: Use a rights-based approach
Group Work

Identify Decision maker

Develop Action Oriented Messages that will attract the eye of the Health Editor
Elements of Media Advocacy Plan

- Advocacy issue
- Audience
- Messages
- Media/channels/tools
- Time frame
THANK YOU