

# Advocacy Toolkit

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# Objectives

- Develop a common understanding of what advocacy is, different types of advocacy, and why/when we include advocacy in our food justice work.
- Explore relationship between advocacy, policy, lobbying and campaigning. Understand the role of communications in advocacy, and the language we use in advocacy
- Share member examples and experiences of undertaking advocacy as part of our work
- Share some core tools and building blocks of an advocacy strategy.
- Explore potential for joint action and working with others - further collaboration on food advocacy

# What is advocacy?

**When do we need to do it?**

**How do we decide between competing issues?**

# What is advocacy?

- **Introduce ourselves**

- What does advocacy mean to me?
- What experience of doing advocacy (either in current or previous roles) do we have?

- **How would we define advocacy?**

- In pairs, write words/phrases on post-its that you associate with advocacy
- Look at your post-its and try to come up with your own short definition of advocacy

# What is advocacy?

- **Examples created in the FLF workshop**

Bring to light an issue to add pressure / influence / lead to action from gatekeepers of power

You can advocate on behalf of yourself, others or surrounding an issue to influence actors to bring about change

Influencing gatekeepers of power to make change

Building community capacity & leadership to influence people and change mindsets, policy, funding ...

# Advocacy definition

“Advocacy is an activity by an individual or group that aims to influence decisions within political, economic, and social institutions. Advocacy includes activities and publications to influence public policy, laws and budgets by using facts, their relationships, the media, and messaging to educate government officials and the public. Advocacy can include many activities that a person or organization undertakes including media campaigns, public speaking, commissioning and publishing research. Lobbying (often by lobby groups) is a form of advocacy where a direct approach is made to legislators on a specific issue or specific piece of legislation. Advocacy groups ... are using social media to facilitate civic engagement and collective action.” *(Wikipedia)*

“Advocacy is an action directed at changing the policies, positions and programmes of any type of institution.” *(An Introduction to Advocacy, Training Guide, SARA Project)*

“Advocacy means giving a person support to have their voice heard. It is a service aimed at helping people understand their rights and express their views.” *(Advocacy Focus, NW England)*

# Different approaches to advocacy

## **Case advocacy**

Eg. Judicial review case on access to Healthy Start for children with NRPF on behalf of 'Child A' – NGOs working with lawyers.

## **Peer advocacy**

Eg. Food Foundation's Children's Right to Food programme, working with young adults to advocate policy change, direct access to Government

## **Community level advocacy**

E.g. Community groups securing local spaces as assets of community value, or securing local land for community food growing, or a change in policies or services at local authority level.

## **National/international Systemic / Policy advocacy**

Eg Campaigning together for a 9pm watershed on HFSS food and drink advertising or expansion of Free School Meals

# 3 building blocks of advocacy strategy

1. Being clear on **WHAT** you want
2. Being clear on **WHO** can give you what you want
3. Understanding **WHY** they haven't given you what you want already
  - Lack of awareness of the problem/solution
  - Awareness but no incentive to care
  - Awareness and care, but ideological or other powerful vested interests pulling in other direction
  - Not enough of a priority
  - What you're asking for is not strong enough

Thanks to [Future Advocacy & Kirsty McNeill, Advocacy Director, Save the Children UK](#)



# Tools of advocacy

- **Evidence & Research**
  - Academic/Social research and analysis
  - Case Studies and Stories
  - Social/Environmental/Economic Modelling
- **Policy development**
  - Policy options, draft motions and bills etc
- **Private influencing / quiet diplomacy**
- **Political and public lobbying**
- **Legal cases/challenges**
- **Alliance building**
- **Public campaigning & community mobilisation**
  - Events, Petitions, E-actions, Protests
- **Media and PR**
  - Letters, comment pieces, photocalls & stunts, stories, high profile figures

# What do you want?

**Working out what we're asking for**

# Why and when do we do advocacy?

- **What makes a good advocacy ask?**
  - Take 1 minute to think for yourself
  - Share in group
  
- **What factors do we consider when deciding whether or not to develop an advocacy initiative/campaign?**
  - How do we choose between different topics?
  - How do we work out the strength of an advocacy idea?

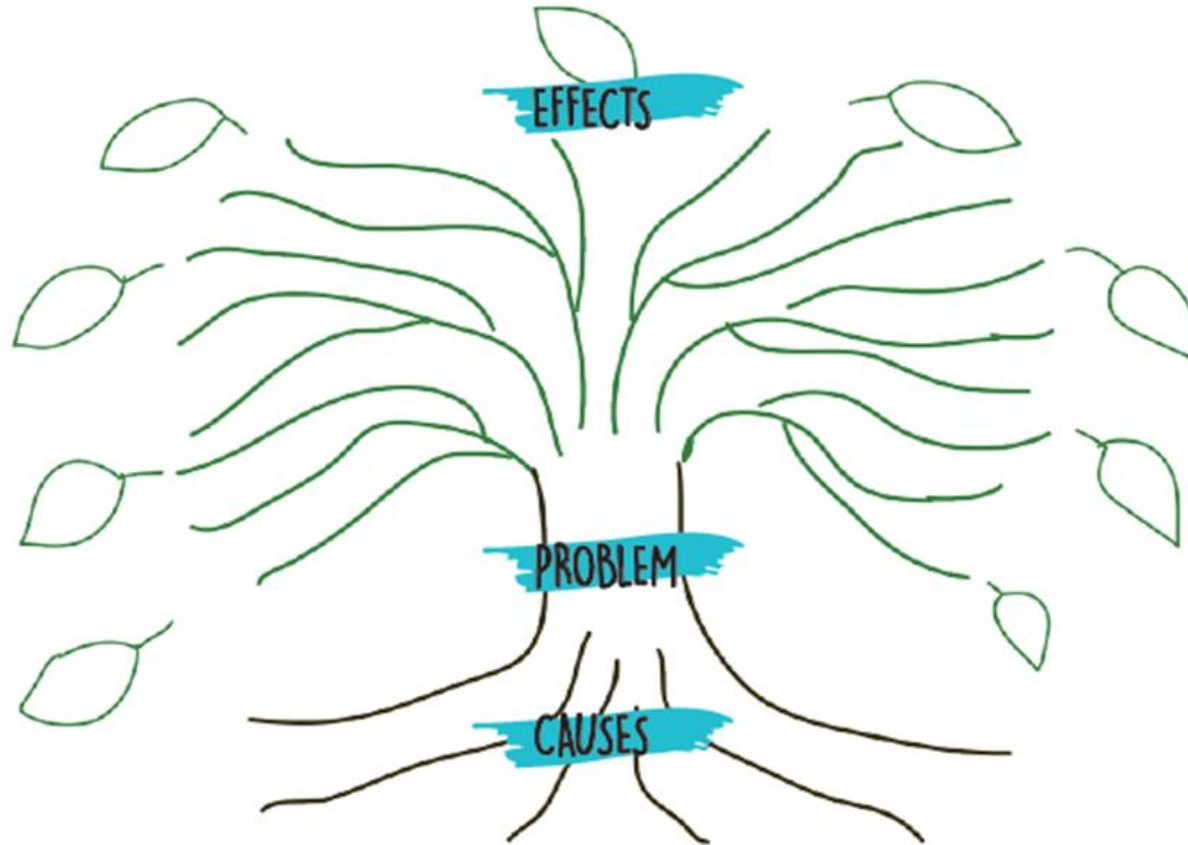
# Why do we do advocacy?

- **Individuals and organisations tend to see advocacy as trying to achieve one or more of the following:**
  - Change in institutional policy and practice
  - Change in public behaviour and attitudes
  - Change in the political process or system
  - Increased power and influence for those excluded, marginalised or experiencing inequality
- **Advocacy can be proactive and/or reactive**

# When do we choose to do advocacy?

- When there are obstacles to the achievement of the organisation's vision and mission that lie outside our own direct power
- When we listen to views of our key stakeholders – staff, supporters, partners, members, clients/user groups
- When we want to leverage experience and insight arising from our programme work to accelerate wider change
- When evidence and experience indicate that existing policies, practices or resources are failing to bring about change, or making things worse

# Tool 1: Create a problem tree

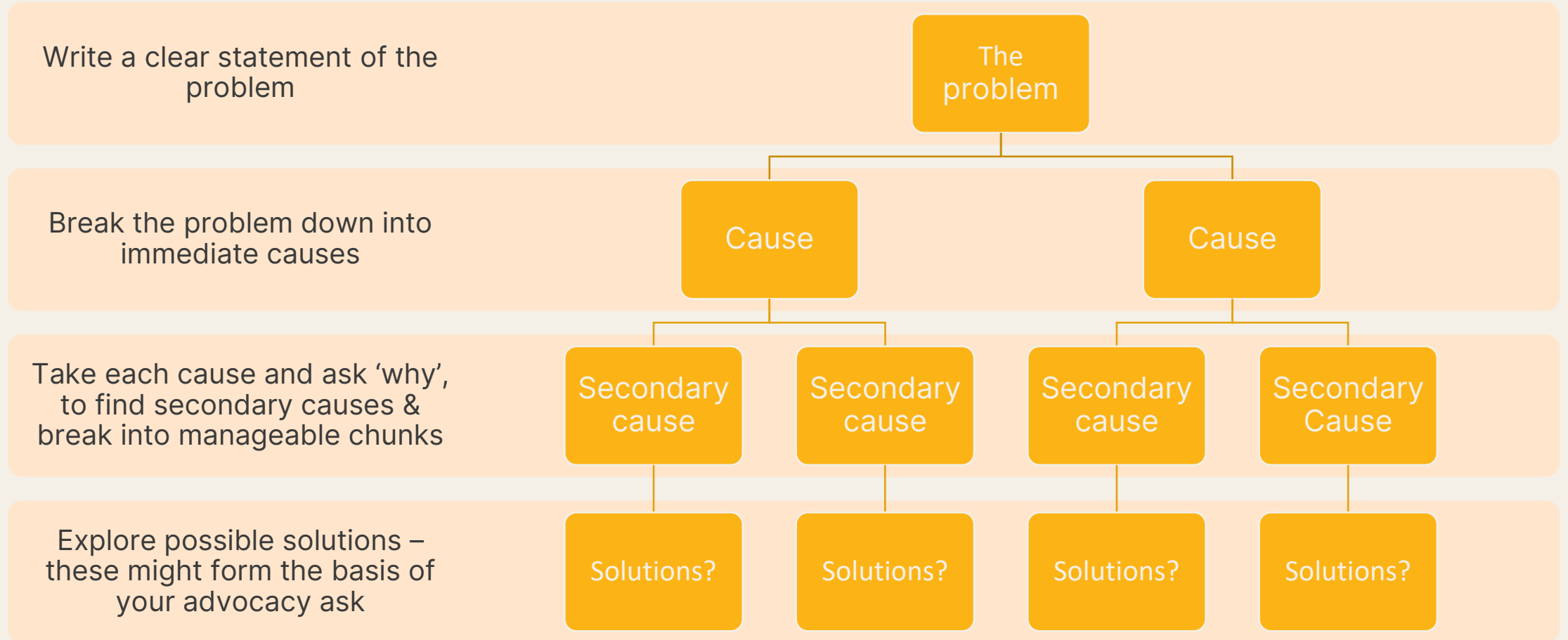


Branches, twigs & leaves = direct effects, then future / knock-on effects

Trunk = a clear statement of the core problem

Root system = causes, dig deeper into primary and secondary causes.

# Problem tree – using post-its



Top Tip: You can also create a “Solution Tree” – put your core aim/goal in the trunk, the roots are your objectives and the branches/twigs and leaves are the positive benefits of your solution.

# Tool 2: Advocacy 'filter'

CRITERIA	USEFUL QUESTIONS
"FIT"	How does this issue fit with our organisational history and mission, values and approach we take?
EVIDENCE	Can we 'show the problem' clearly? Do we have relevant research/analysis, case studies/stories, or the ability to generate these?
SMART DEMAND	Have we got a clear, measurable advocacy demand? Do we have a clear proposed solution to the problem? Is this demand achievable?
TARGET	Who has the power to decide? Who influences them? Is the target clear? Do we have a 'baddie'/Enemy No.1
PATH OF INFLUENCE	Is there a clear path of influence for reaching the decision maker?
PUBLIC TRACTION	Can we demonstrate public interest in this issue? Is there a strong human angle that will generate public concern? Can we create strong visual/emotive frames, symbols and analogies/metaphors?
ALLIES	Do we have potential to build a powerful alliance / coalition of support behind this? Who might be willing to work with us?
TIMING	Is this topic timely? Is there a window of opportunity right now? Is the time right?
RESOURCES	Do we have the right expertise and knowledge, or can we acquire/develop it? Do we have enough financial / technical resources to deliver? What would it take?



# Tool 3: Effort vs impact



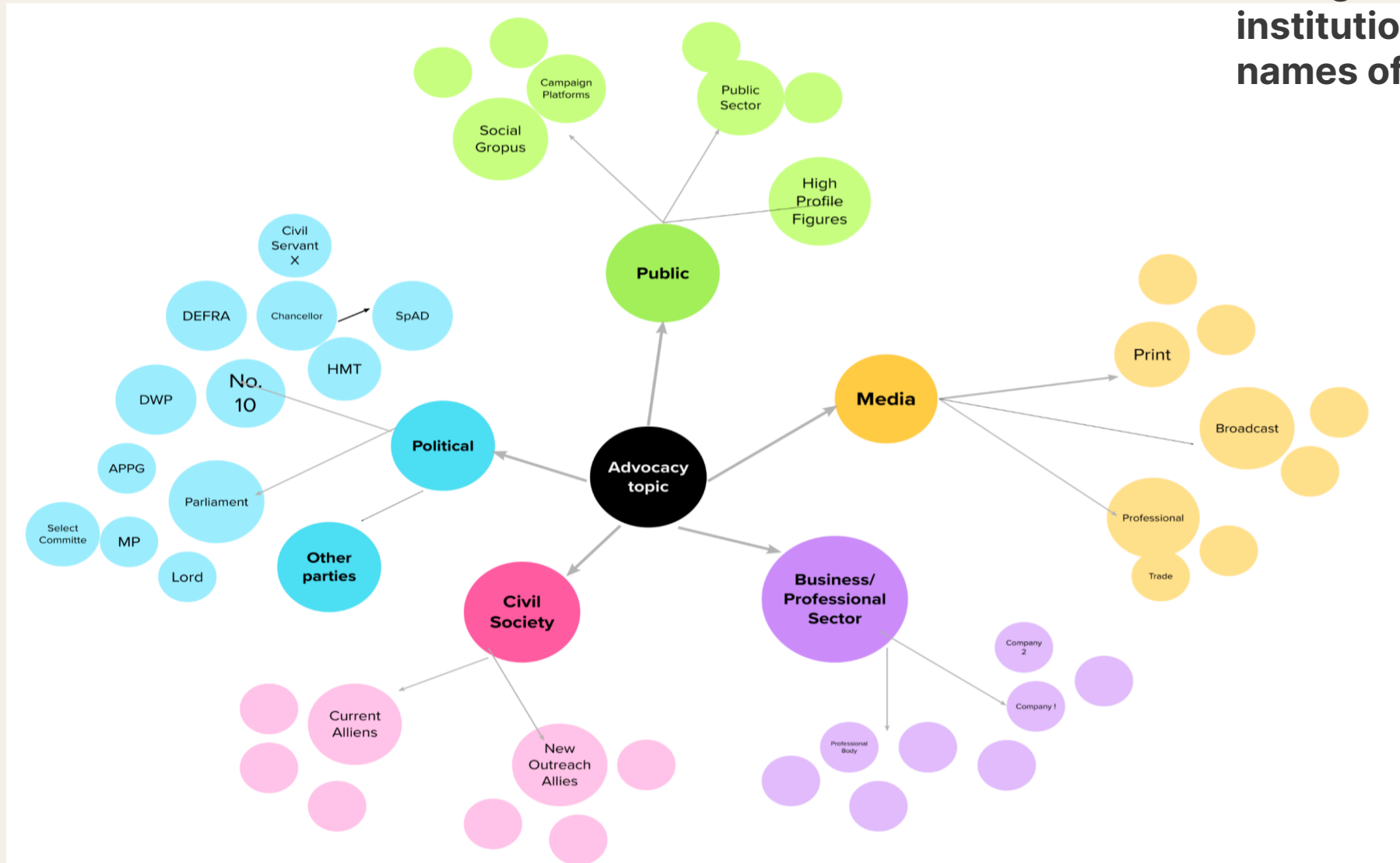
# Targets & stakeholders

# Targets for advocacy

- **Decision makers do not work in isolation**
  - Decision advisers
  - Decision influencers
- **What level of access can you get to your target?**
  - Who else has access
  - Who does your target listen to?
  - What access do you have to advisers and influencers?
- **Is your target under pressure from anywhere else?**

# Stakeholder/power mapping

NB Focus not just on organisations / institutions but names of people

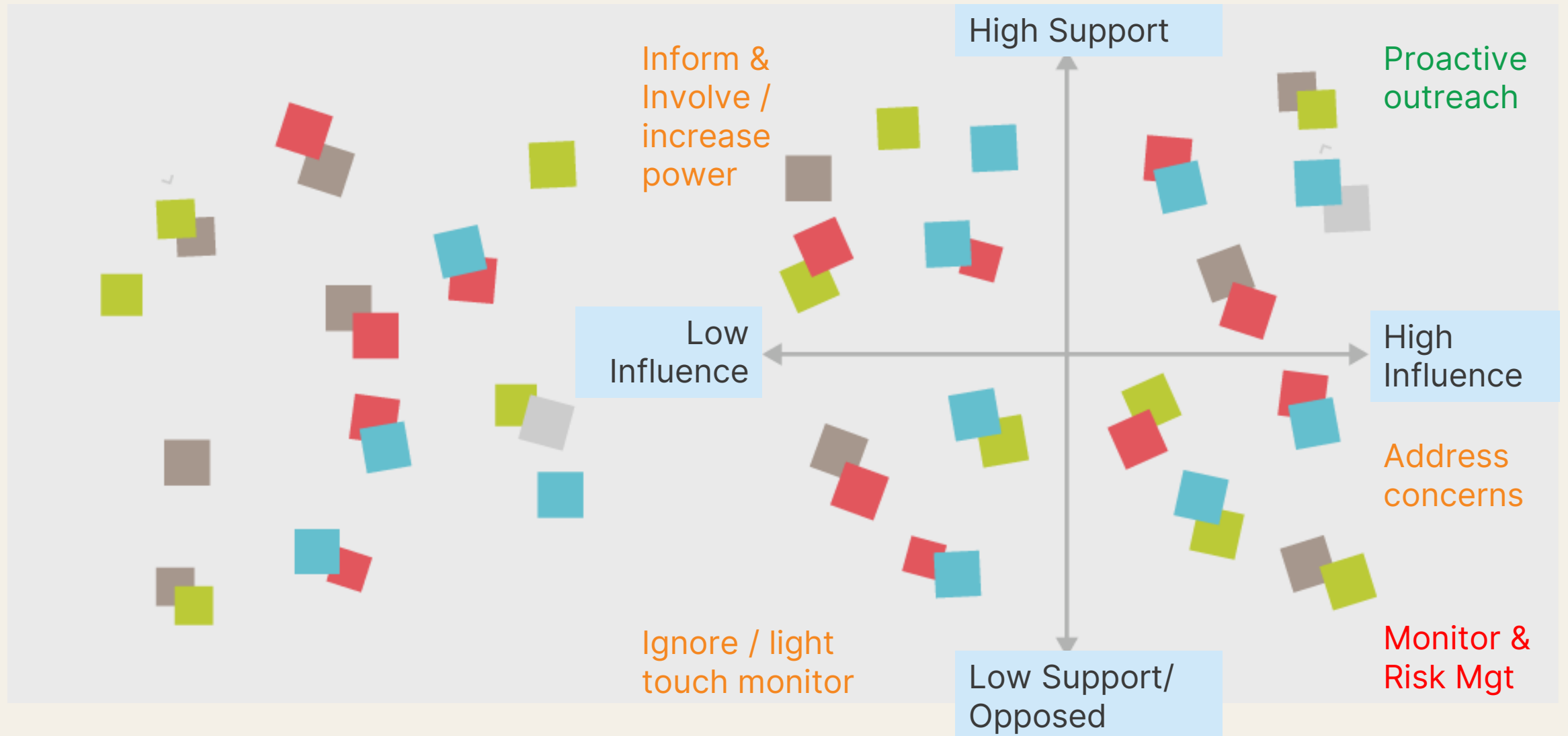


# Stakeholder / power analysis

- **ATTITUDE:** How much do they agree / disagree with us
- **IMPORTANCE:** What level of importance does this stakeholder give to this issue? How high on their agenda is it likely to be?
- **INFLUENCE:** How much influence do they have over this issue? Where does their influence lie in relation to any decision?

# Stakeholder / power mapping

NB You can map on high interest / level of support vs high impact / power to influence



# What wins people over?

**INTEREST**

+

**EVIDENCE**

+

**RELATIONSHIP**

+

**A SOLUTION**

- Personal interest
- Professional interest/need to change
- Clear evidence that change is desirable in relation to their interest
- Persuaded by someone they respect and like
- Know how/power to implement a solution – a clear path for how to change.

# Allies, coalition & community building

- Which communities do you want to involve?
- How does this issue fit with their goals and experience?
- How can they help you shape your work on this? Involvement in co-production or co-design of your advocacy programme?
- What role could they help play in building momentum on this issue and/or reaching decision makers and influencers?
- What resources do you have to support their involvement?



# Approaches & Tactics

# Mobilising your resources

- **What assets do you have?**
  - Evidence
  - Expertise / Knowledge
  - Contacts & relationships
  - Funding
  - Reputation / public profile
  - Technical platforms and tools
- **What are the gaps in resources, and can these be addressed?**
- **How can you turn your assets into the power to achieve the change you want to see?**
- **How can you mobilise the assets of other allies, stakeholders & partners?**

# Tactics – what role do you play?

	ADVANTAGES	DISADVANTAGES
<b>Cooperative (Insider)</b>	Better knowledge of position/views of target Can work 'with the flow' Can build relationship & trust with decision makers	Risk of co-option Risk of dilution of own ask in order to find middle ground May exclude stakeholders Potential to be misrepresented
<b>Confrontational (Outsider)</b>	Higher profile Greater freedom of action Ability to involve & mobilise	Can be counter-productive & entrench opposition Risk of marginalisation Loss of political/financial support
<b>Critical Friend (Insider/Outsider)</b>	Share evidence & clear position, whilst maintaining independence. Constructive but principled	Potentially 'sitting on fence' in eyes of some stakeholders Potential to be misrepresented Potential erosion of insider role

**Tip:** What role are others playing on this? What plays to your strengths & fills the gap?

# **Advocacy Communications & Messaging**

# Advocacy communications toolkit

- **Evidence & position document**
  - Setting out the context and facts, and your analysis of it... laying the ground work for...
- **Core/Umbrella Message**
  - Your core proposition and advocacy 'ask' – what you want and why
- **Stories & Images**
  - The narratives, case studies, human interest that adds colour to your advocacy work
- **Tailored messaging for different audiences / stakeholders**
  - Working with the frames and interests based on insight into where they're at, and how you want to move them to action
- **The 'one-minute' version**

# Building your advocacy message

## Frames = mental shortcuts to 'think fast' about things

- Assumptions about our world
- Help us make sense of our world and shape our understanding
- Activated by the things we see and hear
- Exist across culture and are enduring

## Q: What frames exist in the sphere of our work of food justice?

- On food security / poverty; On obesity and health; On sustainable farming?

## Framing = making deliberate choices about what we do and don't say

**Resources:** [Frameworks Institute](#). JRF [toolkit on poverty](#). Impact on Urban Health [toolkit on child health/obesity](#).

# Ingredients of framing

- **A good story**
  - Why it matters - eg lead with positive health, shared purpose
  - What it's about – the context that shapes the problem, the causes not just the issue itself
  - Metaphors – eg rivers and stage/spotlight on obesity
  - How we can fix it
- **Things to leave unsaid**
  - Jargon, acronyms, technical terms
  - Leading with economic arguments may backfire (eg cost to NHS)
- **Jobs of a good message**
  - What we want people to know, think, feel and do
- **Repeat, collaborate, repeat**

# Framing & advocacy

- **Know what you are up against**
  - What do you know about what people already think?
  - What language might speak to them?
  - The frames operating with your advocacy targets and stakeholders that are holding your issue back
- **Know what you stand for**
  - Not just 'rebuttal', beware of reinforcing negative frames
  - Focus on a positive, alternative viewpoint and narrative
- **Repeat 'ad nauseam'**
  - Changing hearts, viewpoints takes time. Don't worry about repetition. Get collaborators and allies to reinforce a common new message and idea.



# Adapting for different audiences

## Public

Jargon free,  
common  
language

Positive and  
inclusive –  
we/our

## Political

What's in it for  
them? Why  
should they act?

Succinct, direct,  
factual

## Professional

Additional  
language for  
expert audience

Embracing their  
role within the  
change you seek

# Tool: A message house

## UMBRELLA STATEMENT

	MESSAGE 1: THE CHALLENGE	MESSAGE 2: WHAT WE WANT	MESSAGE 3: WHAT YOU CAN DO
<b>POINT:</b> The 'hook' or soundbite to catch attention			
<b>EVIDENCE:</b> Facts, statistics, proof points			
<b>STORY:</b> The human interest, why we care			

# Channels of advocacy communication

	Decision Makers	Influencers	Allies	Public
1:1 Meetings				
Workshops / Roundtables				
Public Events & Conferences				
Direct letters & emails				
Media (print/broadcast/online) & Press confs				
Social Media				
Local / community channels				
<i>Add your channel</i>				

# Plans and evaluation

# Making a plan

	Year / Period 1	Year / Period 2	Year / Period 3	Review Period
External timeline & Events				
Research & Evidence Building	★ ★ ★	★	★	★
Policy & Lobbying	★	★ ★ ★	★ ★ ★ ★	
Mobilisation / Campaigning		★	★	★ ★ ★ ★
Communications / Media & PR		★	★	★ ★ ★ ★
Monitoring Evaluation & Learning	★ ★	★	★	★ ★ ★

**Are we winning?**

# **The power of evaluation**

- **Why is evaluation useful to us?**
- **When and how do we do it?**
- **How do we know if we're making progress?**
- **How do we evaluate advocacy, when we don't control the outcome? What is worth monitoring & measuring?**

# Monitoring & Evaluation (recap!)

	WHAT WE DO - Activities/Outputs	Indicators	THE IMPACT OF WHAT WE DO - Outcomes	Indicators
<b>What are we monitoring / evaluating? (What is the indicator?)</b>				
<b>How will we measure it?</b>				
<b>When will this take place?</b>				
<b>Who needs to be involved?</b>				
<b>What resources are needed?</b>				



# 5 Stages of Advocacy Success

- Our advocacy ask is **being noticed**
- More people (esp influential) are **agreeing and supporting** what we're calling for
- Decision makers (and those influencing them) are **engaging with our ask**
- Our ask is being incorporated into **new policies and political processes**
- The change we advocated is **delivering positive change**

# **Annexe – additional tools & notes**

# Further resources on advocacy

- The Advocacy Hub blog - <https://theadvocacyhub.org/our-thinking/blog/>
- Future Advocacy mini-masterclasses <https://futureadvocacy.com/training/>
- The Advocacy iceberg podcast (Jim Coe of Advocacy Hub)  
<http://www.coeandkingham.org.uk/feed/podcast>
- Creative Coalitions handbook (Crisis Action) <https://crisisaction.org/handbook/contents/>
- Do Something: Activism for Everyone, by Kajal Odendra (Change.Org)  
<https://www.hive.co.uk/Product/Kajal-Odedra/Do-Something--Activism-for-Everyone/24115976>
- How to Win Campaigns: Communications for Change, by Chris Rose  
<https://www.hive.co.uk/Product/Chris-Rose/How-to-Win-Campaigns--Communications-for-Change/7073028> and Chris Rose's 12 Guidelines and Campaign Strategy website  
[http://www.campaignstrategy.org/twelve\\_guidelines.php?pg=intro](http://www.campaignstrategy.org/twelve_guidelines.php?pg=intro)
- VSO Participatory Advocacy Toolkit <http://www.toolsforchange.net/wp-content/uploads/2012/01/VSO-2009-Participatory-Advocacy.pdf?4c19cd>

# Tips for successful lobbying meetings – PREPARATION

## 1. Know your target

- Do your homework, check background, interests, political speeches, questions
- Know what motivates them and who influences them
- Anticipate their questions

## 2. Frame your request & use relationships to open the door

- go to where they are

## 3. Know what you want

- get clear on your ask – understand what is in their power to do

## 4. Have an offer up your sleeve

- Think about what your organisation has/can do that might be useful to them

# Tips for successful lobbying meetings – DURING THE MEETING

- **Value their time** Recognise people are often busy, be succinct and acknowledge time
- **Be interesting!** Have facts, stories, metaphors, insights that will engage
- **Know your politics** – be clear on the political story you need to tell, why this is important for them, their constituents, the current political agenda & activity
- **Listen & respond** – Ask questions to understand better where they are coming from, think about how you can help
- **Clearly present your ask**
- **Clarify any actions / follow up**
- **Keep notes** – not just actions but observations, key points

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