



## Self-Assessment Checklist: Advocacy

The Code of Good Practice for NGOs Responding to HIV/AIDS (the 'Code') defines advocacy as a method and a process of influencing decision-makers and public perceptions about an issue of concern, and mobilizing community action to achieve social change, including legislative and policy reform, to address the concern.

Laws, policies, social norms, and community attitudes and perceptions shape the environment in which we respond to HIV and AIDS. The Code states that advocacy efforts may be focused at a local, national, and international level, with the aim of creating and sustaining an environment where laws and public policy protect the rights of PLHIV and affected communities, support effective programmes and reduce vulnerability to HIV and its consequences.



### The Code identifies two key principles on advocacy:

- We advocate for an enabling environment that protects and promotes the rights of people living with HIV (PLHIV) and affected communities and supports effective programming.
- We plan, monitor and evaluate advocacy efforts for effectiveness and in response to community need.

This self-assessment checklist will help you assess the degree to which your organisation is successfully implementing these principles. The questions are designed to be thinking points/guidelines to help you identify areas that are already at a 'good practice' level, and areas that need to be developed and strengthened.

### author

This module was developed by the International Treatment Preparedness Coalition (ITPC) and the Asia Pacific Network of People Living with HIV (APN+).



## Self-Assessment Checklist: Advocacy

### Self-Assessment Instructions

This checklist should be completed by a group of three to five staff members who are involved your organisation's advocacy work. It was designed to be used by organisations actively engaged in HIV advocacy, or those exploring the possibility of becoming advocates for any of the many challenging issues related to HIV.

Please indicate your answer to each question by marking the appropriate box.

- Y** Yes, we undertake this work/activity
- I** Insufficient, in preparation, or is not followed in practice
- N** No, we've not yet tackled this work/activity
- NR** Not relevant to our work

**Please be honest in completing this checklist.** It is expected that your scoring will vary between modules, depending on your area of expertise.

**There is no formalized scoring process for this assessment. Instead, we suggest that you look at the questions that you answered 'no' or 'insufficient' to, and then select areas that are most relevant for your organisation to improve upon in the short-term.**

### Action Plan

We challenge you to use this tool to identify areas that your organisation needs to strengthen in order to reach a 'good practice' level, and then develop a brief Action Plan that highlights examples of HOW you will improve your advocacy work over the next six months. You can use the Action Plan template provided at the end of this module or create your own.

**There are eight Key Questions highlighted in the checklist in red.** These questions address fundamental issues that you need to consider first when assessing your organisation's advocacy activities. As you develop your Action Plan, keep these questions in mind and if you have answered 'no' to any of them, this would be a good starting point for improving your programmes!

#### How to save the Action Plan:

Complete the self-assessment module and Action Plan electronically, save the file and submit it to the Code Secretariat by email. The Secretariat will credit all NGOs that submit Action Plans as 'Implementing' NGOs and full signatories of the Code. After the period of six months, we will ask you to measure your progress against your Action Plan.

### the Code

The Code of Good Practice for NGOs Responding to HIV/AIDS (the 'Code') was created by a broad consortium of NGOs to provide a shared vision of good practice to which NGOs can commit and be held accountable.

The Code outlines principles and practices that are informed by evidence and underscore successful NGO responses to HIV. It identifies a series of areas that are key to HIV programming and articulates fundamental principles that should be applied to HIV programmes in each of these areas.

These principles are aspirational, setting out examples of good practice that NGOs can work towards over time.

**For more information on the Code, go to [www.hivcode.org](http://www.hivcode.org)**



# Checklist

Please indicate your answer by marking the appropriate box.

**Y** Yes, we undertake this work/activity

**I** Insufficient, in preparation, or being considered

**N** No, we've not yet tackled this work/activity

**NR** Not relevant to our work

## A

### Enabling Environment

This section will help you determine if your organisation provides and/or advocates for an enabling environment for its constituents, staff, volunteers, and society at large.

#### A.1 Organisational Structure

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="radio"/> <b>Y</b> <input type="radio"/> <b>I</b> <input type="radio"/> <b>N</b> <input type="radio"/> <b>NR</b> | 1. Is your organisation's advocacy work supported by its mission, goals, senior managers and external funders?   |
| <input type="radio"/> <b>Y</b> <input type="radio"/> <b>I</b> <input type="radio"/> <b>N</b> <input type="radio"/> <b>NR</b> | 2. Does your organisation ensure the meaningful participation of PLHIV as volunteers, staff, management and Board members?   |
| <input type="radio"/> <b>Y</b> <input type="radio"/> <b>I</b> <input type="radio"/> <b>N</b> <input type="radio"/> <b>NR</b> | 3. Does your organisation ensure the meaningful participation of PLHIV (including women and youth) in the activities, work and major decisions of your organisation?   |
| <input type="radio"/> <b>Y</b> <input type="radio"/> <b>I</b> <input type="radio"/> <b>N</b> <input type="radio"/> <b>NR</b> | 4. <b>Do your organisation's advocacy efforts actively involve PLHIV, affected communities and community stakeholders (including women and youth)?</b>   |
| <input type="radio"/> <b>Y</b> <input type="radio"/> <b>I</b> <input type="radio"/> <b>N</b> <input type="radio"/> <b>NR</b> | 5. Do members of key populations (sex workers and their clients, men who have sex with men (MSM), drug users and prisoners) with whom your organisation works fully participate in the major advocacy decisions and activities of your organisation? |
| <input type="radio"/> <b>Y</b> <input type="radio"/> <b>I</b> <input type="radio"/> <b>N</b> <input type="radio"/> <b>NR</b> | 6. Does your organisation engage all genders in its advocacy activities?   |

#### A.2 Advocacy Issues

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="radio"/> <b>Y</b> <input type="radio"/> <b>I</b> <input type="radio"/> <b>N</b> <input type="radio"/> <b>NR</b> | 7. Does your organisation advocate for:  |
| <input type="radio"/> <b>Y</b> <input type="radio"/> <b>I</b> <input type="radio"/> <b>N</b> <input type="radio"/> <b>NR</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the review and reform of legislation to ensure that it supports effective HIV prevention, care and treatment, and is consistent with international human rights obligations?</li> <li>enacting, or improving, anti-discrimination and other protective laws and policies (including ethics in research, privacy and informed consent for testing and treatment)?</li> </ul> |



# Checklist

<input type="radio"/> Y <input type="radio"/> I <input type="radio"/> N <input type="radio"/> NR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• monitoring and enforcement mechanisms (including complaint systems) that are appropriate for, and accessible to, PLHIV and affected communities to guarantee the protection of HIV-related human rights?</li> </ul>
<input type="radio"/> Y <input type="radio"/> I <input type="radio"/> N <input type="radio"/> NR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• establishing or improving legal and related services to enable PLHIV, affected communities and people from key populations to know about and enforce their rights?</li> </ul>
<input type="radio"/> Y <input type="radio"/> I <input type="radio"/> N <input type="radio"/> NR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the reform of laws and policies that stigmatize or discriminate against PLHIV, affected communities and people from key populations, and/or undermine access to information, education and the means of prevention?</li> </ul>
<input type="radio"/> Y <input type="radio"/> I <input type="radio"/> N <input type="radio"/> NR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• improving women's access to education and to economic resources, such as training, legal reform and credit schemes, to contribute to women's overall decision-making power within households and in sexual relationships?</li> </ul>
<input type="radio"/> Y <input type="radio"/> I <input type="radio"/> N <input type="radio"/> NR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• reviewing and reforming laws regulating HIV-related goods to ensure widespread availability of prevention commodities?</li> </ul>
<input type="radio"/> Y <input type="radio"/> I <input type="radio"/> N <input type="radio"/> NR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• engaging active political and community leadership on the value and effectiveness of comprehensive harm reduction programmes for people who inject drugs?</li> </ul>
<input type="radio"/> Y <input type="radio"/> I <input type="radio"/> N <input type="radio"/> NR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• reforming health systems to promote application of universal infection control, including safe injection practices and the securing of a safe blood supply?</li> </ul>
<input type="radio"/> Y <input type="radio"/> I <input type="radio"/> N <input type="radio"/> NR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the development of health service infrastructure to support comprehensive and integrated prevention, testing, treatment, care and support programmes?</li> </ul>
<input type="radio"/> Y <input type="radio"/> I <input type="radio"/> N <input type="radio"/> NR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• wider availability of affordable male and female condoms?</li> </ul>
<input type="radio"/> Y <input type="radio"/> I <input type="radio"/> N <input type="radio"/> NR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• HIV vaccines and microbicide development (including access to community preparedness measures)?</li> </ul>
<input type="radio"/> Y <input type="radio"/> I <input type="radio"/> N <input type="radio"/> NR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• access to safe, effective and affordable medications (including improved supply of affordable drugs by governments)?</li> </ul>
	<p>This also includes international issues regarding compulsory licensing, parallel importing, low international prices for HIV-related drugs and national laws relating to regulation of HIV-related goods to ensure widespread availability of safe and effective medication at affordable prices.</p>



## Checklist

Y  I  N  NR

• the reform of laws and policies to decriminalise sex work?

Y  I  N  NR

• the reform of laws and policies in relation to MSM?

Y  I  N  NR

• reviewing and reforming laws relating to violence against and sexual abuse of women and children?

**Actions needed to support Section A:**



## Checklist

# B

## Analysis

These questions are designed to help you assess whether your organisation fully analyzes the local context before engaging in advocacy on an issue.

### B.1 Policy Environment

Y  I  N  NR

1. Does your organisation advocate on behalf of individuals and communities affected by HIV?

Y  I  N  NR

2. Does your organisation ensure that the issues it advocates on are significant by ensuring the meaningful involvement of its constituents and the general public (including women and young people) in defining the issues?

Y  I  N  NR

3. Does your organisation ensure that its advocacy issues are timely – that your constituents perceive it to be important and there is a reasonable prospect that policy change is possible?

Y  I  N  NR

4. **Does your organisation map the environment to identify factors that may affect advocacy processes and outcomes?**

This includes mapping:

- current leadership
- legal and law enforcement, social and cultural, and health and welfare contexts
- gender issues
- HIV and AIDS policy environment
- legislative impediments to effective HIV and AIDS advocacy

Y  I  N  NR

5. Does your organisation use evidence and lessons learned from previous advocacy activities to inform new activities?

Y  I  N  NR

6. Does your organisation use evidence-informed data (surveys, focus groups, research findings) and national statistics to inform your advocacy activities?

Y  I  N  NR

7. Does your organisation utilize gender-disaggregated data to inform your advocacy work?

Y  I  N  NR

8. Does your organisation analyze, synthesize and translate research and other evidence so that it is relevant for target audiences?



## Checklist

### B.2 Stakeholders

Y  I  N  NR

9. Have all relevant stakeholders, including networks of PLHIV, decision-makers and influential individuals and groups, been identified by your organisation?

Y  I  N  NR

10. When planning advocacy work, is your organisation aware of political dynamics among stakeholders and other possible influencing factors?

**Actions needed to support Section B:**



## Checklist

### C Strategy

This section will help you assess how comprehensive your organisation's advocacy strategy is.

#### C.1 Objectives

Y  I  N  NR

1. Does your organisation have an advocacy strategy in place that has been approved by senior management or a governing board?

Y  I  N  NR

2. Are SMART objectives (specific, measurable, achievable/appropriate, relevant/realistic, and time-bound) used to develop advocacy activities?

Y  I  N  NR

3. Are indicators developed to monitor the processes and evaluate the impact of your advocacy activities?

Y  I  N  NR

4. If yes, are the findings shared with your organisation's constituents and stakeholders?

#### C.2 Methods

Y  I  N  NR

5. Does your organisation consider various advocacy methods (such as media campaigns and lobbying policy-makers) to determine the most effective ways to achieve your advocacy objectives?

Y  I  N  NR

6. Does your organisation utilise multiple channels of communication (personal contacts, community media, mass media - print, radio, TV), and information technologies (e-mail, internet, electronic discussion forums) in your advocacy work?

Y  I  N  NR

7. Does your organisation ensure that your advocacy activities are appropriate for the geographical/community context?

Y  I  N  NR

8. Does your organisation ensure that your advocacy activities are appropriate for the intended audience?

Y  I  N  NR

9. Does your organisation's advocacy work include capacity-building to strengthen active and potential advocates?

Y  I  N  NR

10. Does your organisation's advocacy work help groups to build consensus on positions?



## Checklist

### C.3 Resources

Y  I  N  NR

11. Does your organisation have enough funding and human resources to carry out your planned advocacy activities?

### C.4 Risk Assessment

Y  I  N  NR

12. Does your organisation identify potential challenges and barriers to its advocacy work?

Y  I  N  NR

13. If yes, are solutions to overcoming these challenges and barriers included in your advocacy strategy?

Y  I  N  NR

14. Are your organisation's representatives prepared to talk to and answer questions from the press and journalists?

Y  I  N  NR

15. If your organisation advocates on controversial issues, does it prepare its representatives to respond to opposing viewpoints and opinions?

Y  I  N  NR

16. Does your organisation decide ahead of time when to stop advocacy activities and when risks are unacceptable to the organisation, partners or others?

**Actions needed to support Section C:**



## Checklist

### D

#### Networking and Coalition-Building

These questions will help you to consider the issues relating to effective advocacy coalitions.

Y  I  N  NR

1. Does your organisation develop strategic partnerships and coalitions with organisations, institutions, and networks that share common goals and policy interests, resulting in joint advocacy action?

Y  I  N  NR

2. Are the purpose, strategy and approach of the partnerships and coalitions clearly defined?

Y  I  N  NR

3. Is your organisation committed to joining a network with participatory processes and collaboration?

Y  I  N  NR

4. Has your organisation identified a staff member(s) to take the lead in working with partnerships and coalitions?

Y  I  N  NR

5. Prior to joining a coalition, does your organisation look for shared vision, diverse membership, good relationships among members and a strong consensus on key issues?

Y  I  N  NR

6. Does your organisation seek opportunities to have a voice in the decision-making and ensure that your organisation is represented at all coalition meetings?

Y  I  N  NR

7. Does your organisation advocate for the responsibilities of coalition members to be clearly delegated and equitable distributed to members?

Y  I  N  NR

8. As a coalition member, does your organisation promote:

Y  I  N  NR

• shared leadership roles to promote participatory planning and decision-making?

Y  I  N  NR

• trust and collaboration among members?

Y  I  N  NR

• the motivation of members by acknowledging their contributions?

**Actions needed to support Section D:**



# Checklist

## E

### Action

These questions will help you assess whether your organisation's advocacy activities include the necessary critical elements.

#### E.1 Building Relationships and Public Support

<input type="radio"/> Y <input type="radio"/> I <input type="radio"/> N <input type="radio"/> NR	1. Does your organisation build relationships with relevant target audiences in an effort to move forward on its advocacy objectives?
<input type="radio"/> Y <input type="radio"/> I <input type="radio"/> N <input type="radio"/> NR	2. Does your organisation provide public education on proposed policy changes?
<input type="radio"/> Y <input type="radio"/> I <input type="radio"/> N <input type="radio"/> NR	3. Does your organisation support networks of PLHIV and key population groups to advocate on their own behalves?
<input type="radio"/> Y <input type="radio"/> I <input type="radio"/> N <input type="radio"/> NR	4. Does your organisation develop and maintain media support through personal contacts, press releases, press conferences?
<input type="radio"/> Y <input type="radio"/> I <input type="radio"/> N <input type="radio"/> NR	5. Does your organisation work with law enforcement agencies to ensure that sex workers, MSM and injecting drug users do not face harassment?
<input type="radio"/> Y <input type="radio"/> I <input type="radio"/> N <input type="radio"/> NR	6. Does your organisation work with law enforcement agencies to ensure that sex workers, MSM and drug users do not face harassment?

#### E.2 The Message

<input type="radio"/> Y <input type="radio"/> I <input type="radio"/> N <input type="radio"/> NR	<b>7. In formulating your organisation's advocacy messages, do you consider the following elements:</b>
<input type="radio"/> Y <input type="radio"/> I <input type="radio"/> N <input type="radio"/> NR	<b>• Content</b> - Have you fully articulated the main idea—the specific message you want to convey to your audience?
<input type="radio"/> Y <input type="radio"/> I <input type="radio"/> N <input type="radio"/> NR	<b>• Language</b> - Is the word choice clear or could it be interpreted differently by various audiences; is the language appropriate for the target audience?
<input type="radio"/> Y <input type="radio"/> I <input type="radio"/> N <input type="radio"/> NR	<b>• Messenger/Source</b> - Are the messengers credible to your target audience; do they include community representatives?
<input type="radio"/> Y <input type="radio"/> I <input type="radio"/> N <input type="radio"/> NR	<b>• Format/Medium</b> - Is the best format to reach your target audience used (for example, signed petition, face-to-face meeting, television or radio advertisement)?



## Checklist

Y  I  N  NR

- **Time and Place** - Do you present your message at a venue or time when it will attract more attention, such as an AIDS conference or World AIDS Day, or during an electoral campaign that might make policy-makers more open to the message, or link it to other political events that will draw attention?

**Actions needed to support Section E:**



# Checklist

## F

### Evaluation

This section will help you assess whether your organisation is comprehensively monitoring and evaluating its advocacy efforts.

<input type="radio"/> Y <input type="radio"/> I <input type="radio"/> N <input type="radio"/> NR	1. Does your organisation monitor and respond quickly to other views and feedback received as a result of your advocacy activities?
<input type="radio"/> Y <input type="radio"/> I <input type="radio"/> N <input type="radio"/> NR	2. Are the purpose, strategy and approach of the partnerships and coalitions clearly defined?
<input type="radio"/> Y <input type="radio"/> I <input type="radio"/> N <input type="radio"/> NR	3. Does your organisation document which strategies and activities have been most successful and which have not, and why?
<input type="radio"/> Y <input type="radio"/> I <input type="radio"/> N <input type="radio"/> NR	4. Does your organisation keep all coalition members informed of activities and results?
<input type="radio"/> Y <input type="radio"/> I <input type="radio"/> N <input type="radio"/> NR	5. Does your organisation hold decision-makers accountable for commitments made, and acknowledge their efforts?
<input type="radio"/> Y <input type="radio"/> I <input type="radio"/> N <input type="radio"/> NR	6. Does your organisation share findings with your constituents and stakeholders?
<input type="radio"/> Y <input type="radio"/> I <input type="radio"/> N <input type="radio"/> NR	7. Are the following tracked to determine the effectiveness of advocacy efforts:
<input type="radio"/> Y <input type="radio"/> I <input type="radio"/> N <input type="radio"/> NR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>media reports to map changes in the public discussion of your issue (for example the number of times your organisation, campaign or issue is mentioned; the balance of pro- or anti-commentary, and whether they are adopting your campaign language)?</li> </ul>
<input type="radio"/> Y <input type="radio"/> I <input type="radio"/> N <input type="radio"/> NR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>policy statements from your target audience (for example changes in rhetoric, what they are saying about your campaign, and whether they are moving closer to your position)?</li> </ul>
<input type="radio"/> Y <input type="radio"/> I <input type="radio"/> N <input type="radio"/> NR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>public polls or surveys?</li> </ul>
<input type="radio"/> Y <input type="radio"/> I <input type="radio"/> N <input type="radio"/> NR	8. Does your organisation collect measurable data (from target audiences, programme implementers, strategic partners and beneficiaries) about the processes used and the impact of advocacy activities?



## Checklist

Y  I  N  NR

Y  I  N  NR

Y  I  N  NR

Y  I  N  NR

Y  I  N  NR

Y  I  N  NR

9. Is the data collected used to assess the extent to which advocacy efforts have:

- affected awareness about the issues?
- influenced your organisation's credibility as an advocate?
- made a contribution to the debate?
- changed laws and policy?
- influenced the attitudes or beliefs of opinion leaders?
- affected the lives of PLHIV, people from key populations and affected communities?

Y  I  N  NR

10. Does your organisation document unintended changes and other factors that may have influenced your target audience and affected your advocacy campaign?

Y  I  N  NR

11. Are the experiences of advocates documented, such as lessons learned concerning the effectiveness of partnerships and alliances, 'packaging' messages, and the use of evidence?

Y  I  N  NR

**12. Is the data collected used to assess the effectiveness of processes used, including effectiveness of partnerships, involvement of PLHIV and organisational advocacy capacity?**

**Actions needed to support Section F:**



# Checklist

## G Continuity

These questions will help you think about your organisation's on-going role in advocacy and how you maintain engagement with the issues on which you advocate.

<input type="radio"/> Y <input type="radio"/> I <input type="radio"/> N <input type="radio"/> NR	1. <b>Are staff and financial resources allocated to monitor a new/reformed policies related to your organisation's advocacy issue(s)?</b>
<input type="radio"/> Y <input type="radio"/> I <input type="radio"/> N <input type="radio"/> NR	2. Is feedback collected from your organisation's target audiences and/or the public about how well new or reformed law/policy is working?
<input type="radio"/> Y <input type="radio"/> I <input type="radio"/> N <input type="radio"/> NR	3. Are evaluation findings from your organisation's advocacy work used to inform future advocacy planning?
<input type="radio"/> Y <input type="radio"/> I <input type="radio"/> N <input type="radio"/> NR	4. If desired policy changes do not occur: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• are previous strategies and actions reviewed, revised and repeated?</li><li>• if no, are other actions identified for future advocacy actions?</li><li>• are issues continually monitored and engagement in advocacy maintained to take advantage of future opportunities?</li><li>• is public awareness and interest monitored for opportunities to create or renew attention for the issue?</li></ul>

**Actions needed to support Section G:**



## Action Plan: Advocacy

In completing this self-assessment checklist, you are likely to have identified some areas that are in need of improvement and some that are already at a 'good practice' level.

Please complete the Action Plan table on the next page and highlight examples of how

you will improve your organisation's work on Advocacy over the next six months, thinking first about the Key Questions below. If you answer 'no' to any of these questions, it would be important for you to start here in improving your work!

### Key Questions

1. Do your organisation's advocacy efforts actively involve PLHIV, affected communities and community stakeholders (including women and youth)?
2. Does your organisation map the environment to identify factors that may affect advocacy processes and outcomes?
3. Are SMART objectives (specific, measurable, achievable/appropriate, relevant/realistic, and time-bound) used to develop advocacy activities?
4. Does your organisation develop strategic partnerships and coalitions with organisations, institutions, and networks that share common goals and policy interests, resulting in joint advocacy action?
5. Are content, language, messenger/source, format/medium, and timing/placement thoroughly considered, and messages presented in multiple formats tailored to each of your audiences?
6. Does your organisation collect measurable data (from target audiences, programme implementers, strategic partners and beneficiaries) about the processes used and the impact of advocacy activities?
7. Are documented lessons learned used to assess the effectiveness of processes used, including effectiveness of partnerships, involvement of PLHIV and organisational advocacy capacity?
8. Are staff and financial resources allocated to monitor a new/reformed policy related to your organisation's advocacy issue(s)?

Please remember to save your completed action plan and email it to **info@hivcode.org** or send it to **PO Box 372, 1211 Geneva 19, Switzerland.**

Name of Organisation	Contact Person	Email Address
Signed		Date



## Action Plan: Advocacy

**Expected Outcomes**  
(What do we want to achieve?)

**Key Activities**  
(What do we need to do?)

**Action Points**  
(How do we do it?)

**Resources**  
(What kind of support do we need to do it?)

**Timeframe**  
(When will we do it?)
