

Project number	39911025
Title	Democracy and Advocacy Review

Countries The Philippines, Egypt

Summary The purpose of this advocacy review is to research and identify advocacy success factors and then to consider how PMU might plan and assess their future advocacy and advocacy capacity building interventions with their national level partners.

A number of headline factors emerge from the available literature, also observed during the research review and gained from practical experience; firstly that the external operating environment and national socio-political, economic and legal contexts are crucial in determining whether social change is achievable. Secondly, that when assessing the extent of advocacy capacity within partners to influence change, it manifests at different levels – whether individual, organisational or policy sectoral – but crucially the capacity and space for broader civil society to meaningfully engage with institutions. In addition, the research conducted for this review identified five lessons to be learned:

- that changes in political space or policy/legislative opportunity structures provide new openings for ‘successful’ collective action
- that rarely does citizen mobilisation create policy change alone and that alliance building is critical – both horizontally and vertically
- that international allies, international frameworks (e.g. the MDGs, UNCRC) or norms of institutional behaviour, and international political pressure can strengthen domestic advocacy
- that while careful framing of issues and messages is critical, contentious issues may require contentious politics as well
- that notions of ‘impact’ or ‘success’ can be understood in many different ways, and will vary across the actors in the advocacy. In general though, the more the campaign is rooted in diverse and broad-based coalitions and communities, the more likely will the gains be sustained

More practically for PMU, Appendix 1 contains ideas for an advocacy application (or ‘app’) that maybe useful for PMU in building a strategically coherent and user-friendly approach for directly supporting partners looking to scale up their advocacy capacity.

Ideas for an advocacy “App”:

- Understanding the situation and context:  
Compile static and dynamic information; What are the main issues concerning PMU partner beneficiaries? The space for civil society and how power is exercised. The extent of political, policy and legislative reforms. The use of resources in the country. Therefore given this analysis, what are the advocacy priorities.
- Outline the national advocacy strategy:  
Identify objectives; what do you want to change and why? Is it achievable and measurable? Identify your primary and secondary target audiences. Who can make change happen? Research and map your targets. Where do they stand? What would influence them to make change happen? Identify and map allies and opponents. Who can support your case? Nationally, internationally? Who will oppose change? Identify key messages. What do your targets need to hear?

Determine your strategies and identify external opportunities. What approach should you use to best influence your targets, and when? Set your activities and outputs. What will you concretely do?

- Monitor and evaluate; Develop indicators to monitor and evaluate your outputs, outcomes and contribution to impact. How do you know it's working? Develop indicators to assess progress in organizational and individuals capacity. Is there enhanced advocacy capacity? Build on the lessons learned. How can you use this knowledge in the future?

#### Recommendations Recommendations for PMU

- Continue to develop alternative models for sustainability, empowerment, discussing the role of the church and advocacy effectiveness.
- Continue to sustain continued funding and relationships for the long-term. The achievement of change has been possible, partly because of long-term commitments and the flexibility in approach demonstrated by PMU
- However, the project-funding model may lead to over-focus on delivering short-term activities and a lack of flexibility, not a longer-term strategic integration of advocacy. Explore possibilities to move to more programmatic models of partnerships
- To consider developing a more systematic and strategic approach with advocacy as one of the PMU building blocks, or as a more visible cross-cutting issue within the other building blocks
- PMU and partners may need to consider the good practice in advocacy capacity building, that it happens at different levels (individual, organizational, thematic) in order to maximize the effectiveness of future advocacy capacity building support programs
- A more systematic approach is required to follow-up activities, monitoring, evaluating and learning, for example on sustaining capacity building and training as well as advocacy itself
- There is a need to build systems within partners for demonstrating greater transparency and accountability to stakeholders especially beneficiaries/rights-holders and NGO partners
- All partners are inclined to be overly dependent on a few (brilliant) key individuals, who are well connected politically and highly effective advocates, but small in number and distributing advocacy capacity within partners is important
- Further develop models for establishing social accountability mechanisms (demand level citizen-led advocacy) at decentralized, local and community governance levels through rights-based approaches and partnering with citizens and activists conducting budget and policy monitoring
- Identify strategies where partners could play an enhanced 'watchdog' role at the national level
- Explore capacity building and training for state institutions and officials in order to help them be more receptive to civil society advocacy
- There is a capacity building need for ensuring south-south learning across PMU's programs, the sharing of experiences and exchanging ideas for effective advocacy and models of social change.
- The independence of civil society is fundamental - keep under review, the risk of scaling-up and scope of programs, particularly if led by government rather than beneficiaries
- Encourage PMU and SIDA to continue to be an "intelligent funder", being flexible, understanding and building from the bottom-up – and crucially,

engaging over the long-term ☐

Recommendations for partners:

- To ensure a continued coherent approach to ensuring cross-program synergies; production, training and related organizations ☐
- This may include strategies for building relationships with new civil society partners, Women's groups, human rights defenders, lawyers and journalists ☐
- To consider the growing importance for capacity building for state institutions, civil servants and officials as state institutional governance emerges ☐
- Seek to ensure a smooth and orderly transition of responsibilities to popular organizations ☐
- There may be the future potential for exploring emerging policy and budget frameworks at the different levels of governance (national, local, community) ☐
- To explore a 'watchdog' role at national level, monitoring issues of transparency, accountability and citizen participation especially on education policy ☐
- To consider the growing importance for capacity building for state institutions, civil servants and officials ☐
- Keep under review, the risk of scaling-up and scope of programs, particularly if led by government rather than beneficiaries ☐