CS4ME

CIVIL SOCIETY FOR MALARIA ELIMINATION

FIGHT AGAINST MALARIA
HOW TO DEVELOP A SMART ADVOCACY ACTION PLAN?

A civil society tool for Civil Society

Mini guide developed by IMPACT SANTE AFRIQUE , CS4ME Secretariat

SUMMARY

1 INTRODUCTION

This document is a mini guide developed by the CS4ME secretariat on **How to develop a SMART advocacy action plan.**

The aim is to provide Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) active in the fight against malaria with a simple and practical tool for developing action plans for targeted advocacy.

SMART advocacy is an advocacy method that aims to reach and work with a specific person who has the power to act and bring about the requested change.

SMART advocacy is therefore different from other advocacy methods, which are quite numerous :

The research

The organization produces research (studies, surveys, statistics, reviews, etc.) and uses it to enhance the credibility of its advocacy. Research allows it to strengthen its positions and proposals for change, but also, through the publication and dissemination of the study, to raise awareness and mobilize citizens and decision-makers on the subject. It generally works closely with sympathetic scientists, researchers and policy analysts.

Pilot or model programs

The organization creates a pilot program, or model, and promotes it through publications, visits by decision-makers, media appearances, etc. This allows it to publicize a solution to a problem, influence political priorities or even demonstrate to the government the feasibility of a model intervention, so that it can replicate it.

Human rights

The organization relies on public international law—specifically, economic, social, cultural, civil, and political rights recognized in international conventions—to protect, enforce, apply, and/or expand human rights. Advocacy focuses on the conformity of national law with international law (change of legislation) and the obligations of States in this area (implementation policy). This brings credibility to the arguments and recommendations put forward by the organization and strong legitimacy to the desired change.

The trial

The organization initiates legal proceedings to draw public attention to a problem and/or set a legal precedent. This can be used to address a broader issue affecting many people, such as judicial reform, legislative change, or changes in practices. Some countries have a legal mechanism called «class action,» which allows groups of similarly affected people to take collective legal action.

The opposition

The organization identifies an opponent and directs its strategy against them by making them a public adversary. This can be an entity (company, public figure) or a group of people. The

objective of this strategy is to publicly and mediatically denounce the opponent's practices, in order to prevent them from accessing rights and/or to block their action.

The protest

To draw attention to its issues and gain support for its cause, the organization uses methods of public and/or media protest: demonstrations, marches, boycotts, hunger strikes, etc. Protest can be a tactic of last resort, when more traditional influence strategies fail to open political dialogue.

Lobbying (persuasion)

The organization meets personally with decision-makers to convince them to support a cause or an advocacy proposal: exchange, information sharing, field visits, etc. To gain more weight and visibility, the organization can rely on the credibility and legitimacy of its grievances, popular mobilization, its various allies, the media, etc.

In this strategy, it is important to know his power, that of his adversaries, and what is negotiable or not.

The negotiation

The organization offers decision-makers and opponents a solution that allows all parties to emerge as winners. This strategy targets opponents who are not formally opposed to the cause being defended, and seeks to align their interests. It involves extensive discussion, diplomacy, lobbying and a favorable environment.

The collaboration

The organization works directly with government and public authorities to design and/or implement state legislation and services. This requires compatibility and convergence between NGOs, community groups and government.

Participation

To ensure that politics is not a domain reserved for «specialists», the organization supports and helps citizens and civil society groups to participate in political debates, so that they can directly defend their basic needs and rights.

Awareness

The organization raises awareness among civil society and the media to make its cause visible to decision-makers. To this end, it organizes seminars, conferences, and public debates, uses posters, brochures, alternative media articles and creative messages through music, videos, theater and songs.

The mobilization

Close to the protest, the organization calls for a mobilization of its supporters, and in particular its activist base, to draw attention to its issue, bring weight and legitimacy to its demands and gain the interest of decision-makers. It uses petitions, email or letter campaigns, marches, etc.

The formation of alliances

The organization forms alliances and strong ties with allies to establish the legitimacy of its demands and facilitate their implementation. This requires shared leadership, clearly assigned roles, good communication and rapid and effective decision-making.

The megaphone

The organization uses an «external» person to convey its messages. This could be an «ambassador» for the cause (a well-known person who speaks to the media and decision-makers to make the problem visible), or a person with strong power, influence or an imaginary person, such as a "mascot." The messages appear more neutral and objective, which brings credibility to the advocacy.

Personalization

The organization personifies its cause and messages through a person and their personal situation. This strategy relies on the charisma of a person who becomes «the hero» (unlike the megaphone, who only transmits a message), and allows the cause to be illustrated by appealing to emotions. This strategy however, raises questions of ethics and security: the person who embodies the cause and testifies finds himself exposed to violent reactions.

The momentum

The organization uses a moment or event to bring its cause to the forefront: an election, international events, political meetings, debates around a law or reform, a highly visible crime or tragedy. It can also create this moment by organizing a festival or a walk, etc.

The CS4ME mini guide developed was heavily inspired by the practical guide: **SMART Advocacy - Successfully Changing Policies and Funding** (© 2021 Advance Family Planning).

Why SMART advocacy ?

An advocacy is said to be SMART when the objectives and activities must meet the following 5 criteria abbreviated under the acronym **SMART** in both French and English:

In French	In English
S Spécifique	S Specific
M Mesurable	M Measurable
A Atteignable	A Attainable
R Réaliste	R Relevant
T Temporel	T Timebound

Why develop SMART advocacy?

It is important to sequence the advocacy process into several steps that can be managed by both advocacy experts and novices. SMART advocacy builds consensus from the beginning and incorporates continuous monitoring, evaluation and learning. **It is targeted, rooted in the best available scientific evidence and reflects and adapts to the local context.**

Furthermore, developing a SMART advocacy strategy also teaches advocates :

- How to break down their goals into objectives, that is to say, distinguish on the one hand, the goal which is a long-term overall achievement and on the other hand, the objective which is a short-term measurable action;
- How to track activities aimed at achieving SMART objectives and possibly correct them during advocacy, which increases the chances of success and achieving the desired change.

2 THE PHASES AND STAGES OF SMART ADVOCACY

A SMART advocacy includes three (03) phases and nine (09) steps to complete, i.e. three (03) steps for each phase of the advocacy.

Concretely, the three phases and nine steps constitute what is called the SMART advocacy cycle.

These are:

Phase 1 Building consensus

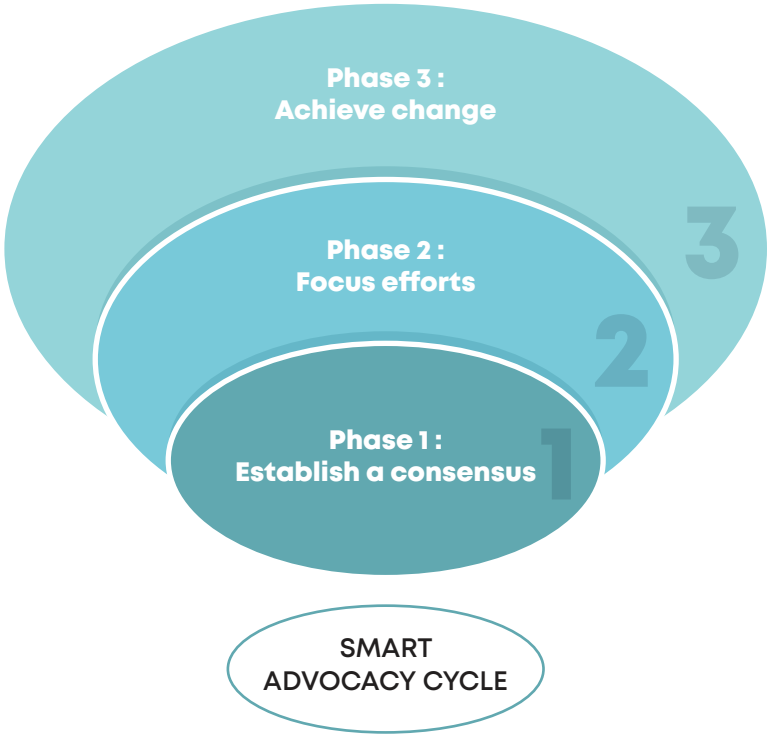
- **Step 1:** Assess the chances of success of SMART advocacy by analyzing the context;
- **Step 2:** Identify allies and potential opponents of SMART advocacy;
- **Step 3:** Set one or more SMART goals.

Phase 2 Focus efforts

- **Step 4:** Identify the decision maker;
- **Step 5:** Prepare the SMART advocacy request;
- **Step 6:** Create a work plan.

Phase 3 Making change a success

- **Step 7:** Submit the SMART advocacy request and present arguments;
- **Step 8:** Follow the work plan;
- **Step 9:** Thank the decision maker and document the results.



3 DEVELOPING A SMART ADVOCACY ACTION PLAN

Phase 1 Establish a consensus

Building consensus means that, following internal consultation, the civil society organization decides to conduct SMART advocacy after having:

- Assessed the chances of success based on internal factors (the situation in which the CSO itself finds itself) or external factors (problems that do not depend on the CSO but which can make SMART advocacy succeed or fail);
- Identified allies, i.e. actors who can support SMART advocacy and adversaries who can, on the contrary, oppose it;
- Defined one or more objectives that are SMART, i.e. Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-bound.

Step 1 : Assess the chances of success of SMART advocacy by understanding the context in which it will be conducted

A CSO that wants to conduct SMART advocacy must be able to assess the internal or external factors that are likely to lead to the success or failure of its advocacy.

For the assessment of internal factors, the CSO can use the **SWOT Tool (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats)**, while for the assessment of external factors, it can use the **PESTEL Tool (Political, Economic, Social, Technical, Environmental, Legal).**

SWOT Tool

Strengths

What does the CSO excel at? What programs are strong and effective ?

What areas do the staff excel in? What are their key skills ?

What are the key capabilities of its leaders, members, staff and allies ?

Weaknesses

What problems do CSO staffs face internally ?

What is missing?

In the organization ? What were the reasons for possible past failures ?

Opportunities

What are the positive developments in the CSO cause? What actions are being taken around it?

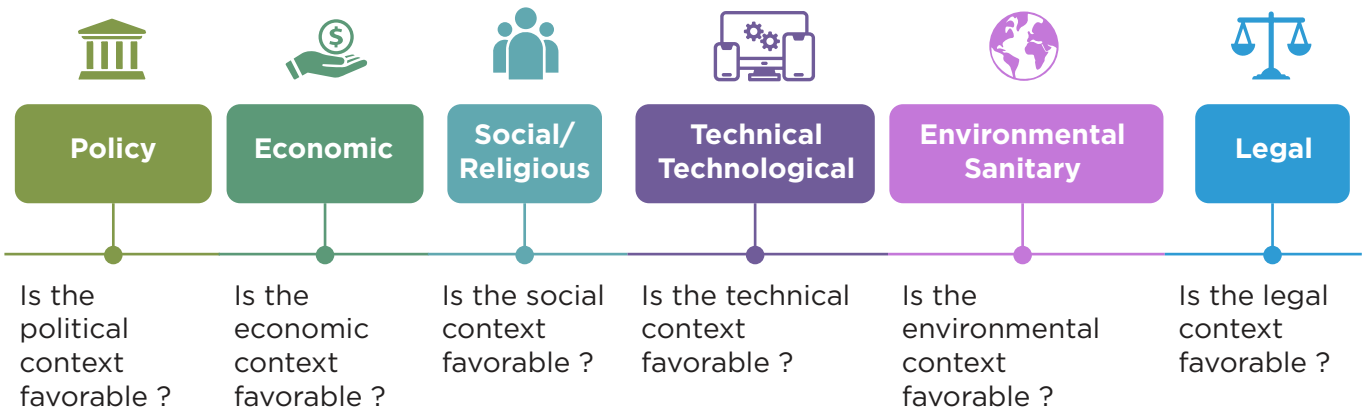
Who can support her? Who supports her cause internationally?

Threats

What are the forces that can prevent the CSO from leading the advocacy ?

What are the hidden problems? What are the main oppositions and what is the risk of repression ?

TOOL: PESTEL ANALYSIS (Political, Economic, Social, Technical, Environmental, Legal)



The CSO's prior assessment of the chances of success of its SMART advocacy allows it to avoid mobilizing financial and material resources unnecessarily, in the event that said advocacy does not have a real chance of success.

Step 2 : Identify allies, i.e., actors who can support SMART advocacy and adversaries who can, on the contrary, oppose it.

A CSO that wants to conduct SMART advocacy must have **allies**. It can form a working group bringing together those people or organizations working in the same area of advocacy, or who have resources or expertise that could provide support, or who have influence, i.e. whose participation could give more weight to SMART advocacy among the target audience.

Similarly, a CSO that wants to conduct SMART advocacy must also identify potential **adversaries**, i.e., actors who may oppose it, block the advocacy, or reject the desired change. The CSO must get to know them and understand their motivations and arguments.

To identify them, the CSO can use **the Stakeholder Assessment Table Tool :**

Stakeholders	Position/Attitude			Interest level			Degree of influence		
	For	Neutral	Against	None	Average	Pupil	None	Average	Pupil
Target communities for advocacy									
Media									
Authorities									
Associations/NGOs									
Administrations/ Companies									
Others									

Position/Attitude :

- Those who are for are allies;
- Those who are against are adversaries;
- Those who are neutral do not support but do not oppose either.

Interest Level :

- No interest: the stakeholder has no interest in the advocacy succeeding;
- Average interest: the stakeholder is in the middle: if the advocacy succeeds it suits them in some ways, if it fails it also suits them in some ways;
- High Interest: The stakeholder has a strong interest in the advocacy being successful.

Degree of influence:

- None: The stakeholder has no power to act to make the advocacy successful;
- Medium: The stakeholder has a power of influence which is however limited;
- High: The stakeholder has the power to act to make the advocacy successful.

To obtain the information enabling it to complete this table, the CSO must :

- Identify where the problem that SMART advocacy seeks to address arises: local, regional, national, sub-regional or international;
- Identify where the decision-making power is located: local, regional, national, sub-regional or international;

If the problem is at the local level while the decision-maker is at the national level, the stakeholders will be both local (because they are directly affected by the problem) and also national (because they can have the most influence on the decision-maker), and so on.

Example: the problem arises in a district: community leaders are involved in advocacy with local CSOs and the sub divisional officer or the mayor, but also national media and the top management of companies with representation in this district because they will have a stronger influence on the national decision-maker.

Step 3 : Define one or more SMART objectives

The CSO that wants to conduct SMART advocacy must have one or more SMART objectives, applied to its advocacy objective, i.e. verifiable by the **SMART Verifier tool.**

TOOL: SMART VERIFER

Specific :	How specific is the goal ?
Measurable :	How can the objective be measured ?
Achievable :	How can the goal be achieved ?
Realistic :	How realistic is the goal ?
Time-bound :	When will the goal be achieved ?

Specific Objective: This is an Objective that has a target, a goal, a method and a place.

Example :

The target: The decision maker with the power to solve the problem.

The goal: To make anti-malarial drugs free.

How: By sending him a request.

Where: Submit the request to your mail service.

Measurable Objective: Objective that can be measured.

Example :

Example: the rate of use of antimalarials, which was 50%, rises to 90% in a given area thanks to free provision monitored by the Minister of Public Health.

Achievable Goal: Goal that can be achieved.

Example :

Example: Increasing the number of households with treated mosquito nets by 20% is an achievable goal.

Achieving a 0% malaria prevalence rate by 2028 is an impossible goal to achieve at the moment as the country is still in the disease control phase.

Realistic Goal: Objective set according to the current situation of the advocate and which is achievable within the planned timeframe.

Example :

Realistic goal: distribute 10,000 mosquito nets that we actually have in stock;

Unrealistic goal: wanting to distribute 10,000 mosquito nets that we don't have in stock;

Time-bound objective: An objective that can be achieved within a specific period of time.

Example :

Increase by 20% the number of households with treated mosquito nets within 6 months.

However, a CSO may set very ambitious goals at the beginning of its advocacy, while reserving the right to revise them downwards as it progresses in the process. Therefore, SMART advocacy goals are not without the possibility of change.

Phase 2 Concentrate efforts

Focusing efforts means that civil society organization:

- identifies the decision-maker receiving the advocacy;
- sends him a request for a advocacy;
- and selects specific advocacy activities to progress towards its SMART objective.

Step 4 : Identify the decision maker

To achieve this, the CSO can use the decision-maker profiling tool :

TOOL: DECISION -MAKER PROFILING

	Priority decision maker	Secondary Decision Maker 1	Secondary Decision Maker 2
Name			
Function			
Decision maker's influence on the problem			
Interest in the problem			
Desired action			
Level of access to the decision maker			
Decision maker communication channels			
To whom is the decision-maker accountable?			

This step is important for the CSO that wants to conduct SMART advocacy for two reasons :

- it allows him to identify the specific decision-maker(s) with the power to achieve his SMART objective;
- then use the knowledge it has of the decision-maker(s) to develop its strategy.

It is also an opportunity for the CSO to use tricks to show the decision-maker what he gains by supporting SMART advocacy:

- a political decision-maker: he sees his popularity rating increase with the public, which will be useful for him to obtain votes in the next elections. Likewise, it allows him to be seen positively by the population and to support a just cause;
- An economic decision-maker: their company can benefit from tax advantages. In the same vein, corporate social responsibility (CSR) is based on the belief that companies have a greater duty to society than simply creating jobs and making profits. Any economic decision-maker who supports a cause makes their company socially responsible, with all the benefits that go with it, such as benchmarks and standards of excellence.
- other types of decision-makers: gain popularity and do a good deed.

Step 5 : Prepare the advocacy request

The CSO that wants to conduct SMART advocacy must then prepare an advocacy request containing an advocacy message.

Advocacy messages must be extremely clear, and CSOs can use the Message Generator tool to refine their SMART advocacy message.

TOOL: MESSAGE GENERATOR

Example :

Hook	15,000 people die of malaria in Cameroon every year
Change targeted	The number of serious cases must be reduced, especially among children
Importance	If nothing is done, many children will continue to die
Decision maker	Ministry of Health must protect children from malaria
Request	Routine malaria vaccination must become systematic

NB: Highlight the negative side more in the hook than the positive side.

Since SMART advocacy aims to reach and work with a specific person who has the power to act and bring about the requested change, the most appropriate methods for filing the advocacy request are:

- **By mail:** deposit with the decision-maker's secretariat or mail department;
- **By email:** if the decision-maker's email address is available;
- **Social networks:** if the decision-maker is active on social networks;
- **Working meetings:** a working session with the decision-maker;
- **Hearings:** the CSO is received by the decision-maker and gives him the request.

NB: Make sure you use the correct channel for the target audience.

Step 6 : Create a work plan

The work plan to be created aims to find ways and means for the decision-maker to be in possession of the advocacy request intended for him, then to follow the progress of the advocacy until the decision-maker takes the decision which will bring about the requested change.

The CSO must ensure that it has the financial, material and human resources to carry out its advocacy and that it can access the decision-maker. Next, the CSO must, based on a work plan, select specific advocacy activities to advance its SMART objective. These are activities necessary to motivate and incentivize the decision-maker to take action.

Example 1 :

The CSO may seek to meet with the decision-maker as frequently and as much as possible for discussions aimed at encouraging them to make the decision that will bring about the requested change.

Example 2 :

The CSO can create within itself a working group specifically dedicated to monitoring SMART advocacy.

This working group will then be able to establish a schedule of meetings with the decision-maker and follow-up meetings to possibly add another activity or to drop another as the CSO progresses in the advocacy.

Phase 3 Making the change a success

To achieve change, the CSO conducting SMART advocacy must implement its work plan:

- by meeting with the decision-maker to submit his request and present his arguments;
- by monitoring the progress of advocacy;
- thanking the decision-maker and documenting the results.

Step 7 : Meet with the decision maker to submit the SMART advocacy request and present the arguments

This step involves the CSO filing its SMART advocacy request and presenting its arguments to the decision-maker during a meeting or working session.

Regarding the working meeting : the CSO must prepare in advance by finding out about protocol rules, dress code, time allowed and whether it will present its request in the context of an informal conversation or a formal presentation.

Regarding the SMART advocacy request : it must be clear and concrete to encourage the decision-maker to make a decision.

Regarding the communication materials that accompany the request : These are materials that present the key messages of SMART advocacy, the results of the research that the CSO has carried out on the subject, the challenges to be addressed, while indicating the procedure to follow by suggesting concrete steps.

These supports must present the ethical arguments supporting the request.

Likewise, these communication supports can take several forms: advocacy briefs, PowerPoint presentations, videos, etc.

These communication media must:

- **be brief** (1 double-sided page of approximately 1000 words for summaries and PowerPoint (PPT) presentations of 10 to 15 minutes);
- **be based on evidence** on verifiable information, so that the decision-maker understands the problem without going too much into the purely technical side of the work carried out by the CSO;
- **be relevant** precise and focused on the geographical location or communities that the CSO wants to impact through its SMART advocacy;
- **be concrete** that is to say, able to convince the decision-maker that the problem is urgent.

At the end of the meeting, the CSO must have a report. This allows information to be shared internally within the team, but also and above all allows the organization to keep a record of these meetings, in order to better prepare those that will follow with the same actor (by knowing him better, avoiding repetition, etc.).

The CSO can use the meeting report tool.

TOOL: MEETING REPORT

- The name, first name and position of the person responsible
- The name, first name and position of the person met
- The date and place
- The names, family names and functions of other people present
- The theme of the meeting
- The initial objective (obtaining a commitment by example)
- The information obtained
- The information given
- The opinion expressed by the person met
- General remarks about the person
- Next steps (when and by whom?)

Step 8 : Monitor the progress of SMART advocacy

The CSO must, still within the framework of the implementation of its work plan, monitor the progress of its SMART advocacy.

In concrete terms, this means that the CSO must evaluate its progress to ensure that it is on track and that its work plan will lead to the achievement of its SMART objectives.

The CSO monitoring the progress of its SMART advocacy must :

- Report on expenditures and resources allocated to SMART advocacy;
- List the actions taken;
- Prepare reports of meetings held with the decision-maker;
- List the number of SMART objectives achieved;
- Observe the change achieved through SMART advocacy.

It is therefore imperative for the CSO to master the framework for monitoring advocacy :

Inputs: The resources that contribute to the advocacy process;

Activities: The use of resources to achieve the SMART objective;

Outputs: Productivity measures to achieve the SMART objective;

Results: Advocacy gain, i.e. achievement of a SMART objective;

Impact: What changes in the long term after several advocacy wins;

However, for more accurate monitoring, the CSO that conducted SMART advocacy must also have the **verification indicators and data sources or means of verification.**

For example :

A CSO calls on the Minister of Finance to allocate 1 billion in grants to CSOs to strengthen the fight against malaria:

SMART Goal: Finance Minister allocates additional 1 billion to CSOs to strengthen the fight against malaria;

Expected outcome: Additional budget allocation of 1 billion to CSOs to strengthen the fight against malaria;

Expected impact: CSOs increase their contribution to the fight against malaria by benefiting from a 1 billion grant which increases their means of action;

Result verification indicator: Amount of funds disbursed. 0 francs disbursed = zero result. 100 million disbursed = result achieved at 10%. 500 million disbursed = result achieved at 50%. 1 billion disbursed = result achieved at 100%

Data sources or means of verifying the result: State budget.

Impact Verification Indicator: Percentage of CSOs benefiting from the grant. 0 CSOs = 0 impact. 10% of CSOs = 10% increase in CSO action on the ground in the fight against malaria, etc.

Data sources or means of verifying impact: Ministry of Health work plan, Ministry of Finance reports, etc.

TOOL: LOGICAL FRAMEWORK

LOGICAL FRAMEWORK	Indicators Objectively Verifiable	Means of verification	Risks and Assumptions
SMART OBJECTIVE: State allocation of 1 billion in grants to CSOs to strengthen the fight against malaria	Actual transfers of funds to the accounts of beneficiary CSOs	Quantitative survey (beneficiary CSOs)	Political will and effective availability of funds
Inputs (Financial, human and material resources dedicated to SMART advocacy)	Budget: 500,000 FCFA + Staff: 4 people + Office equipment	Expense invoices + qualitative and qualitative survey (CSO initiating the advocacy)	Availability of resources (financial, human and material)
Activities (The use of resources to achieve the SMART objective)	Filing of a plea request and broadcast of radio messages	Discharge of the request + quantitative survey (Media)	Sufficient resources from start to finish of advocacy
Outputs (Productivity measures to achieve SMART goal)	Organizing a meeting with state officials in a hotel	Invoice for expenses for organizing the meeting	Wasteful expenditure if the plea fails
Expected Results (Advocacy gain i.e. achievement of a SMART objective)	State disburses 1 billion FCFA in support to CSOs	Finance Act	Zero result or result below target
The expected impact (What changes in the long term thanks to the gain in advocacy)	Increased contribution of CSOs to the fight against malaria	Activity reports of CSOs that have benefited from the State subsidy	Misappropriation or misuse of allocated funds = zero or low impact

Step 9 : Thank the decision maker and document the results

The CSO that has achieved its SMART objective(s) should thank the decision-maker, both privately and publicly, to encourage them to honor their commitments and take action again.

Next, it must document its results. Documenting the results of SMART advocacy is crucial for the CSO because it can serve as a model for other future SMART advocacy efforts or benefit partner civil society organizations.

Documenting results also allows the CSO to keep its network and donors informed and share lessons learned.

Two examples of advocacy conducted to show how SMART could have been applied or if it was applied in a successful advocacy.

Example 1 :

Non-SMART advocacy: Advocacy for the reduction of mortality due to malaria led by the association Les Voix du Mali during the year 2008

Location: Communes of Sadiola, Koussané, Marena, Diombougou, Logo, Samé Diomboma, Kayes, from the Kayes Region.

Objectives: To support the management of simple cases of malaria at home by relays and to promote the improvement of the general population's knowledge of malaria so that they adopt a change in behavior.

Activities: Strengthen the skills of health providers and relay actors in the diagnosis, prevention and treatment of malaria.

- Awareness/education for behavior change.

Results

- The skills of health service providers in household relays are strengthened;
- The general population's knowledge of malaria is strengthened;
- Awareness has been raised among municipal stakeholders regarding the problem of fighting against malaria;
- A network of multiple stakeholders has been set up and is actively involved in actions to fight against malaria;
- The municipal councils of Koussané, Samé and Logo allocated budget lines for the fight against malaria in 2008;
- Some elected officials have taken the initiative to raise awareness among the population about malaria each time they are called upon to preside over a ceremony (weddings);
- Awareness has been raised among political and local administrative authorities (neighborhood leaders) and civil society actors;
- Hygiene/sanitation actions, cleaning system and garbage collection in the municipalities following advocacy actions.

Conclusion 1: absence of decision maker, absence of advocacy request, advocacy based on training and awareness, non-SMART advocacy, objectives, results and impact are not measurable, the three phases of SMART advocacy are not carried out: establishing consensus, focusing efforts and achieving change.

Example 2 :

SMART Advocacy: Double advocacy for the fight against malaria in Ivory Coast during the year 2020 by their civil society.

SMART Objective: Efficient mobilization of decision-makers from the private and community sectors in the fight against malaria.

Activities: Engage community stakeholders (religious leaders and traditional leaders) in raising awareness among their populations about malaria and private sector decision-makers (business leaders) in raising awareness and treating malaria cases among their employees and their families.

Results: Effective engagement of community actors and private sector decision-makers by 50% despite the increase in the incidence of malaria in the general population in Ivory Coast which was 189% in 2018 and which rose to 270% in 2022, and the increase in the national incidence of malaria in children under five which was 492‰ in 2018 and which rose to 842% in 2022;

Conclusion 2: knowledge of key decision-makers in order to submit advocacy requests to them, specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time-bound objective, SMART advocacy, objective achieved because effective involvement of decision-makers in the fight against malaria despite the increase in the malaria index, the three phases of SMART advocacy achieved: establishing consensus, concentrating efforts and achieving change.

Time required for each step of SMART advocacy

Assess the chances of success of the plea	One day
Identify potential allies and adversaries	One day
Set one or more SMART goals	One day
Identify the decision maker	One day
Prepare the SMART plea request	One day
Create a work plan	One day
Submit the SMART Plea Request	One day
Follow the work plan	Until a decision is made by the decision maker
Thank the decision maker	One day

Comparison table between SMART advocacy and other forms of advocacy

SMART Advocacy	Other forms of advocacy
Allows you to cover all topics	Topics often specific to the type of advocacy
Includes several easy-to-follow steps	Can be split into stages or not
Measurable advocacy gains	Advocacy gains not always measurable
Distinguish between goal and objectives	Very often goal-oriented
Easily verifiable impact	Impact often difficult to verify

4 CONCLUSION

Typically, advocacy arises from a big change. The SMART advocacy approach establishes a roadmap for achieving that change. But how do you identify the right person to promote a critical policy? Or build a coalition of allies? What's the best way to present compelling arguments? How will those arguments support a decision? How do you achieve the results you're looking for?

Whether you're new to advocacy or an experienced professional, the SMART approach answers these questions and helps you make the choices necessary for your project's success. It draws on proven concepts and the experience of advocates in the health and development fields.

5 GLOSSARY

Allies: These are all individuals or legal entities who will support, assist, and/or promote the organization's advocacy. They share certain values with the organization and are favorable to it or its cause. Advocacy objectives may differ, but mutual support is possible. This may involve active, technical, financial, intermediary, or even verbal support in the context of public positions. An actor may decide to support an organization for reasons different from the organizations, for example, to obtain votes in an election. In this case, the organization must assess whether its objectives are compatible with its own, whether it wishes to form this alliance, and under what conditions.

Opponents: These are all individuals or legal entities who oppose or block the organization's advocacy and/or reject the requested change. They are varied, more or less violent and harmful, and may oppose the organization for various reasons: disapproval of values, threat to their power, ideological opposition, opposition to change, etc. It is important to get to know them, to understand their motivations, arguments and levels of opposition.

Targets or decision-makers: These are all those who have the power to respond to the request for change and/or to influence society, politics, laws, etc. They may initially be opposed to the organization's objectives, be unaware of the problem, and/or not take the request seriously. The goal is then to present the problem to them and convince them of the need to make the requested change, in order to make them allies.

Primary target or decision-maker: The decision-maker/actor with the most power to achieve the desired change. However, for several reasons, this target may be inaccessible: refusal to meet, political risk if highlighted, etc.

Secondary target or secondary decision-maker: A person who does not have the power to resolve the problem, but who is close to the primary target. They are accessible and putting pressure on them can help put pressure on the primary target, or get them a meeting.

Example: It may be impossible to access the President, but possible to reach him through an important advisor or minister, or even his wife if he is an accessible public figure.

The undecided: These are people who do not have a clear point of view on the subject in question, because they are not familiar with it, or because they do not yet know which point of view to adopt. It is up to the organization to convince them using their codes.

Drivers: The primary target of advocacy, these are active individuals capable of driving change for or against the organization. This may be a specific role that confers great authority to decide on change (a minister) or a very active individual (an advisor within the ministry who would be particularly listened to).

Followers: These are people who don't really have decision-making power and/or who, for various reasons, don't want to drive change. Making them your primary targets would be a waste of time and energy. Therefore, before identifying a target or ally, you must be sure that they won't be a follower.

6 APPENDICES

PRACTICAL EXERCISE SHEET: THE DEVELOPMENT OF A SMART ADVOCACY ACTION PLAN BY A CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATION

Example

SMART advocacy to resolve the problem of shortage of appropriate drugs for treating severe cases of malaria in Cameroon

Exercise 1 :

I assess the context in which the SMART advocacy will be carried out:

SWOT Tool

Strengths

- The CSO has been in existence for 15 years;
- She has been leading the fight against malaria all this time and has extensive experience in this field;
- Its staff are specialized in malaria control and qualified to develop a SMART advocacy action plan;
- The CSO collaborates with other CSOs, community leaders and authorities.

Weaknesses

- CSO staff are faced with insufficient material and financial resources;
- He is also faced with the lack of rolling stock, which is essential for carrying out actions on the ground, which does not allow him, for example, to travel to document the shortage of medicines throughout the country.

Opportunities

- The CSO is part of CS4ME, which amplifies its degree of influence;
- The CSO is supported by the World Health Organization;
- The CSO is known to decision-makers at the Ministry of Public Health, including the Minister himself and its work is noted.

Threats

- Laxity of public authorities and weak enforcement of legislation allowing potential speculators to organize shortages of medicines in the official circuit;
- The climate of insecurity in certain parts of the country does not allow the CSO to move as it pleases.

SWOT assessment outcome: CSOs should leverage strengths and opportunities while taking precautions to ensure that weaknesses and threats are not potential causes of advocacy failure.

TOOL: PESTEL ANALYSIS (Political, Economic, Social, Technical, Environmental, Legal)

Policy	Economic	Social/ Religious	Technical Technological	Environnemental Health	Legal
Pre-election period (favorable context, health status influences elections).	Difficult situation preventing workers from receiving normal medical care due to lack of financial resources.	Malaria continues to wreak havoc in society, making children especially vulnerable.	Social media and ICT make it easy to get messages about malaria treatment across society.	Climate change exacerbates climate-related health risks, including epidemics of diseases such as malaria.	The law of January 4, 1996, establishing the framework law in the field of health, is the legal framework.

Conclusion of the assessment using the PESTEL tool: In a difficult context for purchasing power, where malaria continues to rage among the population, it is essential, in application of the law of January 4, 1996 relating to the framework law in the field of health, that medicines for serious cases of malaria are permanently available, taking into account the climatic risks which aggravate the situation, and the ease of conveying messages to the population thanks to NICT.

Exercise 2 :

I identify allies and opponents of my SMART advocacy using the Stakeholder Assessment Table Tool :

Stakeholders	Position/Attitude			Interest level			Degree of influence		
	For	Neutral	Against	None	Average	Pupil	None	Average	Pupil
A CSO in the health sector	✓					✓		✓	
A consumer protection CSO	✓					✓		✓	
A television channel	✓					✓			✓
Potential speculators			✓	✓					✓

Conclusion of the identification by the Stakeholder Assessment Table Tool:

Among my allies, I identify a consumer advocacy CSO, given that the shortage affects sick people who are primarily consumers. This CSO is highly interested in the issue and has a degree of influence over the decision-maker that, although average, is not at all negligible. I add a television channel that has the power to inform the masses so that the problem is taken into consideration by the public authorities. Its degree of influence over the decision-maker is therefore high.

Among my opponents, I identify potential speculators lurking in the shadows who may be behind the shortages in order to drive up the prices of certain drugs and make undue profits from black market sales. While not excluding the possibility that they may be in collusion with high-ranking officials, I believe they have a significant degree of influence over the decision-maker and have no interest in the success of my advocacy.

Exercise 3 :

I set a SMART goal and I carry out the SMART verification:

SMART Goal: Obtain an urgent resupply of medicines

TOOL: SMART CHECKER

Define the objectives according to the grid below:

Specific : A request must be addressed to the decision-maker who can resolve the problem.
In what way
Measurable: A supply of 2 tons of medicine is necessary.
How can the objective be measured ?
Achievable: The shortage can be ended if the supply is effective and continuous.
How can the goal be achieved ?
Realistic : The State of Cameroon has the means to ensure this supply.
How realistic is the goal ?
Time-bound : Replenishment can be effective within three days
When will the goal be achieved ?

Exercise 4 :

I define three SMART objectives to achieve a single goal:

- **Objectif SMART 1 : Obtenir d'urgence un réapprovisionnement en médicaments :**

  Specific: Identify the decision-maker and send them a request for advocacy;

  Measurable: A supply of 02 tonnes of medicines is necessary;

  Achievable: The shortage can be ended if the supply is effective;

  Realistic: The State of Cameroon has the means to supply the country;

  Temporal: A period of 03 days is sufficient to resupply the country.

- **SMART Objective 2: Diagnose supply problems:**

  Specific: Identify the decision-maker and send them a request for advocacy;

  Measurable: The diagnosis to be carried out can identify 80% of the problems;

  Achievable: Supply problems will end if the diagnosis is done correctly;

  Realistic: It is entirely possible to solve supply problems;

  Temporal: One day is sufficient to establish a diagnosis.

- **SMART Objective 3: Design a supply security strategy:**

  Specific: Identify the decision-maker and send them a plea request;

  Measurable: The strategy can secure 100% of supplies;

  Achievable: Supplies can be secured if there is a strategy;

  Realistic: It is entirely possible to secure supplies;

  Time-bound: Strategy design can be completed within one week.

Exercise 5 :

After defining my SMART objectives, I identify the decision-maker who has the power to solve the problem and bring about change by profiling the decision-makers.

	Priority decision maker	**Secondary Decision Maker 1**	**Secondary Decision Maker 2**
Name	X	Y	Z
Function	Minister of Health	SG Ministry of Health	Director of Medicines
Decision maker's influence on the problem	Decides in the last resort	Propose the measure to the Minister	Initiate measurement, send to SG
Interest in the problem	Sovereign prerogative of the Minister	Sovereign prerogative of the Secretary General	Task listed in his job description
Desired action	Instructs end to drug shortage	Proposes a measure to end the shortage	Initiates a measure to end the shortage
Level of access to the decision maker	Easy	Quite easy	Very easy
Decision maker communication channels	Social networks	Ministry website	Ministry website
To whom is the decision-maker accountable?	To the Prime Minister	To the Minister of Health	To the Secretary General of the Ministry

Exercise 6 :

How can I be sure I have chosen the right decision maker ?

Answer: Because I have contacted the decision-maker who can bring about the desired change. The Minister of Public Health will send the Minister of Finance a request for funds to pay for essential medicines, which will initiate the procurement process and end the shortage.

Exercise 7 :

I draw up a list of secondary decision-makers who can push the primary decision-maker to act.

Answer:

1. **The Secretary General of the Ministry of Health:** he can be contacted because he follows, under the authority of the Minister, the instruction and processing of the files of the Ministerial Department. In turn, he first contacts his direct subordinate who is the Director of Medicine to have a diagnosis, a feasibility study and a technical solution, then contacts the Minister as part of a decision support process;
2. **The Director of Medicines at the Ministry of Health:** he can be contacted because he is responsible for medicines policy. In turn, he contacts his direct hierarchical superior who is the Secretary General as part of a decision-making process to present him with a diagnosis, a feasibility study and a technical solution;

Exercise 8 :

I develop a SMART advocacy message

Hook	The country is affected by a shortage of drugs for severe cases of malaria
Change targeted	These drugs must be available to treat the population
Importance	The most vulnerable groups whose children are in danger if nothing is done
Decision maker	The Minister of Health has the duty to ensure the supply of medicines
Request	Instruct urgent supply of drugs for severe cases of malaria

Advocacy message : A resupply of drugs for severe cases of malaria in our country is essential, in order to enable our hospitals and health centers to cope with this disease which can be fatal, especially for the most vulnerable groups including children and have long-term consequences on health.

Exercise 9 :

I write a SMART advocacy request

TOOL: MODEL PLEA REQUEST

To the Attention

Minister of Public Health

Subject: Shortage of medicines for severe cases of malaria in our country

Mr. Minister,

Impact Santé Afrique has been communicating with you regarding a shortage of medication for severe cases of malaria in our country for nearly a month.

Indeed, Mr. Minister, at the end of our field investigations, and the relevant evidence in the form of communication materials is attached to this letter, it appears that our hospitals and health centers are faced with a glaring lack of appropriate medication for serious cases of malaria.

The following medications are almost out of stock:

- Artemether-lumefantrine
- Artesunate-amodiaquine
- Artesunate-mefloquine
- Artesunate + sulfadoxine-pyrimethamine
- Dihydroartemisinin-piperaquine

This unfortunate situation negatively impacts the quality of care for patients with severe cases of malaria, particularly children and the elderly and vulnerable.

This is why our organization, in partnership with the Cameroon Consumer Collective and Alpha TV, is sounding the alarm by informing national opinion and public authorities about this worrying situation.

These medicines must be available at all times to treat the population and your ministerial department has a duty to ensure the supply of medicines.

We are available for any meeting, gathering or working session on the subject at any date convenient to you, and thank you in advance for urgently instructing the resupply of our country with medication for severe cases of malaria.

Answer: The request is drafted in synergy with the allies, while monitoring a reaction from potential speculators organizing the shortage to make maximum profit by reselling the drugs on the black market who are opponents of the plea.

The request is addressed to the principal decision-maker (or to the secondary decision-makers if the principal decision-maker is inaccessible), and contains the advocacy message. It can be delivered to him in person or submitted to his secretariat against receipt.

Exercise 10 :

I prepare the meeting with the decision-maker

Before the meeting	During the meeting	After the meeting
• I practice role-playing with my colleagues • I prepare the communication materials accompanying the request	• I begin by stating the importance of the subject • I engage the decision-maker in a conversation • I state my request clearly and briefly	• I plan to follow up on the meeting • I review the strategy as needed

Exercise 11 :

- Do I have the financial resources? Yes, this advocacy does not require huge expenses;
- Do I have time? Yes, this advocacy can be successful in a very short time;
- Do I have the evidence (data or field reports) to support my request? Yes, the evidence of the problem of shortage of appropriate drugs for the treatment of severe cases of malaria in Cameroon is included in my communication materials in support of the advocacy request;
- Do I have the human resources necessary to implement my strategy? Yes, advocacy requires an extremely lean staff;
- Do I have access to my decision-maker and those who influence him? Yes, the Minister of Health, his Secretary General and his Director of Medicines can receive the CSO in audience and receive the plea request;

Exercise 12 :

I create my work plan

Activity	Estimated cost	Responsible person	Calendar
Filing of the advocacy request	Printing costs: 2000 FCFA	CSO Advocacy Officer	November 10
Working meeting with the Ministry of Health	Transport costs: 5000 FCFA	President of the CSO	November 15
Announcement in support of the advocacy broadcast by the Allied television channel	Advertising costs: 30,000 FCFA	CSO President and CSO Advocacy Officer	November 17

Exercise 13 :

I follow up on my SMART advocacy action plan

Inputs: Budget: 50,000 FCFA – Number of staff deployed: 2 people;

Activities: Filing of the plea request, announcement on a TV channel;

Outputs: Working meeting(s) with the Ministry of health and its collaborators;

Results: Instruction given by the Ministry of Health for an urgent resupply of medicines for severe cases of malaria: SMART objective achieved;

The impact: Gradual supply of medicines to hospital facilities across the country from the first week following the effective resupply.

TOOL: LOGICAL FRAMEWORK

LOGICAL FRAMEWORK	Indicators Objectively Verifiable	Means of verification	Risks and Assumptions
SMART OBJECTIVE: Resolving the problem of shortage of appropriate drugs for treating severe cases of malaria in Cameroon	Replenishment of the national territory with medicines for severe cases of malaria	Qualitative and quantitative survey of hospitals and health centers	Political will and effective availability of funds
Inputs **(Financial, human and material resources dedicated to SMART advocacy)**	Budget: 50,000 FCFA + Staff: 2 people + Office equipment	Expense invoices + qualitative and qualitative survey (CSO initiating the advocacy)	Availability of resources (financial, human and material)
Activities **(The use of resources to achieve the SMART objective)**	Filing of a plea request + awareness message on a TV channel	Discharge of the request + quantitative survey (TV channel)	Sufficient resources from start to finish of advocacy
Outputs **(Productivity measures to achieve SMART goal)**	Organization of a meeting with the Minister of Health or his SG	Invoice for expenses for organizing the meeting	Availability of the Minister or his SG

Expected Results **(Advocacy gain i.e. achievement of a SMART objective)**	The Ministry of Health sends a request to the Ministry of Finance for funds to pay for essential medicines	Official information channels of the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Finance	Administrative delays and hostile actions by speculators
The expected impact **(What changes in the long term thanks to the gain in advocacy)**	Return to usual availability of drugs for severe cases of malaria	Quantitative survey of pharmacies and hospital training	Supply with variable geometry, persistent shortage in places across the country

Exercise 14 :

I achieved my SMART goal so I thank the Ministry of Health and I document the results
I thank him publicly and privately to encourage him to honor his commitments and act again.

TOOL: A THANK YOU LETTER TEMPLATE

Madam Executive Director of Impact Sante Afrique (ISA)

To

Mr. Minister of Public Health

Subject: Thanks

Mr. Minister,

Since November 10, 2024, we have been constantly pleading with you to express our alarm about a shortage of appropriate medicines for the treatment of severe cases of malaria which has been raging throughout the national territory for almost a month.

In the same vein, we request your prompt response so that a rapid solution can be found to this problem for the benefit of the population.

Despite all the circumstances at the time, you reassured us that you would take all appropriate measures to urgently resupply our country with medicines for serious cases of malaria.

This act, aimed at us but not only at us, may seem trivial to you, but rest assured that it is more than beneficial and will certainly help to normalize the situation of patients suffering from serious cases of malaria in our hospitals and health centers.

Therefore, being satisfied with this unforgettable gesture, we will always be grateful to you and remain determined to support you in the success of your mission while guaranteeing you the assurance of quality work.

We therefore reiterate our gratitude and sincere thanks for your reaction, but also for the attention and interest that you continue to show towards us.

We also take this opportunity to send you our New Year's greetings.

With our deepest gratitude, we respectfully ask you, Mr. Minister, to kindly accept this expression of thanks.

CS4ME

CIVIL SOCIETY FOR MALARIA ELIMINATION