Introduction to Advocacy

What is advocacy?

Advocacy is a strategic *process* to *influence* the policies and practices that affect people's lives. This can be roughly divided into two phases: advocacy planning and advocacy activity:

- Advocacy Planning includes the process by which goals are set, targets are selected and influencing strategies are devised.
- Advocacy Activity is the means by which the plan is implemented and includes the formulation of messages and the type of lobbying activity undertaken.

Why do we do advocacy?

To promote the concerns and analysis of ordinary people affected by conflict and insecurity:

- Because change is inevitable – what is not inevitable is the direction of change, and that is what we *can* influence.
- Because through advocacy we can achieve change from the local to the international level and have an impact on those who influence change.
- Because advocacy acts as a multiplier on the effectiveness of the work we do on the ground.

What kind of advocacy?

There are many different types of advocacy activity ranging from lobby meetings to seminars, workshops and report launches. Which activity is used is determined by many different factors foremost of which is the likelihood of achieving impact. For Saferworld and Conciliation Resources, our advocacy activities primarily focus on:

- Bringing communities together to articulate their needs and concerns to decision makers.
- Using our experience of working on the ground to draw evidence-based arguments about the way the international community can best prevent and resolve violent conflict.
- Engaging directly with government officials and international institutions such as the EU and UN to influence policy.

How do we do advocacy?

Because advocacy is a process, rather than just an event, the key to doing advocacy successfully is to develop an 'advocacy strategy' that is implemented over time with creativity and persistence.

A 6-step process for devising an Advocacy Strategy

The six step process shown below is designed to ensure that all the key elements are taken into consideration when we are devising our advocacy strategy. The process is designed to help ensure that key factors affecting our work are addressed, and priority objectives and targets for our advocacy are identified enabling us to maximise the impact of our advocacy activity with the limited resources available to us.

This toolkit will take us through each of these steps and provide us with tools to help complete each stage of the process. At the end of the process we should be able to produce an advocacy strategy document similar to the template included as an annex 4. That strategy will help us establish a logical theory of change that will enable us, our colleagues, partners and others to understand what we are seeking to change and how, allowing them to feed into and support the advocacy work.

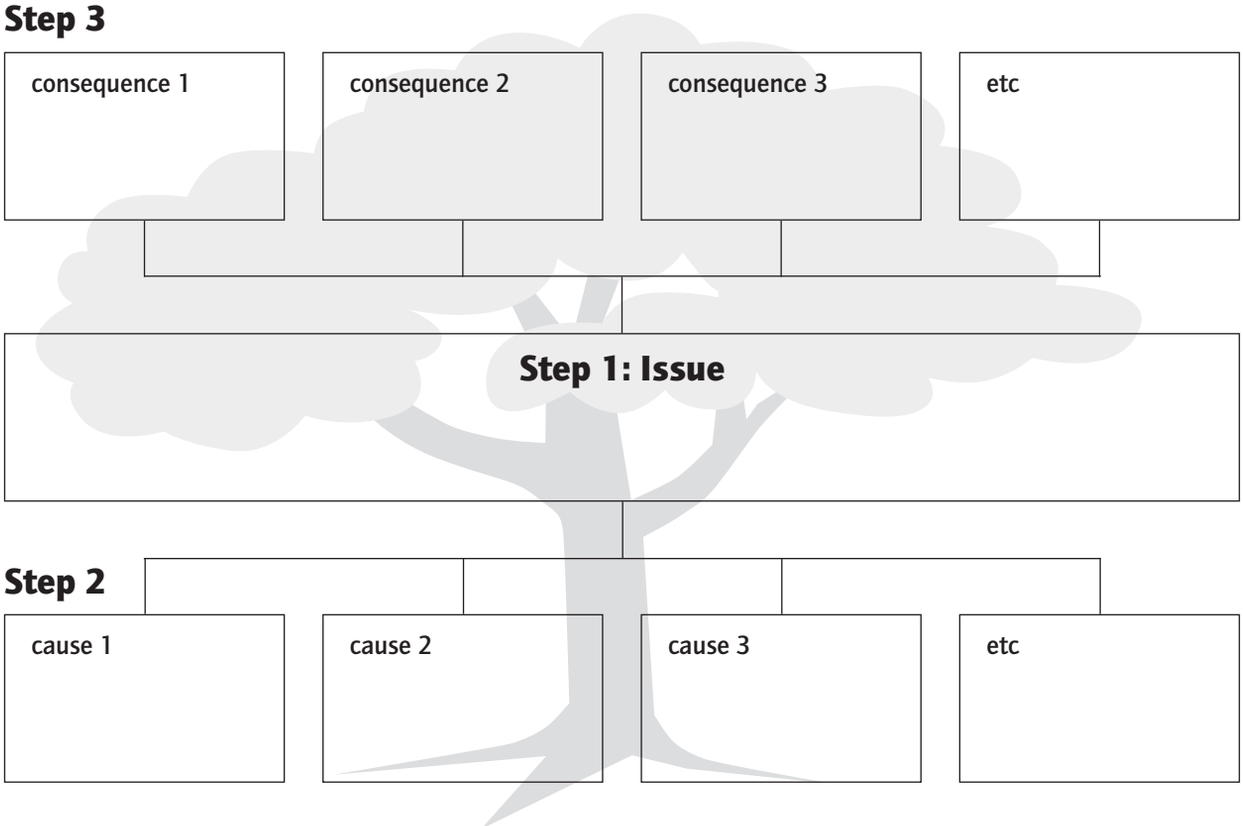
SWOT Analysis

Strengths	Weaknesses
What are the positive aspects within your organisation that could be important in your work?	What are the factors within your organisation that might inhibit your work?
Opportunities	**Threats**
What are the factors in society (external to your organisation) that could positively affect your work?	What are the factors in society (external to your organisation) that could have a negative impact on your work?

Problem-Solutions Tree Template – 6 Steps

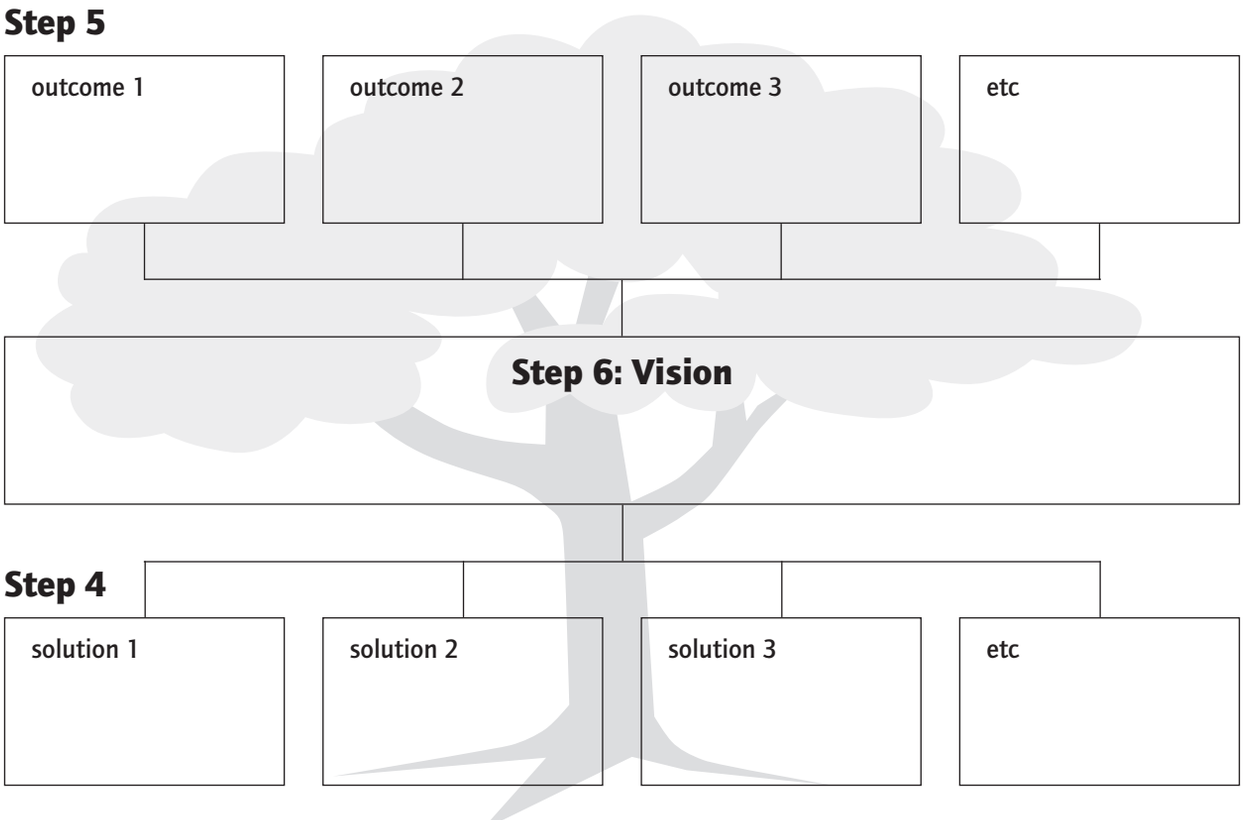
Problem Tree

Step 3



Solution Tree

Step 5



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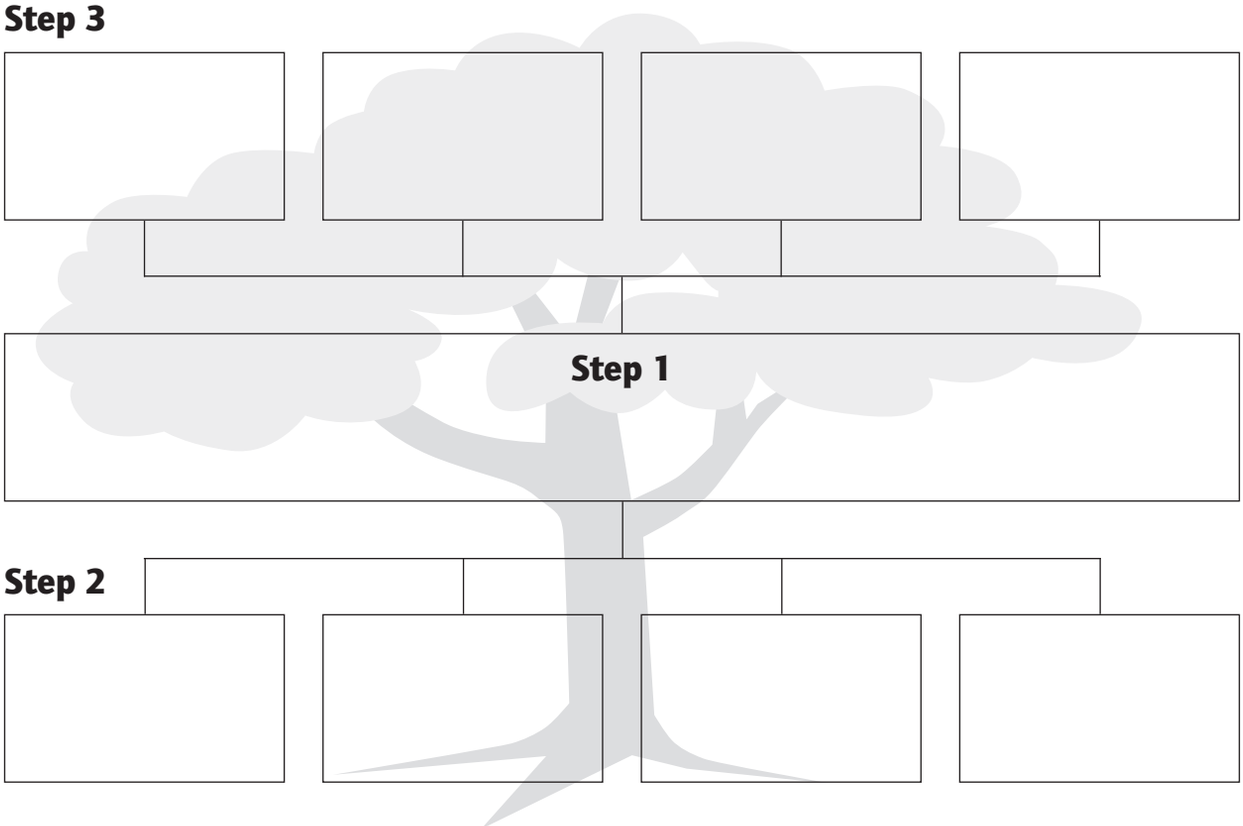
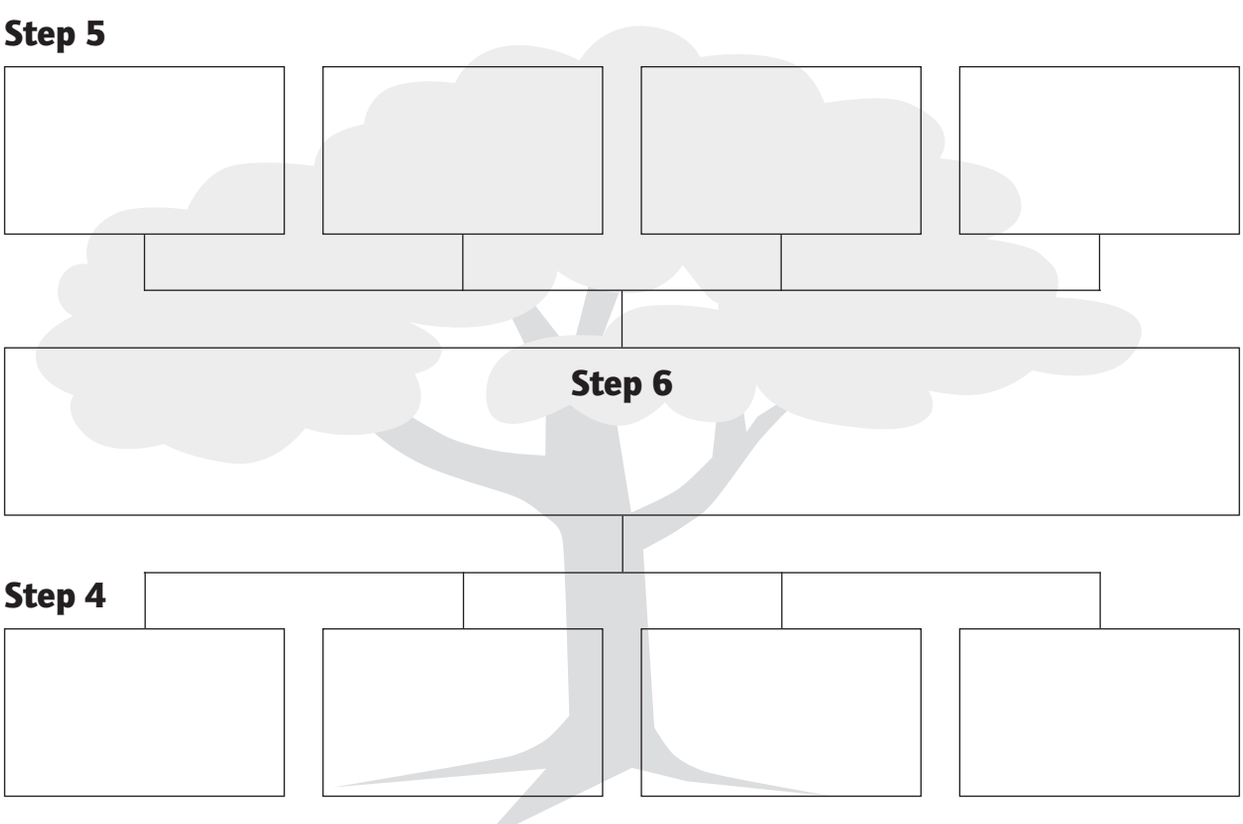


Solution Tree



Solutions Table: Template

	At the local level	At the national level	At the regional and international levels
What are the problems, their causes and consequences?			
What kind of change(s) do you want to see?			
Who needs to change?			

	At the local level	At the national level	At the regional and international levels
What are the problems, their causes and consequences?	The culture of violence is a legacy of decades of internal conflict. Although the fighting is over, people continue to use weapons as the first solution to solve their problems. This is true even for minor disputes, which often turn deadly. In local communities there is a serious lack of trust between civilians and the authorities responsible for maintaining security. Almost no dialogue takes place between civilians and local authorities on security and small arms issues.	The creation of the National Commission for Weapons Reform and Management was a major step forward, but it is not yet operational and lacks the capacity, resources, and support it needs to become effective.	Efforts by the government and the international community, supported by civil society, are now better resourced and timed, but still lack a strong basis of understanding, comprehensiveness, and coordination.
What kind of change(s) do you want to see?	Dialogue needs to be encouraged between these groups to help ensure that disarmament efforts are accepted, sustainable, effective, and address underlying root problems.	Unless the attitudes of civilians, security forces, and authorities are addressed, the demand for weapons will still remain. To transform this dependence on weapons into skills for non-violent conflict resolution is important work requiring long-term commitment.	Without a strategy to develop capable, resourced and self-led Cambodian efforts, current activities remain short-sighted and of limited effectiveness. An internationally-supported long-term strategic plan is needed.
Who needs to change?	■ security forces ■ local authorities ■ civil society/civilian groups	■ police, armed forces and other security forces must develop new policies and practices ■ individuals and groups must find ways to deal with their own fears and find common solutions to improve security	Regionally and internationally, institutional support for the government is needed to increase its understanding and capacity to carry out the work.

Ranking Solutions: Template

List of Possible Solutions	Potential Impact	Prospect of success	Internal Rationale	External Rationale	Total score

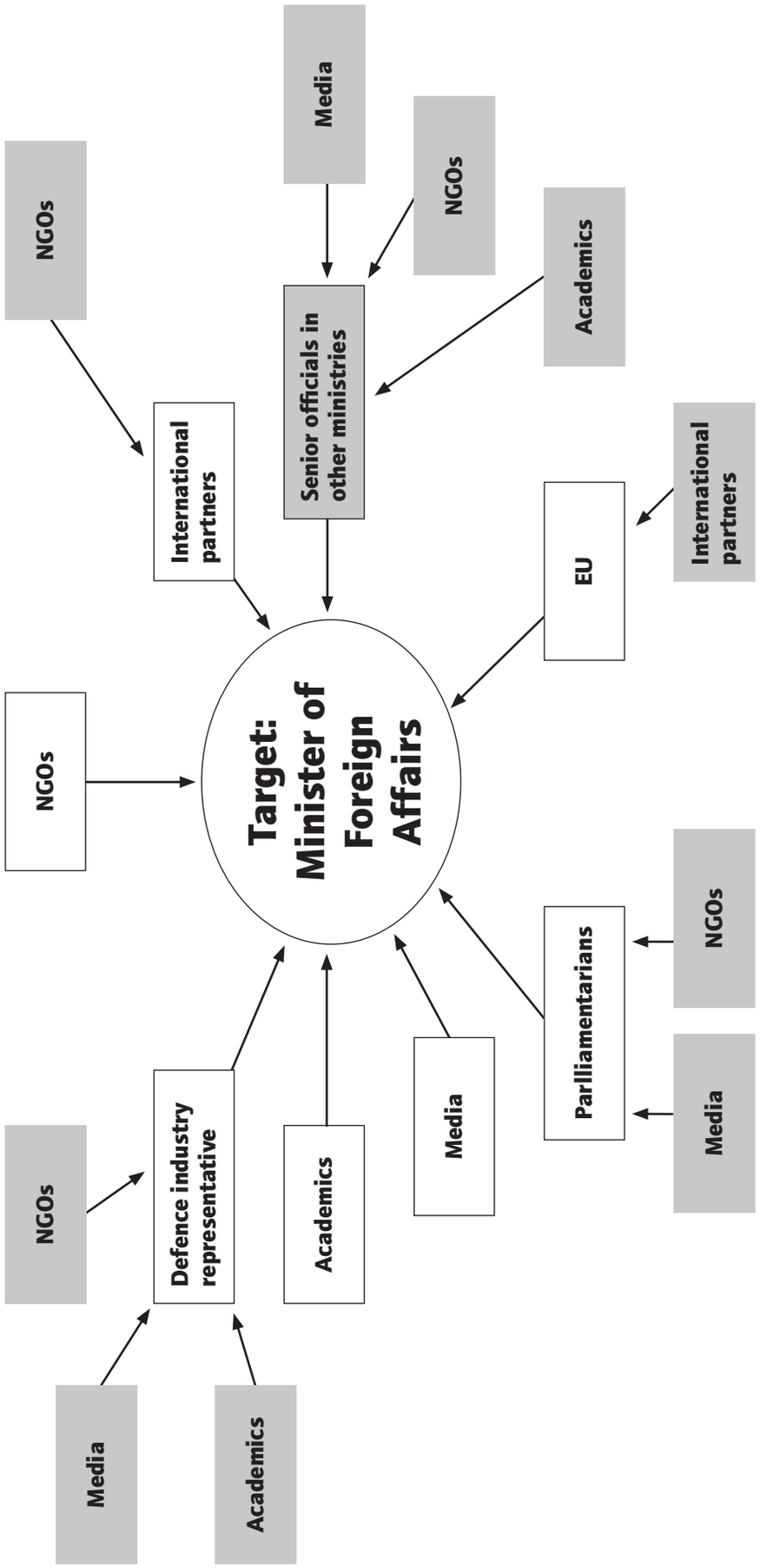
Identifying Stakeholders checklist

You need to research	How to find out more
Which part of government is responsible for relevant issues including: ■ Negotiations and participating in international/regional fora ■ National law enforcement & border controls ■ Provincial and local government ■ Local law enforcement ■ National defence & military ■ Development and grant making ■ Finance ■ Negotiating/liaising with non-state actors ■ Social inclusion and equality	**Getting information about governing institutions:** ■ Does your government produce a directory? ■ Does it have a website outlining what different departments do? ■ Are there other civil society organisations working with governments who could give you the information? ■ Are UN agencies operating in your country or region (UNDP, UNICEF, DPKO, etc.) that could supply you with information? ■ Can you get the information from local government or community leaders?
Which other organisations and individuals have a major interest in your issue? Name specific... ■ NGOs ■ Media ■ Police ■ Business ■ Youth groups ■ Academics ■ Judiciary ■ Community groups ■ Political parties ■ Members of parliament ■ Labour organisations ■ Women's groups ■ Religious groups ■ Elders and community leaders	**Getting information about organisations and individuals** ■ Check to see if there are any other local NGOs working on similar issues ■ Have any political parties produced statements on relevant issues ■ Are there public records of parliamentary debates or is there public access to parliamentary sessions? ■ How much media coverage of your issue, and by which media?
Which international players have an interest in your issue? Again, name specific... ■ Donors ■ NGOs ■ UN bodies ■ Regional groups (e.g. Organisation of American States, EU, etc.) ■ Trans-national corporations involved in the country ■ Trade unions ■ International financial institutions ■ Other governments that are working to introduce new policies in the area	**Check big international NGOs with a relevant focus to their work. Many might have country or regional offices close to where you work e.g.** ■ Oxfam GB ■ World Council of Churches ■ Amnesty International ■ International Committee of the Red Cross/Red Crescent Check with UN depts. to access reports and work on relevant issues within the UN system, plus also statements, positions and voting records of member states.

Stakeholder Mapping: Template

Influence on our issue – ability to bring about the change we want to see	High	Medium	Low	
				Strongly Supportive
				Supportive
				Opposing
				Strongly Opposing
				Position on our issue

Influence Map



Channels of Influence Table

How effectively will we be able to influence the channel?

	High	**Medium**	**Low**
High			
Medium			
Low			

How much influence will the channel have with our target

Communicating Effectively

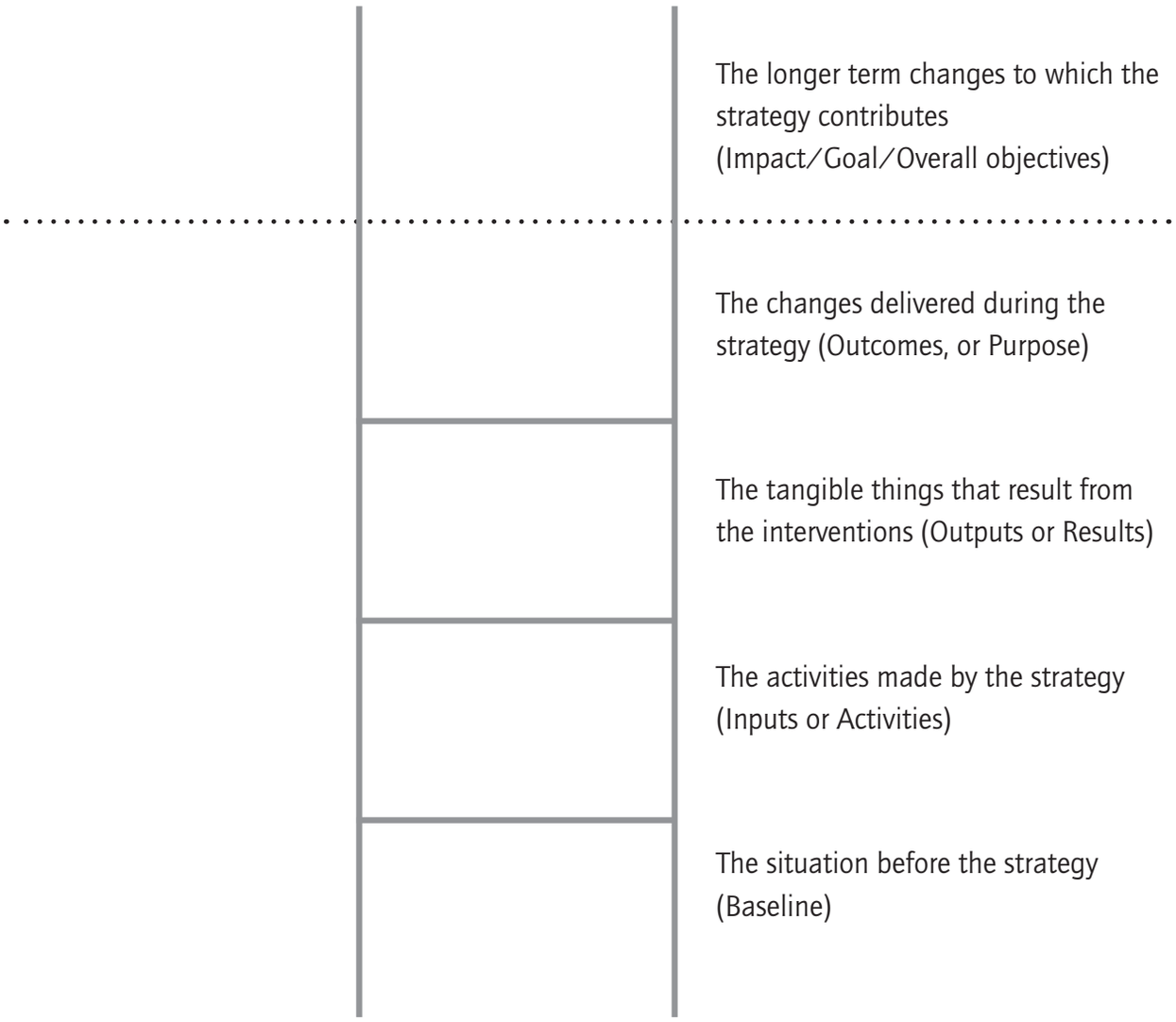
small numbers of people

different audiences, different messages

large numbers of people

brief description of the different audiences	**types of message that it might be appropriate to communicate to these audiences**	**examples of good ways to convey messages to the different audiences**
(1) policy makers and opinion formers	either detailed, evidence-based arguments, or else show how the issue relates to their power and status	through detailed policy documents, or simpler letters or meetings to establish the importance of the issue to them
(2) groups and individuals who are interested in the issue	*explain what you are calling for and why, identifying the barriers to change, but without being too specific about the detail*	through newsletters, leaflets, and newspaper articles; provide more detailed information to those who ask for it
(3) the wider public	*simple and emotional stories and messages that make it easy to understand and engage with the issues*	through using celebrities or the personal testimonies of those who have suffered as a result of small arms misuse

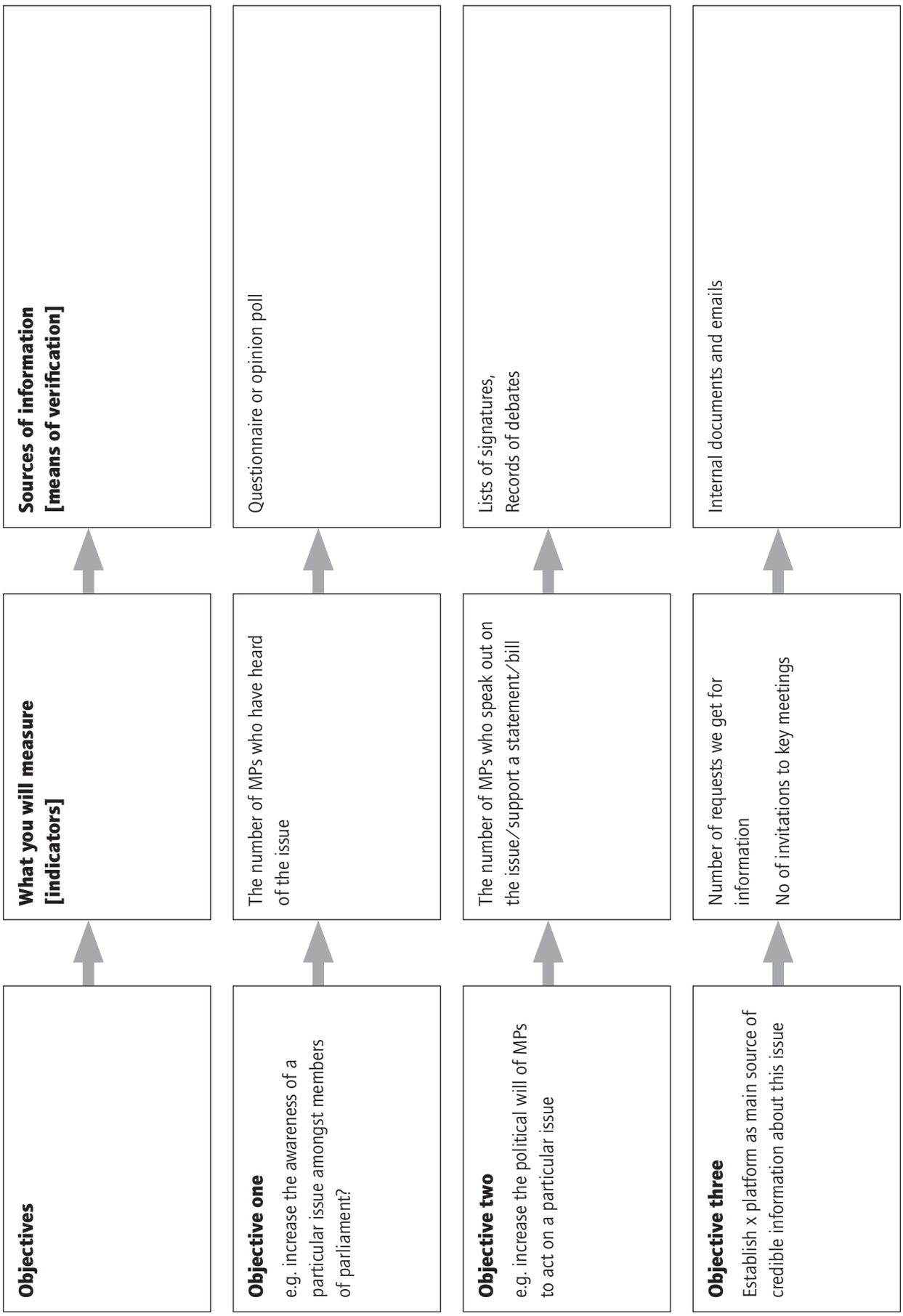
The Impact Ladder



Example GANTT Chart – PPP project overview

	Oct 2010	Nov	Dec	Jan 2011	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan 2012	Feb	Mar
Inception Phase																		
Clarify and establish staffing arrangements																		
Establish financial systems																		
Set up Steering Com.																		
Conflict Analyses																		
In-depth participatory																		
National Level																		
Regional																		
Advocacy																		
Stakeholder Analysis																		
Capacity Building																		
Presentation																		
Monitoring and Evidence Collection																		
Conclusion																		
19th Report – thematic Participatory Analysis																		
Submission of reports and financial info																		
Final Evaluation																		

Setting Indicators: Template



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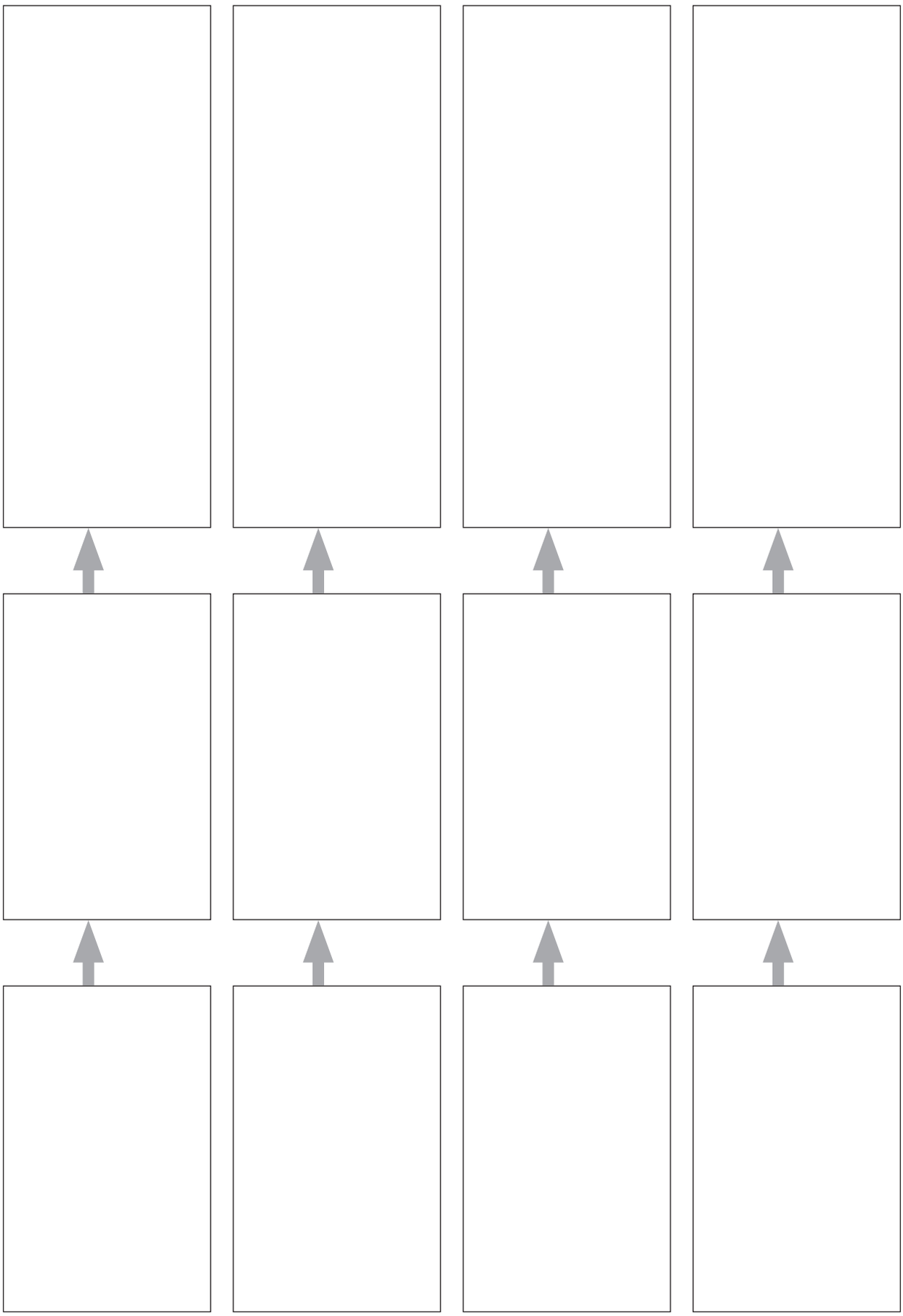

Advocacy Strategy Template

Advocacy Strategy

Background

This section should briefly outline the background to the security and conflict context of the relevant country/region, and the history of your involvement in this country and/or on this particular issue. Refer to any recent reports, on other ongoing work, which might be relevant or useful to be aware of.

The issue – what problem are you working on?

This section should set out in some (but not extensive) detail the issue/s on which your work focuses. You should set out as clearly as possible the problems as you see them, and the solutions you are working towards.

Your 'power analysis' – who are key players and what is their position

This section should detail the key actors that are relevant to the issue you are working on, their positions on your issue (whether they are supportive of opposed) and should set out the key target/s, allies and opponents.

Your advocacy goals and specific objectives – what are you trying to change?

This section should set out your change-focused advocacy goals, which will enable you to achieve the solutions you are working towards. You should also set out some of the detail of your advocacy objectives, including what type of advocacy is required to help achieve the solutions identified above, and why. This should be supplemented by any interim SMART objectives which form the basis of your advocacy strategy.

Your influencing strategy – how will you persuade your targets to act?

This section should outline how you plan to influence key actors e.g. which channels of influence will you use; and detail your 'theory of change' i.e. what logic are you using and what assumptions have you made.

Your activity plan – time for some detail

This section puts your influencing strategy into action, and will begin to detail the who, what, where and when of your advocacy activity. A timeline will help you keep track of progress.

The indicators – how will you judge your progress?

This section should outline some indicators by which you can judge the success of your advocacy work. Setting indicators will allow you to see what is working and what is not, helping you to refine your strategy further.