

## Session 2

### Key Concepts and Definitions

<p><b>Purpose</b> Introduce basic elements of policy advocacy, provide definitions of key concepts, differentiate advocacy from other similar concepts, and identify different types of policy change.</p>	
<p><b>Objectives</b> By the end of this session, participants will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Define policy and policy advocacy</li> <li>• Differentiate between policy advocacy and other similar concepts such as activism</li> <li>• Develop a working definition of policy advocacy for the workshop</li> </ul> <p><b>Total time:</b> ~1.5 hours</p>	<p><b>Session Preparations</b> Materials Needed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Session2_KeyConcepts_PowerPoint file (unhide slide 9 if conducting that activity)</li> <li>• Handouts: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Levels of Advocacy—An Example</li> <li>- Policy Advocacy and Other Related Approaches/Concepts</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Prepared flip charts: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Policy (title only)</li> <li>- Types of Policy Change (title and bullets); identify locally relevant examples of each type of change for sharing during the policy change discussion (see slide 6)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Flip chart paper and markers</li> </ul> <p>Set-Up:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Small groups at tables or theater style</li> </ul>

#### Definition of Advocacy—45 minutes

1. Use the speaker notes, questions, and probes provided to encourage participant interaction during the session.

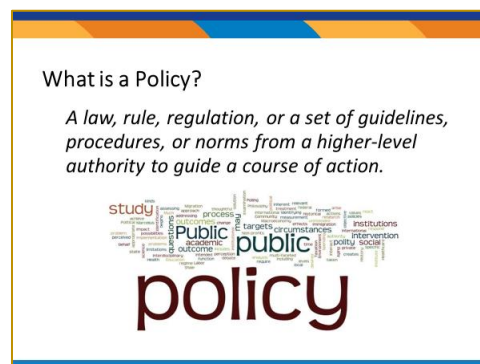
Show slide 1, explain: **During this session, we will introduce basic elements of policy advocacy, provide definitions of key concepts, differentiate advocacy from other similar concepts, and identify different types of policy change so that we have a common understanding of these concepts.**

2. Show slide 2 (title only).

Post the prepared flip chart titled Policy.

Ask participants: **What is a policy?**

Solicit ideas from the participants and write their ideas on the flip chart. Probe for: laws/legislation, plans, strategies, agendas, frameworks, protocols, procedures, guidelines, regulations, budgets/line items, training curriculum mandated by the government, regulatory authority,



treaties, international conventions or declarations, circulars, standard operating procedures (SOPs).



If the group is silent, ask these follow-up questions:

**What are examples of guidelines or regulations that you need to follow at work? What about in your community? What are some of the documents that you refer to for your work?**

Thank participants for their suggestions.

Advance the slide to share the definition of policy.

**Explain: There are many definitions of policy. Here is one clear definition of policy: A law, rule, regulation, or set of guidelines, procedures, or norms from a higher-level authority to guide a course of action.**

Link the definition to the ideas shared by the participants and recorded on the flip chart by connecting common elements or similar thoughts.

Share this additional information about policies:

**Policies can be established at the international, national, regional, district, local, or facility levels. For example, international organizations like the World Health Organization (WHO) may review research and recommend policies; a local government may set policies for their community; and hospital administrators will have SOPs for their facility.**

**Policies are formal documents that outline goals, guiding principles, or strategies to reach a goal. Policies give a person or an entity authority to undertake action to reach a goal.**

**Strong policies will also include resource commitments (e.g., people, finances), clear timelines, and benchmarks about how the goal will be achieved.**

3. Show slide 3.

Explain: Policy is just one of the words in “policy advocacy.” Let’s look at the definition of the second word in policy advocacy, “advocacy.” Almost all nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and community-based organizations (CBOs) already engage in some form of advocacy, perhaps unknowingly—you may use other terms to describe it.

Read the first definition shown on the slide; advance the slide to share the second definition of advocacy.

Clarify: Advocacy is a deliberate process involving intentional actions. It is possible to be sympathetic to or supportive of a cause without being an advocate.

**What is Advocacy?**

*Advocacy is the act or process of supporting a cause or issue. An advocacy campaign is a set of targeted actions in support of a cause or issue. We advocate a cause or issue because we want to*

- Build support for that cause or issue
- Influence others to support it
- Try to influence or change legislation that affects it

— International Planned Parenthood Federation, IPPF Advocacy Guide

*Advocacy is speaking up, drawing a community’s attention to an important issue, and directing decision-makers toward a solution. Advocacy is working with other people and organizations to make a difference.*

— CEDPA, Cairo, Beijing and Beyond: A Handbook on Advocacy for Women Leaders

4. Show slide 4.

Explain: Let’s put policy and advocacy together and review the definition of “policy advocacy,” that is, advocacy focused on policy change.

There are many different interpretations of what “policy advocacy” means and there’s no single agreed upon international definition. The definition on this slide, from PATH, is one of several published definitions. Please note that the terms “policy advocacy” and “advocacy” are used interchangeably during this workshop.

**What is Policy Advocacy?**

*Policy advocacy is the deliberate process of informing and influencing decision-makers in support of evidence-based policy change.*

— Stronger Health Advocates, Greater Health Impacts: A Workshop Curriculum on Policy Advocacy Strategy Development, 2013

5. Show slide 5 (title only).

Explain: There are several important elements contained in any definition of policy advocacy.

Advance the slide to reveal one bullet at a time. For each element, describe why this is an important feature of policy advocacy.

1. Policy advocacy is a deliberate process focused on informing and influencing decision-makers.
2. Policy advocacy tries to influence those who have the formal power to make a policy change.
3. Policy advocacy seeks changes that are evidence-based with recommended

**Elements of the Definition**

- Policy advocacy is a **deliberate process** that requires planning and strategy.
- Specifically, policy advocacy:
  - Aims to **inform and influence decision-makers**
  - Seeks changes that are **evidence-based**
  - Has a goal of **achieving a desired policy change**

solutions grounded in data that demonstrate the utility/benefit in making the changes.

4. The goal of policy advocacy is to achieve a desired policy change. It is not enough to just educate policymakers. We want to convince them to take a preferred action.

Clarify any participant questions.

6. Show slide 6 (title only).

Explain: **There are several different types of policy changes. Let's take a closer look at those.**


Advance the slide to reveal one bullet at a time. For each type of policy change, discuss the meaning and ask participants to share an example that reflects that type of change. If any of the examples you prepared are different from the examples shared by the participants, share your examples as well. Emphasize that these are examples of policy change.

Also post the prepared flip chart **Types of Policy Change** for reference during the workshop.

1. **Eliminate a harmful policy**—remove a harmful policy from a law, an SOP, or other governing document.
2. **Update or reform an existing policy**—change a current policy to better reflect new guidelines, evidence, or a changing population.
3. **Enforce an existing policy**—advocate for a group to implement or consistently enforce an existing policy.
4. **Develop a new policy**—create a new policy to address an inequity, a gap, or a related issue.
5. **Fund a policy**—request adequate funding to support a strong policy.

### Types of Policy Change

1. Eliminate a harmful policy
2. Review or revise an existing policy
3. Enforce an existing policy
4. Develop a new policy
5. Fund a policy



Source: Stranger Health Advocates, Greater Health Impacts: A workshop curriculum on policy advocacy strategy development, Facilitator's Guide, PATH, 2013.



7. Show slide 7.

Explain: Policies are made and may need to be changed at many levels. As such, advocacy must also occur at global, national, or subnational levels (e.g., regional, village, district, city, town, or province). The results from advocacy activities at one level can influence another.

**Levels of Advocacy**

Policy change can be made at many levels; as such, advocacy can occur at the:

- International level
- National level
- Local level

*Advocacy activities conducted at one level can affect what happens at other levels.*

8. Show slide 8.

Explain while advancing the slide to reveal one bullet at a time: A problem or issue may have a combination of local, national, and international causes, so the level of your advocacy work will depend on:

- The scale of the problem or issue—it may have a purely local cause.
- Where you (as the advocate) can have the greatest impact on the problem or issue—it may be more realistic to persuade and obtain the support of a local stakeholder first and then advocate at a higher level.
- The resources your organization brings to the issue; different levels of advocacy take different amounts of staff time, skills, and funds.
- Your organization’s networks and relationships. For example, one of your board members may know regional- or national-level stakeholders.
- The geographic scope of your organization—your activities may be limited to your community or to a single province.

**Levels of Advocacy**  
*(continued)*

Level(s) of your advocacy work will depend on:

- The scale of the problem or issue
- Where you can have the greatest impact
- Resources your organization can supply (i.e., staff time, skills, and funds)
- Your organization’s networks
- Geographic scope of your organization



Let’s look at one example of how the interactions among levels can occur.

Distribute copies of the Levels of Advocacy handout.

Tell participants: Take a few minutes to read the example on the handout. The example describes how advocates made a change to who is able to administer an HIV test. As you read the example, think about how the

**different levels may interact in your advocacy activities.**

After several minutes, ask: **What did you notice in this example about how advocacy at different levels can interact to bring about change?**

Probe for: Advocacy at the local, national, and international level worked together to create policy change that led to desired outcomes. The local clinic played as critical a role in implementing the change, and providing feedback on change, as WHO did.

*Note: Slide 9 is hidden in the slide set because this is an optional activity. However, if time permits, this activity provides an excellent opportunity to engage participants by tapping into their previous advocacy experiences. If you include this activity, allot an additional 20 minutes.*

9. Show slide 9 (optional; unhide slide if conducting the activity).

Ask the participants to break into four or five small groups of four to five people.

Introduce the activity using the instructions on the slide. Mention: **Think about advocacy that you may have conducted—at what level, or levels, did it occur? Discuss advocacy activities each of you have done—find examples from each level. Each small group will then share one example with the larger group.**

Allow the groups 10–15 minutes to share their advocacy stories with each other and select an example to share.

Ask each group to share their example of advocacy, describing the level(s) where it was conducted.

Thank each group for sharing their example.

**Discuss Policy Advocacy Experiences**

1. Recall the advocacy activities you have conducted and at what level(s) they occurred.
2. Share your experience(s) with other participants in your small group.
3. Select one example from your group to share with the large group.



10. Show slide 10.

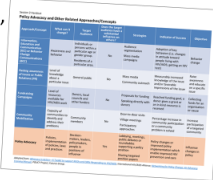
Explain: There are several other approaches that are often confused with policy advocacy. Let's clarify why they are distinct from advocacy.

Distribute copies of the Policy Advocacy and Other Related Approaches/Concepts handout.

Tell participants: Take a few minutes to review the features of the other approaches/concepts described on the handout. The first column lists the various other approaches/concepts, including information, education, and communication (IEC); behavior change communication (BCC); public relations; fundraising; and community mobilization; compared with policy advocacy, which is in the bottom row. Notice that there are distinct differences among what each approach is designed to change, the target audience for each approach, the strategies used, the indicators of success, and the overall objectives of each approach.

Approaches Often Confused with Policy Advocacy

- Information, education, communication (IEC) or behavior change communications (BCC)
- General awareness raising on issues or public relations (PR)
- Fundraising
- Community mobilization




11. Show slide 11.

Explain: There is often confusion among IEC, BCC, and policy advocacy, particularly for organizations that have not done policy advocacy work in the past. Let's take a closer look at the distinct differences between IEC/BCC and policy advocacy—the first and last rows on the handout. Note that IEC and BCC:

- Are focused on changing awareness and behavior, where the target audience is a group with similar characteristics (i.e., age, gender, geographic locations)
- Use strategies such as mass media campaigns or traditional media to help achieve the goal of behavior change
- Measure the success of campaigns by looking at whether behaviors change or are adopted in the target population
- Have behavior change as the primary objective

A Closer Look at IEC/BCC and Policy Advocacy

Approach/Concept	What Can It Change?	Target Audience	Does the Target Audience Have a Substantial Influence on Others?	Strategies	Indicator of Success	Objective
Information, education, and communication (IEC) or behavior change communications (BCC)	Awareness and behavior	Individuals or people within a particular age or gender group. Residents of a particular area.	No	Audience segmentation Mass media campaigns	Adoption of key behaviors (i.e., changes in attitudes toward people living with HIV or AIDS; getting an HIV test)	Behavior change
Policy advocacy	Policies, implementation of policies, laws, and practices	Decision-makers, leaders, policymakers, people in positions of influence	Yes	Lobbying, meeting, public debates, or roundtables supporting a policy position Sharing targeted position papers	Policy changes or improved policy implementation that enable improved HIV prevention and care	Influence changes in policy

Adapted from: Advocacy in Action—A Toolkit to Support NGOs and CSOs Responding to HIV/AIDS, International HIV/AIDS Alliance; Networking for Policy Change: An Advocacy Training Manual, POLICY Project, Future Group.

Tell participants: Compare these features of BCC against the features of policy advocacy.

After allowing participants to compare the features, summarize by saying:

- Policy advocacy is different from IEC/BCC because it targets decision-makers.
- The objective of policy advocacy is to change policy, not behavior.
- Advocacy efforts may include an IEC component to raise awareness among key audiences, but advocacy does not stop with awareness raising. Later in this workshop, we will discuss how BCC efforts can help support policy change and work hand-in-hand with policy change goals.
- Policy advocacy focuses on an end goal of a policymaker implementing the prescribed policy action.

*Note: Tell participants that this chart simplifies potential target audiences for each strategy. In reality, you may find that a certain strategy reaches a mix of the target audiences. We will discuss how many of these strategies work together to maximize change among a variety of target audiences.*

12. Show slide 12.

Explain: There is one additional concept that is often confused with advocacy—the concept of activism. Let’s clarify what each means:

- Both advocacy and activism seek to bring about a change in policies, programs, or action in support of a particular issue.
- Often these words are used interchangeably, but they do not mean the same thing. It is helpful to think of activism as one form of advocacy, but advocacy is much broader than just activism.
- Advocacy can be thought of as a more formal negotiation; it occurs “within the system.”
- Activism is often associated with confrontation or political protest. Activism occurs “outside the system” and involves applying pressure for change in a more confrontational manner.

**Advocacy vs. Activism**

<p><b>Advocacy</b></p> <p>Policy advocacy is the deliberate process of informing and influencing decision-makers in support of evidence-based policy change.</p> <p><small>– Stronger Health Advocates, Greater Health Impacts: A Workshop Curriculum on Policy Advocacy Strategy Development, PATH, 2013</small></p>	<p><b>Activism</b></p> <p>The use of direct, often confrontational action, such as a demonstration or a strike, in opposition to or support of a cause.</p> <p><small>– The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language, 4th Edition</small></p>
---	---



Ask participants: **What are some examples of activism in your country or community? Was the activism related to a larger advocacy effort?**

Probe for: current or historical examples that are relevant to participants.

Summarize the examples shared by clarifying whether they were “within the system” or “outside the system.”

### Small Group Activity—45 minutes

#### 13. Show slide 13.

Ask the participants to break into their assigned groups (prearranged small groups of four to five people who will work as a team throughout the training; see the Facilitator’s Guide, Grouping the Participants for more information on how to organize the small groups).

Introduce the activity using the instructions on the slide. Mention: **The task for your group is to write a definition of policy advocacy that is specific to the kind of work you do and the type of policy change you might seek. Your definition should incorporate each of the elements mentioned in the instructions on the slide, reflect the ideas of your group, and be meaningful to your organization. Form a consensus as you decide how to describe the elements of policy advocacy. You can refer to the discussions and handouts that we reviewed earlier for ideas that you may want to include in your definition. The definition should be brief—no more than a couple of sentences.**

*Note: Since definitions have already been presented, some groups may be confused regarding this activity. Explain that this activity requires them to **personalize** the definition of policy advocacy for their organization. Here is an example of a tailored definition participants might develop: Policy advocacy is a joint effort, with meaningful participation from communities affected by HIV and AIDS and interested stakeholders. It targets policymakers with strong evidence to influence the policy development process and ultimately to make informed changes to policy.*

#### Activity—Define Policy Advocacy

1. Select a recorder and a spokesperson.
2. Write your group’s definition of policy advocacy.
3. Remember: Include what policy advocacy is and who policy advocacy is aimed at. Specifically, policy advocacy:
  - Aims to **inform and influence decision-makers**
  - Seeks changes that are **evidence-based**
  - Has a goal of **achieving a desired policy change**



Remind the groups to select a recorder to take notes during the discussion and prepare a flip chart, as well as a spokesperson to share the group's definition with the larger group during the report out.

Give each group markers and several sheets of flip chart paper.

Allow the groups 20–25 minutes to complete their definition of policy advocacy and prepare to present their definition. Give periodic updates about the amount of time remaining.

Circulate among the groups to answer questions.

Ask each group's spokesperson to post their definition where all participants can see it and to take about two minutes to present their definition, describing how they decided on the wording and the emphasis given to each element.

Thank the spokespeople and the participants for sharing their definitions and ideas.

#### 14. Show slide 14.

After the groups have presented their definitions, conduct a discussion using the questions on the slide:

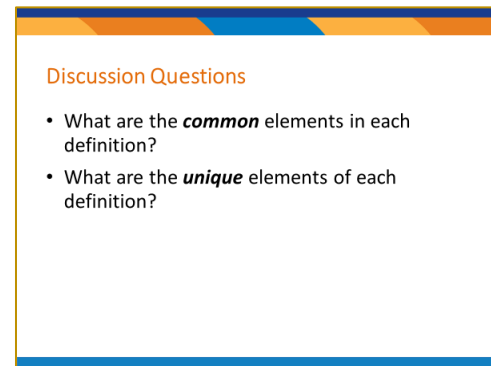
- What are the **common** elements in each definition?
- What are the **unique** elements of each definition?

Ask the first question and encourage participants to point out the elements that are *common* across each of the definitions.

Ask the co-facilitator to use a colored marker to highlight (by drawing a circle around the words) the *common* elements that participants identify. Move from one definition to the next until you have identified all the *common* elements.

Ask the second question and encourage participants to point out the elements that are *different* across the definitions.

Ask the co-facilitator to use a different colored marker to highlight (by underlining the words) the *differences* in the definitions identified by the participants. Move from one definition to the next until you have identified all the elements that are *different*.



Discussion Questions

- What are the **common** elements in each definition?
- What are the **unique** elements of each definition?



## 15. Show slide 15.

Tell participants: **As we discussed earlier, there are many different definitions of policy advocacy, but no one internationally accepted definition. To establish a common understanding, we'd like to agree on a single definition that we will use during this workshop. There are several options for developing a common definition of policy advocacy. We could:**

- 1) **Develop another definition using the common elements from the small group definitions**
- 2) **Select two or three favorites from the small group definitions and combine them**
- 3) **Select a definition written by one of the small groups that we all agree should be used as our definition of policy advocacy**

Ask for a show of hands from participants to decide which method to adopt. Based on the participants' responses, use your judgement to determine the best approach to reach a single definition. This decision may be influenced by the makeup of groups within the workshop and the time available.

Depending on the approach selected, either craft another definition or rewrite the selected definition neatly on a fresh sheet of flip chart paper so it is easy to read.

*Note: Finalizing the definition takes time, and wordsmithing in a large group is challenging. If necessary, ask for one or two volunteers to work on the definition over lunch or overnight, and then present the definition to the group for final review, additional editing, and approval during the next session.*

After endorsement by the group, post the final definition on the wall for use throughout the workshop.

**Activity—Agree on Policy Advocacy Definition**

1. Create a new definition combining common elements from all the small group definitions.  
OR  
Create a new definition by combining two or three favorite small group definitions.  
OR  
Select one of the small group definitions.
2. Write the final definition on a flip chart for use during the workshop.



**Wrap-Up**

16. Show slide 16.

Conclude the session by reviewing the learning objectives, summarizing the key concepts and definitions, and clarifying any questions.

Learning Objectives—Session 2

- Define policy and policy advocacy
- Differentiate between policy advocacy and other similar concepts such as activism
- Develop a working definition of policy advocacy for the workshop

## Levels of Advocacy—An Example

Advocacy work can target people with influence at all levels. In this example, our advocacy issue is task shifting the professional staff who can administer and read HIV tests.

**Local level:** A clinic associated with a local faith-based hospital persuades the district health authority to allow outreach workers, as opposed to nurses at the hospital, to conduct initial HIV tests and then refer clients to the hospital for a confirmatory test. A pilot study demonstrates an increase in the numbers of new clients tested under this policy change. This advocacy work completed by the local clinic has a local impact on the number of clients who know their HIV status.

**National level:** The country's Ministry of Health takes notice of the pilot study and tracks results for 1.5 years from the clinic and local hospital system where this policy change has been integrated. The administrator of the hospital system shares the data and a technical brief outlining the potential for country-wide impact on uptake of HIV testing. The Ministry of Health reviews the data and confers with the HIV technical working group and medical technologists' association before making a country-wide policy change stating that outreach workers with a limited level of training can conduct HIV tests.

**International level:** The head of the HIV technical working group from the country takes the data from the nationwide policy rollout and presents it at the International AIDS Conference. Staff from the World Health Organization (WHO) take notice and ask to make a site visit to learn about the policy change, see the implementation firsthand, and learn from the experience of the implementers. Based on what they learn, the HIV working group at WHO updates their guidance regarding how to effectively task shift HIV testing to lower-level health workers.

This example shows that advocacy can make a difference at each level, and results from one level can influence another. Working together in coalitions can strengthen advocacy at every level, but partnerships become particularly important as you move from the local to national to international levels. This is because at the national and international levels, you may face a broader variety of challenges to achieving your advocacy objectives, and a group of advocates with a broader set of capabilities, drawn from a coalition, is best positioned to respond.

### Policy Advocacy and Other Related Approaches/Concepts

Approach/Concept	What Can It Change?	Target Audience	Does the Target Audience Have a Substantial Influence on Others?	Strategies	Indicator of Success	Objective
Information, education, and communication (IEC) or behavior change communications (BCC)	Awareness and behavior	Individuals or people within a particular age or gender group. Residents of a particular area.	No	Audience segmentation Mass media campaigns	Adoption of key behaviors (i.e., changes in attitudes toward people living with HIV or AIDS; getting an HIV test)	Behavior change
Raising awareness of issues or public relations (PR)	Level of knowledge about a particular issue	General public	No	Mass media Community outreach	Measurably increased knowledge of the issue and/or favorable impressions of the issue	Raise awareness and educate on a specific issue
Fundraising campaigns	Level of resources available for HIV and AIDS work	Donors, local councils, and other funders	No	Proposals for funding Speaking directly with donors	Reached funding goal, a donor gives a grant or an in-kind resource is received	Collecting funds for an organization or cause
Community mobilization	Capacity of communities to identify and address their problems	Community members	No	Door-to-door visits Village meetings Participatory approaches	Percentage increase in community participation or a community problem is solved	Increase participation of a targeted community

Approach/Concept	What Can It Change?	Target Audience	Does the Target Audience Have a Substantial Influence on Others?	Strategies	Indicator of Success	Objective
<b>Policy advocacy</b>	Policies, implementation of policies, laws, and practices	Decision-makers, leaders, policymakers, people in positions of influence	Yes	Lobbying, meetings, public debates, or roundtables supporting a policy position Sharing targeted position papers	Policy changes or improved policy implementation that enable improved HIV prevention and care	Influence changes in policy

Adapted from: [Advocacy in Action—A Toolkit to Support NGOs and CBOs Responding to HIV/AIDS](#), International HIV/AIDS Alliance; [Networking for Policy Change: An Advocacy Training Manual](#), POLICY Project, Futures Group.