

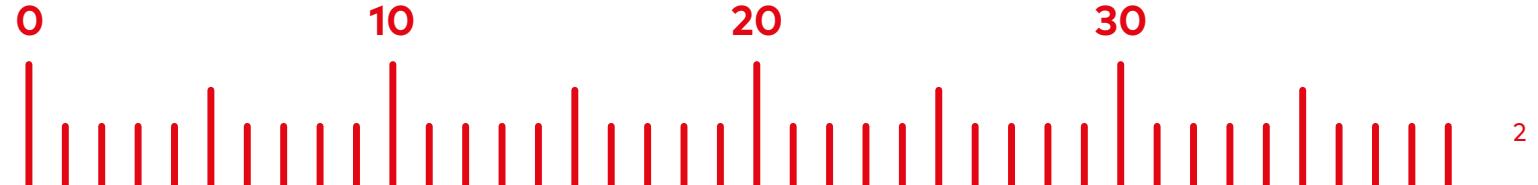


# Measuring Up: Learning from practice

Planning, monitoring  
and evaluating  
HIV-related advocacy

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This publication was developed by the PITCH M&E Working Group in 2020 (consisting of staff from both Aidsfonds and Frontline AIDS), with Casey Davison O'Brien (Frontline AIDS) serving as lead author. We would also like to acknowledge the extensive work in 2016 of independent consultant, Nicky Davies, who developed the original iteration of Measuring Up: Learning from practice, without which this publication would

have been unlikely to have come to fruition. Nicky's work has ensured that we continue to learn from the practical, lived application of different advocacy M&E tools within the context of multi-country advocacy programmes working on the HIV response. For inquiries related to any of the lessons presented in this publication, please feel free to contact either Aidsfonds or Frontline AIDS.

We would like to dedicate this publication to the memory of Alan Brotherton, one of the original authors of Measuring Up. A life-long HIV and AIDS activist, Alan prided himself on the fact that his activism was always linked to organised advocacy.



<sup>1</sup>The Partnership to Inspire, Transform and Connect the HIV Response (PITCH) is a strategic partnership between Aidsfonds, Frontline AIDS and the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs. It aims to build the capacity of community-led organisations representing people living with and most affected by HIV to advocate for HIV prevention, human rights and sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR). PITCH supports advocacy in Indonesia, Kenya, Mozambique, Myanmar, Nigeria, Uganda, Ukraine, Vietnam and Zimbabwe. For more information visit [aidsfonds.org/pitch](http://aidsfonds.org/pitch) or [frontlineaids.org/pitch](http://frontlineaids.org/pitch)

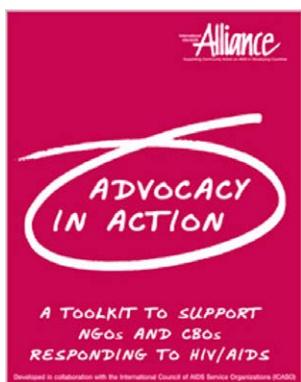
# 1. Introduction

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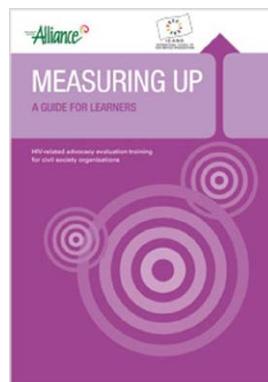
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Inherently complex by default, when it comes to designing robust yet practical M&E systems, advocacy programmes are disadvantaged from the outset. The relational and intangible world of advocacy presents a range of barriers when it comes to demonstrating the contribution civil society actors make to change. When they are persuaded to change policy, policy-makers are not in the habit of publicly crediting the role of advocates in influencing their decisions. The space for influencing the targets of our advocacy and campaigns is occupied by numerous actors and calls for action that use a range of different strategies, some of which are better coordinated than others. When a national government decides to fund community-led programmes that provide health services to sex workers for the first time, who has shaped that decision? What was the role of civil society? Which campaign, coalition or advocacy programme contributed to it?



Over the past 20 years, Frontline AIDS – previously the International HIV/AIDS Alliance – has worked closely with advocates to support learning related to the monitoring and evaluating of advocacy work. The Advocacy in Action toolkit was published in 2001 by Frontline AIDS and the International Council of AIDS Service Organizations (ICASO), and was designed to help organisations plan and implement effective advocacy work around HIV/AIDS. In 2010, in response to a growing need to plan and measure advocacy by outcomes, Frontline AIDS and ICASO worked together again

to publish 'Measuring Up: A guide for learners' and 'Measuring Up: A guide for facilitators'. These guides served those learning how to evaluate HIV-related advocacy, as well as those setting out to facilitate this learning. The Asia Action and Link Up programmes championed and piloted the tools presented in these guides.



In 2020, Measuring Up: Learning from practice has been developed as a follow up to its 2010 predecessors. It coincides with the fifth and final year of PITCH, a global advocacy programme coordinated by Aidsfonds and Frontline AIDS.

In this publication we present the experiences of PITCH partners, and of the PITCH M&E Working Group in using different advocacy M&E tools and approaches. We compare and supplement these with experiences and lessons from the earlier Asia Action and Link Up programmes (both ended in 2015), which were documented by Nicky Davies in 2016. This publication has been written as an honest, up-to-the-minute reflection and stocktaking exercise.

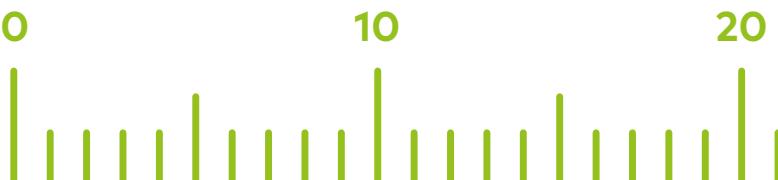
## 2. Experiences, reflections, lessons and guidance

### 2.1 Theory of Change

#### Setting the scene

The purpose of a Theory of Change is to identify and present the ultimate impact of a programme or influencing strategy, and then, working backwards, to illustrate the logical and consequential steps that need to be taken in order to achieve that anticipated impact. These steps form a causal sequence of results, or a journey of change. The development of a Theory of Change at the beginning of a programme or influencing process is our opportunity to present – as we best understand it at the time – how the change we want to see and to contribute to will happen over the course of the programme. Each stage in this journey of change towards our ultimate goal is underpinned by one or more assumptions, which allows us to bridge the gap between the different stages of change in our Theory of Change. Without these we cannot truly understand how we move from one stage of change to the next, and what conditions need to be in place to allow for this change to happen.

There exists ample guidance elsewhere on the development of Theories of Change, and therefore we will not go into any detail in this publication in terms of how to undergo a Theory of Change development process. What we do provide below is an insight into the experiences of using Theories of Change to guide the planning, monitoring and evaluation of the PITCH, Asia Action, and Link Up programmes, with a particular focus on the PITCH programme.



## Case Study:

# Using global and country-level Theories of Change

As part of the inception phase for the PITCH programme, an overarching Theory of Change was developed (see Figure 1) to guide the numerous advocacy activities taking place in the nine countries: at the regional level in the Southern Africa region and the Eastern Europe & Central Asia region, as well as at the global policy level e.g. at the United Nations, Global Fund, European Union, and African Union.

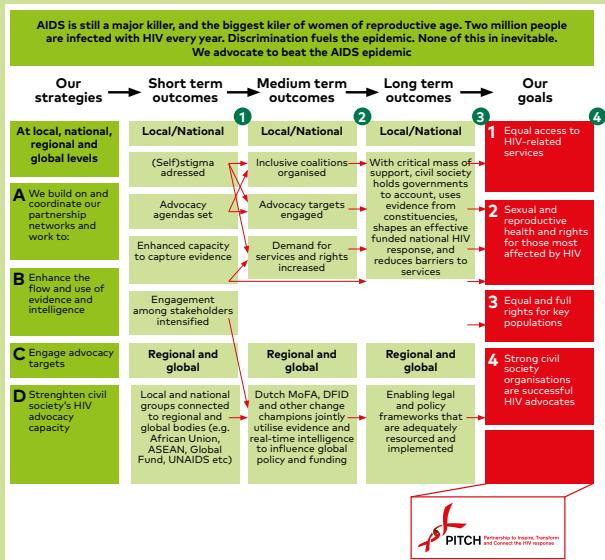


Figure 1: PITCH programme – Theory of Change

The PITCH programme has used this Theory of Change to inform both the annual work planning and annual reporting processes for all contracted partners. By developing a set of 25 performance indicators within the M&E Framework, we have been able to help PITCH partners internationally to measure the progress they are making each year towards each of these outcomes (see example Figure 2).

Indicator
<b>PITCH Short-Term Outcomes</b>
<b>S1: (Self) Stigma addressed</b>
<b>IndS1.1:</b> Decision-makers/implementers demonstrate changed attitude towards key populations (KPs) and adolescent girls and young women (AGYW) on an issue or claim.
<b>IndS1.2:</b> % of KP and AGYW who report to have recently experienced stigma and discrimination in relation to their HIV status and/or gender/sexuality.
<b>IndS1.3:</b> % adolescents and young people living with HIV (A&YPLHIV) who express equitable gender norms with regard to decision-making around sex and relationships.
<b>S2: Advocacy agenda set</b>
<b>IndS2.1:</b> Extent to which country partners utilise advocacy opportunities to shape policy positions and strategies with relevant stakeholders.
<b>IndS2.2:</b> # of country partners with evidence-based advocacy strategy or plan with clear policy targets and recommendations.
<b>S3: Enhanced capacity to capture evidence</b>
<b>IndS3.1:</b> # of country partners with improved capacity to capture evidence aligned to their advocacy work.
<b>IndS3.2:</b> # of new evidence produced or existing evidence synthesised by country partners to inform their advocacy efforts.
<b>S4: Engagement among stakeholders intensified</b>
<b>IndS4.1:</b> # of meetings/foras/symposiums with decision-makers in which country partners represent themselves and share their positions/Advocacy Asks at country, regional and global level.
<b>IndS4.2:</b> # of country partners with improved capacity to engage with stakeholders at country, regional and global level.
<b>S5: Local and national groups connected to regional and global bodies (e.g. African Union, ASEAN, Global Fund, UNAIDS etc.)</b>
<b>IndS5.1:</b> Global, regional, and country partners meaningfully engage with regional and global policy processes and institutions.
<b>IndS5.2:</b> Evidence of positive political changes at regional and global level.

Figure 2: PITCH M&E Framework

PITCH is a programme that contracts more than 100 organisations internationally, therefore it was important from the outset to develop a system whereby these 11 outcomes could be adapted in a way that would feel relevant and context-specific to each of these organisations.

Aidsfonds and Frontline AIDS worked with partners in each of the nine target countries in the PITCH programme to develop country level Theories of Change (see example Figure 3). Partners in each country took the original language used at each outcome level in the global Theory of Change, whether this concerned addressing stigma or enhancing the capacity of advocates to collect evidence, and made these their own, adapting the language to suit their country context. In doing so, each country-level Theory of Change has been driven by country-specific outcomes.



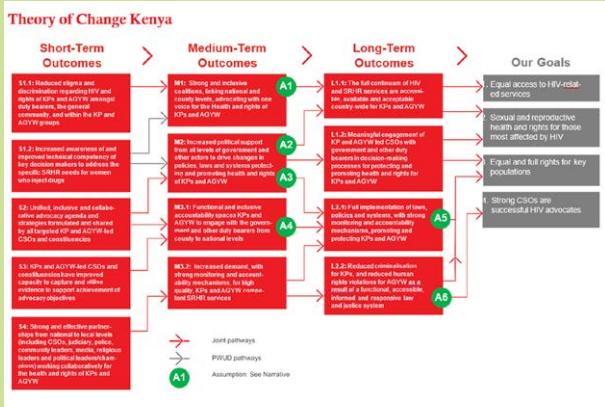


Figure 3: PITCH-Theory of Change for Kenya

In Figure 3, we can see that the PITCH partners in Kenya have chosen to adapt several outcomes to suit their country context. They have focussed on addressing the sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) of women who inject drugs as a short term outcome (S1.2), while setting out to contribute to a functional, accessible, informed, and responsive legal and justice system as a long-term outcome.

The PITCH M&E system was also designed to support the aggregation of the results of partners' work at the country, regional and global policy levels with the programme's overarching Theory of Change and Results Framework. Figure 4 illustrates an example of how, as part of the PITCH reporting process, partners use a reporting template to monitor and track progress towards their Advocacy Asks (more on this later) in line with the outcomes from their country Theory of Change. By connecting the country-level outcomes with the programme-level performance indicators, the programme has sought to connect the local contexts that PITCH partners are working in with the programme-level Results Framework.

Section 2: Kenya Results Framework		
Indicators	Value	Narrative
<b>IndS1.1:</b> Decision-makers/implementers demonstrate changed attitude towards key populations on an issue or claim		
<b>IndS1.2:</b> % of KP and AGYW who report to have recently experienced stigma and discrimination in relation to their HIV status and/or gender/sexuality		
<b>IndS1.3:</b> % Adolescents and Young People living with HIV (A&YPLHIV) who express equitable gender norms with regard to decision-making around sex and relationships		

Figure 4: Kenya Results Framework



## Lessons and reflections

### Keep the focus on results

It is important to monitor the changes in the context where advocacy is taking place in order to be able to adjust advocacy strategies and Advocacy Asks, as well as, where relevant, anticipated advocacy outcomes. Ongoing monitoring of this kind also allows for learning in terms of understanding how programme implementers have adapted their planning in response to these changes in context. As part of the PITCH programme, space was provided in the PITCH reporting templates for programme implementers to document these contextual changes and their impact on their work. Our experience from PITCH has therefore taught us to keep the focus of our performance indicators on the contributions that partner organisations are making towards changes and outcomes, in line with their Theory of Change.

During the PITCH programme inception phase, 11 outcomes were identified as part of the development of the programme's Theory of Change. In order to measure progress towards these outcomes, 25 performance indicators were developed, 10 of which were qualitative, and 15 of which combined a quantitative value with a qualitative narrative to explain that value. While many of these indicators have allowed partners to monitor and report on the progress they have made towards each of the outcomes, others have not.

Some have been written in a way that encourages partners to reflect more on the changing context in which they are working. This is the case, for example, with IndM3.1: Number of rights violation cases against key populations and adolescent girls and young women brought to court. Other indicators more clearly focus on measuring the contribution to positive changes in policy and practice, for example IndM2.1: Level of involvement by country partners in local and national strategy and policy formation.

Other indicators in the PITCH Results Framework are designed to measure changes in PITCH

partners' capacity to use evidence to support their advocacy; to engage with different advocacy targets, and to hold governments to account. We learned that measuring changed capacity, without a provision for monitoring how an individual or an organisation has used that increased knowledge, confidence or new skill, risks stalling learning at the output level. It risks undermining a programme's ability to truly learn what this change in capacity has meant for advocates working to influence policy and practice. Therefore, we need to reflect on how best to measure changed capacity, how it has been applied, and how this has contributed to the achievement of a programme's goals.

### When and how should we adapt?

Best practice dictates that once a Theory of Change has been developed, a clear and user-friendly process needs to be put in place that will allow its users to periodically review and adjust it to suit the ever changing context they are working in. This is especially important the longer a programme is implemented, and with PITCH we have watched the context change drastically since 2016 when the programme was first launched. What seems less clear is when and how often to adapt a Theory of Change, what such a process should look like, and who to involve.

The advice from Better Evaluation<sup>2</sup> is that the following circumstances each warrant a review of a programme's Theory of Change:

1. There is disagreement about how valid or comprehensive the current Theory of Change is
2. There are gaps or errors in the current Theory of Change
3. There is little evidence to support the current Theory of Change (either from the programme or from other research and evaluation)
4. The understanding of how the project or programme works has developed further since the original Theory of Change was developed
5. The context has changed in significant ways
6. The current version is adequate for planning purposes but needs more detail for an evaluation.



Points 2, 4, and 5 were at the forefront of our minds when planning for the PITCH programme's Mid-Term Review in 2018. As part of the Mid-Term Review, all partners had the opportunity to meet with their Country Focal Point to reflect on the continued relevance of each country's Theory of Change. The following questions were presented in the country meetings as a way to guide these conversations:

1. Is the focus and strategy described in the country Theory of Change still up-to-date and comprehensive – what aspects need to change and why?
2. Do we need to revise the key assumptions on which our work is based?
3. Is there clear evidence that we are using the country Theory of Change to reflect, learn and improve our work?  
If not, why not? How are we going to improve that in the next phase?
4. What are the 3–4 Advocacy Asks that implementing partners would like to focus on/continue with?

Although only the partners in Myanmar and Ukraine decided to actually adapt their country Theory of Change, either changing the sequence of outcomes or the language in the outcomes themselves, what was particularly interesting was the process that partners in each country engaged in. In Uganda, several partners noted that they had found their country Theory of Change 'especially useful' when mapping the stakeholders that they went on to work with as part of PITCH, as well as when mapping both their advocacy targets and allies, including 'friendly' or supportive health service providers. When sharing feedback during their in-country Mid-Term Review meetings in 2018, many partners commented that they found their country Theory of Change 'most useful' when planning their activities. This was confirmed when PITCH partners completed a survey in August 2020 that focused on partners' experiences of using the programme's M&E system. As many as 94% of respondents found their Theory of Change to either be 'very useful' or 'useful' when planning their advocacy strategies and activities. Additionally, 96% of respondents noted that they found their Theory of Change either 'very useful' or 'useful' when monitoring and reporting on the results of their advocacy work.

Aside from the Mid-Term Review process, no other formal opportunities have been created for partners to adapt their country Theory of Change. However, partners have been encouraged to reflect on it each year when taking part in the annual work planning and reporting processes. It is worth noting that, as part of the programme development phase for the Power of Voices strategic partnerships, the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs explicitly asked strategic partners to develop a limited set of indicators in line with their Theory of Change, and that these should remain static over the course of the programme period.



"I wish someone had talked to me about my sexual health - I wouldn't have ended up pregnant and unprepared at such an early age."  
Youth-friendly services need to be designed and implemented by youth. Uganda. © Naskmariz/Frontline AIDS/PhotoVoice/2018

### How can we manage linear expectations?

Through our experience of implementing PITCH, we have observed an inherent contradiction in the formulation of advocacy programme Theories of Change. On the one hand, it is broadly recognised and agreed that monitoring and evaluating the contribution of different stakeholders towards change in the context of advocacy programmes is more complex than in more traditional service delivery programmes. Change does not tend to happen in a clear and easy to trace sequential or linear manner. In the context of advocacy programming, change is messy and prone to setbacks as much as progress. On the other hand, advocates and their M&E colleagues – during a programme inception phase – are expected to plot their anticipated journey of change in the form of neatly articulated short-, medium-, and long-term outcomes, as a contribution to a set of goals. This process is applied in the full knowledge that advocates are unlikely to transition from short- to medium- and long-term outcomes over the course of a

programme. As the Overseas Development Institute noted in 2014, "traditional monitoring and evaluation approaches which rely on a simple linear, cause and effect model with predefined indicators, are simply not adequate in this context advocacy requires a 'try and evolve' management style with an M&E system that can facilitate learning about the context in question, and about the effectiveness of the strategies and tactics used".<sup>3</sup>

In the PITCH programme, we have endeavored to apply a 'try and evolve' management style as described by the Overseas Development Institute, which has proven to be largely effective. As shown in the example in Figure 3, partners in each of the nine PITCH countries have used a Theory of Change that identifies outcomes in the short-, medium-, and long-term. Each year, partners have been asked to plan their advocacy activities for the following year in line with the outcomes that feature in their Theory of Change, regardless of whether they are in the first or final year of the

<sup>3</sup> Overseas Development Institute (ODI) 2014. Monitoring and evaluation of policy influence and advocacy: Working Paper 395. London: ODI. Available at: <https://www.odi.org/sites/odi.org.uk/files/odi-assets/publications-opinion-files/8928.pdf>

programme. We have intentionally created space for partners to plan their activities in line with a short-term outcome, even if they are mid-way, or even in the last year of the programme. We recognise that the contexts in which we all work and operate are subject to change. Efforts to tackle stigmatising and discriminatory attitudes expressed by the police or healthcare workers are, in many circumstances, just as a fundamental at the beginning (as a short-term outcome) as at the end of an advocacy programme (as a long-term outcome). A change in circumstances – whether a regular occurrence like a general election, or simply a key government stakeholder having a change of position- to major shocks like a global pandemic – can very easily undo the gains made, requiring advocates to take a step back and re-visit their earlier, short-term interventions.

In the PITCH programme, we have adopted a 'cyclical' approach to developing and monitoring a Theory of Change, recognising that social phenomena – changes in attitudes or behaviour among communities, civil society, service providers or governments – are prone to recurring throughout the lifetime of a project. This has enabled PITCH partners to use their Theory of Change practically when planning and reflecting on their progress in line with their anticipated advocacy outcomes. Providing PITCH partners with the space to adopt a cyclical rather than linear approach to their advocacy planning and implementation has allowed them to work in line with their Theory of Change while not being held captive by it.

**"Using the Theory of Change approach as part of the PITCH monitoring and evaluation system, we can measure the short-term, medium-term and the long-term change. We can also monitor our work and document changes. We can prove our contribution from the result of our advocacy work".** PITCH partner, August 2020.

## 2.2 Advocacy Asks

### Setting the scene

Aidsfonds and Frontline AIDS define an 'Advocacy Ask' as a statement that articulates the change that a partner sets out to achieve as a result of their advocacy work over the course of a year. A strong Advocacy Ask should contain the following essential components:

- The stakeholder or the policy that the advocate is setting out to influence or change
- The change that the PITCH partner wants to see take place
- Where the change needs to take place
- Who will benefit from this change

Fundamentally, Advocacy Asks work best when they are clear, specific and concise. They allow advocates to understand the detail and specificity of the change they want to contribute to, and to plan and monitor the effectiveness of their advocacy work accordingly. Advocacy Asks should be developed in accordance with the relevant outcomes in a Theory of Change, which in turn helps to maintain the relevance of these outcomes by bringing them to life. The narrowly defined nature of Advocacy Asks makes it relatively easy to assess whether or not the desired results have been achieved. The assessment of progress and ultimate successful result are only possible if these results are worded in a specific and unambiguous way. For example, an Advocacy Ask in the context of a harm reduction programme might be:

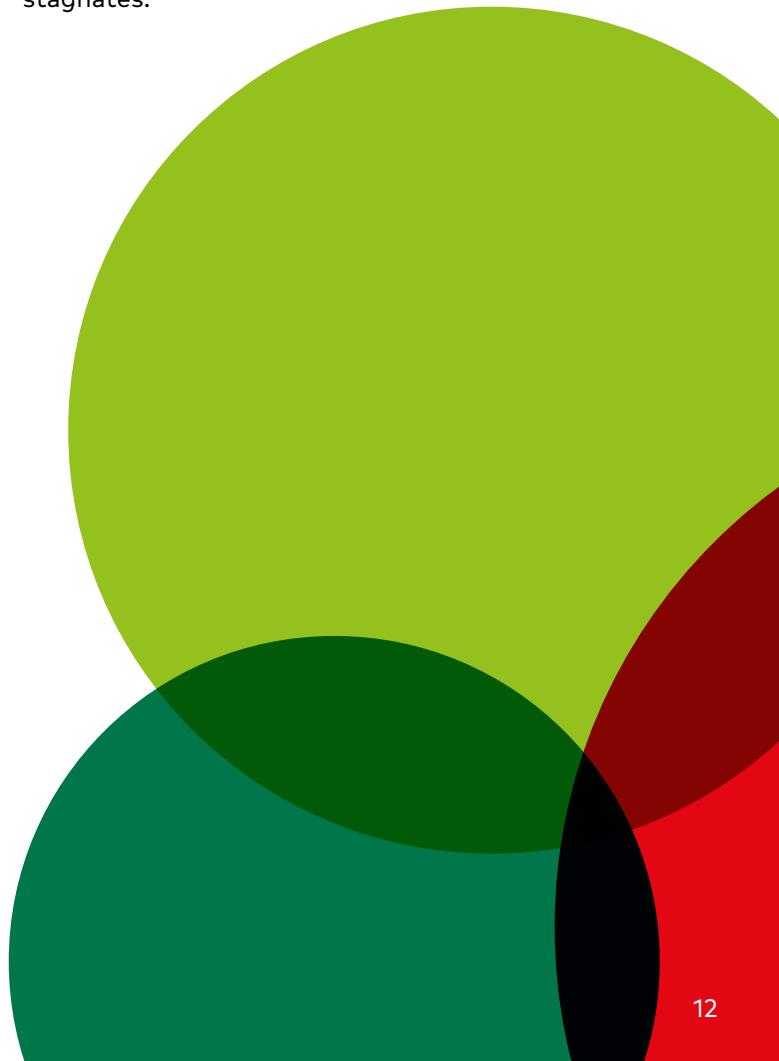
**'National legislation in Ukraine is passed by parliament that allows for the provision of methadone treatment in prisons'.**

Progress in line with this Ask could be measured in relation to the relevant context at the start of a programme, where no legislation exists that calls for the provision of methadone treatment in prisons. It is important to note that this Ask is

centred on the question of policy and legislation, rather than the provision of a service. Once this Ask is achieved, a new Advocacy Ask can be developed, for example,

**'All prisons in Ukraine are implementing methadone treatment programmes by December 2020'.**

Advocacy Asks are therefore most useful in the context of outcome-based monitoring and evaluation, serving as indicators by which progress can be measured at the mid- and end-point of a programme, or more frequently if required. The lesson learned is that Advocacy Asks help operationalise the Theory of Change and give the flexibility that the outcomes within it lack because of their more abstract nature. Advocacy Asks help track change within a context that is complex and does not show linear improvement, but jumps forwards, backwards, and sometimes stagnates.



## Case Study:

# Using Advocacy Asks for planning and monitoring in PITCH

In the PITCH programme, as part of the annual work planning process, partners have collaborated with their Country Focal Points and Country Coordinators at Aidsfonds and Frontline AIDS to develop their annual Advocacy Asks. Usually, up to five annual Advocacy Asks are developed in relation to each key population community (adolescent girls and young women, the LGBT community, people who use drugs and sex workers). When planning and budgeting advocacy

and campaigning activities, this process is carried out in line with these Advocacy Asks, as well as the relevant outcomes within the partners' country-level Theory of Change. Through a simple coding process, each Advocacy Ask is given a code that consists of a number and the key population acronym (e.g. PUD1 for people who use drugs), which is then linked to the relevant activities under the relevant outcome in the PITCH partner's annual work plan (see Figure 5).

2020	
Advocacy Ask - PUD1	Geographic Focus of Results
1. Kenya's 12th Parliament to legislate in support of the provision of harm reduction interventions as part of the country's national Healthcare Bill by September 2020	National level

Figure 5: Advocacy Ask example

This process helps ensure that the annual Advocacy Ask directly correlates with the relevant outcome from the partner's Theory of Change.

In this way the partner can identify and track the concrete change they want to achieve.



An alternative approach, applied as part of the Link Up and Asia Action programmes, involves the development of Advocacy Asks at the baseline, mid-term, and end-point in a programme. Developed early in a programme, this approach

can help to guide advocates as they plan, implement, and reflect on the progress of their activities. Figure 6 shows an example of a template these programmes have used to document Advocacy Asks.

<b>Advocacy Ask</b>	<b>Baseline (the situation now – add the date)</b>	<b>Anticipated mid-term (add date)</b>	<b>Ask achieved (add date)</b>
<b>The Government of Nigeria includes Naloxone in all future national-level harm reduction packages by December 2020</b>	Naloxone is not currently included in national harm reduction packages in Nigeria	The Nigerian Government is reviewing the current harm reduction package offered to people who use drugs	Approval for the inclusion of Naloxone in all future national-level harm reduction packages is obtained
<b>A client-centred support and treatment model is in place in Indonesia as an alternative to the current compulsory detention model</b>	A client-centred support and treatment model does not exist in Indonesia.  The compulsory detention model is the current policy of the Indonesian Government	Government stakeholders collaborate in developing and piloting a client-centred support and treatment model in Jakarta, as an alternative to the compulsory detention model	The Government replicates the client-centred support and treatment model in Sumatra

Figure 6: Alternative Advocacy Ask approach

## Lessons and reflections

### Focused, but inflexible?

In the PITCH programme, as well as previously in the Asia Action and Link Up programmes, we have worked to strike a difficult balance between encouraging partners to develop Advocacy Asks that are focused on a very specific achievements, and being sufficiently flexible to allow for adaptation in the face of a change in context. In the survey carried out with PITCH partners in August 2020, more than 90% of respondents found that the Advocacy Ask approach has either been 'very useful' or 'useful' when planning their advocacy strategies and activities. Meanwhile, nearly 90% of respondents found that the Advocacy Ask approach has either been 'very useful' or 'useful' when monitoring and reporting on the results of their advocacy work. When asked what the main advantages have been of using the Advocacy Ask approach, 65 out of 75 survey respondents noted that this approach helped them to be specific about who it is they want to influence with their advocacy. Meanwhile, 60 out of 75 respondents felt that the Advocacy Ask approach helped them to plan activities that focus on the specific change they want to achieve.

In conversations with partners in 2016, as part of an earlier assessment of these organisations' experiences of the Advocacy Ask approach, one partner commented:

**"There is an element of flexibility about the Advocacy Asks. Based on experiences within the first phase of the project, we could tweak our mid and end goals/expected results in such a way that the Ask was more specific and concrete. They should be reviewed regularly throughout a project."** PITCH Partner

Another partner noted:

**"Advocacy Asks help us to focus and to be consistent when working to reach our advocacy goals. The first time I used Advocacy Asks they helped me to become more systematic in my approach, and to better understand what I should aim to achieve at the mid and end stages of the project"**

PITCH Partner, Policy Manager

However, respondents to the PITCH survey also highlighted the disadvantages of the Advocacy Ask approach: 20 out of 75 respondents noted that their Advocacy Asks felt too ambitious; 22 out of 75 respondents felt that their Advocacy Asks have proven to be restrictive, not allowing for enough flexibility when planning and implementing their activities. This might reflect both a need for greater capacity strengthening support for partners using the Advocacy Ask approach for the first time, as well as a need for a system that allows for greater flexibility when developing and monitoring progress towards the achievement of an Advocacy Ask. When developing Advocacy Asks, it is clear that a balance between flexibility and specificity needs to be sought, and this is why, in the PITCH programme, partners have been asked to take time mid-way through each year to review and reflect on the relevance of their Advocacy Asks, and consider the need for adaptation.

While the PITCH country-level annual work planning meetings have taken place in September each year, the annual reporting meetings between partners have taken place six months later, in April each year. These annual reporting meetings have provided the space for partners to re-visit their Advocacy Asks, and to discuss and self-assess the progress they have made so far towards achieving each Ask. Partners have then worked to reach agreement on whether the language in



their Advocacy Asks needed to be adjusted in response to either a change in context or a need to adjust their advocacy strategy. While some partners still found their Advocacy Asks to be either restrictive or inflexible, it seems that on the whole most PITCH partners have felt able to use these mid-year annual reporting meetings to re-visit and make adjustments to their Advocacy Asks. This has helped to ensure that in most cases the Advocacy Asks continue to guide and inform partners' advocacy planning and implementation.

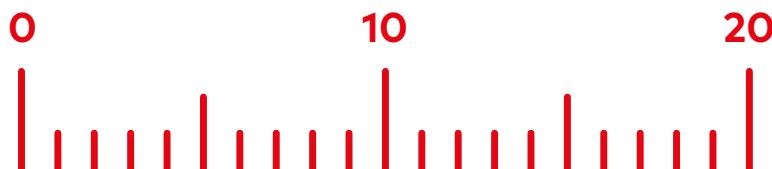
We would recommend advocates and programmers reflect on the tips and potential pitfalls identified through the experience of using Advocacy Asks in the Asia Action, Link Up, and PITCH programmes (see Figure 7).

**"Monitoring the PITCH project helps me to routinely track changes that lead me to the outcome I want to achieve. It helps me to know if I am making progress or not. For example, the Advocacy Asks help me to monitor my progress toward achieving results. They help me to stay focused on targets, and to record tangible results"**

PITCH partner, August 2020

Tips	Potential pitfalls
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advocacy Asks should be specific to the outcome you are working towards, and should be unambiguous</li> <li>• Don't forget your Advocacy Ask should describe the situation that you aspire to contribute to. It should be classed as 'achieved' or 'in place' and not as a demand or an objective for something in the future</li> <li>• Some organisations have found it helpful to note who the main advocacy targets will be for achieving each Ask. You can add this to your table if this is helpful (see Figure 7).</li> <li>• Overly ambitious Advocacy Asks are not helpful</li> <li>• Having Advocacy Asks does not replace the need for a good Theory of Change – the Asks should be informed by the specific outcomes in your Theory of Change, and it should be clear how each Ask will help you to achieve each Theory of Change outcome.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Having Advocacy Asks that are too vague can be problematic – the benefit of an Advocacy Ask is that it is either achieved or not, with no ambiguity, so that you have a clear result that can be connected to the advocacy activities you have implemented and the outcome you are working towards</li> <li>• A project does not need many Advocacy Asks – many projects have only 3 or 4 – so try to avoid developing many more than this</li> <li>• If you do not collect a baseline for your Advocacy Ask it is difficult to demonstrate progress.</li> </ul>

Figure 7: Advocacy Asks – Tips and potential pitfalls



## 2.3 Advocacy Logs & 'Wanda'

### Setting the scene

Documenting evidence for the purpose of demonstrating contribution to change – in the context of advocacy programming – is notoriously challenging, that much is clear. Depending on the context, photographs of critical meetings between advocates and government officials, documented agreements, published government commitments, newspaper or online articles, technical working group minutes etc are all more or less available as forms of evidence. But they are not necessarily reliable, and are somewhat anecdotal. In a more traditional service delivery programme, a relevant newspaper article might report on the opening of a new health clinic by a specific organisation, and therefore the success can confidently be attributed to that organisation.

In PITCH, from early in the programme, we recognised that we could not afford to rely on access to traditional forms of evidence alone. Colleagues in the Asia Action and Link Up programmes also experienced similar challenges. We could see that we needed to do more than collect evidence – we also needed partner organisations to develop journals that captured the journeys of change that they experienced when implementing these programmes. This has been done by documenting the small changes in context, as well as the perceived changes in policy, attitudes, and behaviour the programme has contributed to. Instead of simply documenting the breakthroughs, partners have been asked to document the small, incremental, yet significant changes on the basis of their interactions with decision-makers, peers, healthcare workers, the media, and others. In PITCH these changes have been presented in the form of 'Advocacy Logs'.

In its purest form, the purpose of an Advocacy Log is to document – for the entire programme duration – the Significant Moments of Change that have enabled an advocate to achieve their Advocacy Asks in line with their Theory of Change. (For a definition of a Significant Moment of Change see Pg 18 – Case Study: PITCH – Docu-

menting Advocacy Logs using 'Wanda' Advocacy Logs focus on the change that the advocate has noted, and should not be used to simply document the advocacy activities that have been carried out. When progress is made towards an Advocacy Ask, something must have changed people's minds and/or led to action being taken. However, it is often difficult to identify what has caused this change. A trigger or turning point is often small – a conversation, an email, a newspaper article – and unless it is captured in real-time, it is likely to be forgotten. It may involve convincing a key advocacy target of the merits of a new or different approach, or of the importance of taking decisive action. The Advocacy Log approach aims to ensure such a trigger or turning point is recorded.

Over the course of a programme, a series of Advocacy Logs can serve as a valuable and reliable journal of changes, a tool for advocates to use when reflecting on what is happening in 'real-time', and to help them think about the next practical steps to take (i.e. a reflective learning and re-planning tool). Advocacy Logs can also be used in the context of reviews and evaluations in terms of advocates' contributions to changes in policy and practice. Advocacy Logs should make a clear reference to important triggers of change or turning points. For example, if a phone call, a Tweet, a Facebook post, or an informal conversation might have had a significant effect on a key person, then this is worth documenting in an Advocacy Log. By regularly reviewing and analysing these Advocacy Logs, programme partners and advocates alike are able to draw important linkages between changes in context, their response to these changes, important changes in policy and practice, and their contribution to these changes.



## Case Study:

# PITCH – Documenting Advocacy Logs using ‘Wanda’

Since the introduction of the methodology halfway through the programme in 2018, PITCH partners have been asked to keep a record of their Significant Moments of Change in the form of regular Advocacy Logs. A Significant Moment of Change can be either context-specific or programme-specific. A context-specific change represents a change in an advocate's context that they believe has had an impact, either on the experiences of the communities, or on the advocacy strategy that this advocate is working to implement. An example of a context-specific change might be that the Ugandan Government has introduced language into new healthcare legislation that effectively discriminates against people who use drugs. This will affect the community that a PITCH partner is working with, while also impacting their advocacy work.

A programme-specific change is a change that an advocate believes has happened as a result of their advocacy work, and that is relevant to their goals. An example of a programme-specific change might be that, following a period of widespread arrests and intimidation of sex workers in Nigeria, PITCH partners advocated for an end to the

intimidation and arrests. In response to this advocacy (which could be considered a trigger or turning point), the Chief of Police in Abuja has issued a clear instruction to police to respect the rights of sex workers who are working in the city's bars and night clubs. In both cases, Significant Moments of Change can be perceived as either positive or negative, depending on whether they are considered to have undermined or advanced the work of the PITCH partners.

Fundamentally, documenting Significant Moments of Change as Advocacy Logs over time allows PITCH partners to learn about how the impact of changes in their context affects how they plan, strategise, and implement their work. This learning has enabled partners to identify what they need to do differently in order to achieve their Advocacy Asks in line with their Theory of Change. In PITCH, monitoring these Significant Moments of Change has served as the first step in writing Advocacy Logs.

Figure 8 shows a hypothetical example of how PITCH programme partner organisations have developed an Advocacy Log.

Category	Response
<b>Advocate name</b>	PITCH partner
<b>Significant Moment of Change:</b>	In March 2019, the Ministry of Health agreed to include a reduction in the age of consent in HIV Testing Service guidelines. PITCH partner contributed to this change through its advocacy with the Ministry of Health
<b>Significant Moment of Change: Background/further details</b>  This is the space to provide more details about the change, in terms of when and where the change took place and, importantly, the significance and relevance of the change for the PITCH partner	Between November 2018 and February 2019, PITCH partner ran a social media campaign in parallel with holding a series of meetings with key decision-makers at the Ministry of Health

Category	Response
<b>Type of Change</b>  Was the documented change related to the partner's context, or was it a change that the partner believes they have contributed to?	Programme specific
<b>Advocacy Target</b>  Who was the individual and agency/organisation that the PITCH partner was aiming to influence with their advocacy?	The National Coordinator at the Ministry of Health
<b>At what level did this occur?</b>  Identifying whether this change occurred at the district, regional, or national level of a country can help to map where in a country context changes are happening in general	National level
<b>Which Advocacy Asks does this change relate to?</b>  By identifying which Advocacy Ask the change relates to, it becomes easier to identify the relationship between the change and the advocacy strategy pursued by the PITCH partner	Advocacy Ask 3: The Ministry of Health approves a lowering of the age of consent in HIV Testing Service guidelines by September 2020
<b>What have you learned from this Significant Moment of Change?</b>  This is an important opportunity for the partner to reflect on the lessons they have learned from this experience, what has this taught them perhaps about the effectiveness of their advocacy strategy or about the patterns in behaviour of their advocacy target?	We have learned the importance of combining the use of social media, as a space to influence public opinion, with targeting relevant decision-makers at the level of the national government
<b>Next Steps</b>  What's next? What do you now need to plan to do as a result of this change? This is important, as it represents the stepping stone from one change to the next. It is the response to this change that will potentially lead to the next change	We will adjust our Advocacy Ask and focus our efforts on advocating for the implementation of these guidelines, ensuring that adolescent girls and young women eligible for HIV Testing Services are able to access these services.
<b>Evidence (if you feel you have contributed to this Significant Moment of Change)</b>  Relevant copies of evidence should be made available with the Advocacy Log, in support of any claims of contribution	Social media posts, Ministry of Health meeting minutes and post-meeting documented agreements



Category	Response
<p><b>Which key population or community does this Significant Moment of Change relate to?</b></p> <p>This helps to remind the PITCH partner to only log changes that directly relate to their advocacy with particular communities</p>	Adolescent girls and young women
<p><b>Which indicator does this Significant Moment of Change relate to?</b></p> <p>Identifying which performance indicator from the PITCH Results Framework this change relates to helps the PITCH partner when reporting back on the results of their work in line with this Framework and their Theory of Change.</p>	S1.1 and L1.1

Figure 8: Example of an Advocacy Log

One of the main advantages of this Advocacy Log template is that it can be adapted to suit the requirements of the advocacy programme. If there are additional categories of information that you would find it useful to add or take away, then this can be done. For example, information documenting the contributions of other organisations could be helpful in some contexts.

Frontline AIDS already had experience of working with the Advocacy Log methodology as part of the Asia Action and Link Up programmes. Following the PITCH inception phase in 2016, Aidsfonds and Frontline AIDS decided to use the Advocacy Log methodology as a core component of the M&E system for the PITCH programme.

For PITCH, the decision was taken to place the Advocacy Log methodology into the open source software platform DHIS2,<sup>4</sup> taking the methodology online for the first time. The Frontline AIDS version of the system was nicknamed 'Wanda', inspired by the life and work of Wanda Fox (1975–2009) a Colombian transgender woman and human rights activist. The ambition at the time was to create a secure and dynamic online platform capable of managing the Advocacy Logs published by all PITCH partners.

After setting up the data collection templates in Wanda, a series of training sessions followed, focusing on how to publish Advocacy Logs and report data in Wanda. This training was delivered by Aidsfonds and Frontline AIDS colleagues in each PITCH country (Indonesia, Kenya, Mozambique, Myanmar, Nigeria, Uganda, Ukraine and Zimbabwe). Vietnam was an exception, where PITCH partner, the Center for Supporting Community Development Initiatives, already used a similar system (Red Cap) for this purpose. Since the system was introduced and rolled out in 2018, PITCH partner organisations have been encouraged to log in to Wanda and to publish regular Advocacy Logs whenever they observe a Significant Moment of Change that relates to their work on the PITCH programme.

One advantage of using such an online system is that colleagues at Aidsfonds and Frontline AIDS can monitor and review the Logs that have been published and provide targeted support to partners. They have also been able to observe a customised dashboard that presents the number of Advocacy Logs published in each PITCH country over the course of the most recent six-month period, while also being able to see each PITCH country's published Advocacy Logs.

<sup>4</sup> District Health Information Software 2 (DHIS2) is an open source, web-based health management information system (HMIS) platform. For more information see: <https://www.dhis2.org/about>

## Lessons and reflections

### Creating the time and space

Utilising the Advocacy Log methodology requires the ongoing time commitment of its users. By only using the system periodically and inconsistently, its value can be lost and the benefits of the system rarely felt. We encountered challenges with this when working with partner organisations in the PITCH programme.

Out of a total of 75 respondents to the PITCH M&E survey in August 2020, 37 respondents stated that one of the main reasons for not publishing Advocacy Logs was a lack of time: 18 out of 75 said they use social media to write about important changes instead; 17 out of 75 gave other reasons, including a lack of confidence in how to write an Advocacy Log, being too busy implementing programme activities, or struggling with internet connectivity challenges, which undermined their motivation and confidence. An important lesson for future advocacy programmes is that partners need to be further supported to embed the Advocacy Log approach into their periodic advocacy planning processes. By reflecting on their Advocacy Logs over a particular period of time, partners can more confidently identify which of their advocacy strategies have been most effective in different circumstances. This will allow for learning in terms of the effectiveness of these different strategies when advocating with different advocacy targets. Another important lesson is the need to better connect the use of social media with the Advocacy Log approach, by incorporating social media posts into documented Advocacy Logs.

Agreements need to be made early on in terms of how often and in what circumstances programme partners would find it most beneficial to document Advocacy Logs, as well as how much time they are likely to need to commit to this exercise. In the PITCH programme, clear guidance was provided to partner organisations on what information they were encouraged to include in their Advocacy Logs. The programme's M&E Working Group advised partner organisations that whenever a change is observed, that is when it should be documented as an Advocacy Log. However, partner organisations would arguably have benefited from clearer guidance in terms of the anticipated time commitment that they would need to make each month in order to truly benefit from using the Advocacy Log methodology.

The PITCH M&E Working Group – comprised of staff from both Aidsfonds and Frontline AIDS – worked with the Country Coordinators and Country Focal Points on a quarterly basis to provide partner organisations with feedback on how their Advocacy Logs could be strengthened, whether any Logs might be missing, as well as any other observations that could help support partners in their work. However, this quarterly qualitative review and feedback process was not initiated until 2019, likely too late to have had a significant impact on the quantity and quality of Advocacy Logs published by PITCH partners.

One respondent that participated in the PITCH M&E Survey in August 2020 commented:

**"Ordinarily, monitoring advocacy activities...and claiming attribution to your work in a context of many players is very difficult. However, through monitoring and recording Moments of Significant Change and Outcome Harvesting as part of PITCH, this was made easy. Logs on Moments of Significant Change helps us to capture change as it happens, therefore making tracking our efforts easier"**

PITCH partner, August 2020

For partners working on the Asia Action and Link Up programmes prior to PITCH, one Policy Manager commented:

**"The first year (using Advocacy Logs) was a lot of trial and error. It was a struggle to find the right balance between what to put in and what to leave out. Categorising according to Advocacy Asks and adding appropriate filters does help in tracking. Overall, the Advocacy Log is absolutely essential for any advocacy project."**

PITCH Partner, Policy Manager

This experience has taught us that when introducing a new system or tool for data collection there needs to be clear buy-in from all involved from the start. Otherwise, the use of the tool or system will remain a point of discussion, undermining uptake as a result. It is helpful to introduce such tools or systems from the beginning of the programme and to ensure that everyone is clear on their value and purpose. Finally, as with almost any computer-based system, expect to run into some technical difficulties and bugs, particularly within the first year, and prepare colleagues for this as well ensuring that there is quick and accessible support available.

#### **Invest in analysis and interpretation, not just documentation**

The most important reason for documenting Advocacy Logs throughout an advocacy programme is to create opportunities to analyse and interpret what these Logs are telling us about how an advocacy programme is contributing to change. In the absence of regular, structured processes that allow for this analysis and interpretation, we only see half the picture. It is therefore important that while the process of developing Advocacy

Logs is led by the advocates themselves, monitoring and evaluation colleagues also need to be involved in order to support the learning and reflection process.

In the PITCH programme, partner organisations have been invited to biannual country-level work planning and report validation meetings, where they have been encouraged to reflect on their Advocacy Logs from the previous six months, in order to help support both their planning and reporting obligations. In September each year, work planning meetings would provide partners with an opportunity to reflect on their Advocacy Logs and the extent to which their advocacy strategies were still fit for the purpose of achieving their annual Advocacy Asks, in line with their Theory of Change. The biannual meetings in April the following year would provide partners with an opportunity to use their Advocacy Logs to identify their contribution to change and advocacy breakthroughs. The preparation for and participation in these in country partner meetings created that crucial space for analysis and interpretation.

However, our reflection is that these meetings have, in many ways, lacked a consistent method and structure for analysing and interpreting partners' Advocacy Logs. The absence of a clear structure or framework for analysing and drawing meaning from the Logs can be traced back to the introduction of the Advocacy Log methodology to PITCH in 2018. During the Advocacy Log and Wanda training sessions in 2018, partner organisations learned about the definition of a Significant Moment of Change, how to write an Advocacy Log, and how to navigate and use Wanda. They learned how to create and download reports from Wanda that feature all their Logs over a certain timeframe in relation to the work of specific partners, and their work with specific key populations. What seems to have been missing was what to do with the Advocacy Logs once these were downloaded, besides using them to support partners with their reporting obligations.

To effectively analyse a series of Advocacy Logs, and to better understand a partner organisation's advocacy journey, it helps to know which questions to ask. These might include learning how partner organisations have responded to changes in context; how they have adapted their advocacy strategies in response to these changes in context; the consequences of these adaptations, and crucially, the contribution they appear to have made to important changes in policy and practice.

One relatively straightforward approach to analysing a series of Advocacy Logs is to export them into Excel and to filter them by different categories of information, depending on what an organisation is hoping to learn from this process. By doing so, this can allow both partner organisations and other project stakeholders to get a

better impression of what changes have taken place over a period of time in terms of progress towards a specific Advocacy Ask.

This is a very simple approach to developing a clearer understanding of the changes – both changes in context, as well as programmatic contributions to change – that have been logged over a specific time period – by the same partner organisation – in line with a specific Advocacy Ask. Once the series of changes related to an Advocacy Ask have been identified, we can then look more closely at how many of these changes were specific to the context and how many were considered programme contributions. Once this is clearer, we can look more closely at whether there is a clear relationship between these changes, and visually present our journey of change. (See example in Figure 9).

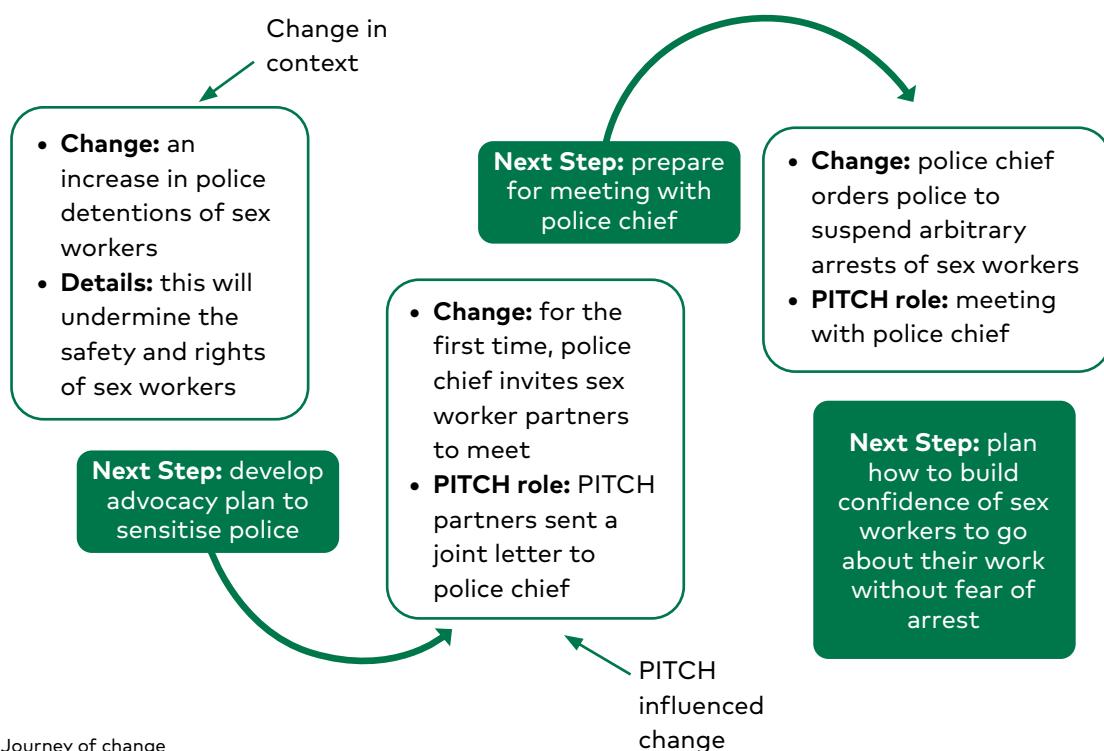
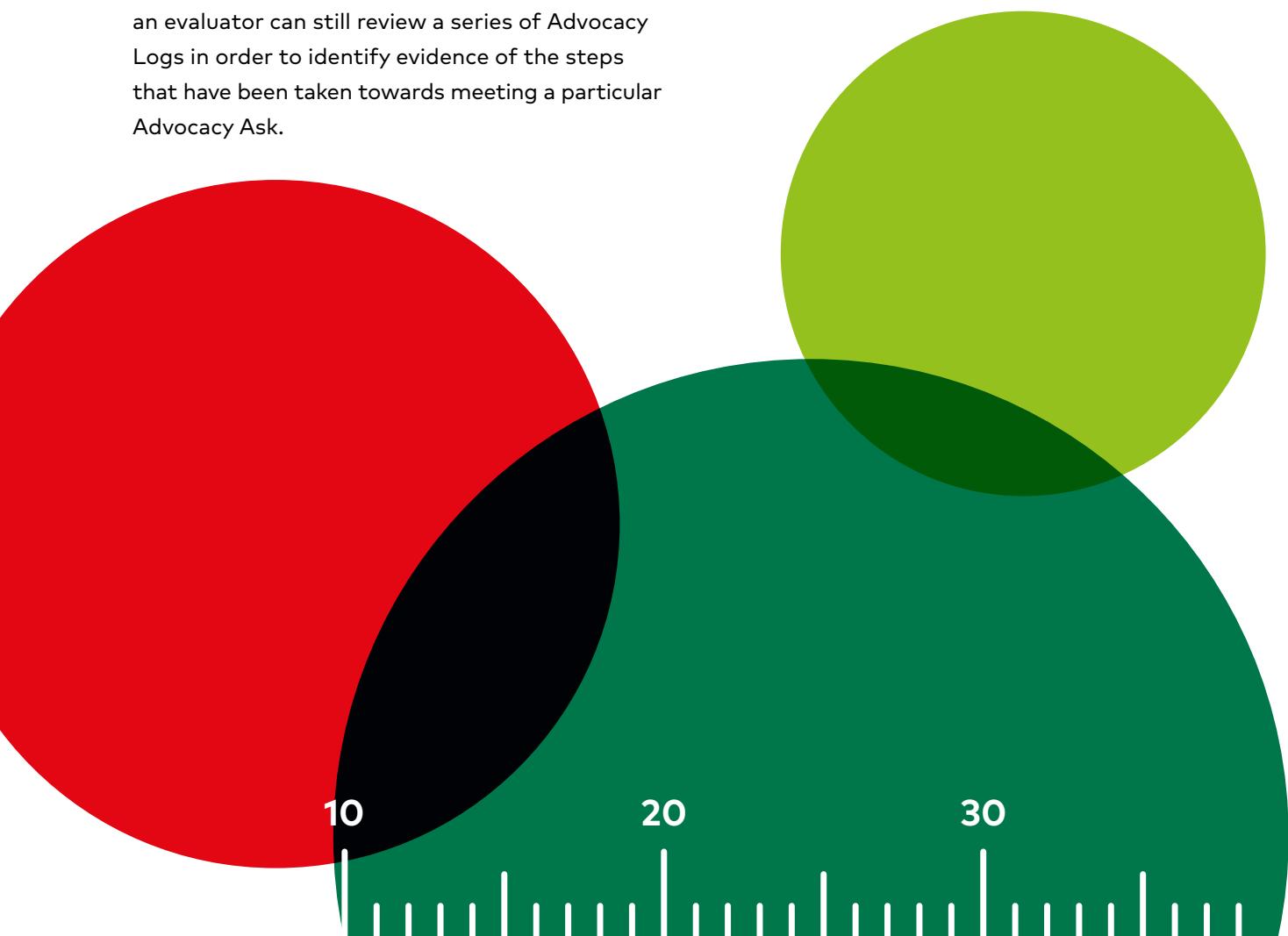


Figure 9: Journey of change

Fundamentally, partner organisations in programmes such as PITCH, Asia Action and Link Up need to be supported to make time to their Advocacy Logs by integrating moments for review, discussion and interpretation at regular intervals, encouraging and facilitating reflective learning. Advocacy Logs can be used to prompt partner organisations and to ensure this is done regularly, although it is important to recognise that it is regular discussion and reflection – not the Advocacy Log methodology alone – that facilitates and allows for learning, adaptation, and the ability to demonstrate evidence of one's contribution to change.

In the context of evaluations, in cases where it is argued that an Advocacy Ask has been achieved, an evaluator can review a series of Advocacy Logs in reverse chronological order in order to trace the pathway that led to any perceived successes. Such a review should involve the triangulation of these Advocacy Logs with other data sources, resulting in an objective assessment of the contribution that the programme is likely to have made towards a particular success. In cases where Advocacy Asks have not yet been achieved, an evaluator can still review a series of Advocacy Logs in order to identify evidence of the steps that have been taken towards meeting a particular Advocacy Ask.



## Roles and responsibilities

Aidsfonds and Frontline AIDS are both organisationally committed to facilitating participatory approaches to planning, monitoring, evaluation and learning. Partner organisations need to be positioned front and centre of any advocacy M&E system in order to ensure that they are collecting, analysing and interpreting data that allows for meaningful learning and adaptation on their terms. To facilitate this effectively, organisations such as Aidsfonds and Frontline AIDS also need to make space to reflect on the roles and responsibilities identified within any given advocacy M&E system. Do these roles and responsibilities reflect the resources, skills, knowledge and experience at the disposal of both the partner organisations implementing advocacy strategies, as well as the international organisations providing remote support?

Fundamentally, each advocacy programme is different and the roles and responsibilities of partner organisations, M&E and programme colleagues will vary depending on resources (budget, time and staffing) skills, and knowledge. Regardless, all those involved must be willing to be flexible and to reflect on the most appropriate arrangement that would allow for the following key roles and responsibilities to be resourced:

- Writing and publication of an Advocacy Log
- Review and feedback on an Advocacy Log
- Reflection, analysis and interpretation of an Advocacy Log
- Adaptation and re-adjustment of ongoing advocacy strategy.

The following checklist can also be used to help with this process:

- Who will fill in the Log (use job title not name in case people change roles)?
- How frequently will the Log be filled in? Once a week or whenever a key moment happens? If the latter, how will you ensure that the tool is not forgotten? Should there be a regular check-in to make sure that entries have not been missed?

- How will the data be used during different stages of the programme cycle and by whom (e.g. how will it be used for reflective learning and how will it be embedded in everyday work e.g. during team meetings, and how will the data be used for periodic evaluations etc.)?
- Who will check data entry quality? How frequently?

A quote from one of the partner organisations involved in the Asia Action and Link Up programmes suggests that they found the Advocacy Log approach useful from the perspective of planning their advocacy work and mapping stakeholders:

**"Using the Advocacy Log made me [more] organised in my advocacy work. (It is) also very helpful in mapping the situation, or when making a note, and to see how to change our strategy if we face a challenge. Sometimes [it was difficult] to write an Advocacy Log, but when I remembered how important they are when helping to inform my strategy and to reach my goals I can beat my laziness! This tool also increased my capacity to do advocacy work."**

PITCH Partner, Policy Manager

Figure 10 lists some tips and potential pitfalls identified and summarised through the experience

of using the Advocacy Log methodology in PITCH, Asia Action and Link Up.

Tips	Potential pitfalls
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If you are using a Microsoft package to document your Advocacy Logs, consider using Excel rather than Word. This will provide you with more freedom to filter and analyse your Logs</li> <li>• Remember to record Significant Moments of change rather than your activities</li> <li>• Always complete each element of your Advocacy Log template. This will increase the likelihood of you actually being able to learn from it and demonstrate the complete experience of your advocacy journey, as well as your successes</li> <li>• Support the person recording the information by reviewing the Log regularly to check the right information is being included and is being used to support ongoing advocacy learning and replanning</li> <li>• Write entries that other people can understand, explain acronyms, include job titles and full names – other people may not be as familiar with the key stakeholders as you</li> <li>• Ask to see good examples of Logs from other countries/programmes. Consider working with relevant colleagues to set up a mechanism for sharing, mentoring and motivation between advocates working in different countries on the same programme.</li> <li>• Remember to document learnings, reflections and next steps to support your advocacy planning.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tracking activities instead of Significant Moments of Change – the log is not intended as the place for you to record all activities. However, tracking unplanned advocacy or campaigning could represent a Significant Moment of Change that represents an important stage in your advocacy journey, so feel free to log these if you think they are relevant</li> <li>• Not writing enough meaningful information and context to make the record useful</li> <li>• The person recording the information does not understand how the information will be used and is not supported to learn</li> <li>• Recording too much, making completing the log too much of a burden</li> <li>• Not institutionalising the use of the data day-to-day, and preferring to think of your Advocacy Logs as records to review 'in a few years' time'</li> <li>• Just including 'positive' moments rather than significant blockages and negative moments</li> <li>• Knowing that the observations put in your Log should significantly affect what advocacy messages you use and the approaches you take, but not taking the steps to use this to replan.</li> </ul>

Figure 10: Advocacy Log methodology – Tips and potential pitfalls



## 2.4 Outcome Harvesting and the Change Report approach

### Setting the scene

In recent years, Outcome Harvesting has emerged as one of the fastest growing methodologies used to monitor and evaluate change within dynamic and complex programmes. Outcome Harvesting is an approach that is designed to help organisations to identify significant changes in the behaviour (the outcome) of social actors that they are working to influence. Working backwards, the Outcome Harvesting approach helps to identify the contribution an organisation has made to that outcome. The approach is highly participatory, placing the people who are most knowledgeable about an outcome (the 'human sources') at the centre of the process, whereby they fine-tune the outcome statements and identify relevant external stakeholders to substantiate the validity of the outcome statements. This approach can be particularly useful in complex contexts where it can be difficult to anticipate what will be achieved within a certain time period, and where flexibility is needed to adapt interventions in response to a changing context.<sup>5</sup>

Outcome Harvesting follows a six-step process:

1. Design the harvest
2. Review documentation and draft outcomes
3. Engage human sources
4. Substantiate
5. Analyse and interpret
6. Support use of findings.

The focus on observable changes within Outcome Harvesting allows us to look at all relevant changes that the programme has contributed to, both large and small. Changes can be positive or negative, intended or unintended, but the connection between the programme's contribution and the change should be verifiable.

<sup>5</sup> Better Evaluation. Outcome Harvesting [Online]. Available at: [https://www.betterevaluation.org/en/plan/approach/outcome\\_harvesting](https://www.betterevaluation.org/en/plan/approach/outcome_harvesting) - :~:text=Outcome Harvesting collects ("harvests", has contributed to these changes

## Case Study:

# The 'Change Report' approach in PITCH

Outcome Harvesting was introduced to PITCH in 2019, creating space for partners to take a step back and better understand their contribution to significant outcomes that were emerging, at least partly as a result of their advocacy. Until August 2019, PITCH partners reflected on their Advocacy Logs every six months as part of their ongoing reporting and learning. However, partners lacked the space to explore and develop their understanding of their contribution to the changes they had recorded in their Advocacy Logs. Inspired by the Outcome Harvesting approach, the PITCH M&E Working Group developed a process and a Change Report template for partners to use once a year. The aim was to help partners develop the confidence to identify the changes they had contributed to, and to encourage them to reflect on existing evidence to demonstrate their contributions to important changes.

In preparation for the first Change Report country meetings in August 2019, Country Focal Points and Country Coordinators were trained on the approach through a webinar, allowing them to provide guidance to PITCH partners when planning for their country meetings. The PITCH M&E Working Group developed a Terms of Reference for the country meetings together with a PowerPoint and a Change Report template that provided a step-by-step approach to the process.

The Change Report country meetings took a 'learning by doing' approach. In preparation for the meetings, PITCH partners were asked to review their Advocacy Logs and to reflect on the observable changes in their programme environments. Partners were also encouraged to

reflect on the significance of these changes; what their contribution to them had been; what evidence there was to show both that the change had occurred, and that they had contributed to it. During the meeting, Country Focal Points facilitated the process of harvesting and discussing the outcomes identified by partners, and guided them through the process of drafting and discussing their Change Reports. Following plenary feedback and discussion, the Change Reports were shared with their Country Focal Points, Country Coordinators, and the PITCH M&E Working Group for their review. This not only created a useful opportunity for dialogue and feedback between PITCH partners and different programme colleagues, it also allowed wider communications, enabling programme colleagues at Aidsfonds and Frontline AIDS to better understand the contribution PITCH partners had made to important changes. The focus on the journey and story of change in the Change Reports also provided useful opportunities for fundraising and communications colleagues. The harvested outcomes enabled improved understanding of the process of change in each PITCH country context, providing opportunities to reflect and learn and to inform future planning.



<b>Year: 2019</b>	
<b>Country:</b>	
<b>Community:</b>	
<b>Who contributed to writing this report:</b>	
<b>Change Statement</b>	
What/who has changed? Does this change relate to a relevant person or an institution (e.g. government department/service provider)? Who is this person or organisation?	
What change can you observe? How is the situation now different from before?	
When did the change occur?	
Where did this happen? Is it at a local, provincial, national, regional or international level?	
<b>Significance</b>	
Why is this relevant in your specific context? Is it the first time that this has occurred in your context?	
How does it relate to your long-term goals?	
Who is affected by this change and in what way? Please think about the community you work with, your advocacy contacts etc.	
What is the significance of this change in relation to your advocacy strategy?	

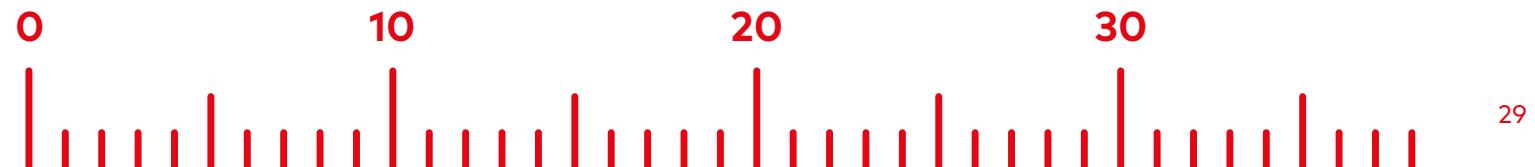
Figure 11: Change Report template

The results of the PITCH M&E Survey in August 2020 showed that a significant majority of the 75 respondents answered either 'useful' or 'very useful', when answering the question 'How useful have you found the Mid-Year Change reporting process?'. Among English language respondents, 94% agreed with the statement 'It helps us to make time to reflect on the important changes', and 88% agreed with the statement 'It helps us to make time to analyse our contribution to change'.

When surveying partners in Mozambique, Myanmar and Ukraine, respondents were marginally less positive about the usefulness of the Change Report approach, with figures closer to 75% and 65% respectively when responding to the same survey questions.

The Outcome Harvesting methodology was chosen as a key methodology for the PITCH End-term Evaluation. This was partly based on the partners' positive experiences in using the

Change Report process, which is ultimately a scaled-back version of Outcome Harvesting. As part of the evaluation process, Outcome Harvesting has been used during a series of online reflection meetings with PITCH partners, with 120 outcomes harvested. The external validation, or substantiation, of a sample of one third of the outcomes harvested represented a key component of this approach. External stakeholders independent of the PITCH programme, but knowledgeable about the outcomes for which substantiation was sought, were invited to provide feedback and confirmation of the extent to which they agreed with the outcome statement, as well as the claim of contribution by PITCH partners. Mostly full agreement, and in some cases partial agreement, were secured for 37 of the 39 outcomes for which substantiation was sought. This provided the evaluation team with a high degree of confidence in the validity of the claims of contribution documented in the outcomes harvested.



### 3. Overarching lessons and conclusions

The following lessons have been documented based on the experiences of M&E colleagues working on the PITCH programme, and also from the experiences of the Asia Action and Link Up programmes. These are intended to provide a useful reality check for all advocates and M&E colleagues when looking ahead to the planning and design of advocacy programme M&E systems, and when thinking through roles and responsibilities, which tools to use and what to focus on, as well as what to deprioritise.

Key lessons learned:

**1. Time needs to be set aside during a programme inception phase to address the following questions** when designing a new M&E system and identifying appropriate advocacy M&E tools: Why do we want to use this tool? What data will it provide us with? What do we anticipate learning from this data? How regularly do we anticipate using this tool? Who

will be responsible for using this tool and the data it produces? Ultimately, we are selecting advocacy M&E tools in order to learn about the effectiveness of our advocacy strategies and to better understand, and to demonstrate, our contribution to change. This vision needs to shape the responses given to these questions.

**2. Committing to using any advocacy M&E tool in a systematic and methodical way requires a significant investment of resources: funding, staff time, and energy. We recommend prioritising tools where those responsible for using them have previous experience and knowledge, reducing the need for extensive capacity strengthening efforts at the beginning of a new programme. Where training or other capacity strengthening is needed, this should be provided as early as possible, and expectations regarding people's different roles and responsibilities need to be clearly agreed at the same time to avoid confusion later in the programme.**



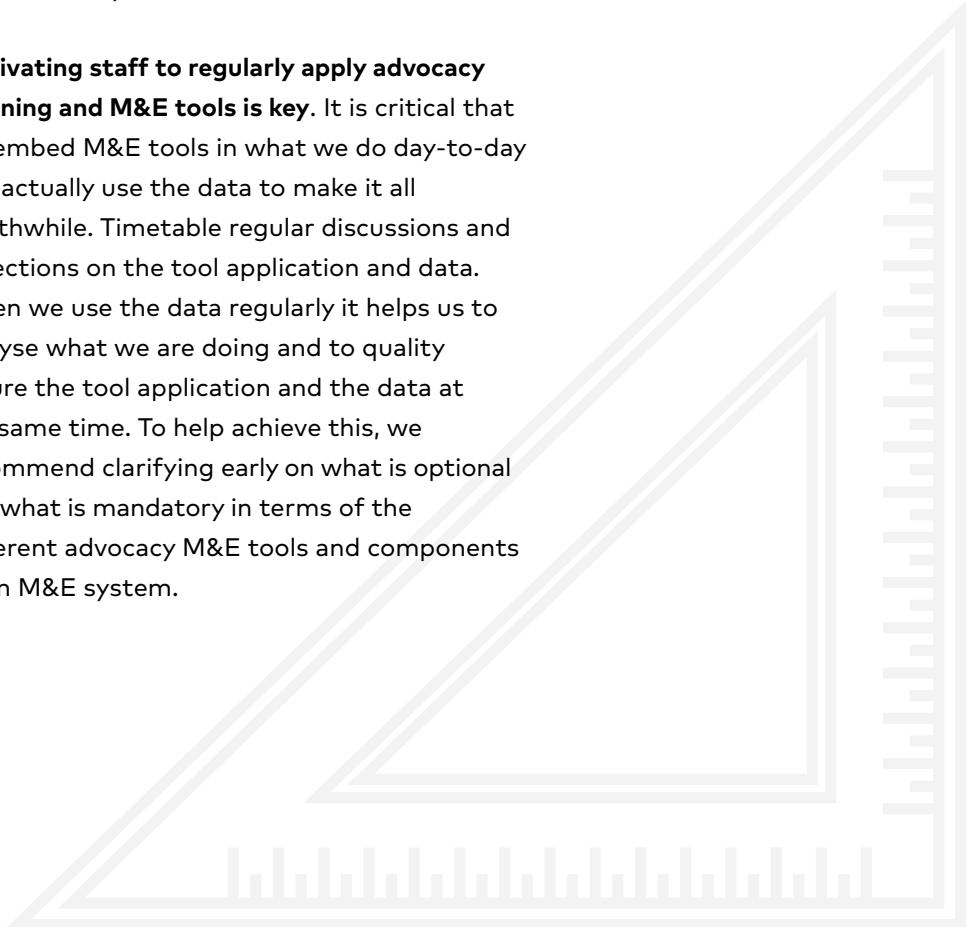
Sex workers can face stigma and discrimination when trying to access health services. © Frontline AIDS/Corrie Wingate/2017



3. When an agreement is made to use a particular advocacy M&E tool as part of a programme, **it is important that this tool is actually used in the way it is intended**, both in terms of the frequency of its application, as well as in terms of the form of data collection, analysis and interpretation that has been agreed. Without repeated application there is no data to compare over time to demonstrate what has changed, and a programme's contribution to that change. An advocacy M&E tool can only add value to a programme M&E system if it is used methodically and in line with what has been agreed.

4. **The same tool can be used for more than one function or purpose.** For example, the Theory of Change approach (alongside a set of corresponding performance or results indicators) and Advocacy Asks can be used to help partners both plan their advocacy strategies and activities, as well as for monitoring and reporting on the results of their advocacy work.

5. **Motivating staff to regularly apply advocacy planning and M&E tools is key.** It is critical that we embed M&E tools in what we do day-to-day and actually use the data to make it all worthwhile. Timetable regular discussions and reflections on the tool application and data. When we use the data regularly it helps us to analyse what we are doing and to quality assure the tool application and the data at the same time. To help achieve this, we recommend clarifying early on what is optional and what is mandatory in terms of the different advocacy M&E tools and components of an M&E system.





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