

# Advocacy Capacity Assessment Tool

**In the following list of indicators of advocacy capacity in your organisation, please circle the number which reflects your opinion**

- |          |          |   |
|----------|----------|---|
| <b>1</b> | <b>=</b> | <b>There is a lot of room for improvement</b>           |
| <b>2</b> | <b>=</b> | <b>There is room for improvement</b>                    |
| <b>3</b> | <b>=</b> | <b>There is some room for improvement, but not much</b> |
| <b>4</b> | <b>=</b> | <b>There is not much room for improvement</b>           |
| <b>5</b> | <b>=</b> | <b>There is no room for improvement</b>                 |

**After finishing the exercise, add the scores for each sub-category and divide by the number of indicators in that sub-category to get your average score for that category to one decimal place.**

**Then add the average scores for each major category and divide by the number of major categories to get your score for each major category to one decimal place.**

**Finally look at your average scores for major category or sub-category: if they are below 3, this signifies that there is need for improvement in that category. Reflect on the reasons, and consider what can be done to improve your organisational capacity in that category or sub-category.**

# Advocacy Capacity Assessment of your NGO

## 1. GOVERNANCE

### 1.1. Executive Committee/Board/Trustees

- 1.1.1. The NGO has an independent governing body (Executive Committee/Board/Trustees) 1 2 3 4 5
- 1.1.2. The Governing Body makes policy for the NGO 1 2 3 4 5
- 1.1.3. The Governing Body represents the interests of the constituency 1 2 3 4 5
- 1.1.4. The Governing Body helps the NGO with its advocacy work 1 2 3 4 5
- 1.1.5. The NGO has a democratically elected governing body 1 2 3 4 5

### 1.2. Policy

- 1.2.1. The Governing Body has agreed a policy on advocacy for the NGO 1 2 3 4 5
- 1.2.2. The Governing Body makes sure that the NGO's advocacy work activities reflect board policy 1 2 3 4 5
- 1.2.3. The NGO documents all its advocacy policies 1 2 3 4 5
- 1.2.4. The NGO advocacy policy requires that all advocacy initiatives are researched 1 2 3 4 5

### 1.3. Mission and Objectives

- 1.3.1. The Organisation has a clear and understandable Mission and Objectives 1 2 3 4 5
- 1.3.2. The Mission and Objectives clearly reflect an advocacy policy 1 2 3 4 5
- 1.3.3. The advocacy mission and objectives are clearly stated and understood by staff 1 2 3 4 5
- 1.3.4. The advocacy mission and objectives are clearly understood by the Governing Body, Volunteers, and sympathetic outsiders 1 2 3 4 5
- 1.3.4. The activities of the NGO reflect and focus on the mission of the NGO 1 2 3 4 5

### 1.4. Constituency

- 1.4.1. The NGO has a clearly defined constituency 1 2 3 4 5

- 1.4.2. The NGO listens to its constituency and consults them on matters involving them 1 2 3 4 5
- 1.4.3. The NGO has in place systems to ensure accountability to and transparency with its constituency 1 2 3 4 5
- 1.4.4. The NGO ensures that its constituents clearly understand the advocacy issue being proposed 1 2 3 4 5

**1.5. Gender**

- 1.5.1. Women are participating equally in decision making 1 2 3 4 5
- 1.5.2. Womens and mens voices are raised equitably in forums concerning advocacy 1 2 3 4 5
- 1.5.3. The NGO has a written gender policy 1 2 3 4 5
- 1.5.4. The gender policy is in practice by the organisation as well as the staff 1 2 3 4 5
- 1.5.5. The NGOs advocacy program takes gender into account 1 2 3 4 5

**2. SERVICE DELIVERY**

**2.1. Targeting**

- 2.1.1. The NGO consults with all stakeholders, active players, sympathizers, and the affected people before deciding its target issue for an advocacy campaign 1 2 3 4 5
- 2.1.2. The NGO has clearly stated target issues for the advocacy campaign 1 2 3 4 5
- 2.1.3. The NGO has a clearly stated target audience for the advocacy campaign 1 2 3 4 5
- 2.1.4. The NGO always remains focused on the stated target issues and target audience 1 2 3 4 5
- 2.1.5. The NGO regularly reviews the target audience 1 2 3 4 5

**2.2. Expertise in Advocacy**

- 2.2.1. The NGO is able to identify and choose realistic and winnable issues 1 2 3 4 5
- 2.2.2. The NGO is able to mobilize/generate support and mount pressure for its campaigns 1 2 3 4 5
- 2.2.3. The NGO considers its own competence when it implements and designs an advocacy campaign 1 2 3 4 5
- 2.2.4. The NGO has expertise in getting constituencies and interest groups to own the target issue and

- proposed action 1 2 3 4 5
- 2.2.5. The NGO has staff and volunteers with skills to mobilize the constituency or interest groups affected 1 2 3 4 5

### **2.3. Constituency Ownership**

- 2.3.1. The NGO is sensitive to a variety of constituency needs, small and big 1 2 3 4 5
- 2.3.2. The NGO involves its constituency in advocacy program design and implementation 1 2 3 4 5
- 2.3.3. The NGO clarifies the risks and benefits of undertaking advocacy work to its constituency 1 2 3 4 5
- 2.3.4. The NGO always ensures that each advocacy campaign is a collective effort, not relying on one individual 1 2 3 4 5

### **2.4. Validity/Credibility**

- 2.4.1. The NGO's advocacy campaign meets real needs and is seen to have real value in the constituency 1 2 3 4 5
- 2.4.2. The NGO is able to recover a percentage of its costs (cash or in-kind) from its constituency 1 2 3 4 5
- 2.4.3. The NGO is generating increased demand for more advocacy campaigns 1 2 3 4 5
- 2.4.4. The NGO is respected as a credible organisation by its peers 1 2 3 4 5

### **2.5. Impact Assessment**

- 2.5.1. The NGO knows how to measure constituency satisfaction with advocacy campaigns 1 2 3 4 5
- 2.5.2. The NGO measures constituency satisfaction with advocacy campaign results 1 2 3 4 5
- 2.5.3. The NGO's constituency is prepared to provide feedback to the NGO on the progress of the campaign 1 2 3 4 5
- 2.5.4. The NGO always identifies indicators of the success of its advocacy programmes 1 2 3 4 5

## **3. EXTERNAL RELATIONS**

### **3.1. Government Relations**

- 3.1.1. Staff and Board of the NGO are knowledgeable about how policy decisions are made in Zambia 1 2 3 4 5
- 3.1.2. The NGO puts forward its own policy suggestions/

- proposals to the Government 1 2 3 4 5
- 3.1.3. The NGO solicits, accepts, and uses advice given by government officials during negotiations 1 2 3 4 5
- 3.1.4. The NGO keeps its dealings with Government officials away from the media unless there is an impasse or a mutually agreed announcement 1 2 3 4 5
- 3.1.5. The NGO participates in government planning processes and structures 1 2 3 4 5

### **3.2. Inter-NGO Relations**

- 3.2.1. The NGO belongs to inter-NGO networks in its own sector 1 2 3 4 5
- 3.2.2. The NGO is ready to belong to coalitions of all kinds of NGOs for limited objectives 1 2 3 4 5
- 3.2.3. Staff of the NGO possess skills in linking and liaison with diverse groups 1 2 3 4 5
- 3.2.4. The NGO staff and Governing Body have regular consultations and meetings with like minded organisations in an advocacy campaign 1 2 3 4 5
- 3.2.5. The staff of the NGO are prepared to share leadership of the advocacy campaign 1 2 3 4 5

### **3.3. Donor Relations**

- 3.3.1. The NGO has a relationship of mutual respect with its donors 1 2 3 4 5
- 3.3.2. The NGO engages in fruitful/productive dialogue and consultations with its donors on advocacy 1 2 3 4 5
- 3.3.3. The NGO is able to persuade donors to fund advocacy campaigns 1 2 3 4 5

### **3.4. Public Relations**

- 3.4.1. The NGO has, and makes available to the public, an information document on itself 1 2 3 4 5
- 3.4.2. The NGO is respected for its activities in its own field 1 2 3 4 5
- 3.4.3. The NGO is able to use innovative and convincing ideas to generate and sustain support from constituents 1 2 3 4 5
- 3.4.4. The NGO builds public support for its advocacy campaign through public education on the target issue 1 2 3 4 5
- 3.4.5. The NGO operates in a non-politically partisan manner 1 2 3 4 5

### **3.5. Media Relations**

- 3.5.1. The NGO introduces itself to the media and is respected by them 1 2 3 4 5
- 3.5.2. The NGO knows how to work with the media 1 2 3 4 5
- 3.5.3. The NGO sensitizes the media to specific advocacy issues before involving them 1 2 3 4 5

## **4. MANAGEMENT**

### **4.1. Organisational Structure**

- 4.1.1. The NGO has a clear organisational structure, which is communicated to its stakeholders 1 2 3 4 5
- 4.1.2. Staff of the NGO have clear job descriptions which include advocacy, where relevant 1 2 3 4 5
- 4.1.3. At least one staff person in the organisation specializes in advocacy 1 2 3 4 5
- 4.1.4. At least one person in the NGO has been trained in advocacy 1 2 3 4 5

### **4.2. Communication and Information Systems**

- 4.2.1. The NGO has a regular system for collecting information to review their advocacy program activities 1 2 3 4 5
- 4.2.2. The information collected guides the programme review and the development of new advocacy programmes 1 2 3 4 5
- 4.2.3. The NGO ensures that information is shared and owned by key players in the advocacy process 1 2 3 4 5
- 4.2.4. The NGO disseminates messages on the advocacy issue to the broader public as well as to the target audience through a variety of media 1 2 3 4 5
- 4.2.5. The NGO ensures that the media used is relevant to the group being targeted (literacy levels, language, social status, age, culture, and religion) 1 2 3 4 5
- 4.2.6. NGO staff are competent at designing and producing clear and concise communication messages 1 2 3 4 5

### **4.3. Programme Reporting**

- 4.3.1. The NGO reports on its advocacy work to its donors 1 2 3 4 5
- 4.3.2. The NGO reports on its constituency work to its constituency and key players 1 2 3 4 5

- 4.3.3. The NGO reports on its advocacy work to relevant local councils, Members of Parliament, and Govt. departments 1 2 3 4 5
- 4.3.4. The NGO documents and preserves records of advocacy campaigns 1 2 3 4 5

#### **4.4. Conflict Management**

- 4.4.1. The NGO recognizes and plans for the pressures that come with advocacy campaigns 1 2 3 4 5
- 4.4.2. The NGO pays attention to conflict resolution issues 1 2 3 4 5
- 4.4.3. The NGO pays attention to morale among its staff during advocacy campaigns 1 2 3 4 5

#### **4.5. Campaign Management**

- 4.5.1. The NGO has staff competent at campaigns 1 2 3 4 5
- 4.5.2. The NGO staff possess experience and competence in lobbying, negotiating, and policy analysis 1 2 3 4 5
- 4.5.3. The NGO has access to legal expertise 1 2 3 4 5
- 4.5.4. The NGO knows how to undertake research 1 2 3 4 5

### **5. SUSTAINABILITY**

#### **5.1. Organisational Sustainability**

- 5.1.1. The NGO is involved in partnerships, coalitions, networks and umbrella organisations 1 2 3 4 5
- 5.1.2. The NGO understands its role and the role of others in advocacy 1 2 3 4 5
- 5.1.3. The NGO has links to some specialized institutions that may be useful to it in sustaining its advocacy work 1 2 3 4 5
- 5.1.4. The NGO is able to retain staff 1 2 3 4 5
- 5.1.5. The NGO is financially sustainable 1 2 3 4 5

#### **5.2. Resource Base**

- 5.2.1. The NGO has investments and assets for organisational continuity 1 2 3 4 5
- 5.2.2. The NGO has some savings and reserves to cushion it at a time of no external funding 1 2 3 4 5
- 5.2.3. The NGO has a variety of funding sources 1 2 3 4 5
- 5.2.4. The NGO is successful in persuading donors to fund their advocacy work 1 2 3 4 5

