

INTRODUCTION TO ADVOCACY

Lesson Outline

Introduction

Start by introducing the topic. When you introduce new information it is important to link it to existing knowledge the students already have. This can be done by:

- Referring to previous lessons when this topic builds on what was discussed in those lessons.
- Introducing the lesson by asking the opinion of the students. Why is advocacy important? What can you achieve with advocacy?
- Using the videos that are on the platform. Share a story from one of the videos and ask the students to some reflective questions like: do you recognise this situation, can you relate to the person in the story?
- Using the quote to start the lesson and ask the students what they feel it means and if they agree.

Quote: "I always wondered why somebody didn't do something about that. Then I realized, I am somebody."

Warm-up

A warm-up is important to introduce students to a certain topic and make them feel comfortable with each other and the topic they are going to discuss. For this warm-up activity ask students to discover what Advocacy means for them by starting a short discussion.

Information

Let the students read through the lesson content on their own, give them some time to form their own opinions and ask them if they have any questions. Share the information from the platform with the students.

- If they have access to the platform you can ask them to read it on their own.
- You can create a Power point presentation where you create slides with images and the most important information
- You can present the information to the whole group. Use keywords for yourself and if possible also write the keywords on a board as reminders for the listeners.
- You could make handouts with the key information.

Make sure that you take enough time to present everything clearly and that you build in moments where the students can reflect on the information and ask questions. The information has already been written in paragraphs – after each paragraph you can ask a reflective question.

You can use these questions to engage the group:

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- Through which platform would you be able to do advocacy?
- What would you want to advocate for?

Advocacy is an organized attempt to change policy, practise, and/or shape attitudes by presenting evidence and arguments for how and why change should happen. It is a set of targeted actions directed at decision-makers in support of a specific policy issue.

So, the core of advocacy is about influencing people with the aim to change policies, practices, structures and attitudes. It can be focused on a particular person, group of people or even an entire organization. Advocacy uses different strategies and a big network of people to reach its goal of bringing change to a large group of people. This change focuses on creating a fair and just society for all.

Advocacy can be done in a lot of different ways and on all different levels. There are small advocacy activities, such as starting a petition in your neighbourhood. There are also bigger advocacy campaigns, sometimes even on an international level, such as international calls from change.org.

However, don't get discouraged by large-scale advocacy projects. A bunch of committed people are able to make a huge difference in their own communities, even more so than global campaigns ever could.

When you want to further explore how advocacy works, then you need to know that these are basic elements or steps you will encounter when doing advocacy;

- **Define advocacy issue and Objective:** What issue do you want to advocate for? Is your goal achievable?
- **Using data and research for advocacy:** Do research on the issue you want to address, to make sure you can make informed decisions, set realistic goals and have proof for your advocacy asks.
- **Identifying Advocacy Audiences:** Who will you direct your advocacy campaign at? Is this really the best person/group/organization to influence?
- **Developing and Delivering Advocacy Messages:** What message can really motivate people to make a change?
- **Building Coalitions:** Who is your ally in this? How will you involve a group of people to advocate with you?
- **Making Persuasive Presentations:** Make sure you bring your message in a convincing way to influence decision makers. How would you bring a message to make a change?
- **Fundraising for Advocacy:** Activities often require resources, so think about where you can get resources (human, financial, time) to advocate for your cause.
- **Evaluating Advocacy Efforts:** Evaluate whether your advocating efforts really made a change in reaching your goal. What would you do differently next time? What went well?

In this course, you will learn more about these topics;

- Key steps of advocacy
- Local, national and international advocacy
- Making it personal