

*Until the Violence Stops*

# **ADVOCACY TOOLKIT**

**Developed by UTVS for the  
V-Day Europe Workshop**

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***Until the Violence Stops (UTVS)*** was established in the UK in January 2003 by a group of educators and artists who were using theatre to increase understanding about violence against women.

From these beginnings, ***UTVS*** has grown into an organisation that combines the arts, culture and education to communicate creatively to raise awareness about violence against women and young people. ***UTVS*** works with a range of partners as part of a global movement to end violence and abuse.

***UTVS*** believes education is the key to social change and to making a lasting impact on the tolerance of violence and abuse that currently exists in our society.

Through its work, ***UTVS*** aims to:

- Educate the public about the violence perpetrated against women and young people
- Challenge men, women and young people that they have a duty to acknowledge and defend a woman's right to be free from violence and abuse
- Empower all people to speak out about violence against themselves or those around them
- Promote debate about the issue of violence against women and young people
- Campaign to mainstream this issue in the National Curriculum, policymaking and the media
- Support women and children who are survivors of violence and abuse through fundraising and awareness raising support for providers working in this area.

Violence against women can include physical, sexual, emotional and other forms of abuse and control. It is rooted in patriarchal traditions and is a direct consequence of inequality in the relationship between men and women. It is a violation of women's human rights.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>The National Association For Domestic Violence Perpetrator Programmes and Associated Support Services, 2003

This document has been designed by UTVS, the organizers of V-Day in the UK. Through our advocacy work we have forged new relationships with individuals and organisations, including the media, leaders and decision makers from all political backgrounds. UTVS developed this toolkit to share the lessons we have learned from undertaking advocacy in the UK with other V-Days in Europe.

## **SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION TO ADVOCACY**

This section will introduce advocacy issues. It will explore what advocacy means and what it can achieve, with reference to the unique skills and experiences of V-Day, and will outline specific issues V-Days should consider when expanding into an advocacy role. Finally, it will provide practical tips for working with partners and the media, and for effectively advocating to policy makers.

### **1. INTRODUCTION TO THE TOOLKIT**

#### **V-Day Europe and Advocacy**

The potential of *The Vagina Monologues* as an advocacy tool is huge. By combining art and activism it enables groups to raise money and consciousness and it unifies and strengthens existing anti-violence efforts. This represents a strong base from which V-Day Europe can legitimately influence key decision makers.

Working as one V-Day voice, and through existing alliances with organisations and networks who share V-Day goals, we can advocate to create a policy environment where women have the right to live free from violence and abuse, and where those rights are upheld in legislation.

V-Day Europe represents a unique advocacy opportunity for the following reasons:

1. Entertainment casts a net wider than activism. *The Vagina Monologues* is a tool that is unique in its ability to reach a broad audience of men and women as well as the media who is drawn to the issue by the presence of celebrity, controversy, or spectacle enabling V-Days<sup>1</sup> and their beneficiary organisations to gain necessary attention.
2. V-Day Europe comprises a unique group of women, with a fusion of skills from the arts, theatre and the women's movement.
3. V-Days have a unique two-way relationship with the beneficiaries of their fundraising work; V-Days act as catalysts to reinvigorate beneficiaries, while beneficiaries reinforce the legitimacy of V-Days to develop as advocates
4. V-Day Europe is unique as a network of diverse V-Days with the potential to influence about violence against women at all levels where power lies: in local communities, nationally, regionally/Europe-wide and internationally

#### **The purpose of this toolkit**

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<sup>1</sup> The term 'V-Day' in this toolkit refers to all organisations, groups and individuals who use *The Vagina Monologues* as a not for profit tool to raise funds and awareness about violence against women

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The specific **purpose** of this toolkit is to provide a practical guide for V-Days that would like to integrate an advocacy component into the work they do.

The extent to which V-Days in Europe undertake advocacy varies greatly. Some only indirectly support advocacy through the work of their beneficiaries, while others (like UTVS) are experienced advocates in their own right. Others may be doing advocacy but do not realise it.

### **How to use this toolkit**

It is recognised that V-Days may undertake very different types of advocacy. Some may use a standalone performance of *The Vagina Monologues* to advocate on a specific issue, perhaps on behalf of a beneficiary organisation. Other V-Days are already part of full-scale advocacy campaigns undertaken as part of a broad coalition of individuals and organisations. To reflect both these needs, this toolkit is divided into two sections.

**Section 1:** This section provides an *Introduction to Advocacy*. This section will be useful for all V-Days, regardless of the scale of the advocacy work they are undertaking.

**Section 2:** This section is aimed primarily at V-Days that would like to undertake more complex campaigns in collaboration with a number of partners. For V-Days involved in informal advocacy, the tools in this section could help them to formalise the advocacy process.

## 2. WHAT IS ADVOCACY?

### Creating a definition of advocacy

There is no single definition of advocacy. UTVS defines advocacy as:

*“influencing key decision makers and policy makers to develop and implement policy that creates an environment where women are able to live free from violence and abuse”*

The common characteristics of advocacy, independent of the concrete definition of it, are:

- advocacy works at *policy* level
- it aims to *influence* the creation of policy and/or how policy is implemented
- the main *targets* of advocacy campaigns are policy makers and key decision makers

Advocacy is not the same as education or awareness raising or fundraising among the general public and the media, although these are often confused with advocacy. They are not advocacy in themselves because they do not *directly* aim to influence key decision makers. However, they are forms of action that can support advocacy work, and as such can still form a vital component of any advocacy campaign.

### Is using *The Vagina Monologues* ‘advocacy’?

V-Days use *The Vagina Monologues* tool in a myriad of ways.

- It is a *fundraising* tool, with proceeds from performances going to support beneficiaries working to end violence against women.
- It is an *educating* tool encouraging the audience to think more deeply about violence against women and how it affects their lives and the lives of those around them.
- It is an *awareness raising* tool which keeps the issue of violence against women in the public eye through media coverage of celebrity performers and champions.
- It is an *empowerment* tool building confidence in those who use it as a piece of drama to find their voice and express themselves

**Performing *The Vagina Monologues* becomes advocacy when a purpose of the performance is to directly influence a target policy maker/decision maker about violence against women.**

For example, a V-Day invites local officials or government ministers to a performance event to influence them about a particular issue, either on their own behalf or on behalf of their beneficiaries. This is advocacy. The performance may also be a fundraising event, but the presence of an advocacy target (the officials/ministers) means it is an advocacy event too.

### 3: ADVOCACY AND YOUR V-DAY

#### Integrating advocacy within an existing V-Day work programme

The most effective advocacy is undertaken in a strategic manner with a clear understanding from the outset of what it aims to achieve and how it will impact on the broader work of an organisation. Table A looks at some of the issues UTVS considers when embarking on a new advocacy campaign.

**Table A: Considering Advocacy - UTVS**

Strategic Considerations	Operational Considerations	Credibility
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How can advocacy contribute to the goals of our V-Day?</li> <li>• Are the issues we plan to advocate about true to the goals of our V-Day or will doing advocacy mean we start to lose focus?</li> <li>• What opportunities for expanding our V-Day does advocacy give us?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do we have the capacity (resources, people) to do advocacy?</li> <li>• How can we integrate advocacy in workplans, budgets, M&amp;E?</li> <li>• What skills &amp; training can we gain from advocacy that will benefit our wider V-Day programme of activities?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do we have the constituency to advocate for this issue?</li> <li>• Does our advocacy work reflect the aims and goals of our V-Day?</li> <li>• Have we chosen issues because they are easy, popular or good for our profile?</li> </ul>

Introducing advocacy into your work can have substantial benefits. Not only will your V-Day benefit from the outcome of advocacy (i.e. the creation of a more supportive legislative environment), it also benefits from the advocacy process itself by reaching new audiences, forming new networks and partners, and developing new advocacy skills.

#### Legitimacy

Legitimacy in advocacy refers to the extent to which advocates can claim to represent the people they are advocating *for*. If we are not legitimate advocates (i.e. we do not truly represent the people we are advocating for), we lose credibility.

Issues UTVS advocates for include:

- inclusion of violence against women in the UK national curriculum. (We are legitimate advocates for this because we are highly experienced school based educators.)
- a revision of UK domestic violence legislation

#### Why is it legitimate for V-Day Europe to advocate to stop violence against women.

V-Days Europe can legitimately advocate to stop violence against women because:

- we are women lead organisations with a right to speak about the experiences of women
- experience from our broader theatre and education work brings us into contact with women we can advocate *for*

we work with women's organisations and beneficiaries in our own countries who are partners that we advocate *with*

#### 4: WORKING WITH OTHERS/COLLABORATION

The more people delivering a message the more difficult it is to ignore. Hence the most effective advocacy is achieved through working in partnership. Good research during the preparation stage of an advocacy campaign will highlight groups and individuals who are working towards the same goals and are potential advocacy allies.

The partnership resources available to V-Days include:

- |                                  |  |
|----------------------------------|--|
| ➤ <i>V-Days</i>                  | Other V-Days   |
| ➤ <i>Beneficiaries:</i>          | Organisations that receive financial support as a result of V-Day events, and may already be involved in developing V-Day strategy and campaigns in their respective countries |
| ➤ <i>Champions:</i>              | E.g. celebrities and decision makers who support the V-Day movement, nationally and internationally  |
| ➤ <i>Women's movement:</i>       | Partnerships with women's NGOs and support groups, academics and researchers, women's refuges and shelters   |
| ➤ <i>Arts and theatre:</i>       | Partnerships within the arts and theatre groups, writers and performers  |
| ➤ <i>Institutional partners:</i> | Alliances with groups who may be indirect/direct targets of advocacy e.g. the police and legal profession who are partners in projects that address violence in the home       |
| ➤ <i>Volunteers:</i>             | V-Days can foster the energy of volunteers, particularly young people, if we can make it fulfilling for them to work with us.  |

We may find it useful to form more broad-based, less long-term alliances for the purpose of advocacy, for example with organisations from different fields, to show how wide the support is for a particular course of action or policy change. Indeed, some allies in coalitions may be indirect targets for advocacy work and be in a position to influence the key decision makers we are targeting. For example, UTVS has worked closely with the Metropolitan Police on campaigns to promote the message that violence against women in the home will not be tolerated by the authorities.

Ideally partners will work together from the start of a campaign, and will all be fully engaged in its planning, however we attract more partners along the way if our campaign is robust. Choosing the right partners can lend credibility to our advocacy work. The more credible our campaign, the more support we will attract.

## Advantages and challenges of working in partnership

The lists below outlines some of the advantages and some of the challenges of working with others. It is worth overcoming challenges, because partner relationships can be very strong and carry on to enrich future work.

### *Advantages:*

- your voice is louder because more people involved
- added weight to the campaign because of the range of people/organisations involved
- pooling financial resources
- sharing skills and expertise
- sharing knowledge of an issue, institutions, people
- sharing the workload with others so achieve more than originally envisaged
- partners bring own constituents/networks/beneficiaries to the cause

### *Challenges:*

- large groups can be hard to co-ordinate
- it can take a long time to build partnerships and reach consensus
- do all partners have the same agenda?
- will all partners respect their responsibilities (ownership of the project)?
- increase in workload (from managing/nurturing the partnership)
- competition over leadership
- conflicts of interest

One way to avoid potential partnership problems is to set ground rules at the outset. While for less formal partnerships it may not appear necessary to do this at first, it can prevent confusion later. Issues that can be defined in those ground rules include:

- the objective/s of the coalition
- the parameters of the coalition (e.g. what issues the coalition can speak about on members' behalf)
- who the coalition is accountable to
- the duration of the coalition (or when Terms of Reference will be reviewed)
- membership
- communication within the group
- leadership of the group i.e. how a leader or chairman will be nominated
- spokesman of the group i.e. who has the sanction of the group to speak on their behalf and on what issues

It may also help to form a steering group comprising a smaller group of advocacy partners. This group can become the focus for the management of the advocacy strategy and play an important role in monitoring the progress of the campaign.

## 5. WORKING WITH THE MEDIA

V-Days are very experienced at working with print and broadcast media and *The Vagina Monologues* itself is a very media friendly tool. But, is working with the media advocacy? Again, this will depend on *who* is the target of our media work.

For example, is a press conference following a performance of *The Vagina Monologues* advocacy? That will depend on who is the target of our message during the press conference. If we are trying to influence a specific decision maker then it is advocacy. If we are aiming to raise awareness among the general public, then it is not advocacy. The role of the media in advocacy can be summed up as follows:

- Working with the media is advocacy if the intended outcome of the interview/press conference etc is policy change.
- The media can be an indirect target of an advocacy campaign, because the media has the power to influence the key decision maker that is being targeted.

### Advantages and challenges of involving the media in your campaign

Working with the media can strengthen a campaign and, depending on the media outlet, it can widen our reach to sections of society who would not have heard about V-Days and might not be informed about the advocacy issue. The broader the base of support for a campaign, the greater the pressure on decision makers to respond to it.

If we spark media interest, journalists can be encouraged to report on violence against women issues that they would not generally cover and to address them in more depth and from a new angle. If we are skilful we will capture their imagination and start a debate that spreads further than the initial publication/broadcast to engage other newspapers, radio programmes, TV shows etc. If we are known as a credible source of information we can make ourselves the first point of call for information about violence against women. Creating and nurturing relationships with journalists and media organisations may even put us in a position to intercept negative or inaccurate coverage about violence against women before it appears.

#### *Advantages:*

- widen the reach of your campaign to new groups/sections of society
- widen the strength of popular support, increasing pressure on decision makers
- spark media interest in a new issue/create a debate
- encourage more in-depth coverage
- enable accurate representation of violence against women in our communities

#### *Challenges:*

- not understanding the rules - the media is not always on your side
- the story can look different from a reporter's perspective
- misrepresentation – if we are not clear in our messages
- bad publicity – we need to be confident in interviews and maintain credibility

However the media will not always cover things as we want them to and there will always be risks inherent in relationships with the media world. We have to make a judgement about whether it is worth the risk or not, although it helps to choose journalists that are supportive of V-Day issues. We have to be aware that a story can look very different from the media

perspective. We have to ensure we are skilled and trained in working with the media to avoid being misrepresented or damaging the credibility of ourselves and our organisations.

### **Tips for working with the media**

#### *Key messages*

- Identify 2-3 points that you want to get across and stick to these.
- Always bring an interview/discussion back to these points.

#### *Speak with one voice*

- Make sure everyone at your V-Day and in your coalition is aware of the message that is being given to the press. It can be easier if one person is nominated as spokesperson

#### *Contacting the press directly:*

- Be the one that makes the story - don't just respond to issues already in the news. Provide stories, press releases and photo opportunities
- Know your publications and news agencies
- Write letters to the editor to spark debate. They must be brief and to the point.

#### *Make it easy for them*

- Provide concise and clear written information e.g. a press information pack or briefing. This can include contact information, information about V-Day, background to the issues, information about opposition views, facts and statistics
- These let you think about what you say to the press before hand and record exactly what you want to say for them (and you!).
- Use stories as well as facts to capture the imagination

#### *Press briefings/releases*

- Know deadlines and the best time to contact the press to ensure next day coverage
- Have press kits at all events

#### *Be a credible source*

- Become a reliable source so the press comes to you for authoritative information about violence against women.
- Only invite the media when you have something important to say
- If you use statistics make sure they are reliable

#### *Appearing on TV and radio*

- Stick to the key messages
- Invest in training in interviewing techniques

#### *Evaluate your campaign*

- Document and evaluate press coverage and learn from previous campaigns

## 6. ADVOCATING TO POLICY MAKERS

Policy makers are the direct targets of most advocacy campaigns as they hold most decision making power. Violence against women is a global issue therefore V-Days can work legitimately at national, European and international level, although it may be more feasible for some V-Days to work on only local issues to ensure their campaigns achieve the greatest possible impact from limited resources

To fully appreciate where power lies it is necessary to understand the decision making system within which you are working and the roles of different groups and individuals within it, whatever the level. Knowing the legislative process and appreciating how relevant institutions work makes it possible to co-ordinate advocacy to target the most appropriate people and at the most appropriate time.

### Identifying who to advocate to

Good research is therefore essential to successful advocacy. It helps identify the key decision makers (direct targets of advocacy) and those who 'influence' these decision makers (indirect targets).

Examples of direct and indirect targets:

- Direct targets:       judicial authorities, members of parliament, civil servants, local councillors/representatives
- Indirect targets:     the media, civil servants, unions, teachers, community groups, police, lawyers

It is important to target policy makers from all parties as V-Day must not be perceived as partisan or biased.

### Tips for working with policy makers

#### Preparation:

##### ➤ *Know your targets*

Once the targets of your campaign have been identified, learn as much as possible about them. The better you know your target and their interests, the more focused your campaign. Start your campaign with those who are most sympathetic to your cause as they will direct you to others with similar interests.

Tips include:

- Find your target's position on certain issues e.g. their voting record, speeches, newspaper articles etc.
- Do a search for them on the internet
- Find out about their constituents and issues facing those he/she represents

##### ➤ *Know your advocacy issue*

From the beginning, it is essential to be clear about *what* you want changed and *why* in order to communicate it clearly to others. Be sure to keep up to date if the issue is constantly moving. Be able to comment on new developments as your credibility can

depend on your hold on current issues. The more informed you are about your subject, the more prepared you are to take advantage of unexpected encounters with potential targets. Key questions to ask are:

- *What* do we want to change? (Legislation? The language of a bill?)
- *Why* do we want to change this?
- What do we want our *target* to do. (A certain opinion in a speech, propose changes to legislation)

➤ *See the issue from your target's perspective, i.e.*

- Why do they think I can help them?
- What it is you want me to do/what is the solution?
- What's in it for me?!

➤ *Know what others think*

Be as up to date about those who oppose your cause as those who support it. This allows you to anticipate opposition and prepare targets to respond to criticism. Anticipate others who might support your campaign, for example other parliamentarians with similar feelings on an issue to your target.

➤ *Create a Position paper*

Position papers should be one page long and explain the problem/issue and what you think, including recommendations for action. Creating a position paper clarifies your stance and reduces the risk of being misinterpreted. Ensure it includes contact details in case more information is required.

## Getting your message heard

➤ *Formal meetings*

Formal meetings are the most common way of advocating to targets. Table B below shows some of the issues to consider when preparing for, undertaking and following-up on meetings with policy makers.

➤ *Writing Letters*

If communicating with policy makers by letter, quote the reference numbers etc for bills you are referring to – make it easy for them to hear your message. Be brief and to the point and provide contact information.

**Table B: Preparing for formal meetings with policy makers**

<i>1. Preparation</i>	⇒	<i>2. During the meeting</i>	⇒	<i>3. After the meeting</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Know your key messages beforehand</li> <li>• Identify mutual interests</li> <li>• Role play/practice the meeting before hand</li> <li>• Prepare information for your target (to sell yourself as an information source)</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be positive about aspects of legislation</li> <li>• Focus on one issue/stick to key messages</li> <li>• Offer solutions not problems</li> <li>• Be truthful/credible – if you don't know, say so</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Keep notes of the meeting – what happened, who was there, agreed actions</li> <li>• Follow-up the meeting with a phone call, letter or email.</li> <li>• Provide additional information promised</li> <li>• Send a thank you letter to</li> </ul>

- |  |   |  |
|--|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Timing of the meeting – just before a vote and not just after!</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Offer to provide more info</li><li>• Leave behind a briefing paper</li><li>• Make suggestions about other people to talk to</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>restate your views</li><li>• Final reminder before the bill goes through</li><li>• Keep involved</li></ul> |
|--|---|--|

➤ *Committees and Boards*

It can help to sit on committees and boards, as these provide a very effective platform to get your views across and influence people and policy directly. It can also enhance the credibility of your V-Day as an organisation, although beware of becoming perceived by others as too entrenched within the institution you are trying to change.

**Case Study: *The Vagina Monologues with Politicians and Peers***

This case study is an example of an event where UTVS used *The Vagina Monologues* as an advocacy tool to directly influence policy makers.

The purpose of the event was:

1. to influence policy makers to vote in the upcoming Safety & Justice Bill
2. to provide a platform for the presentation of V-Day beneficiary demands to politicians and peers

In 2003, V-Day beneficiaries (organisations that receive money as a result of V-Day performances organised by UTVS) devised a list of demands that they wanted to make to policy makers about violence against women. The demands are diverse reflecting the range of interests of V-Day beneficiaries and they range from the highly specific (e.g. abolition of the 'no recourse to public funds' rule) to the less specific (e.g. creation of a task force to co-ordinate voluntary and government violence against women services), see Box V.

UTVS wanted to create a platform for these demands to be presented to policy makers. What better way to involve politicians than to persuade a supportive group of parliamentarians to actually perform *The Vagina Monologues* for their peers! We used our existing contacts within the Houses of Parliament to identify potential candidates, approaching those that were most likely to agree first in order to encourage others to take part.

**Box V: V-Day Demands**

## V DAY DEMANDS

V Day beneficiaries work tirelessly to campaign to end violence and abuse making a significant difference to female survivors and their children. Our beneficiary charities welcome the forthcoming Safety and Justice Bill, however, the following demands stipulate what the government still needs to do in order to prioritise the issue of violence against women in accordance with its position as a human rights violation.

We are honoured to have Baroness Patricia Scotland Minister for Women with us in the audience today to represent the government in acknowledging these demands.

- **National Violence against Women strategy** - V-Day demand that over a 5 to 10 year period a government task force is established to co-ordinate the work of voluntary and government services
- **Education and public awareness campaign** – V-Day demand that issues relating to violence against women should be explicitly include within the National Curriculum with voluntary groups involved in the creation of any public awareness campaigns
- **The abolition of the ‘Two Year’ and the ‘No recourse to Public Funds’ Rules** - V-Day demand that the two year probationary period be abolished as it places the women who experience violent relationships in a stark position of either leaving the marriage and risking deportation, or staying and risking their lives. V-Day also demands that in the interim there should be further reform to the domestic violence immigration rule to cover all women subject to immigration control and to allow all types of evidence as proof of domestic violence. In addition, women subject to domestic violence and immigration control should have access to public funds to enable them to leave abusive situations.
- **Resources** – V-Day demands the development of a co-ordinated national strategy for the provision and funding of voluntary sector services. These include but are not limited to refuges, advocacy and counselling for women and their children.
- **Justice system task force** – V-Day demands that a justice system task force is established to ensure proper justice for survivors and greater accountability of perpetrators. This task force would review how current law, policy and practice help or hinder prevention, protection and provision in relation to violence against women.

As a result, on the 8<sup>th</sup> March 2004, UTVS presented a gala performance of *The Vagina Monologues* performed mainly by politicians and peers (members of the House of Lords) together with some respected broadcasters and public figures. The invited audience was a mixture of policy makers, broadcasters and other key decision makers in the field of education,

law and policing together with V-Day beneficiaries and other organisations working in gender, violence, health, education and employment rights.

The event was a great success, raising the profile of violence against women in both Houses of Parliament and gaining the attention of the media despite the unstable international environment at the time, which was of course the focus of most paper and broadcast news.

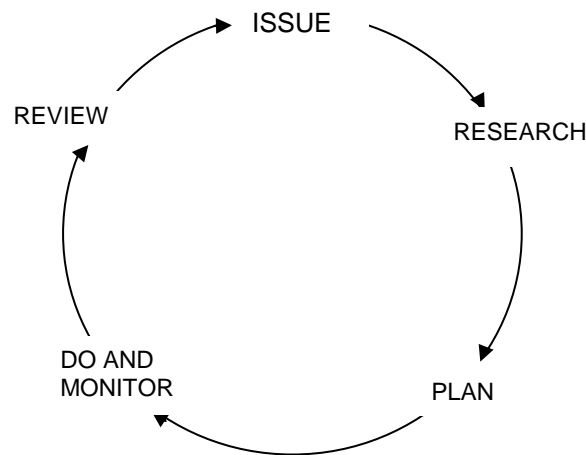
Below is a summary of some of the key steps in organising this advocacy event:

- ❑ Organising began well in advance to secure availability of the key women who would take part in the performance
- ❑ UTVS partners and beneficiaries were involved from the beginning and assisted in planning and implementing the performance.
- ❑ A high profile theatre was arranged which was close to the Houses of Parliament so it would be easy for parliamentarians to attend
- ❑ Advertising and promotion was secured for the publicity materials and to cover costs of the performance
- ❑ Flyers, programmes for the event were designed, but not published until very near the time of the performance to allow for last minute changes in performers
- ❑ UTVS wrote to influential women to request their support for the event and was able to include messages of support from, among others, Cherie Booth QC (Cherie Blair) and the Mayor of London. These were included in the programme to the event and were read out during the performance.
- ❑ Press releases were written and the media were invited to a photo-session on the day of the performance – early enough to ensure photos would be published the next day.

## SECTION 2: ADVOCACY PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION

This section aims to provide a guide through the advocacy planning process. It uses the advocacy cycle and an advocacy framework as tools for planning, structuring and reviewing advocacy work. It also identifies key issues to consider when preparing an advocacy strategy.

### 7. THE ADVOCACY CYCLE



Effective advocacy is a cyclical process. In this section we will look at the stages in the advocacy cycle in more detail.

The preparation stage: the **issue** is defined and we get our facts straight through good **research**. This is a time to identify **partners** who will work with us to plan the strategy.

The planning and doing stage we use the advocacy framework as a **planning** tool to guide identification of:

- objectives
- targets and messages
- activities and outputs
- risks and assumptions
- monitoring and evaluation

This describes how we will **implement** the advocacy strategy

The reviewing stage: we **review** our progress and return to the **issue**

## 8. PREPARING FOR ADVOCACY

### Researching the issue/Knowing the facts

Robust information allows us to create a credible and sustainable advocacy strategy based on facts. The more information we have, the easier it is to be proactive i.e. we can set the agenda and create a positive environment for advocacy, and not just react to the statements and actions of others.

Researching the issue well at the beginning enables us to:

- *Be fully informed:* we can be an authoritative and credible source that is able to argue our case convincingly, has identified solutions to the issue and is aware of how others will counter our position.
- *Identify others with an interest in this issue:* identifying allies to work with in devising and implementing our advocacy strategy; distinguishing the most credible partners and ensuring we clearly understand the politics of the issue we are tackling.
- *Create materials:* provide content for development of materials including web, brochures, fact sheets, policy statements, posters etc
- *Focus our planning:* how we will decide the activities that form our advocacy strategy
- *Establish a baseline:* provide a clear assessment of the issue and the need we are addressing, establishing a baseline from which we will be able to monitor the impact of our advocacy work

If no information is available on the issue we are advocating for, is it possible to commission or encourage research into the subject? Alternatively, perhaps your V-Day has experience that could form the basis of a new body of work on an issue?

Documenting your V-Day experiences and sharing information and lessons learned from dealing with an issue first-hand, represents strong evidence of your authority to speak on an issue and credibility as a source of information. For example, V-Days can record newspaper clippings from performances, or summarise the achievements of projects or events. We can create materials and documents that highlight the support we have secured from celebrities, policy makers etc who have championed V-Day in the past

## 9. BUILDING AN ADVOCACY FRAMEWORK

### What is an advocacy framework?

There are a range of project planning tools we can adapt to guide the planning, implementation and monitoring of advocacy work. This toolkit uses an advocacy framework designed by UTVS. This is a table that shows all the elements of an advocacy strategy. The framework is a guide only and can be adapted according to the needs of a project or group of partners.

The advantage of a framework is that it encourages us to consider, in a systematic way:

**what** the project aims to achieve,

**how** it will be achieved,

**who** will be responsible for each activity,

**when** activities will take place, and

**resources** required, are they sufficient or do we need to change our strategy

The process of outlining the achievements or outcomes we expect from advocacy, provides us with **indicators for monitoring** project progress. These help us assess whether we are keeping to our plan and to analyse our progress towards meeting the advocacy objectives. The framework also includes a brief assessment of **risks** made during the formation of our strategy, allowing V-Days to make contingencies against potential risks.

A good plan is equally important whether it is one V-Day or a coalition implementing a strategy. Organising the strategy in a framework allows both the relationship between activities and the responsibilities of all partners to be seen easily. Table C is a blank framework and over the next few pages we will begin to fill in some of the sections.

### Advocacy objectives

V-Days across the world share the same overall goal – to end violence against women. However, a campaign to stop violence against women would be a colossal task. There would be a myriad of components to consider and it would be unrealistic that such an enormous social issue and associated inequalities in gender relationships across the globe could be overcome within the space of a time-limited project. Instead, it is more practical to embark on more focused advocacy projects that *contribute* towards that overarching goal.

V-Days need to define an advocacy objective at the start of a campaign. After all, if we do not know what we want to achieve from our advocacy then why are we doing it at all?

A good objective will be SMART, that is it will be:

<b>S</b>	Specific
<b>M</b>	Measurable
<b>A</b>	Appropriate
<b>R</b>	Realistic
<b>T</b>	Timebound

- Specific:** the objective describes exactly what will be achieved by the end of the project/campaign
- Measurable:** what will be achieved can be measured
- Appropriate:** the objective fits within the broader goals of the organisation/V-Day (i.e. it contributes to ending violence against women)
- Realistic:** it is within the capacity of the coalition/V-Day to achieve this objective
- Timebound:** there is a specified time by which the objective will be reached

An example of a SMART objective from a campaign that UTVS is implementing:

*“Violence against women is included in the National Curriculum as a specific issue to be covered in Personal Health and Social Education classes by September 2006”*

This objective is SMART because it describes *specifically* what will be achieved, and this can be *measured* by whether or not the issue has been included in the curriculum. The objective is *appropriate* because UTVS works actively in schools to educate young people about violence against women and this fits within the values of V-Day. Taking into consideration the strong relationships that UTVS has with parliamentarians, teacher training colleges, teaching unions and other educational organisations, achieving the objective is *realistic*. The objective is also clearly *timebound*, to be completed by December 2006.

An advocacy objective may aim to affect something that is already happening e.g. to contribute to the creation or amendment of a piece of legislation. Alternatively, it may seek to set the agenda, to raise awareness about an existing policy that needs to be changed, or to call for consideration of a new issue which is not covered in existing regulations/legislation.

Ideally, other project partners will work with you to identify the objective of advocacy. UTVS works closely with beneficiary organisations in determining our advocacy objectives. UTVS is working now to involve more young people in the planning and implementing of the advocacy strategy as we are ultimately working on their behalf. Involving the people we are advocating for in a project strengthens us as advocates.

### **Advocacy activities and outputs**

It is important to describe the objective well because advocacy activities will be chosen based upon how well they contribute to meeting this objective. The activities that form the content of the strategy have to be relevant to achieving the objective and if they are not then we need to rethink the activities we have chosen. It is easy to include activities because they are comfortable or easy to do even though they are not really relevant to the advocacy campaign.

There are three main activities under this project:

- A1 Meetings/communication with key decision makers
- A2 Performance of *The Vagina Monologues* for MPs, educationalists, teachers and trade unions
- A3 A public debate on violence against women in the national curriculum

In the context of this project we can assume that all project partners have agreed that these activities will contribute to meeting the objective of the advocacy. These activities can therefore be added to the Advocacy Framework. By asking a few simple questions about these activities, the framework can be completed further:

- *what will be achieved by the activity? (output/measurement of success)*
- *when will it take place? (timing)*
- *who will do it? (responsibility)*
- *what are the resource implications of this activity? (inputs)*

**Table D: Advocacy Framework – Activities**

Activity	Measurement of success	timing	responsible person/org	inputs/ resources
A1 Meetings/ communication with key decision makers	2 Champions can be identified	on-going (Dec 04 – Mar 06)	UTVS	£5k
A3 Performance of <i>The Vagina Monologues</i>	5 MPs request meetings about the bill following the performance	on-going (Dec 04 – Mar 06)	UTVS The SexEd Network	£15k £5k
A3 A public debate on violence against women in the national curriculum	5 MPs request meetings about VAW in the curriculum following the performance	Sept 05	Teachers Against Violence UTVS The SexEd Network	£10k

The other side of an activity is its ‘output’ i.e. what we want to happen as a result of doing an activity. Outputs are useful as measurements of whether we have been successful in achieving what we planned from an activity. They also help to focus us on why we are really doing an activity and how it contributes to the overall strategy. We will look at these measurable outputs more in the section on monitoring and evaluation.

A large portion of the framework is now complete. This sample project shows how *The Vagina Monologues* can play a central role within an advocacy project, as long as it is supported by other activities. The performance becomes an advocacy tool.

## Timing

The timing of activities will depend on a number of issues. Activities have to be undertaken systematically. Often, an activity cannot begin before another activity has been completed (for example, materials have to be created before they can be distributed). External factors will also affect timing. For example, the timing of follow-up to meetings with MPs will depend on when a bill is about to be discussed in parliament.

It can help to lay out all the activities in a gant chart, a table which shows clearly when activities will begin and end. This is a useful tool for assessing how a change in timing will impact on other activities that are dependent on it, and for managing workload across the duration of a project. The chart below shows that the summer period before the performance in September will be a particularly busy time.

**Table E: Gant chart**

Activity	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Meeting decision makers												
• briefing materials												
• initial letters,												
• meetings												
• follow-up												
VM Performance												
• press materials												
• Identify performers												
• Invites MPs/targets												
• Performance												

### Advocacy targets and messages

Advocacy can influence those who can directly affect policy change, and also those whose influence is indirect, i.e. individuals or groups who can *influence the influencer*. In the example above, the project aims to influence both direct and indirect targets.

Where and who is advocated to will depend upon:

- the scale of the problem or issue
- where advocacy can have the greatest impact
- resources available
- networks/relationships
- the goals and objectives of an organisation

Who is advocated to and where this will take place should be decided according to how the advocacy can have the greatest impact. This advocacy strategy aims to influence national level policy on the national curriculum and is therefore targeting national level decision makers. However, advocating to local education authorities to include violence against women in the syllabuses taught in their schools could have been added to the campaign, creating an upward pressure on national level policy makers to make the same commitment nationally.

In the case of this project the direct targets are the ministers, civil servants and educationalists as they will decide what is included in the curriculum. The indirect targets are the media, teachers and teaching unions who are in a position to influence these decision makers.

Successful advocacy uses simple, clear messages that are easy to remember, use powerful language and are relevant to the target therefore sparking his/her interest.

Targets will have differing agendas and we can attract and retain their attention to an issue by ensuring our messages take account of that target's priorities. For example, some issues likely to spark the interest of different groups are shown below.

- *Politicians/policy-makers*: budget, public opinion, chance to show leadership
- *Journalists*: news value, timing, celebrities
- *Partners*: effectiveness of actions, common agendas, opportunities

It can help to clarify who is being targeted, why and with what message in a table as below.

**Table F: Message Table**

<b>Advocacy</b>	<b>Who</b>	<b>Message</b>	<b>Why?</b>	<b>Action/What?</b>
Direct Target	Minister	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is the problem</li> <li>• What is the solution</li> <li>• Why it needs to be included</li> <li>• Allies</li> <li>• Potential opposition and what they will say</li> </ul>	They are on the committee drafting PHSE component of the national curriculum	Meeting the minister <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ask champion MP to arrange a meeting</li> <li>• Preparation for meeting:</li> <li>• briefing pack</li> <li>• follow-up</li> </ul>
Indirect Target	Media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is the problem</li> <li>• Why it is a problem</li> <li>• What is the solution</li> </ul>	Press coverage can influence the minister	VM Performance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Invite to VM Performance</li> <li>• provide briefing/ materials</li> <li>• photo-opportunity of celebrity performers</li> </ul>
Indirect Target	Civil Servant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is the problem</li> <li>• What is the solution/</li> <li>• Why it needs to be included</li> </ul>	Very experienced on the issue and very close to the minister	Meeting with official <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preparation for meeting:</li> <li>• briefing pack</li> <li>• follow-up</li> </ul>

The use of visual images and materials help draw attention to the message. Materials should be specific to the target and be in clear accessible language, to ensure they are not misinterpreted.

### Analysing Risk

These are factors that fall outside the control of the project but that could effect implementation. It is important to assess risk so a realistic assessment can be made of the likelihood of an advocacy strategy being implemented successfully. If there are too many risks, is it still worth going ahead? Acknowledging risk at the beginning means it becomes possible to make contingency plans to alleviate risk. On big campaigns, it may be worthwhile analysing the risks associated with all the major activities, and not just the project as a whole.

Two risks are identified in this sample advocacy framework:

1. Emergency legislation will impact on the timing of formal discussion about the curriculum
2. External factors could prevent parliament from sitting for normal business during autumn 05

## **Monitoring the advocacy strategy**

Through monitoring we are able to track the progress of our advocacy to date. Are activities creating the outputs planned? How close is the campaign to meeting its objective? Monitoring is a chance to identify barriers to successful implementation of the strategy and how to overcome them. It is an opportunity to assess whether the framework needs to be revised.

Integrating monitoring into the advocacy strategy facilitates good management of the campaign. Whether working as a coalition or as individual V-Days we are likely to be accountable to a steering group (in a coalition), donors or boards or all of these for the work that we do.

Time for monitoring, including meetings with partners, should be built into an advocacy plan. It can help to agree a specific time to review progress at the beginning of the process, perhaps once a month depending on the timescale of the campaign. This does not mean that monitoring stops in between these times – it is an on-going process and it helps to document events and achievements (e.g. references to your V-Day or advocacy campaign in the press) as they happen so evidence of the impact of your work is not lost.

It also helps to allocate responsibility for monitoring implementation of the strategy to someone who recognises the importance of this role within the campaign. In a coalition, it might be appropriate for this person to report back directly to the steering group rather than one of the advocacy partners.

## 10. REVIEWING THE ADVOCACY STRATEGY

At the end of an advocacy campaign we find ourselves in a position to formally evaluate our work, and return to our advocacy objective to review the impact of our strategy.

### Evaluating the impact of advocacy

The advocacy objective in the example used here is very specific and as a result it will be easy to measure our success in meeting this objective.

*Objective: Violence against women is included in the UK National Curriculum as a specific issue to be covered in Personal Health and Social Education classes by September 2006*

If we want, we can identify specific measurements of success that relate to our objective (as we did for activities earlier). If so, these 'outputs' should be identified at the planning stage of the advocacy cycle. Two measurements of success in meeting the objective of our sample project could be:

- Violence against women identified as a specific issue to be covered in PHSE classes
- An explicit definition of violence against women is included in the National Curriculum

Using baseline information gathered during the preparation phase of the advocacy cycle, we can also assess the broader impact of our advocacy strategy. To what extent have attitudes changed towards the inclusion of violence against women in the national curriculum? What unexpected outcomes were there as a result of this campaign?

### Returning to the issue

We have reached the end of the advocacy cycle and this is a time for reflection to consider our next steps.

Returning to the issue, we may realise we need to continue our advocacy and can plan this based on the lessons we learned during the previous advocacy cycle. Perhaps we will do things differently in the future. These 'lessons learned' can be shared with partners and beneficiaries so they too can learn from our advocacy experience.

Alternatively we may have successfully reached our advocacy goal and will want to develop a strategy to further embed our advocacy achievement (e.g. through awareness raising and public education).

Whatever the outcome, through embarking on advocacy V-Days will gain new experiences, learn more about themselves, meet new partners and contacts and grow as organisations and individuals. UTVS hopes V-Days will have found this toolkit useful and will work with us in the future as advocacy partners.

**ADVOCACY FRAMEWORK: Domestic Violence Advocacy Project**

**Overall Goal:** To stop violence against women

**Objective:** Violence against women is included in the National Curriculum as a specific issue to be covered in Personal Health and Social Education classes by December 2006

**Output 1:** An explicit definition of violence against women is included in the National Curriculum

**Output 2:** Violence against women is identified as a specific issue to be covered in PHSE classes

Objectives	Targets	Activities	Time	Responsible person/org	Resources/ Inputs	Measurement of success	Risks
Violence against women is included in the UK National Curriculum as a specific issue to be covered in Personal Health and Social Education classes by September 2006	<u>Direct</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Ministers</li> <li>•Opposition spokesman</li> </ul>	Meetings/ communication with key decision makers (minister, junior minister, opposition spokesman) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• briefing materials</li> <li>• initial letters,</li> <li>• meetings</li> <li>• follow-up</li> </ul>	Dec 04 Jan 05 Apr-Dec05 Sep 05 – Mar 06	UTVS	£5k	Key decision makers in both government and in the opposition are informed about the need for VAW to be included in the national curriculum  2 Champions can be identified	Emergency legislation will impact on formal discussion about the curriculum  External factors will prevent parliament from sitting for normal business during autumn 05
	<u>Direct</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•MPs, civil servants, educationalists</li> </ul> <u>Indirect</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Media/general public</li> <li>• teachers</li> <li>• trade unions</li> </ul>	Performance of <i>The Vagina Monologues</i> for MPs, educationalists, teachers and trade unions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Media coverage of VM – press release, briefing notes etc</li> <li>• Identify performers/organisers</li> <li>• Invitations to MPs/targets</li> </ul>	Sept 05	UTVS	£15k	A forum is created that brings a wide range of MPs and educationalists together who would not otherwise prioritise VAW.  5 MPs request meetings about the	

						national curriculum following the performance
	<p><u>Direct</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MPs, civil servants</li> <li>• teachers</li> <li>• unions</li> </ul> <p><u>Indirect</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Media/general public</li> </ul>	Organise public debate with parliamentarians, celebrity champions and teachers on the subject of VAW in the national curriculum	Feb 06	<p>Teachers Against Domestic Violence</p> <p>UTVS</p> <p>The SexEd Network</p>	£15k	<p>A forum is created to show the broad base of support for VAW in the national curriculum (partners, teachers, unions, educationalists, MPs)</p> <p>5 MPs request meetings about the national curriculum following the performance</p>



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	<u>Direct</u> •MPs, civil servants, educationalists  <u>Indirect</u> • Media/gener	Performance of <i>The Vagina Monologues</i> for MPs, educationalists, teachers and trade unions: • Media coverage of VM – press release, briefing notes etc	Sept 05	UTVS	£15k	A forum is created that brings a wide range of MPs and educationalists together who would not otherwise prioritise VAW.	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>al public</li> <li>teachers</li> <li>trade unions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify performers/organisers</li> <li>Invitations to MPs/targets</li> </ul>				5 MPs request meetings about the national curriculum following the performance
	<p><u>Direct</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>MPs, civil servants</li> <li>teachers</li> <li>unions</li> </ul> <p><u>Indirect</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Media/general public</li> </ul>	Organise public debate with parliamentarians, celebrity champions and teachers on the subject of VAW in the national curriculum	Feb 06	<p>Teachers Against Domestic Violence</p> <p>UTVS</p> <p>The SexEd Network</p>	£15k	<p>A forum is created to show the broad base of support for VAW in the national curriculum (partners, teachers, unions, educationalists, MPs)</p> <p>5 MPs request meetings about the national curriculum following the performance</p>

