



**INCLUSIVE
SECURITY**



MODULE EIGHT

Message

Advocacy for
Inclusive Security
Curriculum

Acknowledgements

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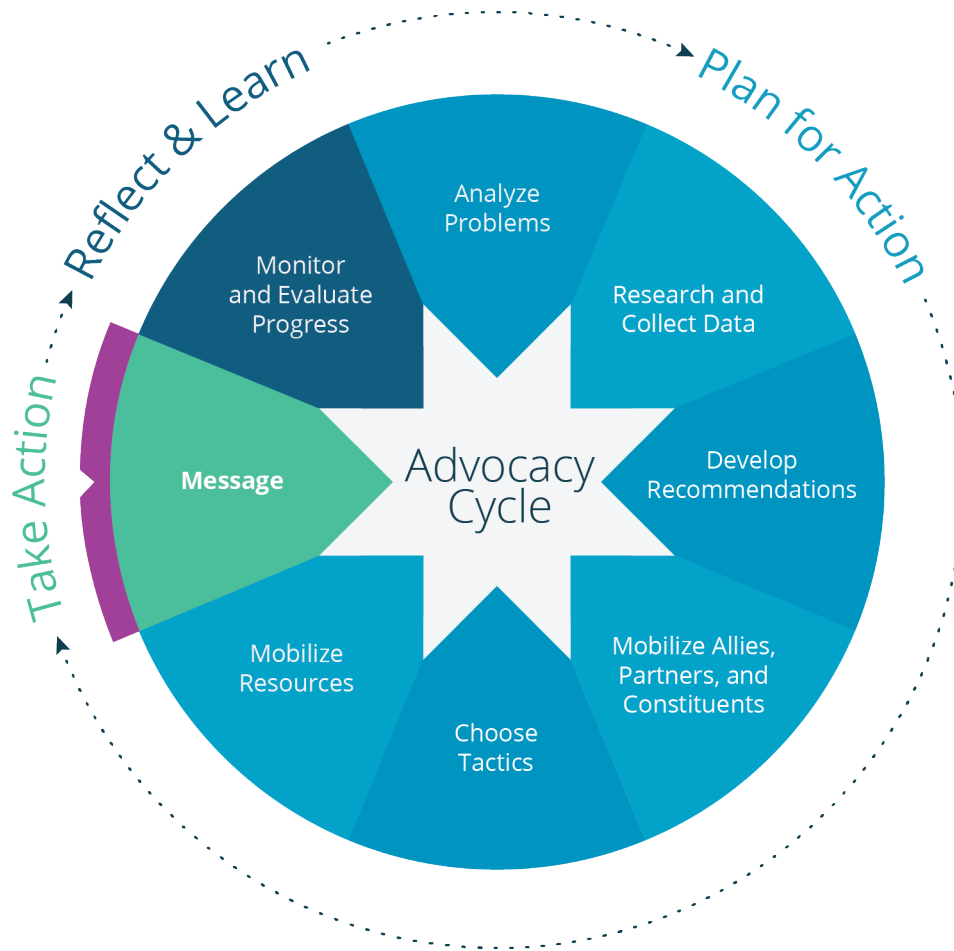
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Advocacy for Inclusive Security Curriculum

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- Module 2** | Analyze Problems
- Module 3** | Research and Collect Data
- Module 4** | Develop Recommendations
- Module 5** | Mobilize Allies, Partners, and Constituents
- Module 6** | Choose Tactics
- Module 7** | Mobilize Resources
- Module 8** | Message
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MODULE OVERVIEW: Message

Learning Objectives

Participants are able to:

- Identify important audiences they want to reach.
- Identify what kind of messages will compel audiences to act.
- Deliver advocacy messages to different audiences, in particular policymakers, the media, allies, and constituents.

Evaluation Procedures

Pre- and post-workshop evaluations

Time Frame

6 Hours 50 Minutes

Background for Facilitator

The purpose of this module is to help participants think strategically about framing messages that will compel different audiences to act. The activities provide guidance on how to create and deliver messages to policymakers, members of the media, allies, and constituents. Note that this module incorporates several videos - decide which videos you want to use in advance and make sure that you have the resources needed (e.g., if internet is unreliable in your training location, you may not be able to show all of the videos). There are also a few role plays that require facilitators to play different characters. As with all modules, messaging is highly context-specific, so be sure to tailor these activities to the context where you are training.

Background Resources

- Inclusive Security. *Inclusive Security: A Curriculum for Women Waging Peace*. Washington: Inclusive Security, 2009.
- Inclusive Security and International Alert. *Inclusive Security, Sustainable Peace: A Toolkit for Advocacy and Action*. Washington: Inclusive Security, November 2004.
- O'Reilly, Marie. *Why Women? Inclusive Security and Peaceful Societies*. Washington: Inclusive Security, October 2015.
- International Center on Nonviolent Conflict. "Pressing Your Case: Nonviolent Movements and the Media (Parts 1-4)." www.nonviolent-conflict.org/resource/pressing-case-nonviolent-movements-media-part-1/.
- VeneKlasen, Lisa, and Valerie Miller. *A New Weave of Power, People and Politics*. Warwickshire: Practical Action Publishing Ltd., 2007.
- Sprechmann, Sofia, and Emily Peltman. *Advocacy Tools and Guidelines: Promoting Policy Change*. CARE International, 2001.

Time	Type of Session	Title
2 minutes	Presentation	Introduction to the Module
45 minutes	Activity	Choose Your Audience
30 minutes	Activity	What Makes a Strong Message?
60-90 minutes	Activity	Telling a Compelling Story
45 minutes	Activity	Making the Case for “Why Women”
90 minutes	Activity	Messaging to Policymakers
105 minutes	Activity	Messaging to the Media
2 minutes	Presentation	Conclusion
30 minutes	More Time: Activity	Developing a Strong Opening

Message

Key Takeaways

Messaging should be tailored for a target audience.

The purpose of messaging is to compel certain audiences to take action. Different audiences require different types of messaging because every audience has distinct interests and will be moved by different types of information. You need to know their interests, agendas, what will compel them to act, and how to reach them.

Messaging for all target audiences should clearly convey the problem, solution, and action.

Your messaging should focus 20% on the problem and 80% on solutions. Most advocates make the mistake of doing the reverse.

Stories are a powerful tool for messaging.

When crafted and delivered deliberately, a story can be a very useful tool for convincing advocacy targets to take action. A story must be short, concise, and memorable. It must link to the core of your message and illustrate the problem and solution. Stories help bring recommendations alive and illuminate the human element of a policy issue.

Preparation is necessary for strong, effective messaging.

Prior to any advocacy meeting, you should conduct background research on your advocacy target to understand their interests, stance on your policy issue, and if possible, what might compel them to take action. Anticipating their responses to your comments and questions can strengthen your message, particularly if the audience is a potential opponent or may be unfamiliar with your policy issue.



Presentation 8.1 Introduction to the Module

Background for Facilitator

This section introduces the purpose and learning objectives of the module.

Facilitator Talking Points

- Messaging to different audiences is a critical component of advocacy. The most effective advocates build rapport with a range of individuals and groups, like policymakers, allies, journalists, and constituents. Understanding these audiences will help you shape your message in a way that is convincing, whether you're asking a policymaker to change a law, inviting another organization to join your coalition, or persuading a journalist to include the perspectives of women leaders in her story.
- The purpose of this module is to help you think strategically about how to deliver your advocacy message in a way that will convince different audiences to take action. A powerful advocacy message must be clear and compelling. Your audience needs to know what they are being asked to do, why they should do it, the positive impact their action will have, and what will happen if no action is taken. So, we'll explore the basic components of messaging, which include identifying the audience(s) you want to reach, exploring the best way to reach those audience(s), and framing your message so that your audience(s) takes action to support your cause. And we'll focus on messaging to four critical audiences: policymakers, members of the media, allies, and constituents.
- After this module, we hope that you will be able to:
 - Identify important audiences they want to reach.
 - Identify what kind of messages will compel audiences to act.
 - Deliver advocacy messages to different audiences, in particular policymakers, the media, allies, and constituents.

Materials Needed

None

Learning Objectives

Participants are able to identify the purpose and learning objectives of this module.

Time 2 minutes

Activity 8.2 Choose Your Audience

Background for Facilitator

The purpose of this activity is to get participants thinking about their primary audience(s) and the key factors they need to know in order to tailor their message. The framing of this activity is initially quite broad, so it can be useful to remind participants that advocacy is about working to make change on a specific policy issue.

Module 4: Develop Recommendations introduces actor mapping to identify those who have the power to take action. When working with groups to determine target audiences for messaging, refer to this analysis and refine if necessary since the actors identified in this analysis will likely be target audiences for messaging.

Materials Needed

Choose Your Audience handout; presentation slides

Learning Objectives

Participants are able to describe what information they need to know in order to tailor a message to a particular audience.

Time 45 minutes

Facilitator Talking Points

- Advocacy is about working to create change on a specific policy issue and knowing your audience is an important component of effective advocacy. Your audience includes individuals and/or groups whose actions can help achieve your desired policy change, and the core of your advocacy message is convincing those actors to take a specific action in support of your cause. In order to craft an effective advocacy message, you need to know their interests, agendas, and what will compel them to act. You also need to consider how to communicate with them.
- **Who is your audience?** Who do you want to reach? Identifying the different people and groups you want to reach with your message is the first step. The types of messages and the way you deliver them will vary depending on who you want to reach. Consider local, national, and international actors including NGOs, constituents, policymakers, religious leaders, donors, opinion leaders, journalists, the private sector, the general public, UN agencies, and multilateral organizations.
- **What do they already know about the issue? How much information do they have?** If this is the first time they're hearing about your policy issue, this may be a great opportunity to introduce the topic when you deliver your message. You want to be sure that your message is in accessible language that people can understand. If your audience is very familiar with your policy issue, then you won't need to spend a lot of time describing the context/background and will want to focus your messaging on what has prevented them from taking action.
- **Do they already have a demonstrated opinion? Does their history/background suggest a bias or position on this issue?** If possible, it's helpful to identify whether your audience is going to be an ally or an opponent prior to delivering your message. This will help you to prepare your examples, arguments, and counterarguments appropriately. If your target audience is an ally or has done something to support your cause, you also want to make sure to thank them for their work/support. An important part of messaging is building rapport and making your target audience feel valued and appreciated.

- **What will compel them to take action?** Individuals are often motivated by personal gain, whether it's opportunities for advancement or building a positive reputation. Some may be compelled to act on what they believe is just and right or what will further the mission of their organization or institution, while others may be motivated by more specific factors like profit or national security. Priorities are most often shaped by a delicate mix of many, diverse factors and different audiences will have different priorities.
 - People hear how they speak – meaning you should craft your message in a way that will resonate to them and meet them where they are. For example, if you're meeting with a religious leader, referencing UN Security Council Resolutions may not be the most convincing; you may instead want to focus on relevant religious teachings that support your stance. It is your job, as an advocate, to determine what will be most compelling for your particular audience.
 - **What is the best way to communicate with them?** The choice of format for your message is very important. What is the best possible way to reach the target audience? What is possible in terms of the access you have? Options can include direct meetings, rallies, community forums, op-eds, interviews, etc.
-

Instructions

Divide participants into small groups (3-4 persons per group, preferable if members of each group work/will work together after the workshop) and distribute the [Choose Your Audience](#) handout (see annex). Explain that they will have 15 minutes to complete the worksheet for 2 target audiences. Using a presentation slide, walk through one of the examples below to help explain the worksheet

Debrief

Facilitator Instructions

- Ask each group to share one of the audiences they chose and what ideas they had for messaging.

EXAMPLE: Policy issue: Women’s exclusion from peace and security institutions, particularly the national police

Audience <i>Name and Institution</i>	Ability to influence our policy issue <i>Why do we want to advocate to this individual? What change can they make?</i>	Existing knowledge of our policy issue <i>What do they know? How much information do they have?</i>	Stance on our policy issue <i>Are they an ally or an opponent? What is their position? If they are an ally, what have they done to support your cause?</i>	Motivation to take action <i>What are their personal interests? What are the objectives of their job? What will motivate them to take action?</i>	Ideas for messaging <i>What types of arguments may convince them to take action?</i>	Format <i>What might be the best way to reach them?</i>
John Smith, National Commissioner of the Police Service	Sets national policies relating to the recruitment and retention of police officers Could set up a commission to assess whether each police department has adequate numbers of women police officers	Aware that women are underrepresented in the police force	Says he is an ally, but has not taken any actions in favor of inclusion	Primary responsibilities: A functioning police force and national to local security Public figure, wants to look good Facing problem of increasing sexual violence across the country	“Why Women” arguments for how women’s inclusion can help improve security – more women officers will make him look good at his job to the community and to donors How more women police officers can help mitigate sexual violence at the community level	Access him at public meetings Seek direct, in person meeting
Terry Jones, Mayor	City X is a major city, so Jones could influence other mayors and national level policymakers by speaking from his experience of greater women’s inclusion in the police force	City X launched a police recruitment and training campaign specifically targeted at women. Higher rates of women police officers have corresponded with declining crime rates	Ally – regularly cites that women’s recruitment has led to less crime	Elections coming up next year Potential interest in running for higher office (governor or President) Better relations with communities could attract voters	How more publicity around women’s inclusion could strengthen his re-election campaign How he could help shape local security priorities across the country	Seek direct, in person meeting with his staff
Members of communities most affected by violence in City X	Put pressure on policymakers; Convince others to join the movement.	There are high levels of mistrust between these communities and police generally. People have begun to see more women police in communities and there is some awareness about the link between declining crime rates and more women police officers	Some community leaders are allies but there is a lack of awareness in the community generally	They are most affected by the violence so investment in this initiative working is high	Emphasize the difference women police officers make with local examples	Op-ed in widely read newspaper, radio interview on well-regarded station known to be regularly accessed by communities



Activity 8.3 What Makes a Strong Message?

Background for Facilitator

This section introduces participants to some basic messaging concepts that will apply to all audiences. It also gives participants with an opportunity to practice brainstorming and delivering messages under time constraints for specific audiences.

This activity builds on Activity 8.2: Choose Your Audience so make sure participants have filled out the Choose Your Audience handout. It may be helpful to remind participants how the problem and solution relate to 'policy issue' and 'advocacy objective' from Module 4: Develop Recommendations (see Instructions below for guidance).

Depending on the level of experience of participants and the context, you can include the following parameters which will help participants get even more specific about the problem and the solution as it relates to promoting women's inclusion in peace and security decision making:

- When describing the problem (i.e., policy issue), your message should include:
 - Why the peace process is needed and what need it addresses. For instance, there needs to be an end to the conflict; a military solution is not working and we need a political solution.
 - Why an exclusive peace process is a problem (i.e., the leaves of the problem tree).
[Facilitator note: See problem tree activity in Module 2: Analyze Problems.]
- When describing the solution (i.e., advocacy objective), your message should include:
 - A pitch for inclusion: How will inclusion of women and civil society make the peace process successful and sustainable?

Materials Needed

Flipchart; markers; Problem, Solution, Action handout; presentation slides

Learning Objectives

Participants are able to identify key components for crafting a strong message and practice messaging for a specific audience under time constraint.

Time 30 minutes

Facilitator Talking Points

- A strong advocacy message captures the core of what you are trying to say. It is how you choose to frame an issue. When I say "frame" think of a picture frame of a certain size and shape. You want to influence how people see a certain issue, which can be done by sharing certain kinds of information that will shape their perspective on that issue.
- You will use what you know about the policy issue, what you know about your audience, and your own personal experience to create an advocacy message.
- General guidance on crafting an effective message that applies to all audiences includes:
 - **Be clear and concise:** You should be able to clearly describe, in simple language, the issue at hand and how it can be addressed. Be sure to avoid any jargon (even the terms "civil society" or "UN SCR 1325" will not be known to all audiences) and make it accessible to people who are not familiar with the policy issue.

- **Tailor your message:** Determine what will motivate your target audience(s) to take action. If personal anecdotes will be most compelling, use your knowledge and network to identify the right examples. If facts and figures will be most compelling, use your research and knowledge to identify the most compelling facts, and also examples that can help bring those statistics to life.
- **Convey urgency:** Your message should convince the target audience that your policy issue is important and requires a timely response. *[Facilitator note: Refer to the problem tree activity in Module 2: Analyze Problems. The leaves of the tree (the effects) are what happens when women are excluded; use these effects to craft a strong message (i.e., if we don't take action, X, Y, and Z will happen).]*
- **Add a human element:** Anecdotes can be very powerful tools for conveying your message. Consider what images or stories might help illustrate the problem you seek to address. Whether you are telling your own story or sharing stories of others affected by the problem you are trying to address, you need to know which stories/examples most clearly support and drive home your message. *[Facilitator note: See Activity 8.4: Telling a Compelling Story.]*
- **Use the “problem, solution, action” framework:** “Problem, solution, action” is a great way to think about structuring your message. Remember the 20/80 rule – 20% of the time on problems, 80% on solutions and actions. Most advocates make the mistake of doing the reverse. The problem is critically important, but if we don't offer new solutions to all the problems we identify, then we won't get anywhere.
 - **Problem:** What is the main issue you are trying to address? Look back at your problem analysis, remember what you identified as the effects of the problem. Use these to convey urgency. Your description of the problem needs to be illustrative. *[Facilitator note: See Module 2: Analyze Problems.]*
 - **Solution:** Introduce your proposed solutions – these are the advocacy objectives you identified. *[Facilitator note: See Module 4: Develop Recommendations.]*
 - **Action:** This is where you describe how the audience can help you reach your objectives. Give specific, targeted asks – what can this specific audience do to help achieve your advocacy objective? *[Facilitator note: See Module 4: Develop Recommendations.]*
 - The problem, solution, action framework is not a strict formula. Depending on the context and audience, sometimes there will not be a specific action. Don't let this limit you, just think of it as general guidance.

Instructions

Give participants 10 minutes to individually brainstorm the following components of their message, using the [Problem, Solution, Action](#) handout (see annex) for one of the audiences they identified earlier.

It may be helpful to refer back to Module 2: Analyze Problems and Module 4: Develop Recommendations. For the **problem**, refer to the roots of the problem tree in Module 2. For the **solution**, consider the advocacy objectives (the 'what') the participants developed in Module 4. For the **action**, refer to the specific recommendations they developed (the 'how') in Module 4. Messaging is not about reading recommendations verbatim, but recommendations can help to provide the framework and foundation of messaging.

In pairs, have them practice answering each question (one minute per question). Remind them to stick to the time limit. If there is enough time, ask them to practice each one a few times and give each other feedback.

Debrief

Discussion Questions

- How did this activity go? Did you find it difficult under these time constraints?



Activity 8.4 Telling a Compelling Story

Background for Facilitator

In Part One of this activity, participants will watch videos that will get them thinking about how to choose stories to illustrate their advocacy points.

There are two options for videos. If you are looking to emphasize **brevity** to prepare participants for situations in which they will have limited time (e.g., in a media interview or meeting with a policymaker), choose the Video Option 1. If you are looking to emphasize the **details of storytelling** to prepare participants for situations in which they will have more time to go into detail like a speech or a TED talk, choose Video Option 2.

Part Two of the activity has participants return to their messaging practice from Activity 8.3: What Makes a Strong Message? and consider how to use stories to illustrate their problem, solution, and/or action to a specific audience. Part Two uses the same Problem, Solution, Action handout as Activity 8.3.

Materials Needed

Telling a Compelling Story handout; Problem, Solution, Action handout; presentation slides

Learning Objectives

Participants are able to reflect on what makes a compelling story and practice telling a story to support their problem/solution messages

Time 60-90 minutes

Facilitator Talking Points

- We are all storytellers. People all over the world tell stories. We tell stories to teach our children about the world. Our religious texts are full of stories.
- Think for a moment about a person in your life who is a great storyteller. Reflect on what makes them good at storytelling. What are the components of a good story?
- Stories can be a powerful tool to convey to people why they need to take action on your policy issue because...
 - Stories **breathe life** into the problem you are trying to illustrate and the solution you seek by adding a human element.
 - Stories can evoke a **sense of empathy and understanding**. You are trying to get your audience to care. When we empathize with a character in a story, we experience the story with them. We can relate to the emotions that are described. We not only hear about a person's courage, fear or accomplishment, but we are inspired and moved by it because we have felt those emotions ourselves.
 - Stories can be used to **illustrate a problem and/or solution** you're trying to describe. For example, if the problem you've identified is that there aren't enough women police officers, you might tell a story that describes a violent act that could have been prevented if there were more women police officers. You could then describe a similar violent act that was prevented by women police officers to illustrate the solution.

- Elements of a good story:
 - **Short and concise:** It is challenging to incorporate stories into messages that need to be concise, like when you're in a meeting with a policymaker or an interview with a journalist. Sometimes you may only have a few sentences to convey your story. Concise storytelling can require a lot of practice and coaching.
 - **Memorable:** You want your story to stick in your audience's minds. What story is most emblematic of the problem or solution?
 - **Creates a sense of urgency:** You want to illustrate to people why it is important for them to act now, not next month.
 - **Inspires hope:** It can't be all doom and gloom. Stories can be great for helping people envision the change that is possible. You can use stories to show the difference your solution can make.
 - **Includes carefully chosen details:** You want to include enough detail to make the story feel real, but not so much that the audience gets lost or bored. Choosing the right details can be the difference between **telling** a story and **telling about a story**.
- Stories can be about your experiences or the experiences of others (like your constituents, for example). There are some cases in which it will be important to give your audience a sense of who you are and why you have credibility on a subject.

Instructions – Part 1 (Videos)

Video Option 1: Keeping Stories Brief (30 minutes)

Choose which videos you want to show (each is about 2-4 minutes long):

- Fatuma Adan (“Fingers on the Pulse”)
- Wazhma Frogh (“Imagine if the minister had listened to us”)
- Esther Ibanga (“Bridging ethnic, religious and political divides”)

Distribute the [Telling a Compelling Story](#) handout (see annex) and ask participants to complete the handout as they watch the videos.

After each video, invite responses to the questions on the handout.

Video Option 2: Stories with More Time

The video for this section is a TED Talk by Zainab Salbi, founder of Women for Women International, called “Women, Wartime and the Dream of Peace”: www.ted.com/talks/zainab_salbi?language=en Zainab tells powerful stories of women who keep everyday life going during conflicts and calls for women to have a place at the negotiating table once fighting is over. You can choose to cut off this video at 12:26 and still illustrate the same points, or watch the whole video if time allows (17:39).

When introducing the video, distribute the [Telling a Compelling Story](#) handout (see annex) and ask participants to complete the handout as they watch the video.

After each video, invite responses to the questions on the handout.

Instructions – Part 2 (Practice)

Refer to the Problem, Solution, Action handout (see annex) and explain to participants that they will choose a story to strengthen their message from the previous activity and practice in pairs.

Give participants 10 minutes to develop their story and then divide into pairs. Each participant should share their message (3 minutes each) and discuss feedback. Remind participants to consider:

1. What story did your colleague tell? What imagery and/or memorable lines did she use?
2. Why do you think the speaker chose this story to tell?
3. Did the story make you want to take action to help their cause? Why?
4. How could this story be improved?

If time allows, you can give participants an opportunity to revise their stories and practice a second time with new partners.

Debrief

Discussion Questions

- Were you able to find a story that fit your problem and solution? Was it easy or difficult to come up with a compelling story?
- How did it go with the time constraints?
- What other considerations came up when you were choosing and then shortening your story?

Answer Key

Telling a Compelling Story

Fatuma Adan (“Fingers on the Pulse”)

What story did she tell? What imagery and/or memorable lines did she use?

- Fatuma tells the story of the build up to a massacre at a school in Marsabit, Kenya. Women, particularly those married across ethnic lines, were the only ones who noticed the tensions building up, for example, people would go to weddings and funerals separately and would only buy goods in the market from people of their same ethnic group.
- Memorable imagery and lines:
 - “Politicians were so polarized they were not talking to each other. They just said we need more guns; we need more bullets.”
 - “I went with the other women to the government and asked what is going on? Why don’t you stop this madness?”
 - “The politicians had gone to a peace meeting in the next district and our houses were already burning. No one saw the fire other than the women.”

What were the problem and solution?

- **Problem:** People in power did not see the early warning signs of conflict, even when they were warned about it. They did not heed the women’s warnings.
- **Solution:** Women see early warning signs of conflict and are an untapped resource. If the people in power in Marsabit had listened to women, there would be less violence and less death.

Why do you think the speaker chose this story to tell?

- This story clearly illustrates the important role women can play in seeing early signs of conflict based on their positions in communities. Women can play an essential role in preventing conflict.

How did the story make you feel? Did the story make you want to take action to help their cause? Why?

- The story makes you feel a sense of frustration and sadness. The fact that the members of the government were at a peace meeting when conflict erupted shows how out of touch they were.
- She creates a sense of urgency and inspires the viewer to ask what you can do to help.

Answer Key

Telling a Compelling Story

Wazhma Frogh (“Imagine if the minister had listened to us”)

What story did she tell? What imagery and/or memorable lines did she use?

- Wazhma tells the story of a group of women in Afghanistan who came to her asking for help when they noticed strange things happening in their community like strange women who said they were the wives of Uzbek businessmen attending wedding parties asking other women about their sons. She took the group of women to meet with a minister and he dismissed what they said and a month later there was an abduction on a public bus by the militant group the women had spoken to the minister about.
- Memorable imagery and lines:
 - “The meeting was twelve women and one man. I am sure he must have felt what it was like to be a minor in this group.”
 - “The minister has a notebook but is not taking a single note. The minister laughed at us... When we said we saw female combatants with AK 47s be said, oh they must have been watering cans.”
 - “Within one month, there was a huge abduction from a public bus. Imagine if the minister had listened to us.”

What were the problem and solution?

- **Problem:** Foreign fighters were infiltrating communities in Afghanistan and planning attacks. Even though women saw suspicious activities going on in their communities, no one listened.
- **Solution:** If the minister had listened to the women, he could have investigated the suspicious activity and prevented an extremist attack from occurring.

Why do you think the speaker chose this story to tell?

- The story illustrates the importance of listening to women’s perspectives and the degree to which women have their finger on the pulse of what is happening in communities. It clearly illustrates the consequences of dismissing women’s perspectives

How did the story make you feel? Did the story make you want to take action to help their cause? Why?

- The story makes you feel frustrated that the minister ignored the women’s warnings.
- She creates a sense of urgency and inspires the viewer to ask what you can do to help.

Answer Key

Telling a Compelling Story

Esther Ibanga (“Bridging ethnic, religious and political divides”)

What story did she tell? What imagery and/or memorable lines did she use?

- Esther tells the story of the Christian and Muslim communities becoming polarized and resulting escalation of violence in the city of Jos, Nigeria. When the nature of the war changed and women and children were targeted, as a Christian pastor, she led a march protesting the killing of 530 women. Muslim women in the community did the same but the killings didn't stop. At that time, it was very dangerous for Muslims and Christians to go into the others' communities. Despite the risk, she reached out to the women who led the rallies in the Muslim community and they met at a restaurant. They realized they had many things in common and started an organization that worked across religious lines to reduce violence in Jos.
- Memorable imagery and lines:
 - “We need to take a common stand as mothers and as women.”
 - “We met in a restaurant. I said to her, I heard that you hate Christians and you want to fight us. She busted out laughing and that broke the ice.”
 - “We sat down and talked and we had more things in common than what divided us.”
 - “I listed the problems the women named; Thirty-eight problems in our communities. We decided to be solution givers, and that formed our work plan and that is how we began to work together.”

What were the problem and solution?

- **Problem:** Escalating violence along religious lines in Jos, Nigeria.
- **Solution:** One step to the solution she outlines is coming together across religious lines to call for peace.

Why do you think the speaker chose this story to tell?

- The image of the two leaders meeting at a restaurant and bursting out laughing when they realize the misconceptions they have of each other is very powerful. It was a great risk for both of them to take, and the story helps us understand the courage involved in taking that initial step and then what it took to work together.

How did the story make you feel? Did the story make you want to take action to help their cause? Why?

- The story makes you feel how high the stakes were for Esther and her Muslim counterpart to meet and then organize together. It also makes you feel hopeful because they organized so effectively to address a problem they saw.
- The story illustrates the ability of women to reach across divides and instills the listener with a sense of their courage, ingenuity, and leadership.

Answer Key

Telling a Compelling Story

TED Talk by Zainab Salbi (“Women, Wartime and the Dream of Peace”)

What story did she tell? What imagery and/or memorable lines did she use?

- There are many examples, full of colors, smells, and specific details that help us put ourselves in her and other women’s shoes, including:
 - “I looked out the window, and I saw a full half circle of explosion. I thought it was just like the movies but full of bright red and orange and grey.”
 - “I prayed and thanked god that that missile did not land on my family’s home. Thirty years have passed and I still feel guilty about that prayer for the next day that missile landed on my brother’s friend’s home and killed his friend and father but not his mother or sisters. The next day the mother came to the school and asked seven year olds if anyone had any pictures of her son because she had lost everything.”
 - “This is not the story of nameless conflict affected people- we do not know their hopes, dreams, values – this is my story, I was that girl. I am that refugee I am that girl.”
 - “I grew up with the colors of war – the red colors of fire and blood and brown tones of earth as it explodes in our faces and piercing silver of a missile so bright that nothing can protect your eyes from it. I grew up with the sounds of war – the staccato sounds of gunfire, the booms of explosions, drones and jets flying overhead and wailing warning signs of sirens. These are also the sounds of birds, screaming in night, the honest cries of children, and the thunderous sound of silence. War is about the silence. The silence of humanity
 - “Do you know people fall in love in war? And go to school? And factories and hospitals and go playing and get married... And the ones who are keeping that life are women.”

What were the problem and solution?

Problem

- We talk about conflict with a language of sterility which creates a dangerous distance (likening it to a chess game she says “How casually we treat casualties”). Individuals becomes statistics.
- Actually there is another side of war that people do not usually consider which is the human element, stories of extraordinary resilience and survival under imaginable circumstances.
- Zainab makes conflict deeply personal, evokes her own experiences and those of women from all over the world who have lived through and are living through war (Sumayya from Bosnia, Nihaya from Gaza, Violet from Rwanda).

Solution: We need to take into account the other side of war. She challenges the viewer to look beyond statistics and faceless descriptions of war and look at the resilience of individuals and communities as well as examining where the social fabric is most torn.

Why do you think the speaker chose this story to tell?

- Zainab tells both her own and other women’s stories to illustrate the other side of war. She chooses them because they are personal, relatable, and show the resilience of women and communities during violent conflict.

How did the story make you feel? Did the story make you want to take action to help their cause? Why?

- Challenged, angry, interested in accountability, empathetic, etc.



Activity 8.5 Making the Case for “Why Women”

Background for Facilitator

This activity will give participants an opportunity to think critically about “why women” arguments, specifically arguments (or counterarguments) that can be useful in a discussion with critics or skeptics of women’s inclusion.

There are many ways to incorporate this activity into trainings, but it should always come after the “why women” exercise and presentation with video clips in Module 1: Introduction to Advocacy. One of the main purposes of this exercise is to give participants a broad set of arguments, grounded in evidence, that can be customized based on their target audience and to utilize arguments that go beyond “because women are fifty percent of the population” and “because women are wives and mothers,” etc.

Depending on the participants’ level of experience, it might be necessary to brainstorm some examples in the plenary before moving into small groups. Evidence for why women’s inclusion matters is highly contextual, so, where appropriate, encourage participants to brainstorm context specific arguments/ counterarguments that are not included here.

An accompanying resource for this activity is: Marie O’Reilly, *Why Women? Inclusive Security and Peaceful Societies*. Washington: Inclusive Security, October 2015.

Materials Needed

[Making the Case for Why Women](#) handout; [Why Women Arguments](#) handout

Learning Objectives

Participants are able to craft strong arguments about why women’s inclusion matters using examples and anticipate and respond to a range of possible responses.

Time 45 minutes

Facilitator Talking Points

- An important component of messaging is providing evidence for your arguments. After conducting research and collecting data, you should have a range of evidence that supports why women’s inclusion is important and what benefits women’s inclusion will bring. In this activity, we’ll explore some general “why women” arguments; hopefully these will help jump start your thinking about what type of context-specific “why women” arguments might be compelling to your advocacy targets.
- Developing counterarguments can also be a useful messaging tool when you advocate to opponents or individuals who may be skeptical or uninformed of the benefits of women’s inclusion. Being able to anticipate these responses and reflecting on your counterarguments is essential practice for any advocate.
- Depending on the context and who you are talking to, there will be different arguments for why women’s inclusion in peace and security should/should not be a priority. In many places, women’s inclusion in formal processes is a new and threatening idea. Though we can’t generalize, there are some arguments against women’s inclusion that we see regularly, such as: [*Facilitator note: These are also listed on the [Making the Case for “Why Women”](#) handout.*]
 - Women cannot play a role in peace and security because their primary role is in the home. They don’t have an understanding of political realities or the realities of war. It is only elite women that say women must have a role.

- Because women are not fighters and do not play a role in armed groups, they have no role in ending the wars that men start.
 - There are no qualified or capable women who have an interest in participating in decision making on peace and security.
 - To achieve peace we only need to convince the men to stop fighting. We will do this by offering political incentives and power sharing relationships. Women have nothing to do with that.
 - Do any of these statements sound familiar? What are some other arguments like this that you've heard?
-

Instructions

Divide participants into small groups (3-4 persons per group) and distribute [Making the Case for "Why Women"](#) handout (see annex).

Each group will develop counterarguments to the statements listed on the handout. Encourage the groups to provide specific examples that illustrate their arguments.

Debrief

Facilitator Instructions

- Go through each of the statements on the handout and ask for volunteer(s) to share their counterarguments. This is an opportunity to give participants gentle feedback about how to strengthen their responses. If the group has experience giving feedback, you can also invite participants to give suggestions about how to strengthen arguments.
- As a facilitator, be sure to come back to the main points about the evidence base for inclusion and emphasize that this kind of data is often going to be the most compelling to the people you are trying to reach with your advocacy. These points are also included in the ["Why Women" Arguments](#) handout (see annex). Consider highlighting that the points in the handout are drawn from Inclusive Security's research and data collection.
- The ["Why Women" Arguments](#) handout below includes additional facilitator talking points.

Answer Key

Making the Case for “Why Women”

Instructions: Read and discuss the statement assigned to your group. In your group, discuss how you would respond to the assigned statement. Write a response that everyone in your group agrees on. Consider using a story or specific example to help strengthen your response.

Statements/Answers

Group 1: Women cannot play a role in peace and security because their primary role is in the home. They don't have an understanding of political realities or the realities of war. It is only elite women that say women must have a role.

- Peace and security often begins at home and in the community. As mothers, wives, and community leaders, women can offer unique insights into their families and communities are affected by the armed conflict.
- Women often experience war in different ways than men and can bring different yet important perspectives into the process.
- [Insert participants own knowledge, constituency, access etc. that makes them a valuable resource]

Group 2: Because women are not fighters and do not play a role in armed groups, they have no role in ending the wars that men start.

- Often, women do take up arms and/or support armed groups. These figures are often underestimated.
- Women often play a role in armed conflict, whether it's on the front lines or providing support to armed groups. While women are less likely to take up arms, they also die in higher numbers from war's indirect effects—the breakdown in social order, human rights abuses, the spread of infectious diseases, and economic devastation. As active participants and those affected by armed conflict, women too deserve to have their interests represented.
- [Insert participants' own knowledge, constituency, access etc. that makes them a valuable resource]

Group 3: There are no qualified or capable women who have an interest in participating in decision making on peace and security.

- We are women capable of participating in decision making on peace and security – we are here to offer our knowledge!
- [You can also re-define what it means to be ‘qualified’ or ‘capable’] Although women may be less likely than men to have direct experience as decision makers, they have insights and experiences that will bring nuance to decision making on peace and security.
- [Insert participants own knowledge, constituency, access etc. that makes them a valuable resource]

Group 4: To achieve peace we only need to convince the men to stop fighting. We will do this by offering political incentives and power sharing relationships. Women have nothing to do with that.

- Women are often perceived by belligerents as honest brokers in peace processes. Conflict parties may see women as less threatening because they are typically acting outside of formal power structures and are not commonly assumed to be mobilizing fighting forces. This grants women access to conflict parties often denied to male leaders.
- Beyond their roles as intermediaries, women are adept at building coalitions in their push for peace. They frequently mobilize diverse groups in society, working across ethnic, religious, political, and cultural divides. Women also bridge the vertical divide between elites and the grassroots, which may increase the chances that peace will last by promoting buy-in and generating legitimacy.
- Women frequently expand the issues under consideration—taking talks beyond military action, power, and territory to consider social and humanitarian needs that belligerents fail to prioritize. When women are included, they frequently advocate for other excluded groups and address development and human rights issues related to the underlying causes of the conflict. Both of these approaches help societies to reconcile and ultimately build a more robust peace.
- [Insert participants own knowledge, constituency, access etc. that makes them a valuable resource]

“Why Women” Arguments

Leadership & Approaches

1. **Women bridge ethnic, religious, and political divides.** Social science research indicates that women are generally more collaborative than men and thus more inclined toward consensus and compromise. They make connections between warring groups to build trust, bring parties to the table, and develop shared steps toward peace. Women also make connections vertically between grassroots and elites.
 - After more than 30 years of brutal civil war, Sudan (and now South Sudan) negotiated peace. To stabilize the country, they appointed a parliament that included 25% women. Those women created the assembly’s only cross-party caucus. For years, the women’s caucus was the only place representatives from different, formerly warring parties, came together to find common ground.¹
 - In the Philippines, women in the high-level peace talks led extensive national consultations across 13 regions, ensuring that participants represented a cross-section of religious, indigenous, youth, and other groups. They raised awareness among the public about the peace process, and fed public opinion back to the negotiators.²
2. **Women have alternative leadership styles.** Women can change the dynamics of interactions between parties, away from zero-sum thinking and toward consensus and collaboration. In social science experiments, women are more likely than men to seek outcomes that benefit all participants in policy negotiations—taking a cooperative rather than competitive approach.³
 - In American politics, female legislators report spending more time building coalitions across party lines than their male counterparts.⁴
 - In negotiations between the Government of Uganda and Lord’s Resistance Army in 2008, the US observer to the talks commented that female participants “greased the wheels of the negotiations” through their communication across parties.⁵
 - Negotiators in Northern Ireland, South Africa, and Somalia report that, even when female participants in peace processes initially met with hostility from their male counterparts, they ultimately developed a reputation for building trust, engaging all sides, and fostering dialogue in otherwise acrimonious settings.⁶

1 Inclusive Security has supported the Sudanese National Assembly Women’s Caucus since 2008.

2 Marie O’Reilly, Andrea Ó Súilleabháin, and Thania Paffenholz, *Reimagining Peacemaking: Women’s Roles in Peace Processes* (New York: International Peace Institute, 2015).

3 Carole Kennedy “Gender Differences in Committee Decision-Making: Process and Outputs in an Experimental Setting,” *Women and Politics* 25, no. 3(2003), 27–45.

4 John M. Carey, Richard G. Niemi, and Lynda W. Powell, “Are Women State Legislators Different?” in *Women and Elective Office: Past, Present, and Future*, eds. Susan Thomas and Clyde Wilcox (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 87–102.

5 Carla Koppell, *Supporting women in negotiations: A model for elevating their voices and reflecting their agenda in peace deals* (Washington DC: Hunt Alternatives Fund, October 2009), 2.

6 Sanam Naraghi Anderlini, *WDR Gender Background Paper* (Washington, DC: World Bank, 2011).

3. **Women help groups make better decisions.** Research shows that groups that include diverse races, ethnicities, genders, and sexual orientation are more innovative than homogenous groups. Members of diverse groups are more likely to “scrutinize facts, think more deeply and develop their own opinions.”⁷ Studies have also demonstrated that heterogeneous groups are more effective at problem-solving, partially because introduction of diverse perspectives helps counter groupthink.⁸ In negotiations or other decision-making processes related to peace and security, these skills are crucial.

Access & Insights

4. **Women are an untapped resource.** Women are often at the center of nongovernmental organizations, popular protests, and social movements. Because women frequently outnumber men after conflict, they often drive the on-the-ground implementation of negotiated agreements, making them an integral part of any peace process.
 - Women were among the first to take to the streets when the Syrian revolution began. In the years since a bloody government crackdown grew into all-out civil war, women have been at the forefront of nonviolent activities to end the conflict, negotiate between warring groups, provide aid, and foster democracy. Despite this, women have struggled to obtain meaningful inclusion in the ongoing international peace talks.
5. **Women have access because they’re viewed as less threatening.** Because there are some realms (physical, cultural, etc.) where men are prohibited, women can quite literally go places and say things that men cannot.
 - In Somalia, where tribal disputes are rampant, men traditionally can’t approach their enemies to settle disputes without “losing face.” However, because most women are not involved in the fighting and aren’t considered dangerous, they’re able to shuttle back-and-forth between clans, mediating the conflict between them.⁹
6. **Women have their fingers on the pulse. [Alternative phrasing: Women know where solutions live.]** Living and working close to the roots of conflict, women are well positioned to provide essential insights about activities leading up to armed conflict and to record events during war. They can thus play a critical role in mobilizing communities to reconcile and rebuild once hostilities end.
 - In 2004, women in northern Kenya—especially those who were married across tribes—noticed that tension was building up. Male community leaders who could have stopped the violence were themselves polarized, arming individuals from their own ethnic groups. A group of women mobilized and pressed the government to step in and prevent tensions from escalating further. But they were dismissed, and a few months later, hundreds of schoolchildren and their parents were massacred and 6,000 people fled their homes amid a cycle of revenge killings.

7 Sheen S. Levine and David Stark, “Diversity Makes You Brighter,” *The New York Times*, December 9, 2015, www.nytimes.com/2015/12/09/opinion/diversity-makes-you-brighter.html?_r=2&mtrref=undefined&gwh=D9CCFE6E6DD3F4F7045B-38186DAEE059&gwt=pay&assetType=opinion

8 L.R. Hoffman and N.R.F. Maier, “Quality and acceptance of problem solutions by members of homogenous and heterogeneous groups,” *The Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology* 62, no. 2 (March 1961), 401-407.

9 Antonia Potter, *Gender sensitivity: nicety or necessity in peace-process management?* (Geneva: Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue, 2008), 62.

7. **Women draw from different experiences.** In many societies, women fulfill different roles and responsibilities than men. Depending on context, this may include cooking, caring for children, gathering water and firewood, and buying and selling goods at local markets. As a result, women see and experience things that men do not. When resolving conflict, their unique knowledge is a crucial ingredient to crafting effective solutions.
 - At peace talks to end the war in Darfur, rebel groups were represented by men who had been living for years in exile in Europe. Mobina Jaffer, a Canadian Senator involved in the peace process, urged the UN to bring to the talks women who were living in the war zone. Before the women came, the men had reached an impasse. They were arguing over who had the rights to a certain water source. The women took one look at the map and said “What are you talking about? That river dried up a long time ago. There’s no river there.”¹⁰ These women had a different perspective than the men both because they had remained in the country, and because women are traditionally responsible for collecting water for their households.
8. **Women recognize early warning signals.** The treatment of women—whether through proliferation of unequal laws or an uptick in domestic violence—is often an indicator of rising tensions in the broader community/country. Women are often the first to know when groups are arming or when their young male family members are being targeted for recruitment.
 - In southern Afghanistan, women noticed an influx of suspicious individuals in their community who claimed to be Uzbek businessmen and took great interest in the young men of the village. The women suspected the group was, in fact, targeting boys for recruitment into terrorist forces. They presented their concerns to a government official, who laughed them out of his office. A month later, the new recruits abducted 32 passengers from a public bus and killed them all.
9. **Women wield influence over their communities and families, including the choice to be violent or peaceful.** Women have untapped power and authority. Though not often seen as “leaders” in the traditional, masculine sense, thousands all over the world have formal and informal leadership roles in their families, communities, and countries. This power can be channeled for good or ill.
10. **Women are highly invested personally to stop conflict. Women are motivated to protect their children and ensure security for their families.** They watch as their sons and husbands are taken as combatants or prisoners of war; when rape is used as a tactic of war to humiliate the enemy and terrorize the population, they become targets themselves. Despite, or perhaps because of this, women generally refuse to give up the pursuit of peace.
 - In 2008, Kenya erupted into ethnic violence following contested elections. In the Kibera slum outside Nairobi, a group of women united after the murder of a 15-year-old girl. They marched through the streets chanting for the fighting to end; when they saw men they knew, they pulled them away and told them to go home. In the 2013 elections, they utilized the same tactic: they patrolled the streets in pairs and, if they saw a man demonstrating, they called his wife, aunt, mother, girlfriend, or daughter.¹¹

10 Mobina Jaffer, “Mobina Jaffer (Canada) – Women and Peace Negotiations in Darfur,” YouTube video, 3:15, posted by Inclusive Security, November 17, 2010, www.youtube.com/watch?v=755YwYpzEmU.

11 Alice Nderitu and Jacqueline O’Neill, *Getting to the Point of Inclusion: Seven Myths Standing in the Way of Women Waging Peace* (Washington DC: Inclusive Security, June 2013).

11. **Women often have the most to lose from the rise of extremism.** Women's rights are often the first to be repressed under extremist regimes. For instance, in territories under its control, ISIS restricts women's movement, dress, and behavior—and severely punishes transgressors. Women are therefore uniquely placed to understand the consequences of rising extremism and are often the first to stand up against it.
- In 2013, when the Afghan Taliban announced it would sit down for peace talks with the government, many women greeted the news with hesitation. Prominent activists and women's organizations vocally insisted that the gains they had made over the previous decade-plus must be maintained. They demanded serious representation at the negotiation table, in order to ensure that restrictions on women's education, work, and public participation were not reinstated.

Solutions & Impact

12. **Women address root causes of conflict.** Women raise often-ignored political and social issues and ensure that the voices of victims and civilians are consistently heard.¹² Broadening the set of issues so that negotiations are not only about borders and power-sharing, but about long-term reconciliation and pluralism.
- In Northern Ireland, the two delegates from the cross-conflict Northern Ireland Women's Coalition (Monica McWilliams and May Blood) were the only ones to insist that compensation for victims of violence, reintegration of political prisoners, and integrated education for Catholic and Protestant youth were addressed in the final agreement.¹³ These issues were crucial for reconciliation and community healing after 30 years of war.
 - In Darfur, women delegates pushed for previously neglected provisions addressing safety for internally displaced persons and refugees, food security, and gender-based violence.¹⁴
13. **Women broaden societal participation by including marginalized groups.** Because of their own experiences as second-class citizens, women are particularly well-placed and inclined to highlight the needs and perspectives of marginalized groups, especially children and minorities. Since exclusion of different identity groups is a driver of conflict, this broadened participation may help stop the cycle of violence.
- During the political transition in Afghanistan, women in the constitutional assembly advocated for the rights of the disabled and supported the Uzbek minority's efforts to gain official recognition for their language.¹⁵
 - In Guatemala's peace talks, women successfully pushed for equal access to land and credit and legislation to curb sexual harassment. They also created a National Women's Forum and an Office for the Defense of Indigenous Women.¹⁶

12 Michelle Page, Tobie Whitman, and Cecilia Anderson, *Strategies for Policymakers: Bringing Women into Negotiations* (Washington, DC: Inclusive Security, 2009).

13 Ibid.

14 Ibid.

15 Tobie Whitman and Jessica Gomez, *Strategies for Policymakers: Bringing Women into Government* (Washington, DC: Inclusive Security, March 2009).

16 Tsjard Bouda, Georg Frerks, and Ian Bannon, *Gender, Conflict, and Development* (Washington, DC: The World Bank, 2005), 53.

14. **Women tend to secure commitments on women’s rights,¹⁷ which are vitally important to a country’s stability.** Women’s significant participation in the transition from apartheid in South Africa led to the enshrinement of gender equality in the country’s new constitution, as well as a requirement that women comprise 30% of all new civil servants. In turn, protections for women lead to greater stability and security: An analysis of 174 countries found that the best predictor of a state’s peacefulness is not its level of wealth, its level of democracy, or its ethno-religious identity; it’s how well its women are treated. The larger the gender gap, the more likely a state is to be involved in violent conflict.¹⁸
15. **Women’s empowerment makes violence less likely.** Where women are more empowered, countries are less likely to go to war with their neighbors, to be in bad standing with the international community, or to be rife with internal crime and violence.¹⁹ Conversely, 14 of the 17 countries at the *bottom* of the OECD’s gender discrimination index experienced conflict in the last 20 years.²⁰
- With just a 5% increase of women’s representation in parliament, a state is five times less likely to resort to violence when faced with an international crisis.²¹
16. **Women increase operational effectiveness of security forces.** The presence of women within the ranks can build trusting relationships between security forces and the communities they work in by helping make them more responsive to all parts of the community. It also encourages security forces to do their jobs more transparently and with more complete information. Women bring particular skills to police forces—important because research shows police are more effective at combating terrorism than militaries.²²
- Policewomen can access the female half of the population that may be closed off to men in conservative cultures.²³ This access can be particularly useful as female police, border, and military officers can also perform critical duties such as searching women at security checkpoints”
 - Women are more likely to report gender-based violence to female officers²⁴
 - Policewomen are more likely than their male colleagues to de-escalate tensions and less likely to use excessive force.²⁵

17 Ibid.

18 Valerie Hudson, Bonnie Ballif-Spanvil, Mary Caprioli, and Chad F. Emmett, *Sex and World Peace* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2012), 205.

19 Ibid.

20 OECD Development Centre, “Social Institutions & Gender Index,” genderindex.org.

21 Mary Caprioli and Mark A. Boyer, “Gender, Violence, and International Crisis,” *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 45 (August 2001), 503-518.

22 Seth G. Jones and Martin C. Libicki, *How Terrorist Groups End: Implications for Countering al Qa’ida* (Santa Monica: RAND Corporation, 2008), 1.

23 Allison Peters, “Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism in Pakistan: Why Policewomen Must Have a Role,” Washington, DC: Inclusive Security, March 2014.

24 Ibid.

25 Jacqueline O’Neill and Jarad Vary, “Allies and Assets: Strengthening DDR and SSR Through Women’s Inclusion,” in *Monopoly of Force: The Nexus of DDR and SSR*, eds. Melanne A. Civic and Michael Miklaucic (Washington, DC: National Defense University, 2010).

17. **Women strengthen the process of security sector reform.** Involving women in SSR processes can help bring credibility to new systems and oversight mechanisms, as well as improve public perception of security sector institutions. For example, women are often at the forefront of providing services to victims of violence, and can partner with the security sector to deliver more integrated services. They can also highlight issues that are important to their communities, so that SSR processes are more reflective of local needs.
- In South Africa, grassroots women’s organizations were vital in drawing attention to previously-ignored security issues, such as the plight of dispossessed communities whose land had been seized for military use, the environmental impact of military activities, and the sexual harassment of women by military personnel. To respond to these issues, two new subcommittees were formed within the Defense Secretariat. After a two-year process, the participatory defense review had helped build national consensus around defense issues and generated public legitimacy for the new security structures.²⁶
18. **Women counter violent extremism.** Women promote tolerance, educate communities, recognize warning signs of extremist ideologies in their families and communities, and collectively mobilize to de-radicalize individuals where necessary.
- In Pakistan’s most remote and volatile region along the border with Afghanistan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK), residents experience firsthand the effects of increasing extremist violence. In the face of this ideology, Bushra Hyder established a high school that teaches a peace education curriculum of her own design—the first of its kind in Pakistan. This model inculcates tolerance and understanding in the next generation, thereby countering recruitment narratives used by extremist groups.
19. **Women can lend legitimacy to a peace process, which can increase public buy-in for maintaining peace.** Although women are typically between 10 and 30% of fighting forces²⁷ they’re not generally perceived as the face of war. This positions them with unique credibility in the eyes of the public. Not seen as having “blood on their hands” they can pursue an agenda of peace from a neutral position. Additionally, in the post-conflict setting, women can maintain the public’s confidence in new political institutions. Studies show that women in politics are perceived as more trustworthy and less corrupt.
- In the Philippines, public perception of the legitimacy of negotiations improved substantially when women were appointed as four of the five official mediators.²⁸

26 Megan Bastick and Tobie Whitman, *A Women’s Guide to Security Sector Reform* (Washington, DC: Inclusive Security, February 2013).

27 Tsjeard Bouta, *Gender and Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration: Building Blocs for Dutch Policy* (The Hague: Netherlands Institute for International Relations, March 2005), 5.

28 Theresa de Langis, *Across Conflict Lines: Women Mediating for Peace; 12th Annual Colloquium Findings* (Washington, DC: Inclusive Security, March 2011).



Activity 8.6 Messaging to Policymakers

Background for Facilitator

The purpose of this activity is to share best practices for meeting with policymakers.

This role play activity is designed to give participants an opportunity to practice what they've learned thus far. Each group will select a specific policymaker that they would like to target and the facilitator will play the role of that policymaker. Make it challenging, but do not stump the participants – remember, this is a learning exercise!

This can be a difficult activity and emphasizing that can be important to ensure participants have a positive experience. As a facilitator, be sure that you come up with a few points that went well and a few areas of constructive feedback to contribute to the debrief of each group.

Some groups may need to discuss what constitutes good feedback and how it can be constructive. As a facilitator, be mindful that participants may only focus on what went wrong, so you should encourage participants to give constructive as well as positive feedback or facilitate this debrief in a structured way (comments on what went well; comments on what could be improved).

This activity uses the [Problem, Solution, Action](#) handout (see annex). If participants have filled it out for different audiences in previous activities, have them fill it out for a specific policymaker in preparation for the role play. The [Tips for Messaging to Policymakers](#) handout (see annex), reinforces the points in the presentation and can be handed out as participants prepare for the role play in small groups. The [Sample: Written Recommendations](#) handout (see annex) is an example of a document that advocates can leave behind after a meeting to ensure clear follow up.

When preparing to play the role of policymaker:

- If you are familiar with the policymaker that the group has chosen, do your best to respectfully imitate his or her demeanor and how he or she might react to such a message. Stay in character at all times.
- Ideas for making the role play interesting: Take important calls during the meeting; have someone play an assistant who comes and interrupts the meeting; have the meeting cut short by some other more important meeting; say the meeting will be cut short (so that the participants rush through their talking points) and then change your mind and have the meeting extended to its full time.
- Sample policymaker profiles:
 - A policymaker with very little interest in women's inclusion and may say things like "we can worry about women later" or "women aren't necessary in this process because their place is in the home" etc. The participants need to convince her/him to listen to them and that their contributions are valuable.

Materials Needed

[Problem, Solution, Action](#) handout; [Tips for Messaging to Policymakers](#) handout; [Sample: Written Recommendations](#) handout; presentation slides

Learning Objectives

Participants are able to employ strategies for messaging to policymaker and identify challenges and opportunities for messaging to policymakers.

Time 90 minutes

- A policymaker that sounds as though they are very supportive of women’s inclusion, however speaks very enthusiastically about how they are supporting girl’s education, gender based violence prevention programs, etc. The participants need to convince her/ him that women’s participation in peace and security processes is what is most important.
- A policymaker with very little time to meet. She/he is generally supportive of women’s inclusion or at least says that he sees the value of women’s participation. However, this policymaker is not eager to make any specific commitments. The participants need to push her/him for a commitment on something concrete.

Facilitator Talking Points

- Through the course of your advocacy campaign, you will likely meet directly with policymakers to advocate for your cause and deliver your recommendations. Policymakers are busy people with many demands on their time. Therefore, your message needs to be concise, impactful, and memorable. Here are a few considerations for communicating with policymakers and conducting an in-person advocacy meeting.
- **Use your audience assessment to determine your messaging strategy.** Use what you know about the policymaker to tailor your message. Think about what they already know about your policy issue, their ability to influence your policy issue, and what might motivate them to take action. Policymakers are often very busy, so consider your time management carefully. For example, if the policymaker is already familiar with your policy issue, you can spend less time on context/background and jump right into your recommendations. If your target audience is an ally or has done something to support your cause, you also want to make sure to thank them for their work/support. An important part of messaging is building rapport and making your target audience feel valued and appreciated. [*Facilitator note: See Activity 8.2: Choose Your Audience for audience assessment tool.*]
- **Decide who is going to speak.** If you are attending the meeting with colleagues, make sure you determine *ahead of time* who is going to speak. This is helpful to make sure that not everyone is speaking at once. Perhaps one person opens, another person presents the recommendations, and a third person closes; maybe one person is the main presenter and the others are there to help answer questions.
- **Have a strong opening:** Your opening is how you will introduce yourself and establish your legitimacy. Your opening should be a few sentences that explain what or who you’re representing in simple language, free of jargon. It should be memorable and grab the audience’s attention. [*Facilitator note: For additional material, see Activity: Developing a Strong Opening in the More Time section.*]
 - We represent a strong network of women’s organizations from every province in X country who are doing the impossible. We have solutions to the challenge of terrorism in our country. After all every, extremist has a mother and every extremist is someone’s son.
 - I represent a women’s network that has deep roots in my country of X. We have consulted over a thousand women in communities most affected by violence, and we know how to stop violent extremism.

- **Structure your message by problem, solution, action.** Remember the 20/80 rule – 20% of the time on problems, 80% on solutions and actions. Most advocates make the mistake of doing the reverse. The problem is critically important, but remember that if we don't offer policymakers new solutions to all the problems we identify, then we won't get anywhere. The problem and solution are designed to get the policymaker bought in, to make them feel a sense of urgency and realize that the problem must be addressed, before you move to your request for action.
 - **Problem:** Why are you there? Look back at your problem analysis, remember what you identified as the effects of the problem. Use these to convey urgency. Your description of the problem needs to be illustrative.
 - **Solution:** Introduce your proposed solutions – these are the advocacy objectives you identified. The solution is what the policymaker can help you achieve.
 - **Action:** This is where you describe **how** the policymaker can help you reach your objectives. Give specific, targeted asks – what can this specific policymaker do to help achieve your advocacy objective?
- **Include a human element:** Anecdotes can be very powerful tools for conveying your message. Consider what images or stories might help illustrate the problem you seek to address with advocacy. Whether you are telling your own story or sharing stories of others affected by the problem you are trying to address, you need to know which stories/examples most clearly support and drive home your message. *[Facilitator note: See Activity 8.4: Telling a Compelling Story.]*
- **Ask questions.** This can be an opportunity to learn about your target (both the person and the office or institution). Ask about:
 - Their policy and rationale
 - Their capacity support to implement your recommendations
 - What you can offer them as an expert and how civil society can be more supportive of their efforts
 - Feedback on your recommendations – are they realistic, what would strengthen them?
 - Relevant information about the changing nature of the process (e.g., what is preventing parties from signing the agreement, who are the key influencers, etc.)
- **An advocacy meeting with a policymaker can and should be a conversation.** You should ask questions and pause for reactions throughout. Any time the conversation starts to move away from your main points, pivot the conversation back on track. For example:
 - “That is a good question, but one that needs asking is...”
 - “I know there are concerns, but what convinced me is...”
 - “That point is really important, but it is most important to remember that...”
 - “What people really need to know is...”
- **Leave something in writing.** Consider leaving your recommendations, position paper, or a document that conveys the problem, solution, and action, in writing with the policymaker. The policymaker may choose to share it with his/her colleagues, so consider making the recommendations broader than your specific asks in the meeting. *[Facilitator note: See [Sample – Leave Something Behind in Writing](#) handout for an example of what this might look like. Also see [Module 4: Develop Recommendations](#).]*

- **Practice, practice, practice!** There is no substitute for practice so make sure you do plenty of it.
 - Before going into a meeting, you should be able to summarize what you hope to convey (your key message) in three sentences - problem, solution, action.
 - And, remember the advice that applies to all audiences:
 - Your message should be clear and concise.
 - Your message should be targeted and compelling – know your audience!
 - Use examples to illustrate key points.
 - Anticipate responses.
 - Convey urgency.
-

Instructions

- Divide participants into small groups (3-4 persons per group, preferable if members of each group work/will work together after the workshop; it may be easier to divide into small groups randomly and have them create a fictional NGO to represent in the meeting) and distribute Problem, Solution, Action and Tips for Messaging to Policymakers handouts (see annex).
 - Explain that each group should select a specific policymaker and will have 30 minutes to prepare their message for a meeting with this individual. The group should work together to help craft the message.
 - Once groups have completed their preparation, they will deliver their message to the policymaker (played by a facilitator) through a role play with the rest of participants observing the interaction. (5-8 minutes per role play and 5 minutes for feedback and debrief after each)
-

Debrief

Discussion questions

- What went well? What could be improved?
- What was unexpected?
- How was this similar or different to other meetings you've been in?
- What was most difficult about the meeting?
- What would you do differently next time?

[Facilitator note: Make sure to provide concrete feedback to each group on what went well and what could be improved, particularly for groups who work together or will work together after the workshop.]



Activity 8.7 Messaging to the Media

Background for Facilitator

This section introduces specific guidance for messaging to members of the media. The [Tips for Messaging to the Media](#) handout (see annex), reinforces the points in the presentation and can be handed out as participants prepare for the role play in small groups.

In Part One, participants will watch a video and discuss strategies for messaging to the media. Make sure to test the audio/visual before running the activity.

The role play exercise in Part Two is designed to give participants an opportunity to practice what they've learned. You will play the role of a journalist. Make it challenging, but do not stump the participants – remember, this is a learning exercise!

This can be a difficult activity and pointing this out can help participants have a positive experience. As a facilitator, be sure that you come up with a few points that went well and a few areas of constructive feedback to contribute to the debrief of each group.

Some groups may need to discuss what is good feedback, how it can be constructive, etc. As a facilitator, be mindful that participants may only focus on what went wrong, so you should encourage participants to give constructive as well as positive feedback or facilitate this debrief in a structured way (comments on what went well; comments on what could be improved).

Notes for your role in the role play:

- Western journalists are typically not hostile, but some can be rude or impatient. The biggest challenge is typically that they're not well informed. In practice, this might mean that the journalist asks a lot of background and historical questions about the context and the policy issue in general, which could take up precious interview time.
- Ideas for making the role play interesting: Take a call during the meeting which cuts the meeting short; lead the interviewee off topic away from their main messaging points (e.g., to focus on background information); summarize their main point incorrectly (e.g., "what I'm hearing you say is X" when they're really talking about Y); state incorrect (and even possibly offensive) assumptions (e.g., why are Muslims so tied to violence? What does your husband think of what you're doing?); receive a call from your editor on breaking news which pivots the conversation to a new topic (e.g., terrorist attack, announcement made by the US); ask about a current controversial issue that could put them at risk (e.g., comment on recent actions by the government)
- Remember that the purpose of this role play is to encourage and empower the participants! Be wary of throwing too many obstacles into the role play – you want to prepare participants for potential challenges, but you also don't want to make them wary of engaging the media. Focus on making this a positive learning experience.

For additional media practice, you could have participants work in pairs to deliver their problem-solution-action summary in 1 minute. This is good practice for developing concise and punchy talking points.

Materials Needed

Videos; [Tips for Messaging to the Media](#) handout; [Messaging to the Media - Video](#) handout; [Messaging to the Media - Guide](#) handout

Learning Objectives

Participants are able to understand strategies for messaging to members of the media and craft a strong advocacy message for a media interview.

Time 105 minutes

Facilitator Talking Points

- You may choose to reach out to members of the media to further disseminate your message or members of the media may reach out to you for a story they're working on. Keep in mind that cultivating relationships with reporters and editors takes time, so treat this like any relationship cultivation for advocacy – slow and steady.
- Has anyone had experience with engaging the media? What kinds of media do you have experience with? How is this different from engaging with policymakers?
- There are many different kinds of media outlets (e.g., broadcast, digital, print) and you have to adjust your message depending on the type of media you're working with.
- Approaches to engaging the media will vary largely from place to place. In some places, the media might be largely controlled by the government, while in other places there is more freedom for reporting. Carefully consider the environment you are operating in and the reputation of different media outlets as you decide how to approach engaging the media.
- When determining your target audiences and the best format to use to reach them, be sure to understand the kinds of media outlets they might pay attention to and pursue that kind of coverage. For instance, if you are trying to establish your credibility on a certain topic and you know a certain newspaper is widely read and well respected by national level policymakers, you might want to try and place an op-ed on that subject. If you are trying to reach potential supporters in a specific community, getting an interview on a highly-regarded radio show could be strategic.
- There are many different ways to engage with the media in general – through op-eds, press conferences, press releases, websites/blogs, etc. We are going to focus primarily on interviews with journalists, but much of the guidance here can be applied to other mediums as well. Here are a few things to consider in preparation for an interview with a member of the media.
- **Preparation:** Before you give an interview, you want to make sure to prepare your remarks. You may not know the exact questions the reporter is going to ask, but you should know the exact points you want to convey throughout the interview. To effectively craft this message, you will need to know some background information. Questions to ask the reporter directly, prior to agreeing to the interview:
 - What is the interview about? What does the reporter want to know?
 - Who is does the reporter work for? What kind of audience do they work with?
 - What is the reporter's deadline? You want to give yourself time to collect your thoughts, but also respond promptly
- **Crafting your message:** The same general guidance applies to messaging to media, as it does for policymakers:
 - **Your message should be clear and concise.** Develop no more than three key messages. You want to keep your main points manageable and easy to follow. Avoid jargon and policy talk.
 - **Your message should be targeted and compelling** – know your audience. Is your audience the reporter or their readers? What will make them want to take action to support your case?

- **Use a mix of stories and facts to illustrate key points.** For every fact you state, use a story to bring that fact to life. The story should be rooted in your own experiences, something you saw or experienced. Journalists don't have much time or space. Your message has to fit into an 8-10 second sound bite or one line quote.
- **Anticipate responses by preparing sample questions and answers.** You may not know the exact questions the reporter will ask, but you can make some educated guesses to help you prepare.
- **Convey urgency.** Your message should convince the readers that your policy issue is important and deserves their attention. Think of the problem tree you created – the leaves of the tree (the effects) are what happens when women are excluded; use these effects to craft a strong message (i.e., if we don't take action, these things will happen).
- **Practice responding to questions you don't want to answer.** You may want to get comfortable with using phrases like – "That's not the focus of our campaign. The focus is..." or "I'm not in a position to speak on that issue."
- **Structure your message by problem, solution, action.** Problem-solution-action can be a useful framework for organizing your remarks to journalists. The problem and solution are designed to get the reader bought in, to make them feel a sense of urgency and realize that the problem must be addressed, before you move to your call to action.
 - **Problem:** Look back at your problem analysis, remember what you identified as the effects of the problem. Use these to convey urgency. Your description of the problem needs to be illustrative.
 - **Solution:** Introduce your proposed solutions – these are the advocacy objectives you identified. The solution is what the reader can help you achieve.
 - **Action:** This is where you describe what actions are needed to help you reach your objective. Unlike the policymaker meeting, you won't be calling a specific person to action; you're trying to communicate to the readers of the news outlet.
- **Practice, practice, practice!** There is no substitute for practice so make sure you do plenty of it.
- And a few considerations during the interview...
- **Assume nothing is off the record.** You cannot take something off the record after you've said it, so only share what you want to see in public. If you want the conversation to be off the record, say at the beginning "this is off the record."
- **Flag key messages.** Emphasize to the reporter what you want them to highlight or what one piece of information you want them to print or broadcast. You can flag these key takeaways by saying:
 - "The most important thing is..."
 - "This is the bottom line..."
 - "The point is..."
- **Be proactive about your message.** Don't wait for the interviewer to bring up your topic, it may not happen.
- **Control the interview, stay on point.** Answer non-relevant questions briefly or pivot and return to your agenda. You want to make sure you convey your message.

- Don't get bogged down on providing background or contextual details – volunteer to send the interviewer a background brief after the interview.
- You don't have to answer simply because you've been asked.
- Politely redirect the conversation.
- If there are issues you can't discuss, be honest about it.
- It is okay to challenge a journalist's assumptions or to tell them that they have a fact wrong, but remember to redirect the conversation to your main points.
- **Don't be afraid of silence**, especially if it's for a written piece. Reporters know people will often keep talking and say more than they intended, just to fill perceived awkward silence. Take the time you need to formulate your answer.
- **Remember:** Short, sharp, strong! Clear, concise, compelling!
- Messaging to the media can be challenging in different ways than messaging to policymakers. For example, journalists may be after a particular story or angle which may lead you off message, or you could get bogged down in providing background details that you don't get to the core of your message.

Instructions – Part 1 (Video)

Distribute the [Messaging to the Media - Video](#) handout (see annex). This video features an interview on the CNN show GPS with Fareed Zakaria with Ambassador Swanee Hunt, Founder and Chair of Inclusive Security, Dr. Alaa Murabit, Founder of the Voice of Libyan Women, and Pastor Esther Ibanga, Founder of Women Without Walls Initiative. The segment is called “Women Waging Peace” and it is 7 minutes and 50 seconds long.

www.cnn.com/videos/tv/2016/01/04/exp-gps-0103-hunt-ibanga-murabit.cnn

Remind participants to keep in mind the [Tips for Messaging to the Media](#) handout (see annex) and the following questions as they watch this video:

1. What do you think went well?
2. What could be improved?

Discuss these questions before moving to Part Two of the activity.

Instructions – Part 2 (Role Play)

Divide participants into small groups (3-4 persons per group, preferable if members of each group work/will work together after the workshop) and distribute [Messaging to the Media - Guide](#) handout (see annex).

Each group is to complete the guide for an upcoming interview with a western journalist writing for a popular, online-based news outlet. One person from the group will be interviewed (preferably not the same person who spoke in previous role plays), but the group should work together to help craft the message. Give participants 30 minutes to prepare for the interview.

Once groups have completed their preparation, they will deliver their message to the journalist (played by a facilitator) through a role play with the rest of participants observing the interaction. (5-8 minutes per role play and 5 minutes for feedback and debrief after each)

Debrief

Discussion Questions

- What was her main point? What did she hope to accomplish?
- What went well? What could be improved?
- What was most difficult about the interview?
- What would you do differently next time?

[Facilitator note: Make sure to provide concrete feedback to each group on what went well and what could be improved.]

Answer Key

Messaging to the Media – Video

What went well?

- Interviewees use short stories with memorable images and quotes. For example:
 - Swanee uses the image of being at the White House for the signing of a peace agreement and seeing a whole lot of grey suits and no women and even then not seeing that this was a problem. She was looking through a security lens, not a gender lens.
 - Swanee goes on to say that the UN mediator said that they don't want to include women because the warlords won't agree to have women because they are worried the women will compromise. A light bulb went off in her head.
 - Alaa evokes women's abilities to identify early warning signs of conflict with clear examples like women saying they were having increasing difficulty getting their daughters into school because classes are segregated, women are required to wear increasingly conservative dress, etc.
 - Esther uses the image of thousands of Muslim and Christian women coming together in a polarized community to march in protest of violence in their communities.
- As a group, they do a powerful job of outlining the problem quickly and then getting to solutions. Swanee outlines the problem by explaining why exclusive peace processes are flawed and Alaa and Esther give the solution – women make a difference in terms of the process and outcomes of peace and security decision making.
- They evoke their own credibility. For example:
 - Swanee recalls her experience gathering 100 women from 10 conflict areas and the overarching theme from all of these places being that in fact women do work across lines and bridge divides.
 - Alaa uses a powerful example from her medical training to help people understand religious manipulation in Libya.
 - Esther shows her influence as a faith leader and activist as she describes the mobilization of thousands of women in Nigeria.
- They recall a success story. Though flawed, Rwanda is an example of places where women's representation in leadership positions correlates with a decrease in corruption and improvements in health care and education.
- They use compelling statistics. A country that has 35% women in parliament is less likely to use violence as a means to resolve disputes.
- They have the advantage that Fareed is a curious and amenable interviewer. He introduces each interviewee before they speak which sets them up to make their points quickly.
- They provided images and video to bring their examples to life.

What could be improved?

- Though they got to the problem and solution, they did not get a chance to provide specific actions that different audiences can take. As a viewer, I now care about the issue and want to know what I can do to get involved.
- There could have been more stories with compelling images to help us understand both the problem and the solution.
- There could have been one or two more compelling statistics about the difference women make globally that would have reinforced the examples from Libya and Nigeria.
- They could have restated their main points at the end of their remarks in a short and concise way.



Presentation 8.8 Conclusion

Background for Facilitator

This section provides an overview of the module's key takeaways.

Facilitator Talking Points

- Messaging represents more than walking into an advocacy meeting and delivering your recommendations. Messaging means that you are adequately prepared and have thoughtfully developed your key talking points prior to any meeting.
- **Know your audience.** The more you know about your audience, the more you can tailor and craft your message to touch on their priorities and interests.
- **Be clear and concise.** You should be able to clearly describe the policy issue, your advocacy goal, and what you intend to do to achieve your advocacy goal. Remember “Problem-Solution-Action”.
- **Use examples to illustrate key points.** Anecdotes can be very powerful tools for conveying your message. Learn how to tell stories that explain the problem you seek to address. Whether you're telling your own story or sharing stories from others, you need to know which stories/examples most clearly support and drive home your message.
- **Convey urgency.** Your message should convince the audience that your policy issue is important and deserves their attention. Think of what can happen when women are excluded (e.g., the leaves of your problem tree); use these effects to craft a strong message (i.e., if we don't take action, these things will happen).
- **Practice makes perfect.** While you may know what points you want to make, practicing your message can only help to solidify your narrative. This is especially true for storytelling - you may discover that there are certain phrases that convey your message very clearly.
- In some cases, you will have a limited time to prepare. You won't have time in every case to assemble your team and conduct an actor analysis. In such instances, consider these fundamental questions:
 - Who is your audience and what is the main thing you want them to take away from this meeting?
 - Based on what you know about this audience, what types of stories or facts would be helpful in getting them to take action? Which stories or facts have been useful or compelling in meetings with other similar audiences?

More Time



Activity: Developing a Strong Opening

Background for Facilitator

This activity builds on a specific aspect of Activity 8.6: Messaging to Policymakers – creating a strong opening for a meeting with a policymaker.

This can be a difficult activity for participants because advocacy platforms are typically diverse and it requires consensus building around who they represent and what gives them legitimacy.

Materials Needed

Developing a Strong Opening handout; presentation slides

Learning Objectives

Participants are able to identify what makes a strong opening and craft one that fits their advocacy meetings.

Time 30 minutes

Facilitator Talking Points

- Your opening is how you will introduce yourself and establish your legitimacy. It should be a few sentences that explain what or who you're representing. It should be in simple language and free of jargon. It should be memorable and grab the audience's attention.
- Like all messaging, your opening should be tailored to your audience. If you want to illustrate your legitimacy to speak on your policy issue, what would your audience find most compelling?
- Let's consider some examples. [*Facilitator note: For each example, ask what you think is strong about the example and what you think can be improved.*]
 - Example 1: "We represent a strong network of women's organizations from every province in Afghanistan who are doing the impossible. We have solutions to the challenge of terrorism in our country. After all every extremist has a mother and every extremist is someone's son."
 - What is strong: Simple, clear language, powerful link made between extremists and mothers,
 - Example 2: "I represent a women's network that has deep roots in my country of Pakistan. We have consulted over a thousand women in communities most affected by violence, and we know how to stop the Taliban."
 - What is strong: Simple, clear language, establishes legitimacy
 - Example 3: "I am the head of the NGO Voices of Afghan Women, and we are part of the Afghan Women's Network. I am here to discuss the reasons why we need to increase women's inclusion in the Afghanistan Peace and Reintegration Process, particularly related to the High Peace Council and the Provincial Peace Councils."
 - Can be improved: Too much jargon, too many policy and decision making body names too early on, language is not accessible enough, etc.
 - Example 4: "I am a member of the PFGN Network in Pakistan and we have programs on CVE, combatting SGBV, and interethnic dialogue. We need to include community perspectives in the Pakistan National Countering Violent Extremism policy."
 - Can be improved: Too many acronyms, too many long names of policies for the opener (you can address the specific policy later on, but not in the opening), etc.

Instructions

Divide participants into small groups (the same groups as the Messaging to Policymakers activity) and distribute [Developing a Strong Opening](#) handout (see annex). Explain that participants will work groups to prepare an opening for an advocacy meeting with a policymaker of their choice.

If groups are struggling with identifying their source of legitimacy, consider sharing these suggestions:

- They represent a wide variety of constituencies (ethnic, religious, class, urban/rural, etc.); the breadth and depth of those affiliations
- They have conducted consultations with a wide variety of constituencies; the breadth and depth of those consultations
- Members of the delegation have specific credentials (PhD, lawyers, doctors, former policymakers, etc.)

Debrief

Facilitator Instructions

- Have each group present their opening in the large group. After each opening ask participants if they can identify who they are, who they represent, and why their message is legitimate.

ANNEX

Choose Your Audience

Audience <i>Name and Institution</i>	Ability to influence our policy issue <i>Why do we want to advocate to this individual? What change can they make?</i>	Existing knowledge of our policy issue <i>What do they know? How much information do they have?</i>	Stance on our policy issue <i>Are they an ally or an opponent? What is their position? If they are an ally, what have they done to support your cause?</i>	Motivation to take action <i>What are their personal interests? What are the objectives of their job? What will motivate them to take action?</i>	Ideas for messaging <i>What types of arguments may convince them to take action?</i>	Format <i>What might be the best way to reach them?</i>
Audience 1						
Audience 2						

Problem, Solution, Action

Instructions: Choose one audience and prepare your message.

Audience:

Problem

What is the main issue you are trying to address? Look back at your problem analysis, remember what you identified as the effects of the problem. Use these to convey urgency.

Solution

Introduce your proposed solutions – these are the advocacy objectives you identified.

Action

Deliver 2-3 specific actions they can take. This is where you describe how the chosen audience can help you reach your objectives. Give specific, targeted asks – what can this specific audience do to help achieve your advocacy goal?

Remember!

- Spend 20% of the time on the problem and 80% of your time on the solution
- Be clear and concise
- Make it targeted
- Include the human element

Telling a Compelling Story

What story did she tell? What imagery and/or memorable lines did she use?

What were the problem and solution?

Why do you think the speaker chose this story to tell?

How did the story make you feel? Did the story make you want to take action to help their cause? Why?

Making the Case for “Why Women”

Instructions: Read and discuss the statement assigned to your group. In your group, discuss how you would respond to the assigned statement. Write a response that everyone in your group agrees on. Consider using a story or specific example to help strengthen your response.

Statements/Answers

Group 1: Women cannot play a role in peace and security because their primary role is in the home. They don't have an understanding of political realities or the realities of war. It is only elite women that say women must have a role.

Group 2: Because women are not fighters and do not play a role in armed groups, they have no role in ending the wars that men start.

Group 3: There are no qualified or capable women who have an interest in participating in decision making on peace and security.

Group 4: To achieve peace we only need to convince the men to stop fighting. We will do this by offering political incentives and power sharing relationships. Women have nothing to do with that.

“Why Women” Arguments

Leadership & Approaches

1. **Women bridge ethnic, religious, and political divides.** Social science research indicates that women are generally more collaborative than men and thus more inclined toward consensus and compromise. They make connections between warring groups to build trust, bring parties to the table, and develop shared steps toward peace. Women also make connections vertically between grassroots and elites.
2. **Women have alternative leadership styles.** Women can change the dynamics of interactions between parties, away from zero-sum thinking and toward consensus and collaboration. In social science experiments, women are more likely than men to seek outcomes that benefit all participants in policy negotiations—taking a cooperative rather than competitive approach.¹
3. **Women help groups make better decisions.** Research shows that groups that include diverse races, ethnicities, genders, and sexual orientation are more innovative than homogenous groups. Members of diverse groups are more likely to “scrutinize facts, think more deeply and develop their own opinions.”² Studies have also demonstrated that heterogeneous groups are more effective at problem-solving, partially because introduction of diverse perspectives helps counter groupthink.³ In negotiations or other decision-making processes related to peace and security, these skills are crucial.

Access & Insights

4. **Women are an untapped resource.** Women are often at the center of nongovernmental organizations, popular protests, and social movements. Because women frequently outnumber men after conflict, they often drive the on-the-ground implementation of negotiated agreements, making them an integral part of any peace process.
5. **Women have access because they’re viewed as less threatening.** Because there are some realms (physical, cultural, etc.) where men are prohibited, women can quite literally go places and say things that men cannot.
6. **Women have their fingers on the pulse.** [Alternative phrasing: Women know where solutions live.] Living and working close to the roots of conflict, women are well positioned to provide essential insights about activities leading up to armed conflict and to record events during war. They can thus play a critical role in mobilizing communities to reconcile and rebuild once hostilities end.
7. **Women draw from different experiences.** In many societies, women fulfill different roles and responsibilities than men. Depending on context, this may include cooking, caring for children, gathering water and firewood, and buying and selling goods at local markets. As a result, women see and experience things that men do not. When resolving conflict, their unique knowledge is a crucial ingredient to crafting effective solutions.

1 Carole Kennedy “Gender Differences in Committee Decision-Making: Process and Outputs in an Experimental Setting,” *Women and Politics* 25, no. 3(2003), 27–45.

2 Sheen S. Levine and David Stark, “Diversity Makes You Brighter,” *The New York Times*, December 9, 2015, www.nytimes.com/2015/12/09/opinion/diversity-makes-you-brighter.html?_r=2&mtref=undefined&gwh=D9CCFE6E6DD3F4F7045B-38186DAEE059&gwt=pay&assetType=opinion

3 L.R. Hoffman and N.R.F. Maier, “Quality and acceptance of problem solutions by members of homogenous and heterogeneous groups,” *The Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology* 62, no. 2 (March 1961), 401-407.

8. **Women recognize early warning signals.** The treatment of women—whether through proliferation of unequal laws or an uptick in domestic violence—is often an indicator of rising tensions in the broader community/country. Women are often the first to know when groups are arming or when their young male family members are being targeted for recruitment.
9. **Women wield influence over their communities and families, including the choice to be violent or peaceful.** Women have untapped power and authority. Though not often seen as “leaders” in the traditional, masculine sense, thousands all over the world have formal and informal leadership roles in their families, communities, and countries. This power can be channeled for good or ill
10. **Women are highly invested personally to stop conflict.** Women are motivated to protect their children and ensure security for their families. They watch as their sons and husbands are taken as combatants or prisoners of war; when rape is used as a tactic of war to humiliate the enemy and terrorize the population, they become targets themselves. Despite, or perhaps because of this, women generally refuse to give up the pursuit of peace.
11. **Women often have the most to lose from the rise of extremism.** Women’s rights are often the first to be repressed under extremist regimes. For instance, in territories under its control, ISIS restricts women’s movement, dress, and behavior—and severely punishes transgressors. Women are therefore uniquely placed to understand the consequences of rising extremism and are often the first to stand up against it.

Solutions & Impact

12. **Women address root causes of conflict.** Women raise often-ignored political and social issues and ensure that the voices of victims and civilians are consistently heard.⁴ Broadening the set of issues so that negotiations are not only about borders and power-sharing, but about long-term reconciliation and pluralism.
13. **Women broaden societal participation by including marginalized groups.** Because of their own experiences as second-class citizens, women are particularly well-placed and inclined to highlight the needs and perspectives of marginalized groups, especially children and minorities. Since exclusion of different identity groups is a driver of conflict, this broadened participation may help stop the cycle of violence.
14. **Women tend to secure commitments on women’s rights,⁵ which are vitally important to a country’s stability.** Women’s significant participation in the transition from apartheid in South Africa led to the enshrinement of gender equality in the country’s new constitution, as well as a requirement that women comprise 30% of all new civil servants. In turn, protections for women lead to greater stability and security; An analysis of 174 countries found that the best predictor of a state’s peacefulness is not its level of wealth, its level of democracy, or its ethno-religious identity; it’s how well its women are treated. The larger the gender gap, the more likely a state is to be involved in violent conflict.⁶
15. **Women’s empowerment makes violence less likely.** Where women are more empowered, countries are less likely to go to war with their neighbors, to be in bad standing with the international community, or to be rife with internal crime and violence.⁷ Conversely, 14 of the 17 countries at the *bottom* of the OECD’s gender discrimination index experienced conflict in the last 20 years.⁸

4 Michelle Page, Tobie Whitman, and Cecilia Anderson, *Strategies for Policymakers: Bringing Women into Negotiations* (Washington, DC: The Institute for Inclusive Security, 2009).

5 Ibid.

6 Valerie Hudson, Bonnie Ballif-Spanvil, Mary Caprioli, and Chad F. Emmett, *Sex and World Peace* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2012), 205.

7 Ibid.

8 OECD Development Centre, “Social Institutions & Gender Index,” genderindex.org/.

16. **Women increase operational effectiveness of security forces.** The presence of women within the ranks can build trusting relationships between security forces and the communities they work in by helping make them more responsive to all parts of the community. It also encourages security forces to do their jobs more transparently and with more complete information. Women bring particular skills to police forces—important because research shows police are more effective at combating terrorism than militaries.⁹
17. **Women strengthen the process of security sector reform.** Involving women in SSR processes can help bring credibility to new systems and oversight mechanisms, as well as improve public perception of security sector institutions. For example, women are often at the forefront of providing services to victims of violence, and can partner with the security sector to deliver more integrated services. They can also highlight issues that are important to their communities, so that SSR processes are more reflective of local needs.
18. **Women counter violent extremism.** Women promote tolerance, educate communities, recognize warning signs of extremist ideologies in their families and communities, and collectively mobilize to de-radicalize individuals where necessary.
19. **Women can lend legitimacy to a peace process, which can increase public buy-in for maintaining peace.** Although women are typically between 10 and 30% of fighting forces¹⁰ they're not generally perceived as the face of war. This positions them with unique credibility in the eyes of the public. Not seen as having "blood on their hands" they can pursue an agenda of peace from a neutral position. Additionally, in the post-conflict setting, women can maintain the public's confidence in new political institutions. Studies show that women in politics are perceived as more trustworthy and less corrupt.

9 Seth G. Jones and Martin C. Libicki, *How Terrorist Groups End: Implications for Countering al Qa'ida* (Santa Monica: RAND Corporation, 2008), 1.

10 Tsjearld Bouta, *Gender and Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration: Building Blocs for Dutch Policy* (The Hague: Netherlands Institute for International Relations, March 2005), 5.

Tips for Messaging to Policymakers

Preparing for your advocacy meeting

- **Assess your target audience.** Who are they? What do they know? What will compel them to take action?
 - If they've taken action on your policy issue, make sure to thank them for their actions/support.
- **Develop your opening.** who you are; who you represent; why your message is legitimate
- **Craft your message** – Problem, Solution, Action
 - 20% of the time on problems, 80% on solutions and actions
 - The problem and solution are designed to get the policymaker bought in, to make them feel a sense of urgency and realize that the problem must be addressed, before you move to your request for action.
 - **Problem:** Why are you there? Look back at your problem analysis, remember what you identified as the effects of the problem. Use these to convey urgency. Your description of the problem needs to be illustrative.
 - **Solution:** Introduce your proposed solutions – these are the advocacy objectives you identified. The solution is what the policymaker can help you achieve.
 - **Action:** This is where you describe how the policymaker can help you reach your objectives. Give specific, targeted asks – what can this specific policymaker do to help achieve your advocacy objective?
- **Have a human element.** Consider what images or stories might help illustrate the problem you seek to address with advocacy. Whether you are telling your own story or sharing stories of others affected by the problem you are trying to address, you need to know which stories/examples most clearly support and drive home your message.
- **Determine what can you leverage that will motivate the policymaker to take action.** If personal anecdotes will be most compelling, use your knowledge and network to identify the right examples. If facts and figures will be most compelling, use your research and knowledge to identify the most compelling facts, and also examples that can help bring those statistics to life.
- Decide who will be the facilitator and lead speakers.

Characteristics of a Successful Advocacy meeting

1. Start by saying who you are and who you represent (your tag line)
2. Demonstrate some understanding of what your target's interests are
3. Describe the issue that you are going to address
4. In a conversational tone, frame a specific problem, identify your proposed solution, offer your recommendation
5. The policymaker commits to a specific action. Expect a pleasant and positive response, but push with statements like "Can I count on you to do [X]?"
6. Leave something in writing
7. Know how to follow up with the person or his/her office (contact info, etc.)
8. Follow up

Remember: Short, sharp, strong! Clear, concise, compelling!

Sample: Written Recommendations

This is a sample of what you might want to leave behind after a meeting with a policymaker that was prepared by a delegation of Syrian women to the United Nations General Assembly in 2014.

Recommendations For a Sustainable and Just Peace in Syria September 2014

In advance of the UN General Assembly Ministerial, a delegation of five Syrian women representing the Syrian Women's Initiative for Peace and Democracy, Center for Civil Society and Democracy in Syria, and women of the Local Councils convened to discuss concrete steps to construct a more inclusive political transition, improve humanitarian access, and strengthen protections for human rights. They sought to engage in constructive dialogue with international and regional actors as well as recommend effective solutions, grounded in the needs of local communities.

The following recommendations were developed by this diverse group of Syrian women from different geographic areas within Syria, representing broad civil society networks comprised of individuals and organizations. These networks have operated with a commitment to reviving a sustainable, peaceful political process and to inclusion of women and civil society in all stages of the transition.

Sustainable political transition

The international community must maintain pressure on parties to the conflict to return to the negotiating table and devise a sustainable political solution based on the Geneva I Communique. To this end, confidence-building measures should be designed in consultation with women and civil society organizations, particularly those focused on gender, to build trust between the negotiating parties and cultivate popular buy-in for another round of talks. A sustainable political transition necessitates inclusive negotiations, an accord that reflects input from affected communities, and representative political transition bodies.

We urge:

1. UN Special Envoy de Mistura to structure the talks to enable the full and meaningful participation of women and civil society by:
 - a. Including an official consultative forum for Syrian civil society in the structure of the negotiations with a requirement that negotiating parties consider the outcomes, statements, and position papers produced by the forum.
 - b. Creating incentives for the official parties to the negotiations to reserve at least 30% of the seats on their delegations for women.
 - c. Assembling a Technical Expert Team comprised by Syrian women and civil society, with at least 50% representing organizations that focus on gender and social inclusion. The team should have a mandate to advise the mediator and official delegations, assured access to all parties, and a formal role in the review of draft text.
 - d. Appointing a gender and social inclusion advisor responsible for identifying and liaising with active, representative networks of women and civil society.
 - e. Requiring each of his technical advisors to integrate gender into their thematic areas and regularly consult active networks of women and civil society.

9. UN Special Envoy de Mistura and his team to work with women and civil society to define confidence-building measures that will create trust and encourage support on all sides for renewed negotiations. Options may include:
 - a. Prioritizing construction of temporary housing for Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) from both sides of the conflict, with a focus on those currently living in tents.
 - b. Coordinating the safe passage of university students between government-controlled and non-government-controlled areas to allow them to resume their studies.
 - c. Allowing for the immediate release of all women and children currently detained by all sides.
 - d. Improving conditions in prisons and detention centers.
 - e. Opening additional channels for the distribution of humanitarian relief.

Humanitarian Response

By conservative estimates, nearly 200,000 people have died in the Syrian conflict. Almost three million are registered as refugees and over six million are internally displaced. Approximately half the population is living in extreme poverty, in dire need of humanitarian assistance. The amount of relief reaching affected communities inside Syria is insufficient. The Syrian government and regional actors continue to violate UN Security Council resolutions to expand the access of humanitarian agencies. Better coordination between the international community, Syrian women and civil society, along with substantial support for local ceasefire negotiations, is essential.

We urge:

1. UN Special Envoy Staffan de Mistura to appoint one person on his team in Damascus to be responsible for tracking all local ceasefire agreements in an official registry; UN Department of Political Affairs (DPA) should use this information to pressure the Syrian government to comply with the agreements. We further urge the UN to supply two international observers—one man and one woman—in each locality to monitor implementation of the agreements' provisions.
2. UN Human Rights Council, in coordination with UN DPA, to issue quarterly reports on local ceasefires and their compliance with international human rights standards.
3. UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) to work with civil society to devise a localized relief effort reflective of each area's unique needs and characteristics. Such specialization would address:
 - a. Areas besieged by the Syrian government, where in-kind assistance is typically disallowed, only cash transfers are feasible, and local ceasefire negotiations are required to expand access.
 - b. Areas held by the government, where the distribution of aid insufficient relative to the high number of IDPs.
 - c. Areas controlled by nongovernment actors, where Local Councils and civil society organizations, particularly women's organizations, play an important role that would benefit from stronger coordination with the international community.
 - d. Areas controlled by the Islamic State (ISIS), where close coordination with tribal elders and other community leaders is required for assessment and access, and support for girls' education should be prioritized.
 - e. Communities of IDPs along the borders, where assistance for education and response centers for survivors of sexual and gender-based violence should be central, and international and local monitoring of aid distribution must be increased.

4. UN OCHA to engage a broader cross-section of Syrian organizations in the monitoring of aid. Should the UN commit to recognizing a civil society-led coordination body, active organizations in each province stand ready to form a committee to conduct needs assessments and monitor the delivery of assistance.
5. UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) to establish refugee camps in Lebanon to accommodate the rising number of displaced Syrians.
6. UN Member States to allow Syrians to travel on expired passports to allow for freedom of movement while access to government agencies for passport renewal is extremely limited.
7. UN Member States to coordinate to commit the full amount of the UN appeal for the Syria Humanitarian Assistance Response Plan before May 2015.
8. UN Special Envoy de Mistura, as well as allies of the Syrian government, to pressure the government to expand humanitarian access in accordance with UN Security Council Resolutions 2165 and 2139.

Detainee and Prisoner Rights

The arbitrary arrest and detention of peaceful activists in Syria is an egregious violation of international human rights and humanitarian law. The full extent of unlawful detention of civilians by all sides is currently unknown. The negative, long-term impacts on detainees' physical and mental health, as well as on the livelihoods of them and their families, are significant and remain largely unaddressed. Civil society can play an essential role in tracking detentions, as well as attending to the needs of prisoners, former prisoners, and their families.

We urge:

1. UN Security Council Members to introduce and pass a resolution that requires the Syrian government and armed opposition groups to acknowledge the full extent of those detained and imprisoned. Further, they should call on these actors to provide a full list of names and facilities and to provide fair trials for all detainees and prisoners.
2. UN Special Envoy de Mistura to mandate monthly protection group meetings between his staff and civil society representatives, particularly women, to share information on detainee issues.
3. International donors to commit financial, health, and psychosocial support for prisoners, former prisoners, and their families, to be delivered by Syrian civil society organizations, particularly women's organizations.
4. International donors to create an education fund for prisoners, former prisoners, and their families, whose lives and livelihoods have been severely disrupted.

Inclusive Security hosted the delegation of Syrian women leaders. Due to security constraints, contact information for delegates has been withheld. Please contact Inclusive Security if more information is needed and/or you need to contact the delegates:

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Tips for Messaging to the Media

Preparing for your interview

Questions to ask the reporter/journalist:

- What is the interview about? What do you want to know?
- Who is do you work for? What kind of audience do they work with?
- What is your deadline?

Craft your message

- **Be clear and concise.** Develop no more than three key messages.
- **Know your audience.** Is your audience the reporter or their readers? What will make them want to take action to support your case?
- **Use a mix of stories and facts to illustrate key points.** For every fact you state, use a story to bring that fact to life. The story should be rooted in your own experiences, something you saw or experienced. Journalists don't have much time or space. Your message has to fit into an 8-10 second sound bite or one line quote.
- **Anticipate responses by preparing sample questions and answers.** You may not know the exact questions the reporter will ask, but you can make some educated guesses to help you prepare.
- **Convey urgency.** Your message should convince the readers that your policy issue is important and deserves their attention. Think of the problem tree you created – the leaves of the tree (the effects) are what happens when women are excluded; use these effects to craft a strong message (i.e., if we don't take action, these things will happen).
- **Problem, Solution, Action.** The problem and solution are designed to get the readers bought in, to make them feel a sense of urgency and realize that the problem must be addressed, before you move to your call to action.
 - **Problem:** Why are you there? Look back at your problem analysis, remember what you identified as the effects of the problem. Use these to convey urgency. Your description of the problem needs to be illustrative.
 - **Solution:** Introduce your proposed solutions – these are the advocacy objectives you identified. The solution is what the reader can help you achieve.
 - **Action:** This is where you describe what actions are needed to help you reach your objective. Unlike the policymaker meeting, you won't be calling a specific person to action; you're trying to communicate to the readers of the news outlet.

During the interview

- **Assume nothing is off the record.** You cannot take something off the record after you've said it, so only share what you want to see in public. If you want the conversation to be off the record, say at the beginning "this is off the record."
- **Flag key messages.** Emphasize to the reporter what you want them to highlight or what one piece of information you want them to print or broadcast. (e.g., "The most important thing is..." "This is the bottom line..." "The point is...")
- **Be proactive about your message.** Don't wait for the interviewer to bring up your topic, it may not happen.
- **Control the interview, stay on point.** Answer non-relevant questions briefly or pivot and return to your agenda. You want to make sure you convey your message.
 - Don't get bogged down on providing background or contextual details – volunteer to send the interviewer a background brief after the interview.
 - You don't have to answer simply because you've been asked.
 - If there are issues you can't discuss, be honest about it.
 - It is okay to challenge a journalist's assumptions or to tell them that they have a fact wrong, but remember to redirect the conversation to your main points.
- **Don't be afraid of silence,** especially if it's for a written piece. Reporters know people will often keep talking and say more than they intended, just to fill perceived awkward silence.

Remember: Short, sharp, strong! Clear, concise, compelling!

Messaging to the Media - Video

What went well?

What could be improved?

Messaging to the Media - Guide

Instructions: Use this as a guide to determine what unique story you want to convey to the media and how.

Audience

Who are you trying to reach through this media opportunity? (be specific)

Pitch

What is the key message you want to convey?

What are three points you'll use to make your case? (think in terms of soundbites!)

- Point 1
- Point 2
- Point 3

Why should the audience listen to you? Why should this issue matter to them?

Story

Plan out some key aspects of your story, ideally including:

What is your best, most powerful anecdote that helps the journalist understand your message.

Bring them into the room and convey emotions and context.

Compelling details illustrate your story...what did you:

See?

Hear?

Smell?

Say?

Feel?

At least two easily verifiable facts (statistics, quantities, events) that support your story

Fact 1

Source(s):

Fact 2

Source(s):

Developing a Strong Opening

A strong opening includes is a short statement that you'll use to open your advocacy meetings. It should be a few sentences that explains who you are, who you represent, and why your message is legitimate. Your opening should be short, straight forward, and easy to remember.

Who are you?

Who do you represent?

What makes you a legitimate speaker on this policy issue?

Why are you the right person/organization/platform to be speaking about this issue?

What would your audience find most convincing?

Your opening

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