

## MODULE THIRTEEN

### Planning for Action



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## A Women's Guide to Security Sector Reform Training Curriculum



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**INCLUSIVE  
SECURITY**

## Acknowledgements

Over the last decade, Inclusive Security and DCAF have conducted dozens of training workshops with women and men in countries undergoing security sector reform processes. We wish to thank all those who have participated in these trainings, sharing their stories, their wisdom and their experience, and helped us in turn to develop the training approaches reflected in this curriculum.

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## DCAF

The Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces (DCAF) is an international foundation whose mission is to assist the international community in pursuing good governance and reform of the security sector. DCAF develops and promotes norms and standards, conducts tailored policy research, identifies good practices and recommendations to promote democratic security sector governance, and provides in-country advisory support and practical assistance programmes.

DCAF's Gender and Security Division works through research, technical advice and regional projects to support the development of security sectors that meet the needs of men, women, boys and girls; and promote the full participation of men and women in security sector institutions and security sector reform processes.

Visit us at: [www.dcaf.ch](http://www.dcaf.ch). Contact us at: [gender@dcaf.ch](mailto:gender@dcaf.ch).

## Inclusive Security

Inclusive Security is transforming decision making about war and peace. We're convinced that a more secure world is possible if policymakers and conflict-affected populations work together. Women's meaningful participation, in particular, can make the difference between failure and success. Since 1999, Inclusive Security has equipped decision makers with knowledge, tools, and connections that strengthen their ability to develop inclusive policies and approaches. We have also bolstered the skills and influence of women leaders around the world. Together with these allies, we're making inclusion the rule, not the exception.

Visit us at: [inclusivesecurity.org](http://inclusivesecurity.org). Contact us at: [info@inclusivesecurity.org](mailto:info@inclusivesecurity.org).

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Please get in touch with us if you would like to translate this guide.

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# MODULE OVERVIEW: Planning for Action

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## Learning Objectives

- Participants are able to consider criteria for choosing advocacy tactics and how those tactics relate to their environment.
  - Participants are able to identify concrete and specific elements of their SSR advocacy action plan.
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## Background Resources for Trainers

- Bastick, Megan, and Tobie Whitman. *A Women's Guide to Security Sector Reform*. Washington: Inclusive Security and DCAF, 2013. [www.dcaf.ch/Publications/A-Women-s-Guide-to-Security-Sector-Reform](http://www.dcaf.ch/Publications/A-Women-s-Guide-to-Security-Sector-Reform)
- Inclusive Security. *Inclusive Security: A Curriculum for Women Waging Peace*. Washington: Inclusive Security, 2009. [www.inclusivesecurity.org/training-resources/](http://www.inclusivesecurity.org/training-resources/)
- O'Neil, Carrie and Nanako Tamaru. *Advocacy for Inclusive Security Curriculum*. Washington: Inclusive Security, 2017. [www.inclusivesecurity.org/training-resources/](http://www.inclusivesecurity.org/training-resources/)
- Shapiro, Janet. *Action Planning Toolkit*. Johannesburg: CIVICUS. [www.civicus.org/view/media/Action%20Planning.pdf](http://www.civicus.org/view/media/Action%20Planning.pdf)

| Time  | Description   |
|---|---|
| <b>5 minutes</b>  | <b>13.1 Introduction to the Module</b><br>13.1.1 Facilitator Talking Points   |
| <b>110 minutes</b>  | <b>13.2 Developing an Advocacy Action Plan</b><br>13.2.1 Facilitator Talking Points: Advocacy Action Planning<br>13.2.2 Facilitator Talking Points: Criteria for Choosing Tactics<br>13.2.3 Activity: Developing an Action Plan |
| <b>5 minutes</b>  | <b>13.3 Wrap Up</b><br>13.3.1 Facilitator Talking Points: Points to Take Away   |
| <b>Adapting the Module</b><br><b>Assessment Questions</b> |   |
| <b>Total Time: 2 hours</b>                                |   |

## 13.1 Introduction to the Module



### 13.1.1 Facilitator Talking Points

#### Background for Facilitator

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

#### Facilitator Talking Points

- We have been thinking about advocacy as a “cycle.” You begin by analyzing the problems in the security sector that you are trying to address, then move through the following stages: research security issues, build coalitions, plan for action, develop recommendations, deliver your advocacy message, and monitor and evaluate progress. In previous modules, we built skills and understanding around researching security issues and building and maintaining coalitions.
- This module focuses on the third step in the Advocacy Cycle: planning for action. Creating an advocacy action plan helps you to think more concretely about your goal and how to achieve it. In this module, we will look at what an action plan is and why it is useful for advocacy, and you will have the opportunity to develop your own action plan.
- After this module, you will be able to:
  - Consider criteria for choosing advocacy tactics and how they relate to your environment.
  - Identify concrete and specific elements of your SSR advocacy action plan.

#### Materials Needed

None

#### Learning Objectives

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

**Time** 5 minutes

## 13.2 Developing an Advocacy Action Plan



### 13.2.1 Facilitator Talking Points: Advocacy Action Planning

#### Background for Facilitator

This section introduces important concepts for planning like “goal,” “objectives,” and “activities” which will be used in subsequent modules.

Action plans should push participants to be concrete and specific about what they will do and who is responsible for what.

You can tailor the [Action Plan](#) handout (see annex) to the needs of your group.

#### Materials Needed

Presentation slides; [Action Plan](#) handout

#### Learning Objectives

Participants are able to identify the concrete and specific elements of an advocacy action plan.

**Time** 20 minutes

#### Facilitator Talking Points

- An advocacy action plan is a snapshot of your overall advocacy strategy. It requires you to be specific about how you are going to make your plans happen. These specifics include who is responsible for what activities, what resources you need, and timing—as well as how all of these pieces fit together with your advocacy objectives and goals.
- Who has experience creating an action plan?
  - Did you find action planning to be a useful process?
  - What were the core elements of your action plan?
- The process of developing an action plan includes a series of questions and considerations to help you better understand the complexity of the problem you are taking on. For example, how a goal or objective relates to specific activities; or how the timing of particular activities line up with your overall timeline. The planning process is a great way to focus and organize your coalition’s work and to ensure that members are on the same page in terms of the coalition’s goals and activities. *See Tool #13 in the Women’s Guide to Security Sector Reform for a sample agenda for an action planning workshop.*
- An action plan ensures that your advocacy strategy is coherent. By capturing important details in one document, you can see how the components (i.e., goal, objective, targets, tactics, etc.) build on one another to create a strategy for change.
- An action plan will also help keep you organized and on track. It can also be a project management tool that increases transparency and accountability—everyone knows who is responsible for what, when, where, and how. In Module 12 we discussed how transparency and accountability are important for the success of coalitions. An action plan also enables coalition partners to realistically identify the human and financial resources required and therefore whether the strategy is really feasible.

- Distribute the *Action Plan* handout (see annex) and/or project the following on a screen.

### Core elements of an action plan



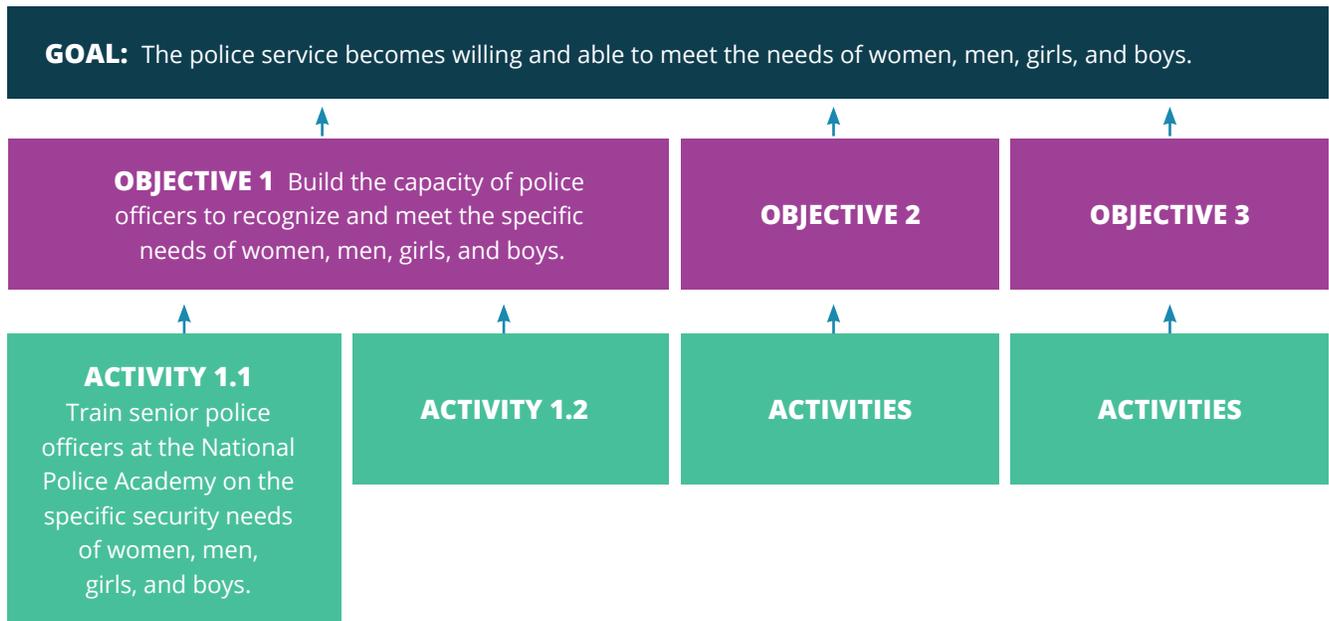
- There are six elements that should generally always be included in an action plan. We will discuss the sixth, monitoring and evaluation, in a later session. (See *Module 16 on monitoring and evaluation*.)
  1. **The Goal:** This is either the overall result you wish to see or the mission of a coalition in which work is ongoing and continuous. Do not hesitate to make the goal ambitious and broad. It should be action-oriented and focused on change. The goal can be a reformulation of the security problem or issue you identified in Module 10. For example, if the problem is that the police service has a one-dimensional view of security and takes a one-size-fits all approach, your goal might be: “The police service becomes willing and able to meet the needs of women, men, girls, and boys.”
  2. **Objectives:** These are the specific, measurable approaches or strategies that will enable you to achieve your goal. Make your objectives as specific, concrete, and measurable as possible. Try defining some objectives that are feasible in the short- to mid-term, while recognizing that achieving gender equality and security will require more long-term effort. To follow the goal example from above, one objective could be: “Build the capacity of police officers to recognize and meet the specific needs of women, men, girls, and boys.” Objectives can include making “improvements”—for example, improving the response to domestic violence—but it is important to identify how you will determine “improvement” (e.g., the number of cases investigated, the number of cases reported, victim satisfaction, etc.).
  3. **Activities:** These are what your coalition will do to achieve each objective and contribute to achieving the goal. Activities might include trainings, meetings, roundtables, poster/letter campaigns, petitions, protests, court observations, prison inspections, etc. Your activities could include **engaging with the security sector** directly through advocacy as well as other activities like training, creating or joining local security forums, and collaborating with the security sector to improve services. For example, an activity that corresponds with the objective above could be: “Train senior police officers at the National Police Academy on the specific security needs of women, men, girls, and boys.” Or if advocating to policymakers was your primary activity, it could be reframed as “Advocate to the National

Police Academy to provide training for senior police officers on the specific security needs of women, men, girls, and boys.”

When planning your activities, think about your target audiences—the people you want to reach most with your advocacy. This could be any of the security sector actors that we identified in Module 2, the media, or the public—anyone whose actions would contribute to achieving your objectives. In Module 10, you thought about potential partners or allies who could further support your cause. You should also consider what might interfere with or prevent you from certain activities. For example, if you want to host a training for police officers, how will you ensure that participants from the police will attend? You might meet with the police commander to get him or her to agree that police officers are required to attend.

Activities might also include a specific output—a tangible product or service delivered. It can be useful to include both risks and outputs in your plan when relevant. Again, the point of an action plan is to help you think through the steps and processes, and to examine all the details involved along the way.

### Example Goal, Objective, and Activities



4. **Responsibilities:** This is who will do what and when. It is important to keep a transparent record of who is responsible for what, particularly when more than one organization is involved. When allocating responsibilities, mapping out a **timeline** of activities may also be important. In addition to creating a timeline (which would necessarily include deadlines), this section can also include benchmarks. For example, if the goal is to train police officers, a benchmark could be to conduct a certain number of trainings by a certain date.
5. **Resources:** Here is where you estimate the financial and human resources that are required for each activity. Human resources include time spent on the actual activity as well as time spent on planning, preparation, and follow up. Financial resources can include phone calls, postage, transportation, copies, equipment, venue rental, and advertising. Bear in mind that your action plan can include fundraising as an activity associated with a particular objective.



## 13.2.2 Facilitator Talking Points: Criteria for Choosing Tactics

### Background for Facilitator

Participants will begin to think about which tactics would best serve their advocacy goals and consider criteria for choosing tactics.

#### Materials Needed

[Criteria for Choosing Advocacy Tactics](#) handout

#### Learning Objectives

Participants are able to consider criteria for choosing advocacy tactics and how those tactics relate to their environment.

**Time** 30 minutes

### Facilitator Talking Points

- Once you have identified your goal and sufficiently researched the environment you're working in, you're ready to choose the tactics that will help you achieve this goal. **Tactics** are the actions or activities you conduct to push toward your goal or desired change.
- In Module 10 we thought about two broad categories of advocacy approaches—confrontational and constructive. Within each of these are a wide range of tactics.
  - **Constructive approaches** use collaborative means to get your point across. These tactics could include working with policymakers and awareness-raising.
  - **Confrontational approaches** use adversarial means to get your point across. These tactics could include strikes, protests, sit-ins, naming-and-shaming, and petitions.
- You will need to decide which type of approach you will use to convey your message. Your tactics or activities should then align with your approach. For example, if you choose a constructive approach, you might prepare policy briefs or arrange meetings with policymakers. You may not want to take on a “naming-and-shaming” campaign, because that could jeopardize your working relationships with policymakers. This doesn't mean that your advocacy approach is set in stone; it can change as the environment changes or evolves.
- We've selected six priority criteria to consider when selecting your approach and planning your tactics. *Distribute the [Criteria for Choosing Advocacy Tactics](#) handout (see annex).*
- Is there anything you would like to add or amend to these criteria?
- Can you share an example of when one of these criteria has been relevant to your work?



## 13.2.3 Activity: Developing an Action Plan

### Background for Facilitator

Decide in advance whether to use the groups and issues from previous modules, or new ones. You may need to help participants refine the issue that they have been working on to ensure that each group has a clear and feasible SSR issue around which to develop their action plan.

### Instructions

Distribute the [Action Plan](#) handout (see annex). Encourage groups to alter this template based on the specific parameters of their vision but underline that, in principle, the five core elements should be included (i.e., goal, objectives, activities, responsibilities, resources). Encourage groups to take their time, work through the process, and use this as an opportunity to draft something that could be useful in their future work. (30-45 minutes)

### Materials Needed

[Action Plan](#) handout

### Learning Objectives

Participants are able to identify concrete and specific elements of their SSR advocacy action plan.

**Time** 60 minutes

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### Debrief

#### Facilitator Instructions

Ask participants to reflect on what was difficult and what was easy about creating their plans. Facilitate a discussion that allows participants to share ideas and insights without actually having to formally report on their action plans. Your goal is to reinforce the benefits of taking the time to develop an action plan. (15 minutes)

#### Facilitator Talking Points

- The very process of creating an action plan is useful. It provides an opportunity for coalition partners to really hear and see each other and to understand each other's perspectives, values, and approaches.
- Action planning and monitoring and evaluation are linked processes. In the next module, we will talk about how to use your action plan to develop a monitoring and evaluation plan to make sure your plans are feasible and measurable.

## 13.3 Wrap Up



### 13.3.1 Facilitator Talking Points: Points to Take Away

#### Background for Facilitator

This section highlights the main points of the module.

#### Facilitator Talking Points

- Action planning guides you through a series of questions and considerations to help you better understand the complexity of the problem you are taking on.
- While there are a number of approaches to developing an action plan, there are six foundational elements that should generally always be included: the goal, objectives, activities, responsibilities, resources, and monitoring and evaluation.
- Flexibility is an important component of any action plan. Factors in your operating environment may change, particularly those relating to timing and risk. Unexpected opportunities to affect change may arise, and you should be ready to take advantage of them.
- An action plan is an easy and effective way to organize your advocacy strategy, from your broad goal to your specific tactics and who is responsible for them. You can use the action plan template we distributed as a starting point for developing additional planning tools to help you maximize the impact of your advocacy.

#### Materials Needed

None

#### Learning Objectives

Participants will understand the main points of this module.

**Time** 5 minutes

# Adapting the Module

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## Less Time



**13.2.1 Facilitator Talking Points:** Advocacy Action Planning



**13.2.2 Facilitator Talking Points:** Criteria for Choosing Tactics **(SAVE 20 MIN)**

These talking points can be covered more quickly if needed.

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## More Time



**13.2.3 Activity:** Developing an Action Plan **(ADD 1-2 HOURS)**

Dedicate more time to action planning; have the groups include more detail in their plans, and/or have the groups report back in the plenary on the key elements of their action plans.

## Assessment Questions (Blank)

**Q.13.1 Working with policymakers and awareness-raising are: (select one)**

- a. Constructive approaches to advocacy.
- b. Confrontational approaches to advocacy.

**Q.13.2 The six core elements of an action plan are: (select one)**

- a. Goal, objectives, activities, communications, and networking.
- b. Goal, objectives, activities, responsibilities, resources, and monitoring and evaluation.
- c. Goal, mission, activities, responsibilities, and training.

## Assessment Questions (Answer Key)

**Q.13.1 Working with policymakers and awareness-raising are: (select one)**

- a. Constructive approaches to advocacy.
- b. Confrontational approaches to advocacy.

**Q.13.2 The six core elements of an action plan are: (select one)**

- a. Goal, objectives, activities, communications, and networking.
- b. Goal, objectives, activities, responsibilities, resources, and monitoring and evaluation.
- c. Goal, mission, activities, responsibilities, and training.

# ANNEX

## Criteria for Choosing Advocacy Tactics

### 1. Do your tactics align with your advocacy goals?

Once you've determined the change you want to achieve, your tactics are the steps that will get you there. Which tactics will help you achieve your objectives? A theory of change (i.e., if we do X, Y, and Z, then A, B, C will happen) can help you identify what intermediate changes are necessary to achieve your objective, and use that to inform your choice of tactics.

### 2. Do your tactics make sense in your operating environment?

The operating environment sets the stage for your advocacy tactics and, for those seeking policy change, the accessibility and openness of policymakers is particularly pertinent. In situations where government actors are not accessible, a constructive approach (e.g., working directly with policymakers) may not be realistic. Conversely, in an environment where policymakers are prepared to meet with civil society actors, a confrontational approach (e.g., protests) could be less effective than collaborating with policymakers.

### 3. Do your tactics take advantage of strategic timing?

Different moments in time present different opportunities and constraints for advocacy. You want to remain flexible enough to take advantage of opportunities when key policymakers are paying attention, but you also want to be aware of when the space for engagement on your security issues is shrinking or expanding.

### 4. Are your tactics aimed at defined advocacy targets?

Tactics should be directed at defined targets. You have to be strategic about how best to use your resources to influence these targets. You should also consider the impact your approach might have on your relationship with said targets. A confrontational approach can be effective in getting policymakers' attention, but calling out policymakers this way could negatively affect an existing relationship.

### 5. Do you have the organizational capacity to carry out your tactics?

Your organization or coalition must have the capacity and ability to carry out the tactics you've chosen. If you are a small and relatively unknown organization, a large-scale sit-in may not be feasible without more well established partners. You must have to have the resources and expertise to effectively carry out your planned activities.

### 6. Is your organization/coalition comfortable with the level of risk associated with your tactics?

Consider carefully the potential risks that accompany your chosen tactics. This includes thinking about whether your tactics will successfully compel your targets to act. It also includes the safety and security of your organization/coalition and staff. When working in conflict-affected contexts where dynamics are changing all the time, it is critical to weigh the potential risks involved in the tactics you choose.

# Action Plan

NAME OF YOUR COALITION

DATE

TO BE REVIEWED ON

GOAL

| Objective | Activity | Timeline | Responsible person(s) | Partners | Resources |
|-----------|----------|----------|-----------------------|----------|-----------|
| 1.        | a.       |          |                       |          |           |
|           | b.       |          |                       |          |           |
| 2.        | a.       |          |                       |          |           |
|           | b.       |          |                       |          |           |

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