Working on SRHR in Times of Opposition

Facilitator's Guide

Rutgers | For sexual and reproductive health and rights

About Rutgers

People have the freedom to make their own choices relating to sexual and reproductive health, with respect to the rights of others, within a supportive society. Rutgers connects research, implementation and advocacy. We take an inclusive and activist approach to our work, including on sexuality education, improved access to contraception and safe abortion, and the prevention of sexual violence. Young people are the main focus of our work.

Rutgers is active in over 20 countries. Our organisation consists of more than 120 passionate professionals in the Netherlands and Indonesia. The values of openness, equality and sustainability are leading in all our activities.
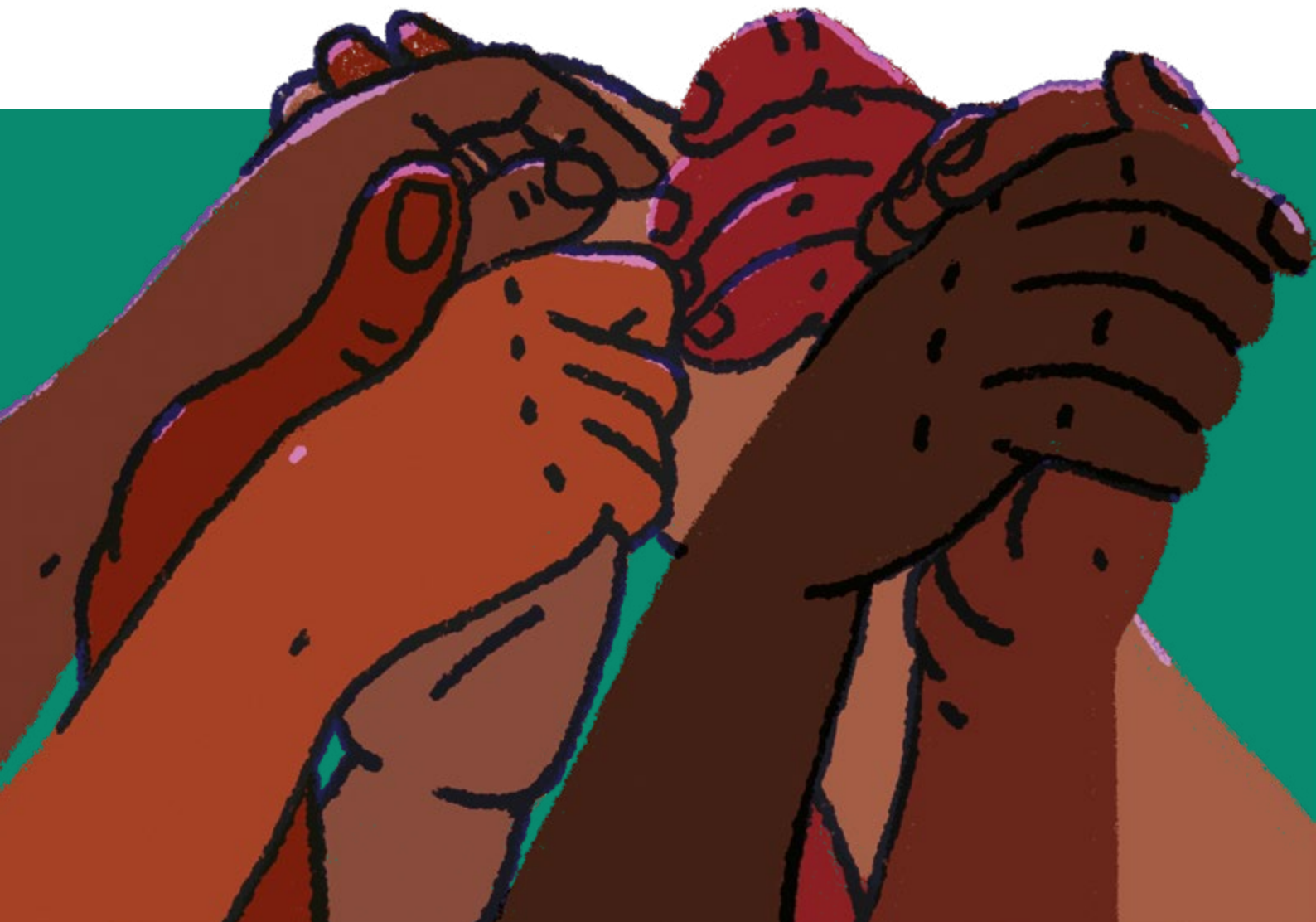
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Advocates for sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) have always experienced opposition to their work. Those calling for the often fundamental changes that the improvement of SRHR requires expect to hear opposing voices, especially when such changes relate to access to comprehensive sexuality education for young people, access to safe and legal abortion, or ensuring equal rights for everyone - including women and people with diverse sexual orientation, gender identity, expression and sex characteristics (SOGIESC).

Today, SRHR and gender equality are under increasing pressure worldwide. Ideologies on the autonomy and rights of girls, women and LGBTI people are more and more polarized[1] and there is a persistent denial of young people's SRHR needs, realities and rights[2]. Barriers embedded in laws, policies, the economy, and in social norms and values—especially gender inequality— still prevent people from achieving sexual and reproductive health, and across the world many people's sexual and reproductive rights are neither respected nor protected[3].

At the same time, organised opposition groups are increasingly well funded, well organised, and effective in getting across their anti-rights messages to a wider public as well as to policy and decision-makers. According to CIVICUS, anti-rights groups "are increasingly confident, aggressive and organised, and are claiming civil society spaces at the domestic and international levels, crowding out legitimate civil society voices"[4]. Similarly, the Observatory for the Universality of Rights (OURS) indicates that "in international human rights spaces, religious fundamentalists are now operating with increased impact, frequency, coordination, resources, and support"[5].

This situation demands a strategic response. We need to integrate approaches that limit the influence of opposition forces into our advocacy efforts for SRHR from

Who is "the opposition"?

Of course, "the opposition" is not a homogenous group. Some opposition to our work comes from well-funded, organised groups, some comes from individuals. It can come from other civil society or faith-based organisations, government representatives, world leaders, media, traditional or religious leaders or parent teacher associations. It can be motivated from an anti-gender, anti-rights and/or (religious) fundamentalist perspective, or it can just be based on misinformation. Some people oppose only some aspects of SRHR (like access to safe abortion) while at the same time they support other aspects (like access to contraceptives). What opposition looks like and how it expresses itself differs from one context to another.

the start. In doing so, our focus should be on taking a proactive approach, by remaining focused on our own goals, while we integrate approaches that limit the effects of the tactics and strategies of those opposing SRHR. Rutgers offers a tool for developing such a strategic response in the form of this facilitator's guide, Working on SRHR in times of opposition. It is designed to support facilitation of a discussion around opposition during a workshop or meeting: its guidance can help to deepen the understanding of opposition in a context-specific manner, to share experience and learning on effective strategies, and support joint application of these strategies in order to prevent or limit the influence of opposition on reaching SRHR-related goals.

The sessions and information included in this guide are based on the results of several learning meetings, organised and facilitated by Rutgers, which included representatives from civil society organisations from six countries in Africa and Asia. Participants in these meetings shared their experiences and knowledge of effective approaches and jointly strategised how to work on SRHR in a context affected by opposition. Next to the valuable insights of these participants, conversations with other civil society representatives and information from existing resources served as further input to this facilitator's guide.

"For all advocacy programmes that may come, it is very important to think deliberately about countering opposition and engaging with the public to support advocacy"
Workshop participant

[1] *www.civicus.org/documents/reports-and-publications/SOCS/2019/state-of-civil-society-report-2019_executive-summary.pdf*
[2] *https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000235707*
[3] *www.thelancet.com/pdfs/journals/lancet/PIIS0140-6736(18)30293-9.pdf*
[4] *www.civicus.org/documents/reports-and-publications/SOCS/2019/state-of-civil-society-report-2019_executive-summary.pdf*
[5] *www.awid.org/sites/default/files/atoms/files/ours_trends_report_2017_en.pdf*

How to use this Guide

This guide is designed to help facilitate a workshop that deepens participants understanding of opposition to SRHR and how to develop strategies to overcome it. Specifically developed to address opposition to sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR), the guide has several activities that can also be used to discuss working in the context of other kinds of opposition.

The sessions have been developed to help you reach the following specific objectives:

1 a deeper understanding among participants of opposition groups in their country context

2 participants exchange experience, learning, best practices and challenges for approaches addressing opposition in their work

3 joint strategies for applying lessons learnt to relevant approaches and developing action plans

4 a networking space where participants can find support from each other and be inspired and motivated to take action

It needs to be stressed that, in this guide, preventing and dealing with opposition is not the goal in itself: the aim is to strategise on how we can reach our SRHR goals, even when opposition groups attempt to hinder us from reaching those goals.

The guide is written to facilitate sessions in face-to-face workshops. It has yet to be used or adapted for online workshops.

Who can use it?
This guide is developed for facilitators who are looking for support or inspiration in facilitating a workshop to discuss working on SRHR in times of opposition, with any of the objectives described above. The facilitator could be a member of staff at a civil society organisation (CSO) or a consultant, but in any case we recommend that the facilitator has prior experience of facilitating workshops, strategy meetings and/or training.

Who can benefit?
Workshop participants can be advocates, activists and/or other representatives of CSOs, like project officers, volunteers, communication officers and researchers. They may come from one country or from several countries. In our experience, participants value the chance to exchange with others working in similar contexts from different countries.

The specific context (local or country), knowledge and experience of the participants will form the starting point for discussions, ensuring that outcomes are useful and can be integrated in their work going forward. The focus, quality and depth of the discussions are very much dependent on who is in attendance.

There is no minimum size of group, but we do not envisage you staging a workshop or meeting for fewer than five or six. When numbers go above fifteen, the logistics of the sessions become slightly more challenging, but with assistance it should be possible to facilitate the programme for a larger group.

How long does it take?
The guide includes outlines of session that form the basis for a two-and-a-half to three-day workshop. Annexe II includes an example of what a workshop programme could look like. We think the sessions work best when they are truly participatory; of course, the more participants you have, the longer things will take.

If time is more limited you can select a number of sessions, but if you do this avoid

A note on safety and security
Opposition towards SRHR does not only affect the work and programme outcomes of SRHR advocates and activists. They themselves can be subject to intimidation, stress and even attacks. This is particularly true at a time when there is an increasing conservative trend worldwide on many SRHR themes, with a growing group of conservatives, populists and religious fundamentalists seeing SRHR advocates and activists as a threat; and at a time when there is increasing shrinking space for civil society organisations. Therefore, we would like to stress the need to create a safe space when organizing a workshop on the topic of opposition to SRHR. This means, for example, being careful in selecting a venue and participants, making clear agreements around the use of photography or recordings and avoiding the use of open access Wi-Fi. We included more information and tips on this in the 'Getting started' chapter and in Part 1- welcome and introduction. Additionally, we included a possibility for some reflection on safety and security in session 4.1. However, the sessions in this guide are not developed to elaborately address safety and security concerns. If this is something you would like to address in the workshop please consult experts and/or materials on this topic.

focusing only on identifying and analysing opposition groups. We recommend you also include a session for exchange on approaches and make time for joint strategising and planning. Annexe III has a suggested outline for a half-day session.

Content and structure of this guide
The next section gives some general tips for the facilitator, including suggestions on how to prepare for the meeting and what to take into account during the meeting. The four main parts of the guide follow, ending with a fifth describing a number of optional sessions.
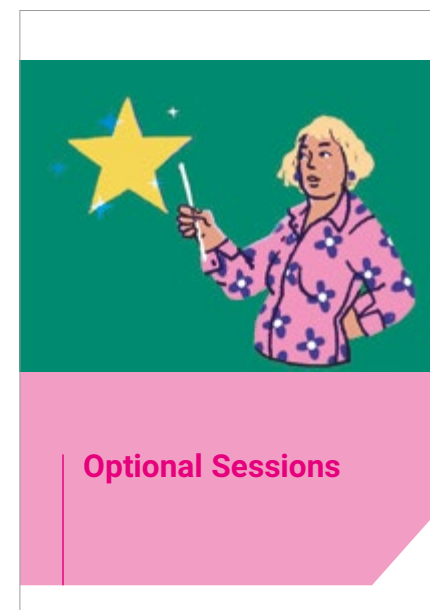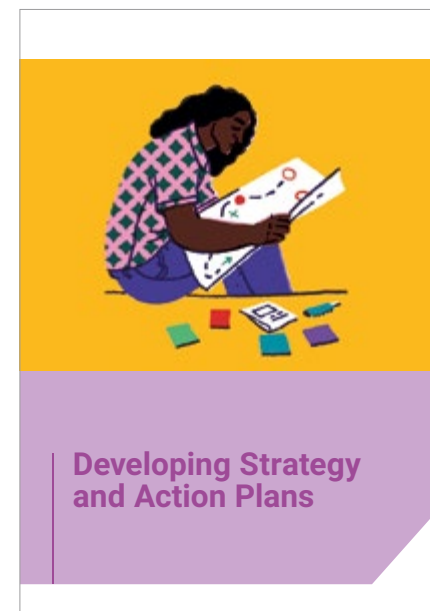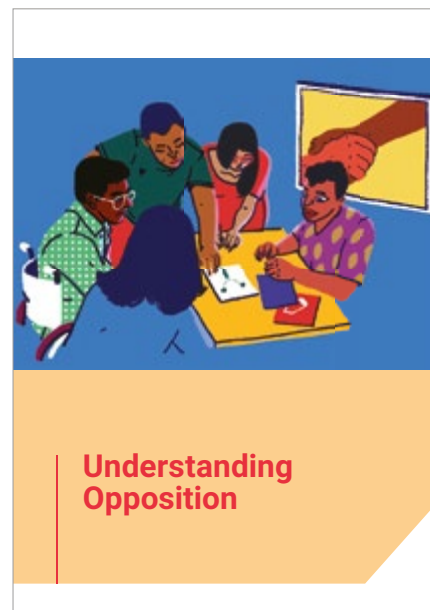
Part 1

Welcome and Introduction.
A meeting on the topic of SRHR in times of opposition requires a specific approach to certain sessions. Often the opposition that participants face also creates risks in their work affecting their safety and security. This can make it a sensitive topic to discuss. Therefore, Part 1 provides some suggestions on how to approach those aspects, usually addressed in the introductory part of a workshop, with extra attention to these sensitivities.

Part 2

Understanding Opposition.
This section starts with an introduction providing information on analysing and monitoring opposition groups, followed by four session descriptions. The first session ensures that all participants have an overview of backlash and/or opposition in the country or countries of focus. The second session creates awareness that people's opinions and views on SRHR can be seen as a continuum along which people can move. In the third session participants explore tactics often used by opposition groups. In the fourth and final session of Part 2, participants conduct a more in-depth analysis of opposition groups.

Part 3

Exchanging on and Learning from Advocacy Approaches. In this section we describe five clusters of approaches to limiting the influence of opposition on our advocacy work. The sessions focus on understanding how those approaches can be applied as effectively as possible to the SRHR context. Part 3 includes an analysis of current civil society advocacy responses to SRHR opposition in the country/countries of focus, providing an important basis for the strategising session in the next block.

Welcome and Introduction

Understanding Opposition

Exchanging on and Learning from Advocacy Approaches

Part 4

Strategising and Developing Action Plans. Participants apply the learnings from the previous sessions. They conduct a risk assessment and consider how to develop a risk management plan in relation to opposition and safety and security. In the second session, participants are given space for strategise jointly on the question, "How can we improve (some of) our work in relation to SRHR, by integrating and/or strengthening the use of relevant approaches to prevent and deal with opposition?" This is followed by planning concrete actions and activities, for incorporation into ongoing activities and workplans.

Developing Strategy and Action Plans

Part 5

Optional Sessions. We have included optional session plans that you may consider including in your workshop because they might be very useful in certain workshops, but less in the others. This depends on the needs of the participants in the workshop. Have a look and decide yourself.

Optional Sessions

Parts 2 to 5 of the guide are structured the same way:
- Each part starts with a table stating the proposed timeframe for the sessions
- Followed by an introduction, providing the background information you need to run the sessions
- It continues by describing the sessions, each containing the following:
- A table stating the objective of the session, the proposed timeframe, necessary materials and -if relevant- the preparations required before the workshop
- A description of the session, aimed to increase the understanding of the aim of the session
- The facilitator instructions, a step-by-step explanation of how to facilitate the session

The sessions in this guide can be adapted according to the needs and expectations of the participants, the number of countries of focus, the specific context, the time available and the number of participants.

Getting started and general tips

The tips provided below specifically relate to facilitating a workshop on the topic of opposition and will help you in preparing and conducting the sessions in this guide. We advise you read them well in advance of the meeting, so you have enough time to work with the tips provided.

1 Ensure a safe space

As a facilitator, you are responsible for creating an open and safe environment where everyone feels respected, encouraged and supported. However, ensuring a safe space is more than that. Discussing SRHR in times of opposition brings up sensitive information. It could be harmful or even dangerous if this information were to end up in the wrong hands: it could compromise ongoing work or a programme, but also endanger personal and organisational safety. You must take this into account at all stages of the preparation and organisation of the workshop.

This applies to inviting participants and selecting a venue. Think for instance about calling the venue in advance to see whether there are any other events organised on the same dates that could attract people who oppose SRHR and/or could be a threat to the participants? Make a conscious decision whether or not to bring handouts in print as loose copies could end up in the wrong hands. Check with the venue if there is secured WiFi access.

During the workshop, you must also pay attention to ensuring a safe space. We strongly recommend starting the workshop by making agreements on a code of conduct. See the session on "principles of engagement" in Part 1 for more information. During the meeting, continue to monitor whether participants feel these principles are being respected, whether they need updating and whether participants feel comfortable. Make sure to clean up the room at the end of each day so there is no sensitive information left lying around.

2 Prepare with participants

Preparation is key! Have preparatory calls or meetings with (some of) the participants to be aware of their needs and expectations. Ask them how they currently prevent and deal with opposition in their work on SRHR, what kind of challenges they encounter and what they would like to focus on during the workshop. Also check with them how the outcomes of the workshop strategising (including actions plans) can be incorporated into ongoing (advocacy) strategies, workplans, and budgets. Read through the instructions for each session as well, since here you will find detailed, concrete guidance on what preparation is needed for that particular session.

3 Participants are resource people

This workshop is based on sharing knowledge, learning and experience between all participants, so they are all considered to be resource people throughout the workshop. In certain sessions, some of them will be asked to prepare a presentation, as described in the facilitator's instructions. In addition, participants could (co-)facilitate certain sessions or discussions. You can ask them in advance if they would feel comfortable in such a role and possibly prepare sessions together. If not possible in advance, you can also explore these possibilities during the workshop.

4 Consider whether you want to invite external resource people

You could invite an external resource person to reflect on an issue from their perspective. Consider this in particular in relation to Part 3 - exchanging on and learning from advocacy approaches. You could, for example, invite a (former) journalist for a session aimed at exchanging lessons learnt and experiences on engaging with the media. The journalist could present how they think media engagement by civil society can be strengthened. For more ideas, consult the session plans for sessions 3.1 and 3.3 (in particular the tips at the end in the text box).

Note that when you consider inviting external resource people, it is always important to check with the participants if they agree to these people being present during (parts of)

the workshop. Participants should feel comfortable to speak out freely, and the presence of an external person should not hinder this. If you invite experts, consider making agreements on confidentiality and make sure they are well briefed.

5 Use examples

Participants will be asked to share their own experiences and examples throughout the workshop, but using examples - your own or from other countries - can strengthen your explanations and be motivational for the participants. Especially in session 3.3, "Sharing lessons learnt on effective application of approaches", it can be inspiring to hear how these approaches have been used in different situations and to show that change is possible. Examples can be found in boxes throughout this guide and in the documents suggested in the further reading section (Annexe I).

6 Ensure note taking

During the meeting, a lot of information will be shared, e.g. on lessons learnt, and strategising will take place. Ensure a record is kept, on which to base a report of the meeting. Ask (some of) the participants to bring their laptops, so they can take notes during (parallel) discussions. During the session on "principles of engagement", discuss who the report will be shared with. To avoid information on any of the dealing-with-opposition strategies ending up in the wrong hands, it is advisable to make the report a confidential, internal document that does not mention participants by name and to think of ways to store and share it safely.

7 Timekeeping

Timekeeping is always something a facilitator needs to keep an eye on, but we want to underline this specifically regarding Part 2 of this guide: understanding opposition. Identifying opposition groups and analysing them can take

a lot of time. It is very important that this is done properly, but at the same time you need to ensure participants do not get lost in endless discussions and analysis. The workshop is just a starting point, after which participants can conduct deeper analysis and strategising. Ensure there is sufficient time left for them to learn from advocacy strategies and approaches to address opposition and to develop an action plan.

8 Use a 'parking lot'

During the sessions, interesting ideas or actions could come up that serve as input for the strategising and development of action plans at the end of the workshop. To ensure these do not get forgotten you could use a flip chart as "parking lot", somewhere you and participants can write down things that should be discussed during the sessions in Part 4 on strategising and developing action plans. This can help you to keep the discussion moving without appearing to close down debate.

9 Keep the energy

The sessions in this workshop include a lot of analysis and reflection. Think of (creative) ways to keep the energy in the group, including varying in methodology and by having regular icebreakers. You could also explore the use of online methods and visuals when/if relevant, e.g. a short interactive quiz or a brainstorm. Check out websites like Kahoot.com, Socrative.com and Mentimeter.com. But you might also know of a short, interesting video that shows change is possible, or a funny video to lighten the spirits (like this Yes Equality video made for the Ireland Marriage Equality Referendum in 2015: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=38WRQrR2br4).

This part does not contain elaborate session descriptions (the other parts in this guide do) as these are basic workshop sessions of which facilitators often already have experience. However, any meeting on the topic of SRHR in times of opposition asks for a specific approach to certain sessions, and this is also true of the opening of your workshop. Therefore, we provide some suggestions on how to approach certain aspects usually addressed in the introductory part of a workshop.

whether they feel something essential is missing. You could approach this by asking the participants to share their hopes and fears or their expectations regarding the workshop. If a gap is identified, discuss how to address this concern and possibly adjust the programme or sessions.

- Getting to know each other: If the participants do not know each other very well we recommend including enough time so that they can share information about themselves, both at personal and professional level. A fun and personal introduction may contribute to building trust amongst the participants. Sharing information about participants' positions in organisations, expertise and why they are participating is also valuable.

Opening

Discussing working on SRHR in times of opposition can sometimes feel like a heavy topic. It is important that people feel motivated to keep looking for opportunities that can advance the respect, protection and realisation of SRHR, even when strong backlash is experienced. Therefore, you can consider starting with a motivational speech by an inspirational or influential person, so that those present feel energised to tackle challenges they face in their work. Also make clear that the workshop is just a starting point for further discussion and action. After the workshop participants can conduct deeper analysis, increase their understanding of certain approaches and refine their strategies. The participants will develop an action plan at the end of the workshop which should include the next steps they would like to take.

Introduction

The introduction concerns both the programme and objectives of the workshop, as well as introductions to each other:

- When introducing the focus, objectives and programme of the workshop or meeting you have the opportunity to check if the participants feel the proposed agenda will lead to outcomes that will help them in their work, or

Welcome and Introduction

"Getting to know each other" suggestions:

- **Use association cards/pictures from which participants can choose one that shows their personality.**
- **Pair participants to get to know each other and let them introduce each other to the group.**
- **Make a bingo sheet with statements like "I play an instrument" and hand this out to all participants. Now they need to find someone in the group matching each of the separate statements. The first person who has their bingo sheet full of names matching the statements wins the bingo.**
- **Ask people to introduce themselves using an alliteration with their name that describes them, like Awesome Andrew or Loud Lydia.**

Welcome and Introduction

Principles of engagement

As mentioned in the previous chapter, discussing SRHR in times of opposition brings up sensitive information. It could be harmful if this information were to end up in the wrong hands: it could compromise your work or programme, but also personal and organisational safety. Therefore, it is important that time is reserved in the opening of the meeting to discuss certain rules/principles of engagement in a participatory manner. You can guide the discussion by asking questions and making suggestions, such as:

- Check whether the group you work with already has internal agreements on how to handle sensitive information.
- Overall rules: what agreements would facilitate a safe environment for this meeting? Think of rules like using the Chatham House Rule, i.e. that participants are free to use the information received, but neither the identity nor the affiliation of the speaker(s), nor that of any other participant, may be revealed. Other ideas could include "we will respect each other's views and opinions" and "the space is for sharing, not for convincing each other".
- The report of the meeting: what will be documented in the report and with whom will the report be shared? The group could agree not to include names of people or organisations in the report and/or not to attribute statements. The group should determine with whom the report can be shared with after the meeting: is it only for the participants, or can they also share it within their own organisation(s)? Can it be shared beyond the participants and their organisations, and if so, with whom?
- Social media: make clear and concrete agreements about what can and cannot be shared on social media. Can participants share pictures/recordings of other participants, can they share the meeting location or can

they share posts containing information about the meeting? We would recommend agreeing that nothing of the meeting is shared at all, to avoid risking the safety of the participants and possibly the organisations that they represent.

- Pictures: if photographs are to be taken, discuss whether this really adds value and if so, make agreements how these will be used: are they for example included in the report? Ask in advance if there are people who do not want to be in the pictures. Agree who takes pictures: can everybody take pictures or only the organising team or an assigned photographer?

Discussion on these rules of engagement can take place in plenary, but as this is the beginning of the meeting, some participants might be a bit uncomfortable to share their thoughts in a big group (this also depends on how well the participants know each other). To really engage everyone in the discussion you can have smaller break-out groups, with each group discussing proposed rules of engagement. The groups then present their proposal in plenary, after which conclusions are drawn on the agreed rules of engagement. Another way, to save time, is to discuss some of these rules in pre-meeting consultations with participants.

Understanding Opposition

Sessions

2.1	Setting the scene: country context (duration varies depending on number of countries of focus)	⏱	45min - 1h 30min
2.2	Seeing opinions and views on SRHR as a continuum	⏱	1h
2.3	Opposition tactics	⏱	1h
2.4	Identify and analyse opposition groups	⏱	1h - 1h 30min
Total			**4 to 5 hours**

Introduction

The better you know your opposition, the better you can formulate an effective (advocacy) strategy to work on SRHR, plan a well-formulated response and/ or find spaces for dialogue. Understanding the motives, tactics and messages of opposition groups might provide you with information on how to counter their arguments, run your own campaigns and/or strengthen your advocacy.

Continuum

First of all, when analysing opposition, a too simplistic "us and them" dichotomy should be avoided. People's opinions and views regarding SRHR can be seen as a continuum. You can find people at points across the entire continuum from strongly anti-SRHR to strongly pro-SRHR. Also, people can change their opinions and views over time. Finally, it should be realised that people can be positioned differently on this continuum, depending on the topic within SRHR, e.g. their position on comprehensive sexuality education may be different to that on maternal health. The first session of this block focuses on creating this awareness. The other sessions focus more on the context related to opposition that the participants work in, and on opposition tactics.

Opposition tactics

Opponents may oppose your work or organisation in various ways (openly and subtly). Recognising the opposition tactics enables you to know whether or not to respond, when to respond, and how to respond. Below we have listed seven common opposition tactics. This list is based on the Community Tool Box, developed by the Kansas University.

Takeaway

At the beginning of 2020, Rutgers documented some key takeaways shared by participants of workshops on 'SRHR in times of opposition'. One take-away was the realisation that there is no such thing as 'the' opposition. Instead of seeing opposition as a monolith, the workshop supported participants to map opposition groups active in their context. One participant shared that this insight allowed them to dissect opposition into different subgroups based on theme and to identify the spaces where these groups are active. The mapping helped to create more targeted strategies and inspired their organisation to organise a series of dialogues with opposition groups that they had identified as "moderate". Through these discussions they realised that some opposition groups were actually lacking the correct information, so these moments were used as opportunities to educate and engage.

Seven Opposition Tactics

1 Delay

In delaying, someone can say they are working on the problem, when in reality nothing is being done. They might say more information is needed when there is already plenty of information on the problem. Alternatively, they may refer you to a group with little or no authority over your issue, e.g. to another department, or to a different organisation altogether.

2 Denial

Denial is used when your opponent refuses to admit there is any truth in either the problem you say exist (e.g. "We don't have a problem with teen pregnancy in our community") or with the solution that you propose (e.g. "Giving kids condoms won't reduce the pregnancy rate, it will just make them more likely to have intercourse"). In another kind of denial, your opponent says they want to help, but do not have the resources necessary to make a change.

3 Deception

Deception is the intentional act of misleading someone by lying or by "forgetting" to tell the whole story. Deceptions include trying to confuse your organisation with bureaucracy, misrepresenting statistics, or making suggestions that in reality have nothing to do with what you are trying to accomplish.

4 Dividing

Opponents may try to divide a group/groups over controversial issues, hoping to reduce the effectiveness of your organisation or coalition. Or try to "buy off" some members with offers of jobs or other incentives.

5 Dulcifying - Appeasing

To dulcify an organisation is to try to pacify members with small, meaningless concessions, or sweeteners, e.g. by

Takeaway

At the beginning of 2020, Rutgers documented some key takeaways shared by participants of workshops on SRHR in times of opposition. According to one participant, the overview of different opposition strategies was very helpful in recognising these strategies in their work. The participant identified a tactic that wasn't recognised before, and therefore adjusted the organisation's strategy to counter this opposition tactic.

including a general reference to SRHR in a policy which is not implemented. This tactic is particularly tricky because it may be difficult to differentiate helpful compromise from meaningless allowances.

6 Discrediting

When someone tries to discredit an organisation, they may attempt to make your group look incompetent or to bring the legitimacy, motives and ways of working of your organisation into question. In its most extreme form, the latter can take the form of lies and accusations towards your organisation/work.

7 Destroying

The destroy tactic has the simple, clear goal of trying to completely ruin your organisation or initiative. This method may use a combination of the other tactics. This could take the form of starting a petition or lawsuit against your organisation, or sabotaging your organisation by hacking accounts.

Understanding Opposition

Analysing opposition

To analyse opposition regarding SRHR in a certain context, e.g. in a particular country or in a specific part of a country, a number of questions can be asked that can guide the analysis. These questions - or a selection of those that are most relevant - can in particular be used in the third session, 2.3.

Possible questions for analysis of opposition:

✔ Who does this group exactly consist of?

If the opposition group is described in general terms like "parents", "the media" or "religious leaders", try to get more clear which organisations, institutions or individuals are actually active. Maybe it is a very active parent teacher association, a specific media house, or a well-known religious leader. Being specific makes it easier to analyse these main actors.

✔ What are the different groups/individuals opposed to exactly?

Not all opposition groups/individuals are completely anti-SRHR. Opinions can differ depending on the exact topic within SRHR, e.g. safe abortion, comprehensive sexuality education, access to contraceptives for unmarried people. Therefore, do not only analyse your main actors by what topics they are exactly opposed to, but also by whether there are topics which they do not oppose.

✔ Why do the groups/individuals oppose these issues?

Understanding opposition groups' motives helps you in assessing whether to approach them and, if so, how to counter their arguments. Different motives for opposing SRHR include:

- **People do not understand the issues you are working on**. For example: they do not know what comprehensive sexuality education is or they are misinformed about it. As a result, people may have concerns or fears. By showing what comprehensive sexuality education actually is, what it teaches children of different ages, and what the benefits are, those concerns and fears might be taken away. Listen to people's concerns and answer their questions. This limits the chances of experiencing opposition and you may even gain allies.

- **People do not understand the need to work on certain issues.** Some people, for example, might think SRHR programmes for young people are unnecessary. They may be unaware of the risks and problems young people face. Sharing context-specific data and/or personal stories of young people's health concerns may persuade them that there is a problem and build support for your work.

- **People feel they have been left out of the process.** Advocates and other civil society representatives should make an effort to consider involving representatives of a certain constituency or community in discussions about a particular issue. It is particularly important to consider including traditional leaders, religious leaders, or parents, as well as to involve or inform government representatives. Take the time to understand the concerns of these important actors, identify common ground, and win their support.

- **People believe the issues you address are conflicting with their or their society's cultural or religious beliefs and norms.** Take the time to explore and understand where these concerns are coming from. It is often a result of how opposition groups or individuals frame their messages. Think of ways you can explain how your work actually does reflect the local values, morals and culture.

You could also think of involving other messengers who are perceived as more credible actors on this topic, e.g. earning support from a respected traditional leader may show others that your work is needed and appropriate.

This shows that it is important to understand the motives behind different forms of opposition, to which you can tailor your response. However, pick your battles: it is not always worthwhile to make the investment of your time. In that case you need to explore other approaches. These will be introduced and discussed in Part 3 of this facilitator's guide.

✔ What are their values, their central messages and what are their main arguments?

Try to identify the main values on which the opposition groups build their messages and arguments. With information on their values, messages and arguments, you can prepare your counterarguments and find evidence that refutes possible misinformation they use. Be sure that in your communication you stick to your own arguments and bring your own message, instead of responding and repeating the messages of the opposition.

✔ How do they operate? What are their tactics?

What strategies and tactics is the opposition using to get their message across and to reach their goals? In what (digital/physical) spaces do they operate? It is possible that these insights will give you new ideas on how to limit the effects of their work on your own goals.

✔ Who are they trying to influence?

What is their target audience? Is this an influential audience? This can help you in gaining insight into how seriously you need to take opposition groups or who you might need to target yourself.

✔ Do they have allies within the government, and if so, who?

You can lobby these allies of the opposition, or ask supportive politicians to lobby them. It will help you to map politicians: who is anti-SRHR, who is supportive and who is undecided or neutral?

✔ How much of a threat are they really? How influential are they?

You do not want to give attention to the opposition if this is not necessary. By responding to public displays of opposition you create extra attention for them and the topic they are attacking or promoting. Sometimes opposition groups even post highly controversial content because they believe it will get them more attention. Therefore, start by asking yourself how much influence this opposition group has (high-moderate-low) to help put it into perspective.

Other questions mentioned earlier ("who are they trying to influence" and "do they have allies within the government") can be helpful in discussing this question.

✔ Do they have ties with any international organisations/institutions? Where do they get their funding from?

Sometimes opposition groups are supported by big international organisations, institutions or movements. Knowing where their funding streams are coming from and who they work with closely can help you to understand their position and arguments, to expose any possible agenda and to predict what their next move will be.

✔ Who speaks on their behalf?

Knowing who speaks on their behalf enables you to identify them in conferences, media, etc.

Monitoring opposition

Once you have analysed the opposition it is important to keep track of their strategies, goals, messages and activities. By doing this we might gain insights into their next steps or upcoming trends. This provides us with an opportunity to anticipate these trends and to strategise how to limit the opposition's influence in our work on SRHR. For instance, monitoring the (sometimes changing) frames and language they use in their messages can help in preparing counter-messages. Or when you know opposition groups are targeting an important policymaker behind closed doors, you can also contact this same policymaker with your own messages. Or if they spread information that is not true or is unjust, you could expose these tactics to a wider public. These are just examples, but for each situation a different response might be necessary. Note that one of the options can also be to do nothing, e.g. to prevent giving too much attention to the opposition's messages or to save valuable resources. Again, the Community Tool Box of Kansas University shows some useful examples of how to respond to the tactics of the opposition.

Monitoring and analysing opposition is something that needs to be done continuously and can, depending on the situation, be more or less intensive in nature. As monitoring opposition can bring very useful insights, we recommend finding ways to invest in it yourself or checking for existing local, regional and/or global initiatives which monitor SRHR-related opposition that you can maybe follow or join.

Note that although it is good to understand the opposition, at some point you need to use this knowledge and turn it into action. Stick to finding out the most important information and facts to inform your own (advocacy) strategy and action plan.

Session 2.1 Setting the Scene: Country Context

Objective	Overview of the context(s) of backlash and opposition in the country/countries of focus of the workshop
Time	45min (if the workshop focuses on 1 country) or 1h 30min (if the workshop focuses on two or more countries)
Materials	PowerPoint, projector
Preparation	Ask one or two participants to prepare a presentation per country

Description
The context of backlash and opposition regarding SRHR is different in each country; even within countries there can be regional differences. The aim of this session is to ensure that all participants have an overview of backlash and opposition in the country or countries of focus of the workshop. An overview will be presented per country, which will provide the participants with sufficient knowledge to be able to participate in and contribute to the follow-up sessions, which will contain more in-depth analysis. It provides participants space to be informed by resource people as well as to add some of their own experiences. This session is especially important if the workshop focuses on two or more countries.

Facilitator instructions

Preparation before the workshop:
- In advance, ask one or two participants to prepare a presentation of 20 to 30 minutes on the backlash and opposition to SRHR in their country. Where the workshop focuses on two or more countries, ask one or two participants per country to prepare a presentation of up to 20 minutes. Ask them to include the following in their presentation:
  ❶ The state of affairs regarding backlash and opposition of SRHR in country; which topics are the target of opposition?
  ❷ Are there relevant recent developments to share, either regarding the political agenda, and/or developments in broader society which might have an impact on opposition to SRHR (either negatively or positively)?
  ❸ Which groups and individuals mainly oppose SRHR?
  ❹ If relevant: what are the international drivers (institutions, organisations) behind these opposition groups?
  ❺ How has this opposition affected (or could it potentially affect) the work of civil society, both at the level of organisations/networks/alliances and of professionals?
  ❻ What has been the advocacy response (in particular strategies and messages) of civil society organisations/networks?

- Ask the presenter(s) to share the presentation with you before the workshop, so you can still give input on the content/length of the presentation, if needed.
- If you have participants from two or three different countries, make sure to include time for a presentation for each country. If you have participants from more than three countries this session needs to be adapted to avoid too many presentations.

During the session:
❶ In the introduction of the session, stress that this is a first overview to set the scene. There is no need to be exhaustive: during the next session there will be further analysis.
❷ After the presentation(s), leave some space for questions, additions and discussion. In the case of more than one presentation, count on 20 minutes presenting and up to 20 minutes of questions and discussion per country. In the case of one presentation, you could have a slightly longer presentation (but no more than 30 minutes), followed by up to 30 minutes of questions and additional comments. Take into account that presentations can take their toll on the energy levels of participants, so include breaks and energisers when needed.

Session 2.2 Seeing Opinions and Views on SRHR as a Continuum: Exchange on Personal Experiences

Objective	Awareness that people's opinions and views regarding SRHR can be seen as a continuum along which people can move or be moved
Time	1h
Materials	Video

Description
This session aims to avoid a simplistic "us and them" dichotomy when talking about opposition. Using this dichotomy is too rigid and will be counter-productive when we need to find individuals/sub-groups within opposition groups who are open for dialogue. It is therefore important to activate awareness on how people's opinions and views regarding SRHR can be seen as a continuum. You can find people across the entire continuum from strongly anti-SRHR to strongly pro-SRHR. Not all opposition groups/individuals are completely at the anti-SRHR end of this continuum, nor are all SRHR advocates at the pro-SRHR end. Also, opinions can differ depending on the exact topic within SRHR, e.g. abortion; CSE; access to contraceptives for unmarried people; maternal health. Not all members of an opposition group oppose all SRHR issues. Besides, people's positions regarding SRHR are not static. Most people move along this continuum during their lives.

Facilitator instructions

❶ We suggest to start with showing the TED Talk by Megan Phelps-Roper up to minute 5.40 (ending with the sentence "It still amazes me"): https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bVV2Zk88beY&t=4s. In this talk she shares her personal experience of extreme polarisation. She explains why she left her very conservative and outspoken church and how she came to that decision. She shares how she was influenced by others and, through open discussions, changed her mind about certain world views. The video serves as an inspiration that people can change their mind about SRHR-related issues. Of course you can also use a different video that fits this session.
❷ Explain the idea of a continuum regarding SRHR (see above explanation under "description")
❸ Facilitate an exchange on what we can learn from our personal experiences of moving along the continuum.
You have two options:
Option 1: In smaller groups, have an open exchange on participant's personal experiences of moving along the continuum.
Guiding questions for the discussion:
❯ Have we ourselves ever been opposed to certain aspects of SRHR (and maybe we still oppose certain values or elements)?
❯ Where do you feel you stand now? In the case that you moved along the continuum, what was it that made you change?

Option 2: Discuss in plenary or in two sub-groups (when you think that will facilitate sharing of experiences) the following questions:
a) Have we ourselves ever been opposed to certain aspects of SRHR (and maybe we are still opposed to certain values, elements or topics)? You could visualise the continuum, by pasting a paper with "anti-SRHR" on one side and another paper with "pro-SRHR" on the other side of the meeting room. Ask participants to place themselves along this line, indicating their position before they started working in the field of SRHR and/or being informed in another way on SRHR.
b) Ask them to reflect on why they were on this point of the continuum and ask if there are some participants who want to share their reflection.
c) Then ask them to move to the place on the line where they feel they stand now. Of course, this can also mean that they remain on the same spot, if they have not changed their views.
d) Ask the participants who did move, to share what it was that made them change. What is the reason or are the reasons for their change in opinion?
❹ Conclude that we need to keep this continuum in mind when we talk about preventing and dealing with opposition to our work on SRHR. Individuals within opposition groups also find themselves at different places on the continuum and they might be influenced to move to a different (hopefully more pro-SRHR) spot on the continuum.

Session 2.3 Opposition Tactics: the 10 D's

Objective	Increased insight into different opposition tactics
Time	1h
Materials	Printouts of examples, 7 Ds handout, 7 Ds signs, tape

Description
This session aims to provide more insight into the different tactics that opposition groups can use to hinder SRHR advocates in reaching their goals. Sometimes these tactics are very obvious, like smear campaigns and online petitions, but sometimes these tactics are much more covert. Recognising opposition tactics might help us to respond to this opposition in our work sooner and more effectively. To look into different tactics we identified seven, based on the Community Tool Box of the Kansas University, which are described in detail in the introduction to this Part. You could bring printouts of these seven tactics to hand out to participants during this session.

Facilitator instructions

Preparation before the workshop:
❶ Read the description of the seven tactics in the beginning of Part 2 and make sure you understand the differences. You can add/change examples that relate to the context of the participants.
❷ Print the examples of the tactics, and print the name of each tactic on a different paper. Also print the handouts of the seven tactics.
❸ Hang the names of the tactics around the room, but hold on to the examples. You will hand them out during the exercise.

During the session
❶ Explain the aim of the exercise.
❷ Explain the tactics (you might want to use a PowerPoint or flip chart for this) and provide participants with handouts.
❸ Now explain the exercise to the group. You will form them into smaller groups and hand out printed examples of opposition. In their groups, they can discuss under which of the tactics they think their example could fall. They need to stick their example to the wall under the tactic that they agree fits best with their example. It is possible their example could fit several tactics, so they need to choose where their examples fit best. Each group gets around 10 examples (groups can have the same examples) and 20 to 30 minutes time to complete the exercise.
❹ Ask the participants to make groups of three or four depending on group size; you do not want more than four or five smaller groups.
❺ Hand out the examples.
❻ Once time is up, ask the participants to convene at the first tactic. You can walk past all the tactics and check – together with the participants – if the examples that are placed there make sense. If you find an example that better fits under a different tactic discuss jointly why this is the case and where to place it.
❼ Once you walked past all the examples you can wrap up the session. You can:
a) Ask participants if they have any examples of these opposition tactics in their own context
b) Ask participants if they have heard of any tactics that are new to them
c) Ask participants if they know other tactics that opposition groups use, but that are not covered by the seven identified tactics
d) Ask participants why they think it is useful to gain insights into the tactics of the opposition

Session 2.4 Identify and Analyse Opposition Groups

Objective	Increased insight into the main groups opposing SRHR in the country/countries
Time	1h - 1h 30min
Materials	PowerPoint, projector, markers, flip chart
Preparation	Prepare a presentation on relevant questions for analysing opposition. You can use the information in the introduction of Part 2 as input. Decide which questions you want to use in the group work and include them in the PowerPoint or print as handouts.

Description
Participants will identify and analyse the main opposition groups and/or individuals in the country (or specific region they work in within a country) or countries of focus in this workshop. The time needed for this session depends on how deeply you want to analyse these opposition groups. If it is just a general exploration of who the main opposition groups are then one hour can be enough. However, if you want to make a full analysis of different opposition groups you can allocate much more time. In the case that there are participants from more than one country it is best to conduct the identification and analysis in country-specific groups.

Facilitator instructions

❶ Start by introducing the session. Share information on why it is important to analyse the opposition and which questions you can ask. You can make a selection of the information provided in the introduction of Part 2.
❷ In plenary, identify the main opposition groups. Ask: Who are the main groups/individuals in your country expressing opposition to SRHR? For the purpose of this inventory, the participants can mention general or clustered groups here, e.g. "traditional leaders". Write their reactions on a flip chart.
❸ If the list is very long, discuss with the group which are the main opposition groups that need to be prioritised for the analysis.
❹ Explain the group work (see next steps).
❺ Ask participants to make groups of three or four. Each group analyses one or two opposition groups. They will write down answers to the questions on a flip chart.
❻ Each group has to select a note taker to ensure that the detailed discussion is documented (preferably on a laptop).
❼ Share the questions to be discussed by the group. We suggest to at least include the following questions:
a) Who does this group exactly consist of?
b) What are the different groups/individuals opposed to exactly?
c) Why do the groups/individuals oppose these issues?
d) How much of a threat are they really? How influential are they?
e) Who are they trying to influence?
f) What are the most important conclusions you can draw from this information?
g) Are there any actions we should/could take based on this information?
For more information on these questions as well as more possible questions, see the introduction of Part 2. Note that adding questions also asks for more time for this session.
❽ After the group work it is time to share the findings. As an alternative to a long recap in plenary, you could ask participants to shift to another table to see each other's work and to add to other's group work ("world café" setting). If you do this, each group needs to select a facilitator who stays at their own table. The facilitator can briefly present the work done so far to the newcomers and ensure that their additions are documented.
❾ Close by capturing the most important findings in plenary. You could ask the participants:
1) Who are the most influential opposition groups towards the issues you are working on?
2) Who are they trying to influence and how are they convincing people for their cause?
3) Are there things we should know, but don't know about these opposition groups?
4) From this analysis, can you identify any action points that you should take? For example, do more research, analysis or monitoring into/of opposition groups, take over their framing, expose them for misinformation that they share, or target their target groups.
❿ Record any action points coming from the closing discussion and place them on the parking lot.

Sessions

3.1	Learning from experiences in relation to other areas of work/topics	45min to 1h 15min
3.2	Analysis of current civil society advocacy response to opposition to SRHR	2h
3.3	Sharing lessons learnt on effective application of approaches	2h 15min
Total		5h 30min

Exchanging on and Learning from Advocacy Approaches

Introduction

By exchanging their best practices and challenges, and discussing experience of using different approaches on preventing and dealing with opposition, participants gain insights into what approaches they could adopt or strengthen in their work on SRHR. Through a number of learning meetings and through gathering relevant documents on this topic, we learnt that, in general, the best way to work on SRHR in times of opposition is to strengthen your current strategy and approaches. We have identified the five following clusters of approaches[6] which seem most relevant and/or provide considerable potential for more effective use when working on SRHR in a context affected by opposition:

❶ Advocacy towards policy and decision-makers
❷ Build public support for the advocacy agenda
❸ Look for points of entry for dialogue with (representatives of) opposition groups
❹ Strengthen narratives and (re)frame language
❺ Strengthen (collaboration within) civil society and beyond

The approaches are elaborated on below. Their effectiveness will depend on how they are being used. Of course there is not one 'best' approach. Rather, the idea is to work on a number of approaches simultaneously. In doing so, different organisations (different types of CSOs or with different expertise) can complement each other by playing to their strengths in their roles. For more information on approaches, see also the "further reading" section in Annexe I.

❶ Advocacy towards policy and decision-makers

Preventing and dealing with opposition is not a goal in itself when conducting advocacy on SRHR. However, opposition groups can have an influence on the results of our advocacy work. For example, if opposition groups are very strong in their advocacy, they could convince policy and decision-makers not to adopt and implement human rights-based policies and laws and not to adhere to the (international) agreements or responsibilities they have with regards to SRHR. Therefore, we should strengthen our advocacy towards policy and decision-makers and limit the influence opposition forces have on these stakeholders.

Some ways to consider strengthening our advocacy efforts:

- Develop focused advocacy strategies and convincing, well-formulated advocacy messages and explore ways of strengthening advocacy skills. Many tools exist which can be used for this purpose.
- Think of good entry points in terms of advocacy asks, e.g. explore the potential of using the key human right principle of non-discrimination which could be an entry point to guarantee rights of young people, women and sexual and gender minorities, or of using economic arguments for investing in SRHR.
- Strengthen relations and collaboration with policy and decision-makers, for example by organising face-to-face meetings and by sharing inputs with them, such as fact sheets and position papers.
- Engage with or involve relevant stakeholders, including policy and decision-makers, from the start of programmes if possible to get their buy in and to strengthen ownership of these stakeholders.

[6] *If you feel important approaches/strategies are missing, please contact us, we are open to learn about additional approaches.*

Exchanging and Learning from Advocacy Approaches

- Support and capacitate those policy and decision-makers that are either already favourable or at least lukewarm towards SRHR. They can be supported to use strong arguments and narratives, to be well versed on the oppositions' narrative and arguments, be equipped with national and local examples and provided with text suggestions for specific occasions. This will enable them to promote and communicate about SRHR issues, convince other policy and decision-makers to support SRHR issues and to deal with opposition themselves.
- If policy and decision-makers cannot support SRHR, explore if they are willing to remain neutral and/or will not block any proposals regarding SRHR.
- Make use of existing advocacy spaces, such as participation in Technical Working groups or relevant networks, in which one or more Government Ministries are also represented. Should these spaces not exist, advocate with decision-makers to create spaces where civil society can input into their work.
- Use international mechanisms, like the Universal Periodic Review sessions of the Human Rights Council, to push the advocacy agenda at national level. Here you can also stimulate the involvement of other countries, e.g. by discussing with them which recommendations could be given to your government. Be sure to create awareness of regional/ international commitments at national level, by making this information accessible.
- Do not overlook advocacy at community, district or regional levels as this can sometimes be achieved in a shorter timeframe and/or can be more effective.
- Align your efforts with others. CSOs can work together to jointly use the, often limited, time that policy and decision-makers have and share joint messages and advocacy asks with them.

Taking advice from government representatives

Up to 2019, many Ethiopian CSOs were not allowed to conduct advocacy activities towards the Ethiopian government, its officers or organisations due to restrictions prescribed by law. One group of CSOs thought it was important for government officials to be aware of and collaborate in efforts on improving SRHR for young people. So, they set up programme advisory committees (ACs) for each level of their work, city and sub-city, and invited representatives of government agencies and departments to be members, alongside other stakeholders and the programme implementers. In this way the government bodies could still be connected to the SRHR programme the CSOs were implementing. Rutgers researched these advisory committees showing that they created direct links for advocacy, exchange of expertise and decision-making, improved youth engagement in planning and monitoring youth-friendly services and built trust and attitudinal change among key stakeholders. Specifically:

- The ACs helped achieve an enabling environment for the collaborating CSOs, as they experienced low levels of opposition from the government during programme implementation and they even became stronger in dealing with SRHR barriers through their close collaboration with government in the ACs.
- The ACs voiced the issues and concerns of youth for policy and decision-makers, leading to the city council allocating funds for youth SRHR in its budget.
- Young people and their functional structures have achieved representation in the process of revision and amendment of youth-focused policy and strategy.

2 Build public support for your advocacy goals

Policy and legal changes and their implementation are directly influenced when a critical mass is achieved by those asking for these changes to happen. Therefore, it could be helpful to work on increasing support for your advocacy agenda, for instance by informing people on the need for action regarding youth SRHR, by stimulating norm change or by mobilising people to speak out. If groups of people express the need and support for SRHR and/or specifically the advocacy agenda, this could motivate decision-makers to take more progressive – or more neutral – decisions regarding SRHR.

Building public support allows us to limit the influence of opposition groups in a proactive way: instead of responding to the narratives created by those who oppose SRHR, we bring our own stories and narratives to the public.[7]

Strategies that could be used to strengthen your efforts on increasing public support are:

Engaging with the media
Media play a crucial role in shaping public opinion: they can share our narratives with a wider public, do fact-checking and give a face and voice to our constituencies through stories. However, they can also share stories and articles that place (aspects of) SRHR in a negative light. Therefore, it is good to be proactive and work on getting support from the media for your issues. Some tips:
- To improve engagement with media you could: build relationships with journalists, editors and media houses; offer training to journalists to improve their reporting on SRHR; bring journalists into contact with relevant networks; and develop content for media houses.
- Do some media mapping: who publishes what? Who is supportive of your issues already who you might want to collaborate with?
- Identify which journalists and/or media houses need sensitisation on SRHR. Work on increasing their understanding of SRHR so they can speak out about your issues in a sensitive and nuanced way.

[7] For more information: 'The Little Blue Book, The Essential Guide to Thinking and Talking Democratic' by George Lakoff and Elisabeth Wheling, 2012.

Working with journalists and beyond

In a Southern African country, CSOs have been working with journalists for a while to ensure challenges and needs related to young people's SRHR are covered in the media. However, the CSOs realised that when journalists have the right knowledge and skills for reporting on SRHR, editors can still block their articles. Therefore, the CSOs decided to extend their work and also started to engage with and sensitise editors on SRHR. As a result, they saw more (high quality) articles on SRHR being published.

- Try to find out what the media needs: are they looking for facts or personal interest stories that you can maybe provide for them?
- Organise an event that is interesting for the media. To attract the interest of journalists in your events and to report about your work you have to think from their perspective: what would be interesting to report on? What is newsworthy, is there a momentum you can build on? Think of ways to make it more attractive to them, for instance by organising creative events and/or inviting important guests to events.
- Certain activities such as litigation have been helpful in creating attention in the media and/or broader society, and thus keeping the topic you are advocating on the agenda. Inform media what is going on and invite them to court cases.
- Develop a media policy for your organisation or platform so it is clear what messages are to be shared with media and who is your main spokesperson when you are contacted by the media.
- Arrange exposure visits so journalists/editors can see for themselves what happens on the ground and to get them in touch with constituencies.
- Make it easy for media to publish on your issues: simplify your statistics and data; avoid the use of jargon; make a press release including a media kit.
- Don't be reactive to opposition in the media, but instead use your own language and messages.

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- Don't invite the media if you're not sure what they're going to write, and if you are not sure if they support your cause (especially on very sensitive issues).
- If possible, review articles on your work/topic before they are published to avoid any misinformation.
- First consult with the organisations/networks you are collaborating with on which key messages you wish to put out (also see "Strengthening (collaboration within) civil society and beyond").

Develop a public campaign

It is possible to launch a public campaign to support your advocacy work. For instance, if you plan to change a policy related to comprehensive sexuality education you might want to mobilise groups of parents, teachers, young people and others to speak about their realities and needs, linking this to the policy change as part of the solution to their problems. In a campaign you can of course still engage journalists, but other interventions and tactics can also be used to draw attention and support to your issues. Think of radio and/or television shows or commercials, develop posters/flyers, spread social media messages, organise gatherings and provide people with platforms to speak out.

Some tips:

- To increase the effectiveness of your campaign set a clear goal on what you want to reach with the campaign. Think

Creative tactics in Lebanon

In 2017, Lebanese activists used some creative tactics in fighting against an article in the penal code that stated rapists escape punishment for their crimes as long as they marry the survivor. To draw attention to this article, the activists hung 31 wedding dresses on nooses in Beirut, looking like these dresses were hanged. The 31 dresses symbolised each day of the month the women could be further abused by attackers who marry them.

what should be the outcome from the campaign that can strengthen your advocacy work.
- Choose your audience carefully. Analyse what audience you need to target in order to amplify your advocacy work. Also analyse what kind of messages resonate with this audience (also see cluster 4 "strengthening narratives and reframing language"), which messengers they listen to and through which channels they receive information.
- The messenger is as important as the message. Consider engaging powerful opinion leaders who are or have the potential to be champions or allies for SRHR. These could include social media

Active involvement of religious leaders

- **Recognising the power of religious groups – as community leaders, influencers, and gatekeepers with control of a large proportion of schools and clinics – CSOs in an East African country explored ways to work together. Their programmes benefitted from this strategy, with acceptance and active involvement in their work from religious leaders at the district level. Those who know their communities, who deal on a day-to-day basis with young members of their congregation who are directly affected by a gap in meeting their sexual health and rights, were found to understand the relevance of the CSOs and the role they could play.**
- **CSOs in in another East African country engaged with Pentecostal churches. Using their shared concern around teenage pregnancies and unsafe abortion as an entry point for engagement, they are now working together on this issue.**

influencers (e.g. popular vloggers), well-known religious, cultural or community leaders, celebrities or other powerful opinion makers at different levels (such as community or national level). They often have a big reach – either in a specific constituency or in broader society - and can therefore be well placed to spread your message to a wider public.
- Think of creative tactics to draw more attention to your campaign and your cause. Examples are the wedding dresses displayed to protest the Lebanese rape law (see box), the female human chain in India to demonstrate for equality in temples or #metoo to start a discussion on sexual violence and harassment. A creative campaign has better chances of being covered by the media.
- Take into account the safety and security of those who are linked to the public campaign. Spreading certain (sensitive) SRHR messages in public can create physical, organisational, reputational and programmatic risks and possible backlash. Conduct a strong risk assessment and develop mitigation strategies. Always ensure you have informed consent when you use images or stories of people.

3 Look for points of entry for dialogue with (representatives of) opposition groups

Sometimes it is worthwhile to find entry points for dialogue with (representatives of) opposition groups, as a way to engage with them and make them less opposed, more neutral or even supportive of your work. Determine if it is useful to target one or more of the groups or individuals that oppose (aspects of) SRHR as identified and analysed in Part 2 of this guide. Take the following into account:

Participants' experience:

"We analysed the tactics of the opposition and why those messages resonate so well, and we were able to develop our own messages based on the understanding of different groups. We realised that SRHR and comprehensive sexuality education are our values but alien [to others], so we started to craft messages for different groups based on shared values."

Workshop participant

[10] *Lakoff & Wheling, The Little Blue Book, 2012.*

- Look for common ground and possible openings for judgment-free dialogue. Try to understand where the opposition is coming from, e.g. if it is based on a misunderstanding of comprehensive sexuality education then it might help to sensitise them on that topic and address any myths, misconceptions and fears.
- Map key actors within opposition groups to identify those that are more open to dialogue.
- If you invite opposition groups or individuals for a public dialogue, be aware that you are providing them a platform. Therefore, carefully consider if a public dialogue - or going into dialogue at all - is really going to help your cause.
- As explained in Part 2, try to think of opposition as a continuum which allows for change of attitudes. People do not usually oppose SRHR 100% and by having open discussions with them, they might move along the continuum towards a more supportive attitude regarding SRHR issues. However, do carefully consider if it is worth your efforts. It might be more efficient to focus your attention on other stakeholders if you think the outcomes of working with opposition groups will be modest.
- Think of who would be a credible messenger or ally who could help you start a conversation with those opposing SRHR. For instance, involve religious leaders who have positive interpretations of religious books and texts and are supportive of (aspects of) SRHR as champions. They often have authority and are perceived by many as trustworthy.

Exchanging and Learning from Advocacy Approaches

Examples of frames

Refugees as a flood: In 2015, exceptionally high numbers of refugees were fleeing to Europe. This situation was often framed using the metaphor of a flood: 'asylum-seekers stream into Europe', 'there is fear for a wave of refugees'. Often these messages were accompanied by images of large groups of people. This frame activated negative feelings people generally associate with floods (unstoppable, negative consequences, dangerous), contributing to negative feelings with regards to refugees.

Building on values for marriage equality: Messages in the campaign for the Irish referendum on marriage equality were framed around common Irish values. Research shows that people's deeply established values often came down to a sense of fairness, which was used in the campaign messages, e.g. 'Loving, equal, fair, generous, inclusive: there are many words to describe Ireland. On the 22nd of May we only need one. Yes'.

4 Strengthen narratives and (re)frame language

In our work on SRHR we constantly send out messages to different audiences: we lobby governments to adopt progressive laws and policies; we try to convince schools to teach their students comprehensive sexuality education; we influence the wider public to support our cause, etc. By sending out messages to these audiences we want them to take a certain action, as we can only reach the fulfilment of SRHR together. Therefore, it is very important that the messages we send out are effective: this means that the messages should reach and speak to our audiences, and ideally move them to action.

The language and images that we use are very important in making our messages effective. A common misconception is that "if we tell people facts, most people will reason to the right conclusion"[10]. However, people have their own values and beliefs that they use as the basis for their reasoning. Therefore, simply sharing facts and figures is often not sufficient for effective communication and advocacy. We need to speak to the existing values, beliefs and emotions that people hold, in order for our messages to resonate and be accepted by our audience. Here are some tips to do this:

- Use personal stories. This can be your own story, the story of someone close to you, or the story of someone you do not know, e.g. "I would like to share the story of Mona with you…".
- Share images: Adding a visual aspect to your story can help people to really "see" your message. For instance, sharing a picture of someone you are talking about can help in literally giving a face to the story. Using metaphors can also help your audience to visualise your story better.
- Share hopes and fears, e.g. "I hope one day my children can live in a world where they can freely choose the partner they want to be with without experiencing any violence or discrimination".
- Show something is morally wrong, e.g. "Women and girls are dying in our country because they cannot access the care they need".

The choice of one word or image over another can make a huge difference. This is where framing comes in: words and images elicit certain thoughts, feelings, and associations. By framing our messages, we intentionally use specific words and images to create a feeling or draw a picture for our audience. Framing sets the terms by which your audience will think about your issue and it will either build support or opposition.

We and many of our partners have identified the development of effective messages, including framing of messages and building on values, beliefs and emotions as a

Standing strong together

In a South-East Asian country, a group of CSOs work together in an alliance on advancing SRHR. One of their goals is to have their country's draft Policy on Elimination of Sexual Violence ratified, for which they lobbied and campaigned. However, a conservative group launched an online counter campaign, attacking this draft policy and the alliance itself. Using the alliance's own digital footprint, the conservative group made false accusations about the alliance's agenda and tried to justify these with links to its mission and members. The conservative group sent around a WhatsApp message, falsely conflating the alliance's support for the policy with promotion of 'free (premarital) sex'.

Alliance members started to make public responses, using their own social media accounts, sharing infographics, videos, and posts, contradicting the claims about free sex. In their efforts the alliance collaborated with the country's Commission on Violence Against Women. This Commission used its own network to share correct information about the policy that was attacked and hosted a press conference attracting national media. The alliance's good standing with its existing networks facilitated a swift and unified response.

field in which we can improve. We strongly recommend the suggested further reading on this topic in Annexe I in addition to the following tips regarding framing and value-based messages:

- Do not repeat the message of those opposing SRHR: Because we are sometimes reactive to backlash instead of proactive, we can be forced to base public debates on the narratives set by the opposition. However, we should be careful not to repeat the messages of the opposition. When we repeat the words used in opposition groups' messages ("comprehensive sexuality education doesn't lead to more sexual relations") we actually reinforce their frames and messages. We also sometimes do this in myth-busting: we repeat certain myths before we break them down. By repeating the myths, we can reinforce them.
- Share your own message and repeat: instead of repeating messages from opposition groups, share your own story. Develop your own clear messages and stick to them. Also try to get others to start using your messages, like the media who are reporting on your issues or your work. For instance, sensitise the media on why they should refer to those opposing safe and legal abortion as "anti-abortion" instead of "pro-life".
- Find a balance: When using values in your messages, seek for ways to develop messages that are true to yourself, but which will also be heard by people whose values may not be exactly the same as yours.
- Adapt your message to your audience: Each audience is different. If you want them to take action you need to develop a message that is specifically adjusted to them. Available data on the important values of your audience, or conducting research on these values can be very helpful in developing your specific messages.
- Use basic level language: Often when we talk or write about SRHR we use jargon. "Sexual and reproductive health and rights" is itself not a description of our work or themes that people (generally) understand. Your message cannot resonate with anyone who doesn't understand the words that you use, so we should use basic level language and make our sentences less technical.
- Test your messages. You can probably think of great frames and messages, but be aware that we live in our own bubble. Therefore, you need to test messages and frames with the audiences you want to share those messages with. Testing your messages can be as big or small as is possible with the resources and time available. You can ask someone outside of the sector to look at the message (think of a friend, family member or neighbour); you can conduct one or several focus group discussions or semi-structured interviews; or you can do a big poll. These tests might bring to light that you need to change your frame or message in order for it to resonate better with your audience. The 'How to test your communications' toolkit by ILGA Europe & PIRC is a very useful tool when you are new to message testing (see Annexe I).

5 Strengthening (collaboration within) civil society and beyond

Strength comes in numbers, and to work towards SRHR in times of opposition, civil society needs to work together. This means working with other civil society organisations that focus on SRHR, or with CSOs and networks working in

Exchanging and Learning from Advocacy Approaches

related areas such as health, human rights and gender equality. In this way you can support each other in your advocacy efforts. It might enable you to reach stakeholders, such as policy and decision-makers, which you could not otherwise have reached. And it could help in linking international, national and local advocacy efforts with each other. Furthermore, working in partnership makes it more difficult for opposition groups to call out on one specific organisation because of the large group involved. Note that there should be a shared goal: you cannot expect civil society in general to support you when there is nothing in it for them. So, it is important to look for common ground, such as intersectional issues, and from there explore which organisations to collaborate with, on what, and how. Besides civil society there might be other actors who can support your cause and with whom you can strengthen or intensify collaboration. Think of media houses, human rights bodies, research institutes, etc. Ways to strengthen (collaboration within) civil society and beyond include:

- When working together with others, develop a joint advocacy or communication plan. Such a plan can clarify on which topic(s) you will collaborate and what advocacy messages will be shared with policy and decision-makers and/or the broader public and how this will be done.
- Acknowledge the different expertise, networks and

constituents the collaborating CSOs have to contribute. This might, for example, suggest that different organisations/networks make use of different strategies, e.g. some will focus more on advising and collaborating with policy and decision-makers, perhaps through their membership of Technical Working Groups, while others will simultaneously work more on creating public support for the advocacy agenda by involving (segments of) broader society, or focus on litigation.

- Concept and value clarification on SRHR (or a specific theme within SRHR) within and between CSOs (including at the level of boards and steering committees), could support the development of such a plan.
- Consider whether there is need for strengthening communication skills to implement the joint advocacy or communication plan, so you are well prepared for delivering SRHR messages to policy makers and/or the public.
- Strengthen collaboration with research organisations, so they can help in generating evidence which you can use in your advocacy.
- Strengthen collaboration with organisations specialised in legal aid and legislation, so you can ask for support or advice when needed. High profile court cases can build public attention and support for your cause.
- Strengthen collaboration with national human rights bodies, as this could help to create access to other networks and advocacy opportunities.
- Strengthen relations with your constituencies, like youth and women, so they can speak out as well, e.g. by raising their awareness and by involving them in the advocacy, for example through social media.

Session 3.1 Learning from Experiences in Relation to other Topics

Objective	Increased insight into effective civil society strategies/approaches to prevent and deal with opposition
Time	45min (in case of one presentation) or 1h 15min (in case of parallel sessions)
Materials	Projector, if required by the invited presenter(s); parallel sessions will require a second room etc.
Preparation	Invite one or two presenter(s)

Description

The aim of this session is to learn directly from advocates who have considerable experience with integrating approaches to prevent and deal with opposition in their work, as they work on topics that have been met with longstanding and/or considerable opposition. Preferably, these will be topics within or related to SRHR.

Facilitator instructions

Preparation before the workshop:

❶ In advance, invite one or two people who have practical experience with preventing and dealing with opposition as advocates (or at least from a civil society perspective), on SRHR or another similar topic. The idea is to invite advocates from an area of work that has long faced considerable opposition. These are preferably topics within SRHR or related to SRHR, such as safe and legal abortion. Alternatively, you could consider inviting advocates working on space for civil society, environment or land rights. The participants may have useful suggestions: discuss who to invite during your pre-meeting conversations.

❷ When inviting them, ask them to prepare a presentation of a maximum of 20 minutes on approaches/ strategies they have used to prevent and deal with opposition in their work, focusing on which were most successful and why.

❸ It might be interesting to invite these people to attend the entire workshop, not just this session. Check in advance with (some of) the participants if they think that is relevant and if they would feel comfortable with them being present the entire workshop.

During the session:

❶ **One speaker in plenary**

If you have one speaker, introduce them, give them the floor for their 20 minutes, then invite questions and discussion. Have a few questions prepared for the unlikely event that your participants don't come forward with their own: ask the

group, what kind of opposition was faced, what responses were made? Ask the speaker, what was most effective? What would they have liked to do differently?

❷ **a) Two speakers in parallel**

If you have two speakers - on two different areas of work - you could consider organising parallel sessions. Each parallel session consists of a presentation (20 minutes), followed by exchange (30 minutes), facilitated by the presenter. Also have a plenary afterwards (25 minutes), to give space for sharing of the main findings of both groups. In this set-up, you would need approximately 1 hour 15 minutes in total for the session. If time allows, you can of course also choose to do the two sessions in plenary, so that participants can attend both sessions (see below). This saves you having to divide the group and secure a second room.

❷ **b) Two speakers in plenary**

If you have two speakers and want the whole group to hear both of them, introduce them and invite them to speak consecutively with a short five or ten-minute clarification session after the first speaker. It will be interesting to compare the two and even hear the speakers get into discussion on their approaches, but try to moderate the discussion so that the learning is uncovered from both presentations. You could have general questions for 30 minutes and reserve ten minutes for the speakers to reach conclusions with you.

Session 3.2 Analysis of Current Civil Society Advocacy Response to Opposition to SRHR

Objective	Joint analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the current civil society response to opposition in the country/countries of focus
Time	2h
Materials	Flip charts, markers

Description

By analysing how civil society in the area of SRHR currently responds to opposition, participants gain mutual understanding regarding the strength and weaknesses of the used approaches as well as on the levels of collaboration within civil society. You can decide to focus this session on civil society working on SRHR "in general" in the country/countries of focus or a specific platform/alliance/network.

This session will provide an important basis for the session on strategising described in Part 4 of this guide, especially the discussion on the underlying causes of current weaknesses.

Facilitator instructions

❶ Introduce the group work in plenary, including the questions for discussion.

You could use the following questions for analysing the civil society response in the groups:

In the work on SRHR:

a) What are strengths in the civil society advocacy response to opposition? Which factors contribute to these strengths?

In doing so, think in particular of:
- The current (advocacy) approaches used by civil society
- The collaboration between civil society organisations

b) What are the weaknesses in the civil society advocacy response to opposition? What are the underlying causes?

In doing so, think in particular of:
- The current (advocacy) approaches used by civil society
- The collaboration between civil society organisations

Make sure you clarify before the group work what is understood by "civil society" in this discussion: the broader civil society in the country/countries or focus or a specific platform/alliance/network.

❷ Start the group work. Where all participants are from the same country, divide into smaller groups, for example one group focusing on the first question on strengths and another group focusing on the second question on weaknesses. In case of participation of people from different countries, it is advisable to ask the participants to divide into groups by country. Share the following with the participants:
- Ask participants to be sure to reflect critically on the second sub-question of both clusters of questions: Which factors contribute to the strengths? What is causing the weaknesses in this particular country?
- Each group needs a reporter, who will document the discussion and present the main outcomes in plenary (either a laptop or on a flip chart).

❸ Conclude with a plenary: ask the reporters to report back to the group what the main findings were during the discussions. Give some opportunity for questions.

Session 3.3 Sharing Lessons Learned on Effective Application of Approaches

Objective	Increased understanding of how approaches to deal with opposition could be applied as effectively as possible when working on SRHR
Time	2h 15min
Materials	PowerPoint, projector, flip charts, markers
Preparation	• Talk with (some of the) participants to start identifying which approaches will be most relevant to focus on in this session • Consider whether you want to ask participants or external people to participate as a resource person; if so, invite and brief them in advance • Make an overview of several approaches to work on SRHR in times of opposition (PowerPoint), and complement it during the workshop • Read box 1 at the end of this session outline

Description

This session first provides an overview of several approaches to deal with opposition: as discussed already during this workshop and based on theory and experiences from other contexts. As a next step, it will in particular zoom in on a number of these approaches, which have the potential to be applied more or more effectively in this context. This session aims to increase joint understanding of how these approaches could be used as effectively as possible, by exchanging experiences and lessons learnt, best practices, ideas and questions. The exact selection of approaches that the session will focus on, is to be decided by the facilitator, in consultation – before and during the workshop - with the participants.

Facilitator instructions

Preparation before the workshop:

❶ Make an overview of several approaches to working on SRHR in times of opposition, perhaps in PowerPoint. You can start to prepare your overview using the information in the introduction of Part 3, which describes five clusters of approaches/strategies. During the workshop, you can strengthen the overview by adding findings from the sessions in Part 2 and sessions 3.1 and 3.2. When developing the workshop programme, you must take this need to update the overview into account, e.g. by planning session 3.3 at the beginning of the day or after lunch.

❷ You will probably only have space to zoom into two or three approaches in this session (one per sub-session), so it is advisable to select these in advance. This is essential if you want to ask participants or external people to have a role as a resource person, e.g. by presenting their insights, experiences and best practices on one of the approaches. Consider these factors when making this selection: the most relevant for the country context; a relatively new or unknown approach; the potential for improving how the approach is being applied; the interest in studying a best practice. Therefore, if possible, have conversations with participants in advance of the workshop/sessions so that you get an understanding what kind of approaches they already use, what challenges they encounter and what their needs are.

❸ In general, the five clusters of approaches as described in the introduction of Part 3 can be used to focus on in the sub-sessions, based on the above-mentioned factors and taking into account the added value for the rest of the programme. For more tips for selecting approaches to focus on in the sub-sessions, see box 1 at the end of this session outline.

❹ If you have decided to ask participants or external people to have a role as a resource person, invite and brief them in advance.

Session 3.3 Sharing Lessons Learnt on Effective Application of Approaches

During the session:

❶ Introduce the aim and set-up of the session. While this session is focusing on learning about 2-3 approaches, remind participants that the next session concerns strategising: determining which approaches/ strategies are most relevant and how to apply these. Therefore, during this session, it is important to take notes of specific ideas or insights they want include in the strategising session.

❷ Start with presenting the above-mentioned overview of approaches to work on SRHR in times of opposition: approaches which have been discussed so far during this workshop, by referring to examples that were touched upon, complemented by approaches based on theory and experiences from other contexts. Explain that the overview is not exhaustive: it focuses on those approaches that seem to be most relevant and/ or provide considerable potential for more effective use. Furthermore, the effectiveness of these approaches will depend in particular on how they are being used. Also, some of the approaches overlap to a certain extent, which is no problem, as there is not one 'best' approach. Rather, the idea is to work on a number of approaches simultaneously. In doing so, different organisations (different types of CSOs or with different expertise) can complement each other.

❸ Explain that the session will in particular zoom in on a number of these approaches, which have the potential to be applied more or more effectively in this context. This will be done in sub-sessions, which give space to mutual exchange -e.g. on best practices- and learning on how these approaches can be applied most effectively in the country context. Ensure that attention is paid to how an

approach can be used in practice, so that the participants have ideas on how to use the approach themselves.

❹ How to organize the sub-sessions: Each sub-session focuses on 1 approach. Probably time allows to address max 2-3 approaches. You can either have parallel sub-sessions so participants can choose where to go, or 1 or 2 plenary sessions if you want all participants to be informed. You could also consider something in between like a presentation in plenary by two resource people, after which you split up in two groups for discussions per approach. Selection depends mainly on the number of approaches you want to highlight, the number of participants and time available. Take into account the following:

- If you have decided to invite resource people (see information on preparation before the meeting), ask them to kick off the discussion in the sub-session by presenting some of their experiences and best practices. We advise to avoid a lengthy presentation, but rather have an interactive discussion.
- Make sure the discussions and in particular the conclusions are noted down.

❺ End the overall session with drawing conclusions. Ask everyone to share their main learning points in plenary.

Box 1.

Tips for Selecting Approaches to Focus on in the Sub-Sessions

To help you to decide on which approaches to focus your sub-sessions and how to set these up, here are some tips for each of the clusters of approaches (based on the five clusters of approaches explained in the introduction of this block)

❶ **Advocacy towards policy and-decision makers**
If you decide to zoom in on this cluster, try to avoid the discussion becoming too general, as this is a broad cluster of approaches. Therefore, it is recommended to focus on particular approaches within this cluster. You could for example focus on best practices in making effective use of existing advocacy spaces, such as participation in Technical Working Groups, or in relation to supporting and capacitating policy and decision-makers that are either already favourable or at least lukewarm regarding SRHR.

❷ **Build public support for the advocacy agenda**
This cluster consists of a number of approaches. It is therefore advised to zoom in on learning about how best to use one or two particular approaches, such as:

- How to engage better with media. In our experience it helps to invite someone working for a media house or a (former) journalist, to get a clearer idea from their point of view. For example, you can ask a journalist to present how they think media engagement by civil society can be strengthened. This could include sharing their insights on what they consider to be newsworthy, followed by a discussion and further sharing of learnings and best practices. This can include cases for inspiration on how others have worked with media to push for SRHR in a context affected by opposition, e.g. see case of Pakistan in Annexe I, Further reading.
- Using social media: You could for example ask one of the participating organisations with experience in this area to share their experience and analysis on the

effective use of social media in times of opposition or conservative contexts. Aspects to consider include how these can be used to involve constituencies, such as youth, how to respond to (online) misinformation, and what are potential risks/dilemmas to take into account.

- Working with (potential) champions: Options include inviting an opinion leader who is a champion for SRHR, at national or community level and/or within a specific group within civil society, e.g. youth or women. For example, a social media influencer (like a popular vlogger) or a religious, cultural or community leader. This champion could share insights and experiences on how they see their role in building support for SRHR and what sort of information and support they value, followed by a discussion and further sharing of learning and best practice. Another option could be to highlight one or two participants' best practices .

❸ **Look for points of entry for dialogue with opposition groups or their representatives**
Consider inviting an organisation with expertise in this area to share how they have concretely established dialogue with opposition groups, including how they have explored common ground without letting go of own values (either one of the participating organization, or another organisation that specifically suits this session). An alternative could be to invite a former representative of an opposition group, who changed position based on such a dialogue and awareness raising. In the latter case, only consider inviting this representative for this particular session if the participants feel comfortable with this and trust this representative.

Tips for Selecting Approaches to Focus on in the Sub-Sessions

❹ **Strengthen narratives and reframe language**

This is probably one of the approaches that is less known, and therefore it is advisable to start with a presentation on value-based narratives and frames. We strongly recommend looking at the resources on reframing language in Annexe I -Further reading. Depending on the time you have, you can think of including a "persona exercise" (giving a face to your audience, thinking of which values would be important to them); having a deeper look into the value map of Schwartz; and/or practising writing value-based messages for a specific audience and (advocacy) goal (for a session plan on this see Part 5, session 5.1 of this guide).

❺ **Strengthening (collaboration within) civil society and beyond**

Consider critically whether a sub-session on this cluster of strategies really adds value, as the previous session in part 2 (session 2) and the next session on strategising also look into collaboration within civil society, and you might risk duplicating topics at the expense of another approach. There is potential added value in focusing on one or two best practices in collaboration in the specific area of SRHR or a related topic, from the same country or region, and to jointly analyse what made this collaboration successful as a strategy to work on in times of opposition.

Developing Strategy and Action Plans

Developing Strategy and Action Plans
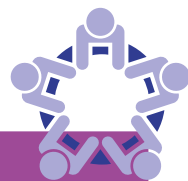
Sessions

4.1 Risk assessment and management		1h 30min
4.2 Joint strategising and developing action plans		1h
4.3 Developing action plans		1h
Total		**3h**

Introduction

In this Part participants translate their learning and insight from the previous sessions into concrete actions points. This is mainly done in session 4.2 when participants a) jointly strategise around the question of how to strengthen their work to limit the influence of opposition forces, and b) develop an action plan to implement this strategy. If time allows you can decide to start with session 4.1 which focuses on conducting a risk assessment, looking at possible risks in relation to opposition and safety and security. This might provide participants with some extra insights that can feed into the discussions in session 4.2.

Session 4.1 Risk Assessment and Management

Objective	• Participants know how to conduct a risk assessment and have increased understanding of different risk management strategies • Participants identified possible risks for (parts of) their workplans in relation to opposition and safety and security • Participants made risk management plans for some of the identified risks
Time	1h 30min
Materials	Flip chart, markers, Post it Notes
Preparation	Discuss with participants what plan to base this session on and request this plan in advance so you can make copies if necessary

Introduction

Anyone who tries to create change may well experience some form of opposition. This can vary from one grumpy person rolling their eyes at you, to a group of people or organisations speaking out against the change you are calling for. It can even express itself in physical violence. As we know by now, this can have big implications for our work and for the safety and security of our people, our organisation and/or our network. However, when we are aware of these risks there may be ways we can limit the chances of risk occurring, or to decrease the impact of a risk. Therefore, it is useful to do a risk assessment and make a risk management plan.

Organisations often conduct risk assessments for their workplans in order to be prepared for any unplanned events that might harm their work. However, these types of risk assessment do not always consider the consequences of opposition and/or the safety and security risks for people or organisations involved in the work. Therefore, this session is specifically focused on risk assessment and management of opposition and safety and security. Below you can find more information on how to conduct a risk assessment and risk management strategies.

Note that when running this session in a workshop it is unlikely there will be enough time to conduct a full risk assessment on the whole workplan (i.e the general workplan participants developed to implement a programme or project, not mean the action plan that is being developed in session 4.3). However, by including this session in your workshop, participants learn or refresh their knowledge on conducting a risk assessment with special attention to opposition and safety and security. If they find it useful they can still do a full risk assessment at a later point.

Risk assessment
A first step in the risk assessment is to identify possible risks that affect the implementation, effectiveness and/or outcomes of your planned work. The next step is to analyse

Safety and security

Ensuring safety and security goes beyond protection from violence, harassment and raids. It also includes remaining physically and emotionally healthy, like preventing stress or fatigue, and other important steps to sustain ourselves and our work. Therefore, when reflecting on safety and security take into account both the physical, digital as well as the psycho-social aspects. Want to know more about this? Check out this holistic security manual: https://holistic-security.tacticaltech.org/

them. For each risk decide what the impact would be on your work if the risk were to occur. Decide if there will be no impact at all, or minor, medium, major or extensive risk. Then, decide if it is highly unlikely, unlikely, possible, likely or very likely that the risk will occur. Once you have decided on both the impact and the probability you can place the risk in the correct place in the matrix below:

Impact →→					
4 Extensive					
3 Major					
2 Medium					
1 Minor					
0 None					
	0 Highly Unlikely	**1** Unlikely	**2** Possible	**3** Likely	**4** Very likely

→ Probability

Risk management strategies

In the risk assessment, you have identified possible risks related to your work. By placing them in the matrix you have highlighted which risks need most attention: these are the risks that have a major or extensive impact and are likely or very likely to occur. However, also have a look at risks in the other boxes: a risk with a major or extensive impact might also need your attention even though the probability of it occurring seems only "possible" or "unlikely". This also works the other way around: if a risk has a medium or minor impact but if it is very likely to occur you might need to address it more urgently.

Now you have an overview of your risks, their impact and their probability, you can think of appropriate management strategies. You can do this for all the risks you have identified, for the risks with the highest impact and probability or for anything in between.

There are different strategies for managing risks:

1. **Avoid:** You choose not to pursue something as you do not want to take the risk that comes with it. This could also mean you change tactics to avoid risk, e.g. you may choose not to attend a protest organised by people with opposing views, avoiding risks related to your safety and security or to your general wellbeing.
2. **Mitigate:** You put safeguards in place to make a risk less likely to occur, or to reduce the impact of a risk when it occurs, e.g. when you face the risk of

opposition attacking your messages, you can try to make this less likely by framing your messages in such a way that they are very difficult to attack (for instance, centred around love, compassion or family).
3. **Manage:** You develop a plan to handle the risk if it occurs. For instance, if you think you will get arrested during an illegal protest, you first look up your rights and contact a lawyer. Should you actually get arrested you can then contact your lawyer who can help you further. With regards to safety and security you could also think of contracting a human rights defenders organisation which can help provide you a safe space, legal advice or any other type of support that you need.
4. **Transfer:** If the risks happens, it is someone else's problem. Insurance is an example of this. Another example is having a different individual/organisation/ umbrella group doing the public representation. If backlash occurs, it is against this individual, organisation or group.
5. **Accept:** Sometimes you simply decide to take the consequences of your action.

Description

In this session, participants will look at their workplans and apply a risk assessment to part of these plans in relation to opposition and safety and security. By workplans we mean the general workplan that participants have developed to implement a programme or project. We do not mean the action plan that will be developed in session 4.3. By

conducting this assessment and discussing strategies for management of these risks, participants can be better prepared for opposition.

Outcomes of sessions in Parts 2 and 3 can serve as input here. In the sessions of Part 2 participants focused on increasing their understanding of opposition forces and in Part 3 they took a look at what kind of approaches they could adopt or strengthen to limit the influence of opposition. In turn, the outcomes of this session can serve as input for session 4.2 (strategising and developing action plans).

Facilitator's instructions
Preparation before the session:

This session is most effective if it can be based on the participants' own workplans, as in that case they can apply the risk assessment immediately to their own plans. Note that it is probably not possible to conduct a risk assessment for their entire workplan. Therefore, discuss in advance with participants which plans, and what part of the plans, they can use for this session and plan accordingly.

During the session:

1. Begin by explaining the aim of this session.
2. Explain how to conduct a risk assessment. You can use the introduction notes of this session. If participants are already familiar with conducting a risk assessment you can still explain briefly to make sure everyone has the same understanding of a risk assessment. Ask for examples of risks in relation to the workplan that you are using for this session.
3. Explain that the risk assessment that will be conducted in this session is related to risks arising regarding opposition forces and safety and security, and therefore will focus on the following two questions:
   a. What opposition may arise in response to your activities that could pose risks to your work (its implementation, effectiveness or outcomes)?
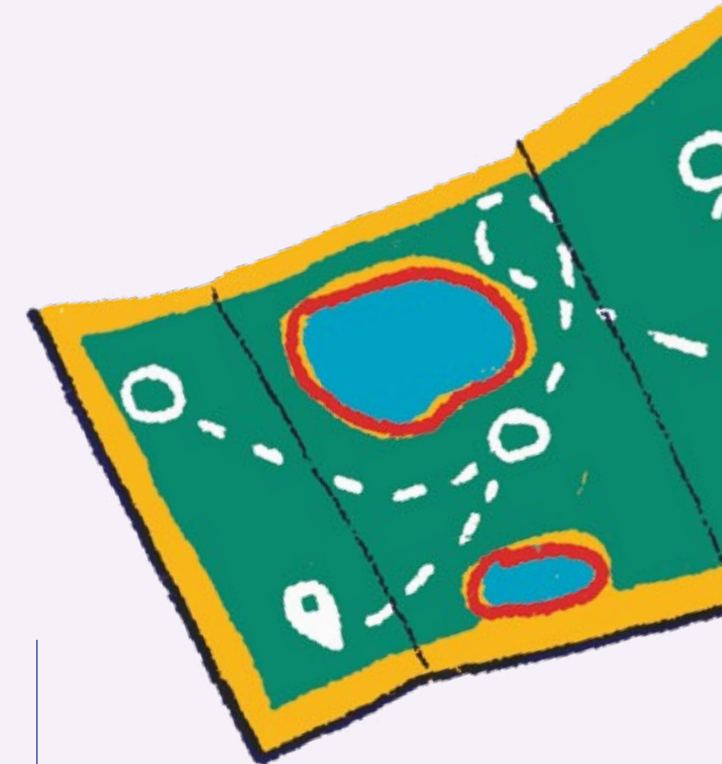
   b. What risks may arise to the physical and digital safety and security and wellbeing of those involved in your work (individuals, staff, allies)?
4. Ask participants to form groups and, within these groups, to identify the risks in relation to parts of their workplan by answering the two questions in the previous step.
5. If all groups have made this assessment based on the same workplan, ask them to come back in plenary and to place their Post it Notes onto the matrix one by one. You could create the matrix with masking tape on a wall, or draw it on a flip chart. If the groups were doing an assessment for different workplans, ask each group to make their own matrix, and discuss the top three most important identified risks in plenary.
6. Once the risk assessment is done, explain the different risk management strategies. Try to give examples that resonate with the participants and/or ask participants for examples.
7. Pick one or two risks that were identified by the groups and discuss in plenary what risk management strategies might deal with those risks. Try to pick different examples, relating to both opposition and to safety and security.
8. Participants go back into groups and pick their top three (or more if time allows) most important identified risks. For these risks they are asked to make a management plan. For instance, if they decide to mitigate a risk, the plan should describe how this will be done exactly.
9. End in plenary, asking groups to share one plan each they made to manage a risk. Outcomes of this session can be included in the development of action plans in session 4.2.

Session 4.2 Strategising

Objective	Agreement has been reached on how selected approaches will be integrated and/ or strengthened in (ongoing or planned) work on concrete topics/ advocacy priorities in the area of SRHR
Time	1h
Materials	The flip charts and/or minutes from previous sessions, markers
Preparation	• Discuss with the co-organisers or participants how the outcomes of this discussion - including possible actions/activities - can be integrated in existing strategy documents, workplans and budgets • Discuss on which topics or advocacy priorities to focus (optional)
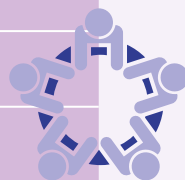
Description

In this session, participants will apply their learning from the previous parts. It provides space for joint strategising by the participants, by focusing on the following question: how can we improve (some of) our work in relation to SRHR, by integrating and/or strengthening the use of relevant approaches to prevent and deal with opposition? To make the discussion more focused it can be centred around specific topics or advocacy priorities. In relation to each topic/advocacy priority, the group will select the approaches that need to be prioritised to prevent and deal with opposition more effectively in the ongoing or planned work, followed by joint strategising on how this will be done.

Facilitator instructions

Preparation before the workshop:

Discuss beforehand with the co-organisers or representatives of the participants how the outcomes of this discussion - including possible actions/activities - can be integrated in existing strategy documents, workplans and budgets and ensure this is communicated to the participants during the introduction of this session.

During the session:

❶ **Introduce the session.** Underline that the strategising should focus on how participants can strengthen their work on SRHR in a context affected by opposition. The ultimate goal is of course not to deal only with opposition in general, but to do so in light of participants' specific advocacy/programme goals. Therefore, first you should agree what topic/advocacy priority the strategising will focus on. This should concern existing - ongoing or planned - work in the area of SRHR. Also agree whether this strategising concerns a particular project or programme, or whether it is a (potential) area of joint work between a number of programmes or platforms/networks.

Examples could include strategising on:
● an existing advocacy priority in an advocacy strategy of a platform/alliance/network.
● a topic of common interest between different alliances/ programmes, but which is not yet being worked on in a concerted manner, for example on CSE or safe abortion.
❷ **Take into account the following:**
  ● Try to be as specific as possible and ensure that all participants have sufficient knowledge of the selected topic/ advocacy priority (from now onwards called 'topic') to start strategising.
  ● Ensure it is clear to all how the outcomes of this discussion -including possible actions/ activities- can be integrated in existing strategy documents, workplans and budgets.
❸ **Explain the set-up of the session:** When you focus on one topic, you could involve all participants during a plenary discussion (also depending on the number of participants). If you focus on more topics, you are advised to work in parallel sessions, to ensure there is sufficient time for in-depth strategising and to address the real challenges for each topic. Make sure you select

a note keeper for each session, as documentation of the outcomes is crucial.

❹ **Explain the focus of the discussion for each selected topic:** how can we improve (some of) our ongoing work in relation to SRHR, by integrating the use of relevant approaches and/or strengthening approaches that are already being used? Share the following with the participants:
● This discussion should build on the insights of all of the preceding sessions (you could, for example, paste the flip charts with these lessons on the walls). It is important not to forget the outcomes of session 3.2 in Part 3 (analysis of current civil society response), in particular the underlying causes of the weaknesses that were discussed. Also, remind the group of the overview you presented in the preceding session (3.3) of several approaches you could apply, either by presenting it or visualising it.
● The main questions for discussion of each topic:
o Which approaches need to be prioritised to prevent and deal with opposition more effectively in the work on this topic? Focus the discussion on the underlying causes of the weaknesses (as identified in session 3.2 (analysis of

current civil society response), e.g. differences in individual or organisational values or in vision. Try to address how these can be overcome.
o Strategise on how you will use these approaches more effectively.
o Draw conclusions and agree on these.
● Remind the participants that there is not one 'best' strategy. Rather, the idea is to work on a number of strategies simultaneously, and also to acknowledge the differences between organisations, such as different expertise or preferred way of working (for example concerning the level of activism). Discuss these differences, especially in relation to values and vision, to increase mutual understanding and try to find common ground, for example agreement on a desired change or result. How this agreed desired change is achieved can then vary, for example some organisations will focus more on advising and collaborating with policy and decision-makers, while others might work more on creating public support for the advocacy agenda by involving (segments of) broader society and/or on more activist approaches.
❺ **Should you choose to focus on two or three topics in parallel sessions, conclude with a plenary. Ask the groups to report back on:**
o The main conclusions of their strategising work. If necessary, have further discussion and try to reach agreement on how the approaches selected will be integrated and/or strengthened in ongoing or planned work. Try to be as specific as possible.
o Any pending issues. The pending issues can then be integrated in the session that follows on the development of action plans.

Session 4.3 Developing Action Plans

Objective	Action plans developed for integration in existing strategy documents, workplans and budgets
Time	1h
Materials	Flip charts from previous sessions, parking lot, markers
Preparation	• Discuss how action plans can be incorporated in existing strategy documents, workplans and budgets • Develop format for action plans (optional)

Description

This session builds on the previous strategising session: now concrete actions/activities will be planned, and a division of tasks will be discussed. Should any pending questions remain from the end of the strategising session, follow-up actions to address these should be formulated. It is key to develop activities/actions which can be integrated in existing strategy documents, workplans and budgets.

Facilitator instructions

❶ In the introduction of the session, explain to the participants how this session builds on the previous session. If you have integrated session 4.1 into your workshop there might also be outcomes from that session that now need to be included in the action plan.

❷ Provide a description of what a good action plan entails (for example, according to the SMART principle) and/or provide a simple format that can be used. Stress the importance of concrete agreement on who will take the lead on what activity or action, and how follow-up is ensured, so that the action points will in fact be implemented. These action plans should ideally be integrated in existing strategy documents, workplans and budgets. Therefore, as indicated in the instructions of the previous strategising session, ensure it is clear to all participants how possible actions/activities can be integrated in those existing documents. If it's not possible to add actions to existing workplans, explore whether it is possible to incorporate the actions into future workplans and budgets (e.g. for the following year) and/or focus on how you can make use of existing activities (in workplans), by integrating certain action points into these activities.

❸ Work in the same groups (if applicable) as during the previous strategising session and share the formats for the action plans if you have developed these.

❹ **Provide the group with some guiding questions for discussion:**
- Think of concrete activities/actions to implement the outcomes of the strategising session:
  o Are the proposed activities/actions feasible (think of capacity, time, budget)?
  o Are there any planned activities into which you can integrate some of the proposed activities or action points?
- If there were questions still pending at the end of the strategising session, formulate follow-up actions to address these. Is there, for example, some kind of validation needed of the outcomes of the strategising session, and/or information sharing with a Governing Body?
- Who is responsible/takes the lead on what?
- How to ensure follow up and monitoring of these actions?

❺ If you worked in groups, let the groups present their draft action plans to each other and provide feedback and tips to each other in plenary, after which each group can process the feedback and finalise its action plan. Ensure in the final plenary that it is clear how follow-up of these actions plans will be ensured.

Optional Sessions

Optional Sessions

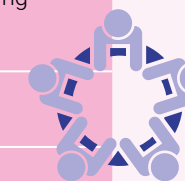| Sessions		
5.1 Framing and value-based messages		2h 30min
5.2 Practising answering difficult questions		1h 30min
Total		**4h**

Introduction

In this part you can find session plans that you might want to include in your workshop:

• **Session 5.1 links with the approach of strengthening narratives and (re)framing language as explained in Part 3. If you decide to focus on this approach you can use the session plan in 5.1 to get participants more familiar with the concept of framing and – if time allows - provide some exercises on how to apply this to the development of messages for their work.**

• **Session 5.2 provides an exercise for participants to help them respond to difficult questions and comments. It includes some tips and tricks and can help participants become more confident when speaking about SRHR, especially in a context affected by opposition. We highly recommend adding this session to your workshop.**

Objective	Participants have an increased understanding and skills of using framing and values in SRHR messages
Time	2h – 2h 30min
Materials	PowerPoint, flip charts, markers, sticky notes
Preparation	Prepare a presentation on framing and values-based messaging. For that you can use the tips in this guide in Part 3 and the resources referred to in Annexe I.

Introduction
This session builds on the information provided in Part 3 on strengthening narratives and (re) framing language. Other useful resources on this topic can be found in Annexe I.

Description
This session plan can be used for zooming in on approaches that limit the influence of opposition as described in Part 3, specifically session 3.3. The aim of this session is that participants get more familiar with the concept of framing and using values in their SRHR messages. The first step is explaining the concepts, after which the participants will practise using them, immediately applied to the topic they are working on and towards the audiences they are trying to reach. If you have limited time, you can decide simply to present the concepts to the group. It helps to have an understanding of these concepts already, and if participants find it important to take it further they can possibly organise a follow-up after your workshop.

Facilitator instructions

❶ Start with a presentation on framing and value-based messages. We recommend you prepare this in advance and use relevant examples. To prepare this presentation you can use the tips in Part 3 of this guide and the resources referred to in Annexe I. The Framing Equality Toolkit of ILGA & PIRC is a particularly useful resource to get a better understanding of the concept. Many of the steps in this session are based on that toolkit.

❷ Ask the participants to divide into groups. Group size is flexible, but strive for groups of three to four people. Ideally, the groups are made up of participants from the same country working on the same advocacy goal. In this way this session is equally useful to all participants. The participants will work in this group for the rest of the session.

❸ Explain to the participants that they are going to work on the concept of framing and value-based messages in a few steps. All the exercises in these steps will be based on an advocacy goal of the participants.

❹ Step 1 is to achieve clarity on the advocacy goal. Ask the participants to answer the questions below. They can write their answers on a flip chart, or you can print the sheet on pages 28/29 of the ILGA/PIRC Framing Equality Toolkit. Explain the questions to the participants before they start working on them:

a. What is your advocacy or campaign goal, or what outcome are you trying to achieve? This should be a specific goal or outcome, like the passing of a draft bill or a no-vote in a referendum, rather than something very high-level, like access to comprehensive sexuality education for everyone. If participants work on several goals, ask them to pick one which they can work on for the rest of the session.

b. Who is your advocacy target or the audience that you need to convince to reach this goal? This might be a policy or decision-maker or any other influential person or group of people who can help you reach

your goal. In campaigns, you often target a group who you can potentially influence to support your cause, who in turn can also influence the policy and decision-maker(s) you are targeting.

c. What is standing in the way of them acting in the way that delivers your desired outcome? For instance, do they fear losing vote or have they an incorrect understanding of the topic you are addressing?

d. What does your frame need to do in order for your audience to overcome this barrier or resistance? What is needed to motivate their support or action? For example, you need to show that comprehensive sexuality education supports young people living healthy and happy lives.

When the groups have finished this exercise (which should take around 30 minutes) you will guide them through the next exercise: making personas.

❺ In step 2 the groups will develop personas for their audience. Ask each group to step into the shoes of their audiences and to answer the questions/describe the aspects below. Participants can write down the answers on a flip chart or you can print the sheet on page 36/37 of the ILGA/PIRC Framing Equality Toolkit.

a. Persona name, age

b. Five things it is important to know about this person, e.g. marital status, job, hobbies

c. A drawing of the persona

d. A quote of the persona regarding the topic you are addressing (something this person could say)

e. Three reasons for the persona to engage with you on the topic you are addressing

f. Three reasons for the persona not to engage with you on the topic you are addressing

g. What are the dreams of the persona?

h. What are the three most important values for this persona?

For this last question you can provide participants with a list of values (for example the value map of Schwartz) to make it a bit easier for them. For this exercise you can give the group another 30 minutes.

❻ Step 3 is the hardest part, to actually develop messages using framing. Participants can start with thinking what their message needs to do (their message task):

a. Shine light on the problem: Getting agreement that there is a problem and what it is

b. Providing a solution: Getting agreement around a solution to a problem

c. Motivate the audience: Inspiring support or action

Sometimes a message needs to do all of these.

❼ Once the message task is decided on, participants need to start brainstorming around their messages. For this they need to go back to their persona, and think of messages that could speak to both the values and emotions of the persona. Ask participants to think of several messages, they do not have to be perfect. They can write the messages on a flip chart or on separate stickies.

❽ After 20 minutes (or a little longer if you feel the groups are still working) ask the group to select and write down their top five messages.

❾ If time allows, it is worthwhile to organise an input session in which participants can provide feedback on the messages of the other groups, for instance in a world café setting.

❿ Close the session in plenary. You can ask the participants how they experienced the session and if they have any key takeaways. Write possible follow-up actions on a flip chart to be used in the strategising and planning sessions in Part 4 and make sure the messages that were developed are captured, e.g. in the report of your workshop or in a separate document. Close by underlining the importance of testing of messages.

Session 5.2 Responding to Challenging Questions and Comments[12]

Objective	Increased skills in responding to challenging questions and comments around SRHR: • Anticipate possible negative or disapproving comments and questions regarding SRHR • Construct and articulate effective responses to these comments and questions
Time	1h – 1h 30min
Materials	Flip charts, prints of/written out questions, chairs
Preparation	See preparation under facilitator's instructions
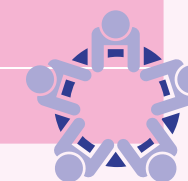
Introduction

When SRHR activists go public, they often experience difficult questions regarding SRHR. This can be from journalists when doing radio or television interviews, from opposition groups during side events at UN meetings, from concerned parents during community dialogues, from anyone on social media, and so on. How you respond (what you say and how you say it) is critical in shaping the conversation on SRHR.

Preparation for answering challenging questions is key. If you have to come up with an answer in the heat of the moment, the chances are you are just reacting to your opponent instead of telling your own story. In this session you will guide participants in practising how to answer difficult questions (see session plan) and you can provide some tips and tricks in (preparation of) answering challenging questions:

● **Tell your own story:** Remember that you talk about SRHR in public because you want people to hear your message. Therefore, think of ways you can integrate your own story/message into your answers. You may have different messages for different audiences, so think in advance about what your message is exactly. Pick a few main points and practise these so you know how to articulate them.

● **Lead the conversation:** It is important you get the chance to share your own messages, so don't simply respond to your opponent. This also means taking control of the conversation. If the conversation is going in a direction you don't like you can claim it back by for instance stepping in and saying, "I'd like to bring us back to the real problem today …" You can use the ABC method here: acknowledge the question ("that's a great question"), build a bridge from the question to your talking points ("I think the important issue is …"); and communicate your message.

● **Don't repeat an opponents' message:** If you repeat a message of the opponent you only reinforce it. Therefore, do not answer the comment "abortion is immoral" with "no, abortion is not immoral". Instead, you can use statements that bring in your own messages: "safe and legal abortion care saves women's and girls' lives".

● **Know your opponents:** If you are invited to speak at an event where other speakers will join the conversation (like a debate, a panel, a radio or tv show with other guests), do your research on these other speakers. What is their stance on (aspects of) SRHR? Are they supporters or opponents? What have they said in the past? What are their strengths and weaknesses in their arguments? When you know these things, you can have already thought of answers to the questions that this person might bring up and of ways to counter his/her messages.

● **Ask difficult questions yourself:** of course you can also ask difficult questions yourself. Think them through carefully, as some questions might give your opponent an opportunity to bring in his/her message. Also think in advance how you could in turn respond to your opponent's answer.

● **Practise:** Answering hard questions in a good way is really a matter of preparation and practising. Take the time to prepare for public events and practise answering questions. You can collect strong answers to commonly asked questions and document them for yourself and your colleagues/the movement you are involved in.

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[12] *This session is based on the carrousel exercise by Catholics for Choice*

Description

The aim of this session is to increase the skills of participants to respond to challenging questions and comments around SRHR. Not only by practising it in this session, but by providing tips and tricks in (preparation for) responding to hard questions and comments and by facilitating experience-sharing of participants.

Set-up of the room
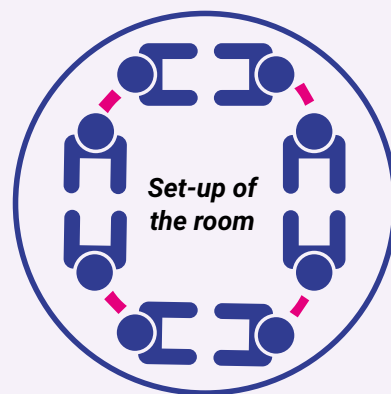
Preparation before the session:

- In advance of this session you need to collect frequently asked challenging questions and comments. You can also bring in your own questions, but it is good to add questions and comments that participants often experience to make the exercise better match their realities and context. From the start of the workshop, when you start other sessions you can hang up a flip chart, asking participants to think of questions and comments that they often experience, anticipate and/or struggle with. They can write these questions on the flip chart.

❶ In advance of this session, you can make a selection from the suggested questions and comments and possibly add a few of your own. Make sure the ones you select yourself are relevant to your participants (in terms of topics they are working on and country context).

❷ Write these down or print them on separate papers.

❸ Prepare possible answers to some of the questions you select so you can support participants during the session.

❹ Set up the room: make a circle of pairs of chairs; each pair of chairs facing each other so that participants can work in pairs. Then place a written or printed question/comment under one of the chairs of each pair. See the drawing on the top of this page

During the session:

❶ Ask everybody to take a seat in the circle.

❷ Explain the aim of the exercise.

❸ Explain that, in this exercise, one of the participants is in the role of a reporter (tv, radio or newspaper, it doesn't matter) and the other one is being themselves. The reporter will interview the participant and reads aloud the question/comment that is assigned to them, under their seat. The reporter can introduce the question/comment briefly, but must leave enough time for the participant to respond. The facilitator will indicate when time is up for answering the question. When time is up the reporters stay in their seats and the participants will move to the next chair and a new reporter.

❹ Ask everyone to check if they are a reporter or a participants. Those people with papers under their seats are the reporters. Do let them know that later in the exercise roles will switch so everybody gets a turn to practise answering.

❺ Depending on how much time there is and/or how many participants there are the group can do a couple of rounds (we suggest you start with four or five rounds). Each round takes four or five minutes. You can vary the time that people have to answer. When time is up in each round the facilitator indicates to participants that they can move seats.

❻ After these rounds, ask a few questions to the participants on how they experienced the exercise, for example:

  a. To participants: How did it feel to respond to these challenging questions/comments?

  b. To participants: What was easy or difficult for you in responding to the reporters?

  c. To reporters: What responses did you hear that were especially helpful?

  d. To reporters: Were there any useful techniques for dealing with a difficult conversation that you observed?

❼ Write any important tips or lessons that come out of this conversation on a flip chart. You could add some tips and tricks (see introduction text) that will help them in the next round if they are not mentioned by the participants.

❽ Continue with the exercise: now the roles will be switched, so everyone who was a reporter will now be a participant, and vice versa.

❾ Hand out new questions/comments to the reporters and do some more rounds (depending on time it can again be four or five rounds).

❿ Close the exercise with a few questions and discussion:

a. Were there any responses in this round that were especially helpful?

b. Did you hear new techniques for dealing with a difficult conversation?

c. What lessons would you take away from this role play to a real-world situation?

⓫ Write all the new lessons and tips down on the flip chart. You could add some more tips and tricks (see introduction text) if they are not mentioned by the participants.

Annexes

Annexe I
Further Reading & Viewing

The reports, books, articles and videos below are documents that provide interesting background information for you as facilitator and can be used during the workshop. This further reading and viewing can also be shared with participants during or at the end of the workshop.

Opposition analysis & monitoring
openDemocracy.net. Tracking the backlash.
On this website of 50.50, the section of openDemocrcacy. net that focuses on gender and sexuality, you can find several articles on backlash to SRHR. The different articles cover cases of how opposition groups work and are funded, and it contains cases of how they are countered.
https://www.opendemocracy.net/en/5050/

The Observatory on the Universality of Rights (OURs) (2017). Rights at Risk.
This report maps a complex global anti-rights lobby targeting various international fora, making connections with national-level agendas, and building increasing alliances across region, religious affiliation, and issues. It reveals an array of evolving strategies and shrewd arguments being used by these actors, and the substantial impacts they have had already.
https://www.oursplatform.org/resource/ rights-risk-trends-report-2017/

Zacharenko, E. (2017). Study for policymakers on opposition to SRHR in Europe: Perspectives on anti-choice lobbying in Europe.
The study aims to (I) raise awareness and build knowledge of anti-choice actors and agendas in Europe by gathering information on their structure and tactics, (II) support advocacy and communications by collecting examples of tactics and arguments used by the anti-choice movement, and (III) contribute to the development of a positive pro-SRHR political agenda.
https://www.elenaz.eu/

The 10 Ds, Community Tool Box by the University of Kansas
The Kansas University developed the Community Tool Box. This is a "free, online resource for those working to build healthier communities and bring about social change. It offers thousands of pages of tips and tools for taking action in communities". One of those pages sets out 10 tactics the opposition may use to oppose work on SRHR.
https://ctb.ku.edu/en/table-of-contents/advocacy/ respond-to-counterattacks/overview-of-opposition-tactics/main

IPPF, SIECUS and Planned Parenthood Federation of America. (2004). Understanding religious and political opposition to reproductive health and rights: A resource guide.
This guide outlines 13 topics that US-based opposition has rallied. Each topic includes a description of the issue and the opposition's public message around a particular issue as well as the underlying intent or objective; examples of opposition tactics and useful facts. Note that the guide is focused on the US and stems from 2004.
https://www.srhr-ask-us.org/publication/ understanding-religious-political-opposition-reproductive-health-rights/

Videos to increase understanding of opposition groups/individuals
An example of a video made by Family Watch International, a group opposing CSE: The war on children. This is a video made for the campaign "Stop Comprehensive Sexuality Education" by Family Watch International and gives the floor to different people who point out why CSE would be harmful to children. It can give participants an understanding of

what arguments an opposition group uses and what values and feelings they try to target.
https://www.comprehensivesexualityeducation.org/ videos/the-war-on-children-the-comprehensive-sexuality-education-agenda/

Phelps-Roper, M. (2017). I grew up in the Westboro Baptist Church. Here's why I left. TED Talk.
In this video Megan Phelps-Roper shares her personal experience of extreme polarisation. She explains why she left the Westboro Baptist Church and how she came to that decision. She shares how she was influenced by others and, through open discussions, changed her mind about certain world views she had.
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bVV2Zk88beY&t=4s

Case studies and inspiration
Chandra-Mouli, V, Plesons, M, Hadi, S, Baig, Q, & Lang, I. (2018). Building support for adolescent sexuality and reproductive health education and responding to resistance in conservative contexts: cases from Pakistan. Glob Health Sci Pract, 6(1), 128-136.
https://doi.org/10.9745/GHSP-D-17-00285

Partos (The Spindle), The Broker and CIVICUS (2017). Activism, Artivism and Beyond: inspiring initiatives of civic power.

This booklet presents creative ways of civil society to speak up and defend and expand civic space.
https://www.partos.nl/fileadmin/files/Documents/ Activism_Artivism_and_Beyond.pdf

The PACT and IPPF. (2017). CSE and Me: Experiences of youth advocates in restrictive environments.
CSE and Me shares the experiences of 39 young CSE advocates from all over the world, and offers ideas and strategies for CSE advocacy in the face of opposition.
http://childrenandaids.org/node/833

Reframing language
ILGA Europe & PIRC. (2017). Framing equality toolkit.
The toolkit is a guide to strategic communications around equality of LGBTI people for activists and communicators. The guide takes you through different stages of framing: it helps you to define the task, to create frames and to check if your frames work. It includes examples of frames used in campaigns in several European countries.
http://publicinterest.org.uk/FramingEqualityToolkit.pdf

ILGA Europe & PIRC. (2017). How to test your communications.
Testing your messages helps you tell whether your choice of framing leads to the outcomes you are aiming for. This resource provides insights on how you can test your messages, including on which frames (both language & images) to use. It provides tips on testing for campaigns or programmes with both limited or sufficient budget and time available.
https://www.ilga-europe.org/communicationsresources/ testingyourcommunications

Lakoff, G. & Wheling, E. (2012). The Little Blue Book.
This book explains how moral discourse (using language based on values) of Republicans and Democrats influences minds and decision-making. It shows how Republicans shape public debate by bringing up morality-based issues and why Democrats struggle to make progressive changes by using evidence. The writers also share some tips for Democrats and progressives on how to become stronger and more influential by changing the language they use.

Annexe I Further Reading & Viewing

International Centre for Policy Advocacy
These reframing guidelines provide a step-by-step approach to building a narrative change campaign. It is not focused on SRHR, but it provides a lot of information on framing and message development which is very relevant.
http://www.narrativechange.org/toolkit/reframing-guidelines

Center for Community Change. Messaging this moment: a handbook for progressive communicators
This handbook provides a few useful principles around messaging, including some examples of which frames to use and which frames to avoid.
https://communitychange.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/C3-Messaging-This-Moment-Handbook.pdf

Reclaiming Family Values (2017). Using family as a frame in social justice activism. A guide for activists and funders in Europe.
This guide describes how activists can use the frame of family - often used by people opposing SRHR and/or LGBT rights - to promote equality. It includes examples of campaigns, and the frames used, promoting family equality in several European countries.
http://www.reclaimingfamilyvalues.eu/

Video in relation to reframing
Advocacy Assembly – Campaign Comm, courses I, II and III
On the website of Advocacy Assembly you can find several interesting courses that you can follow for free. One interesting course offered is Campaign Comm I, II and III. It explains how to develop messages and how to use framing in campaigns focusing on rights of people with diverse sexual orientation and gender identities (SOGI).
https://advocacyassembly.org/en/

Reclaiming Family Values. Why reclaim family values?
Short video (4.40 min) on reclaiming family as a frame.
http://www.reclaimingfamilyvalues.eu/

Religion
Nolley Echegaray, J. (2014). Manufacturing stigma. How faith-based organisations demonise abortion. Conscious Magazine.
A critical article on working with faith-based organisations.
http://dev.friendlydesign.co/cfc/2014/09/12/manufacturing-stigma-2/
Also read Susan Cohen's (Guttmacher Institute) comments on this article: Cohen, S. (Guttmacher Institute) (2015). Manufacturing stigma. http://consciencemag.org/2015/01/26/manufacturing-stigma/

IPPF (2010). Voices of Hope.
Guide to inspire dialogue on religion, faith, sexuality and young people.
This guide examines the dilemmas facing young people living in different religious contexts, including relationships, contraception and pregnancy. It provides tips on starting a discussion with other young people on religion and sexuality, and on engaging parents and religious leaders. It also suggests how organisations can best support young people and advance the dialogue on sexuality and faith.
https://www.ippf.org/resource/voices-hope

Annexe II Suggested Workshop Programme

DAY 1		
Time	**Subject**	**Session in guide**
Welcome and introduction		
09.00-10.30	Welcome and introduction	Part 1
10.30-10.50	Break	
Understanding opposition		
10.50-12.00	Setting the scene: country context	Part 2 Session 2.1
12.00-13.00	Seeing opinions and views on SRHR as a continuum: exchange on personal experiences	Part 2 Session 2.2
13.00-14.00	Lunch	
14.00-15.00	Opposition tactics	Part 2 Session 2.3
15.00-15.20	Break	
15.20-16.50	Identifying and analysing opposition groups: having a closer look at opposition groups and their strategies	Part 2 Session 2.4
16.50-17.00	Short evaluation of the day and closing	

DAY 2		
Time	**Subject**	**Session in guide**
09.00-09.15	Opening of the day	
Exchanging and learning from advocacy approaches		
09.15-10.30	Learning from experiences in relation to other topics	Part 3 Session 3.1
10.30-10.50	Break	
10.50-11.50	Analysis of current civil society advocacy response to opposition to SRHR	Part 3 Session 3.2
11.50-13.00	Sharing lessons learnt on effective application of approaches	Part 3 Session 3.3
13.00-14.00	Lunch	
14.00-17.00	Sharing lessons learnt on effective application of approaches – continued. Include a break in this timeslot.	Part 3 Session 3.3 & Part 5 Session 5.1
17.00-17.15	Short evaluation of the day and closing	

DAY 3		
Time	**Subject**	**Session in guide**
09.00-09.15	Opening of the day	
09.15-10.45	Answering difficult questions	Part 5 Session 5.2
10.45-11.05	Break	
Strategising and developing action plans		
11.05-13.00	Risk assessment and risk management plans	Part 4 Session 4.1
13.00-14.00	Lunch	
14.00-15.30	Developing strategy and action plans	Part 4 Session 4.2 & 4.3
15.30-16.15	Closing and evaluation	

Annexe III
Suggested shorter session

The sessions described in this guide cover a workshop or meeting of two and a half days. In case it is not possible to make this time available, we include here a suggested agenda for approximately half a day, which can be integrated in a broader workshop or meeting agenda, e.g. on advocacy skills.

While half a day does not allow for elaborate discussions, it does provide the opportunity to increase awareness on the importance of preventing and dealing with opposition when working on SRHR and to start a first dialogue among participants on approaches that could be effectively applied in their context.

Sessions		
❶ Introduction		15 min
❷ Understanding opposition		1h 30min
❸ Approaches: learning and making a start with strategising		20 min
❹ Action points/follow-up		15 min
Total		**4h**

1 Introduction

Since half a day is very short, ensure beforehand that a clear focus is chosen. The introduction should clarify this focus. Underline that the aim is to discuss how participants can strengthen their work on SRHR in a context affected by opposition. Therefore, first agree what topic/advocacy priority the sessions will focus on.

2 Analysis of opposition groups

We advise to focus on Part 2 – Session 2.2 and 2.4. Since you have less time than indicated, you are advised to limit the amount of questions discussed during the group work in Session 2.4 to approximately 4-5 questions.

3 Approaches: learning and making a start with strategising

In this session participants share their experiences with preventing and dealing with opposition in their work on SRHR and make a start with strategising on which approaches to apply more or differently. The next questions could be used to guide the discussion in working groups:

❶ Based on your experience, what are approaches/strategies that have been effectively used by civil society to prevent and respond to opposition in its work on SRHR? Why?

❷ Do you have experience with approaches that were ineffective, unconducive or did not lead to results? Why?

❸ What (other) approaches exist that you feel should be used more or more effectively?

❹ What approaches could the platform apply to try and prevent and respond to this type of backlash? Please make concrete recommendations.

End with a plenary, in which there is exchange on the most important insights of the groups. Focus the plenary on the recommendations formulated (question 4).

4 Action points/follow-up

Based on the outcomes of the previous session, formulate in plenary with a few concrete actions the participants can and want to take up to strengthen their work. Write these down on a flip chart. Make sure each action point is linked to a person responsible for this.

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