Strategic Advocacy for Social Change (4 days)

Practical skills and tools for the creation of effective advocacy interventions

What is this course about?

The primary mandate of the majority of non-profit organisations is to contribute towards achieving positive social change. Such changes are widely recognised as the result of shifts in the behavior, relationships, actions and activities of individuals, groups and institutions in society. Advocacy is the means through which organisations individually or collectively seek to effect such change. Effective advocacy provides non-profit organisations with the opportunity to inform, influence and shape public policy and decision-making, institutional practices and public opinion, as the foundations of sustainable social change. However, the full potential of an organisation's advocacy work is not often realised. Achieving strong advocacy outcomes requires a deep understanding of how change is brought about at different levels within society.

This course provides you with a practical introduction to effective advocacy, its conceptual underpinnings and real-world applications. It examines the various types and approaches to advocacy that are available to bring about behavior change in different audiences and contexts. This course focuses on advocacy as a cyclical multi-stakeholder process requiring strategic design and management to achieve its goals. It highlights how alternative advocacy interventions can be effectively employed to influence actors in different ways as part of multidimensional advocacy strategies.

Finally, this course addresses some of the potential opportunities, challenges and pitfalls associated with designing and implementing effective advocacy interventions.

Who should attend?

Leaders, managers and staff of organisations engaged in advocacy work, in particular:

- Executive directors
- Senior and middle management
- Programme and project staff involved in advocacy

What will I learn?

After this course, you will be able to:

- Explain the relevance of advocacy to bringing about positive social change
- Describe the conceptual underpinnings and real-world applications of effective advocacy
- Identify different types and approaches to advocacy and how each can be applied in different contexts.
- Assess the relevance (power and influence) of different stakeholders to the process of advocating for social change
- Design, map and implement multidimensional advocacy strategies and individual interventions
- Enhance your advocacy with evidence-based research and analysis as well as effective political communication
- Incorporate effective advocacy into your organisation's existing programmes and initiatives
- Assess how specific networking or partnership building opportunities can contribute to achieving your organisation's advocacy goals

Course Approach

Emphasis is placed on "action learning" and this course features presentations, structured learning experiences, facilitated discussions, individual and group activities.