5 Program Planning

5.1 Defining your program

5.1.1 Goals and objectives

As with any new program or project, the first step is to set your goals and objectives. These will vary from one organisation to another, depending on your vision and strategic directions and the changes you are hoping to bring about.

You may decide to focus on women who have experienced a specific form of violence, for example, family violence, or a specific group of women, such as women with a disability. This will be reflected in your program objectives. The important part is to be clear from the outset what you are setting out to achieve. An example goal and objectives are shown below.

This section will help you plan a Media Advocacy Program and keep it on track. Identifying stakeholders, risk management, communication, evaluation and sustainability are all key considerations.

Example Goal and Objectives

Goal	To influence public policy by reframing the public discourse on violence against women, its drivers and strategies for prevention.
Objectives	At the completion of training, all participants will have developed the skills to effectively advocate for the prevention of violence against women.
	By [insert date] the Media Advocacy Program has generated [insert number] media opportunities involving [insert number] advocates.
	By [insert date] the Media Advocacy Program has generated [insert number] public speaking or community advocacy opportunities involving [insert number] advocates.
	[insert number] % of event organisers who use an advocate from the Media Advocacy Program in their event or advocacy opportunity report that there are benefits of engaging an advocate for the audience in attendance.
	[insert number] % of media articles written after engaging with an advocate satisfy the requirements of the Responsible Reporting Guidelines.[8]
	By [insert date of evaluation], [insert number] % of advocates report benefits to self-esteem and an increased confidence to advocate for the prevention of violence against women as a result of participating in the Media Advocacy Program.

5.1.2 Program scope

It's important to carefully identify what is in and out of scope for your program as this will have implications for all levels of planning.

Factors to consider include:

– What forms of men's violence against women will your program address? Is it women who have experienced intimate partner violence? Adult women as survivors of child sexual abuse? This will impact on your partnerships, recruitment, and the content of your training. See Preparing for media advocacy training in the *Voices for Change Training Manual* for more information on this.

– What populations of women will you work with? Do you want to work with a particular cultural group or a particular demographic of women? This will have significant implications on all aspects of the program including partnerships, screening, training, media outlets and support. See Section 5.1.2.1: Diversity and its impact on your program.

– What forms of media advocacy will you focus on such as print media, radio, television, social media, or public speaking? Each of these will require your advocates to have varying skills. Online media including social media has some specific challenges, particularly around safety for women online. See the 'Social media and safety for women online' box below.

– Will you have any geographical or catchment boundaries on where you recruit women from and where you respond to advocacy requests? Or are you keen to reach further? Will there be increased privacy issues for your advocates if you are only responding to local media – this may particularly be an issue in rural communities. See Section 5.1.2.2 for more information on rural communities.

– How much time will your organisation or partnership dedicate to this program? Will you respond to after-hour requests, or events on evenings and weekends? This will have implications for your program staff and staffing budgets.

– Be clear on what the program is NOT. For example, Media Advocacy Programs are not designed to be, or replace, counselling services for women who have experienced violence.

Social media and safety for women online

Social media can be a useful avenue for advocacy, potentially connecting to a large audience, who can interact directly and in real time. However there are a number of challenges and safety considerations if you decide your program will include a social media or online component.

There is a significant and pervasive presence of gendered hate towards women who have a voice online. For women who have experienced violence, online harassment may trigger previous trauma and may not be helpful to their personal health and wellbeing.

If you are planning to encourage individual advocates to use social media, they will need specific training on the effectiveness and safety of using social media. You should also include this in your risk management analysis.

You might also choose to use your organisation's social media to share the messages of advocates. This is less risky to the women, though your organisation will need social media policies. If you do this, make sure you ask advocates if they are comfortable with their voices being shared online.

Regardless of choices about social media, advocates should be made aware that many media publications are also available online. It is very difficult to control how widely articles will be seen, and how the voice of advocates will be received online. It is important to remember that in many cases online comments cannot be moderated or deleted and there is limited opportunity for the program worker to step in to control the situation.

For more information on advocate safety, see Section 6.2.1.

5.1.2.1 Diversity and its impact on your program

Women who have experienced violence come from all walks of life and from a broad range of backgrounds. While gender inequality lies at the heart of men's violence against women, the understandings, contributing factors, experiences and contexts of violence can vary for different groups of women and across different communities. The prevention of violence against women will always include addressing gender inequality, but for some groups of women there will be a need to also address other intersecting forms of discrimination they may face such as racism, ageism and discrimination based on ability.

The *Voices for Change Implementation Guide and Voices for Change Training Manual* are generalist resources that provide a basic foundation for addressing violence against women. They can be adapted to meet the needs of, and be relevant to, specific groups of women and population groups.

Being culturally safe[1] and relevant to the women involved should be done by, or in partnership with, organisations working with the specific groups of women and in consultation with women from these communities.

Regardless of whether your program will primarily focus on a particular group of women, it is important to consider how your Media Advocacy Program will accommodate diversity and be meaningful to young women, older women, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women, women from immigrant and refugee backgrounds, women with disabilities and others who may be participants.

It is critical in the planning process that you consider the makeup of your advocate profile together with your goals. To ensure the appropriateness and relevance of your program, consider:

- **Partnerships**
  Who do you need to partner with to ensure you meet the needs of the advocates you plan to work with? Who can provide guidance on how to tailor the program to the specific needs of the group and ensure it is delivered in a culturally safe way?

- **Recruitment**
  How will you do this if you wish to get a mix of women with different backgrounds, or women with some specific experiences? Will you recruit first and then see who responds, or aim for a particular mix of women? How will you manage this? Can your partner organisations assist you with recruitment? Many women will not feel comfortable in a group if they feel they are in the minority, such as the only woman from an Indigenous background, or the only woman with a disability. Where possible, it is good practice to include at least two women from a similar minority background in your program.[2]

- **Advocate training**
  Training content and training providers will need to be responsive to the women and their experiences. In order to be culturally safe, the training and its providers will need to acknowledge and respect the associated definitions, concepts, beliefs and drivers of violence against women for participants from different backgrounds (see 'Contexts of violence' box below). An understanding of the intersection of gender inequality and various forms of discrimination faced by marginalised women and their specific barriers in accessing services and in working with the media is imperative. The myths and stereotypes around violence against women that are addressed in training will differ for different groups of women. For example, for women from different cultural backgrounds it would be important to cover stereotypical beliefs about violence in families from immigrant backgrounds so that the advocates are confident in addressing this if raised in interviews.

- **Advocate support**
  Does your organisation and all program workers have the necessary knowledge and skills to support advocates from varying backgrounds in a culturally safe way? Are there any training needs? Can you engage others to assist?

- **Other specific supports or requirements**
  Consider translated training materials, bilingual workers, accessibility of training venues and advocacy venues and culturally appropriate catering.

- **Media and community advocacy opportunities**
  You may need to consider cultural safety when organising advocacy opportunities and proactively promote your program to alternative advocacy and media sources including non-English speaking media. Having processes in place for checking the content and context of the article to ensure the advocate's voice is appropriately represented is very important.

Organisations running a generalist program need to explain to women from diverse backgrounds how the program will run for women to decide if they feel comfortable participating.[3,4,5,6] For your program to be responsive to the needs of participants you should ask the women themselves what they might need.

Some women will choose to undertake a specialist program run by and for women with similar circumstances. Hopefully some of these programs will soon exist. The 'Contexts of violence' box below provides more information on the contexts of violence for different populations of women.

Contexts of violence for different populations of women – some examples

Indigenous women

Indigenous definitions of 'family violence' are broader than those commonly used in the wider community. The Victorian Indigenous Family Violence Task Force defines family violence as: 'An issue focused around a wide range of physical, emotional, sexual, social, spiritual, cultural, psychological and economic abuses that occur within families, intimate relationships, extended families, kinship networks and communities. It extends to one-on-one fighting, abuse of Indigenous community workers as well as self-harm, injury and suicide.'[3] Family violence within the Aboriginal community should also be viewed within the context of the influence of colonisation and intergenerational trauma. Addressing gender equality within Aboriginal communities requires a whole of community approach. Strategies to prevent violence against women in Aboriginal communities are most likely to be successful if they are led by Aboriginal communities.[4]

Immigrant and refugee women

Prevention activities targeting immigrant and refugee women should be delivered in a culturally sensitive way, recognising the unique experiences, beliefs and structural barriers that immigrant and refugee women face. Prevention approaches need to consider the varying expectations of women's roles across cultures, and the way in which cultural norms and traditions might influence your approach. Women from immigrant and refugee backgrounds also face racial discrimination and barriers that may limit their independence and prevent them from seeking support for violence. These may include a variety of immigration and settlement issues, language barriers, financial limitations, lack of extended family support, and fear of police and the court system.[5]

Women with disabilities

The rates of family and sexual violence are much higher for women with disabilities than for other women. Violence against women with a disability needs to be viewed within the context of the intersecting forms of discrimination that they face including gender based and disability based discrimination. The power imbalance between women and men may be amplified for women with disabilities. Women with disabilities experience the same forms of violence as other women but may additionally experience disability based violence by the perpetrator. Barriers to assistance are also numerous for women with disabilities. Barriers can include physical access issues, lack of information in appropriate formats, lack of appropriate accommodation alternatives, fear of removal of children from their care, and previous negative experiences of services.[6]

5.1.2.2 Rural communities – challenges and opportunities

There are specific issues that women from rural areas face as they become advocates in the prevention of violence against women.

Advocates and workers from the Loddon Campaspe Media Advocacy Project (case study in Section 2.2.1.3) identified a number of challenges and opportunities, which are detailed below along with other considerations for those implementing a rural program.

Opportunities

– The closeness of a small community can mean that messages from women have a more powerful impact.

– The local community can put a face or rural perspective to the experience – the issue of violence can become more 'real' and help debunk myths and misconceptions.

– The whole community may be encouraged to rally behind the advocate and the issue.

– A rural program can engage experts from within the region to be involved with various parts of the program and local media and community members can be encouraged to participate in the reference group, training and practice sessions, thereby also increasing their understanding of violence against women.

– A rural program has the opportunity to engage positively with the local media and encourage and support accurate reporting of violence against women.

– Advocates are able to be involved in advocacy opportunities in different geographical areas from where they live, assisting with issues relating to privacy, confidentiality and the impact on women and children when the perpetrator may live in the same geographical area and have ongoing contact.

Challenges

– The advocate's privacy can be more difficult to protect. She can be more easily contacted, tracked and harassed through small community relationships, may experience privacy issues in accessing services and support, and there is a heightened possibility of contact being made by local media directly outside the program guidelines.

– Social isolation and a lack of community understanding and support in relation to violence against women are common experiences of women who have experienced violence living in a rural area.

– The community may know the perpetrator, or he may be identified through the story, causing an escalation of risk for the advocate (and her children).

- The safety of the advocate's children or family could be at risk when an advocate speaks out about violence, as, in a small community, some may 'take sides' with the perpetrator.

- The advocate may be expected to be the 'voice' for all public speaking and advocacy opportunities.

- Community attitudes can be unhelpful as they may expect the woman to stay in an abusive relationship, and can contribute to further victim blaming.

- The perpetrator could be in a position of power or high status in the community and use these means to further victimise or discredit the advocate.

- Rural programs often have a large geographical area to service and seek diverse representation of advocates, amplifying the following challenges:

  - the difficulty for all advocates to attend training, which is dependent on their location and where the training is held as the venue needs to be accessible

  - limited car parking, public transport and available child care

  - the benefits of holding training in a larger rural town can mean anonymity for advocates – if it were held in a smaller town, advocates may not be as willing to attend.

5.1.3 Tasks, responsibilities and timelines

It is important from the outset to think about the tasks, responsibilities and timelines involved in the planning and implementation of a Media Advocacy Program. You need the right mix of skills and knowledge, and organisational resources to deliver the program. Everyone involved needs to be aware of their responsibilities and timelines. For more information see Section 4: Is media advocacy for you?

Example Task List

Task	Responsibility	Timeframe
Formalise partnerships	Program manager lead organisation, Program managers partner organisations	Month 0 – 2
Establish steering committee	Program manager lead organisation	Month 2
Recruit and appoint program worker	Program manager lead organisation and representatives of partner organisations	Month 3
Develop program guidelines	Program worker	Month 4 – 5
Identify and book suitable trainers	Program worker	Month 5
Recruit advocates	Partner agency A	Month 5
Implement training	Program worker, Partner agencies A and B	Month 6
Promote program	Program worker and steering committee	Month 6
Meet with individual advocates to formalise their role	Program worker	Month 7
Commence taking media advocacy requests	Program worker	Month 8

5.2 Identifying key stakeholders

When setting up your Media Advocacy Program, consider who has an interest in or could be affected by it – these are your key stakeholders. Questions to ask to ascertain who key stakeholders are:

- Who is the Media Advocacy Program for?

- Who will benefit from the program?

- Who has a role to play in your program?

- Who would be interested in the results of the program?

See the 'Potential stakeholders' box below.

Consider the needs and interests of each stakeholder and any actions or communication that you will need for them to support it. It is important to identify and engage stakeholders who might interact with your program, whether it is in using or promoting your program, services who may experience an increased demand because of your program, a potential funding body or a community member that you are trying to reach or influence.

Identifying your stakeholders will also help you identify partners and develop your key messages and a communication plan. See Section 5.4 for more information on developing a communication plan.

Potential stakeholders for a Media Advocacy Program
- Organisational staff
- Funding bodies
- Advocates
- Wider community
- Media
- Event organisers
- Local councils
- Community health services
- Schools
- White Ribbon Day organisers
- Sport associations
- 16 Days of Activism organisers
- Women's health organisations
- Community groups
- Universities
- Domestic violence services
- Sexual assault services
- Migrant information centres and other culturally specific organisations

5.3 Risk management plan

Assessing the risks involved with implementing a Media Advocacy Program – and ways to minimise or avoid them – is critical to consider from the outset. Some of your risk management strategies will be closely linked to the sustainability of your program (see Section 5.6: Sustainability).

Example risk management assessment outlining some key considerations for a Media Advocacy Program

Risk	Mitigation strategies
Re-traumatisation of advocates	Screening and recruitment strategies to ensure women involved in the program are adequately progressed in their trauma recovery. Training covers strategies for staying safe when speaking out, how to deflect or re-direct questions, asserting boundaries, self-care and importance of debriefing before, during and after advocacy opportunities.
Increased safety concerns for advocates as a result of advocacy opportunities	Screening and recruitment results in women involved being in relative safety. Keeping safe included in training. Safety an ongoing issue discussed by advocates and worker prior to each advocacy activity.
Duty of care requirement of organisation questioned	Inclusion of safety documented in screening tool, and training outlines. Program worker to maintain case notes for each advocate to document discussions of safety and offers of debriefing.
Privacy and confidentiality breached for advocates	Privacy and confidentiality policies and procedures in place. Program worker has clear documentation of confidentiality requirements for each advocate (eg contact details, use of name, etc.) Privacy procedures include secure storage of any advocate information, speeches, case notes.
Program worker experiences vicarious trauma	Debriefing, support and supervision mechanisms in place. See 'Worker safety' box below.
Program worker fails to provide adequate support to the advocates	Support and supervision mechanisms in place for worker and advocate. Clear position description and program guidelines for program worker outlining responsibilities. Feedback and complaint mechanisms in place and advocates aware of these.
Risk of litigation	Recruitment and ongoing support mechanisms to include consideration of potential legal proceedings for advocates. Ensure advocates are formal volunteers of your organisation and covered by your insurance. Police checks should be a part of your volunteer policy. See 'Police checks' box for further information.
Lack of program worker due to leave or resignation	Back up worker trained, multiple workers sharing the role and able to cover each other. Agreement with other Media Advocacy Programs to assist in covering advocacy opportunities when worker on leave.
Inability of organisation to respond in a timely way to media requests	Position description of program worker to include a need to prioritise media requests over other work. Seek funding to increase the EFT of the program worker. Agreement with other Media Advocacy Programs to share media requests as needed.

Worker safety

Supporting advocates to have their voices heard is rewarding work, but it can provoke strong emotional and physical responses in program workers.

It is essential that program workers are supported by their organisation to look after and manage their own safety and wellbeing. Organisational strategies to support program workers can include:

– Develop safety planning – This is just as important for workers as for advocates. Identify possible risks to worker safety and implement a plan and appropriate supports to mitigate these risks.

– Always ensure that your organisation knows where you are when attending a media advocacy opportunity, how to contact you and when you are expected to return. It is recommended to always check in with a manager or supervisor after an opportunity to let them know you are back safely.

– Familiarise yourself with the event location, including the availability of safe parking, access to and from public transport, emergency exits and who will be present.

– Consider whether the program worker should attend alone with the advocate or with another worker for support.

– Consider what equipment program workers may need to support their safety, such as a mobile phone with essential numbers stored in it, access to a work vehicle or public transport or taxi vouchers.

– Ensure equipment checks and procedures are in place, such as mobile phones are fully charged and checked prior to leaving the office, work vehicles are maintained at more than half a tank of petrol and have an up-to-date first aid kit.

– Have an emergency plan that includes what to do in case of an emergency and a plan for the organisation on how to support the worker.

– Know your organisational policies and procedures – How do they support and protect worker safety? What are the lines of reporting? If a program worker is concerned about safety with whom and how do they take up their concerns?

– Reporting and evaluation – In the case of an incident, ensure it is reported appropriately and evaluate incident response and opportunities to improve safety planning.

For the emotional safety and wellbeing of workers it is important that organisations foster a culture that supports employee health and wellbeing and promotes self-care. Workers should be provided access to regular supervision and access to an employee assistance program and/or counselling or debriefing. Self-care, accompanied by appropriate professional supports such as supervision, can prevent potential risks to worker safety and wellbeing such as secondary trauma.

Opportunities for program staff to collaborate and build networks with other people working in this space can facilitate peer learning, the sharing of knowledge and resources and can prevent isolation. Being able to debrief informally with colleagues and share the challenges of the work can also make a positive difference for workers.

Police checks

Advocates should be inducted as volunteers into your organisation. Depending on your volunteer policy, this may require a police check.

It is important to be clear about why a police check is required. Police checks are generally recommended for any volunteers who will be dealing with vulnerable people. This is certainly the case for advocates who may come across other women who have experienced violence through their advocacy. There is also the risk of any previous police record somehow becoming public (for example, through a vindictive perpetrator) when the advocate gains a public profile. The check therefore protects both the organisation and the advocate.

It is also important to be clear about what your organisation's policy requires if someone does have a police record. This could mean assuring them that having a police record does not necessarily mean they are excluded from the program, but will be discussed with them to decide what is best for the advocate and the organisation.

5.4 Communication plan

To effectively engage and communicate with your key stakeholders your communication plan should detail:

- – your communication objective – what do you want to accomplish?
- – your audience
- – the messages you want to communicate
- – the ways in which you will communicate
- – timelines for communication
- – indicators of success.

When considering communications, refer back to your list of key stakeholders. Think about why and how others may be interested in or impacted by the program.

For example, it is important to recognise that your Media Advocacy Program may result in a flow on effect outside of the program. There may be increased media interest in violence against women and therefore an increase in requests for comment from family violence and sexual assault services. Services may also get an increased demand from women in the community who are prompted to seek help as a result of the program. It's important that these agencies understand that this increased demand may occur.

Other stakeholders might just be interested to know how the program is going and how to engage an advocate should they wish.

Your communication strategy should outline key messages to communicate to the general public about your program and the prevention of violence against women.

It is beneficial to communicate these messages with a range of stakeholders to promote consistent and coordinated messaging on violence against women and its prevention in your community.

5.5 Evaluation

Evaluation of your Media Advocacy Program will be different for every organisation, because it depends on your goals and objectives. Evaluation can include both impact and process evaluation.[7]

Process evaluation is focused on program development and delivery. This type of evaluation would be useful for evaluating parts of your advocate training, such as whether you have been able to attract the participants you hoped to and whether the presentations effectively communicate the content and skills.

Impact evaluation is used to measure whether the changes you have described in the objectives have been realised. For example, whether media reports that are published following involvement with an advocate from your program conform to the responsible reporting guidelines[8], or how they compare to reporting that does not involve advocates.

Below are some suggestions of when, how and what to evaluate to judge the success of your Media Advocacy Program. Sample evaluation tools have also been provided and can be replicated and used in your own program if appropriate to your objectives. A sample evaluation framework has been provided as part of this guide.

Suggested evaluation methods for various activities

Advocate training

Evaluation of advocate training could include questions to assess an increase in advocate knowledge and skills, confidence to take on the role of an advocate and how well the training program was run and facilitated. Qualitative and quantitative data can be collected to provide a richer overview of the training days.

See the *Voices for Change Training Manual* for more detail on advocate training, including suggested objectives and sample evaluation forms for the three days of training.

Sample program objective

At the completion of training, all participants will have developed the skills to effectively advocate for the prevention of violence against women.

Media articles

Media Advocacy Programs seek to influence and change the way in which the media reports on issues such as family violence and sexual assault through the voices of women who have experienced violence. Therefore reviewing media articles and stories that have used advocates is an important part of your evaluation. To enable evaluation, it is recommended that you collect any media articles that feature your advocates.

The number of media stories involving advocates is also a potential program evaluation measure. This can be as simple as keeping a spreadsheet with the details of each article, keeping hard copies of newspaper articles or downloading and storing articles. A sample of a simple spreadsheet for keeping track of your media opportunities has been provided as part of this guide.

You may like to set your own targets each year for the number of articles, events or opportunities involving advocates you hope to generate. This will depend on the program resources including number of advocates and time dedicated to the program.

> ### Sample program objective
>
> By [insert date] the Media Advocacy Program has generated [insert number] media opportunities involving [insert number] advocates.

To assess the quality of articles involving your advocates you can review them against the media reporting guidelines developed by Our Watch for the reporting of domestic or sexual violence.[8]

> ### Sample program objective
>
> [insert number] % of print media articles written after engaging with an advocate satisfy the requirements of the responsible reporting guidelines.

For a more detailed analysis of the quality of reporting of your program, you can compare the media articles on violence against women that have involved an advocate to those which have not, and compare articles before and after the commencement of your program.

For more information on working with the media see Section 7: Creating and managing media advocacy opportunities.

Community advocacy opportunities

Community advocacy opportunities are a significant part of a Media Advocacy Program. These could include advocates speaking at events, meeting with politicians and community leaders, contributing to public inquiries and other public discussions, and contributing to relevant campaigns.

It can be difficult to measure the impact where advocate voices have been used as part of submissions, or in meetings with politicians, however it is useful to keep track of the frequency and number of all advocate engagements by using an opportunity register similar to the one used in tracking your media articles.

A spreadsheet similar to the media opportunity spreadsheet (which has been provided as part of this guide) can be used to record all community advocacy opportunities. You may even keep a record of speeches by advocates (kept securely and with their permission) as part of this spreadsheet. You may also wish to collate qualitative information. Example questions could include what did the advocate contribute to the enquiry, how was the advocate's presence responded to at a meeting with a politician, was any feedback received after the meeting?

> ### Sample program objective
>
> By [insert date] the Media Advocacy Program has generated [insert number] public speaking or community advocacy opportunities involving advocates.

If evaluating a public speaking event where an advocate has spoken, consider how you measure the impact of the advocate's speech on the knowledge or attitudes of the audience about violence against women and/or gender equality. While this can be done at an individual participant level at smaller presentations and events, often large public events make this difficult, if not impossible. Although not as rigorous as individual feedback, seeking feedback from the event organiser or asking them to complete an evaluation of the advocate presentation is an option.

This might include asking the event organiser to take note of, and provide feedback about, whether the presentation:

- helped dispel myths and stereotypes
- challenged common understandings about the issue
- highlighted facts about prevalence, the nature of gendered violence and the impact that it can have on women and the wider community
- made the link between gender equality and violence against women
- highlighted the key drivers of violence against women and how targeting these can lead to prevention.

Another valuable component to evaluation is gaining feedback from the event organisers regarding their experiences in engaging an advocate. Examples of questions could include:

- Was the advocate presentation what you were expecting?
- Would you use an advocate again or recommend using one to others?
- How did the inclusion of the advocate add to your event? What were the benefits?

A sample evaluation form for event or community advocacy organisers can be found in the appendices.

Advocate involvement

You will need to collect qualitative data to explore and understand how your Media Advocacy Program is impacting your advocates. What are the benefits and challenges they may have experienced as an advocate? Gathering narrative, quotes and stories from advocates provides rich and descriptive data on the impacts of the program.

This evaluation could be conducted through a survey (hard copy or online), semi-structured interviews or focus groups, or a combination of all three. You may wish to consider making surveys anonymous (by using Survey Monkey or similar) or engaging an independent third party to conduct an evaluation. The benefits of this are that advocates may feel more comfortable providing feedback about things that did not go so well for them.

Possible questions could include:

- – Tell me about your experience as an advocate.
- – How has being involved impacted you and others?
- – Can you tell us about any social connections you have made as a result of being in the Media Advocacy Program and how this has impacted you?
- – What aspects of the Media Advocacy Program have been positive or negative?
- – What has/has not worked, and what could be done better?
- – Are there any other issues that you would like to raise?
- – Can you share your experiences of working with different types of media and other advocacy opportunities?

5.6 Planning for sustainability

Sustaining your Media Advocacy Program for the long term should be considered in your planning. Here are some tips on how to do this.

5.6.1 Ongoing support for advocates

Think of how you can provide ongoing opportunities for advocates to strengthen their competencies to engage with media and build confidence at public speaking events. There are a number of options available to do this:

- – Run refresher training for advocates to practise their media and public speaking skills, develop key messages and keep up-to-date on statistics, policies and issues on the prevention of violence against women.
- – Support the development of an advocate community (see Section 6.2.7) which might include bringing advocates together to share stories and learnings, and to practise their key messages and speeches with one another and the program worker. Discuss this with your advocates. It could be a regular coordinated event, or set up by the program worker for the women to run themselves.

5.6.2 Need for new advocates over time

The role of an advocate is different for everyone. Some women feel that through their involvement in a Media Advocacy Program they become an 'advocate for life'[9]; for others it could be a stepping stone to move onto other activities, or they may have healed sufficiently and feel it is time to move on. See Section 5: Working with advocates for more information on supporting advocates.

It is also a reality that the media like to see new faces and hear new stories over time. It is important to explain this aspect of how the media works in your advocate training.

In order to accommodate these points, you should be aware of the need to recruit advocates on a regular basis and plan for future advocate training and induction.

5.6.3 Ongoing investment in staff

As discussed in Section 4: Is media advocacy for you, staff time and commitment is an important resource and vital part of sustaining the project. You will have to assess whether you have the staff capacity to keep the initiative going. Do you have the funds to cover the cost of a program worker in your organisational budget? Do you need to consider applying for a grant or seeking alternative funds to enable a worker on an ongoing basis?

Another sustainability strategy is to build the capacity of other workers within your organisations to be able to manage media requests and attend events and media opportunities with advocates. This might mean including other staff members in the advocate training sessions to increase their understanding of the program and for the advocates and other staff to get to know each other. Building

capacity of other workers is also a risk management strategy. See Section 5.3 for a sample risk management plan.

Upskilling of staff can be achieved through shared media training with other organisations in your region that may be interested in learning more about working with the media.

5.6.4 Managing advocate requests

The process of managing advocate requests is important for the ongoing sustainability of your program.

Having a structured process that is followed for each media advocacy opportunity is important. Developing a written procedure that can be followed by a variety of staff in your organisation may be useful, particularly for busy times when your worker is on leave. For more information on this, see Section 7: Creating and managing media advocacy opportunities.

Requests for advocates will fluctuate depending on the external environment. In particular, media interest in violence against women can ebb and flow depending on a number of factors including current events, other news stories and the public's response to the issue. Sometimes you will be able to plan for these and sometimes you will not.

For example, the 16 Days of Activism including White Ribbon Day, is a time of the year which is likely to be busy, and for which you can plan. You are likely to also get a number of advocacy requests after a violent incident in your region, or a high profile person speaking out about prevention. These will be less easy to prepare for in advance. It is important to develop a process that considers these fluctuations.

Other considerations when managing advocate requests include ensuring timeliness and consistency of response to media, and keeping good records of requests to support future evaluation. Your ability to be responsive to the media's needs will also build the likelihood of them using your program in future. For more information on how the media works, see Section 7.2: Engaging and working with the media.

5.6.5 Ongoing promotion and relationship building

You also need to consider strategies to build interest in your program if you are not getting a regular flow of requests. The ongoing promotion of your Media Advocacy Program is essential to keeping people aware of the availability of advocates for media stories and public speaking opportunities.

Some tips for building your program's profile include:

– send a quarterly newsletter to relevant stakeholders with an update on recent advocate media and event opportunities and program contact details

– equip your staff to promote the program within their networks

– enlist partner organisations to share a program flyer within their networks

– use advocates within your own organisation – have an advocate speak to your board of governance or to all staff or at your annual general meeting.

For more information on promotion, see Section 7: Creating and managing media advocacy opportunities.

5.7 Media Advocacy Program – stages of implementation

Your planning is now complete! Look at this simple implementation flow chart to see if you are ready to implement your program and where in the *Voices for Change Implementation Guide* you can find the help you need.

Key stages of implementation	Section/s of Guide
Step 1: Decide if a Media Advocacy Program is for you	**Section 1:** Introduction **Section 2:** History and current context **Section 3:** Why media advocacy? **Section 4:** Is media advocacy for you?
Step 2: Develop a program and evaluation plan with partners. Confirm staffing	**Section 5:** Program planning
Step 3: Develop and implement ongoing support mechanisms for advocates	**Section 6:** Working with advocates
Step 4: Recruit advocates	**Section 6:** Working with advocates
Step 5: Deliver advocate training	*Voices for Change Training Manual*
Step 6: Create and manage advocate opportunities	**Section 7:** Creating and managing media advocacy opportunities
Step 7: Foster an advocate community	**Section 6:** Working with advocates
Step 8: Sustain your Media Advocacy Program	**Section 5:** Program planning **Section 6:** Working with advocates

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