Advocacy & Lobbying Methodology

Group Development Pakistan (GDP) is a Pakistani Civil Society Organization (CSO) registered under Society's Act 1860. GDP believes in a democratic and humanistic society in which the most important stakeholders - children - are acknowledged, respected, empowered and protected from violence, abuse and discrimination. GDP follows a holistic, inclusive, eco-friendly, culture-sensitive, child-focused, systemic and human rights-based approach. GDP envisages that Pakistan will become a country in which each child is free from violence and discrimination and fully avails and exercises his/her fundamental rights to a life of dignity, safety and self-fulfilment as described in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and other relevant international and regional human rights conventions/covenants/declarations/agreements ratified by Pakistan.

To achieve its mission GDP conducts multiple communication exercises and among those are Advocacy & Lobbying, as two of the most important elements.

**Fundamental Values of our Advocacy & Lobbying**

GDP advocacy and lobbying relies on values that have been presented in GDP's communication strategy:

- Best interest of the child
- Do no harm policy
- Positive messaging
- Engage, do not attack
- Zero tolerance for discrimination and violence
- Gender sensitivity
- Cultural sensitivity
- Participation
- Inclusiveness
- Practice what you preach
- Accountability
- User-friendliness

But also includes additional characteristics listed below:

- Evidence-based
- Synergic
- Child and youth-led
- Possibly in collaboration with state actors or even state-led
- Creative
- Reactivity/responsiveness
- Adaptability
- Multi-pronged
- Complementing (no duplication)

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1 *See annexure 1, Group Development Pakistan Communication Strategy 2020*
**Advocacy & Lobbying Levels**

GDP articulates its advocacy & lobbying activities at three levels:
- Socio-cultural (behavioural change, shift in ground realities)
- Institutional (behavioural change, policy reform, improved programming, increased quality service delivery)
- Structural (legal and policy reform)

**Advocacy & Lobbying Cycle**

GDP applies a synergic multi-sectoral and dynamic advocacy & lobbying cycle.

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Indirect advocacy & lobbying: stakeholders use evidence/information generated by the project/program and/or are engaged in legal and policy reform as a result of the project/program.

Direct evidence-based advocacy & lobbying by GDP
Advocacy & Lobbying Methodology

For each advocacy and lobbying cycle, an advocacy and lobbying methodology is devised and articulated around the following questions:

a) What do we want?
   - Outlining definitions
   - Problem and solutions tree
   - Generating a basis of evidence
   - Planning research

b) Who can make it happen?
   - Mapping stakeholders (enabler, neutral, opponents)
   - Mapping target audience

c) What do they need to hear?
   - Developing evidence-based messages
   - Gender, child-sensitive, inclusive messages
   - Ideation

d) Whom do they need to hear it from?
   - Choosing messengers strategically
   - Involving children as messengers
   - Ethical considerations

e) How can we make sure they hear it?
   - Identifying, capitalising upon, planning opportunities

f) Choosing the best format to communicate your messages
   - Campaigning
   - Lobbying
   - Online communication

 g) How do we tell if it is working
   - Monitoring Evaluation Accountability & Learning (MEAL)

h) Simulation
   - Pretesting
   - Feedback collection
   - Adjustment

I) Action planning

Phase-wise Advocacy & Lobbying Methodology

1. GDP collects information from children, youth, communities, technical experts, state or private institutions, general public, available documents and builds evidence. GDP subsequently designs an advocacy & lobbying strategy after consulting all relevant stakeholders including children;

2. GDP starts executing its advocacy & lobbying strategy. Further research may be required as an initial phase;

3. Based on collected evidence, GDP develops tools/messages such as but not limited to: technical notes, policy briefs, research papers, reports, desk reviews, Oped, articles,
concept notes, technical drafts, Information, Education and Communication (IEC) material, video or radio messages, movies, infographics, animations, key messages for social media. These advocacy & lobbying tools/messages are developed by or in consultation with children and youth as well as technical experts and are created, pretested and reviewed in light of the Jakobson language scheme (participatory critical review before finalisation).

4. Advocacy & lobbying messages are disseminated directly by GDP and/or children to targeted stakeholders at local, provincial and federal levels. Evidence is also shared and disseminated to ensure those messages are credible. Several activities may be conducted in parallel, or in chronological order, each one feeding the other. A daily briefing is conducted within GDP to adjust the communication pace and guarantee advocacy relevance. Each activity result is tracked, documented, recorded and assessed. In parallel, or subsequently (depending upon the scenario), advocacy and lobbying activities are directly conducted by GDP at regional and international levels and periodic debriefing occurs within GDP to adjust the communication pace and guarantee advocacy & lobbying relevance.

5. GDP indirect advocacy & lobbying: stakeholders sensitized and engaged by GDP and/or children use the evidence disseminated by GDP at local, provincial and national levels and take ownership of GDP's advocacy/lobbying messages at local, provincial and national levels. Constant contact is maintained between the GDP team and engaged stakeholders to provide timely and quality assistance whenever required. In parallel, or subsequently (depending upon the scenario), evidence shared by GDP and/or children at regional and international levels, is used by regional and international stakeholders to inform and shape advocacy & lobbying tools/messages at international or regional levels, which reinforces the credibility of GDP messaging at all levels and eventually strengthens the buy-in of GDP's advocacy objective nationally, provincially and locally.

6. The buy-in eventually leads to achieving the advocacy & lobbying goals envisaged in the concerned advocacy and lobbying strategy via a multi-pronged dialogue that leads to the policy or legal change.

7. Once the advocacy & lobbying goal is achieved, an assessment is made by GDP to devise the next advocacy & lobbying step, identify lessons learnt and good practices. Then the process continues based on what has been already achieved. State actors are supported by GDP to share and explain to local, regional and international stakeholders how change has been realized, what it entails and what will be the next steps (it can, for example, be reflected in a state report to the UNCRC committee). This explanation is often articulated in line with international guidelines and recommendations and national policies.

Periodic feedback is collected from children, general public, CSOs, state actors, mostly via social media or weekly and sometimes activity-based debriefing meetings in addition
to Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability & Learning (MEAL) visits and analysis to assess if the advocacy & lobbying strategy works and is adequate; if not, then it is immediately revised in light of received feedback. Remediations are always devised in a participatory manner.

The feedback mechanism is also fed by statistics gathered via online data analysis, comments, the number of shares, demands for upscaling the dissemination of information by third parties, or by associates sharing what they did to support GDP's advocacy & lobbying efforts.

Finally, when advocacy & lobbying goals are achieved, they are documented and featured on GDP's communication media: website and social media. They are also eventually reflected in further pieces of evidence such as but not limited to state reports, position papers, research, etc.