**United Way of Massachusetts Bay and Merrimack Valley’s Public Policy Evaluation Framework**

Our evaluation framework values the process of advocating for public policy just as much as the policy outcomes themselves. We do this by focusing on how we engage the different audiences that are essential in changing public policy.

This policy outcome results in positive social change

These activities result in a policy outcome

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Audience** | **Description** | **Activities** | **Outputs** | **Outcomes** |
| Community | The individuals and institutions are included in each audience | The actions we take to educate, influence, and organize each audience | The number of actions we take to engage each audience | The direct result of these actions |
| Allies/ Stakeholders |
| Media |
| Decision-makers |

These engagement activities take the form of educating, influencing, and organizing each target audience around each policy issue. The table below, adapted from a 2004 publication by the Alliance for Justice[[1]](#footnote-1), provides an example of how we might engage each audience in order to reform state policy around child support.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Sample Target Audiences and Engagement Activities for a Model State Child Support Reform Campaign** | | | | |
|  | **Target Audiences** | | | |
| **Community** | **Allies/ Institutional Stakeholders** | **Media** | **Decisionmakers** |
| State child support recipients, individual activists, and neighborhood organizations | Public officials, health organizations, and others with ties to child support | Local press, radio, and television | State legislators, governor, state regulators, and staff of each |
| **Educate** | Develop and distribute reports and issue updates on child support in the state. Get input from the community, in person and via social media. | Develop and distribute reports and issue updates to other organizations, as well as officials from state Dept. of Health and Human Services (DHHS). | Distribute reports and press releases to news outlets, run paid ads on radio, and conduct press conferences featuring remarks from Allies. | Provide background information on issues to state legislative and executive branch staff. Testify before the state legislature. Prepare and provide written comments to state DHHS on proposed child support regulations. |
| **Influence** | Present examples of successful advocacy by others and possible benefits of child support advocacy to this community. | Provide information on how child support reform will benefit potential allies’ constituencies. | Respond quickly to media questions with credible information and invite media to selected coalition meetings. | Keep decisionmakers informed of the agency’s position on legislative and regulatory proposals and the reason for those positions. Respond quickly to questions with credible information. |
| **Organize** | Conduct meetings with the community to suggest advocacy actions and report results. | Build and convene a child support reform coalition of different organizations to work together on the issue. | Keep in touch on a regular basis with members of the media. | Organize community activists, organizational advocates, and other Allies to contact or visit decisionmakers. |

**How does your organization engage each target audience?**

Using the chart below, describe your organization’s audiences and record the activities it undertakes to engage them. Indicate whether each activity **educates** the audience about the issue, **influences** them to take your side, or **organizes** them to join you in advocating for your desired policy change. Also record what the outputs and outcomes of those activities might be.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Desired policy outcome:** | | | | |
| **Audience** | **Description** | **Activity** | **Outputs** | **Outcomes** |
| **Community** |  |  |  |  |
| **Allies/ Stakeholders** |  |  |  |  |
| **Media** |  |  |  |  |
| **Decision-makers** |  |  |  |  |

1. Alliance for Justice (2004) *Investing in Change: A Funder’s Guide to Supporting Advocacy*. https://www.bolderadvocacy.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/02/Investing\_in\_Change.pdf [↑](#footnote-ref-1)