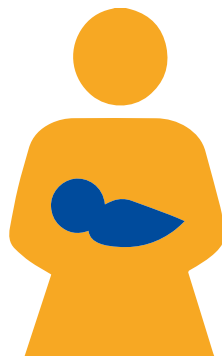




International  
Confederation  
of Midwives

# ICM Advocacy Toolkit FOR MIDWIVES





With thanks to UNFPA for their continuous support and partnership.



# Advocacy Toolkit Language

The ICM advocacy toolkit has been designed to be easy to understand and easy to use.

The toolkit has been put together to give midwives and associations the tools to advocate for increased resources for midwifery globally. The toolkit will also help midwives to raise awareness and educate their communities about certain health issues; to advocate for increased rights and protections for their profession; to amplify the voices and needs of midwives in their country and globally to key leaders and policymakers.

As an educational tool, this resource provides an introduction and guide to advocacy. It offers a clear overview of advocacy, based on the key questions: *What? Where? Who? Why? and How?*

The best way to use this toolkit is to read through each section, gain an understanding of advocacy, and refer to as you plan your advocacy activities. Remember, you might already be advocating on a small scale. If you want to develop our advocacy, this toolkit can help you to consider your audience, messaging and advocacy activities to strengthen your efforts, impact and outcomes.





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# 1. What is Advocacy?

What do you think of when you hear the word: ADVOCACY?

Advocacy is the act of supporting a cause to effect change. We might engage in advocacy because we are passionate about a cause or an issue and want to raise awareness or promote solutions. While some people influence policy and policymakers at the highest level to cause institutional changes, many of us are advocating at the grassroots levels by discussing these issues and engaging those around us in important conversations.

Advocacy has many definitions:

‘Public support for or recommendation of a particular cause or policy’. Oxford Dictionary

‘A set of organised actions aimed at influencing public policies, societal attitudes, and socio-political processes that enable and empower the marginalised to speak for themselves.’  
John Samuel, President of the National Centre for Advocacy Studies in India

In short, advocacy is the act of communicating a message to achieve change. The word advocacy comes from the Latin word *advocare* which translates to add + voice.

## 2. Advocacy and Midwifery

Understanding what *effective* advocacy looks like in practice can be a challenge. What does advocacy in the midwifery space look like? What skills and concepts do midwife advocates use to effectively communicate their message?

We’ve spoken to leading midwife advocates and asked them what they consider to be their top ten advocacy tips. Here’s what they said:

### 1. TAKE RESPONSIBILITY

*It’s imperative for those in a problematic situation to understand what each person’s responsibility is in creating that problem. We have the capability as humans to co-create extraordinary things, but we fail if we don’t take responsibility for our own part.*

~ Suzanne Stalls, Senior Technical Advisor, Jhpiego

## 2. NEVER GIVE UP

*Never take for granted that politicians and policymakers are knowledgeable about what we are advocating for. They need information but make it simple and precise. Leave them with written materials. Work with the government even though you are pushing them for change. Involve citizens without endangering them in any way. Above all, never give up!*

~ Rose Mlay, National Coordinator of White Ribbon Alliance, Tanzania

## 3. GET THE SUPPORT OF WOMEN

*We can't do any of this without the support of women. It makes no sense to fight for midwifery if women don't want it. Women need to know that midwifery exists, and to demand it. Midwives need to build their grassroots base.*

~ Petra ten Hoope-Bender, Technical Adviser Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights, UNFPA Office of Geneva

## 4. BE ONE TEAM, WITH ONE VOICE

*All midwives need to join their Midwifery Associations in order to harmonize their efforts, talents, knowledge and skills. Midwives need to work as one team with one voice*

~ Andre Nyamabaji, Rwanda Association of Midwives

## 5. COLLABORATE

*We cannot do it alone! We need to develop relationships with key potential partners; collaboration is key. Today we have new social media platforms which we did not have 20 years ago, so let's utilise these platforms effectively, raise awareness and interact using Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp and so on. Speak up midwives, let our voices be heard!*

~ Felicity Mapuvire Ukoko, Head of Midwifery Programmes, Wellbeing Foundation Africa

## 6. BE CONVINCING

*Midwife advocates need to be well informed about maternal and newborn health issues in the world, in their country and in their region. We need convincing facts and information. We need support from colleagues working in different areas of midwifery to buttress our arguments with on-the-ground examples so that we can give a face and a name to what we are advocating for—real women with real families.*

~ Nester T. Moyo, Senior Midwifery Advisor, ICM

## 7. USE EVIDENCE, STAY POSITIVE

*Creating change needs a combination of collaboration, cooperation, the strong voices of women and families, the use of evidence, being politically astute and skilled in the use of media. It's not easy. People don't always agree with each other or work together as you might hope.*

~ Professor Mary Renfrew, University of Dundee, Scotland

## 8. BE STRATEGIC

*Midwifery advocacy in my experience often suffers from failure to identify a problem that is concrete enough, either taking an approach that is too broad or too complex, or embarking on a strategy that is not targeted or tailored enough to the audience or change agent but rather remaining largely self-referential. Multiple small, effective campaigns are better than one great idea that doesn't get off the ground or hit its mark.*

~ Rima Jolivet, Maternal Health Task Force

## 9. STAY FOCUSED ON WOMEN AND BABIES

*In those who are successful as midwifery leaders you can see their commitment to women. When we stay focused on women and babies and not on ourselves, we get so much further.*

~ Deborah Armbruster, USAID

## 10. BE BOLD, SPEAK WITHOUT FEAR

*In my experience, the greatest barrier is ourselves. We do not speak with one voice; we lack the boldness required to be advocates for ourselves and perhaps we also lack knowledge of advocacy. We must start with the desire and interest to make things change and make a difference.*

~ Lennie Kamwendo, White Ribbon Alliance Malawi





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### 3. Levels of Advocacy

Advocacy can take place from the community, grassroots level, right through to the international level. At the community level, advocacy is largely centred on changing societal and cultural attitudes and raising awareness to change behaviours towards an issue, topic or group.

At the national level, advocacy requires social mobilisation within communities and organisations to create the drive for institutional change. These are the most common areas in which advocacy takes place – very few operate at the highest levels, creating an enabling environment for change through lobbying and advocating for changes in policies.



The power of advocacy lies in harmonising grassroots initiatives with global efforts. Global advocacy is not only a political space, action on the ground often acts as the wave, creating the momentum that ensures action at the highest levels of policy and decision-making.

For advocacy to be effective, advocates must understand the broad impact of their voice and their actions. We've been working to open the advocacy space to strong and impactful voices in the field of midwifery.

Decisions made at an individual level impact people at other levels. Therefore, advocacy is needed at every level to bring about lasting change. For example, a national midwifery organisation may spend money on new equipment for midwives. This might mean that they cannot allocate budget to the regional midwifery organisation to spend on facility refurbishment at midwifery schools. Therefore, the local midwifery school cannot fulfil their aim of refurbishing their facilities and expanding their centre to train more midwives.

In this scenario, advocacy work needs to be aimed at the local midwifery school, regional, national and international levels. This is because of the links between the issue of providing new equipment for existing midwives and expanding midwifery training schools to train more midwives. Individual midwives are affected by decisions made at higher levels. However, we can change these decisions by influencing decision-makers.

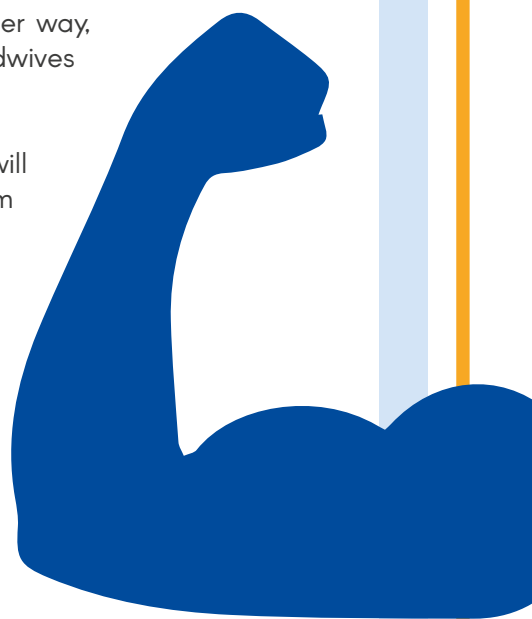
## 4. Understanding Your Issue

If you aim to advocate for change, the first step is identifying what issue you want to tackle so that you can shape your messaging around these concerns.

To help midwife advocates identify the issues they are passionate about, we've selected some of the common challenges that midwives face. Maybe you've identified an issue or a challenge that people haven't yet recognised? Either way, everyone has their own unique voice in tackling common issues midwives face in their work and their community.

As this is a toolkit for everyone, we hope these key messages will act as a guide to help keep messaging consistent and to inform midwives worldwide about the causes they might want to advocate for.

If midwives around the world use the same messages it will give that message more power and prominence.



## 5. Types of Advocacy

### GROUP, PROFESSIONAL, POLITICAL ADVOCACY

This toolkit will outline strategies to deal with different forms of advocacy around different issues – with the understanding that advocacy is not just about identifying problems – it's also about sharing solutions.



## GROUP ADVOCACY

relates to issues that affect specific groups based on things that define that group, such as gender. In midwifery, group advocacy usually links to human rights issues.

Examples include:

- Respectful Maternity Care
- Gender Equality: A woman's right to determine her birth experience
- Ending obstetric violence and unnecessary intervention

Below is a list of key topics that are important to midwifery with key messaging describing ICM's position on each issue. These examples should help to set the scene for your advocacy.

### *– Rights abuses*

In times of war and civil unrest, violations of Human Rights are more frequent and vulnerable groups, including women and children, often suffer disproportionately. ICM recognises the courage of midwives who in the most difficult of circumstances continue to provide care for women and their newborn. We encourage our midwifery associations to lobby NGOs and supportive governments around the world to support peace initiatives.

### *– Gender inequality*

Women are worthy of respect and are to be treated with dignity in all situations. ICM, therefore, support all efforts to empower women – including midwives – to gain their Human Rights, and the understanding of the responsibilities that come with exercising such rights.

### *– Medicalisation of maternity care*

When midwifery education is limited to hospitals and clinical environments it may prevent midwives from practising the full scope of midwifery practice as outlined in the ICM International Definition of the Midwife and the ICM Essential Competencies for Basic Midwifery Practice. Such experiences may impact on the ability of midwives to support women in achieving normal birth. Midwives are encouraged, in partnership with women, to:

- Promote normal childbirth within the maternity service.
- Confirm midwives as the primary caregiver and expert in normal childbirth.
- Enrich midwives' education in order to enhance skills and competencies in normal childbirth.

## PROFESSIONAL ADVOCACY

relates to issues that impact midwives and midwifery as a profession. Midwives face a range of issues as a result of working in a highly gendered profession, in some cases in areas of conflict or in environments where their autonomy is undermined.

Examples include:

- Advocating for women and babies to have a birth experience without unnecessary intervention
- Generating demand from women and families for midwives
- What Women Want campaign: Women saying what they want maternal health services to do for them

Below is a list of key topics that are important to midwifery with key messaging describing ICM's position on each issue. These examples should help to set the scene for your advocacy.

*- A Lack of recognition for the work midwives do*

Globally, there is a lack of understanding about the importance of midwives in helping women to have a safe birth. ICM recognises a need to identify the midwife specifically as the most appropriate health care professional delivering skilled care to women during pregnancy, childbirth and the postnatal period. We therefore promote and endorse midwives and midwifery skills, as defined by the ICM core documents and position statements, as vital to the health and wellbeing of women and the newborn.

*- A lack of recognition for midwifery as a distinct profession*

In some countries, midwifery still struggles to achieve recognition as an autonomous profession. Autonomous midwifery practice enables midwives to provide up-to-date, evidence-based, high quality and ethical care for childbearing women and their families, as set out in the ICM Definition of the Midwife. That's why ICM encourages and supports midwives to secure and maintain the autonomy of the profession to better serve women and childbearing families.

*- Low salary as a result of a lack of funding*

Poor employment policies and conditions can make the work of a midwife incredibly challenging. The ICM urges Member Associations to lobby governments to establish legal and employment systems that support and maintain mother- and baby-friendly employment practices by employers. Midwives need enabling environments for them to serve the women and babies they care for.

*- Overstretched midwifery workforce*

In 2011, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) published a report – The state of the world's midwifery 2011: delivering health, saving lives – providing a look at midwifery around the globe. Its analysis of 58 countries showed that there was a global shortage of an estimated 350 000 midwives, at least a third of whom were needed in the world's poorest countries.

The ICM offers a range of tools online to help expand education programmes and regulatory frameworks, which will lead to an increased number of competent midwives in their countries in order better to serve childbearing women and their families.

## POLITICAL ADVOCACY

relates to a variety of these issues that impact midwives and midwifery as a profession. Midwives also encounter political issues which impact their work, but these depend on the region or country in which midwives are working, as well as the current global state of midwifery. Advocacy will therefore often depend on what midwives are experiencing in various locations around the world.

Examples include:

- Decriminalising community-based/home births
- Protecting autonomous midwifery
- Ending female genital mutilation

Here is a statement from Young Midwifery Leader, Massoma Jafari, regarding an attack that took place on midwifery school in Afghanistan in 2018:

*"A few weeks ago, a midwifery school in Jalalabad was attacked by an insurgent group – over 70 student community midwives and nurses escaped with the help of school staff but sadly 3 male support staff were killed. The school remains closed and it is unknown if it will open again. The community midwifery education programs are unique in that they offer residential accommodation and families are encouraged to send their wives, daughters, sisters etc to these schools to become midwives and return to serve their community. Finding new candidates with sufficient levels of education in such remote areas with worsening security is very difficult."*

After the incident occurred midwives in Afghanistan and around the world stood together in solidarity, sharing messages on social media, attracting news coverage and helping the school to recover from the attack. The response to this attack showcases political advocacy in action.

Identifying whether the issues you are most passionate about or witness most heavily relate to group, professional, or political midwifery can help to frame your messaging and your advocacy activities. For political issues, lobbying might be the most effective activity, whereas for personal issues it might be best to advocate to change the attitudes of those around you or among specific communities.







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# 6. Strategic Planning

## SETTING YOUR OBJECTIVE

Box: foundations of a good strategy:

Your Advocacy Strategy should answer the following questions:

**Issue & Subject:** What problem have you identified? Who does it impact?

**Solution(s):** What can help resolve this problem in part or in full?

**Intended outcome:** What do you expect to achieve as a result of your advocacy?

**Audience:** Who do you need to influence that this is important?

**Mobilise:** How will you motivate your audience to act?

**Communication Method:** What is the best way to present your argument?

**Resources:** What do you have? What do you need?

**Logistics:** Who will do which actions, and when?

**Impact Evaluation:** What does success look like?

What are your overall objectives? What are your short-term targets?

Once you have an idea of the issues you want to highlight and overcome, it's good to have an idea of the possible solutions to these challenges. Then, you are not only advocating *against* disrespect or injustice, but also *for* something positive.

Thinking about solutions, and what you hope to achieve will help to guide the activities you undertake as part of your advocacy.

Solutions to common midwifery issues might include:

- Better working conditions
- Policies that support midwives and midwifery
- Membership with a Midwives' Association to ensure representation and unity
- Midwives working in the community
- Woman-centred care
- Clear scope of practice

Understanding your objectives, what you want to achieve, and your messages will help you decide what kind of activity would best work to communicate with your audience. This will help you align your activity with your objective.

If your objective or solution includes raising awareness of an issue, you might decide to shape your advocacy around sharing information.

Below is a list of objectives along with the kind of activities which suit each goal – notice

how each objective has a different target audience, from the public to journalists and the media.

#### Inform the public about midwives

- Organise a rally, flash mob, march, public performance, marathon or other high-visibility events
- Create a social media campaign and encourage your fans and followers to participate by sharing their own experiences of midwifery care (see sample messages to help).
- Call your local radio station and tell them about the issues local midwives are facing and if you could share with their audience.

#### Increase awareness of midwifery services:

- Offer free antenatal, postnatal or other reproductive health services to sensitise women to the benefit of midwifery services.
- Establish a safe space for the public to receive free cervical or breast cancer screening, family planning advice, etc.
- Invite policymakers to visit midwifery services and give them insight into the daily life of a midwife.
- Share your work on social media with the relevant hashtags. These hashtags will vary depending on key advocacy days, but many popular hashtags used by ICM include [#midwife](#), [#midwives](#), [#midwifery](#), [#HealthforAll](#) and [#NormalBirth](#)

#### Nourish the support system amongst midwives

- Have a celebratory event where midwives can meet each other and exchange knowledge on what practices and approaches enable them to effectively practise midwifery.

#### Collaborate with other health professionals

- Bring together stakeholders in health or gender equality to collectively shine a spotlight on the invaluable work of midwives.
- Organise a social event – either formal or informal – where midwives can be celebrated by a diverse group of advocates in support of their work.
- You could also show a video about midwives or reproductive health services to encourage deeper thought about midwifery amongst attendees or host a roundtable with a discussion about the importance of midwifery services.

#### Increase the number of midwives

- Arrange visits to secondary schools to talk about midwifery as a career and in the long-term recruit new students. Arrange meetings with government officials to discuss retention strategies.

#### Achieve a policy change

- Invite government officials to a panel discussion and address the necessary changes.
- Share the findings from different reports e.g. Midwives' Voices, Midwives' Realities, the State of the World's Midwifery report, Lancet Series on Midwifery or any other local/national report on midwifery services that might be available in your country.
- Invite relevant government officials to visit your place of work so that they share in the achievements of midwives whilst learning how best to support midwives in overcoming the challenges.
- Advocate for decision-makers to encourage an enabling environment for midwives to practice.

## UNDERSTANDING YOUR AUDIENCE

Another key aspect of framing your advocacy and achieving your objectives is deciding both your audience and your subject. Who are you advocating to? Who are you advocating for?

Your audience is the people you need to persuade that your issue is important. This might include, but not be limited to:

- Women
- Families
- Community leaders
- Other midwives
- Policy-makers
- Academics/Researchers
- Doctors and nurses
- Media

Meanwhile, midwives generally seek to empower and represent:

Women

- Newborns
- Families
- Midwives
- Midwifery students

Advocacy begins to succeed when audiences are inspired to act. Advocating to people or groups can be challenging because everybody has different priorities and will not all be inspired by the same arguments. To motivate our audience, we must try to imagine the situation from their perspectives and ask ourselves what will motivate our audience.

## COMMUNICATING YOUR MESSAGE

Having a clear understanding of your objectives and your audience is key to shaping your advocacy message and ensuring that you communicate effectively to a variety of target audiences.

- International, national and local government
- Non-governmental organisations and charities
- Community and faith leaders
- Mothers and other relevant members of the general public
- Healthcare professionals and associations
- Other midwives

Equally as important as [identifying the audience](#) you want to communicate with, is [choosing the right person to share the message](#).

**Quality:** Everyone who is a part of the campaign will have something of value to add. Play to each individual's strengths, available resources and networks!

**Equity:** Make sure that diverse voices are heard and represented. The messaging of your

group should be agreed upon collectively. This might require ensuring a consensus on the target message so that your audience hear this one message and not multiple messages, which could be confusing.

**Leadership:** A unified front is a MUST. All partners and allies should present a similar perspective in their advocacy and be confident in supporting their cause.

## COMMUNICATION TOOLS AND CHANNELS

TYPES OF COMMUNICATION	Written	Governments/ Institutions/Experts	Informed Non-Experts	The General Public
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Policy studies</li> <li>• Research papers</li> <li>• Working papers</li> <li>• Policy reports</li> <li>• Policy-oriented journal articles</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Policy briefs, memos &amp; fact sheets</li> <li>• Newsletters</li> <li>• Policy Reports</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Op-ed articles in newspapers</li> <li>• Letters to newspapers</li> <li>• Ads, banners, posters, t-shirts, stickers</li> </ul>
	Oral	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conference presentations</li> <li>• Less formal presentations at one-to-one meetings or lobbying</li> <li>• Presentations to working groups or public hearings</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Radio &amp; TV programs</li> <li>• Public meetings and hearings</li> <li>• Speeches to the public</li> </ul>
	Videos		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Documentary videos</li> <li>• Advocacy-based advertising</li> </ul>	
	Digital	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dedicated advocacy websites</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Email campaigns</li> <li>• Dedicated advocacy websites or pages</li> <li>• Social Networking platforms</li> <li>• Texts/Messaging apps</li> </ul>	





# 7. Working with the Media

Engaging with the media can amplify your message and visibility greatly, both in terms of informing the public and raising awareness.

While media is important, it is not always easy to get journalists to write about what you are doing as there is a lot of competition for publicity. Journalists will decide whether to cover your story based on whether they think it will be interesting to their readers or viewers, and whether it is important in the local context.

## JOURNALIST BRIEFING

You might choose to invite journalists for a briefing that includes a tour of a midwifery ward or to connect journalists with mothers who have partnered with a midwife throughout their pregnancy and childbirth.

## KEEP UP WITH THE NEWS

A simple way to make use of the media is to keep an eye on the latest local and national news and track any updates that are relevant to your interests and cause.

## PRESS RELEASES

Two weeks before the event send a media advisory out to local journalists. A week before the event make sure to follow up with your journalists. ICM will usually share a press release five days before the day. Aim to convince the journalist by providing the facts that will help them make a positive decision:

- What activity or event are you organising?
- What makes it interesting for their readers or viewers?
- Why is it important or unique?
- Who is attending or invited?
- When and where will it take place?

Also, include:

- A short quotation highlighting a human perspective and showcasing why the event/day is important and interesting. This can be from a local midwife or mother. If you can find a celebrity or significant civic leader to provide a supportive quote, all the better.
- A short explanation of the advocacy day you are celebrating and your own organisation.
- Contact details in case someone would like to request further information.

The ICM has created an example of a media advisory for an IDM event below. Send to your local journalists to convince and gain interest around your advocacy:

# Media Advisory Template



Media Advisory for immediate release

Date .....

International Day of the Midwife, May 5

What you are doing

Where is it taking place

When (date and time)

Short quotation from someone relevant to the story

Contact details (name and phone number)

**Note For Editors:** The International Day of the Midwife is celebrated on 5th May each year to highlight the important role midwives play in the health of mothers, children and their families. Over 340,000 women and over 3 million infants around the world die each year from preventable complications from pregnancy and childbirth. The majority of these deaths would be prevented if there were enough qualified and adequately resourced midwives available around the world. Midwives are skilled to provide up to 87% of childbirth-related services, making them the ideal health professional to support women through the maternity continuum of care.

The World Health Organization, several United Nations agencies and other international bodies have identified midwives as the key to reducing maternal and newborn deaths and disabilities globally. With midwives yielding a sixteen-fold return on investment, the ripple effect of improved health outcomes is significant. Midwives save lives.

To help you write your press release, we've gathered a list of four top tips:

**1. TARGET YOUR MEDIA** Based on who your target audience is, decide whether you're going for a newspaper, blog, local radio or TV. Find out what kind of stories they cover and how your story relates to it. When writing an email, speaking to them or sending a press release always link their work to your story to show how it is relevant to them and their media outlet.

**2. SHORT AND SWEET** Your press release should be short and to the point – no more than a page long and without any superfluous information. Include the most important information in the heading and at the beginning of the body. Journalists want to know who, what, why, when and how and make sure the first paragraph of your press release addresses these questions. Leave the less critical details to the end.

**3. KEEP IT IN THE EMAIL** If you are sending an email, put the press release in the body of the email. Add an informative and interesting title to the email subject line, but don't exaggerate this will make you lose your credibility with the journalist. Opening attachments require an extra click, and you should aim to make life as easy as possible for journalists.

**4. FOLLOW UP** Phone the news desk or the journalist you sent the email to. Make sure to ask if they are free to talk before you start telling them about your story. All journalists work on tight deadlines so don't call them late in the afternoon. Once they have said they are free to talk quickly introduce yourself and the story, make it short and snappy and tell them why it is relevant to them and the audience. Ask if they are interested or if anyone else on their team is. Be courteous and polite and take no as an answer. Once you have introduced yourself and your organisation to the journalist you can always go back and ask about a different story, treat a no as a step to building a relationship with the journalist.

## 8. Working with the Government

Lobbying is, in short, the act of trying to influence the actions, policies, or decisions of political officials, particularly policymakers or legislators. Working with the government might not be necessary for all kinds of advocacy, and it is possible to engage in advocacy without targeting policymakers. ICM encourages and support partners who wish to direct their advocacy to the highest levels by lobbying and advocating for policy changes relating to maternal, newborn and reproductive healthcare nationally and internationally.

## 9. Messaging

Based on the objectives and audience of your advocacy activities, the message you decide to share is one of the most important things to consider. Whether you want to inform, discuss, promote or advocate, key messages are the messages you want your audience to react to and remember.

Key messages should be clear and concise so that any audience member can find them easy to understand and remember.

A key message may stand alone, but it can be reinforced by supporting messages that provide further evidence to strengthen the core point.

The presentation of your key messages is determined by your event, for example: On a social media campaign, your message might be a slogan or hashtag that can be copied by anyone else and shared on their media; or at a social event, it can be the theme of a short introductory video played to the attendees.

To ensure consistency and increase the power of your message, key messages should be used in all the materials around your activity, such as press releases, statements, speeches, fact sheets, and other documents and visibility materials such as banners, T-shirts, caps, etc.

Here is an example of messaging from the [2019 International Day of the Midwife](#)

The Core Message: [MIDWIVES ARE THE DEFENDERS OF WOMEN'S RIGHTS](#)

**Supporting Messages:**

- Midwives uphold and protect the rights of women every day
- Midwives need safe and enabling environments to work in
- Women, girls and midwives have the right to live safe from harm, violence, discrimination and abuse
- Women and girls have the right to access sexual and reproductive health services anywhere in the world
- Women have the freedom and the power of choice regarding what happens to their bodies
- Every woman has a right to be free from any form of discrimination
- Every woman has a right to up to date health information
- Women have the right to make choices about their care during childbirth
- Midwives have the right to provide care across their full scope of practice
- Women have the right to access educated and competent midwives
- Every woman has the right to choose the place where she gives birth

Please note: Adding locally-relevant facts and figures will increase the power of your messaging.



## 10. Utilising Social Media

When used effectively, different social media channels can help you reach more people and spread the word about your advocacy activities and messages. Facebook, Instagram and Twitter can be used in many ways to engage your audience and increase the visibility of your events. Below are some examples of how these channels can be used. Remember to also see the sections on suggested social media posts for practical ideas and examples on how to communicate about common issues for midwives.

- Visuals always grab attention and have far more engagement. ICM regularly disseminate graphics and posters that can be printed and shared on social media. Please contact [communications@internationalmidwives.org](mailto:communications@internationalmidwives.org) if you wish to request any of these images. Alternatively register for the ICM newsletter and you will receive graphics monthly related to the upcoming advocacy days the following month.
- For inspiration around what to post on your social media, see the section of key messages and suggested social media posts pages of this toolkit.

### Facebook

This social media platform is ideal to inform your stakeholders about key midwifery issues in a more personal way. It is interactive in that you can post information and invite discussion, whilst creating guidelines for others on how they can support you and your cause. You can interact with your 'Friends' – the people who have selected your posts to show up in their feed – by posting on your page.

People mostly use Facebook to connect exclusively with people they already know.

#### USE FACEBOOK TO:

- Change your profile photo and cover photo to midwifery-themed photos
- Set up a page for your cause
- Post your key messages
- Share visuals
- Create an event
- Invite your friends/fans to attend this event
- Upload photos of your event
- Engage with your followers by asking questions



# Twitter

This social media tool attracts a different audience – it is the place for journalists and policymakers who are discussing current issues, unlike Facebook and Instagram.

It is a great place to connect with the general public and raise awareness. Hashtags are vital in ensuring the right people follow your conversation. Many people will use hashtags (words or phrases beginning with #) so that they join an online conversation with other people discussing the same thing. You should use #Midwives to make sure that your posts and tweets are seen by those engaging with this topic daily.

## USE TWITTER TO:

- Post your key messages using the hashtag #Midwives
- Share visuals
- Change your profile photo and header photo to midwife-themed photos
- Announce an event
- Share live updates and photos from your event/activity/cause
- Post links to midwifery articles and coverage
- See, retweet, comment and like what others are saying about #Midwives
- Retweet ICM's tweets from the account [@world\\_midwives](#)

# Instagram

Instagram is a platform with a focus on visual imagery. Its focus is more on personal and inspirational content, rather than professional information. Share high-quality photos and short videos with an inspirational or educational touch. Be sure to add a variety of hashtags that are relevant to your target group. People will use popular hashtags to search for content, so if you use them there is a greater chance of people finding your posts. Use both specific words and more general tags to make your content available to a broader audience.

'Followers' – the people who have selected your posts to show up in their feed – will usually be either people you know or people interested in the same topics as you.

## USE INSTAGRAM TO:

- Promote events in advance through engaging photos
- Share some high-quality photos and videos from your event or activity
- Request your followers to engage with your posts, e.g. by asking questions relevant to midwifery issues
- Post your key messages using the hashtags #Midwives, #GenderEquality etc.
- Share midwifery messages and visuals
- Change your profile photo to a midwifery theme photo

# Blog posts

Blog posts are short articles or editorials that you can write and publish online. They are particularly effective for telling a more personal story, as they are more like a story than a report. You can write using your own perspective with personal pronouns such as “I” or “we”, or you can use a more general perspective with a focus on your Midwives’ Association. If you have a blog or article you want to share you can always send it into ICM for posting and sharing on our platforms. Send in short pieces (max. 500 words) with high-quality photos to us at [communications@internationalmidwives.org](mailto:communications@internationalmidwives.org)



# 11. Monitoring and Evaluation

Even if you understand advocacy and your key messages, as well as your choice of advocacy activities, it's important to measure your success regularly. This can help you to reassess your goals and strategies to best serve the people you are advocating for and best communicate with your audience.

Keeping a track record of the outcomes of your advocacy will also provide useful data to attract funders and encourage further support for your cause.

You can find a list of measurement tools below which offer effective ways to evaluate the outcomes of your advocacy:

**Planning your Advocacy:** To be successful, all partners need a clear understanding of individual responsibilities, timelines to deliver specific actions and measures of success.

**What Does Success Look like?** If everybody knows what markers of success (also known as Key Performance Indicators) look like, they will know whether their actions are moving them closer to achieving their objectives.

**Share Results:** Record progress. Measure data where it is available. Share knowledge with your partners.

**Track your Progress:** Ensure that at any stage, you can access relevant information about your advocacy and analyse your progress.

**Reporting:** It is important that people who have invested either money, time or resources to your cause receive regular updates so they remain engaged and inspired.



## 12. Seeing the Bigger Picture

You can find a range of helpful resources on the ICM website at [www.internationalmidwives.org](http://www.internationalmidwives.org).

We have included a variety of reports and ICM position statements on several key midwifery issues.

You might also find the resources below helpful as you frame your advocacy:

[The State of the World's Midwifery \(SoWMY\) 2021](#)

[The Lancet Series on Midwifery](#)

[The World Bank: Health Data](#)

[The Global Midwives Hub](#)

More data can be gathered from the Ministry of Health in your country

Where to look for advocacy grants:

<https://formidwifery.org/apply-for-grants/>

<https://www.rcm.org.uk/promoting/learning-careers/bursaries-scholarships-grants/>

<http://www.midwife.org/Scholarships-Fellowships-Awards-Grants>

Midwifery Advocacy Toolkit to help shape your social media messaging: <https://www.internationalmidwives.org/assets/files/advocacy-files/2019/07/icm-advocacy-toolkit---july-2019.pdf>

Midwives Voices Midwives realities <https://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/250376/9789241510547-eng.pdf;jsessionid=933B32E9B3793BCDFAA60F7CBB40F9B8?sequence=1>

WHO Midwifery Education Modules [https://www.who.int/maternal\\_child\\_adolescent/documents/9241546662/en/](https://www.who.int/maternal_child_adolescent/documents/9241546662/en/)



# Connect

## ASSOCIATIONS

You can find the details of your national association on the ICM website:  
[www.internationalmidwives.org](http://www.internationalmidwives.org).

If you are planning any advocacy activity you should engage your association and regional board members for added support.

## REGIONAL BOARD MEMBERS

You can find details of the current regional board members on the ICM website, as well as their contact information. Board members are here to serve you and your region so please ask for support if you need it.

## ICM TEAM

ICM always wants to hear about advocacy efforts from midwives and associations, and we will always help in whatever way we can.

Please contact [communications@internationalmidwives.org](mailto:communications@internationalmidwives.org).



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