PITCH Partnership to Inspire, Transform and Connect the HIV response

Learning Event 2019

Lessons, Reflections and Next Steps

aidsfonds FRONTLINE AIDS Ministry of Foreign Affairs

LESSONS & REFLECTIONS

Each of the sessions during the Learning Event produced some valuable and insightful reflections from the participants.

Day 1: Understanding our contribution to change!

On Day 1 we discussed what kinds of evidence we need in order to demonstrate our contribution to change.

Examples of evidence of successfully 'creating space' for change:

- Advocates speak at government events for first time
- Number of times policy makers accept community
- Up to date mapping of 'champions' in parliament and government
- Technical Working Group minutes
- Comparisons between countries with different policies
- Police training other police to reduce stigma and discrimination

Country example: Mozambique

- We heard from Belarmino from UNIDOS, who commented on his experience of creating space for advocacy in Mozambique. UNIDOS' advocacy targets are government ministries, who they lobby on behalf of people who use drugs (PWUD) who are criminalised in Mozambique. The development of a PWUD network has helped to create space to meet with the government, and is also evidence in itself of progress made by PITCH. The existence of this network helped convince government stakeholders of the value and importance of participating in the Harm Reduction conference in Portugal in April 2019. The conference helped to show Mozambican governent officials the progress that has been made in Portugal in terms of promoting a public health and harm reducton approach, inspiring them to reflect on how the same approach could work in Mozambique.

Group Work

How to manage setbacks and abandoned commitments made by advocacy targets?

Hannington from ICWEA in Uganda led this discussion and spoke about their experience of engaging in advocacy with PEPFAR, who committed to provide funding for people living with disabilities, and which as a Significant Moment of Change was recorded as a success in Wanda. However, some time later PEPFAR suddenly said that they did not have the funding to support this work after all. Should this still be recorded as a success, given this setback?

Through discussion it was suggested that this should not necessarily be considered a setback, but instead should be seen as part of the process of ongoing reflection and adaptation of our advocacy planning. It was suggested ICWEA's advocacy strategy could be adapted to include a commitment to raise this issue at COP 2020. Examples like this can be used as evidence to make decisions on the next steps to take us forward to the 'next battle'. The group reflected that it is important to think about the gains you've made and, even if your advocacy wasn't successful, use the experience as a benchmark/stepping stone for the next step.

Some lessons identified by the group:

- Document expected and unexpected changes, what went well, and what has not worked in terms of what we implemented - this will help inform future decisions;
- It's important to document the small processes; as well as documenting the challenges and the barriers to reaching our goals
- It's also about how to change your strategy so that things don't just stop when there are barriers
- Working in a coalition means that after funding has stopped, you can continue your work and reach out for support from your coalition members

How to measure the success of informal advocacy as a contribution to our outcomes?

Maidina from ICJR In Indonesia led this discussion, raising the question of how best to document progress achieved through informal approaches to advocacy. It was agreed that PITCH partners can make a record all the information and communication, recording the key pieces of communication as well as information about open activities and meetings. It was recognised that the advantage of public engagement means that decision makers can be held to their commitments more effectively. The group found that recording changes in Wanda may not show a direct connection between an advocacy intervention and a result, but that Wanda can be useful for reviewing and finding threads that connect advocacy activities and changes. A challenge is safety – to publish personal connections between PITCH partners to members of parliament may affect their safety (both the partner and the MP), potentially negatively affecting future advocacy opportunities.

How to use data and evidence to make the most of the final year of PITCH?

Buky from EVA in Nigeria led this discussion, identifying the cross cutting themes of relevance for most PITCH partners and a common agenda, including a focus on issues of stigma and discrimination, meaningful participation of different groups, inclusive coalition building, and strengthening capacity of decision makers. This last theme doesn't appear in most countries' ToCs but nevertheless has come up as something many people have been workin on. One example is the work of the police doing sensitisation training and taking this on themselves as a responsibility. What we've been able to achieve so far- tangibly- has been around data gathering

and evidence. We are now using data to implement decisions, and as evidence to demonstrate that the Key Populations that we work with really do exist. The change we have been able to contribute to, importantly, is that Key Populations are now better recognised and have a voice in various public processes across the PITCH countries. Some have seen positive changes in policies or laws, but even where this hasn't been achieved they have at least managed to create a different narrative around important topics.

The group also identified struggles and challenges, in the form of stronger push back from governments on certain issues. This suggests that PITCH partners are advocating at a higher level than previously, engaging with increasingly influential and powerful government stakeholders.

Some next steps identified by the group:

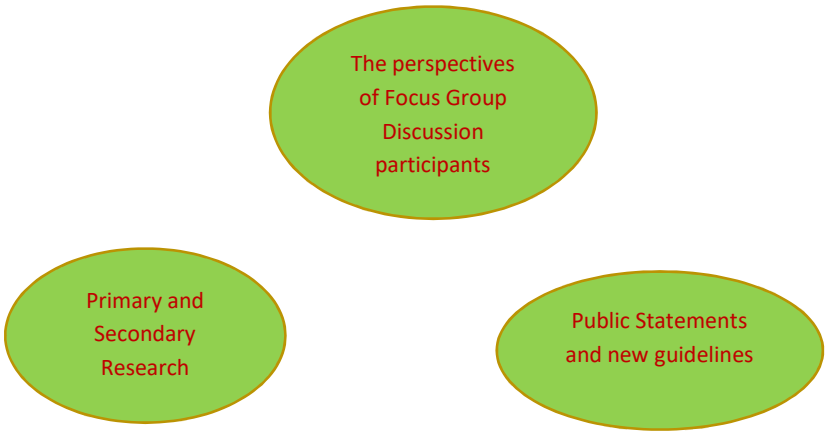
- Document more case studies around lessons learned, and continue to invest in the approaches that are working best
- Focus more on movement building and bringing more organisations together
- More opposition monitoring; where is there money coming from and how are they doing it?
- Shifting the public perception towards our work.

Day 2: Analysing, Understanding, and Substantiating our Data!

On Day 2 we discussed what experiences participants have of substantiating their outcomes

- Both in Uganda and Indonesia, partners consult community members in order to check that partners understanding of what has changed, and their contribution to that change, is in line with the understanding and experiences of the relevant and affected communities
- Agreement was reached that it is important to identify any contradictions and limitations in our claims of contribution part of our work in substantiating our claims of contribution

Examples of data used by partners when substantiating their contribution to change:



Challenges experienced when substantiating our data:

Group Work

How to ensure the safety and security of informants when collecting data?

Issues;

- The police can easily identify the location of where meetings and interviews with informants are held
- Transgender people cannot attend mosques
- The safety of activists remains a concern

Good practice;

- Don't name people or places if it could put them at risk - anonymise the names of individuals
- Try to develop good working relationships with decision makers (champions or advocacy buddies) at the national and international levels, as a way to mitigate the risk of yoir government imposing restrictions on your work if you have spoke out publicly against their position
- Try to secure a place at meetings with those who who have a difficult working relationship with. One example given was to sit in CCM meetings

How to evidence changes in stigma, attitudes and behavior?

Recommendations;

1. The use of mystery clients can help, accompanied by follow up over time

    - The challenge can be that if someone has been accessing a service for a long time, they may become friends with the health workers, making the data collected appear less reliable
    - It is therefore important to use more than one method.
2. Ask informants to complete a beginning and end of service evaluation form after they have received a service at a clinic. This will allow us to observe changes in client feedback before and after they used a service

3. Make a hotline available for reporting violations, and these cases could be monitored

4. Run a focus group discussion with community members and explore whether participants believe there has been a change in attitude on a particular topic

5. Collect information through Facebook messenger on reports of complaints against law enforcers or health services

6. Analyse the frequency and significance of reports of stigma and discrimination, human rights violations etc that are submitted

How to measure change at the national, regional, and global level?

'If we only measure at the end, then we miss all the small changes'

Recommendations;

- Document the process. What are the processes we go through to organise partners? How is that happening? By bringing up topics that were not spoken about previously, this can represent an important change

- Monitor budget allocation that is relevant to the advocacy agenda on domestic financing

- Review and use published shadow reports, for example the Global Coalition for HIV prevention, which Kenyan government signed up to. Data was collected to identify th extent to which the government is responding to the commitments they have signed up to. The shadow report sits alongside and complements the official government report

- Using Scorecards can allow us to hold governments to account for thier actions and progress against commitments

- The End Term Evaluation should consider measuring what worked well and what didn't work in terms of the relationships between the country, regional and global levels

Lessons learnt;

- There are real challenges in accessing regional and global policy spaces

- PITCH partners would benefit from a better understanding of who is working in the regional spaces, and how to link PITCH advocacy in these spaces

- It is challenging that PITCH global policy and regional partners have not been using the same M&E approaches as countries (e.g. advocacy logs, change reports)

- It is important to bring together and connect the indicator/outcome reports at all three levels so that we can better understand analyse what is being achieved through collaboration between these different levels

Questions;

- How do we track what people are doing against what they committed to do? Tracking global targets signed by national governments

Day 3: How to use your evidence for reporting, learning, communication, fundraising, advocacy

On Day 3 we discussed the different ways that we can use data and evidence of our contribution to change to support our ongoing reporting, learning, communications, fundraising, and advocacy work

Nina explained that in 2020 the PITCH Communications Working Group will coordinate a series of communications for advocacy trainings for PITCH partners in each country. These trainings will focus on how to use communications strategically in your advocacy, and how to use communications tools and create communications products that will allow PITCH partners to confidently communicate their achievements and present their advocacy journey. Global and local trainers will be recruited to facilitate these trainings.

Nina gave the following recommendations to participants on what to consider when planning your communications activities:

- If someone tells a story, and you understand the story, you share the same brain pattern as the person telling the story. This suggests that you have empathy with the person telling the story (the story teller)

- A story need a central character, a problem or experience that serves as a focus for what is being communicated
- A story needs context - numbers without context mean nothing
- A story needs to be clear. The clearer it is for the audience, the more likely they are to understand it.

Group Work

How to use evidence as part of our fundraising?

Case Study: How to address the challenge of reduced availability of funding?

Examples of possible funding options discussed:

- Increase focus of our advocacy on increasing the availability and access to domestic sources of funding, reducing reliance on international funding
- Increase engagement with private funders like trusts and foundations, and private companies. Many private companies have established their own charitiable funds. We could take some time to map out and identify those funds that have an interest in and commitment to supporting Key Populations
- Patricia from LVCT noted that we need to first understand more about Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), and the CSR commitments that have been made by different private companies to support Key Populations. We need to understand their agenda and objectives and how these match our own work and objectives. We need to think about our advocacy and how this might complement the work of relevant private companies. In Kenya, we worked with a call centre and mobile network, and they agreed to set up a free helpline for Key Populations to use, in a way that would still result in a satisfactory profit for the company

Lessons and Reflections

- When presenting our evidence it is important that we are able to demonstrate that its origins are with the community, that it reflects the real needs and experiences of the communities we work with;

- Our evidence needs to include concrete data, while presenting a story from the community that funders understand represent and articulate the challenges that the community faces;

- Often forgotten is the “what next” in our proposal and the next level;

- We need to make the most of the range of international funding opportunities open to us, including the Global Financing Facility, Amplify Change, and local embassy funding etc;

- We need to remember to find new ways to maintain and develop our working relationships with local embassies, providing technical updates, briefing papers, and identifying gaps in implementation and policies;

- In Zimbabwe, PITCH has presented evidence on HIV prevention to the Ministry of Health and parliament as part of a wider effort to demonstrate the value of focussing on prevention as part of the management of public health financing;

How to use evidence as part of our advocacy?

Case Study: Using a cost-benefit analysis to demonstrate the value of UHC to a Ministry of Finance

Lessons and Reflections

- The main message we can convey is that investing in UHC represents a sound long term investment in the long term health of society, more economical than the alternative where the most marginalised continue to be denied access to health services

- Our advocacy targets from this perspective are mainly Ministries of Health as well as donors, who will allow us to amplify our voices by influencing donor funding priorities. We also need to target parliamentarians

- When using a cost-benefit analysis we need access to reliable figures and not so much stories, as well as a good view of the short, medium and long-term impact. We also need a KP and population size estimate, allowing us to develop an investment case outlining the consequences of governments not meeting their own UHC targets

- We need to understand and advocate on the basis of specific initiatives, such as health insurance. In many PITCH countries in Africa, KP communities do not have any health insurance, while in other countries communities do have insurance

- A cost-benefit analysis advocates that investing in Key Populations represents a sound long term investment in the health of the wider community; it is important to use the SDG framework to help support our arguments

How to use evidence as part of our social media?

Case Study: Using social media to influence Ministries of Health on issues related to SRHR, and Ministries of Education on the needs of Adolescent Girls and Young Women

Lessons and Reflections

- Social media can connect governments to the community. Ministerial staff and parliamentarians use social media professionally, and platforms such as Facebook and Twitter can serve as a useful platform to connect the voice of the community with government decision makers and policy makers

- Social media can also be used to support fundraising efforts

- Facebook can be used to show short videos that tell the story of the experiences of Key Populations in an accessible and engaging way. We need to be careful about what we publish on Facebook as our timeline can be easily traced and referenced by others, including government officials

- For all social media platforms, very real security concerns exist for individual users which we need to be really clear and aware of

- Twitter is better for communicating short messages, infographics and links to reports;

- Instagram and YouTube can be used to celebrate or promote relevant international days

- Some governments still only really trust the traditional media (newspapers, TV, and radio)

- Partners that have been involved in the Photovoice project can use their images to support their advocacy on social media. This can help bring Key Populations into the wider debate and helps to bring data to life, bringing together stories and data

- When using social media it is important to make the most of of opportunities for conversations on key themes. Drug use in Nigeria has had a lot of media coverage which has created opportunities to for increased visibility around Harm Reduction. Having the data and evidence readily accessible and available when you need to use them is vital for PITCH advocates

- It is important to be transparent in how you have used your funding, and you can use social media for this purpose. Yoiu can explain what % of your incomes has been used on administrative costs, giving supporters greater confidence to donate to your work again

Country specific experiences:

- In **Russia**, storytelling was used on Russian social media to support fundraising efforts

- In **Indonesia**, Rumah Cemara sell accessories through social media to help children who are living with HIV. They have also run a campaign (#indonesiawithoutstigma) and have involved sport teams to support this campaign and spread the word

- In **Zimbabwe**, despite facing challenges in securing long term funding, PITCH partners have found success in using whatsapp groups, twitter and GoFundMe pages to support emergecncy responses for Key Populations

- In **Nigeria**, social media can be more effective when communicating evidence related to service delivery programmes rather than advocacy programmes, as information about services can be easier to quantify. Messaging related to advocacy needs to be especially clear. When using social media to fundraise for advoacy programmes, it is important to ask for specific amounts of money and be clear about how it will be used. Offering to send a thank you email, or hand written letter from the beneficiary, can serve as a helpful incentive

- In **Myanmar**, we use social media to provide communities with information so that they become better informed about health services that are available to them

NEXT STEPS

As participants in this Learning Event, you are now responsible to sharing your insights, reflections, and lessons from this event with your PITCH colleagues that weren't able to participate. **You are now PITCH Learning Champions!**

Here are some suggested next steps for the following themes:

M&E and Learning

- A lot of participants seemed to recognise the value of the advocacy log approach as a way to document the steps that PITCH partners are taking in their advocacy journeys.

  Why not meet with your colleagues and other PITCH partners and agree to log your moments of change in Wanda or Excel for a couple of months, and arrange to meet and review what these advocacy logs are telling you? You might find some useful information that will help you understand your contribution to change, and what lessons you can learn about your own advocacy strategies and how they need to be adapted in response to your advoacy context

- The PITCH End Term Evaluation is taking place this year, and Outcome Harvesting will play an important role in helping us to understand what PITCH has achieved as a programme. Two day Outcome Harvesting reflection workshops will be carried out at the country, regional, and global levels to help us to understand the most significant changes that PITCH has contributed to.

  This will represent an excellent opportunity for you to document some really useful evidence, in the form of outcome statements, that will help you to demonstrate your contribution to change. You can use this to support your learning about what you have achieved in PITCH, to support your work in developing future programmes, as well as with your fundraising.

Communications and Social Media

- The communications trainings that will take place in each PITCH country this year will provide PITCH partners with an opportunity to build their confidence and expertise in communication skills for advocacy. This will help partners to build on and strengthen their use of communications to support their advocacy in the last year of PITCH, and to reflect on how to use these skills after the end of PITCH.

  Why not reflect on the evidence and data you have been using as part of your communicatons work up until this year, and think about what evidence you now need to support the new communications techniques and skills you have developed as part of the communications training this year. Remember to contact colleagues from the PITCH M&E Working Group and Communications Working Group if you have questions or ideas you would like to share

Advocacy

- One of the overarching priority advocacy themes for PITCH in 2020 is “Ensuring the sustainability of the HIV and AIDS response in the age of UHC”. In 2020 PITCH partners will be participating in a range of national, regional, and global level meetings and events where UHC among other topics will be the focus for discussions

  Take time to reflect on the data and evidence you normally use to support your advocacy on specific themes. Share with your colleagues some of the examples of evidence identified from different countries during the Learning Event, and discuss whether these might be relevant to the advocacy that you have planned for the remaidner of PITCH. Remember that you can also contact your global policy, research, and M&E colleagues to share any questions you might have.

Fundraising

- Fundraising is an important consideration for all PITCH partners in this final year of the programme. As part of our research into new funding opportunities, we will need to feel confident that we have the evidence availabe, showing the success of our advocacy work, to support our fundraising efforts and demonstrate to funders why they should fund community advocacy work

  As mentioned earlier, remember that you can use the outcome statements developed as part of the end term evaluation to support your fundraising efforts. You can also use the Mid Year Change reports from your reflection meetings in August and September last year to build strong arguments about what you have been able to achieve during PITCH, and how you plan to build on this experience in the future. If you need any advice about how to transform your outcome statements and advocacy logs into compelling fundraising asks, please contact the M&E Working Group and Country Teams for ideas and support.