



How to participate in a law-making process

This toolkit is intended as a guide for anyone who wishes to start a citizen movement aimed at change.



1

ISSUE

- Identify the issue that concerns you by conducting a [problem-tree analysis](#).
- This can be an issue at the community, district, state or national level; for eg. the high level of noise pollution caused by motorbikes late at night in your neighbourhood, lack of public infrastructure to support person with disabilities, etc.



2

INITIAL CONSULTATION

- Invite other individuals, groups or communities who are affected by the same issue for an initial consultation. You may be surprised to find that there are others who are facing similar issue. You can now start to work together towards a common goal.
- Collecting views from other people will also help you to understand the issue more holistically and effectively.



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FORM A COALITION

- A coalition is a group of people taking action together towards a common goal.
- Working in a coalition has its advantages; instead of being alone, you will represent a larger voice to push for the change that you want.
- To help you stay focused on your issue and achieve your objective, develop a concept note where you can set goals, expected results, activities and strategies.

PLATFORM – Create your own platform

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PLANNING AND STRATEGISING



- At this stage, it is also important to build network with other individuals and organisations that are not part of the coalition to expand influence, allies, and visibility.
- Sample of a concept note can be found [here](#).
- When setting your goal, use the **SMART** formula;
 - **S**pecific (*Who it's for, where it takes place, how it takes place, how often it's measured*)
 - **M**easurable (*How the goal will be measured*)
 - **A**chievable (*Attainable despite the challenges you might face in terms of capabilities, resources and budget*)
 - **R**ealistic (*Goal should be relevant to the project, organisation, communication requirements and audience*)
 - **T**ime-Bound (*The goal should have a fixed time-frame for implementation and also evaluation. This motivates the team to work together efficiently to achieve the common goal*)

- This is about mapping your target group, objective and strategy to help you see the big picture and identify key stakeholders to develop an effective plan of action.
- Planning and strategising include designing and detailing your activities, setting timeline and delegating tasks to your team and volunteers.
- Use a [logical framework](#) to help you develop your action plan. This framework should include the implementation, management, [monitoring and evaluation](#) plan.

The logical framework is also a way for you to structure the main elements in your campaign and create a work flow that makes sense. For eg. in order to organise a public seminar, you must first identify the speaker/trainer, confirm the date and time, book the venue, send out the invitations, etc. It also sets out timeline to keep you in check and focused.

- It is a good practice to conduct a quarterly review of the campaign to assess and track its progress and to be able to adapt to any changes quickly.
- Lastly, it is important for the coalition to conduct a [risk assessment](#) to work out what are the obstacles or threats it may face while running the campaign. This will help the coalition to adopt appropriate measures when faced with such obstacles and threats.
- In a nutshell, this is where the coalition works towards its goal by having a clear purpose of what they want to do, how to do it, when to do it, where to start, what strategy works, and who to target.

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CAPACITY BUILDING

- Whether a goal is achievable will depend on how much effort you put into planning and building the capacity of your team.
- In your planning, take into consideration the needs of your team by conducting a [learning or training needs analysis](#).
- Capacity building is important to develop and strengthen the skills, instincts, abilities, processes and resources of the team. Eventually, this would enhance the team’s capability and with sufficient resources, the team can use their knowledge and experience to help others in duplicating the good work.
- Some of the skills needed for running a campaign are advocacy, negotiation, story-telling, media engagement, community engagement, etc.



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RESEARCH

- This is a systematic investigation and study of materials and sources relevant to the issue in order to establish facts and reach (*new*) conclusions.
- This includes the collection of quantitative and qualitative data to assist the coalition to understand the issue intelligently (*see it as collecting “intelligence”*).
- ✓ **Survey**
 - The collection of information about the behaviour and experience of other people apart from the group is important, in order to understand the extent of how much the issue is affecting the majority.
 - This is usually referred to as quantitative data.
 - A survey may also assist you in identifying suitable candidates for an extended qualitative study.
- ✓ **Documentation**
 - Once you have identified suitable candidates for your qualitative study, you can start the process of documentation. This is where you record details of how the issue has impacted on specific individuals.
 - The qualitative study aims to identify the gravity of the issue and possible solutions to tackle the issue in a holistic manner.
- ✓ **Study**
 - Experiences, results, success stories and lessons learned from other country or region can provide useful and important data for the research. This includes policies and legislations.



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ISSUES PAPER (GREEN PAPER)

- An issues paper typically lays out the findings of the research and identify key questions regarding the issue that need to be answered in order to come up with effective solutions.
- This is a preliminary report that should be published as widely as possible to invite public discussion and consultation.
- In a nutshell, the paper serves as a consultation document and provides the opportunity for stakeholders, including lawmakers and the public to submit their input based on the questions asked.



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PUBLIC/STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION

- The public is invited to give their input on the issue. Some ways to do this include organising a seminar, talk, town hall meeting to brief the attendees on the issue and invite discussion, call for submission (*online and offline*) of feedback and engagement with all level of society who are affected by the issue.
- Some examples of stakeholders are government agencies, lawmakers, law-enforcers (*police*), academia, statutory bodies (*such as the Malaysian Bar Council and Human Rights Commission of Malaysia/SUHAKAM*), private sector (*companies that are involved in the issue*), media, students and survivors.

Note: Perhaps the most important people to consult are those who are directly affected by the issue (*or survivors*). So, please don't forget them!

- The main goals are to improve on the efficiency, transparency and public involvement in large-scale projects or drafting of new laws and policies.



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REPORT AND RECOMMENDATION (WHITE PAPER)

- This report lays out the input received from the public on the issues/green paper.
- Recommendations on solutions are also provided in the report. They could include law or policy reform, and/or awareness raising campaign.



10 PUBLIC AWARENESS CAMPAIGN

- A good public awareness campaign must have a well-defined message or a concrete call to action. It must be presented clearly and is relatable with precise target audience.
- Once you identify the target group, you are able to determine what is the best communications method to roll out your public awareness campaign.
- A campaign cannot be successful without a team and strategy. So, form a team who will develop the public awareness campaign strategy; eg. persistent engagement with the media, creation of a website, social media page and/or e-newsletter, curation of social media content, development of information, communications and education materials, etc.



11 SURVIVOR'S KIT

Optional – depending on the issue and how it affects the community

- This kit is created based on the needs of the affected group upon consultation with them.
- It provides relevant and useful information for the affected group in tackling the issue and on getting help.



12 TABLING OF BILL

- One of the methods to push for change is law reform. However, it often needs long-term commitment for the group to engage with elected representatives in Parliament to push for this change. Most bills can typically take up a long time to be passed in Parliament, some more than ten years. So, be prepared for a long journey and do not lose hope or be discouraged if it is taking much longer than you expected.
- Follow through the process on how law-making is accomplished in Parliament by clicking [here](#).