



Harnessing international advocacy for national progress

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National vs regional/ international advocacy

National advocacy – key to changing national level policy

not working, needs additional push, too dangerous

International advocacy - seeking influence on national level from international level stakeholders

international actions linked with national advocacy goal

national & international advocacy not mutually exclusive – can be employed separately or together

Security of stakeholders involved – key to consider





1. Wide international support campaign

Complexity | **Easy**
Time | **Medium**
Price | **Low**

Gathering as many as possible regional/ international level support to influence national decision makers/ processes, e.g. sign-on letters.

PROS

- Adds credibility.
- Problem known widely.
- Easy & cheap to implement.

CONS

- Gather signatures takes time.
- Reluctancy to sign (e.g. UN, EU).
- Do not matter for repressive governments, accused/ discredited as foreign influence.
- Security issues.



2. Advocacy targeting international stakeholders

Complexity | Moderate
Time | Medium
Price | Low

Aims to influence changes on regional/ international level (e.g. UN, the Global Fund) that might impact national level policies and situations.

PROS

- Low cost
- Helps civil society have united front using the same arguments.

CONS

- Direct impact hard to assess.
- Influence on decisions of entities might be possible only via participation in specific groups mandated to provide input (e.g. Global Fund Delegations).



3. EU level advocacy for EU/ accession countries

Complexity | Complicated
Time | Long
Price | Costly

Organized efforts by NGOs, businesses, professional associations, regional governments, and citizens to influence EU decision-making and shape public policy. Must align with the policy cycle.

PROS

- Push innovative agendas.
- NGOs - early warning systems.
- EU has some tools to enforce implementation.

CONS

- Complicated, costly, takes long to implement.
- Influence on decisions is possible only via participation in specific groups mandated to provide input.



4. Strategic litigation

Complexity | Complicated
Time | Long
Price | Costly

Organization or individual taking on a legal case as part of a strategy to achieve broader systemic change. After national judicial system is exhausted → case to European Court of Human Rights.

PROS

- Change beyond individual case.
- Strengthens legitimacy of human rights defenders.

CONS

- Lengthy, costly and complex process.
- “Victory” in European Court of Human rights does not guarantee enforcement.



5. Use of international mechanisms

Complexity | *Moderate*
Time | *Medium*
Price | *Low*

Aims to put international pressure on government, via UN Human Rights Council (UNHRC), UN Treaty Bodies, or UN Special Procedures.

PROS

- Adds credibility to the claims.
- Opportunity for ongoing monitoring.
- CSOs often have in-house knowledge and skills.

CONS

- Only recommendations,
- May discredit as “foreign interference”.
- Might require specialized skills, e.g. legal expertise.



6. Expert reference group

Complexity | Complicated
Time | Medium
Price | Costly

Mobilizing respected experts from international institutions (academics, policy specialists, or representatives from intergovernmental bodies) to lend credibility, authority, and technical expertise.

PROS

- Increases trust among – peer-to-peer exchange
- Links advocacy demands to international commitments.
- Media and public attention.

CONS

- May discredit as “foreign interference”.
- Access to experts needed.
- Complicated and costly.



7. Social media campaigns

Complexity | Easy
Time | Short
Price | Low

Coordinated advocacy effort that uses online platforms to raise awareness, influence public opinion, mobilize support, pressure decision-makers. One of the most visible and accessible advocacy forms.

PROS

- Wide reach.
- When meeting is unsafe.
- Attract traditional media coverage and public debate.

CONS

- Social media alone rarely achieves policy change.
- Hard to assess impact.
- Excludes audiences without internet access or digital literacy.



8. Traditional media

Complexity | Complicated
Time | Medium
Price | Moderate

To shape public discourse and build awareness. To give voice to marginalized groups or highlight uncomfortable topics.

PROS

- Established contacts with journalists – repeated approaches.
- The price is low if not considering paid articles.

CONS

- Maintaining global media attention – continuous effort.
- Regional media – limited influence on national decision makers.
- Can be costly.