EXECUTIVE STRATEGIC ADVOCACY, LOBBYING & POLICY INFLUENCE

Introduction

This course introduces participants to the principles, strategies and practical tools required to design and implement effective advocacy initiatives that influence policy, institutional decisions and social change. In an increasingly complex policy environment, successful advocacy requires organisations to understand how decisions are made, who influences those decisions, where opportunities for change exist and how evidence can be used to build credible and persuasive arguments. The programme provides a strategic framework for analysing policy and political environments, identifying decision-makers and influencers, mapping stakeholder interests and power, defining advocacy objectives, building coalitions and developing evidence-based advocacy messages. Participants will examine effective approaches to engaging governments, policymakers, institutions, communities, media and other influential stakeholders while maintaining ethical and transparent advocacy practices. Particular attention is given to policy influence, strategic lobbying, coalition building, stakeholder engagement, advocacy communication, campaign development and measuring advocacy results. Participants will also explore how to anticipate political and institutional dynamics, manage advocacy risks and adapt strategies as policy environments change. Through practical case studies, advocacy simulations and strategy-development exercises, participants will develop the ability to design targeted, credible and measurable advocacy strategies that influence decision-making, strengthen institutional accountability, advance policy reform and contribute to sustainable social change.

Course Objectives

- Understand the principles of strategic advocacy.
- Analyse policy and decision-making environments.

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- Identify key decision-makers and influencers.
- Conduct stakeholder and power mapping.
- Develop advocacy objectives and strategies.
- Build effective coalitions and partnerships.
- Develop evidence-based advocacy messages.
- Use lobbying and policy-engagement techniques.
- Design advocacy campaigns.
- Measure advocacy effectiveness

Course Modules

> Module 1: Foundations of Strategic Advocacy
- Meaning and purpose of advocacy
- Advocacy versus lobbying and campaigning
- Principles of ethical advocacy
- Advocacy and social change

> Module 2: Policy and Political Environment
- Understanding policy systems
- Decision-making processes
- Political economy analysis
- Identifying policy windows

> Module 3: Stakeholder and Power Analysis
- Stakeholder identification
- Power mapping
- Influence and interest analysis
- Stakeholder prioritisation

> Module 4: Advocacy Strategy Development
- Defining advocacy problems
- Setting advocacy objectives
- Identifying target audiences
- Developing advocacy pathways

> Module 5: Evidence-Based Advocacy
- Evidence gathering

- Research and data
- Evidence interpretation
- Turning evidence into advocacy messages

> Module 6: Lobbying and Policy Engagement
- Engaging policymakers
- Lobbying strategies
- Policy meetings and briefings
- Ethical lobbying practices

> Module 7: Coalition Building
- Advocacy networks
- Strategic partnerships
- Coalition management
- Managing competing interests

> Module 8: Advocacy Communication
- Advocacy messaging
- Media engagement
- Digital advocacy
- Public communication

> Module 9: Advocacy Campaigns
- Campaign design
- Campaign implementation
- Mobilisation strategies
- Campaign risk management

> Module 10: Advocacy Monitoring and Impact
- Advocacy indicators
- Measuring influence
- Outcome assessment
- Advocacy action plan

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