Policy Advocacy Curriculum

Outlining content, session plans, pedagogical approaches, tools and activities for effective policy advocacy action planning

PASS
Policy Advocacy for Sport and Society

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Imprint

Policy advocacy is crucial as it provides a bottom-up, civil society-led contribution to the formation of relevant policies and helps make vital, relevant information available to key stakeholders who may influence public policy. Despite these calls, there is limited understanding of or support for policy advocacy connecting sport and social development within Europe. The Policy Advocacy for Sport and Society (PASS) project seeks to address this gap by developing a comprehensive set of tools and resources to raise awareness and capacity for policy advocacy within the crucial and growing sport and social development sector. As such, the PASS project will support (European) sport and social development actors so that they can increase their participation and engagement in democratic life, and enable them to use that engagement to sustainably promote education and equality in and through sport. In other words, this project aims to improve civic participation and engagement in democratic life within the field of sport and social development, and in turn use this increased engagement to advocate for and support education, equality and shared values within European communities.

Consortium Partners

- German Sport University Cologne (Germany, Coordinator)
- Munster Technological University (Ireland)
- University of Applied Sciences Kufstein (Austria)
- United Nations High Commission for Refugees (HQ, Switzerland)
- Fair Play Point (Czech Republic)
- Második Esély Sportegyesület (Hungary)
- International Sport and Culture Association (ISCA)/SportandDev.org (Denmark)

Table of Contents

1. Introduction

The following policy advocacy curriculum was developed for the Erasmus+ Policy Advocacy for Sport and Society (PASS) project. Organisations that promote social development through sport often design their programmes with a view to contribute to the inclusion of vulnerable or at-risk people and promote diversity and socially cohesive communities. However, the impact of these programmes can be limited due to a lack of alignment and support from policy or institutional actors in their communities. Aligning policy with practice is crucial for the achievement of positive long-term social change. Further, it can challenge power structures that oppress vulnerable groups, strategically position sport for social development organisations within the policy landscape and promote the sustainability of their programmes.

In order to equip organisations to engage (further) in policy advocacy, the PASS project has developed a comprehensive multi-step process.

Firstly, the project undertook a Mapping Survey to understand how policy advocacy is currently being engaged with in the sector.

Secondly, the project created an Evaluation Matrix to categorise and understand policy advocacy examples.

Thirdly, the project collated Selected Policy Advocacy Activity Examples to explore how organisations are already engaging with policy advocacy at this time.

This policy advocacy curriculum builds on the initial phases of the project and provides the foundation for the next phase, which includes the development of a policy advocacy toolkit and an online learning course. Both resources will be publicly available on the International Platform on Sport and Development from mid-2026.

2. The Curriculum

This Policy Advocacy Curriculum offers a practical framework for understanding and implementing a policy advocacy action plan aimed at practitioners and educators in the field of sport for development. Building on a theoretical phase, during which needs were identified and examples of existing practices were reviewed, the PASS project is creating a practical educational component comprising four modules. These modules outline learning objectives, session plans, pedagogical approaches, tools, and activities designed to deepen the understanding of policy advocacy within the sport for development context. The curriculum also supports practitioners in designing their own policy advocacy action plans. It serves as the foundation for an accompanying online course and toolkit, which provide further in-depth teaching and learning resources.

This curriculum is designed to build the capacity of practitioners and educators in the field of sport for development to engage in effective policy advocacy. It offers a structured learning path across four

modules, gradually guiding participants from foundational knowledge to the development of a concrete advocacy action plan.

Each module combines theoretical and practical elements and uses methodological approaches such as explanations, case studies, tools and worksheets, videos, matching exercises, quizzes and self-reflection exercises. These methodological approaches and assessment exercises support experiential learning and reflection, while recommended tools, resources, and references offer opportunities for further exploration.

The four modules are:

1. **Foundations of Policy Advocacy in Sport for Development** – introducing the course structure, learning objectives, and the broader sport for development ecosystem;

2. **Self-Assessment and Advocacy Readiness** – focusing on internal analysis and preparedness for advocacy work;

3. **Policy Advocacy Activities** – exploring the concrete advocacy activities, how to use them and under which circumstances;

4. **Policy Advocacy Action Planning** – guiding participants in designing their own policy advocacy initiatives.

Together, these modules shall provide the users and educators with a structure to understand and address policy advocacy in the field of sport for development.

3. Purpose of the Curriculum

This curriculum is part of a broader learning offer. It provides the base for a **practical toolkit** and the outline for an **online course**, which will provide a more immersive learning experience and include detailed resources, templates, and interactive content to support implementation and know-how. These tools will further enable users to engage with policy advocacy in sport for development.

The **online course** will comprise of the above described four modules. The full course will take approximately four hours to complete and is intended as flexible for self-paced learning. Learners are encouraged to follow the modules sequentially, as each build on the knowledge and skills developed in the previous one. However, individual modules can also be used independently, depending on the learner's needs and context.

This curriculum presents the structured learning objectives, thematic content, practical exercises, and suggestions for methodological approaches for each module. The materials will be designed to encourage critical reflection, active participation, and application in real-world advocacy contexts.

The **practical toolkit** will be a longer form, written document that complements the online course content. It will include references to further resources and will help learners to contextualize some of the theory outlined in the online course.

MODULE 1: Foundations of policy advocacy in Sport for development

Description

This module presents the course content, learning objectives and benefits of completing it. It also explores how policy advocacy has influenced the sport for development ecosystem, and allows learners to explore their own potential strengths and network entry points into policy advocacy.

Learning objectives

By the end of the module, learners should be able to…

- ➢ know the structure of the course.
- ➢ understand the S4D system and the influential role that policy advocacy plays.
- ➢ reflect on their position in the S4D ecosystem.
- ➢ recognise the spheres of influence on the individual and organizational level.
- ➢ understand the core principles of policy advocacy in sport for development.
- ➢ be aware that one can engage in policy advocacy and propose a new framework.
- ➢ understand the benefits and added value of policy advocacy in sport.

Syllabus

a. **Introduction to the course structure**
   - i. Main learning objectives
   - ii. Understanding the course structure
   - iii. Familiarisation with the teaching and engagement methods

b. **Introduction to the S4D Ecosystem (socio-ecological model)**
   - i. Identifying the stakeholders and their level of operation
   - ii. Understanding the context related factors that influence S4D activities
   - iii. Identifying the structure around your organisation and mapping your position among other stakeholders to help clarify your goals and strategy

c. **Introduction to types of policy advocacy**
   - i. Coalition building: forming coalitions and cooperation's with like-minded organisations, exchange of information
   - ii. Engaging and mobilising the public: awareness raising campaigns, mobilisation of citizens

<ol type="i" start="3">
Engaging decision makers: contacting and developing rapport with relevant decision makers
Information campaigns: research, analysis and communication to persuade the public and decision makers
Reform efforts: aiming at changing policies through litigation, legal actions, pilots and demonstrations
Policy monitoring: monitoring policy implementation

d. Introduction to policy advocacy examples in sports

<ol type="i">
Examples to be extracted from the previous <u>Selected Policy Advocacy Practices</u>, among others

e. Identifying spheres of influence using specific tools

<ol type="i">
Network Mapping: helps identify key actors, decision-makers, relationships, and communication channels
Power Grid: categorises stakeholders by level of interest and degree of influence
Pathway of Influence: focuses on the indirect access and pathways to decision-makers via those who influence them
SWOT analysis: assists in the identification of internal and external factors that can positively or negatively affect policy advocacy activities

Learning approach

Definitions　　**Explanations**　　**Tools and Worksheets**　　**Case studies**　　**Further Reading**

Assessment exercises

Matching Exercise
Matching examples of policy advocacy with a type of policy advocacy

Quiz
Questions identifying the level of policy advocacy and its impact

Further resources, references, tools

CYSDP (Commonwealth Youth Sport for Development and Peace Working Group). (2015). *Sport for Development and Peace Youth Advocacy Toolkit.* Commonwealth Secretariat. https://yourcommonwealth.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/SportforDevelopmentandPeaceYouthAdvocacyToolkit.pdf

Open Society Foundations. (2010). An Introductory Guide to Successful Advocacy. Open Society Foundations. https://www.opensocietyfoundations.org/uploads/99ce7dec-9e89-40b1-ad88-7db45b4d68a5/guide-to-successful-advocacy-20100101.pdf

Young, E., & Quinn, L. (2012). *MAKING RESEARCH EVIDENCE MATTER. A Guide to Policy Advocacy in Transition Countries.* Open Society Foundations. https://advocacyguide.icpolicyadvocacy.org/

MODULE 2: Self-assessment and advocacy readiness

Description

Learners reflect on their own and their organisation's strengths and experience to determine their readiness to take part in various forms of advocacy. Users will therefore consider their own advocacy experience, and obtain a more structured overview of the resources (inputs) needed for advocacy.

Learning objectives

By the end of the module, learners should be able to…

➢ reflect on their own level of knowledge/experience of advocacy while drawing on the PASS mapping survey.
➢ understand the necessary resources (inputs) needed for policy advocacy.
➢ assess their readiness to engage in policy advocacy, with reference to these inputs.
➢ align their resources (inputs) and goals to determine if policy advocacy will help them to achieve those goals.

Syllabus

a. **Reflect on experiences with advocacy**

   i. Reflection on how organisations have (not) engaged with activities presented in module 1 in the past

b. **Resource and asset mapping**

   i. Presentation of different key inputs for policy advocacy, as per Gen and Wright (2013). These include agency, knowledge/skills, resources, people/relationships
   ii. Self-reflection on organisation's capacities/position as it relates to these inputs

c. **Visioning exercise (goals/fit with organisation)**

   i. Initial connection between inputs and different types of policy advocacy activities (e.g. what types of activities need what inputs)
   ii. Reflection on how organisations can use their inputs to support policy advocacy related to their goals/community needs

Learning approach

Video   **Tools and Worksheets**   **Matching exercise**   **Further Reading**

Assessment exercises

Self-Reflection
Self-reflection on resources-goals-advocacy fit

Quiz
Questions about key inputs for advocacy

Further resources, references, tools

- [Moustakas et al. (2025) Playing for progress: policy advocacy in sport for development](#)

- [Gen and Wright (2013) Policy Advocacy Organizations: A framework Linking Theory and Practice](#)

MODULE 3: Policy advocacy activities

Description

In this module the learners familiarise themselves with the different policy advocacy activities identified in the [Evaluation Matrix](#), and understand how and under which circumstances to use them. This module is divided into units, each describing one specific activity. Learners should gain a deeper understanding of each policy advocacy activity and know how and when to use it accordingly.

Learning objectives

By the end of the module, learners should be able to…

- ➢ understand which policy advocacy activities exist.
- ➢ know how to use each activity.
- ➢ assess which circumstances (goals, context) are most suitable for each activity.

Syllabus

a. Coalition building

    i. Description of resources and position of the organisation for coalition building

    ii. Building coalitions with like-minded organisations

b. Engaging the public

    i. Description of resources and position of the organisation necessary for engaging the public

    ii. Building strategies for awareness-raising and mobilisation of citizens

    iii. Planning specific actions resulting in a change of public views

c. Engaging decision makers

    i. Description of resources and position of the organisation to successfully engage decision makers

    ii. Engaging and building rapport with relevant decision makers

    iii. Specific actions (networking, meetings, sharing information) with key decision makers resulting in changing their views

d. Information campaigning

    i. Description of resources and position of the organisation to engage in information campaigning

    ii. Strategy involving research and rhetoric to support policy advocacy

    iii. Specific actions (developing evidence of benefits of policy changes, meetings with policy makers, awareness raising campaigns targeting decision makers and the public) leading to new policy adoption

e. Reform efforts

    i.   Description of resources and position of the organisation to engage in reform efforts

    ii.   Initiation of pilots, demonstrations, legal actions or litigation processes leading to the desired change in policy and practical implementation of these changes

f. Policy monitoring

    i.   Description of resources and position of the organisation to engage in policy monitoring

    ii.   Monitoring the implemented policy to support learning or pressure for continued changes

    iii.   Ensuring the correct implementation and harmonisation of policies across a range of sectors to achieve the desired outcome

Learning approach

Definitions   **Tools and Worksheets**   **Case studies**   **Further Reading**

Assessment exercises

Matching Exercise
Match a policy advocacy activity with a content example

Quiz
Questions addressing all six policy advocacy activities

Assessment
Assessment of a case study and its relation to a specific policy advocacy activity

Further resources, references, tools

- Evaluation Matrix from Work Package 3 of the Policy Advocacy in Sport and Society project https://www.sportanddev.org/research-and-learning/resource-library/evaluation-matrix-policy-advocacy-sport-and-social

- Promising Practice Report from Work Package 3 of the Policy Advocacy in Sport and Society project https://www.sportanddev.org/research-and-learning/resource-library/selected-policy-advocacy-practices-sport-and-development

- CYSDP (Commonwealth Youth Sport for Development and Peace Working Group). (2015). *Sport for Development and Peace Youth Advocacy Toolkit.* Commonwealth Secretariat. https://yourcommonwealth.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/SportforDevelopmentandPeaceYouthAdvocacyToolkit.pdf

MODULE 4: Policy Advocacy Action Planning

Description

This module provides information, tools and resources that will support the development of a policy advocacy action plan aimed at influencing decision makers and promoting specific policy changes. From defining a focal problem to understanding the policy landscape and developing communication strategies, learners will cover a range of topics that are critical to achieving, monitoring and evaluating policy change.

Learners identify a gap in policy and choose a policy advocacy approach to address it. They should draw on information and knowledge gained from previous modules to identify actionable steps for achieving their desired change.

Learning objectives

By the end of the module, learners should be able to…

➢ understand how to identify a policy gap.
➢ identify key stakeholders and key dynamics of the respective field.
➢ define action steps that would result in the intended outcome.
➢ identify strategies to communicate about progress toward the desired outcomes.
➢ understand the importance of monitoring, evaluating and learning (MEL) with their own policy advocacy work.

Syllabus

a. **Introduction to the module**

   i. Overview of the context, learning approaches and objectives

b. **Defining the focal problem**

   i. Identifying a problem
   ii. Engaging a community and stakeholders
   iii. Identifying policy gaps

c. **Understanding the policy landscape**

   i. Identifying political and social dynamics and key stakeholders in a specific context
   ii. Specification of a focal problem

d. **Using an Action Plan template**

   i. Completion of a specific Action Plan to achieve an intended outcome

e. **Communication strategies**

   i. Identifying communication channels regarding particular stakeholders

  ii. Drafting a communication strategy to raise awareness and progress with the policy advocacy process

 f. Policy monitoring

  i. Identifying successful outcomes of a policy advocacy

  ii. Defining indicators for monitoring and evaluation of an action towards the policy change

 g. Share the lessons learned

  i. Identifying lessons learned through self-reflective questions and journaling

  ii. Planning how to share the lessons learned

  iii. Identifying the audience for sharing new knowledge

Learning approach

Definitions **Tools and Worksheets** **Case studies** **Further Reading**

Assessment exercises

Matching Exercise
To understand the link between a case and its focal problem

Self-Reflection
Questions about the context to identify policy gaps, the effectiveness of previous policy advocacy and the next steps in action planning

Quiz
Questions about the steps of policy advocacy action planning

Self-assessment
Interactive assessment of your communication strategy

Further resources, references, tools

- [Guiding evaluation questions, MEL framework](#)

- [Peer-to-Peer learning Toolkit](#)