



Report to The One Foundation on Barriers to Advocacy on Children's Rights, Immigrant Rights and Mental Health

Summary

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Introduction

Over the first five years of the One Foundation operation, it has made investments of approximately €5 million in advocacy, roughly 20 per cent of total investments. In 2009, One Foundation commissioned analysis of Foundation advocacy goals and corresponding organisations, with a particular brief to:

- Examine the current work of the portfolio, and its relationship to each goal
- Examine the scale and nature of the gap between projected progress to each goal by 2014, including risks related to that progress
- Identify potential solutions to address these gaps

On the basis of this analysis, we also provided recommendations on actions to take to maximise progress to these goals. Our findings are presented in this document, which is a condensed version of the report to the Foundation. Excluded from this version is a section of analysis of Foundation strategy to date and sections that relate to individual organisations.

Advocacy goals

The three goals are:

- Make children's rights real (hereafter, 'kids goal'):
 - Children's rights have been made more real by inclusion in the Constitution and are evident in a critical mass of communities in Ireland
 - Separated kids are treated equally in the Irish care system
- Enshrine a right to mental health services (hereafter, 'mental health goal'):
 - The right to the highest attainable standard of mental health appears in Irish legislation
- Make immigrant rights real in Ireland (hereafter, 'immigrant goal'):
 - Immigrant rights are protected in Ireland, evidenced by immigrant rights appear in legislation; and the immigration system is fair, transparent and accountable
 - Immigrants have access to information about their rights, entitlements and services (specialist info providers now; mainstream by 2014)

Our approach

We approached this work through a review of literature, individual interviews with portfolio organisations, group discussions, and external interviews. We have also brought to bear our experience of advocacy campaigns in the United States and Ireland, and current best practices from our work with corporate and NGO clients of the Public Affairs practice of Wilson Hartnell.

Our findings

Summary

There is a gap between the rate of progress towards Foundation goals that can reasonably be expected from current organisational approaches to advocacy and what is required to meaningfully achieve those goals by 2014. Generally, but not exclusively, current approaches are incremental, long-term, and heavily weighted towards winning commitments over implementation. These approaches are consistent with normal practice, and have been validated by demonstrable progress over time. However, the Foundation's ambitious goals require approaches that are capable of achieving rapid breakthroughs, making progress that can be measured in the achievement of key additional policy commitments as well as their realisation in practice, which includes informing other related areas of policy.

In the course of researching and compiling this report, interviewees debated whether such 'breakthrough' opportunities occurred in the course of incremental advocacy, or whether they could be actively pursued or created through the adoption of particular approaches.

It is the view of the authors that as with the Foundation's approach to developing the capacity of organisations for service delivery, there is a need to evaluate the options to pursue breakthrough advocacy, and what return they might achieve. However with advocacy, the Foundation has less than 5 years remaining, which mandates rigorous differentiation among options, including what balance of risk and reward the Foundation wants in the portfolio, rapid decision-making during Q4 2009 and early 2010, and the adoption of appropriate forms of performance management for advocacy. Altogether, the Foundation will need to focus on advocacy in far greater detail than it has done to date. The content of this report and its appendices is intended to provide evidence, analysis and recommendations to support this process.

We present our findings under the themes of:

- 1) The current portfolio of organisations
- 2) The environment for advocacy generally and each specific goal
- 3) Recommendations

In each section, we present major findings together with relevant insights.

1) The current portfolio of organisations

Portfolio organisations possess an adequate level of capacity for advocacy and addressing the few deficits is not expected to result in additional progress towards goals sufficient to justify investment:

- *Generally good capacity, but not great. Analysis of*

NGOs have the capacity

"The tools (for advocacy) are all there, but nobody is listening..."

Interviewee

capacity found that the ‘basics’ and ‘making the case’ are strong; the weaker areas are mobilising support, the development of actionable recommendations to government, and increasing tactical flexibility

- *Address capacity gaps selectively.* The highest value gap in NGO advocacy capacity was at the top end of the capacity scale, e.g. making change actionable by government and tactical flexibility
- *Limited connectivity between regional and national advocacy.* Regional groups all have high capacity in their areas, but are not currently core to national advocacy. However scaled up local advocacy may be a powerful model to incorporate into goal strategies, e.g. find specific constituencies (by issue or geography) that have disproportionate influence on national goals. The most obvious example is making sure there is strong local advocacy in Ministerial constituencies
- *Models of advocacy within primarily service organisations.* Some organisations which are focused on service delivery conduct narrow but effective advocacy, totally integrated into service development and delivery and offer a working solution to local and national agencies and policy-makers, e.g. Headstrong
- *There is a surplus of advocacy capacity when viewed by goal or across all goals.* Some NGOs working towards the same goal track the same issues, contact the same officials, issue similar press releases to the same journalists etc. This constitutes a significant duplication of activity and actually results in resources being diverted into low-value coordination of advocacy, or as one interviewee put it: “why did we bother doing that joint press release?”
- *The value of a diversity of approaches is largely cancelled out by the complexity this introduces.* While it appears that advocacy benefits from the ability to adopt a range of approaches, there is evidence that multiple advocates negate this benefit, e.g. the cost of coordination (or of lack thereof) cancels out the benefit of a diversity of approaches. There were examples within the portfolio of advocacy organisations able to draw on a range of approaches as relevant to a particular opportunity, able to engage in ‘elite’ or ‘mass’ advocacy as required; the Foundation does not need to make two different investments in organisations to have this diversity
- *There is value in specialisation and shared services.* Some organisations demonstrated effective specialisation, for example with one NGO providing the

Orla Tinsley's campaigning on cystic fibrosis

“The Government, the Minister for Health and the Health Service Executive (HSE) have all failed in their duty of care to vulnerable citizens. Last year, following intensive political lobbying and some courageous individual campaigning by Orla Tinsley, Minister for Health Mary Harney and the HSE promised to build a new 120-bed facility, with 30 en suite rooms, at St Vincent’s hospital in Dublin by 2010. Last month, following a reduction of 26 per cent in its capital budget, the HSE announced it didn’t have the money to go ahead and that construction would be delayed until “at least 2011”. The ensuing public uproar and criticism from the Opposition parties caused Ms Harney to examine whether the facility could be funded in a more innovative way. And the outcome may be positive. It is too early, however, to applaud a victory for the Cystic Fibrosis Association and its members . . .”

Irish Times, April 2009

press office function for another. There is potential for efficiencies across Foundation advocacy organisations if a expanded shared services model is adopted

- *Advocacy capacity is largely held by individual advocates, and not by organisations, creating both opportunities and challenges.* A number of interviewees suggested that the strong views and commitment that accompany advocates can also lead to burn-out in which they are accepting of the status quo, overly resistant to new approaches, and at ease with the accepted incremental character of advocacy on social issues. However it is relatively easy to replace this capacity through talent-management, recruiting and transferring skills and knowledge to new generations of advocates, with Orla Tinsley (see sidebar) only one example. The significant role played by individuals in advocacy also informs some of the options identified for the Foundation in this report.

2) The environment for advocacy

In general, the environment for advocacy is a significant constraint, but there has been low innovation is challenging this:

- *The nature of government is a significant constraint on more rapid progress.* The nature of government, and of government in Ireland specifically, limits the effectiveness of advocacy as practiced. Key aspects include:
 - Levels of engagement with NGOs and advocacy varies
 - There is very limited transparency of decision-making
 - The culture is very strongly risk-averse, with “huge incentives to not rock the boat”
 - The capacity for the advancement and execution of policy is low
 - Accountability for the development and execution of policy is very low
 - The necessity of winning alignment between both political support for a policy and civil service willingness to alter practice
 - The need for decision-makers and influencers to experience the practical consequences of current failures of policy first hand, and to discover the solutions for themselves
 - Poor understanding by politicians of the advocacy undertaken by civil society groups, and a perception that many groups lack legitimacy in the political process. Among the grounds for this lack of legitimacy that interviewees have heard cited are lack of a membership mandate and lack of service provision experience. This lack of understanding extends to the boards of some of the Foundation’s advocacy organisations, where one interviewee said “it’s hard to sell strategic advocacy to my own board”
 - Government actions to restrict advocacy including the impact of the Charities Bill Act 2009
- *There has been limited thinking about how to drive change in this environment, despite near universal agreement that the nature of government was the major barrier to more rapid progress.* Several interviewees noted during the meetings

by goal that they did not undertake structured analysis of this challenge and generate ideas outside the customary toolkit to address it.

- *Some of the needed innovation will have to come from outside the current portfolio.* The current portfolio varies in its openness to generating and implementing new approaches, or willingness to divert resources from tested, low-impact incremental advocacy to untested, potential higher-impact approaches (start-ups were more inclined to test new approaches and innovate). Some external interviewees expressed frustration at the comfort level of some advocates with the current rate of progress, and stressed the need for a 'shake-up' with new tools, approaches and individual advocates introduced into the pool of organisations
- *Assessment of the perspective of elected officials and civil servants did not form part of the research for this report.* We have sought to address this through external interviews and do not believe that these conclusions will be changed, however current and future strategy should be stress-tested and refined by (but not contingent upon the outcome of) foundation engagement with the targets of advocacy. Indeed, some of the identified options to increase progress to Foundation goals involve high degrees of interaction with government

Goal-specific findings

In addition, there were goal-specific findings, which in some cases elaborate on the general challenges for advocacy. For your relevant goal, we have noted findings under environment, policy development and execution, the scenario to 2014, and known factors in that period that should inform strategy. This section does not repeat the often excellent analysis in business plans prepared by portfolio organisations.

For the kids goal:

- *Environment:* The best opportunity in a generation to win progress of children's rights is now. The current government is bound by a 2007 commitment to hold a referendum on children's rights, and the public and media debate on the abuse of children in the care of religious orders has made children's rights the leading social issue. The next four years will be the peak of political power for advocacy on children's rights for decades
- *Policy development:* The attention to children's issues has not been converted into a broad social mobilisation in support of either the need to enshrine the rights of children, nor in support of a comprehensive programme to realise children's rights in a mass of communities. Policy development continues to fall short, as noted in the Shadow Report to the UNCRC
- *Policy implementation:* Where policy development falls short, implementation is "barely acceptable, with limited positive impact on children's lives" according to CRA's Report Card 2009. The separated children case illustrates the challenge of working with government. Despite a positive environment, significant time investment, and with the incentive of funding, the rotation of key staff set back

progress made towards winning implementation. Similar challenges in working with government are not unfamiliar to lobbyists and other interest groups. That government can fail to implement policy when all of the insights and resources of the Foundation and its portfolio are brought to bear, and in response to the suffering and peril to which children have been exposed, is a vivid illustration of the limits of incremental advocacy as widely practiced

- *Scenario:* The current window of opportunity will not be fully seized and children's rights will increasingly fall in priority, especially as the ageing of the population increases the political importance of older citizens, as already evident in the medical card protests
- *Gap:* The absence of a Government commitment to hold a referendum on children's rights within a specific time frame
- *Risks:* Poor relationships and low collaboration among key actors, with Barnardos refusing to participate in group discussion of the foundation goal, will allow the window of opportunity to pass
- *Factors:* A general election, remotely possible in 2009 but necessarily before 2012 is a major opportunity to seek more than policy commitments on children's rights, but rather a time-bound commitment to a referendum, The National Children's Strategy is due for an end-of-term review in 2010.

For the mental health goal:

- *Environment:* Mental health advocacy operates in an environment where there is widespread experience of mental health, but a still prevalent stigma attached to discussion of mental health. These conditions mean that there is significant political capital to be unlocked through approaches that allow politicians and society to transcend the constraints of stigma and engage with the issues and policy options.
- *Policy development:* Good policy in Vision for Change. There are poorly established rights, as Irish law does not set out a right to mental health care, nor the rights of people in receipt of mental health services
- *Policy implementation:* The good policy in VfC is let down by the very poor plans for implementation. "At the present rate of progress, it will take 40 years to implement Vision for Change" (College of Psychiatry)
- *Scenario:* It is probable that AI and IMHC increase the quality of advocacy and Headstrong further demonstrates a solution, with advocacy integrated into the service model. The likely continued difficulties within the HSE will act as a damper on progress at national level. National political attention is, with current levels of action, also likely to be concentrated on other topics (possibly in the area of children's rights) over the period to 2014. The most likely scenario is that Vision for Change is implemented piecemeal, with progress

Changing leadership

"Martin Hogan will operate within the current framework, which is focused on outputs and produces incremental change. We need to lift him up so he can see what is possible"

Interviewee

extremely slow, constrained by limited or poorly directed finances, entrenched groups of stakeholders in the sector professions, and the general difficulty with execution

- **Gap:** Two items are particularly acute gaps to realisation of the goal:
 - The failure to implement often excellent policy at even a basic level, e.g. the absence of an implementation plan for Vision for Change. Absent this plan, officials and agencies cannot be audited, lobbied and held to account for their work
 - If an implementation plan is adopted, do the skills and resources, including appropriate staff, required for implementation exist?
- **Risks:**
 - If adopted in late 2009, implementation of the plan is not likely to be measurable until late 2010 or early 2011 at the earliest. What will advocacy seek to achieve in 2010 to prepare for 2011?
 - The information needed for advocacy is not available. Mechanisms to track HSE expenditure in mental health are still lacking, a key requirement for political oversight and accountability; this compounds the opacity of services, complicating identification of the problem areas
 - Attitudes held by sector professionals, volunteers and the public may hamper or slow implementation, e.g. community-based housing
 - Mental health will be pushed down the agenda by other social issues that have a broader base of active advocates
- **Factors:** There are a number of events and issues that could be analysed for opportunities:
 - Intensify the window of opportunity by converging key reports and activities
 - Review of Mental Health Act by HSE due to be completed 2011
 - Seek to bring forward VfC review to earliest date of 2013
 - Initiate public interest litigation
 - Combine anti-stigma campaign with a mobilisation of current volunteers in sector, service users and families etc to push MH onto political agenda for all parties in period to 2014 (this includes general election in this period)
 - Much more outreach to opposition parties, currently regarded as low importance and given to point-scoring; apart from the economy, this is the biggest shift coming for advocacy

Power of the bureaucracy

“Lenihan took on his own civil servants, the ones who write policy, and was unable to get the changes”

Interviewee

For the immigrant goal:

- **Environment:** Engagement is acutely difficult for because of the incumbent civil servants, compounded by at best neutral but often hostile public attitudes. Regard for the policy-making process for immigrants and migrants, but also for other areas of policy, is at low ebb because of a dominant political party that has had a high degree of comfort and practically no accountability. Particularly within the organisations for this goal, there was a view that while the commitments were to be won on the national

policy stage, meaningful progress towards implementation was to be won locally. The windows for the development of policy was right now – in the next 5 to 7 years, but the impact of that policy will be felt by today’s children rather than by their parents. “Impact is long-term, not now”

- *Policy development:* The policy currently in place is poor. The IRP bill is currently at report stage in the Dail and will move from there into the Senate. This is not set and may bounce between the two. There was mutual concern voiced among all NGOs that the new Minister for Integration was not yet engaged and the previous two Ministers had little interaction or involvement
- *Policy implementation:* There is little sense of urgency on the IRP Bill. In order to influence content in this bill, there is a need for the NGOs concerned to focus on key areas, e.g. work-permit. There is little activity beyond the bill, however the partial regularisation programme is due to be confirmed in October
- *Scenario:* The IRP bill will pass during the period to 2014, but public attitudes, the fragmentation of the sector NGOs, and shrinking organisational resources are likely to combine to severely restrict the ability of advocates to influence the content of the bill to the maximum degree
- *Gap:* There are 3 key gaps to realising the goal, each a major challenge, and each grounded in the hostile environment for advocacy on immigrants
 - The absence of a constituency at a national level in Irish society that supports the adoption of a comprehensive policy on immigration and integration
 - The failure to date to make integration of immigrants a full strand within general social integration policy
 - The control of or influence on the system of services and agencies by the Department of Justice, and a resulting culture of law-enforcement rather than a culture of rights
- *Risks:* Reduced levels of immigration, and the departure of some recent immigrants during recession may further reduce social, media and political interest in the adoption of progressive policies
- *Factors:* There are a number of events and issues that could be analysed for opportunities:
 - Expand the current narrow constituency of support by developing a broader anti-racism campaign, although the portfolio did not believe that they should lead this development. This could be tied to the racism framework decision at EU level early next year, which will lead to making racism a crime in Ireland
 - European lobbying is much more important in the run-up to the European Elections in 2014, and could include the need for a Common European Asylum system
 - Tokenism and quality of immigrant role could be challenged or positive role-models developed and communicated

No critical mass of support

“The state is responding to what its political constituency wants – even established immigrants to Ireland are not sympathetic to new immigrants”

Interviewee

- Volunteering, which may increase during low employment, creates opportunities to bring in new individual advocates
- The sentiment of established immigrants risks being similar to the general population, i.e. anti-immigrant
- There is a need to speak in the language of the general population, reaching young men rather than the readers of the Irish Times

3) Our recommendations on options for further progress

Beyond fine-tuning of strategy and performance management *(these sections have been removed from this version of the report)* we have sought to develop from our own understanding and discussion with the portfolio and external interviewees new options for the Foundation which are, relative to current investments, high-risk and high-return, i.e. those which have the potential to achieve significant additional progress towards Foundation goals. The options are not 'ranked', however we have identified where options had broad or narrow support. This set of options is a starting point, and they all require further development.

Innovation

"We have been down the road of promoting and defending small wins so many times...we need more maverick ideas – being both chaotic and controlled is our best asset"

Interviewee

Address risk as in business, or in the early stages of investing in services: The Foundation can apply a model of fostering innovation by providing small funds to a broad array of advocates who seek significant impact on the goals. On the assumption that if only 1 in 30 makes progress, this will realise a return on investment greater than additional investment in current NGOs. This option had greatest support among external interviewees, with one interviewee stating: "it would be a shame to narrow down to 2 or 3 things against each goal, and then find none of them working after 2 years", with another NGO interviewed describing this approach as creating 'ripples in the environment' capable of unleashing significant change. This approach, one interviewee suggested, was an application to advocacy of the early 'Garryowen' phase of the Foundation in which it built understanding of how to build organisational capacity. A variation on this approach is offering prizes to encourage innovation, with research suggesting this approach is particularly effective where there is a well-defined objective; a large population of potential problem-solvers, and a willingness among participants to bear some of the costs and risks themselves

Legal advocacy has high potential to accelerate impact: Although there is concern at bad policy made in response to exceptional cases, legal cases can accelerate change, although 'backfilling' with regular advocacy is required. We recommend that the Foundation conduct a rapid due diligence of the options for legal cases within each goal

Use the advocacy goal with the greatest natural constituency as a spearhead for the others. We suggest making children and young people a political issue in populist terms, and match this with clear policy asks including implementation of existing commitments. The immigrant

and mental health goals and the work on alcohol are part, but not the leading edge, of this advocacy

Seek to trigger changes in government capability to implement policy. While this may sound like adding another very ambitious goal, namely solving government, there are precedents for cutting through the ‘treacle’ that frustrates the implementation of policy wins. It does require changes in mindsets, a reduction in bureaucracy, increase in accountability and new skills:

- The Policy Delivery Unit approach seeks to concentrate these skills in one unit, but with a broad remit across government
- The objective is to get four necessary conditions in place for the achievement of specific policy goals: cross-department authority, a clear approach to execution, the resources to do so (financial and skills), and the engagement of key actors, e.g. NGOs
- Examples include the UK, where Michael Barber led the Prime Minister’s Delivery Unit (2001–5), where he was tasked with ensuring the government’s public service reforms delivered significant results. Dalton McGuinty (Ontario) and John Howard (Australia) both established delivery units. The Programme Manager role is the best precedent for this approach in Ireland
- Interviewees cited the individual advocacy and skills-building with key staff in agencies and government in Ireland. There is enormous scope to foster a “new professionalism” among the front-line staff and leaders of government bodies. Combining this pool of leaders with NGO advocates creates “guiding coalitions” who sequence and implement reform, and accelerate this process, e.g. through leadership retreats

Multiple interviewees, both from NGOs and external, expressed a desire to explore this option further to determine how this might be implemented in Ireland.

Consider models of advocacy that are not centred on NGOs.

Models of advocacy that are not based on NGOs, but rather on individuals, political parties, grassroots movements, including online or professional advocates offer potential for ‘arms-length’ advocacy. Examples of these models are:

- Involve an ‘elder statesman’ figure to engage with government to win structural changes that unlock the value in current policy commitments. A potential outcome here is the establishment of a form of policy delivery unit
- Professional advocates or lobbyists who ‘bundle’ issues and have deep and broad reach with targets; benefits of scale and perceived ‘rational’

What’s wrong with government?

“Ireland can be one of the best places in the world to be a child – it is within the Government’s grasp. The Government is saying the right things; it is nodding in the right places; it just needs to start delivering. Many of the immediate actions we have recommended are not dependent on increased funding but require departments to work together, processes and practice to be reformed, transparent decisions and monitoring, and accountability in the face of inaction. The Government would get a better grade if it managed to get civil servants from different departments talking to each other”

*Children’s Rights Alliance,
January 2009*

Changing government capability for implementation

“Achieving great performance in the public sector, no less than in the private sector, requires unlocking the initiative, creativity, and motivation of leaders throughout the system, rather than just those at the top”

Michael Barber

argument. In Brussels and Washington, social sector clients employ lobbyists to make and maintain direct contact with officials, with examples including the lobby the Amber Alert system for missing children

- Use celebrity to push key wins over the line, e.g. Joanna Lumley (Gurkhas), Bono (HIV / AIDS)
- Political contributions: the Political Action Committee model of financial contributions to politicians' campaigns is well-established as a tool for NGOs and other interest groups in the US. Analysis of funding of Irish campaigns suggests that a separate vehicle from the Foundation (a 'third party' under electoral law) could increase the access and influence with key officials at a very low level of financial contribution (in the hundreds of euro, which is in contrast to the higher level – approximately €6,000 – required to get elected to a local council, which arguably does not deliver the same value)

Conduct a network analysis of NGOs, decision-makers and influencers. Advocacy in Ireland does not have to deal with the complexity of the state and federal bodies in the United States, however our interviews determined that while the top 5 individuals on a given issue were well-known, peripheral decision-makers or influencers were often not known or consistently engaged. Given the substantial overlaps among the individuals and organisations targeted by current advocacy organisations, there is clear value if developing a map of the networks of relationships among targets of advocacy. This analysis also identifies those individuals in government the Foundation should seek to better understand through interviews, polling and other outreach, in order to develop optimum advocacy strategies for them. Interviewing these targets of advocacy was outside the scope of this project.

Include non-Irish stakeholders in the analysis. Particularly for those goals seeking to establish policy, i.e. immigrants' rights and alcohol, Europe is important as a source of examples of policy. For those goals where a body of Irish policy is in place, it is a venue for indirect influence on Irish implementation and practice, however it requires a high level of sophistication to select among the many actors. As part of the proposed network analysis of decision-makers and influencers, the Foundation should consider mapping the different individuals and bodies in Europe and their importance to Foundation advocacy goals.

The value of relationships

"Understand that access to government and relationships with officials just give you information, not changes. For that, you have to have a political constituency behind you"

"We have been hoodwinked that some of these relationships with government and officials are worth something. We have to be clear what we are asking for, and prepared to be confrontational if we don't get it"

Interviewees

Understanding what works with decision-makers and influencers

"There is a real risk of over-saturation, as we all target the same politicians, the HSE....Fergus Finlay was an example of a single advocate who had the ear of the powerful and could make things work for the Special Olympics"

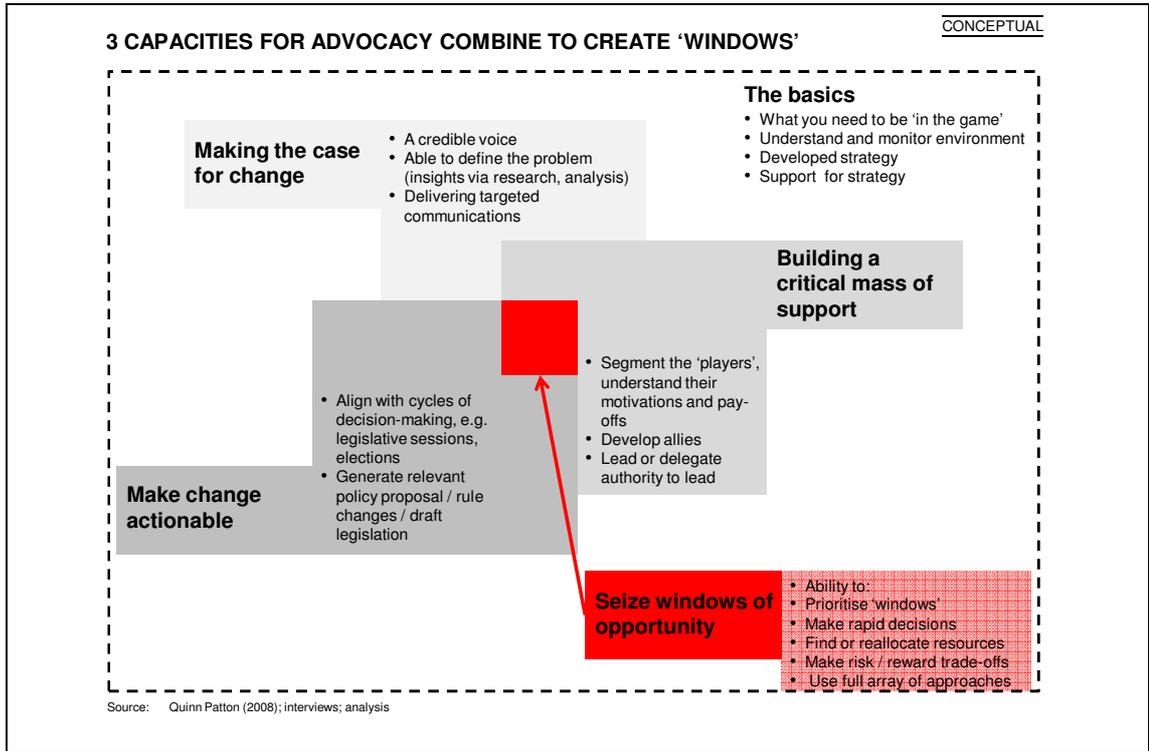
Interviewee

Next steps

We believe that the 'hanging in the morning' should concentrate Foundation attention and lead to moving very quickly in order to achieve further progress to Foundation goals by 2014. Specifically, we recommend that in Q4 2009 the Foundation:

- Set a schedule for the decision-making process
- Bring key actors into this process, including management team and advocacy organisations, preferably through circulation of this paper and facilitated meetings with organisations
- Confirm Foundation strategy for the advocacy goals to 2014, and the measures the Foundation will take in support of that strategy
- Communicate that strategy to key stakeholders, and put in place the means to regularly test and refine that strategy, as well as the strategies being implemented by organisations
- Implement any new measures as quickly as possible to maximise the time period during which the Foundation realises a return

Appendix



INTERVIEWEES

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|------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| • Aki Stavrou | Director | Integrating Ireland |
| • Siobhan O'Donoghue | Director | MRCI |
| • Robin Hanan | Chief Executive | IRC |
| • Gertrude Cotter | Director | NASC |
| • Karen McHugh | CEO | Doras Luimni |
| • Siobhan O'Connor | Advocacy & Campaigns Officer | Doras Luimni |
| • Colm O'Gorman | Executive Director | Amnesty |
| • Fiona Crowley | Research & Legal Manager | Amnesty |
| • Noeleen Hartigan | Programmes Director | Amnesty |
| • Caroline McGrath | Director | IMHC |
| • Tony Bates | CEO | Headstrong |
| • Fiona Ryan | CEO | Alcohol Action Ireland |
| • Cliona Murphy | Policy Development Officer | Alcohol Action Ireland |
| • Fergus Finlay | CEO | Barnardos |
| • Norah Gibbons | Director of Advocacy | Barnardos |
| • Jillian Van Turnhout | CEO | Children's Rights Alliance |
| • Tess Murphy | CEO | Longford Women's Link |
| • Barry Johnston | Political Affairs Officer | Amnesty |
| • Kieran Murphy | National Director | Society of St Vincent de Paul |
| • Harvey Koh | Portfolio Manager | Private Equity Foundation |
| • Ahmad Abuelata | Consultant | |
| • Anthony Finn | Consultant | ARD |
| • Melanie Verwoerd | Executive Director | One Advisory Board / UNICEF |
| • Kieran O'Brien | Advocacy Officer | UNICEF |
| • John R. Healy | Adjunct Professor | TCD / One Advisory Board |
| • Eoin McKeagney | Advisor | One Advisory Board |

