



# Politics is Trans Toolkit

Workbook for advocacy and action



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## **About GATE**

**GATE is an international advocacy organization working towards justice and equality for trans and gender diverse communities.**

Rooted in our movements, we work collaboratively with strategic partners at the global level to provide knowledge, resources and access to international institutions and processes. Our vision is a world free from human rights violations based on gender identity and gender expression. Our strategy is to transform the landscape of global advocacy, knowledge creation and resource distribution through critical inclusion of trans and gender diverse movements at all levels of political, legal and socio-economic processes.

Find out more about GATE by visiting [www.gate.ngo](http://www.gate.ngo)

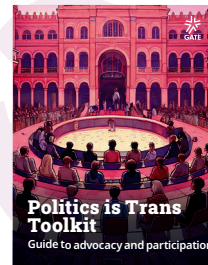


# About the Politics is Trans Toolkit

The **Politics is Trans Toolkit** is a collection of two interconnected resources designed to empower trans and gender diverse people to participate in politics and advocate for systemic change:

## 1. | **Politics is Trans Toolkit: Guide to advocacy and participation**

This guide provides foundational knowledge to help you understand political systems, build advocacy strategies, and advance trans and gender diverse liberation.



## 2. | **Politics is Trans Toolkit: Workbook for advocacy and action**

The workbook complements the guide with practical exercises, reflection tools, and actionable steps to turn strategies into transformative action.

Together, these resources are grounded in resilience and self-determination, equipping individuals, collectives, and allies with the tools to challenge systemic barriers and create meaningful change.

### **Why this toolkit matters**

Politics is inherently trans. Every act of living authentically as a trans or gender diverse person challenges oppressive systems and reclaims space. The Politics is Trans Toolkit channels those acts of resistance into systemic transformation. Whether you're organizing grassroots movements, leading campaigns for gender-inclusive policies, or crafting strategies to dismantle barriers, the toolkit strengthens your efforts to create more just and safe societies.

## What this toolkit offers

By engaging with the guide and workbook, you will:

- **Analyze and navigate systems:** Understand political systems, power structures, and decision-making spaces to identify where and how to advocate effectively.
- **Apply practical strategies:** Use adaptable exercises and frameworks to strategize, negotiate, and advocate across diverse political contexts.
- **Center lived experiences:** Explore case studies and activities that reflect intersecting identities, ensuring strategies resonate with your unique context.
- **Develop essential skills:** Build capacities such as storytelling, coalition-building, and advocacy to amplify your impact and navigate challenges.

## How this toolkit is organized

The *Politics is Trans Toolkit* is composed of two distinct yet complementary resources:

### Politics is Trans Toolkit: Guide to advocacy and participation

The guide introduces key concepts, frameworks, and strategies for political participation, organized into four practical sections:

#### Step 01 | Reclaim political power

Identify barriers, uncover opportunities, and strategize for transformative action.

#### Step 03 | Engage in political processes

Learn tactics for impactful participation in elections, legislative advocacy, public policy, and global movements.

#### Step 02 | Understand political systems and power structures

Navigate political systems, identify decision-makers, and map advocacy opportunities.

#### Our Stories:

#### Resistance, progress, and political transformation

Draw inspiration from real-world case studies of resilience and collective power.



# Politics is Trans Toolkit: Workbook for advocacy and action

The workbook translates the concepts in the guide into actionable steps through a series of 10 practical exercises that you can pick and choose from or fill out completely in order.

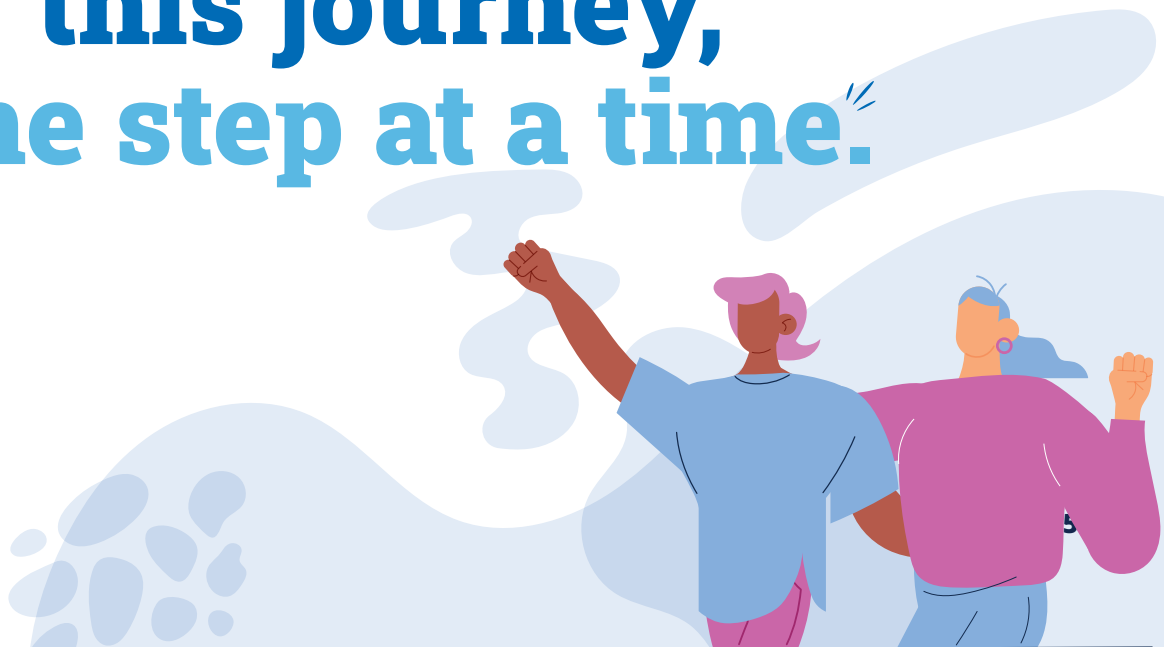
- **Exercise 1:** Identifying key advocacy issues
- **Exercise 2:** Understanding your political systems
- **Exercise 3:** Power mapping
- **Exercise 4:** Breaking down political processes
- **Exercise 5:** Decoding electoral systems
- **Exercise 6:** Role-playing negotiations
- **Exercise 7:** Advocating through legislative processes
- **Exercise 8:** Navigating risks in advocacy
- **Exercise 9:** Storytelling as advocacy
- **Exercise 10:** Crafting a personal advocacy plan



## A call to action

This toolkit is more than a resource — it's an invitation to action. By engaging with these tools, you are building the foundation for equitable, inclusive systems. Your voice and advocacy matter. Let's begin this journey, one step at a time.

**Let's begin  
this journey,  
one step at a time.**





## Exercise

# 1

## Identifying key advocacy issues

### Objective

This exercise helps you define the main problems affecting trans and gender diverse communities using an intersectional approach. By analyzing root causes and effects, you will develop a clearer understanding of the issues your advocacy will address. This foundational step will guide the goals and strategies in your **Personal advocacy plan (Exercise 10)**.

### Step 1: Prepare \_\_\_\_\_

- Gather perspectives from trans and gender diverse individuals, activists, and allies through discussions, surveys, or community consultations.
- Consider intersectional factors such as race, disability, migration status, socioeconomic background, and geographic location.
- Review existing research, reports, and data that highlight challenges facing trans and gender diverse people in your region.

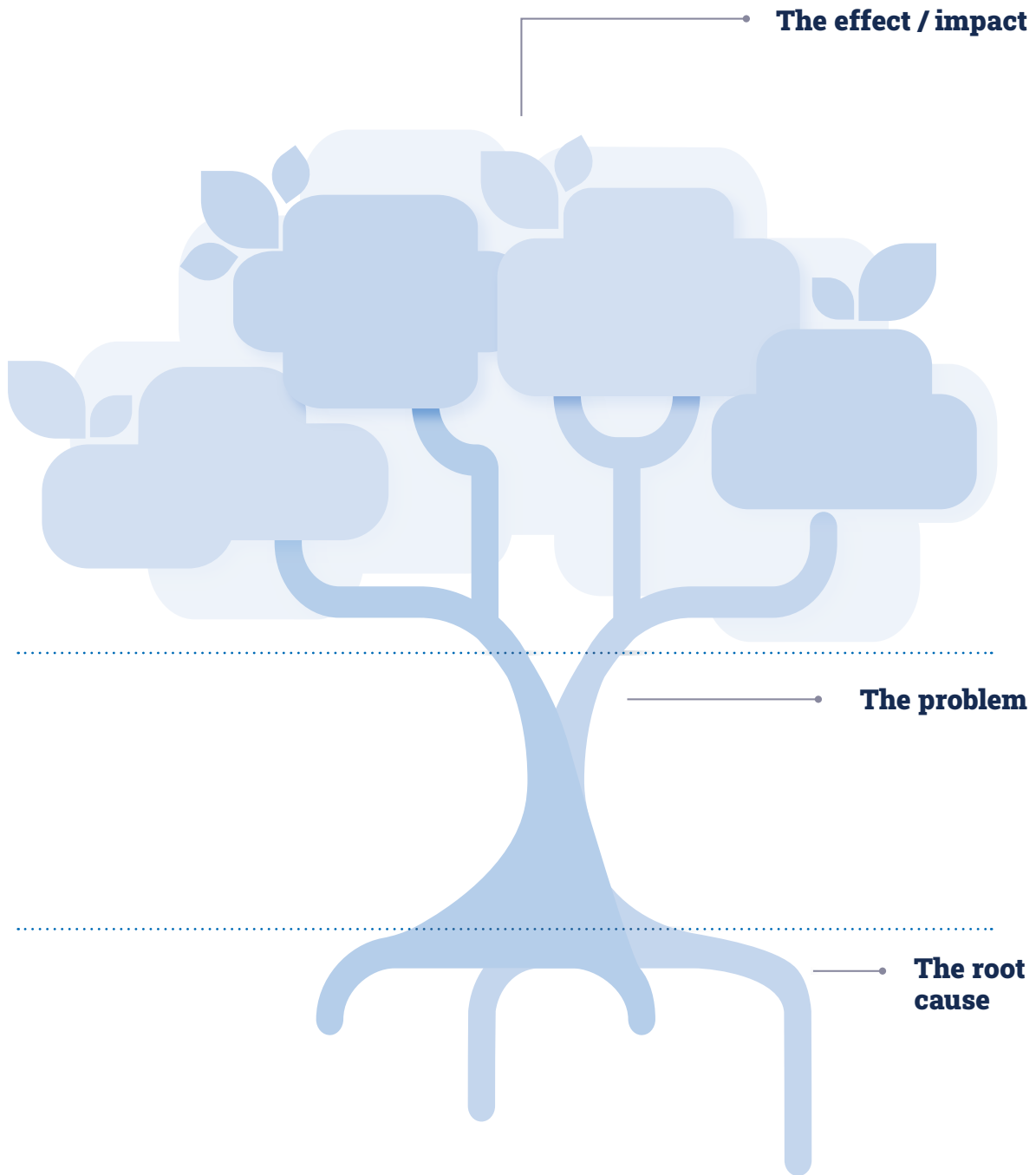
### Step 2: Construct a 'Problem Tree' \_\_\_\_\_

A 'Problem Tree' is a tool used to analyze complex issues by breaking them into three key parts.

Key parts	Description	Example
<b>The core problem (trunk)</b>	The main issue affecting trans and gender diverse communities.	Trans people face barriers in obtaining legal identification that matches their gender.
<b>Root causes (roots)</b>	The systemic, legal, and social factors that contribute to the problem.	Restrictive ID laws, lack of political will, discrimination in legal institutions, high cost of document changes.
<b>Effects (branches and leaves)</b>	The consequences of the problem on individuals and communities	Inability to access healthcare, employment discrimination, increased risk of violence and harassment, exclusion from political participation.



**Instructions:** Using the image below, write the main problem at the center (trunk), list all underlying problems at the bottom (roots), and list the consequences of the problems at the top (branches and leaves).





Step 3: Turning problems into advocacy goals \_\_\_\_\_

**Instructions:** Now that you have identified key issues, consider how advocacy can address them. Use the table below to start translating problems into potential advocacy goals.

Problem identified	Root causes	Potential advocacy goals
<b>Example:</b> Lack of legal gender recognition.	<b>Example:</b> Restrictive ID laws, political resistance.	<b>Example:</b> Advocate for self-ID laws for trans people.
<b>Example:</b> Trans people face discrimination in healthcare.	<b>Example:</b> Lack of training for medical providers, legal gaps in protections.	<b>Example:</b> Push for trans-inclusive healthcare policies.

Reflection questions

- 1. Which problems seem most urgent and require immediate action?
- 2. How do these issues disproportionately impact certain groups within the trans and gender diverse community?
- 3. Which problems are systemic, and which can be tackled through grassroots advocacy?
- 4. How can collective action and alliances help address these challenges?



## Exercise

# 2

## Understanding your political systems

### Objective

This exercise equips participants with a clear understanding of their country's political system by identifying **systemic barriers, key allies, and actionable advocacy tools** to advance trans and gender diverse inclusion.

### Step 1: Prepare

Before analyzing your political system, gather relevant information from diverse sources including:

- **Government websites:** Visit official sites like your parliament, electoral commission, or relevant ministries.
- **Reports from non governmental organizations:** Look for reports from local and international advocacy groups.
- **Media sources:** Identify reliable national newspapers or investigative platforms.
- **Community groups:** Engage with local LGBTQI or activist organizations for insights.

**Pro tips for research:** Use targeted search terms

- 'How laws are made in [your country]'
- '[Your country] political system explained'
- 'LGBTQ+ rights in [your country] political structure'

### Step 2: Analyze your system

**Fill out the table:**

- Use the provided table to explore each key element of your country's political system.
- Focus on identifying barriers and opportunities specific to trans and gender diverse advocacy.

Key element	Description of current system	Barriers for trans and gender diverse advocacy	Potential allies and advocacy tools	Main actors and Institutions
<b>Type of political system</b>	How the government is structured (e.g., democracy, hybrid, authoritarian).	Example: In authoritarian systems, dissent is often criminalized.	Example: International human rights organizations.	Example: Executive branch, ruling party, opposition parties.
<b>Decision-making process</b>	How laws and policies are created (e.g., parliamentary, presidential).	Example: Centralized power limits access to decision-makers.	Example: Build coalitions with local grassroots groups.	Example: Legislature, presidential office, constitutional courts.
<b>Checks and balances</b>	Mechanisms to limit power (e.g., independent judiciary, free press).	Example: Weak judicial systems fail to protect minority rights.	Example: Advocate for judicial reforms.	Example: Judiciary, ombudsman offices, press regulators.
<b>Access points for advocacy</b>	Spaces where advocacy can influence decisions (e.g., legislatures, courts).	Example: Limited access to public consultations for marginalized groups.	Example: Partner with legal aid organizations to create briefs.	Example: Parliamentary commissions, human rights bodies, administrative agencies.
<b>National ideology or agenda</b>	Overarching principles guiding governance (e.g., nationalism, secularism).	Example: Nationalist rhetoric excludes marginalized communities.	Example: Collaborate with broader equality movements.	Example: Political parties, religious institutions, media influencers.

## Reflection questions

1. What are the most significant systemic barriers in your political system that restrict trans and gender diverse advocacy? Which of these barriers requires immediate attention?
2. How does your country's political system create specific moments or spaces (e.g., elections, legislative reviews, public consultations) for trans and gender diverse advocacy? How can these opportunities be leveraged effectively?
3. Who are the key allies or institutions within the political system that can amplify your advocacy efforts? What strategies can you use to establish or strengthen these alliances?
4. How can you tailor your advocacy tools and approaches (e.g., lobbying, public campaigns, partnerships) to navigate the unique challenges and opportunities within your political system?



## Exercise

# 3

## Power mapping

### Objective

This exercise helps participants identify key power structures and stakeholders, categorize them based on influence and stance, and develop **strategic engagement approaches** to advance trans and gender diverse inclusion.

### Step 1: Prepare \_\_\_\_\_

Before starting the exercise, gather as much relevant information as possible about the political and social landscape in your region.

- Identify government officials, organizations, and community leaders by consulting government websites, NGO reports, policy documents, media sources, and advocacy networks.
- **Use targeted search terms like:**
  - 'Local decision-makers in [your city/region]'
  - 'Community power mapping for advocacy'
  - '[Your country] trans rights policy stakeholders'
- Engage with community members and existing advocacy groups to identify key actors.

### Step 2: Identify key actors and stakeholders \_\_\_\_\_

**Instructions:** Write down as many relevant names under each category below. If you are unsure about specific individuals, note down institutions or groups instead.

Category	Names / Organizations / Institutions	
Government officials and agencies		
Political parties and candidates		
Community leaders and organizations		
Religious and cultural influencers		
Business leaders and private sector entities		
Media and journalists		



### Step 3: Create an engagement strategy using a power-influence grid \_\_\_\_\_

Once you have identified key actors, analyze their level of power and influence on trans and gender diverse rights.

**Instructions:** Fill out the table below with details about each stakeholder.

Actor	Relevant roles and type of influence	Stance (ally, neutral, opponent)	Level of influence (High, Medium, Low)

Now that stakeholders are categorized, use a **Power-Influence Grid** to determine the most effective engagement strategy.

Category	Who belongs here?	How to engage?
<b>Manage closely</b> (High Power, High Influence)	Decision-makers who directly affect policy & laws.	Decision-makers who directly affect policy & laws.
<b>Keep satisfied</b> (High Power, Low Influence)	People with authority but not directly involved in LGBTQI issues.	People with authority but not directly involved in LGBTQI issues.
<b>Keep informed</b> (Low Power, High Influence)	Influencers, journalists, civil society allies.	Influencers, journalists, civil society allies.
<b>Monitor</b> (Low Power, Low Influence)	Individuals or groups with minimal power or involvement.	Individuals or groups with minimal power or involvement.

**Instructions:** Using the stakeholder power map below, categorize actors into the four quadrants. For additional context on this exercise consult <https://www.projectmanager.com/blog/stakeholder-mapping-guide>.

- Place stakeholders in the appropriate quadrant based on their influence and stance.
- Use arrows or lines to indicate alliances, dependencies, or key interactions.
- Make the most influential actors more visible.

Keep satisfied	Manage closely
Monitor	Keep informed

## Reflection questions

1. Which allies on your map have the greatest potential to drive immediate change, and how can you engage them effectively? Focus on identifying actionable steps to activate the support of your most influential allies.
2. What are the most effective strategies to turn neutral actors into allies? Reflect on how education, storytelling, or partnerships can shift their stance positively.
3. How can you minimize the influence of opponents while building community resilience? Consider non-confrontational approaches, such as counter-narratives or diversifying your advocacy channels.
4. What gaps or opportunities does your power map reveal, and how can you address them? Reflect on missing connections or unexplored resources that could strengthen your advocacy efforts.

## Exercise

# 4

## Breaking down political processes

### Objective

To broaden perspectives by understanding how advocacy can span across electoral, legislative, judicial, administrative, and budgetary processes, and to map actionable steps for trans and gender diverse inclusion at key points.

### Step 1: Prepare

Before engaging in advocacy, it is essential to understand the political processes that shape decision-making in your country. Identify how laws, policies, and resources are determined by analyzing the following:

- **Legislative and administrative processes:** Examine how bills are drafted, debated, and implemented.
- **Judicial processes:** Investigate how rights violations are litigated and enforced.
- **Budgetary processes:** Identify where resource allocations are decided and how to influence these decisions.
- **Elections:** Research opportunities to advocate for trans inclusion during election cycles.

#### Sources to consult:

- Government websites (parliamentary or ministerial portals).
- Reports from NGOs like Human Rights Watch or Amnesty International.
- Media platforms focusing on political analysis and governance.
- Local advocacy groups or trans-led organizations.

**Pro tips for research:** Use targeted search terms

- *'[Your country] legislative process explained'*
- *'How elections work in [Your country]'*
- *'Trans rights legal framework in [Your country]'*
- *'Public budget allocation for LGBTQ+ programs in [Your country]'*



## Step 2: Map the advocacy timeline

Using the provided table format, analyze a key political process of your choice. The process could include advocating for electoral reforms, anti-violence measures, gender identity recognition, or another priority area for trans inclusion. Identify:

- **Touchpoints:** Critical stages at which advocacy can generate impact.
- **Actors/Institutions:** Groups or entities that influence these stages.
- **Actions:** Concrete steps to advance the inclusion of trans and gender diverse people.

*Example of advocacy timeline for gender identity law:*

Phase	Touchpoints	Actors / Institutions	Advocacy strategy
<b>Proposal development</b>	Drafting the bill	Parliament, trans advocacy groups	Collaborate with legislators and civil society organizations to propose inclusive and evidence-based language for the law.
<b>Legislative debate</b>	Committee discussions	Legislative committees, allied parliamentarians	Present testimonies and research demonstrating the importance of legal gender recognition.
<b>Public consultation</b>	Public hearings	Parliament, advocacy groups, media	Mobilize trans individuals and allies to provide testimonies during consultations, and amplify their voices through media campaigns.
<b>Voting</b>	Final parliamentary vote	Parliament, political leaders	Engage directly with key legislators to secure votes, and organize public campaigns to pressure undecided lawmakers.
<b>Implementation</b>	Development of regulations	Ministry of Justice, human rights organizations	Advocate for clear, accessible procedures for legal gender changes, and monitor the rollout of implementation policies.
<b>Monitoring and evaluation</b>	Periodic reviews of the law	Civil society organizations, parliament, judiciary	Publish reports on implementation progress, document barriers faced by trans individuals, and propose amendments if necessary.

Your key political process: \_\_\_\_\_

**Your advocacy timeline:**

Phase	Touchpoints	Actors / Institutions	Advocacy strategy

**Reflection questions**

1. Which phase or touchpoint offers the greatest opportunity to advance trans and gender diverse inclusion, and why?
2. What are the most significant barriers at each key moment, and how can they be effectively addressed or mitigated?
3. Who are the most influential stakeholders in this process, and what strategies can you use to engage or counter their influence?
4. How does this process connect to or influence other political processes, and how can advocacy efforts across different stages reinforce each other to achieve long-term change?

## Exercise

# 5

## Decoding electoral systems

### Objective

This exercise helps you analyze your country's electoral system, identify systemic barriers to trans and gender diverse inclusion, and propose actionable reforms to promote equitable participation.

### Step 1: Prepare

Before assessing electoral barriers, gather reliable information on how elections function in your country. Use official sources, advocacy reports, and independent analysis:

- **Government websites:** Visit official resources for electoral commissions or ministries.
  - **Reports from non-governmental organizations:** Consult organizations like Amnesty International or local LGBTQI advocacy groups.
  - **Media and academic resources:** Look for reliable articles or studies on your country's voting and candidacy rules.
- Pro tips for research:** Use specific search terms.
- *'How elections work in [your country]'*
  - *'Voting rights for trans people in [your country]'*
  - *'Candidacy rules for marginalized groups in [your country]'*
  - *'Electoral barriers for LGBTQ+ individuals in [your country]'*

### Step 2: Analyze your electoral system

**Fill out the table:** Using the table below, organize your observations about your country's electoral system. Use the prompts to guide your analysis.



Element	Description of current system	Actors / Institutions	Opportunities for reform
<b>Electoral formula</b>	How votes are converted into seats (e.g., majoritarian, proportional).	Example: Majoritarian systems favor majority populations.	Example: Advocate for proportional systems to improve representation.
<b>Candidate lists</b>	Whether lists are open (voters choose candidates) or closed (party decides).	Example: Closed lists exclude trans and gender diverse candidates.	Example: Push for quotas for trans and gender diverse inclusion in closed lists.
<b>Voting requirements</b>	Rules around ID documents, age, or citizenship for voting.	Example: Mismatched IDs prevent trans people from voting.	Example: Reform ID requirements to allow for self-identified names.

### Step 3: Draft your reform proposal

**Fill out the table:** Based on your table, craft a reform proposal for one key barrier. Follow this structure:

Element	Description of current system	Actors / Institutions	Opportunities for reform
Title	What is the focus of your reform?	Reforming ID requirements for inclusive voting	
Problem statement	What is the current barrier, and how does it affect trans and gender diverse individuals?	Restrictive ID laws in [Country] exclude trans voters due to mismatched legal names and genders.	
Proposed reform	What specific change would address the problem?	Allow voters to use self-identified names on voting records without requiring medical or legal documentation.	
Justification	Why is this reform necessary, and how will it improve trans and gender diverse inclusion?	This change ensures voting rights for trans individuals and aligns with international human rights standards.	
Implementation plan	What steps need to be taken, and who will be involved in enacting the reform?	Partner with electoral commissions, human rights organizations, and international observers to advocate for this change ahead of the next election cycle.	

### Reflection questions

1. What makes this reform essential for advancing trans and gender diverse inclusion? Reflect on the specific impact this change could have on your community and the broader political landscape.
2. Who are your strongest allies in championing this reform? Identify individuals, organizations, or institutions that could help amplify your proposal and drive its adoption.
3. How will you navigate potential resistance to your reform? Anticipate challenges or pushback and outline strategies to address them effectively while maintaining momentum.
4. What does success look like, and how will you measure it? Define what achieving this reform would mean and consider short-term wins or progress indicators to track along the way.

## Exercise

# 6

## Role-playing negotiations

### Objective

To build practical negotiation and alliance-building skills by simulating discussions with key stakeholders, such as electoral commissions, media, and civil society organizations.

### Step 1: Prepare \_\_\_\_\_

- Familiarize yourself with the roles and goals of key stakeholders, as outlined in the guide's sections on mapping spaces, power actors, and decision-making processes.
- If working in a group, assign roles (see Step 3). If working solo, use the role briefs to guide how you would approach each stakeholder.

### Step 2: Choose your scenario \_\_\_\_\_

Select one of the scenarios below, or adapt a context relevant to your advocacy work:

- 1. Advocating for inclusion quotas:** A proportional system has quotas for women but excludes trans and gender diverse candidates. Electoral commissions resist new quotas, fearing political backlash. Civil society is divided, and media coverage is mixed.
- 2. Reforming ID laws for voting:** Restrictive ID laws exclude trans voters due to mismatched gender markers. Electoral commissions cite logistical challenges, and media is indifferent. Civil society supports reforms but lacks clear demands.
- 3. Addressing political violence against trans and gender diverse candidates:** Political violence against trans candidates is widespread, but electoral commissions deflect blame onto local governments. Media and civil society have limited resources to address the issue.



### Step 3: Choose your role \_\_\_\_\_

Take on one of the following roles to explore different perspectives and constraints:

Role	Goal	Constraints	Potential alliances
<b>Electoral commission officer</b>	Maintain electoral legitimacy while minimizing political risk and logistical complexity.	Limited funding, pressure from conservative political factions.	Media outlets (to shape public perception), civil society leaders (to build public trust).
<b>Trans candidate</b>	Advocate for trans inclusion in electoral lists and voting processes.	Limited access to political networks; potential backlash from conservative factions.	Civil society leaders, human rights organizations, and media allies.
<b>Civil society leader</b>	Strengthen trans and gender diverse inclusion and representation in the electoral process.	Fragmented support from different advocacy groups; limited financial resources.	Trans candidates, electoral commissions, and international observers.
<b>Media representative</b>	Highlight trans and gender diverse advocacy as part of a compelling narrative to engage audiences.	Pressure to remain 'neutral' and avoid controversial topics.	Trans candidates and civil society leaders with strong data and stories.

### Step 4: Simulate the negotiation \_\_\_\_\_

**Spend 30 minutes simulating a negotiation:**

- 1. Electoral commission officer:** Share challenges and constraints of implementing reforms.
- 2. Trans candidate:** Use lived experiences and storytelling to highlight barriers and urgency.
- 3. Civil society leader:** Bridge gaps between stakeholders and propose collaborative solutions.
- 4. Media representative:** Discuss strategies for shaping narratives and increasing visibility.

**Goal:** Work toward consensus on actionable reforms by addressing stakeholder concerns while emphasizing trans and gender diverse inclusion.

## Reflection questions

1. What strategies were most effective in building consensus and addressing stakeholder concerns? Reflect on what worked well and how these approaches can be strengthened or adapted in future negotiations.
2. How did power dynamics and differing priorities influence the outcomes? Consider how the roles and influence of each stakeholder shaped the negotiation and your ability to advocate effectively.
3. What role did storytelling or evidence play in shifting perspectives? Evaluate which narratives or data points were most impactful and how you can refine them for greater influence.
4. Which compromises felt necessary, and how did they impact the overall advocacy goals? Reflect on whether the compromises aligned with your broader objectives and what you might approach differently next time.

### Exercise

# 7

## Advocating through legislative processes

### Objective

To teach participants how to craft effective policy memos or submissions to legislative bodies to advocate for systemic change, focusing on addressing barriers to inclusion for trans and gender diverse communities.

### Step 1: Prepare

Before engaging in legislative advocacy, it's essential to understand **how laws are created, debated, and enacted** in your country.

Research key legislative processes including:

- How new laws are introduced and which actors have the power to propose them (e.g., legislators, ministries, citizen initiatives).
- How bills progress through different chambers of government and what public consultation mechanisms exist.
- Who votes on bills, what majority is required, and whether the executive branch has veto power.
- How laws are enacted and what mechanisms exist to monitor enforcement.

**Pro tips for research:** Use specific search terms.

- *'How a bill becomes law in [your country]'*
- *'Legislative process for human rights laws in [your country]'*
- *'Trans rights policy advocacy in [your country]'*
- *'How to submit a policy memo to [your country's legislative body]'*

Step 2: Define the policy issue \_\_\_\_\_

**Fill out the table:** Articulate the issue you want to address and its impact on trans and gender diverse communities using the table below:

Issue	Impact on trans and gender diverse communities
Restrictive ID laws	Excludes trans individuals from voting, accessing services, or employment opportunities.
Lack of anti-discrimination laws	Leaves trans and gender diverse people vulnerable to workplace and housing discrimination.
Insufficient protections against political violence	Discourages trans and gender diverse candidates from running for office.
Your policy issue:	

Step 3: Draft a policy memo \_\_\_\_\_

**Fill out the table:** Follow the structure below to create your memo:

Section	Guiding questions	Example	Your response
Introduction	Excludes trans individuals from voting, accessing services, or employment opportunities.	"Restrictive ID laws in [Country] disproportionately exclude trans and gender diverse individuals from public life and voting."	
Background	Leaves trans and gender diverse people vulnerable to workplace and housing discrimination.	'In 2024, [Statistic]% of trans people in [Country] reported being denied services due to mismatched ID.'	
Proposed reform	Discourages trans and gender diverse candidates from running for office.	"Implement policies allowing self-declared gender identity for official documents without medical requirements."	
Justification	Why is this change necessary? How will it benefit trans and gender diverse individuals and society?	"This reform ensures compliance with international human rights standards and promotes inclusive participation."	
Action Steps	What are the next steps? Who needs to act?	"Introduce the proposed reform in the next legislative session and allocate funding for implementation."	

## Step 4: Plan your advocacy strategy \_\_\_\_\_

**Fill out the table:** Follow the structure below to create your memo:

Actor/Institution	Guiding questions	Example
Legislators	Introduce and vote on the proposed reform.	Meet with supportive lawmakers and provide data on the benefits of the reform.
Civil society organizations	Advocate for policy change.	Partner with advocacy groups to mobilize public support and pressure legislators.
Media	Shape public opinion.	Publish op-eds and share stories of trans and gender diverse individuals affected by the current laws.

### Reflection questions

1. How does your proposed policy reform align with the needs and priorities of trans and gender diverse individuals? Reflect on whether your reform directly addresses systemic barriers and fosters meaningful inclusion.
2. Who are your key allies in advancing this reform, and what steps can you take to engage them effectively? Consider both institutional allies and community stakeholders who can amplify your advocacy.
3. What objections or resistance might legislators or stakeholders raise, and how will you respond? Anticipate challenges and develop evidence-based counterarguments or compromise strategies.
4. What makes your advocacy strategy practical and actionable? Assess whether your action steps are clear, achievable, and aligned with the legislative process.
5. How does this exercise prepare you to navigate real-world legislative advocacy challenges? Reflect on the skills, insights, or strategies gained and how they can inform future efforts.



## Exercise

# 8

## Navigating risks in advocacy

### Objective

To identify potential risks (e.g., violence, discrimination, or legal barriers) associated with advocacy efforts and propose mitigation strategies to ensure safety and effectiveness during campaigns.

### Step 1: Prepare \_\_\_\_\_

Before developing risk mitigation strategies, take time to assess the **advocacy activities** you are planning or currently engaged in. Analyze risk factors including:

- How does the current government or political leadership view trans and gender diverse advocacy? Are there any upcoming elections or policy changes that could impact your work?
- Are there any **laws or regulations** that restrict advocacy, protests, or public gatherings? Are there risks of **criminalization or legal repercussions**?
- What **societal attitudes** toward trans and gender diverse communities exist? Are there risks of **community backlash, media disinformation, or discrimination**?
- Are there **known risks of violence, online harassment, or surveillance** for advocates working on trans rights? Who are the main sources of potential threats?
- What **financial, organizational, or staffing challenges** might limit your ability to respond to risks?

### Step 2: Identify risks \_\_\_\_\_

Use the prompts below to brainstorm potential risks for your advocacy efforts:

- **Personal safety:** Threats of violence, harassment, or arrest.
- **Community impact:** Risks to the broader trans and gender diverse community as a result of your advocacy.
- **Operational challenges:** Funding limitations, logistical difficulties, or lack of support.
- **Reputation and backlash:** Public misrepresentation, loss of allies, or negative media coverage

Step 3: Complete the risk assessment matrix \_\_\_\_\_

**Fill out the table:** Evaluate each identified risk using the table below to consider its likelihood, impact, and possible mitigation strategies.

Risk	Likelihood <i>(high, medium, low)</i>	Impact <i>(high, medium, low)</i>	Mitigation strategy
Example: Online harassment	High	Medium	Enable privacy settings, document threats, and seek tech support from advocacy groups.
Example: Political violence during events	Medium	High	Hire security, coordinate safe meeting locations, and engage local law enforcement if safe.
Example: Negative media representation	Medium	Medium	Train spokespersons, prepare media kits, and build relationships with sympathetic journalists.

## Step 4: Develop mitigation strategies

For each risk, propose strategies to reduce its likelihood and impact. Consider:

- **Preventive actions:** What steps can you take in advance to minimize risk?
- **Response measures:** What actions will you take if the risk materializes?
- **Support systems:** Who can provide help, such as legal aid, security, or counseling.

Risk	Preventative actions	Response measures	Support systems

### Reflection questions

1. Which risks are most urgent to address, and how can you prioritize mitigation strategies to ensure both safety and advocacy impact? This encourages participants to focus on what matters most without feeling overwhelmed.
2. What trusted networks or allies can you activate to help manage or reduce risks effectively? Highlights the importance of collaboration and building a strong support system.
3. How can you adapt your advocacy approach to maintain momentum while minimizing exposure to high-risk situations? Promotes creative, flexible solutions that balance risk and action.
4. What lessons can you draw from past advocacy efforts (your own or others') to strengthen your risk management strategies? Encourages learning from experience and building resilience for future challenges.

## Exercise

# 9

## Storytelling as advocacy

### Objective

To harness the power of storytelling as a tool for trans and gender diverse advocacy, creating narratives that inspire empathy, build coalitions, and influence decision-makers.

### Step 1: Prepare

Before crafting your advocacy story, take time to reflect on key moments that highlight barriers and opportunities for trans and gender diverse inclusion. Identify storytelling themes:

- What key moments from your own advocacy journey demonstrate resilience, injustice, or progress?
- What stories from your community illustrate shared struggles or successes in advancing rights?
- What systemic obstacles (e.g., legal, political, social) have shaped trans and gender diverse experiences?
- Have there been specific policies, movements, or campaigns that have transformed lives?
- What message do you want your audience to take away? How can they support trans rights?

## Step 2: Understand the elements of a compelling story \_\_\_\_\_

Every story has key elements. Think about these as you craft your narrative:

Element	Description	Example
<b>Protagonist</b>	Who is the story about? (A trans person overcoming systemic barriers, a community fighting for change).	A young trans voter facing barriers due to mismatched IDs. Whenever possible (with safety and consent in mind), using real people, photos, and personal stories creates a stronger emotional connection, making the issue more tangible and impactful.
<b>Conflict</b>	What challenge or obstacle is being faced?	Mismatched IDs leading to voter disenfranchisement.
<b>Resolution</b>	What action was taken or change is needed?	Advocacy for inclusive ID laws.
<b>Call to action</b>	What do you want your audience to do?	'Join our petition to demand inclusive voting!'

## Step 3: Write your story \_\_\_\_\_

**Fill out the table:** Craft your story using the following prompts:

Prompt	Example	Your story:
Describe a moment when you (or someone you know) faced a significant barrier to participation.	"When I arrived at the polling station, they told me I couldn't vote because my ID didn't match my gender."	
What emotions were involved in this experience?	"I felt invisible, as if my identity didn't matter."	
What did you (or the protagonist) do to overcome or challenge the barrier?	"I worked with local advocacy groups to create awareness about this issue."	
How does this story connect to a broader advocacy goal?	"This experience shows why we need voting protocols that respect trans identities."	
What action do you want your audience to take after hearing this story?	"Sign the petition to demand trans-inclusive voting reforms."	



## Step 4: Tailor your story for different audiences

Crafting effective messaging requires aligning your communication with key stakeholders' power, influence, and stance on trans and gender diverse political participation. Using the stakeholder power map, this step will help refine messages based on different actors, ensuring they align with their level of influence, interest, and engagement strategy.

**Fill out the table:**

Audience	Touchpoints	Advocacy strategy
Community members and grassroots organizers	Mobilize local support, increase voter turnout, pressure decision-makers.	'Your vote matters! Let's work together to break down barriers for trans voters and make our voices heard.'
Local election officials and commissions	Oversee voter registration, ID requirements, and polling station operations.	'Ensuring all voters can cast their ballots safely and fairly is essential. Simplifying voter ID policies benefits everyone, including trans and gender diverse voters.'
Political parties and candidates	Have the power to advocate for legal reforms and voter protections.	'Trans and gender-diverse voters are a growing political force. Will you commit to policies that ensure fair voting rights for all?'
National and regional legislators	Draft and vote on electoral and ID policies.	'This isn't just about individual cases — it's about democracy. We need legislative solutions that guarantee equal access to voting for all.'
Government agencies (interior ministry, civil registry, electoral authority)	Implement ID policies, voter registration, and election laws.	'Updating gender marker policies and streamlining ID processes can remove unnecessary barriers to democratic participation.'
Media outlets and journalists	Shape public discourse, highlight barriers and success stories.	'Here's a compelling story about the challenges trans voters face due to ID mismatches — and the solutions advocates are pushing for to protect democracy.'
Religious and cultural leaders	Influence community norms and public opinion.	'Everyone deserves dignity and equal participation. Addressing voter ID barriers ensures that trans and gender-diverse people can engage fully in civic life.'
Business leaders and private sector	Can support policy reforms through lobbying and corporate responsibility initiatives.	'Inclusive policies benefit everyone. Companies and employers can support fair voting rights by advocating for policies that eliminate unnecessary barriers.'

## Step 5: Practice storytelling in different formats

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Practice delivering your story through these formats:

1. **Written:** Draft a short essay, blog post, or op-ed.
2. **Visual:** Create a short video, slideshow, or graphic representation of your story.
3. **Spoken:** Practice delivering your story aloud, focusing on tone, emotion, and impact.

### Reflection questions

1. Which part of your story felt the most powerful or impactful, and why do you think it resonated? Encourages participants to reflect on their narrative's emotional and strategic strengths.
2. How did tailoring your story for different audiences help you connect with them more effectively? What adjustments worked best? Promotes adaptability and highlights the importance of knowing your audience.
3. What reactions or feedback did you receive, and how can you use this input to refine your storytelling further? Encourages participants to view feedback as an opportunity for growth and improvement.
4. How can you leverage your story to build momentum for your advocacy goals? What platforms or partnerships could amplify its reach? Focuses on taking concrete next steps to maximize the story's impact.

## Exercise

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## Crafting a personal advocacy plan

### Objective

This exercise guides you in setting specific, actionable advocacy goals that align with your capacities, interests, and local context. It provides a roadmap to turn your vision into impactful actions. By the end of this exercise, you will have a personalized advocacy plan that includes your short-term and long-term goals, the resources you'll need, and clear milestones to track your progress.

### Step 1: Prepare \_\_\_\_\_

Before drafting your advocacy plan, take time to **assess your priorities, strengths, and available resources**. Identify key elements for your advocacy plan:

- What specific issue do you want to address (e.g., legal gender recognition, healthcare access, political representation)?
- What **immediate** changes can you work toward? What are the **long-term transformations** you hope to see?
- What reports, research, or community input support your advocacy focus?
- What obstacles might you face in your advocacy efforts?

### Step 2: Reflect on your advocacy vision \_\_\_\_\_

Spend 10–15 minutes reflecting on the following:

- What motivates you to engage in advocacy?
- Which issues affecting trans and gender diverse communities resonate most with you?
- What unique strengths or skills can you bring to advocacy?
- What challenges or barriers do you face?

Write your answers down to **clarify your vision and priorities** before setting your goals.

Step 3: Define your goals \_\_\_\_\_

Using the table below, outline your advocacy goals. Include both short-term (achievable within 6 months) and long-term (achievable within 1–3 years) goals.

Timeframe	Goal	Why it's important
Short-term goal	Example: Advocate for gender-neutral restrooms.	Improves safety and visibility for trans and gender diverse individuals.
Long-term goal	Example: Push for legislative changes on ID laws.	Ensures systemic inclusion and legal recognition.

Step 4: Identify resources and support \_\_\_\_\_

For each goal, identify the resources, skills, or allies you'll need. Use the table below to organize your thoughts:

Goal	Resource needed	Potential allies

Step 5: Break down goals into milestones \_\_\_\_\_

Transform your goals into actionable steps by creating milestones with deadlines.

Goal	Milestone	Deadline
Example: Advocate for gender-neutral restrooms.	Conduct stakeholder meetings with schools.	End of Month 1.
Example: Push for legislative changes on ID laws.	Partner with a legal advocacy organization.	End of Month 3.

Step 6: Build your advocacy plan \_\_\_\_\_

Consolidate your reflections, goals, resources, and milestones into a Personal Advocacy Plan.

Vision statement

What motivates your advocacy? Write a brief statement about the purpose driving your efforts.

**Example:** “To create safe spaces where trans and gender diverse people can express themselves freely.”



**Your vision statement:**

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**Goals****Short-term goals**

Goal: \_\_\_\_\_

Why it's important: \_\_\_\_\_

**Key milestones:**

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

**Long-term goals**

Goal: \_\_\_\_\_

Why it's important?: \_\_\_\_\_

**Key milestones:**

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

### Resources and allies

**Key resources needed:** What tools, knowledge, or funding will help you achieve your goals?

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**Allies and support networks:** Who can support your advocacy efforts? List organizations, individuals, or groups that align with your vision.

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**Action plan:** Plan your first three months of action based on your milestones and resources.

**Month 1:**

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**Month 2:**

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**Month 3:**

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### Reflection questions

1. What makes your advocacy plan uniquely yours? How do your strengths, skills, and lived experiences shape the goals you've set?
2. Who will feel the impact of your efforts? Which individuals or communities stand to benefit most from your advocacy, and how can you ensure their needs remain central?
3. How will you celebrate progress, no matter how small? What milestones or moments can you use to recognize your efforts and keep your motivation alive?
4. What's your strategy to adapt and thrive? If challenges arise, how will you adjust your approach while staying true to your vision?

# Your voice, your power:

## A call to action

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**Remember that every political strategy begins with the unwavering conviction that your voice is essential and powerful. Being a trans and gender diverse person is not a limitation — it is a declaration of liberation and resilience. It is a unique starting point to dismantle unequal systems, envision new possibilities, and push for transformative change. Through the tools and exercises you have explored, you are equipped to approach your participation with clarity, strategy, and courage.**

Your lived experience and vision hold the power to redefine political spaces, not only creating real impact for today but also laying the foundations for liberation and justice for those who follow. Liberation is not simply the absence of oppression; it is the presence of opportunity, representation, and community thriving. Trust in your capacity to drive change, lean on your networks, and build alliances with those who share the collective dream of justice and equity.

**Liberation requires consistency, reflection, and a willingness to reimagine the path forward. Do not be afraid to adapt, persist, and create. The world needs trans voices — not just to strengthen democracy but to inspire the future we all deserve. Your advocacy is a powerful step toward liberation for all.**





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