

BEHAVIOR CHANGE FOR HEALTH SYSTEMS STRENGTHENING:

AN ADAPTABLE BUDGET ADVOCACY TOOL APPLIED TO IMPROVE COMMUNITY HEALTH IN GUINEA

TOOL SUMMARY

Overview

In 2018, Guinea launched a new National Community Health Policy (Politique National de Santé Communautaire, PNSC) and a decentralization plan and program to transfer decision-making and resources to the subnational levels. Bearing in mind the challenges with implementing the PNSC, the Accelerator developed an SBC-oriented budget advocacy tool to support citizen dialogue with PNSC decision-makers.

The tool consists of a detailed, three-section set of slides with three accompanying worksheets. It includes key contextual information on the community health policy, key actors and their roles, the budgeting process by administrative level, and how to develop strategic, behavior change-cognizant advocacy approaches. The accompanying guidance and worksheets help users of the tool to establish their advocacy goal and strategy and conduct behavior mapping.



ACCELERATOR RESOURCES THAT INFORMED THE DESIGN OF THE TOOL

- **Improving Linkages Between Social Accountability and Social and Behavior Change: A Preliminary Report of Country Data Collection for Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, and Guinea** ([Visit Link](#))
- **Engaging Subnational Stakeholders on Social Accountability and Social and Behavior Change (SBC)** ([Visit link](#))
- **Using a Behavioral Lens to Mobilize Citizens Around Universal Health Coverage (UHC) in Togo** ([Visit link](#))
- **Financial Protection and Social and Behavior Change: Strengthening Financial Protection Programs through Behavior Change Approaches** ([Visit link](#))
- **Social Accountability and Social and Behavior Change: Applying a Behavioral Lens to Social Accountability Approaches** ([Visit link](#))
- **Enhancing Equity in Health Systems: The Critical Role of Implementation Research** ([Visit link](#))

KEY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

Social and behavior change (SBC) is a systematic evidence-driven approach to improve and sustain changes in behaviors, norms, and the enabling environment. SBC interventions aim to affect key behaviors and social norms by addressing their individual, social and structural determinants¹.

Social accountability works toward increased citizen engagement by holding government and health system actors accountable for their conduct, performance, and resource management.

Budget advocacy refers to citizen and/or civil society participation in budget decisions and using that participation to improve accountability for the use of public resources.

Tool Sections

Section 1: Understanding the Tool

This section lays the foundation for the tool by defining key technical and contextual points related to the current state of Guinea's national community health policy. While some components are globally applicable, modifications for select subsections, including the background section, budgeting, and details of the focal issue from the current focus of the PNSC, will enhance accessibility and usefulness for new audiences in different contexts.

Section 2: How the Tool Works

This section explains how to start budget advocacy and presents key information, such as the actors involved and their roles, and the budget process specific to Guinea. It orients users on how the tool works, how budget advocacy works, how SBC is applied in budget advocacy, and describes the financing issues for the PNSC in Guinea. The actors and their budget responsibilities in Guinea are described from the national to community level. A detailed timeline outlines the budget process from the national to the subnational levels. Apart from the introductory slides, this section requires comprehensive adaptation to accurately reflect the user's local context, as the original tool content is specific to Guinea's PNSC.

Section 3: Process of Using the Tool

The last section provides guidance on how to apply the tool's information, with an overview of methods for mapping behaviors, selecting target actors and behaviors, and when to conduct advocacy activities. This section walks users of the tool through the behavioral mapping process. The information on advocacy timing requires updates to the budget process for each selected context.

Supportive Materials

These supportive materials consist of three worksheets, which provide users of the tool with instructions, illustrative examples, and references to the tool content. The worksheets include images of the original tool slides that require context specific updates.

Advocacy Prioritization Worksheet

The first worksheet guides users in prioritizing a budget advocacy goal. The worksheet references the overall advocacy goal related to the PNCS, which requires adaptations for different contexts. It also references material from the original tool that necessitates updates including information about budget advocacy opportunities that maps the existing budget calendar with entry points for advocacy.

Behavior Mapping Worksheet

The second worksheet supports users in conducting behavioral mapping for their specific budget advocacy goal. It details the behaviors and the actors to focus on for advocacy using a behavioral lens. The guidance includes content on actors and responsibilities necessitating tailoring for new contexts. The worksheet lists the overall advocacy goal of the original tool, which requires updating to the advocacy goal of other users.

Advocacy Strategy Worksheet

The third worksheet is designed to develop the advocacy strategy using insights from the behavioral mapping worksheet. The current worksheet in the accompanying materials lists the initial tool's overall advocacy goal requiring modifications to reflect the new user's advocacy goal.

Insights for Adaptation

Adapting the tool will require a thorough understanding of the local context and conditions, including the policy environment, stakeholder landscape, and existing challenges. Collaborating with key civil society and government members will enhance the tool's content. Include those knowledgeable about the issue (policy, programmatic area) and the budgeting process. Key takeaways include:

Impact of Behavioral Insights

Integrating a behavioral lens enhances advocacy's impact by adapting and applying contextually sensitive methods to solve longstanding issues across diverse advocacy topics and settings.

Challenges of Budget Advocacy

Effective efforts require comprehensive technical expertise beyond the budget process, necessitating thorough guidance to support inclusive and representative advocacy.

Value of Systems Thinking

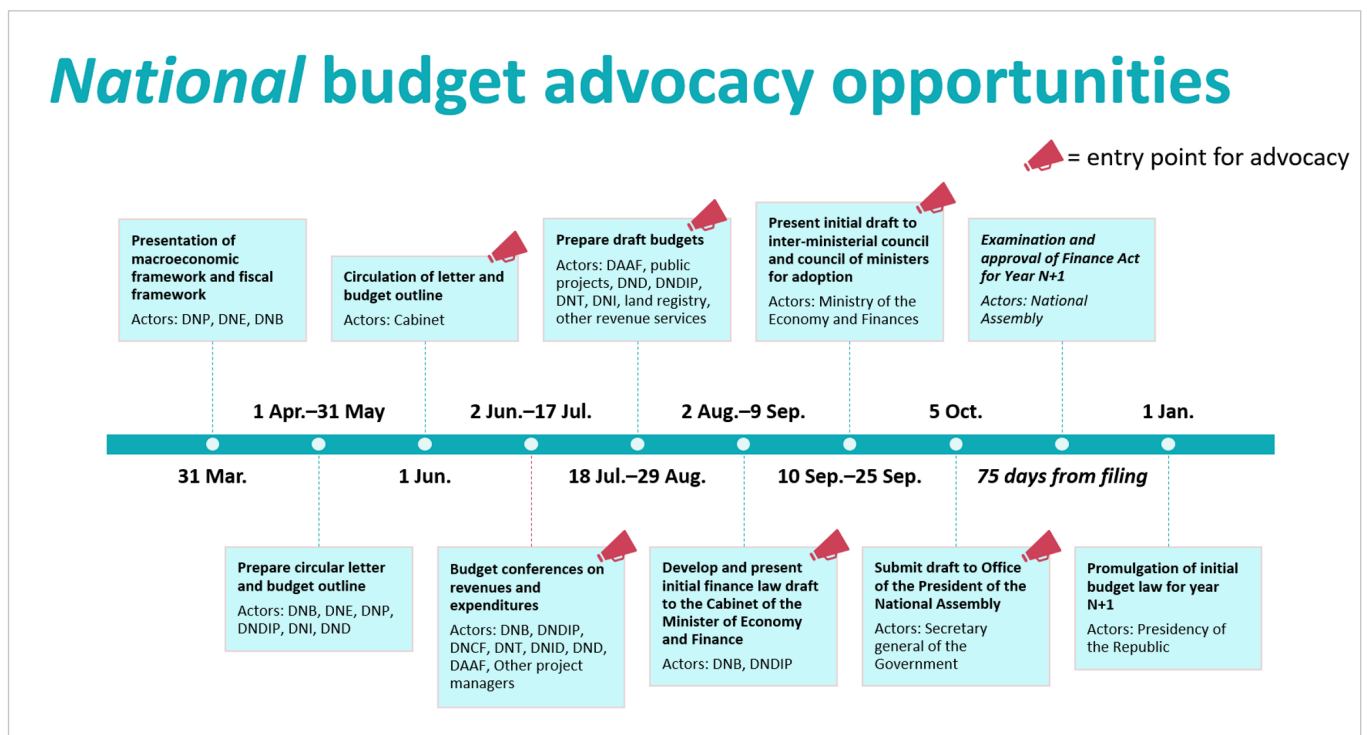
This approach helps to navigate complexity, drive meaningful change, and foster more inclusive and effective activities for impactful social accountability efforts.

Benefits of Collaboration

An inclusive approach ensures that products like the tool reflect its users' local context and needs, enhancing its relevance and sustainability for ongoing use.

Knowing When to Engage in Budget Advocacy

Understanding the optimal time for budget advocacy is key to maximize impact. The figure maps the budget process by month in Guinea, highlighting actors involved in each stage. The flags indicate entry points for advocacy efforts, aligning with critical decision-making points. Users should adapt this figure to their context. This is slide 68 in the original tool.



The Health Systems Strengthening Accelerator (Accelerator) is a global initiative funded by the United States Agency for International Development, with co-funding from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. Its goal is to partner with countries to build resilient, high-performing health systems that respond to persistent and emerging health challenges that disproportionately impact vulnerable populations. The Accelerator contributes to USAID's strategy for achieving improved health equity, quality, and resource optimization by helping countries apply a whole-of-systems lens to intractable health systems issues, connecting local innovation and global knowledge, strengthening local ownership and processes, and building the institutional architecture needed to ensure lasting change.

The Accelerator systematically learns and shares new knowledge about building sustainable, country-led institutions for iterative health systems strengthening that ultimately help countries and development partners develop new strategies, partnership models, and approaches.

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