



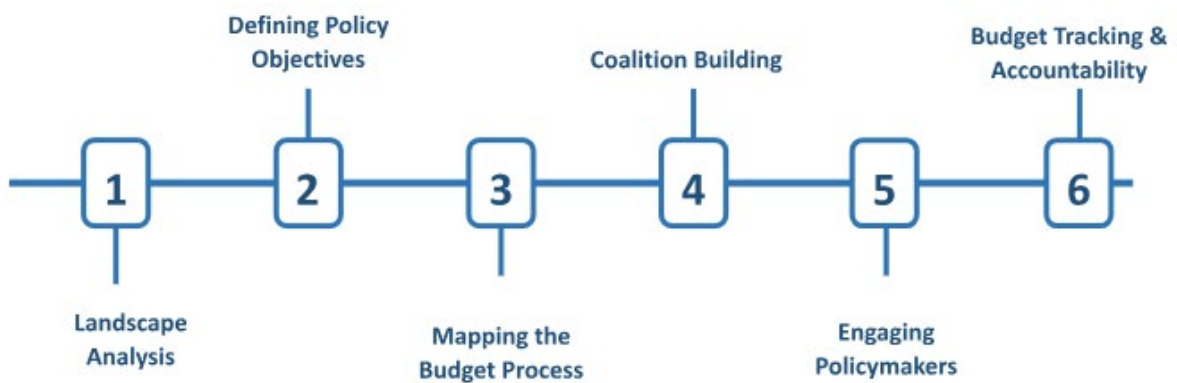
## Budget Advocacy Guide

Influencing government budget policies and practices is a powerful way to address child survival issues and challenges. The child survival community can hold the government accountable for implementing programs and policies to end child preventable deaths.

Budgets are an important tool national and sub-national governments use to make decisions that reflect their social and economic priorities. It reflects the government’s commitment to achieving SDGs and other critical commitments that meet people’s needs. The decisions governments make about funding policies, programs, and services directly impact efforts to end preventable deaths for children. These funding decisions affect child health, such as immunization, nutrition, curative care, and development.

Government budgets should plan, cost, and fund interventions that accelerate child survival at national, sub-national and international levels.

There are key steps and tools to guide the planning and implementation of an advocacy campaign for increasing child survival financing.



Tool	Purpose
1. Landscape Analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A landscape analysis assesses the national or local context to understand the child health policy changes needed and the advocacy strategy to achieve the policy goal. The analysis takes into consideration national or local child health situations, for instance, immunization, nutrition, social protection, quality of child health services, and cultural practices.</li> <li>• The analysis includes mapping key child health stakeholders, the political environment, legal frameworks, civil society advocacy capacity and media presence. The assessment should capture public attitudes, identify key decision-makers and assess the socio-political environment.</li> <li>• The landscape analysis should start with a desk review of existing information to learn more about the national or local prioritization of child health and opportunities for change by taking into consideration relevant resources.</li> </ul>



<p>2. Defining Policy Objectives</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Every advocacy campaign has a specific child health goal, such as “increased funding for immunization, nutrition, and health services.” The campaign’s policy objectives describe the policy changes necessary to achieve that goal.</li> <li>● A successful campaign starts with clear objectives that are Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time-bound (SMART). The objectives should be linked to policy change and existing evidence and informed by landscape analysis. Ideally, the policy objective will address a gap in funding or the existing policy environment and provide an evidence-based solution.</li> </ul>
<p>3. Mapping the Budget Process</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● This is mapping the process that national or local governments take when creating the budgets (pre-budget phase, budget preparation phase, executive budget submission to legislation phase, budget approval phase, and implementation phase) along with the dates and actors associated with each step</li> <li>● The mapping identifies vital decision-makers in government bodies who are responsible for the different budget process stages. For each decision-maker, consider the question, “What’s in it for me?” In other words, how will supporting investments in child health align with their values, interests or political goals?</li> </ul>
<p>4. Coalition building</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Working in a coalition or partnership with others is the best way to demonstrate support for child health policy goals. The nature of engagement may vary depending on the policy objective.</li> <li>● Coalitions can be structured and continue indefinitely or end after a specific milestone.</li> <li>● Coalitions made up of the child survival community and other NGOs will help to keep child health at the forefront of public and political discourse by:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Generating social momentum</li> <li>○ Ensuring media coverage of the topic through press releases and op-eds, invitations to journalists to attend campaign events and other activities.</li> <li>○ Bolstering stakeholder outreach and amplifying child survival messaging</li> <li>○ Coordinating stakeholder input to pending legislation and public health development plans</li> <li>○ Providing technical assistance and talking points to policymakers.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p>5. Engaging policy makers</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Regular engagement with political leaders increases discourse, builds trust and strengthens political will for government action to achieve the child health policy objective. This can be done through:</li> </ul>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Secure firm commitments from policymakers to support child health funding at events and publicize their public statements.</li><li>○ Identify and invite government leaders to be policy champions for child survival.</li><li>○ Share educational materials, reports, fact sheets and position papers that contain relevant data and talking points to help political leaders advocate for child survival.</li><li>○ Organize educational forums, panel discussions, conferences and political roundtables for government, nongovernmental entities and other stakeholders to promote action, elevate discussions and increase discourse.</li><li>○ Testify before legislative committees and other political forums and coordinate NGO participation in government-led sessions.</li><li>○ Request NGO participation in intersectoral expert committees to advise on policy development and promote an inclusive government process.</li><li>○ Provide expert advice and technical assistance in policy drafting.</li></ul>
<p>6. Budget tracking and accountability</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Once the budget has been passed, budget allocations must be tracked to ensure that appropriated resources are efficiently disbursed and that there is accountability in the budget process. This means a transparent process, timely reporting and without cumbersome processes that delay or prevent the release of allocated funds.</li><li>● Inefficient disbursement of allocated funds is a common barrier to program improvement. The child survival community can promote budget accountability by working with the government to identify and remove barriers to disbursement and, by working collaboratively, agree on funding targets and goals in the next budget cycle.</li><li>● To evaluate budget allocations and disbursements, it is important to track child health indicators, the targets committed to by the published government budgets and policies, and the actual disbursement and the data sources for reference.</li><li>● The child health indicators are usually based on the advocacy campaign's policy objectives. Most of the indicators are likely to be related to budget allocations and disbursements. Annual budget allocations are usually publicly accessible. Disbursements can be more challenging to access and track. However, indicators may also focus on policies that influence the budget and the outcomes that the budgets and policies seek to shape.</li></ul>



## Landscape Analysis

Each country’s landscape-specific context helps to shape the campaign’s policy change priorities and strategies. This analysis will help identify some of the most important conditions the advocacy campaign should consider.

Table 1: Landscape Analysis Template

Components for Analysis	Answers
Country/ Local Context: What is the political and policy context that informs funding priorities?	
Political Mapping: Who are the government departments responsible for each stage of the budget process?	
Budget Process: What is the process and timeline of the budget process and the access points?	
Legal Analysis: What are the current and pending laws, regulations, and other measures that are relevant to the policy goal?	
Stakeholder Mapping: Which stakeholders, decision-makers and policy influencers to target is vital to achieving the policy objectives	

## Mapping the Budget Process

Understanding the national and subnational budget making process is critical to identifying opportunities to advocate for resource allocation for intervention that impact child health. In most countries the national budgeting process involves (see section on ‘budget process’ for more details of process):



It’s critical to understand the timelines for each of these key processes and prepare to engage those various stakeholders. See [here](#) an example of the 2024 budget preparation calendar for the government of Sierra Leone. Given that most of these processes involve specific government officials, it is more effective to develop champions amongst these individuals who will advocate for child survival behind closed doors.

Table 2: Example Budget advocacy planning tool for Sierra Leone



<b>Budget Process Stage</b>	What is the stage of the budgeting process and what are the timelines?	Budget preparation process that starts from March 2024 to June 30 <sup>th</sup> , 2024, ending with the submission of budget to the parliament.
<b>Target Stakeholder</b>	Who is the target stakeholder(s)? Highlight specific names	Ministry of Health Budget officer: DR XX
<b>Key messages</b>	What are the specific key messages that will resonate with this stakeholder?	
<b>Communication Channel for engagement</b>	What are the communication tools and channels that can be employed to reach out to this stakeholder?	Email Policy Brief In person meeting
<b>Advocacy workplan: Activities and Timelines</b>	What are the activities that need to happen? What are the timelines and outcomes of these activities?	
<b>M&amp;E: Desired Results and impact</b>	What is our desired result(s) and have been we achieving it?	

### Budget Decision-Makers Mapping

This worksheet can be used to list key decision-makers in government responsible for the budget process stages.

For each decision-maker, consider the question, “What’s in it for me?” In other words, how will supporting investments in ending child preventable diseases align with their values, interests, or political goals?

Table 3: Budget Decision Makers Mapping Template

	Decision-makers	Role in the Budget Process	Position on the issues	Values and Interests	Opportunities for engagement
<b>Pre-Budget Phase (Agencies Identify Priorities)</b>					
<b>During Budget Preparation</b>					



After the Executive Budget is Submitted to the Legislature					

### Budget Tracking

This framework supports budget accountability by tracking progress against the indicators identified in the advocacy plan.

1. **Indicators:** These indicators are drawn from the advocacy plan. They may also include other government actions the advocacy campaign tracks to determine whether the government is meeting its commitments.
2. **Target:** This is the total amount (in expenditure totals, percentages, etc.) the advocacy campaign had asked the government to support through the budget process.
3. **Allocation:** This is the amount the government has committed to spend through the budget process, policies, other funding pathways, or investment frameworks.
4. **Actual:** This is the amount of funding that has been disbursed, released, or spent and policies that have been carried out based on available reports.
5. **Data Sources:** This is the list of places where the information on “Actual” expenditures can be found: for example, reports from ministries, departments, and agencies; documents from coalition partners; or articles in the media.

Table 4: Budget Tracking Template

Indicator	Targets	Allocations	Actual	Data Sources

### Budget Process

#### Stage 1: Budget Preparation

What Happens: During the budget preparation stage, government agencies, including the Ministry of Health, Finance, and Education, collaborate to develop budget proposals. These proposals outline the resource needs for various sectors, including child health. The Ministry of Health identifies key child health interventions, estimating the financial requirements for programs, vaccinations, maternal and neonatal care, and other initiatives.

- **Ministry of Health:** Identifies child health priorities, estimating financial needs for programs and interventions.
- **Ministry of Finance:** Coordinates with various ministries to consolidate budget proposals, ensuring alignment with national priorities.



### Stage 2: Budget Authorization

At the budget authorization stage, parliamentarians review and authorize the proposed budget. They assess the allocations for child health and other critical sectors. Amendments and negotiations may occur to ensure adequate resources for child health interventions. Parliament plays a pivotal role in approving the overall budget, including allocations for child survival initiatives.

- **Parliamentarians:** Review and authorize the budget, including allocations for child health.
- **Ministry of Finance:** Presents the budget to parliament, justifying allocations and responding to inquiries.
- **Ministry of Health:** Advocates for sufficient resources for child health programs during parliamentary discussions.

### Stage 3: Budget Execution

During budget execution, government agencies, led by the Ministry of Health, implement the approved programs and interventions for child health. This involves disbursing funds, monitoring program implementation, and addressing any challenges that may arise. The Ministry of Finance oversees the financial disbursements and ensures compliance with budgetary allocations.

- **Ministry of Health:** Implements child health programs, monitors progress, and addresses implementation challenges.
- **Ministry of Finance:** Manages financial disbursements, ensuring funds are allocated according to the approved budget.
- **Implementing Agencies:** Execute child health interventions, following guidelines set by the Ministry of Health.

### Stage 4: Budget Accountability

Budget accountability involves monitoring and evaluating the outcomes of budget execution. Audits and assessments assess whether funds were used efficiently and effectively, especially in the context of child health programs. Transparency and reporting mechanisms are essential to hold the government accountable for its commitments to child health.

- **Auditors and Evaluators:** Conduct audits and assessments to ensure funds were used appropriately and effectively.
- **Government Agencies:** Provide information and reports on the implementation of child health programs.
- **Civil Society Organizations:** Advocate for transparency and hold the government accountable for commitments to child health.
- **Parliamentary Committees:** Review audit reports and hold hearings to ensure accountability for budget execution outcomes, including child health initiatives.

