

# **The Elements of Successful Public Outreach:**

**Influencing Opinion and Policy through Citizen Action**

International Republican  
Institute

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# Why is Change so Difficult to Create?

- Perceptions
- Persuasion
- Priorities
- Policies

# Public outreach planning begins by answering three questions:

- Where are you?
- Where do you want to be?
- How will you get there?



# Where are you?

Assess the current situation you want to change

## Example:

- Our country's legal code prohibits women from conferring citizenship on their children if the father of the child is not Lebanese.
- This law has been challenged in the past but with little success
- Our argument is a logical one, but there is no political will among women to agitate for change.

# Where do you want to be?

Describe acceptable outcomes you want to create

Example:

- Option 1: A law that states that no Lebanese law shall abridge the rights of women
- Option 2: A law that gives a women the right to confer Lebanese citizenship on her children regardless of the childrens' father's nationality.

# How will you get there?

- Step 1: Strategize – agree goals and messages
- Step 2: Form Coalitions
- Step 3: Plan Your Attack

# Public Outreach Planning

## Step 1

- Hold a Strategy meeting
- Agree upon message and goals
- Decide roles and responsibilities
- Assign specific tasks on a defined timeline

# Public Outreach Planning

## Step 2

Seek out partners with similar goals

- Agree upon shared values
- Define your work
- Coordinate press strategies



# Public Outreach Planning

## Step 3

### Plan your attack

- Lobby Public Officials
- Approach Opinion Makers
- Launch your Initiative

# Coalitions

- What are the common uniting issues?

- Religion
- Geography
- Common values
- Shared experiences



# Challenges of Public Outreach Campaigns

- Raising awareness
- Inspiring action
- Competition for messages
- Creativity
- Circumstances beyond your control

# Staying Connected with Coalition Partners

- Regular meetings
- Phone calls
- Email
- Non-political projects



# Interacting With Public Officials

- Be persistent
- Be patient
- Be honest
- Articulate your plan
- Demonstrate unity



# Discussion

## Regional Case Studies of Public Outreach Campaigns

- Ghada Jamchir and Women’s Petition Committee  
*(Bahrain)*
- Women’s Freedom Association  
*(Iraq)*
- “My Nationality, a Right for Me and My Family”  
*(Lebanon)*
- “Women are Kuwaiti Too”  
*(Kuwait)*

# Discussion Questions

- If we were to list the goals of each group, what would they be?
- What impressed you about their methods?
- How can each group build on their success?
- Do any similar projects come to mind in your country?