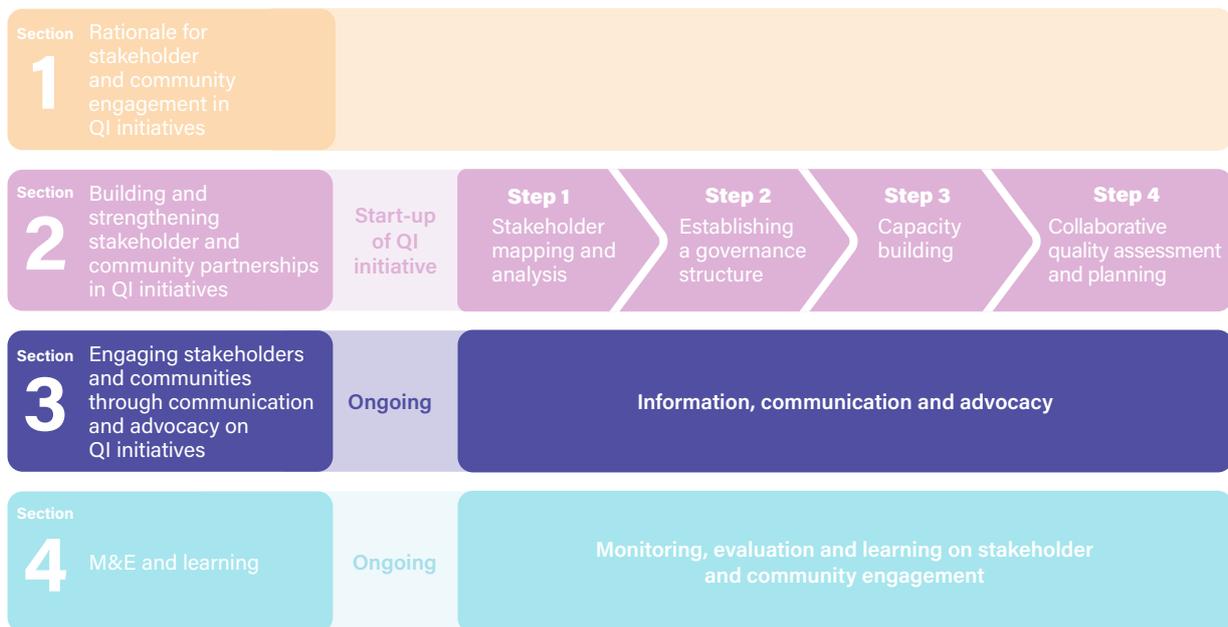




SECTION 3. STRATEGIES FOR INFORMATION, COMMUNICATION AND ADVOCACY



Ongoing engagement with national/district/facility-level stakeholders is crucial to maintaining commitment, ensuring accountability, and creating or strengthening a positive environment to improve and scale up QoC in MNCH in the long term. This section provides a set of approaches and tools for **information, communication and advocacy strategies and activities** geared towards stakeholders who are not directly part of the partnership or member of the TWG or QI team.

Information strategies around the QI initiative

At which points do core stakeholders, other groups and the general public need to be informed about the QI initiative? Think through the types of information different stakeholders and community members need. What mechanisms will be put in place for information sharing?

Recommended information activities – national level

- Launch of an MNCH QoC report or other relevant outputs
- Creating momentum and organizing events around key dates (e.g. International Women's Day) or organizing a side event to a conference (e.g. health summit)
- Presentation of programmes and reports at medical schools to raise awareness and collect feedback from students.

Recommended information activities – district level

- Presentation of the stakeholder mapping results in a district development forum, asking for inputs and feedback
- Creating momentum and organizing events around key dates (e.g. International Women's Day) or organizing a side event to a conference (e.g. health summit)
- Presentation of programmes and reports during health provider training or at medical schools to raise awareness and collect feedback from students.

Communication and advocacy strategies to promote QoC in the MNCH agenda

Goals of communication and advocacy

Communication and advocacy can help raise awareness on QoC in MNCH and accelerate action by stakeholders. For example:

- Develop stakeholders' understanding of the underlying reasons for low QoC and push for the need to address these.
- Increase stakeholders' commitment to the initiative itself or for QoC in MNCH care more generally.
- Call for investments in necessary infrastructure, skilled health workforce, medical supplies, appropriate information systems, and standards and guidelines, as well as effective systems of regulation and accountability to support QoC in MNCH.
- Call for action on the social, political, economic and environmental determinants of QoC in MNCH.
- Build trust for contracting with accreditation or insurance agencies

When to develop a communications and advocacy strategy?

A communications and advocacy strategy complements the stakeholder engagement strategy by conducting more in-depth analyses of the position of stakeholders towards a QI initiative and their preferred information sources and channels. Communications and advocacy activities can be planned and implemented at different stages of the QI initiative. They are, however, more likely to be effective and consistent when developed at the early stages of the process.

Who should develop a communication and advocacy strategy?

A communications and advocacy strategy complements the stakeholder engagement strategy; therefore, ideally, the group that developed the stakeholder engagement strategy also develops the communications and advocacy strategy. The stakeholder mapping and analysis will also help to identify partners (e.g. NGOs or civil society organizations, media, existing MNCH campaigns) that have existing QoC or MNCH advocacy campaigns that can be built upon. For example, White Ribbon Alliance has launched advocacy campaigns on safe and respectful childbirth in several countries. Box 6 describes some resources supporting information, communication and advocacy.

Box 6. Resources supporting information, communication and advocacy

Tools and references for communication and advocacy – national level

- WHO (2014). Every Newborn advocacy toolkit. This document provides a repository of quick references and examples to show how to undertake advocacy and communication in various national and local contexts. It includes examples of the use of basic facts in advocacy messaging and ways in which “calls to action” can be written for different audiences: policy-makers, health managers, health providers, parents and families. The guide includes examples of letters to policy-makers, briefs, press releases, social media content and other relevant materials to make the case for improving QoC. The guide suggests steps on how to develop a communications and advocacy strategy. The UNICEF list of “key elements to consider before developing advocacy activities” is a useful complementary source – it helps think through advocacy objectives for different stakeholders, possible advocacy activities and tools. https://www.unicef.org/cbsc/files/Advocacy_Toolkit.pdf
- White Ribbon Alliance (2013). Guide for advocating for respectful maternity care.

Tools and references for information and communication – facility level

- Save the Children (2008). Thinking through motivational messages to interest partners in the QOC programme (PDQ-Youth guide, p. 28).
- Community Toolbox. Developing a community communication plan.
- Community Toolbox. Information and consultation: making community presentations.
- The IAP2 Public Participation Toolbox provides a reference guide on 45 techniques for sharing information. Some of the communication techniques covered are press releases, newspaper inserts, television programming, briefings, in-person surveys, focus groups and open houses.
- WHO (2014). Every Newborn advocacy toolkit: Developing communication materials for health workers, community and religious leaders, NGOs; includes examples of communication channels to reach pregnant women, husbands, families and community leaders in MNCH (pp. 28–30).