

# GLOBAL ADVOCACY FOR PHYSICAL ACTIVITY (GAPA) *ADVOCACY COUNCIL OF ISPAH*

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## CORE FUNCTIONS

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### **Background**

In the last decade there has been significant progress globally in relation to physical activity. This includes: the advancement of the science on health benefits; improvements in population monitoring; the development of national and regional guidelines; and the development of professional networks on physical activity to share and promote work in five geographical regions. In addition, there has been the development of a successful *Journal of Physical Activity and Health*, two international congresses and in many countries community-wide campaigns and programs. There is however some impatience for progress and a sense of urgency to scale up the action at a population level in most countries. The strong scientific evidence now warrants a significant increase in commitment to physical activity advocacy across the world.

### **Mission**

GAPA aims to increase commitment to physical activity and encourage governments and interested parties to develop, disseminate and implement national policies, programs, services and environments to support physical activity and health.

### **Principles of GAPA advocacy actions include:**

Three main principles underpin how GAPA will aim to work:

- ◆ The development of actions based on evidence of effectiveness,
- ◆ The application of advocacy actions aimed at multiple levels:
  - \* political advocacy,
  - \* media advocacy,
  - \* professional mobilization,
  - \* community mobilization, and
  - \* advocacy within organizations,
- ◆ The involvement of a wide range of organizations with direct and indirect interests in the promotion of physical activity across all regions of the world.

The above principles focus on how GAPA will work to capitalize on the scientific evidence base for public health and physical activity and work in partnership to advocate for policy, environments and programs that support active lifestyles. The underpinning approach to Advocacy is shown in Figure 1 as the five imperatives for effective physical activity advocacy.

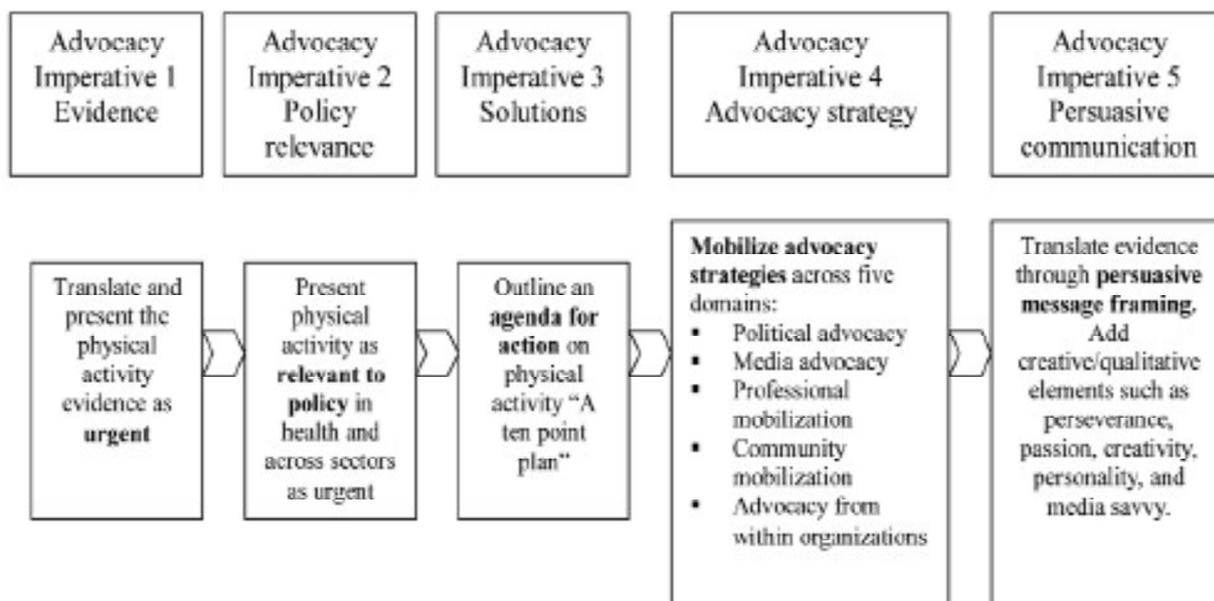
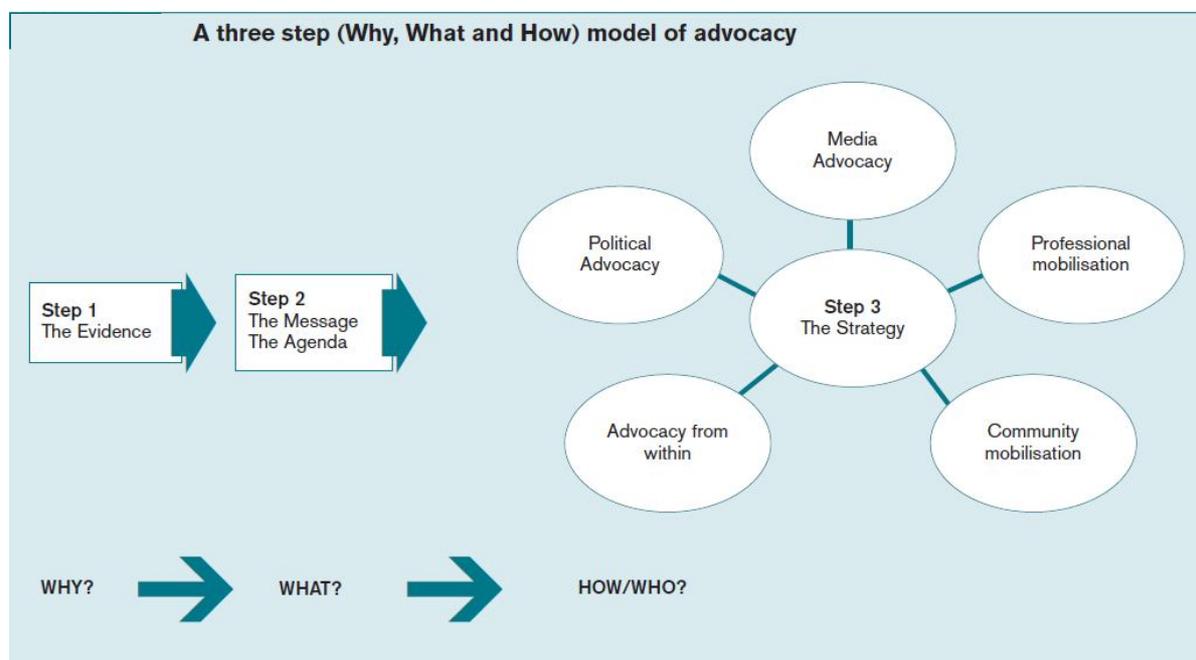


Figure 1- Five Imperatives for effective physical activity advocacy (Shilton TR, 2008)



Shilton, T. *Advocacy for physical activity – from evidence to influence. Promotion & Education*, 2006

## Five core functions of GAPA

GAPA will undertake its work through five core functions:

- Disseminate physical activity information and evidence;
- Advocate for the development, dissemination and implementation of national physical activity policies, action plans and guidelines;
- Develop an agreed Global physical activity and health Charter (a 10 point plan);
- Advocate for capacity building and the development of workforce training initiatives;
- Advocate for establishing and strengthening regional networks and global collaboration amongst these.

## References

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- World Health Organization – "The Global strategy on diet, physical activity and health" - 2004, World Health Assembly Resolution WHA 55.23. <http://www.who.int/dietphysicalactivity/strategy/eb11344/en/index.html>
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