



FETP Advocacy Toolkit for the Eastern Mediterranean Region (EMR)

December 2025

GHD|EMPHNET: Working Together for Better Health

The Eastern Mediterranean Public Health Network (EMPHNET) is a regional network that focuses on strengthening public health systems in the Eastern Mediterranean Region (EMR) and beyond. EMPHNET works in partnership with ministries of health, non-government organizations, international agencies, private sector, and relevant institutions from the region and the globe to promote public health and applied epidemiology. To advance the work of EMPHNET, Global Health Development (GHD) was initiated to build coordination mechanisms with partners and collaborators. Together, GHD|EMPHNET is dedicated to serving the region by supporting efforts to promote public health policies, strategic planning, sustainable financing, resource mobilization, public health programs, and other related areas.

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Executive Summary

The **FETP Advocacy Toolkit for the Eastern Mediterranean Region (EMR)**, developed by **GHD|EMPHNET (December 2025)**, is a practical, action-oriented guide designed to help countries secure the long-term **sustainability, institutionalization, and impact** of Field Epidemiology Training Programs (FETPs). It responds directly to persistent challenges facing FETPs in the region—namely donor dependency, limited integration into national health systems, fragmented funding, and unclear career pathways for graduates.

FETPs have been a cornerstone of public health capacity in the EMR for over four decades. Through hands-on, field-based training, they have produced a skilled workforce that leads disease surveillance, outbreak investigation, emergency response, and evidence-based policymaking. FETP residents and graduates have been on the frontlines of major public health emergencies, including COVID-19, cholera, measles, and other outbreaks, contributing directly to national health security and compliance with global frameworks such as the **International Health Regulations (IHR 2005)**, **Universal Health Coverage (UHC)**, and the **Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**.

Despite their proven value, many FETPs remain vulnerable. Regional sustainability assessments and workshops conducted between **2021 and 2025** identified recurring gaps in formal institutional integration within Ministries of Health or National Public Health Institutes, insufficient domestic financing, weak strategic planning, and limited retention mechanisms for trained epidemiologists. These findings underscore the need for structured, country-led advocacy to translate technical success into lasting political, financial, and institutional commitment.

This toolkit addresses that need by providing a **clear advocacy framework** tailored to the FETP context. It guides users through defining advocacy objectives, planning strategically using tools such as **Theory of Change, SWOT analysis, goal setting, and stakeholder mapping**, and developing targeted, evidence-based messages for different audiences. It also includes ready-to-use templates—fact sheets, policy briefs, success stories, media pitches, and elevator pitches—to support effective engagement with policymakers, donors, academic institutions, media, and the public.

Importantly, the toolkit distinguishes between **advocacy** and **visibility**. While visibility builds awareness and credibility, advocacy is positioned as a deliberate, sustained effort to influence policy, funding decisions, and institutional structures. The toolkit emphasizes that both are complementary and necessary for achieving durable outcomes.

The intended audience includes **FETP program directors, residents, alumni, Ministry of Health focal points, and partners**, empowering each group to play an active role in advocating for FETPs. By strengthening internal alignment and external

engagement, the toolkit promotes collective ownership of sustainability goals across the entire FETP ecosystem.

The expected outcomes of applying this toolkit include:

- Formal integration of FETPs into national health system structures
- Increased and diversified domestic and partner funding
- Clearer career pathways and retention of trained epidemiologists
- Stronger national and regional partnerships
- Enhanced preparedness and response to emerging public health threats

Ultimately, the FETP Advocacy Toolkit positions FETPs not as temporary training initiatives, but as **essential, institutionalized assets** for resilient health systems. It equips countries in the EMR and other priority settings with the tools to claim their seat at the decision-making table—and to secure the future of field epidemiology as a pillar of national and global health security.



1. Introduction

Toolkit Purpose

The FETP Advocacy Toolkit is a practical resource designed to help Field Epidemiology Training Programs (FETPs) in the Eastern Mediterranean Region (EMR) and other priority countries to plan, implement, and evaluate their advocacy efforts effectively. It provides structured guidance, tools, and templates to support advocacy aimed especially at promoting FETP sustainability and institutionalization.

More specifically, this toolkit helps country programs advocate for their integration within Ministries of Health or other national institutions through policy change, legislation, or alignment with national workforce development structures.

It equips users with tools to promote program sustainability by securing long-term financial and operational support, emphasizing domestic ownership, and reducing donor dependency.

The toolkit includes a step-by-step framework for strategic advocacy, covering stakeholder mapping, message development, influencing tactics, and customizable templates.

At the same time, it strengthens the advocacy capacity of FETP teams, residents, and alumni by empowering them to champion their programs using evidence, success stories, and targeted messaging that highlight the FETPs' value to public health, health security, and system resilience.

By guiding country-led advocacy efforts, the toolkit helps position FETPs as essential to achieving national and international commitments, including the International Health Regulations (IHR), Universal Health Coverage (UHC), and emergency preparedness goals.

In summary, the toolkit's core purpose is to help make the case for FETPs as indispensable components of national public health systems by ensuring they are formally recognized, sustainably funded, and institutionally supported for the long term.

1.1: Why is Advocacy Important for FETPs in the EMR

Since their launch in the year 1980 by the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Field Epidemiology Training Programs (FETPs) were originally modeled to mirror their Epidemiologic Emergency Service (EIS) program. FETPs have been instrumental in graduating skilled field epidemiologists who joined their countries' respective ministries of health. To date, FETP residents and graduates have worked to strengthen response to public health threats within their countries. These programs adopt the "learning by doing modality" where around 75% of the learning process

within them occurs in the field. What distinguishes these programs further is that each FETP is adapted to its host country's context. In the EMR, FETPs offer training in the advanced modality (two-year training), the intermediate modality (one-year training), and the Public Health Empowerment Program (PHEP), basic (three-month training).

In partnership with the US CDC, EMPHNET has been providing support to ministries of health to establish sustainable FETPs where residents receive training in 10 main competencies. These vary in terms of outputs and learning results in accordance with specific country contexts. Still, they comprise epidemiological methods, biostatistics, public health surveillance, prevention effectiveness, emergency response, and leadership and management, amongst others.

With the EMR often being characterized by socio-political unrest as well as being home to natural disasters and man-made emergencies, FETP residents and graduates contribute to health functions pertaining to epidemiologic surveillance of diseases, outbreak investigation and response, evidence-based decision-making, and scientific communication all within their respective ministries of health.

Additionally, these programs focus on human resources development and over the years it has been proven that their functions within health systems are imperative, especially in our highly interconnected world where public health threats are increasing. The past COVID-19 pandemic is a concrete example that highlights the need for adequate human resources globally and specifically in our region. Other disease outbreaks, health emergencies, and natural disasters, have all served to prove further the significant role these programs play in response efforts.

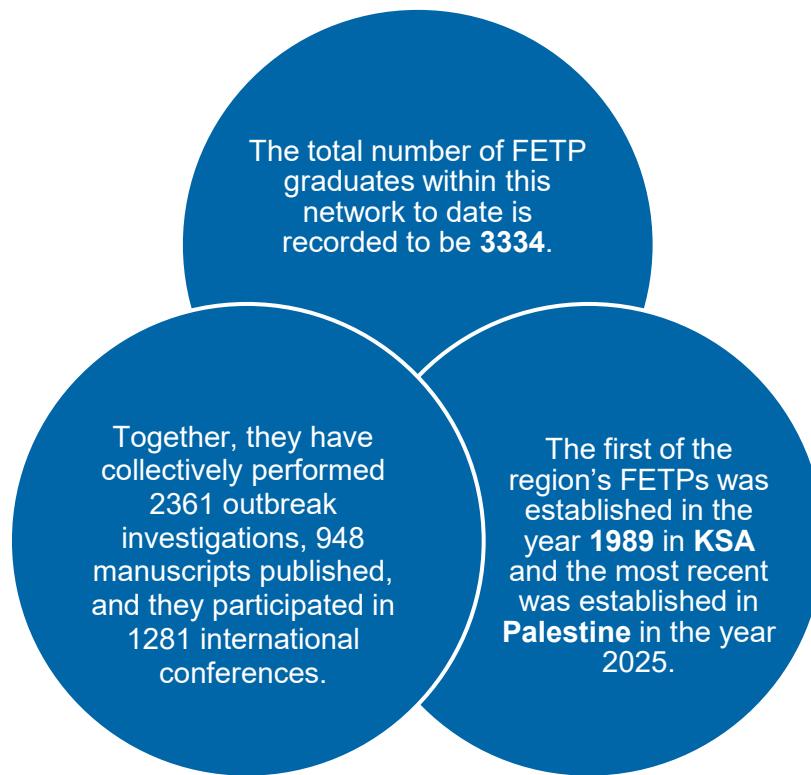
Thus, FETPs have been instrumental in responding to health threats in a variety of areas including infection prevention and control, risk communication, case investigation and management, and coordination.

In addition to their role in conducting critical public health functions, FETP graduates are expected to occupy leadership positions, mentor FETP residents, and work closely with partners and other public health experts within national public health institutes (NPHIs) and ministries of health.

As a network, EMPHNET offers support to 16 FETPs within the EMR and other priority countries. These country-programs are in **Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, KSA, Lebanon, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco, Oman, Pakistan, Palestine, Qatar, Sudan, Tunisia, and Yemen.**

They offer training in the three above-mentioned modalities namely: advanced, intermediate, and basic.

FETPs in Numbers



The continuous investment in field epidemiology capacity during the past forty years has consequently increased the number of FETPs within countries. This has led to an increased urgency to sustain the FETP enterprise. However, many challenges limit countries to sustain FETP. Therefore, ensuring the long-term viability and sustainability of FETPs is a strategic goal that EMPHNET actively pursues through collaborative efforts with its partners. To this end, EMPHNET has been actively pursuing this goal from the year 2021 and until the present date.

In March 2021, EMPHNET organized a regional workshop dedicated to FETP sustainability. The workshop sessions offered participants a space to discuss and address the conceptual framework and various approaches to FETP sustainability. Since then, EMR countries have worked on their sustainability plans with the support from EMPHNET and currently, some of them are working on operationalizing these plans as well.

During 2024, EMPHNET conducted self-assessment activity for the countries' sustainability progress. The results showed gaps in several sustainability areas.

For example, eight countries within the region are still lacking the integration of FETP within the MOH or NPHI which highlights the need for more structured efforts to integrate these programs within the national health infrastructure. Several countries lack formal strategic planning processes or documented annual work plans, which are essential for setting clear goals, aligning with national health priorities, and guiding

program activities. In addition, funding is an essential need for FETP sustainability and countries need to diversify the source of funding for their programs. The absence of clear career path/development for FETP mentors and graduates is also highlighted from most countries as well.

Taking these factors into consideration, EMPHNET conducted a three-day regional workshop in May 2025. The purpose of this workshop was to build on past initiatives the organization conducted with countries in regards to sustainability and to outline the way forward for countries to achieve sustainability for their FETPs.

The Benefits of FETP Advocacy

With that said, advocating for FETPs in our region is crucial to ensure their long-term sustainability. This is because advocacy for FETPs ensures continued support, more resources, and greater recognition for their vital role in public health. Advocacy efforts will raise awareness among decision-makers and the public about the value of FETPs, leading to increased funding, institutionalization within health systems, and integration into national health priorities.

Breaking Down the Benefits of Advocacy

Advocacy efforts yield the following benefits:

1. Securing Funding and Resources:

- Advocacy efforts can convince governments and donors to allocate sufficient and sustainable funding to FETPs.
- Advocacy efforts highlight the impact of FETPs on public health outcomes, where advocates can justify continued investment in these programs.
- Advocacy can also help secure funding for program expansion, curriculum development, and training of new epidemiologists.

2. Institutionalizing FETPs within Health Systems:

- Advocacy can play a key role in integrating FETPs into national health systems, and ensuring they are recognized as essential components of public health infrastructure.
- Advocacy can help towards the achievement of formalization of FETP positions within government structures and the inclusion of FETP graduates in key decision-making roles.
- Advocacy can also promote the development of career paths for FETP graduates, thus encouraging them to stay within the public health sector

3. Raising Awareness and Building Support:

- Advocacy efforts can increase the public's awareness of the role field epidemiology plays in managing health challenges affecting communities.

- By highlighting the contributions of FETP graduates in outbreak investigations, surveillance, and other public health activities, advocates can build public support for the program.
- This increased public awareness can translate into greater will to support FETPs and their graduates.

4. Strengthening Partnerships and Networks:

- Advocacy can foster collaboration between FETPs, ministries of health, international organizations, and other stakeholders.
- By building strong partnerships, advocates can create a network of support for FETPs, ensuring their continued relevance and impact.
- These partnerships can also facilitate the sharing of best practices, resources, and technical expertise, further enhancing the sustainability of FETPs.

5. Responding to Emerging Public Health Threats:

- FETPs are crucial for responding to pandemics and outbreaks., so advocacy efforts can highlight the critical role of FETPs in these responses, and their value in building resilient public health systems.
- By advocating for the continued development and strengthening of FETPs, advocates can help ensure that countries are better prepared to respond to future public health emergencies.
- In spirit, advocacy ensures that FETPs are not just seen as training programs, but as vital components of a strong and sustainable public health system.

1.2 The Purpose of the Toolkit and Who it's For

This toolkit is designed to support all stakeholders involved in its implementation, oversight, and the advancement of FETPs in the region and other priority countries. It is intended to provide an advocacy roadmap for program directors as well as the tools they need to advocate for their programs to policy makers and the public. It is to assist them in making a case for the shaping, structure, and quality of the residents' experience and graduates' careers. Residents can also use the toolkit to reflect the country's programs as being ideal for meeting the expectations for their national health systems. They can benefit from resources that the toolkit provides to highlight their success and showcase their achievements for further career growth as well.

Alumni may find it helpful in maintaining engagement with the program and contributing to its evolution. Additionally, Ministry of Health (MoH) focal points can utilize the toolkit to learn about the alignment of FETP activities with national health priorities, monitor outcomes, and ensure sustained impact within the public health system. Overall, this toolkit serves as a practical guide to strengthen collaboration, accountability, and effectiveness across all levels of the FETP ecosystem.

2. FETP Values Promoted through this Toolkit

In an increasingly interconnected world, the ability to detect, investigate, and respond to health threats is no longer optional, in fact it is essential. To this effect, FETPs play a vital role in strengthening national public health systems, especially in regions like the EMR where capacity gaps persist. Designed to build a competent and agile public health workforce, FETPs residents gain a range of skills through their training. Their skills enable them to take on key professional roles within their country and specifically their ministries of health. Overtime, FETPs have proven to be a true investment not only in individuals, but also in their national health systems and their communities. They have been instrumental in protecting populations from communicable and non-communicable diseases, outbreaks, and health emergencies.

The FETP curricula are offered in three tiers: Basic (also referred to as Frontline or PHEP), Intermediate, and Advanced. Each tier is designed with a specific target group and purpose in mind. The Basic tier equips health workers at the district and local levels focusing on core competencies related to disease surveillance, outbreak investigation. This modality is completed over a period of three-months. and routine data reporting. The Intermediate tier, completed over a period of one year, expands on the above-mentioned skills. It introduces residents to more robust methods for data analysis, outbreak investigations, and field investigations. The Advanced tier, often spanning two years, prepares senior-level epidemiologists to lead national surveillance systems, influence health policy, and manage complex health emergencies. This tiered structure allows countries to scale training according to local needs while building a strong base of expertise from the community level up to the national level.

Beyond technical skills, FETPs contribute to system-wide resilience. Graduates and residents are often the first line of defense during public health crises. Their contributions extend across outbreak investigations, disease surveillance, and emergency preparedness and response. For example, FETP residents and graduates have been at the forefront of investigating infectious disease outbreaks, responding to natural disasters, and supporting immunization campaigns. In the EMR, These programs played a central role in managing cholera, measles, and COVID-19 outbreaks by leading case investigations, supporting contact tracing, and establishing real-time reporting mechanisms.

These programs are also crucial for long-term planning and health system development within their countries'. FETP graduates regularly contribute to national policy and strategic planning by generating data that informs evidence-based decisions.

The FETP residents and graduates work during the COVID-19 pandemic, and many other country-specific instances show that such programs are not just producing

competent individuals, but they are also creating networks of problem-solvers who know how to work across disciplines and within the realities of their health systems.

FETPs are also closely aligned with broader global health goals. By building surveillance capacity and improving health security, FETPs directly contribute to countries' compliance with the International Health Regulations (IHR 2005). Their work supports the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly those related to health system strengthening, universal health coverage, and reducing the burden of communicable diseases. From another angle, they help Ministries of Health operationalize national public health strategies and respond to the increasing demand for skilled health professionals at all levels.

In conclusion, Field Epidemiology Training Programs are a proven mechanism for building resilient, responsive, and skilled public health systems. They prepare health workers to act swiftly and decisively in the face of outbreaks and emergencies, while also laying the groundwork for sustainable health planning and policy development. As countries in the EMR and beyond continue to face complex health challenges, investing in FETPs is not only strategic, but also essential for national and global health security.

2.1 Values to Advocate for FETPs

Key Values of FETPs

 <p>Service to Public Health Commitment to protecting population health through applied fieldwork and evidence-based action</p>	 <p>Collaboration Working across disciplines, sectors, and borders to achieve collective public health goals</p>
 <p>Scientific Rigor Emphasis on high-quality epidemiologic methods, data integrity, and analytical thinking</p>	 <p>Leadership Development Cultivating future public health leaders who can influence systems, policy, and strategic direction</p>
 <p>Field-Based Learning Prioritizing hands-on, real-world experience to strengthen practical skills and problem-solving</p>	 <p>Ethical Practice Upholding professional standards, transparency, and respect for communities and individuals</p>
 <p>Responsiveness Ability to rapidly detect, investigate, and respond to health threats, emergencies, and outbreaks</p>	 <p>Sustainability Building national capacity to ensure long term health system resilience and reduced reliance on external support</p>
 <p>Adaptability Remaining flexible and innovative in the face of evolving public health challenges and resource limitations</p>	 <p>Alignment with National Priorities Ensuring that training and activities are relevant to country-specific health needs and policies</p>

3. Understanding Advocacy

3.1 What is Advocacy

Advocacy is the act of promoting a cause, idea, or solution to influence decision-makers and mobilize support. In the context of public health, advocacy serves as a bridge between evidence and action, ensuring that data, experiences, and field realities shape policies, investments, and systems that impact people's lives.

For FETPs, advocacy means clearly demonstrating the value of training field epidemiologists and embedding them within national health systems. It involves communicating the critical role these professionals play in detecting outbreaks, managing public health emergencies, and informing policy with timely, accurate data.

Advocacy can take many forms, from high-level policy dialogues and stakeholder meetings to producing policy briefs, case studies, and toolkits like this one. It is a useful communication tactic for engaging with different stakeholders. From Ministry of Health official, a donor agency, to a regional network, the goal remains the same: In this case we advocate for FETPs to ensure sustained support for them and their integration as a foundational element of national health security.

3.2 Advocacy in the FETP Context

Advocating for Field Epidemiology Training Programs (FETPs) goes beyond raising awareness. It is about securing their place as an essential, permanent part of national public health systems. Despite their proven impact, many FETPs still rely heavily on external funding, or they may even exist outside formal government structures. Therefore, advocating for FETPs should mainly focus on **funding, sustainability, and institutionalization**.

Let's break this down:

✓ **Advocating for Funding**

Because stable long-term funding is the foundation of any sustainable FETP, advocacy efforts must highlight how FETPs are a valuable and cost-effective investment in public health preparedness, especially in the face of outbreaks, pandemics, and health emergencies. The message from advocacy efforts should place a focus on the fact that funding should be secured not only through external partners, but also by embedding FETPs within national health budgets. It should call for governments to allocate core funding to these programs, and ensure continuity, even during shifting donor priorities.

✓ **Advocating for Sustainability**

In order for FETPs to thrive, they should be sustainable. Therefore, advocating for sustainability means advocating for ongoing support structures such as dedicated staff, standardized curricula, strong mentorship networks, and

pathways for graduates to advance within their careers while contributing to the advancement of their country's health system. A sustainable FETP is one that is embedded in national institutions, has clearly defined roles in ministries of health and their functions, and is regularly evaluated to maintain quality and relevance.

✓ **Advocating Institutionalization**

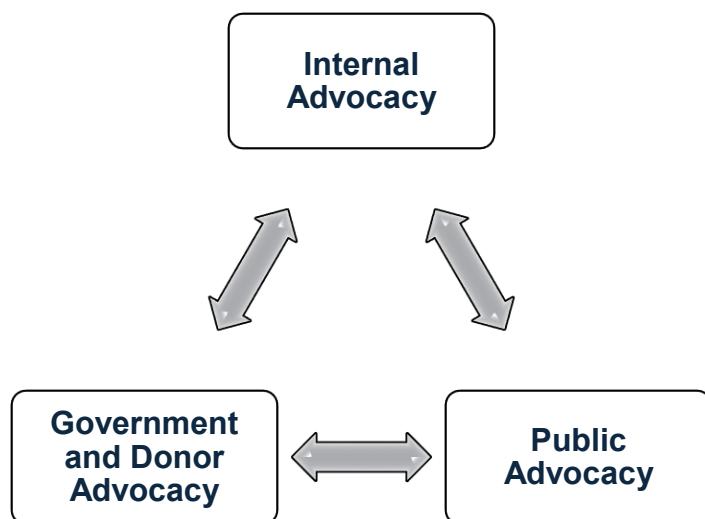
Institutionalization refers to the formal recognition and integration of FETPs within national public health structures. This includes aligning FETPs with ministries of health, national public health institutes, and workforce development strategies. Institutionalized programs are more likely to influence national policy, respond rapidly during emergencies, and retain talent. Advocacy in this area involves engaging key decision-makers, drafting policy briefs, and using data and success stories to show how FETPs strengthen the national health architecture.

By focusing on these three pillars, **funding, sustainability, and institutionalization**, advocacy can help transition FETPs from externally supported initiatives to fully embedded national assets. The goal is clear: to ensure that every country has the capacity to detect, respond to, and prevent health threats, with FETPs at the core of that capability.

3.3 Levels of Advocacy

Advocacy for FETPs in the EMR can be carried out at different levels with each level requiring targeted strategies and messages in order to reach specific stakeholders. By engaging effectively at each level, FETPs can strengthen their arguments for institutionalization, enhance their influence, and receive the financial and technical support needed to effectively carry out their missions.

The levels of advocacy identified include:



1. Internal Advocacy

Internal advocacy focuses on building understanding, ownership, and commitment within the program itself. For FETPs, this means ensuring that leadership, faculty, staff, and current residents are aligned with the program's goals and can articulate its value. Internal advocacy may involve presenting program achievements to senior management or host organizations whether MoHs or NHIs. It also involves integrating FETP output into institutional planning while fostering a culture of continuous learning and quality improvement. The benefit of strong internal advocacy lies in its ability to ensure that the program is prioritized in decision-making and resource allocation, especially during complex situations.

2. Governmental and Donor Advocacy

Governmental advocacy targets decision-makers within ministries of health, finance, and other relevant government bodies as well as potential donors. The objective of government advocacy is to influence policies, secure funding, and integrate FETPs into national public health systems. This level of advocacy involves presenting credible data, success stories, and return-on-investment arguments to policymakers. It may include conducting briefing sessions for ministers, participating in national strategic planning, and aligning FETP activities with government priorities such as disease surveillance, outbreak investigation and response, and workforce development. Sustained governmental advocacy helps institutionalize FETPs as a critical component of national health policies and national health priorities. It may also help secure funding from donors, since they can see the benefit and impact of FETPs, and how they would be an asset to their project.

3. Public- Advocacy

Public advocacy seeks to build awareness, trust, and support among the broader public, media, the community, and civil society. For FETPs, this involves communicating the tangible benefits of their work, such as timely and effective outbreak investigations, highlighting improved health data systems, and trained field epidemiologists responding to emergencies. Public advocacy efforts might include media engagement, social media campaigns, community outreach, and sharing human-interest stories featuring FETP graduates making a difference. By raising public understanding and visibility, these efforts can create a supportive environment that indirectly influences political will and resource commitment.

3.4 Understanding Advocacy vs. Visibility

While advocacy and visibility work hand in hand, they are not the same. Understanding their differences is crucial for designing effective strategies to strengthen FETP impact in the EMR while achieving our advocacy goals.

On the one hand, **Advocacy** is a strategic process designed to influence decision-making and specifically the decisions of stakeholders to create policy, funding, or

structural changes that support FETPs. It is purpose-driven, targeted, and often involves sustained engagement with those who have the authority to make changes. Advocacy efforts for FETPs may focus on securing long-term government funding, integrating FETP graduates into national health systems, or influencing public health workforce policies. The goal is not just to raise awareness, but to translate that awareness into concrete action and institutional support.

On the other hand, **visibility** involves making the work of FETPs, their residents, and their graduates, known and recognized among relevant audiences, both within the health sector and among the public. Visibility includes showcasing achievements, communicating successes, and highlighting the program's role in protecting public health. It is essential for building a positive reputation, attracting talented applicants, and creating a favorable environment in which advocacy messages are more likely to succeed. However, visibility alone does not guarantee policy change; it lays the groundwork for advocacy but must be paired with targeted action to influence decision-making while advocacy efforts are more likely to succeed with strong visibility.

In essence, visibility can be seen as the efforts made to set the stage to ensure that audience see the work done by FETPs, while advocacy is the “script and dialogue” that persuades key stakeholders act in support of FETPs.

Key Differences between Advocacy and Visibility Outlined

Impact	Advocacy	Visibility
Purpose	Influenced decisions, policies, and resource allocation	Increase recognition and awareness of the program
Audience	Policymakers, institutional leaders, funding bodies	General public, media, professional networks
Approach	Strategic persuasion, evidence-based arguments, sustained engagement	Communication, branding, showcasing success story
Outcome	Policy or funding changes, institutional integration	Enhanced reputation, public and professional awareness
Timeframe	Often medium- to long-term for results	Can achieve short-term recognition gains

3.5 Examples of Advocacy and Visibility in the FETP Context

Examples of Advocacy

- Presenting evidence to the Ministry of Health showing how FETP graduates reduced outbreak investigation time by 50%.

- Meeting with the Ministry of Finance to integrate FETP budget lines into the national health budget.
- Informing ministers of the importance of field epidemiology in national health security, linked to International Health Regulations (IHR) commitments.
- Including FETP workforce targets in the country's national public health workforce development strategy.

Examples of Visibility

- Publishing FETP success stories in national newspapers or health sector newsletters.
- Creating short videos or infographics on FETP outbreak investigations for social media.
- Hosting graduation ceremonies with media coverage to highlight the achievements of new cohorts.
- Participating in public health days (e.g., World Health Day) with exhibitions showcasing FETP work.

Examples Integrating Visibility with Advocacy Efforts

Purpose	Advocacy Example	Visibility Example
Government Engagement	Policy briefs to Ministry of Health requesting integration of FETPs into national workforce development plans	Press release about a new cohort of graduates
Funding	Proposal for linking FETP cost-effectiveness to health budget priorities	Social media post showing the economic benefits of outbreak prevention
Public Awareness	Meeting with legislators to link FETPs to pandemic preparedness laws	Feature story in a local newspaper about a graduate's field work
Partnership Building	Negotiations with WHO or donors to sustain funding	FETP stall at a regional health conference

As seen from the above, advocacy and visibility efforts go hand in hand. They compliment each other, both working together for the sole purpose of strengthening the case for FETPs.

4. Advocacy Objectives for FETPs

4.1 Main Advocacy Objectives in General

Advocacy efforts for FETPs in the EMR would yield the most effective results when they are conducted based on clear strategic objectives that align with national public health priorities. These objectives should address both the sustainability of the program and its ability to contribute meaningfully to national, regional, and global health systems and priorities. By setting targeted advocacy goals, FETPs can guarantee that their work not only receives recognition but that it also leads to concrete institutional, policy, and funding support. The following subsections outline key examples of advocacy objectives that FETPs can pursue to maximize their impact and sustainability.

4.2 Breaking Down the Strategic Objectives

A. Institutionalization within Ministries of Health (MoHs) and National Public Health Institutes (NPHIs)

This objective focuses on embedding FETPs into the formal structures and functions of the national public health system to ensure long-term stability, predictable funding, and alignment with national health priorities. Advocacy in this area focuses on securing official recognition of FETPs as an essential public health workforce development and functional mechanism, reflected in organizational charts, mandates, and national strategies.

B. Securing National and Donor Funding

Through achieving this objective, the main focus is on achieving financial sustainability for country programs. This is critical for the continuity and growth of FETPs. To this end, advocacy efforts should target governments with aims to include FETP funding in regular budgets. It is also important to engage donors and partners to support program expansion, specialized tracks, and the introduction of innovative training methods. To achieve this objective it may be good to highlight cost-effectiveness, return on investment, and successful outbreak responses related to FETPs. This can strengthen funding appeals.

C. Strengthening Career Pathways for Graduates

FETP graduates are highly trained professionals whose expertise should be retained within their countries' public health system. Advocacy in this area focuses on creating clear, attractive, and well-compensated career paths, including defined job descriptions, promotion opportunities, and professional development support. This helps prevent the loss of good cadres and ensures that investments in FETPs translate into sustained capacity.

D. Expanding Partnerships with Universities and Research Institutes

Partnerships with academic institutions and research organizations can enhance the quality of training, increase opportunities for operational research, and promote evidence-based decision making while making the program even more attractive for eager residents and more appealing for graduates. Advocacy here involves demonstrating the mutual benefits of collaboration, such as joint research, co-supervised residents, and access to academic resources for both public health authorities and universities. Such efforts can also yield joint programs with academic institutions that raise the profile of the FETP certificate and make FETPs more appealing and attractive in the eyes of stakeholders.

E. Increasing Program Visibility and Public Recognition

While visibility alone is not advocacy, it creates the foundation for advocacy success. Public recognition of the FETP's contributions, through media coverage, social media engagement, and participation in public health events, can generate goodwill, attract future residents, and build societal support for continued investment in country programs.

F. Influencing Health Policy Using FETP-Generated Evidence

FETPs generate valuable field data and evidence that can inform national and regional health policies. Advocacy efforts should focus on translating this evidence into actionable policy recommendations, engaging with policymakers, and participating in policy development processes. By positioning FETPs as a credible source of timely, high-quality evidence, the program can directly shape health system improvements, thus increasing the appeal for its support, sustainability, funding, and its institutionalization.



5. Planning Advocacy Efforts

5.1 Key Questions to Ask

Before creating a strategic plan for advocacy, you need to ask the following questions.

- What is the goal/goals you want to achieve through your advocacy efforts
- Who are your key audiences, which stakeholders do you need to reach?
- What does your target audience already know?
- What do you want them to know in addition to their current knowledge?
- What is the change you want to see once you have reached that audience?
- What are the key messages you want to deliver?
- What channels of communication will you use to deliver these messages?
- What resources do you need to carry out each advocacy effort?
- What budget is needed?
- Is this budget available?
- How will you determine that your effort was successful?

These questions will help you brainstorm in order to create a strategic advocacy plan for your country's program.

5.2 Developing a Planning Framework

Once you have formulated clear answers to the above questions, you can start planning for your advocacy efforts. Below are a few planning tools to use.

A. The Planning Framework

Effective advocacy for FETPs in the EMR require a structured planning process. A clear framework ensures that actions are strategic, evidence-based, and aligned with both program priorities and stakeholder needs. The three tools outlined below—Theory of Change / Logic Model, SWOT Analysis, and Goal Setting with Outcome Mapping serve to provide a roadmap for developing, implementing, and monitoring advocacy efforts.

Theory of Change / Logic Model:

A **Theory of Change (ToC)** model or Logic Model is a visual or narrative representation of how advocacy activities will lead to the desired long-term outcomes. It helps clarify assumptions, define the advocacy effort's pathway, and align actions with measurable results.

How it applies to FETPs:

For FETP advocacy efforts, a ToC or logic model can map how activities, such as engaging ministries, producing policy briefs, or hosting stakeholder meetings, lead to

intermediate outcomes like increased policy attention, that in turn result in institutionalization and sustainable funding.

Key components of a Logic Model for FETP advocacy:

- **The Goal:** For example, the goal is to achieve sustainability and institutionalization for the FETP in my country. The components below help in analyzing what to do to achieve this goal, and whether it is achievable or not.
- **Inputs:** This is a list of the current resources available for the advocacy effort including staff, budget, time frame, equipment, etc.
- **Activities:** This lists the actions such as meetings, presentations, and media outreach scheduled as part of the advocacy effort.
- **Output:** These are the tangible products from the activities conducted such as policy briefs, reports, social media campaigns, etc.
- **Outcomes (short- and medium-term):** this component focuses on what the outputs led to, for example if they resulted in awareness, political commitment, and budget inclusion.
- **Impact (long-term):** this measures whether or not the outcomes led to long term change several years down the line for example if they led to well-funded FETP integrated into the public health system, or whether or not the goal we wanted to achieve from the effort was met.

SWOT Analysis

Purpose:

Conducting a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) analysis for a country program provides a snapshot of its internal capacity and the external environment. It is an essential step to be taken when identifying where advocacy can benefit from advantages and where risks must be managed. See an example SWOT analysis below.

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skilled and experienced graduates • Strong track record in outbreak investigations and emergency response • Good relationships with MoH leadership 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of dedicated funding • Inconsistent career path for graduates • Lack of visibility and media awareness
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased global attention on pandemic preparedness • Potential partnerships with universities and donors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Political instability affecting program continuity

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• WHO and regional networks support	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Competition for government resources• Changes in health leadership priorities
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How to use a SWOT Analysis for Your Advocacy Efforts:

- Use your strengths to build advocacy messages.
- Develop strategies to mitigate weaknesses.
- Actively pursue opportunities for the purposes of collaboration or funding.
- Create contingency plans for threats outside your control.

Goal Setting and Outcome Mapping

Purpose:

Goal setting defines *what* you want to achieve, while outcome mapping details the *steps and changes* needed to get there. These two elements ensure that your advocacy efforts are realistic, measurable, and adaptable.

For FETP advocacy, goals should be:

- **Specific:** Clearly state the desired change (e.g., “Secure a dedicated budget line for FETP in the MoH annual plan”).
- **Measurable:** Define indicators to track progress (e.g., inclusion in official policy documents).
- **Achievable:** Align with available resources and influence.
- **Relevant:** Support the broader mission of strengthening public health capacity.
- **Time-bound:** Set deadlines for expected results.

Outcome Mapping Process:

1. **Identify boundary partners:** Who can influence the change (e.g., MoH decision-makers, donors, academic leaders)?
2. **Define desired behavior changes:** What do you want them to *do* differently?
3. **Map progress markers:** Early, intermediate, and advanced signals of progress.
4. **Link activities to outcomes:** Ensure each advocacy action directly supports a progress marker.

Example for an FETP Goal:

- **Goal:** Integrate FETP into the MoH structure.
- **Early Marker:** MoH leadership attends FETP graduation ceremony.
- **Intermediate Marker:** FETP is referenced in MoH strategic plan.

- **Advanced Marker:** FETP is institutionalized in MoH organogram with a dedicated budget.

It is recommended that these three activities are done in the planning stage to ensure that advocacy efforts are targeted, they are defined, and that they are strategic. The end result would be a detailed advocacy framework with defined goals, while the goals themselves take into account the program's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. In the templates section of this toolkit, we include a full framework sheet you can use.

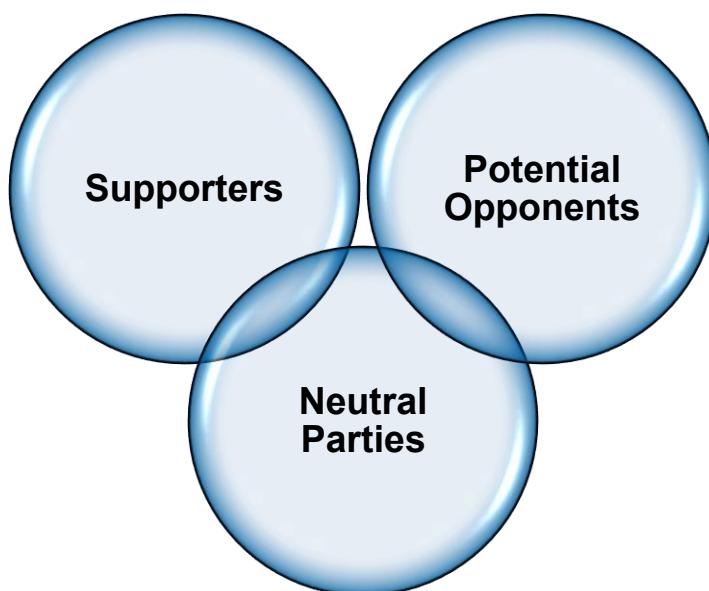
5.3 Stakeholder Mapping

Successful advocacy for FETPS depends on understanding **who** can influence your goals, **how** they might respond to your messages, and **what** role they can play in advancing, or blocking, your objectives. This is stakeholder mapping.

Stakeholder Mapping is defined as the process through which you identify, analyze, and prioritize the individuals, groups, and institutions that have a stake or that you want to reach in in your advocacy efforts. This step ensures that your engagement strategies are targeted, efficient, and tailored to the specific needs and motivations of each audience.

1. Identifying Supporters, Neutral Parties, and Potential Opponents

In any advocacy environment, stakeholders can be broadly grouped into three groups:



- **Supporters:** Individuals or organizations already aligned with FETP objectives. They may help amplify your message, provide resources, or champion your cause inside decision-making bodies. For example, public health leaders who have benefited from FETP training, or graduates within the organizations you are targeting, and who may actively advocate for funding and policy support.
- **Neutral Parties:** Stakeholders who are not currently engaged or have no strong opinion about the FETP. These individuals can often be persuaded to

support your cause through awareness-raising, evidence sharing, and highlighting the program's relevance to their priorities.

- **Potential Opponents:** Those who may resist or challenge your advocacy goals due to competing priorities, resource constraints, or political considerations. While not all opposition is hostile, understanding their concerns allows you to prepare counterarguments, find common ground, or reduce resistance.

A strong stakeholder analysis will recognize that these categories are **fluid**—stakeholders can move between them depending on political, institutional, or personal shifts.

2. Understanding Level of Influence Decision-Makers and Influencers

Stakeholders vary not only in their position toward your advocacy goals but also in their **level of influence**. In the FETP context:

- **Decision-Makers** are those who have the formal authority to implement changes, including Ministers of Health, leaders who control budgets in the Ministry of Finance, or heads of national public health institutes.
- **Influencers** may not have direct authority but can shape the decisions of others. They include senior technical advisors, respected academics, professional associations, journalists, and international partners.

Identifying both groups ensures that advocacy messages are directed not only at the final authority but also at the people and networks who can sway that authority's decisions.

3. Sample Stakeholder Mapping Template

A stakeholder map plots stakeholders according to their level of influence and level of support. This allows you to prioritize your engagement strategies. For easier view you can color code the stakeholder. For example, use green for supporter, yellow for neutral, and red for opponent.

Stakeholder	Role in the Institution	Supporter Neutral Opponent	Level of influence	Advocacy Approach
Minister of Health	Ministry of Health	Supporter	High	Provide regular updates on FETP impact; request formal policy integration
University Dean	Faculty of Public Health	Neutral	Medium	Share research collaboration opportunities; invite to graduation events

Media Editor	National Health News Outlet	Supporter	Medium	Offer human-interest stories on outbreak investigations
Budget Officer	Ministry of Finance	Potential Opponent	High	Present cost-benefit analysis; link FETP to economic resilience

5.4 Developing a Strong Message

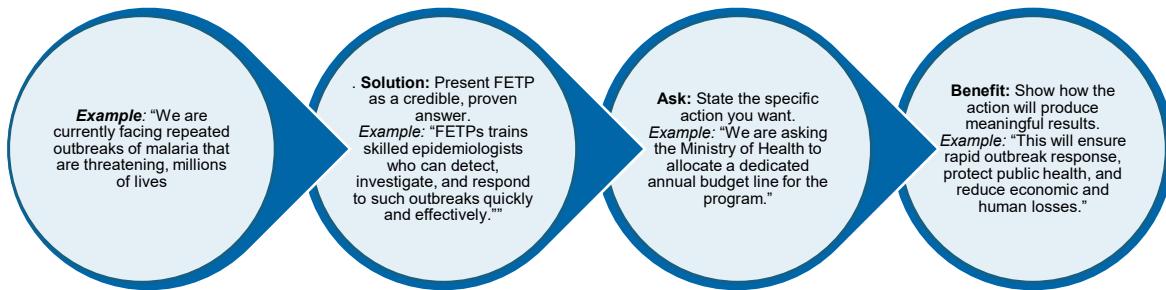
Effective advocacy efforts start with strong messages. A well-crafted message can overtake competing priorities. It can capture attention and inspire action. For FETPs in the EMR, advocacy messages need to be clear, evidence-based, and tailored to the values and interests of specific audiences.



2. Creating a Problem → Solution → Ask → Benefit Message

The structure below may be your go-to formula when creating an advocacy message.

2: Example



3. Areas of Focus in Messaging for Different Audiences

a) Policymakers

- **Focus on:** Public health security, cost-effectiveness, compliance with International Health Regulations (IHR).
- **Example:** "Investing in FETP ensures we prevent costly outbreaks, and we safeguard our populations' health."

b) Donors

- **Focus on:** Impact, sustainability, return on investment, alignment with donor priorities.
- **Example:** "With your support, FETP graduates would reduce outbreak detection time by 50%, therefore directly saving lives and resources."

c) Media

- **Focus on:** Human stories, urgency, public interest.
- **Example:** "When a cholera outbreak struck, within hours FETP graduates were on the ground, actively protecting communities."

d) Academic Institutions

- **Focus on:** Research collaboration, prestige, training excellence.
- **Example:** "Partnering with FETP allows your institution to shape the next generation of public health leaders and it would put your institution at the forefront of policy advancement through research."

e) Community Leaders

- **Focus on:** Local impact, trust, community resilience.

- **Example:** “FETP-trained epidemiologists work directly in your communities to stop outbreaks before they spread, thus protecting families and livelihoods.”

The next section provides useful templates to use

6. Useful Templates

6.1: The FETP Fact Sheet

Field Epidemiology Training Program (FETP) – Fact Sheet

[Country/Region Name] _____

Date Issued (Add here the date this sheet was issued) _____

1. About the Program

What it is:

A few lines about the program, its modalities, its year of establishment, and areas of training focus)

Established: [Year]

Hosted by: [Ministry of Health / National Public Health Institute]

Supported by: [Partners, donors, technical collaborators]

2. FETP Impact (In bullet points state the impact of your country program on public health)

- **How it Protects Communities:** Trains epidemiologists to respond rapidly to outbreaks and public health emergencies.
- **How it Strengthens Health Systems:** Builds national capacity in disease surveillance, data analysis, and evidence-based decision-making.
- **How it Supports Global Commitments:** Contributes to meeting International Health Regulations (IHR) and other global health security frameworks.
- **How it is Cost-Effective:** Early detection and control of outbreaks save lives and reduce economic losses.

3. Facts and Figures

Fact	Number
Number of graduates since inception	[XX]
Outbreak investigations conducted	[XX]
Surveillance system improvements	[XX examples]

Research projects completed	[XX]
Publications and conference presentations	[XX]

4. FETP in Action – A Snapshot

Add a short success story:

“In [year], when a [disease] outbreak occurred in [location], FETP residents detected the outbreak within [X days], initiated immediate control measures, and prevented further spread—saving [estimated number] lives.”

5. Current Challenges

- [Example: Limited sustainable funding]
- [Example: Retention of skilled graduates]
- [Example: Expanding coverage to underserved regions]

6. Call to Action (Tailored to audience)

- **For Policymakers:** Integrate FETP into national public health workforce strategies and secure dedicated funding.
- **For Donors:** Support scale-up and specialized training tracks.
- **For Academic Institutions:** Partner for research and joint training opportunities.
- **For Media/Public:** Share success stories to build public awareness and support.

Contact Information

Program Director: [Name]

Email: [email@domain]

Phone: [+CountryCode XXX XXX XXXX]

Website/social media: [Links]

6.2: Policy Brief Outline

1. Title

- A short, compelling headline that clearly states the focus.
Example: “Strengthening National Health Security through FETP Institutionalization”

2. Executive Summary (150–200 words)

- A concise overview of the issue, the solution, and the key recommendation(s).
- Written so a busy policymaker could understand the main points in under a minute.

3. The Problem

- Describe the public health challenge your country faces (e.g., frequent outbreaks, limited skilled workforce, slow surveillance response).
- Support with brief, compelling data (national statistics, recent outbreaks, economic costs).
- Link the problem to national priorities (health security, SDGs, IHR compliance).

4. The Solution – Role of the FETP

- Explain how the FETP addresses the problem.
- Highlight program strengths:
 - Hands-on training in outbreak investigation and surveillance
 - Proven track record in responding to public health threats
 - Contribution to national and global health goals
- Include key success stories or case examples.

5. Evidence of Impact

- Quantitative: Number of graduates, outbreaks investigated, surveillance improvements, research outputs.
- Qualitative: Real-life examples showing FETP graduates making a difference.

6. Policy Options (optional if you want to present alternatives)

- Option 1: Maintain current status (outline risks of inaction).
- Option 2: Incremental improvements (e.g., partial funding, targeted expansion).
- Option 3: Full institutionalization and sustainable funding.

7. Recommended Action

- A clear, specific, and feasible “ask” for the policymaker.

Example: “Integrate FETP into the Ministry of Health structure with a dedicated annual budget line of [amount] starting FY [year].”

8. Benefits of Action

- How the recommendation will protect health, save costs, and strengthen the country’s reputation in public health.
- Where possible, quantify economic or health gains.

9. Implementation Considerations

- Brief note on resources needed, timeline, and potential partners.

10. Contact Information

- Name, position, phone, and email for follow-up.

6.3: Success Story Template

Title:

A short, engaging headline highlighting the achievement.

Example: “FETP Rapid Response Saves Lives During Measles Outbreak in [Region]”

1. Summary (2–3 sentences)

A quick snapshot of the story: what happened, where, when, and the outcome.

Example:

“In March 2023, FETP residents in [Province] detected a spike in measles cases within 48 hours. Their rapid investigation and targeted vaccination campaign prevented further spread, protecting over 15,000 children.”

2. The Challenge

Describe the situation before FETP intervention:

- What problem occurred?
- Why was it urgent?
- What was at stake for the community, health system, or economy?

3. The FETP Response

Explain how FETP graduates or residents acted:

- Steps taken (investigation, data collection, response, etc).
- Collaboration with other agencies or community partners.
- Tools, skills, or methods used.

4. The Results

Highlight measurable achievements:

- Quantitative results (cases prevented, time saved, resources preserved).
- Qualitative results (trust built, capacity strengthened).
- Use before/after comparisons if possible.

5. Why It Matters

Connect the results to broader public health and policy implications:

- How this demonstrates FETP's value to the country's health security.
- How it aligns with national or international priorities (e.g., IHR compliance).

6. Voices from the Field (Optional)

Include a short, impactful quote from a beneficiary, official, or FETP graduate.

Example:

“Without the rapid action of our FETP team, this outbreak could have spread to three neighboring provinces,” — *Dr. [Name], Provincial Health Director*

7. Photos or Infographics

- Add 1–2 high-quality, relevant visuals (with consent).
- Can include outbreak maps, before/after charts, or team action shots.

8. Contact Information

For follow-up or more details:

- Program name
- Contact person
- Email/phone
- Website/social media

6.4: Media Pitch Outline

1. Subject Line / Headline (*for email pitches*)

- Short, attention-grabbing, and relevant to the outlet's audience.
 - Example: "Local Epidemiologists Stop Cholera Outbreak Before It Spreads"
 - Example: "Training Heroes: How FETP Protects [Country] from Deadly Diseases"

2. Opening Hook (1–2 sentences)

- Start with a compelling fact, statistic, or human-interest angle.
 - Example: "In the last year alone, our Field Epidemiology Training Program has contained five outbreaks, effectively saving lives and millions in economic costs."

3. Why It's Newsworthy

- Explain why this story matters **now**:
 - Timeliness (linked to a current outbreak, health day, or new graduate cohort)
 - Human interest (personal story of a graduate or affected community)
 - Local relevance (impact on the outlet's audience)
 - Broader context (ties to national/global health security)

4. The Core Story

- Briefly describe:
 - What is the FETP and does
 - What happened in this specific case (the success, intervention, or milestone)
 - Measurable results (lives saved, cases prevented, outbreaks contained)

5. Quote(s)

- Provide a strong, authentic soundbite from:
 - A graduate program
 - A health official
 - A community member impacted

- Example: “Thanks to our training, we were able to detect the outbreak within hours, not weeks,” , Dr. [Name], FETP graduate.

6. Call to Action for the Journalist

- Invite them to:
 - Schedule an interview
 - Visit the program site or attend an event
 - Use provided photos, infographics, or fact sheets

7. Contact Information

- Name, title, phone, and email of your media contact
- Website or social media links for background

8. Attachments / Links (*optional*)

- Press release (if available)
- Photos with captions and credits
- FETP fact sheet
- Recent success story or case study

6.5: Elevator Pitch

An **elevator pitch** is a brief, clear, and persuasive summary of an idea, program, or project that can be delivered in the time it takes to ride an elevator—usually **30 to 60 seconds**. Its purpose is to:

- Quickly grab the listener’s attention
- Communicate the value or impact of what you’re presenting
- Encourage follow-up or action, such as a meeting, support, or further discussion

Key characteristics of an effective elevator pitch:

1. **Concise**: it communicates the main points without unnecessary detail
2. **Clear**: It doesn’t contain jargon and is easily understood by any audience
3. **Compelling**: it highlights the problem, solution, and benefits
4. **Tailored**: it adjusted to the audience, whether policymakers, donors, media, or the public

For FETPs, an elevator pitch explains **why the program matters, the impact of its graduates, and the value of supporting it**, all in under a minute.

Sample Elevator Pitches for Different Stakeholders

1. Pitch for Policymakers

"The Field Epidemiology Training Program is a proven investment in our country's health system and security. By training our own public health professionals to detect, and respond to outbreaks, we reduce reliance on external emergency support and ensure rapid, data-driven action. FETP graduates are already embedded in our Ministry of Health and have responded to [X] outbreaks in the past year. Institutionalizing and funding FETP allows us to protect our populations, strengthen and position our country as a leader in public health preparedness and response."

2. Pitch for Donors

"The Field Epidemiology Training Program builds lasting capacity where it matters most, more specifically within the country's health system. Every penny invested in our FETP strengthens surveillance, outbreak investigations and response, and evidence-based decision-making. In the past year alone, FETP residents and graduates have prevented [X] outbreaks from becoming national crises, saving millions in potential economic losses. Your support helps scale this impact, train more experts, and ensure sustainability so that no health threat goes undetected or uncontrolled."

3. Pitch for General Public / Media

"The Field Epidemiology Training Program trains our country's own public health professionals who detect and mitigate outbreaks before they can harm our families and communities. They've been on the frontlines of [recent outbreak example], working day and night to keep us safe. Supporting FETP means investing in the health and safety of every person in [country], now and for the future."

7. How to Approach Each Audience

In the past sections we spoke about advocacy, we spoke about why it is important, we outlined the steps to take for organizing an advocacy strategy, and we shared quick and easy to use templates to create advocacy content. In this section, we move on to share quick tips to consider when dealing with each target audience.

After all, effective advocacy efforts require the tailoring of approaches to meet audience needs. Different stakeholders have distinct priorities, motivations, and ways of engaging. The table below outlines the tips and tricks to use for each target audience relevant to FETPs.

Audience	Tips
Working with Ministries and Government Agencies	<p>Understand priorities: Align FETP messaging with national health strategies, emergency preparedness plans, and International Health Regulations (IHR) obligations.</p> <p>Speak their language: Use policy-relevant terms and demonstrate how FETP strengthens health systems, workforce capacity, and outbreak response.</p> <p>Build long-term relationships: Establish regular communication channels and invite officials to program events, outbreak simulations, or graduation ceremonies.</p> <p>Provide evidence: Use data and success stories to show measurable impact and return on investment in public health infrastructure.</p>
Talking to Donors and International Partners	<p>Focus on impact: Highlight cost-effectiveness, measurable outcomes, and program sustainability.</p> <p>Demonstrate scalability: Show how donor support can expand training, improve national coverage, or replicate success in other countries.</p> <p>Make specific requests: Be specific about funding needs, technical assistance, or resources required.</p> <p>Show alignment: Illustrate how FETPs contribute to global health security, Sustainable Development Goals, and donor priorities.</p>
Partnering with Universities and Academic Institutions	<p>Emphasize capacity-building: Highlight opportunities for joint research, internships, and graduate programs.</p> <p>Highlight mutual benefits: Showcase how collaboration strengthens</p>

	<p>curriculum, provides field experience for students, and produces high-quality research.</p> <p>Engage faculty champions: Identify faculty who can advocate for FETP integration into academic programs and publications.</p> <p>Share success stories: Present case studies showing FETP graduates contributing to research, policy, or outbreak response.</p>
<p>Engaging with Media</p>	<p>Craft compelling stories: Use human-interest narratives, outbreak successes, and community impact to make technical work relatable.</p> <p>Use multiple channels: Engage traditional media (TV, radio, newspapers) and social media platforms to reach different audiences.</p> <p>Provide ready-to-use content: Fact sheets, infographics, photos, and short videos make it easier for media to cover FETP activities accurately.</p> <p>Train spokespeople: Ensure FETP graduates and staff can communicate clearly, stay on message, and emphasize program value.</p>

This section helps your country program to **adapt messaging and approaches** depending on who you are targeting, thus increasing the likelihood of support, partnership, and institutionalization, sustainability, or any other advocacy goal.

8. Regional Collaboration for Advocacy

FETPs across the EMR and other priority countries face common challenges, while sharing the **same ultimate goal for strengthening public health systems and protecting communities from health threats**. While each program operates within its national context, the regional nature of many health emergencies calls for collaboration, where collective advocacy efforts can significantly amplify the FETPs' impact. By advocating together, FETPs can present a unified voice to policymakers, donors, and the public, making the case for sustained investment in field epidemiology a cornerstone of health security across the region.

FETPs in the EMR can collaborate and advocate collectively by developing joint advocacy positions that highlight the shared value of their work, using consistent messaging in regional health forums, and coordinating data collection to present aggregated evidence of their combined impact. More established programs can mentor newer ones, offering guidance on advocacy approaches and sharing lessons learned.

Regional representation at events like WHO EMRO meetings or international public health summits ensures that FETP priorities are heard at decision-making tables and that the programs are recognized as a vital regional network rather than isolated national initiatives.

Regional campaigns provide powerful opportunities to raise the profile of FETPs collectively. Such examples include: **FETP Awareness Month** in September and **World Field Epidemiology Day** on September 7. The latter presents an ideal platform for coordinated outreach. By sharing aligned hashtags, stories, and visuals on social media, pitching regional success stories to the media, and hosting joint webinars or public events, FETPs can engage audiences across the EMR simultaneously. Coordinated campaigns not only strengthen visibility but also reinforce the message that disease threats cross borders, and so must the solutions.

EMPHNET also plays a central role in facilitating this kind of regional advocacy. Through its convening power, EMPHNET connects FETPs across the EMR, fostering collaboration and amplifying their voices at regional and global levels. It also provides technical and strategic support, such as developing tools, producing advocacy materials like this toolkit, as well as newsletters, social media posts, and conducting training on policy engagement and communication. By bridging FETPs with international partners, EMPHNET helps ensure that the programs' achievements are recognized and that their advocacy messages reach influential audiences.

To sustain collaboration, FETPs in the EMR may benefit from platforms that allow for continuous knowledge exchange. A regional **Community of Practice** offers a virtual space for programs to share advocacy resources, case studies, and success stories. Webinars like the EMPHNET WEBi Series and online learning sessions provide opportunities to update skills, both technical and advocacy-related, while regional

advocacy working groups can focus on priority areas like visibility, funding, or curriculum development. These platforms strengthen both the individual capacity of programs and the collective voice of FETPs, enabling them to advocate more effectively for the resources, recognition, and partnerships they need to thrive.

9. Monitoring and Evaluation of Advocacy Efforts

Advocacy is most effective when it is intentional, results-oriented, and measurable. For FETPs, monitoring and evaluating advocacy activities ensures that efforts are strategic, that resources are used efficiently, and that successes can be demonstrated to stakeholders. Unlike technical public health interventions, advocacy outcomes are often gradual and influenced by multiple external factors. This makes it important to define the measure of success from the planning of an advocacy strategy with progress being tracked in a structured way.

9.1: The Measure of Success

Success in advocacy may mean influencing a policy decision, securing sustained funding, strengthening institutional support, or increasing public recognition of the FETP's role. These outcomes depend on the individual goal of the country program; however, they serve to help teams stay focused and avoid spreading efforts too thin. For example, a “win” for one program might be the Ministry of Health officially recognizing FETP as part of the national workforce structure, for another it could be a donor committing multi-year funding. Success should be framed both in terms of **short-term milestones** (e.g., a policymaker agrees to meet) and **long-term impact** (e.g., FETP graduates are integrated into public health leadership roles). Having the measure of success clearly defined, will help programs strategically plan their advocacy efforts, and to know who exactly to target, with the right message.

9.2: Sample Indicators

To assess progress, country programs can use both qualitative and quantitative indicators, such as:

- **Engagement metrics:** Number of meetings with decision-makers, donors, or partners.
- **Policy influence:** Number of policies, strategies, or plans that reference or integrate FETP.
- **Visibility measures:** Media mentions, social media reach, and attendance at FETP events.
- **Resource mobilization:** Amount of funding secured or in-kind contributions received.
- **Partnership growth:** Number of new institutional collaborations or MOUs signed.
- **Capacity-building outcomes:** Number of staff trained in advocacy or communication.

9.3: Advocacy Progress Tracker Template

Below is a sample table showing how you can monitor and evaluate progress

Advocacy Goal	Key Activity	Target Audience	Timeline	Indicator	Progress/ Outcome
Secure multi-year funding	Meeting with Ministry of Finance	Government officials	Q1–Q2 2025	Funding commitment secured	First meeting completed; follow-up planned
Increase FETP visibility	Launch FETP Awareness Month campaign	Public & media	September 2025	Media reach > 1M people	Campaign plan finalized

9.4: Reporting and Feedback Mechanisms

Regular reporting ensures accountability and allows teams to adjust strategies when needed. Quarterly or biannual advocacy reports can summarize progress, highlight challenges, and recommend next steps. Feedback should be gathered from both internal stakeholders (FETP staff, graduates) and external partners (ministries, donors, media contacts). This will help programs understand the perceived impact of their advocacy activities. This periodic feedback helps refine messages, strengthen relationships, and ensure that advocacy remains relevant to stakeholder and program priorities.



10. Conclusion

Field Epidemiology Training Programs are more than capacity building bodies; they are essential investments in the health security and resilience of nations. Yet, the value of FETPs is not always fully understood or prioritized. This is where advocacy bridges that gap. It transforms program achievements into compelling stories, and it turns technical data into persuasive arguments, while mobilizing the partnerships and resources needed for sustainability.

This toolkit has outlined practical steps to plan, execute, and evaluate advocacy efforts made by country programs from identifying stakeholders and developing tailored messages to collaborating regionally and measuring progress. By applying these strategies, FETPs in the EMR and other priority countries can find themselves closer to achieving their goals for strengthening their position within ministries, securing long-term funding, and expanding their influence in shaping health policy.

Advocacy is not a one-time effort; it is an ongoing process that thrives on persistence, collaboration, and adaptability. The challenges facing public health are complex and constantly evolving, but so is the network of skilled field epidemiologists ready to respond. With coordinated advocacy, FETPs can ensure that their role remains visible, valued, and supported, both today and in the years to come.

This toolkit is your guide to taking a seat at decision making table and making your voice heard for the future of field epidemiology.

