NANGO

**National Association
Of Non-Governmental
Organisation**

Non-State Actors
Apex Alliance
Module
Policy lobby and
Advocacy

NSAA

Non State Actors Alliance

"An Engaging Society"

PREAMBLE

This Advocacy and Public Policy Training Manual is guided by the NANGO's Vision of "A proactive community of NGOs responsive and committed to the sustainable development needs of all people in Zimbabwe and the full realisation of human rights, democracy, good governance and poverty alleviation.", It is a Manual that is responsive to the demands of cross cutting issues such as gender, environment, disability and HIV and AIDS. It shall provide the basis for the development of future Training Manuals.

This training manual is designed to guide the training of trainers on project life cycle, monitoring and evaluation. The training manual will introduce basic terms and concepts on advocacy. This will set foundation to the understanding of advocacy. Furthermore, the manual will further the understanding of the scope of advocacy through understanding and identifying the actors within the realm of advocacy and also contextualise the necessary technique to use to ensure the message gets to the recipient in a manner that he/she understands. This manual is intended for use during the training of trainers who in turn will use it as a resource as they train other Civil Society Organizations (CSOs).

The Manual is a product of a highly participatory and inclusive process involving stakeholders with in-depth knowledge in monitoring and evaluation of developmental programmes.

This Manual document demonstrates that through collaboration and dedication, success can be achieved. The National Association of Non-Governmental Organizations is deeply indebted to all the participants who made the exercise a success.

On behalf of NANGO

Leonard Mandishara

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Introduction/Preface/Foreword

Civil Society represents an important segment of society – one that provides goods and services, creates jobs, attracts investment, drives innovation, and increases the standard of living. Yet, to fulfill its functions, CSOs must be able to operate in a sound legal and regulatory environment. Experience of various countries shows that for such an environment to emerge, it is imperative for the CSO sector to participate openly in the policymaking process.

CSO coalitions provide the sector with such an opportunity. Although many think of business associations as providers of business information, networking opportunities, education and entrepreneurial training, they actually do much more. As a voice of the private sector, voluntary, independent business associations can lead advocacy efforts to create an environment conducive to entrepreneurship and business development and growth. Effective business associations combine member services with advocacy programs for policy reform in areas that affect their members and societies in which they operate. In today's world of global competition where businesses are looking for associations that will help their bottom line, no association can afford to overlook advocacy. In fact, advocacy is the key to an association's success and survival.

The rewards for associations that advocate effectively are a stronger membership base and a better business climate for members. Yet, successful advocacy programs mean more than building a stronger membership base. By engaging the CSO sector in policy debate, transparent advocacy processes strengthen democratic governance and market institutions.

Section 1 An introduction to Advocacy

What is Advocacy?

Understanding Advocacy

In simple terms, advocacy means actively supporting something or someone (an idea, action, or person) and attempting to persuade others of the importance of that cause. More specifically, as the term is used throughout this handbook, advocacy is a group effort focused on changing particular public policies. It is an effort to influence government policy in an open and transparent manner and to represent the views of members of a particular group by making their positions known to legislators, regulators, and other policymakers. Advocacy can be implemented on a local, regional, or national level.

The issues addressed by public policy advocacy may include:

- Laws and other legislative acts,
- Regulations,
- Court decisions,
- Executive decrees and orders,
- Political party platforms, or
- Governmental policies

Advocacy, especially public policy advocacy, can be challenging because it may involve opposing the government's stand on specific issues. At the same time, advocacy is an expression of the most basic rights of any constituency to have its voice heard and in that sense it is an essential element of a functioning democracy. Because many public policies affect business activity and consequently the health of a nation's economy, the private sector has a right and a civic obligation to make its voice heard on policy issues. In turn, businesses have resources, human capital, and problem-solving capabilities that can benefit society as a whole, including workers who find employment in the private sector and consumers who stand to gain from cheaper, better goods and services when businesses are thriving. It logically follows that policies hampering entrepreneurship and private sector growth negatively affect the livelihood of a society at large.

Policy advocacy by the private sector represents a key part of a truly democratic process, as it extends civil society's participation in governance. Issues most crucial to the private sector include laws and regulations concerning various aspects of business operations and business environment. For example:

Starting a business: ease of establishment (especially for small- and medium sized enterprises – SMEs), availability of capital and credit, support for business incubators.

Running a business: corporate governance, property rights, labour issues, nonwage labour costs (such as social security), safety regulations, finance, taxes, transportation.

Competing in a global marketplace: anti-trust and fair competition laws, enforcement of contracts, technology development, trade regulations.

A common misconception is to regard these as "corporate" issues important to large businesses but of little relevance to the average citizen. In reality, business is not a monolith; it consists of various companies, sectors, and interests. In different economies one finds combinations of large national and multinational companies, small- and medium-sized enterprises, informal sector entrepreneurs, state-owned companies, and leading-edge firms, among others. The issues related to starting and running a competitive business matter most to firms that do not benefit from government connections but possess enormous potential for innovation and growth.

Frequently one finds that the majority of business interests – especially those of smaller firms and informal entrepreneurs – are not represented in the political process. Such representation of different business interests in an open and transparent manner is essential to the successful economic and political development of countries.

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Engaging the broader business community is necessary for meaningful reform and strengthening business diversity. It increases the likelihood that the government will adopt specific measures aimed to establish, nurture, and maintain a favourable business environment. Finally, broad-based public policy advocacy provides a strong context for healthy political competition.

Advocacy in Different Country Contexts

The type of advocacy that an association can be involved in heavily depends on the context of the country where it is conducted. Experience shows that in many places the practice of public policy advocacy remains challenging. A well-designed, locally appropriate advocacy strategy can overcome these challenges.

In countries where the concept and practice of advocacy is fairly new, the first challenge often comes from defining the very term "advocacy," as many languages do not have a native word that would fully express that concept. Therefore, simply making advocacy the subject of public discourse and private sector initiatives sometimes requires the introduction of a whole new vocabulary. It also involves building public awareness of the concept and challenging any misconceptions that can derail even best-intentioned efforts. Broadly speaking, business associations aspiring to engage in advocacy in countries with little precedent for this way of business representation face significant *internal challenges*:

Expanding role and vision

Associations previously focused on member services, education, and training may find that there is a need to redefine their mission if they are to be involved in advocacy. This new, broader role should reflect consensus among the members on the overall vision for what the advocacy efforts are to accomplish.

Scarce resources

Feasibility of engaging in advocacy depends greatly on the availability of financial and human resources. Many associations find that taking on advocacy efforts may put a strain on their budget and personnel, especially if they are not in a position to hire additional staff to conduct legislative research, prepare advocacy materials, etc. Therefore, it is crucial to educate your members on the importance of the advocated causes so that the association can count on their active involvement. It may also be helpful to consider pulling your resources together with another association pursuing similar policy goals.

Legislative process

Understanding how laws are made is crucial to any successful advocacy effort, because your association needs to know exactly who, when, and how to approach with your message. Yet, it is also one of the hardest initial steps to accomplish. Given that legislative rules and procedures can be complex, convoluted and often influx, understanding them and keeping up with any changes takes a concerted effort of the association leadership and members.

Whatever the country context and local challenges may be, voluntary business associations constitute an important segment of a civil society. Even though conditions are different in each country and some are more conducive toward public policy advocacy than others, the basic elements of a transparent decision-making process remain universal. The process is based on several key factors. Decision-makers have to have the right information in order to make educated policy decisions. They must solicit feedback and views of the interested parties, whom they ultimately serve. Also, timing of policy decisions matters – public policy advocates should aim to be proactive, rather than reactive.

Keeping in mind that each factor creates avenues for voicing the opinions of your association, you can design a strategy uniquely suited to the circumstances in your country that would allow you to reach the decision-makers with relevant policy information at the right time. Change takes time and one has to remember that truly successful public advocacy efforts do not just ameliorate immediate problems – they ultimately help transform the relationship between the public and private sectors from one of antagonism and distrust to one of partnership and cooperation. But to start that process, all you need are good policy ideas and an enthusiastic base of your association's membership determined to push for public policies that would best serve the economic progress of your country.

Advocacy means taking action to bring about the change you are seeking. Therefore, advocacy must necessarily take place in a particular context, and be aimed at a particular target.

It might be that your advocacy work is targeted at changing national, or even international, policy and practice. But it can also take place in a very local context too; it can entail empowering and enabling individuals and local communities to take action for them to achieve change. A holistic advocacy strategy that seeks to achieve comprehensive change – such as the improvement of water supply and sanitation (WSS) in the poorest countries of the world – will necessarily involve coordinated advocacy work at international, national, regional and local levels. It will also involve a clear understanding of the political and power influences on the target of your advocacy. This section aims to make clear some of the different political contexts in which your advocacy work will take place, and will illustrate how the contexts are often mutually influential.

Government and governance

Advocacy aims to change policy, so it is necessarily targeted at those bodies, institutions or individuals that are responsible for making, deciding and implementing policy. Who has the power? How are decisions made? Who has influence, and what structures exist for asserting influence yourselves?

'Government' is the act or process of governing; particularly it is the process of making, deciding, implementing, controlling and administering public policy in a political unit, i.e. a nation state or part of it, e.g. a municipality. The word 'government' also describes the group of individuals given the authority and responsibility of governing a state, specifically through:

• The executive: the part of the government charged with running the day-to-day affairs of the body/state/municipality being governed, which also implements laws

• The legislature: the part of the government that decides on what laws and policies the executive should implement.

• The judiciary: the part of the government which is responsible for interpretation and enforcement of the law

This separation may be a useful way for organisations to determine where its advocacy should be targeted. However, when we analyse the way in which this power is exercised, we talk about 'governance'. In order to carry out effective advocacy work, it is important to be clear about the political environment in which you are working. How is the country or district run? What are the traditions and processes that influence how a decision is made? How are citizens involved in the exercise of power? Are decision-makers accountable to the rule of law? The answers to these types of questions will help you effectively analyse the state of governance.

Governance

Governance, according to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) is "the exercise of economic, political and administrative authority to manage a country's affairs at all levels. Governance comprises the complex mechanisms, processes and institutions, through which citizens and their groups articulate their interests, exercise their legal rights, meet their obligations and mediate their differences". 1

The UNDP adds that governance transcends government and includes civil society and the private sector. 'Good governance' has attributes of accountability and transparency, is effective, equitable and promotes the rule of law.

The problem of politics and power

Of course, governance and government does not take place in a vacuum. For a start, it takes place through groups and individuals, each with their own political and personal agenda, who are influenced in different ways, and who have different levels of power. In short, governance is necessarily influenced by politics and power.

As a result, governance does not always follow a rational path. Whether a particular district gets WSS services, for example, is often not the result of their need, what policies are in place or how well budgets are planned. Too often, it is down to the whims of a particular politician, who may want to cater to the needs of a particular constituency or influence. Politics is about how actors – individuals

businesses, civil society and others – in a society organise themselves to increase their influence, as they seek to promote or protect particular interests. To tackle the reasons why millions of people lack access to adequate WSS, an understanding is needed of the political and economic context in which WSS policies evolve, and the power relationships involved.

The same principle is true whether at an international or national level, or even a local or community one. In order to be effective at advocacy, NGOs need to build up an understanding of the power relationships and politics at each level of operation. (And they need to avoid being influenced themselves by a particular party or group, so as not to undermine their work through bias.)

In practice: Who has the power in government policy making processes?

An analysis of power relationships in the local government will enable you to examine similar relationships relating to other advocacy issues. These are examples of some of the questions you could ask.

• *Who are the people denied access to local government services?*

• *Who has the power to make decisions about who does, or does not, get access?*

• *Who stands to gain from these decisions and what influence do they have on the decision maker?*

• *Who is responsible for shaping and deciding sector policy?*

• *Who and what influences the decision-maker?*

• *What interests do decision-makers have in giving or denying people access?*

• *What environments do decision-makers work in; what are the challenges and barriers they face in making decisions about service delivery?*

• *Who decides on levels of public finance for local government service provision?*

• *How is finance allocated and distributed?*

Depending on the importance of an issue to a government and other targets for advocacy, an NGO may find it relatively easy or very difficult to effect a policy change.

Spaces for civil society participation (3)

Closed or provided spaces: Some decision-making spaces are closed in the sense that decisions are made by a set of designated actors such as elected representatives and experts behind closed doors, without any scope for broader consultation or involvement.

Invited spaces: As efforts are made to widen participation, new spaces are opened which may be referred to as 'invited spaces', where people (users, citizens, or beneficiaries) are invited to participate by various kinds of authorities, such as government, supranational agencies or non government organisations. Invited spaces may be regularised or more transient, such as an annual forum or a one-off intensive consultation period on an issue.

Created or claimed spaces: These are spaces created or claimed by citizens independently of government or by government and citizens together. They can emerge out of sets of common concerns, and may come into being as a result of popular mobilisation, such as around identity or issue-based concerns, or may consist of spaces in which like-minded people join together in common pursuits.

Occasionally, involvement in debates can allow an NGO a 'seat at the table', from which it can try to influence policies. Understanding such power relationships can help an NGO to determine its strategy, and avoid it being co-opted unwittingly by advocacy targets. In many cases, it is the implementation of a particular policy that is the problem, not the policy itself. In such cases, research should focus on the blockages to implementation. For example, a government policy may dictate that there should be a certain level of sanitation per head of population throughout the country, but corrupt local councillors in some areas may have prevented the implementation of this policy. In this example, advocacy aimed at national level policy makers is misplaced. It ignores the root of the problem, whereas lobbying for a more open and accountable local council may prove more effective.

How does policy evolve?

When a government acknowledges a public problem, and agrees to do something about it, policy makers search for practical solutions in the form of policies. It is important for NGOs and community organisations to fully understand how each of the different stages of policy making work in their respective countries, or context. It will help them to ensure their advocacy work targets the most critical stages of policy making – it is not sufficient to present the evidence to policy makers, and assume the rest will take care of itself. (4)

Public policy (5)

Public policy can be described as "a course of action" taken by a government or policy maker, which most often results "in plans and actions" and effects "on the ground" – or lack of them. Some examples of public policy might be:

• An expression of intent, usually by a politician. For example, to encourage economic development

• A programme of linked proposals detailing the way in which a government will address a broad set of issues under one banner. For example, Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers

• A formal government response to a specific public concern. For example, eradication of cholera

• A document setting out guidance in a sector. For example, water policy or land policy

• A national or local government budget.

The policy making process, in whatever governance context it takes place, is complex. There are a number of overlapping phases, and within them many sub levels. It is rarely a systematic, or even rational, process. It is often subject to pressure, power and politics of the kind described above. It may involve different groups, with competing alternatives. Sometimes, policy making can proceed without quite knowing what the problem is, or who is affected by it.

Phases of policy making

- Agenda setting
- Policy formulation
- Decision-making
- Implementation
- Monitoring
- Evaluation
- Adjusting
- Reviewing

Theoretical analysis of policy making identifies two key 'classes' of actor:

A policy community

This includes the individuals and institutions involved in policy formulation. A particular policy community would involve actors that are interested in forming an analysis or set of alternatives for a policy. The policy community is where the knowledge about a particular policy is located. For example in the WSS sector, the policy community may involve individuals and agencies within government responsible for WSS, as well as WSS-related NGOs, consultants, advocates, research and academic bodies and think tanks.

A policy network

This is a subset of actors drawn from within the policy community. They work together, or interact regularly, to achieve specific change. The policy network can be described as where action relating to a policy change takes place. The policy network that might seek to bring about change might include NGOs, and civil society organisations, their allies in donor communities, even government departments.

Linking local, national and international advocacy

Advocacy may be targeted at various political contexts, but in the development sector it will most often need to be targeted at a number of different contexts at the same time – particularly at local, national and international levels.

Effective advocacy work, therefore, demands good communication between actors operating at these different levels. After all, the causes of the development problems that advocacy seeks to tackle are themselves complex and interconnected at every level.

Local to national

When local projects require advocacy, the target of that advocacy might often be at a national level. For example, a local project to install water pumps might depend on advocating nationally for funding streams from which they can be paid. Such a nationally relevant advocacy issue cannot be tackled at a local level alone. Many national advocacy issues originally emerge at a local level where their impact is really felt. The 'feeding up' of local advocacy issues to the national level ensures officials and politicians are responding to the priorities of poor communities.

National to local

Sometimes advocacy issues may well emerge only at a national level, for example, the development of a national sanitation strategy. Nevertheless, these 'policy windows' offer an opportunity to highlight the impact such policies have on local communities, and to bring local voices to the forefront.

International to national

These inter-related processes are replicated at a national/international level too. For example, national NGO offices may wish to respond to an international issue – such as the conditions attached to World Bank lending. Meanwhile, national NGO offices may advocate at the international level on issues affecting their national policy agendas – such as how World Bank lending is actually used in country. Indeed, when global issues are addressed simultaneously at the international and national level, a much more powerful response can be given. An example is the global campaign on debt relief, and the Global Campaign Against Poverty. A similar power exists when national and local advocacy takes place on a unified issue.

National to national

Exchanges can also work sideways with different national networks advocating on a particular issue according to their own particular context, or developing a series of shared national advocacy activities between one country and another country, or regionally, e.g. West Africa or South Asia Regions.

For international NGOs, this multi-level approach to advocacy is possible due to their organisational structures. Larger organisations may be connected to international networks through formal or informal links, while national and local NGOs may have access to national level networks. This process of coordination and interrelationship between advocacy networks at different levels is important. Not only does it increase the legitimacy and relevance of advocacy work, but it enables vital support between levels and networks. Advocacy workers of national level organisations rely on detailed information from the grassroots to support their advocacy work; while they in turn can provide training, analysis, information and advocacy support to local organisations.

> ### In practice: How NSAA envisions advocacy
> *For any NGO engaging in advocacy, it is vital to be clear what change you are attempting to bring about, and the ways in which you can make that change happen. It is important too to identify the factors that will assist or hinder your advocacy successes.*

NSAA seeks change through advocacy in the following dimensions:

• Policy: we seek to change public policy, programme, practice and behaviour at all levels. Policy makers should be informed about the impacts of their policies on the poorest sections of society, as well as promoting alternative solutions

• Civil society: we seek to strengthen and expand civil society's capacity, organisation, accountability and power so that they can occupy their seat at the 'policy-making table'

• Democracy: we seek to improve the political 'legitimacy' of civil society to participate in policy making, as well as improving the accountability and transparency of public institutions

• Individual gain: we seek to improve the material situation of the poor, such as their living conditions and opportunities for health, education and livelihood. We also seek to expand people's self-awareness as citizens, with responsibilities as well as rights

Advocacy's four dimensions
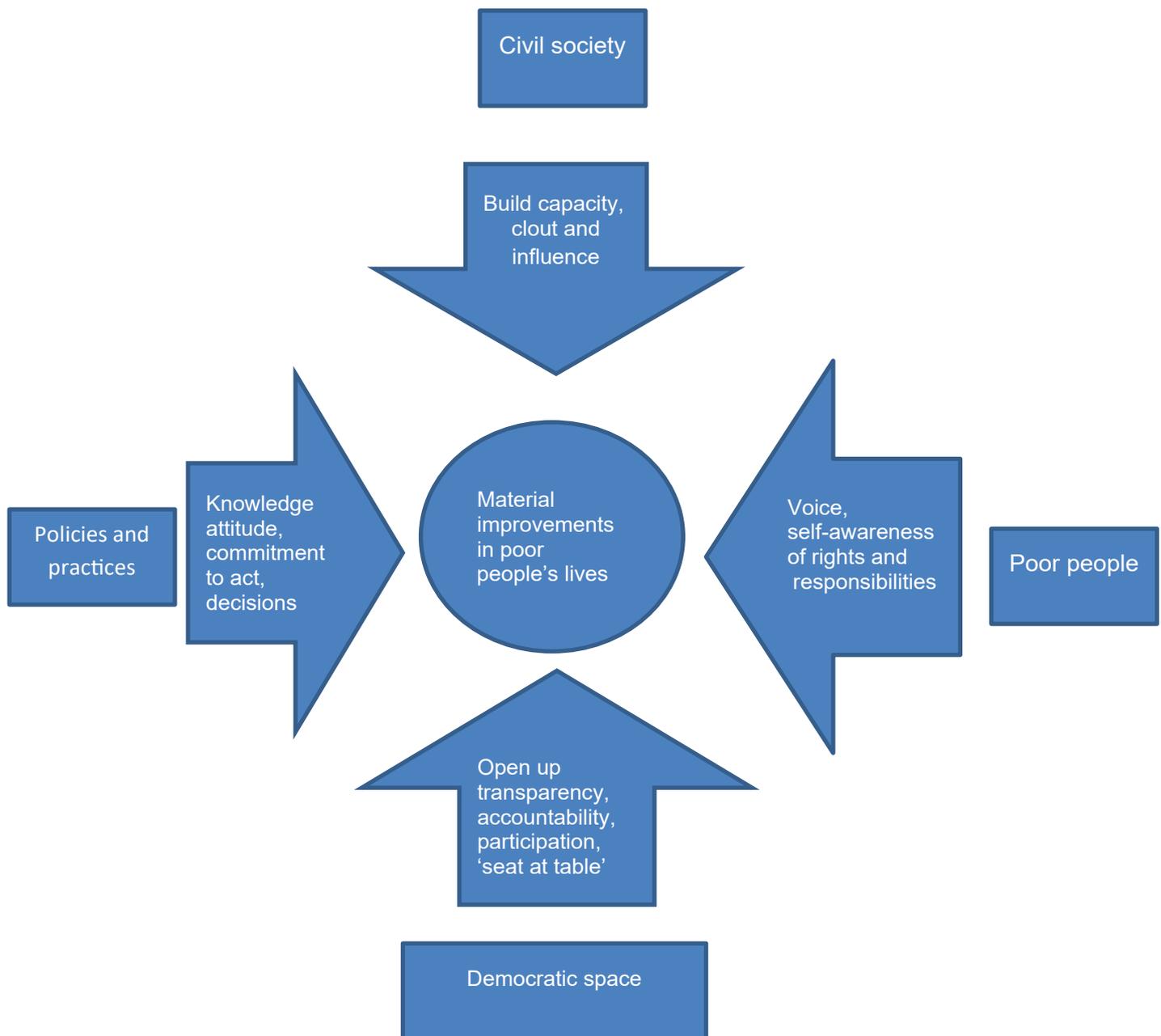
NSAA seeks to achieve the following strategic changes through advocacy:

• Financing: from all sources (national governments, donors, self-financing, local private sector, community and microfinance) will be doubled and focused on sustainable and equitable access to WSS

• Sector planning: will become more accessible, transparent and accountable. It will be grounded in a consultative process in which all stakeholders participate

• Benefit to the poor: policy reforms and national investments will benefit the poor and enhance social service delivery

• Capacity: local government capacity in service delivery will be improved, and local government will work in a participatory way to plan, mobilise local resources, monitor and implement for all

• Accountability: greater parliamentary scrutiny and accountability of activities in various sectors will come from increased public awareness and media interest

• Participation: effective citizen participation will make WSS service providers more efficient, responsive and accountable to the poor

The critical factors in achieving these changes successfully are:

• Political will: creating the political will among governments and other service providers to serve the poor and voiceless;

• Policy communities: building the strength and capability of local analysts, researchers and other practitioners to combine their skills to contribute to evidence-based policy-making

• Public action: empowering poor people and strengthening civil society organisations and networks to hold governments and service providers accountable

• Political space: creating platforms for dialogue between governments, service providers and citizens for the negotiation of services, and policies that impact on services

Advocacy and Ethics

The terms "advocacy" and "lobbying" are often used interchangeably. In the broadest definition, they both refer to the process of trying to influence policymakers in favour of or against a specific cause, but in practice the scope of lobbying is narrower. While lobbying remains mostly limited to direct face-to-face interactions with decision makers, advocacy is much broader and involves grassroots mobilization, coalition building between many like-minded groups, getting the message out through the media, etc.

In recent years lobbying has also come to be associated with allegations of corrupt practices such as back-door dealings or illegal financial kickbacks to lawmakers, giving rise to the public perception of political corruption. Public policy advocacy, on the other hand, emphasizes openness, transparency, and need for the highest ethical standards in all stages of the advocacy process, especially during interactions with decision-makers. Advocacy is focused on delivering the message from a particular constituency to policymakers rather than financially contributing to a particular political outcome.

Why Is Public Policy Advocacy Important?

Public Policy Advocacy Gives a Voice to Business

The advocacy process encourages business associations to use their expertise in an open and transparent manner in order to shape public policy and provide oversight of laws, regulations and policies adopted by the government. Effective advocacy makes crucial, policy-relevant information widely available to several key audiences that influence public policy:

The media who benefit greatly from the private sector's policy input - Journalists gather a great deal of their information from official government sources, but they are better able to analyse this information once they have listened to the alternative voice of business associations and think tanks.

Lawmakers who need sound information because they make policy decisions that affect their citizens' lives. These citizens, in many cases, will decide on whether or not to re-elect these same legislators. Sound policies foster a favourable business environment, advance market-oriented reforms, attract investment, stimulate entrepreneurship, and generate economic growth and jobs, all of which benefit society as a whole.

Regulators, bureaucrats, and administrators who, when provided with solid information about the underlying objectives of specific policies and regulations, are able to do a better job implementing and enforcing them.

Researchers and academics who use information provided by business associations to conduct their studies; in turn, researchers and academics raise awareness of the issues important to the private sector and illustrate linkages between the private sector and development.

The public, including business association members who influence policymaking decisions - Having access to key information about policies under consideration educates business association members and the public on policies that affect them and helps them know what elected officials are doing – or failing to do – on their behalf. Citizens and business associations can then hold these representatives accountable.

Section 2 Planning for advocacy

Once you are clear on what advocacy is, the context in which advocacy can take place, and the important issues of community involvement, you can move on to planning your advocacy work.

The principles of planning advocacy are similar to those of planning any other programme, with the need for being clear about objectives and targets, and of course monitoring and evaluation. However, because advocacy often involves a political context, with stakeholders and targets each having their own agendas and influences, it can be somewhat more complex.

The advocacy planning cycle aims to identify the factors that might influence the outcome of advocacy. It also prepares NGOs to account for factors that have not been identified, as they arise. A systematic and analytical approach to advocacy work, which properly researches the issues, identifies targets and desired outcomes, and which is clear about the key messages it wishes to get across, is most likely to result in a dynamic and effective advocacy strategy. This section aims to show you how to develop an effective advocacy strategy, based around workable action plans. It offers practical techniques and a systematic framework for developing your own advocacy strategy.

The advocacy planning cycle

Planning advocacy work is similar to any other project planning. It involves identifying what your objectives are, and how to achieve them. That leads to defining the activities you will carry out, and assigning responsibilities for making them happen.

The advocacy planning cycle is a useful method of organising your material, and the work you need to do. It will take you, step-by-step, from identifying the core issues you need to work on through to drawing up a specific action plan to implement your advocacy work.

The cycle can be split into two distinct parts – the first steps are more strategic in nature, the second develop that strategic background into a workable action plan. Advocacy planning is a cycle because although there are some sequential steps, some steps run in parallel with others, or may change sequence according to progress. It is also a repetitive process: on-going monitoring and review will lead to updating and adjusting the plan, as will different reactions to the advocacy among your targets.

The advocacy planning cycle

Identifying the **issues**

Finding out more through **analysis**

Planning for **monitoring and evaluation**

Setting **objectives**

Drawing up an **advocacy action plan**

Identifying **targets**

Identifying **allies** and **partnership working**

Defining the **message**

Choosing advocacy **approaches and activities**

Assessing **resources**
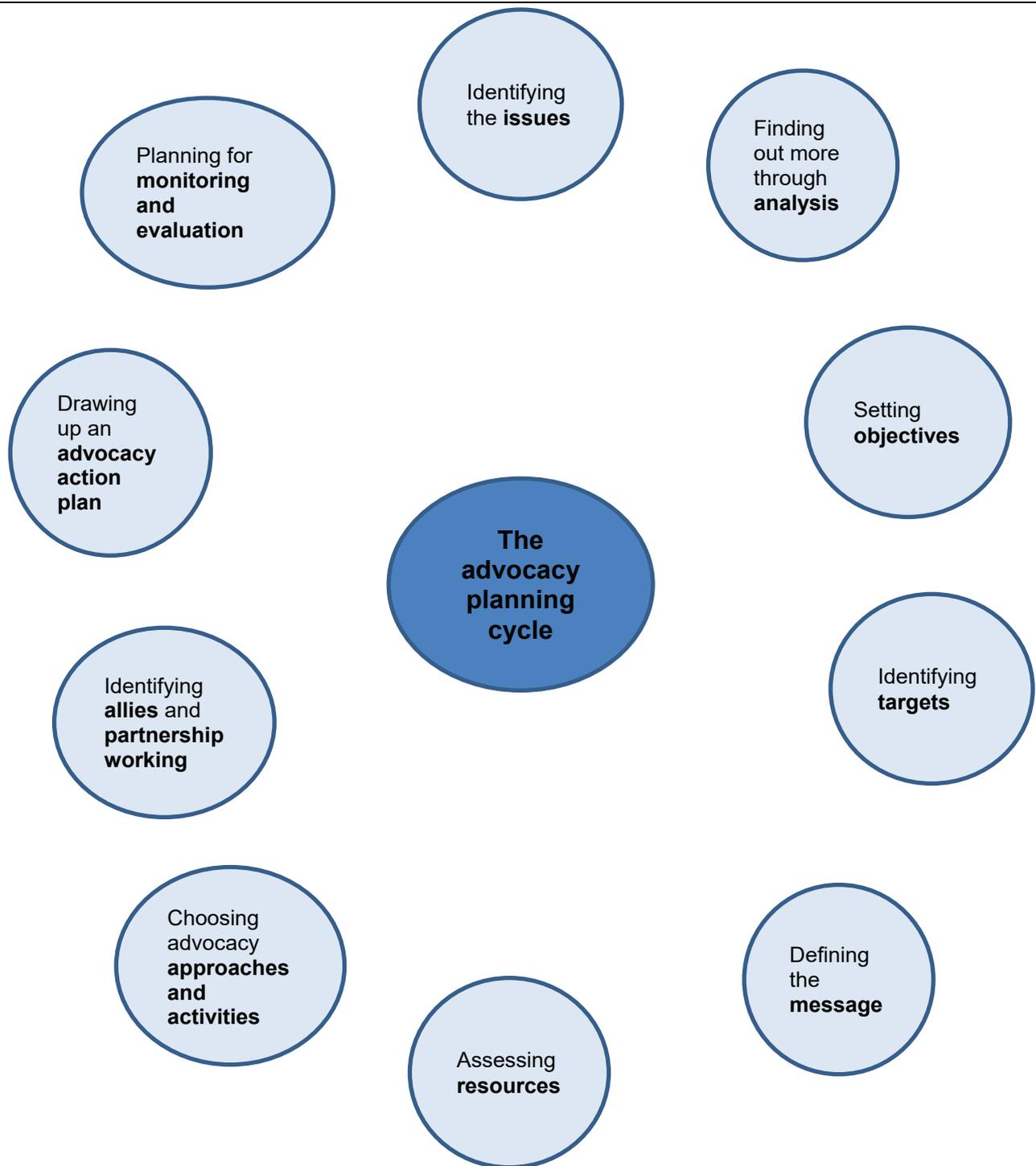
Cycle timeframes

Too often, NGOs tend to react to issues too late. Debates have taken place and decisions have been made, before they begin their advocacy work to change things they could perhaps have prevented in the first place.

Good advocacy demands an appropriate analysis of the timeframes involved in the issues you are working on. Careful monitoring of the direction policy making is taking will enable anticipation of the timescales, and may even allow NGOs to influence the timescales themselves.

In particular, there may be significant events and opportunities related to the advocacy issue, such as international conferences, consultation deadlines and meetings, that will need to be built into your advocacy activity. Failure to account for these will lessen the impact you can have.

On 24 August 2005, The Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning in Ghana invited associations, groups and individuals to submit memoranda that would inform the 2006 budget. WaterAid responded by collaborating with other WSS practitioners in Ghana. It advertised in two national newspapers calling on "actors and friends of water and sanitation" to work together to make their voices heard in the budget planning.

An advocacy forum was held in September that was well attended by representatives of local and central government, donors, civil society groups and sector practitioners. Discussions centred on low WSS coverage within Ghana, slow progress towards the MDG target for the sector and huge finance gaps. The links between WSS and other important sectors, such as health and education, were discussed.

The consensus was that water supply and sanitation should be a cornerstone of the Government's priorities and development agenda and that the MDG target for the sector would be missed if substantially more funding was not provided. The meeting gave WaterAid evidence and support to call for increased funding for the WSS sector in the budget. A memorandum calling for more funding in 2006, and in subsequent years, was signed by all 'friends of the sector' and delivered to government departments.

The intervention was timely, feeding into the government's budget deliberations at just the right time, and targeting just the right decision-makers: ministers and the Parliament, which had the final decision on the budget.

The highpoint came when the Ministry of Finance requested electronic copies of the memorandum, and called for presentations of the facts and figures that it could use in budget presentations. Before the end of November, the Ministry of Finance advertised in the Daily Graphic Newspaper, expressing its appreciation to individuals and organisations, including WaterAid in Ghana, for the input made.

Identifying the issues

The first step in planning advocacy work is to identify the issues you need to tackle. To do that, however, you need to be able to prioritise the issues that concern you, and demonstrate their relative importance to those you aim to represent. To identify the key issues you want to focus on, you may need to narrow down a shortlist, examine each of these and prioritise them.

What is a 'good' advocacy issue?
Use the following checklist to identify which advocacy issues you should prioritise (14)
Will working on the issue:

- *Result in real improvement in people's lives?*
- *Give people a sense of their own power?*
- *Be widely and deeply felt?*
- *Build lasting organisations and alliances?*
- *Provide opportunities for women and others to learn about and be involved in politics?*
- *Develop new leaders?*
- *Promote awareness of, and respect for, rights?*
- *Link local concerns with larger-scale, even global, issues?*
- *Provide potential for raising funds?*
- *Enable the organisation to further its vision and mission?*
- *Be winnable? Does it have a clear target, timeframe and policy solution?*

Researching the issues

The importance of research

A detailed understanding of the issues you will be doing advocacy work on is vital in the earliest stages of the advocacy planning cycle. Only with research can you create a really rational argument, and provide the evidence to back it up. Research gives your advocacy positions credibility. It provides the information you need to do proper planning, develop your messages, and carry out your lobbying.

Research can also assist you to build alliances, as you seek assistance to gather the information you need from other organisations and individuals. Indeed, working together on research with, for example, policy analysts and policy makers, can help forge close ties at a very early stage that can be useful at a later stage when you move into lobbying.

And if you work with organisations and communities to gather the information you require, you will also be helping to develop their capacity and citizenship skills – a key aspect of good advocacy.

The Overseas Development Institute (ODI) calls research "a systematic effort to increase the stock of knowledge." (15) It can also be described as "the systematic collection, analysis and dissemination of information." (16)

It is certainly important that your research is well structured and systematic and focuses on the critical issues. For every source of information, you need to analyse its credibility. It must be properly recorded in a useful way and an evaluation should be made of its usefulness to the issue under consideration.

In advocacy work, your research should certainly cover three vital aspects:

• Analysis of the issue

• Analysis of the context in which the issue takes place

• Understanding the timeframe to which your advocacy on the issue relates.

Credible research

Research should be:

• Objective, not biased

• Representative of the whole group on whom it is focused, not a single viewpoint

• Accurate and reliable

• Methodical and systematic.

There are some key stages in good research, which you should apply to gathering information before you begin your advocacy programme:

What information do you need?

It is useful to think of this in terms of what questions you need answering. Where are the gaps in your knowledge? Breaking down the required information into parts will help you plan to research it, particularly helping you to distinguish between information that will be easy to obtain, and that which requires more effort.

Where can you find the information?

You should identify sources where information already exists, gathered by other researchers, perhaps laid out in reports, government consultations, statistics or project plans. However, you should identify whether this secondary information is credible, reliable and up-to-date. In other cases, you may have to collect primary information yourself, from original sources. You might identify the need to carry out a field survey, or interviews, for example. Primary information can be gathered from a variety of sources, ranging from a survey of village residents to an investigation of the policy making process implemented by government.

Who will contribute to your research?

If you are to carry out primary research, you will need to identify who to interview or survey. For your research to be credible, you will need to ensure the group you research are a representative sample. You should attempt to have as broad and representative a sample of interviewees as possible, depending on your time and resources. It should offer an accurate reflection of the whole population, from which you can draw your conclusions. Will your sample simply be a randomly chosen percentage of the population you are analysing, or will you attempt to survey everyone in one particular area such as suburb? When defining your sample, you will want also to identify its key characteristics, such as water use, age, gender, household situation, as these may influence responses to your research.

How will you collect the information?

If you are carrying out primary research, it is important to record data accurately and systematically. That means being clear about how you will collect information, such as through interviews, questionnaires, observation, statistical analysis or another data collection tool (see below). Whichever method you use, you should ensure data collection is systematic, consistent, takes nothing at face value and can be cross checked. Additionally, your method needs to be flexible enough to record information if data

findings move in an unexpected direction. Overall, your research methods must also respect people's culture and privacy.

How will you analyse and present the information?

After collecting your information, it will need collating in a systematic way. Only this will enable you to analyse it properly, looking for patterns and deepening your understanding of the situation. You should then write up your findings, for yourself and for colleagues (even if it is only an internal document). The process of writing up your results will help you to analyse the information, and draw conclusions. Remember to include information on your methodology and sample.

Advocacy toolkit: Research planning table

The following table will help you to formulate what questions you need answered. It will also help you to break those questions down into more specific research questions. It allows you to record what possible sources of existing information might answer those questions, and how you might collate further information.

Topic/Research question	Sub topic/Research question	Sources of information	Methods of information collection	Who's responsible/ by when should data be available

Tools for analysing the issues

Once you have identified the issues you are most concerned with, and have collected the relevant information about them, the next step in the advocacy planning cycle is to subject the issues to a thorough analysis.

By analysing your issues, you can identify how you can influence the issues and which stakeholders are best placed to attempt to bring about that influence. There are a number of different ways of analysing an issue, but each of them really attempts to do the same thing: to break the issue down into smaller parts. This aids understanding of the issue, the context in which the issue operates and how you can bring about change.

Here we present four different tools for analysing your issue, and where it fits into your advocacy work: The problem analysis framework, the problem tree, the RAPID framework and the PESTLE analysis.

The problem analysis framework

This method of analysis centres of splitting the issue under consideration into a list of sub-issues.

Within each sub-issue, you will examine the consequences of the problem, its causes and any possible solutions.

ISSUE:			
Sub-issues	**Consequences**	**Causes**	**Solutions**
Sub-issue 1			
Sub-issue 2			
Sub-issue 3			

For example:

| ISSUE: Access to drinking water in rural regions			
Sub-issues	**Consequences**	**Causes**	**Solutions**
Sub-issue 1 **Insufficient boreholes** **in rural region**	Rural residents spend hours collecting water every day from the few boreholes that do exist. Residents collect unsafe water from other sources. Etc.	Ethnic bias in governance favours boreholes for some communities over others. Political motivated funding for boreholes in constituency of politicians. Lack of resources allocated to borehole creation Etc.	Changes in policy, practice, laws, attitudes and behaviour Etc.
Sub-issue 2			
Sub-issue 3			

Note that continually asking the question 'why?' helps to provide a full analysis of the problem. For example, a deeper analysis of the causes of poor borehole provision may reveal overarching structural constraints that allow politically motivated allocation of resources to take place; for example, the debt burden on the national economy prevents sufficient spending on rural water supply.

The problem tree (19)

Problem tree analysis is one of many forms of project planning and is well developed among many development agencies. It is a visual method of analysing a particular problem, based around mapping the different aspects of the problem on large sheets of paper. It works particularly well when analysing an issue in a group. The 'tree' enables participants to visualise the links between the main issue and its resulting problems, as well as its root causes.

The tree's trunk represents the core problem, its roots represent the causes of the problem, and the branches represent the effects of the problem.

• Draw the shape of the tree on a large flip chart, and write the focal or key problem or issue on the trunk of the tree

• On smaller pieces of paper or card, write down the causes of the problem. These are placed on the tree as its 'roots'

• On other cards, write down the consequences that result from the main issue. These are placed on the tree as its 'leaves'

• In a group, you can negotiate with each other using the tree as a discussion tool, about the priority and placement of different leaves and roots. The heart of the exercise is the discussion, debate and dialogue that is generated as factors are arranged and rearranged, often forming sub-dividing roots and branches
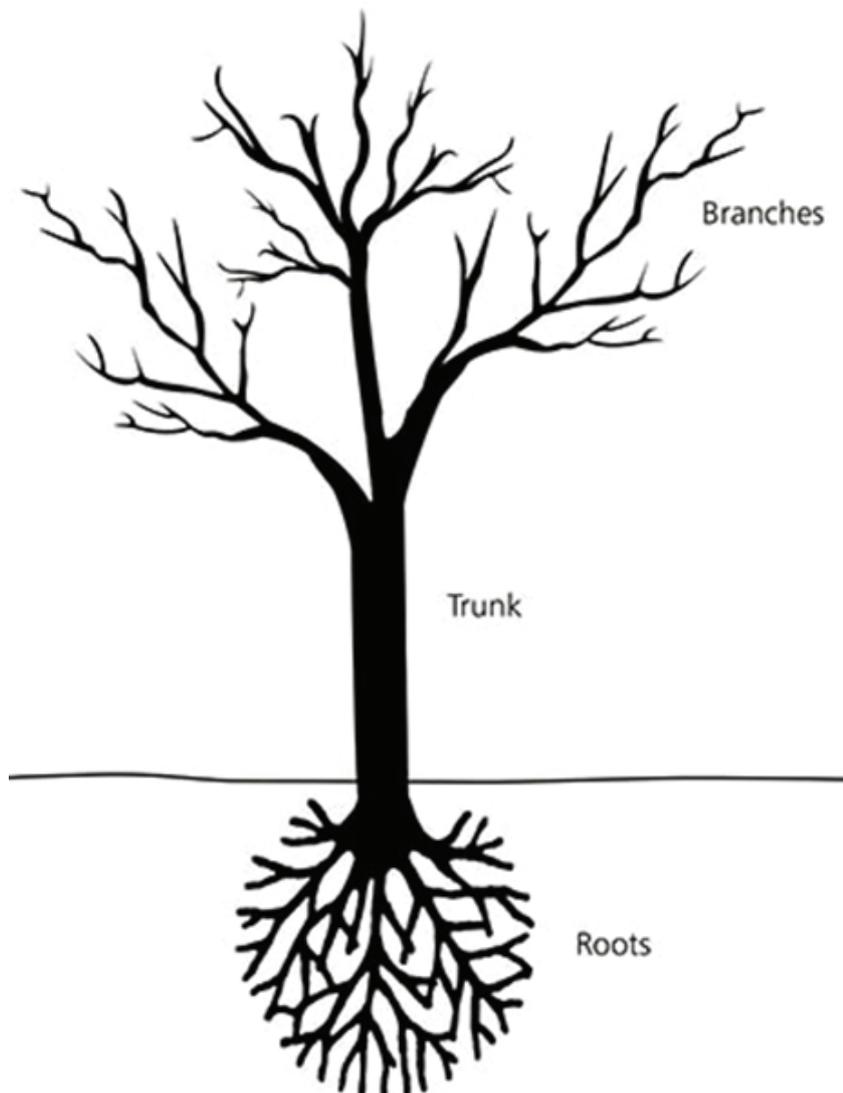
The next step in the problem tree process is to begin to break down the causes of the problem, so that you can see where you may be able to have most effect.

• Take one of the key root (cause) cards, and make that the tree's trunk (key problem). You can now analyse that problem's causes in the same way, perhaps showing areas where you may be able to have influence

The final step is to use the tree to help you define your goals or objectives, why you should attempt to achieve your goals, and what you need to do to achieve them. You can convert the problem tree into an objectives tree by rephrasing each of the problems into positive desirable outcomes – as if the problem has already been treated.

• Write your goal on the trunk of the tree – this will be a reversal of the negative statement that made up the cause of the problem, defined in step two. For example, 'there are not enough boreholes in a rural area', would become 'sufficient boreholes in a rural area'

• To clarify the purpose of your goals, write on cards the benefits that will accrue if this goal is achieved. These become the 'leaves' of your tree

• Now, write on cards the steps or actions you need to take to achieve that goal. These become the 'roots' of your tree

Again, you can convert the negative statements that made up the roots of your problem, into positive statements. For example, 'insufficient funds are provided for WSS in the rural area', can be converted into 'make sufficient funding available for WSS in the rural area'.

The RAPID framework

The Research and Policy in Development (RAPID) team at the Overseas Development Institute developed the RAPID framework to help develop an understanding of the policy and political influences on a particular issue, as well as identify that issue's stakeholders and policy actors.

To do advocacy work effectively, NGOs need to understand the power relationships involved in a particular issue, as well as the decision-making processes involved. If, for example, an NGO is planning advocacy work on the financing of WSS services in poor urban areas, an analysis is needed of exactly who makes the decisions about financing WSS services and how those decisions are made.

The RAPID framework helps to ensure that the right questions are asked to develop this understanding. This RAPID framework is set out on the following page. Once you have identified the answers to the key questions in the RAPID framework, these can be used to determine the next steps you need to take in your advocacy work, and how to go about it. For each answer to the questions, you should identify what action you might need to take in relation to the question, and how to go about it.

The RAPID table – moving on from analysing your advocacy issue, to planning what action to take (38)

What you need to know (answers taken from RAPID framework)	What you need to do	How to do It
Political • Who are the policy makers? • Is there a demand for new ideas from policy makers? • What are the sources/ strengths of resistance? • What is the policymaking process? • What are the opportunities and timing for input into formal processes?	• Get to know the policy makers, their agenda and their constraints • Identify potential supporters and opponents • Keep an eye on the horizon and prepare for opportunities in regular policy processes • Look out for, and react to, unexpected policy windows	• Work with policy makers • Seek commissions • Align research programmes with high profile policy events • Reserve resources so you can move quickly and respond to policy windows • Allow sufficient time and resources
Evidence • What is the current theory? • How divergent is the new evidence? • What sort of evidence will convince policy makers? • What are the prevailing narratives?	• Establish long-term credibility • Provide practical solutions • Establish legitimacy • Build a convincing case and present clear policy options • Package new ideas in familiar theory or narratives • Communicate effectively	• Build up programmes of high-quality work • Create action-research and pilot projects that demonstrate the benefits of new approaches • Use participatory approaches to help with legitimacy and implementation • Clarify strategy and resources for communication from the start • Promote face-to-face communication
Links • Who are the main stakeholders in the policy discourse? • What links and networks exist between them? • Who are the intermediaries and what influence do they have? • Whose side are they on?	• Get to know other stakeholders • Establish a presence in existing networks • Build coalitions with likeminded stakeholders • Build new policy networks	• Build partnerships between researchers, policy makers, and communities • Identify major networkers and salespeople • Use informal contacts
External Influences • Who are main national and international actors in the policy process? • What influence do they have? • What are their aid priorities? • What are their research priorities and mechanisms? • Who are main international actors or donors in the policy process? • What influence do they have? Who influences them? • What are their aid priorities and policy agendas? • What are their research priorities and mechanisms? • How do social structures and customs affect the policy process? • Are there any overarching economic, political or social processes and trends? • Are there exogenous shocks and trends that affect the policy process?	• Get to know the national and international actors, their priorities and constraints • Identify potential supporters, key individuals, and networks • Establish credibility • Monitor donor policy and look out for policy windows	• Develop extensive background on donor policies • Orient communications to suit donor priorities and language • Try to work with the donors and seek commissions • Stay in regular contact with important individuals

The PESTLE analysis

A PESTLE (21) analysis offers a framework for examining the external environment and trends that may affect the issue you are working on. Having drawn up a list of the PESTLE factors, you should identify which ones are significant to your work, as opportunities or threats. Your problem is examined according to the following factors in the country in which you are working:

Political: including for example government and government bodies, legislature and judiciary, and any other political movements or pressure groups

Economic: including for example its GDP, debt, sources of government income, private sector employers, income distribution etc.

Sociological: including for example demographics, education and health, employment rates, land ownership and media

Technological: including for example information technology infrastructure, access to telecommunications

Legal: including for example the restraints and other legal factors relevant to your advocacy work

Environmental: including for example deforestation and desertification, pollution, drought, flooding, wildlife and/or agriculture

Assessing the risks (insert in diagram)

In some countries speaking out on some political, economic, legal or environmental issues may endanger personal safety for the advocates themselves, or for those whose issues they champion. These factors need careful consideration when planning advocacy work, and the above tools should enable you to do this.

Obtaining the consent of anyone who may be at risk, and ensuring that the risks are understood and mitigated, is vital. Working in alliances with other organisations can help in these circumstances. Alternatively, individuals or groups can work anonymously through external organisations (such as those with an international profile), levering pressure on decision-makers without endangering themselves.

Setting objectives

Following research and analysis of the issues, along with its associated power relationships, the next stage is to begin drawing up specific objectives for your advocacy work. You need to define exactly what you want to happen, and by when. Setting objectives will enable you to be clear about what you are trying to achieve, and will assist you in your planning and design of advocacy activities. In the longer term, clear objectives will also allow evaluation and monitoring of your advocacy work.

One well established way to determine what your key objectives or strategies might be, is to subject your issue to a thorough SMART analysis.

Specific: what exactly do you want to happen?

Measurable: will you know when you have achieved it?

Achievable: is it realistic or even possible to achieve your objective, given your resources and time?

Relevant: is it relevant and appropriate to all stakeholders, and to the problem itself?

Time-bound: by when do you want it to happen?

Some SMART advocacy objectives for a water and sanitation project, for example, might be:

• To convince the Ministry of Education to agree to adopt a national hygiene promotion programme, as part of the curriculum for all primary and secondary school age children, within 12 months

• To increase funding for sanitation provision in the five poorest districts by 50%, within 18 months

• To convince the District/Municipal Chief Administrative Officer and the District/Municipal Assembly in a specific district/municipality of the value of NGOs in delivering WSS services to villages during the development phase of the authority's new strategic plan

• To repeal the city ordinance that prevents the water utility from connecting households in slum areas to its service within the next two years

• To ensure that the price subsidy for water and sanitation services go to the poorest 20% households in the town as soon as it is implemented

• To ensure that the national economic and development planning authority includes WSS coverage targets in the country's new five year development plan

Some not so SMART advocacy objectives might be:

• To promote hygiene education in schools

• To promote sanitation use among poor communities

Identifying targets

Advocacy work is all about influencing those with the power to effect change. Your research and analysis should, by now, have highlighted what changes you would like to bring about, and the political and other factors involved in the issues you are concerned about.

The next step is to identify those who are most likely to be your allies in your advocacy work, and those who can be convinced to become allies, or at least facilitators to help you. You will also need to identify those who stand in the way of you achieving your advocacy aims.

You will need to identify exactly who you need to convince and influence in order to bring about change. These are your advocacy targets. Most importantly, you need to tailor your 'ask' according to what your targeted decision-maker is capable of delivering.

It is useful to begin the process of identifying your target by identifying all of the stakeholders and actors involved in your particular issue. These can be quickly be classified according to their role, in relation to the advocacy issue. Your targets, friends, community stakeholders and others should all be included in the matrix.

Adversaries
Those who oppose your position but who may not be directly responsible for decision making

Beneficiaries or constituents
The people you represent

Allies
Individuals or organisations that can help you reach your advocacy goal

Internal stakeholders
Colleagues and others from within your organisation that have a stake in the process and the result

It is important to remember that a matrix such as this is not static, and nor is it strictly drawn. Groups may move from being adversaries to being allies (or vice versa) as your advocacy work progresses. Your beneficiaries may also begin as adversaries to your work, and may need convincing of its validity.

Once the key stakeholders and influentials in a particular issue have been identified, it is worth analysing them and their position, so that you can target your advocacy in the right place. There is little point in spending resources trying to convince either someone who is already supportive of your cause or, someone who is not in any position to be able to make decisions that will help your advocacy objective to be reached.

Stakeholder analysis table (9)

An analysis will offer clarity about your allies, adversaries and targets, and help you prioritise and strategize.

For each stakeholder, you need to identify three things in relation to your issue:

• What is the attitude of the stakeholder to your position? (for instance, very anti, anti, neutral, pro, very pro)

• How important is the issue to your stakeholder?

• How much influence does your stakeholder have on the issue?

The issue:	
Your position:	

Stakeholder	Attitude of the stakeholder to your position	Importance of the issue to the stakeholder	Influence of the stakeholder on the issue
	AA A N P PP	L M H	L M H
	AA A N P PP	L M H	L M H
	AA A N P PP	L M H	L M H
	AA A N P PP	L M H	L M H
	AA A N P PP	L M H	L M H

In completing this table you are effectively applying three filter questions to the list of stakeholders:

• To what extent does the stakeholder agree or disagree with your position? For each stakeholder you should assign them an attitude to your position:

   • AA = Very anti
   • A = Anti
   • N = Neutral
   • P = Pro
   • PP = Very pro

• How much importance, relative to the other stakeholders, does the stakeholder attach to the issue?

   • L = low
   • M = medium
   • H = high

• How much influence, relative to the other stakeholders, does this stakeholder have over the issue?

   • L = low
   • M = medium
   • H = high

Using the stakeholder analysis table above, you can now begin to prioritise stakeholders in terms of whether they should be a target for your advocacy work. In short, stakeholders who regard the issue as important, and who also have influence over that issue, are likely to be your key targets, as the following diagram illustrates:

Importance of the issue to the target audience

HIGH	Secondary audience	Priority Audience	Priority Audience
MEDIUM	Ignore	Secondary audience	Priority Audience
LOW		Ignore	Secondary audience
	LOW	MEDIUM	HIGH

Influence of the target audience on the issue

A similar analysis will allow you to identify those who are likely to be your key allies and opponents in relation to your advocacy issue.

• Those who have most influence but are most anti- your position, will be those where the key convincing will need to take place;
• Those with the most influence and who are most in favour of your position, are likely to be key allies.
• Those with high influence, who are neutral on your issue, could well be your key targets at the earlier stages of your advocacy work.

Attitude of the target audience to your position

Very Pro		Main allies	
Pro			
Neutral		Key battleground	
Anti			
Very Anti		Main opponents	
	LOW	MEDIUM	HIGH

Influence of the target audience on the issue

Influentials

When drawing up your list of stakeholders and targets, it is useful also to identify secondary targets at the same time by looking a little deeper into the decision-making process. Often, you may not be able to reach decision-makers themselves, however effective your advocacy planning. Instead, your advocacy may need to be targeted at those who do have access to decision-makers. These 'influentials' may be your most important route to bringing about change through that relationship. (23)

Influentials can be found in a variety of places, and not just among those officially part of a decision-maker's immediate circle. They include the media, members of parliament, donors, faith leaders, other government departments and trade unions.

Once your key targets are identified in this way, you can decide how best to attempt to influence them. There are a number of ways to influence stakeholders, based on the matrix analysis you have already used.

For example, you may wish to attempt to convince a stakeholder who currently regards your issue as low priority or of low relevance to them, to increase their prioritisation of or interest in it. Or, you may seek to increase the influence of allies and those who are pro- your position; or indeed reduce the influence of those who are anti- your position.

Comprehensive target analysis

Upon identifying your key targets for advocacy work, you can ask yet more questions that will clarify exactly where your work should be targeted in order to convince them.

For each target, you might ask:

• What do they know about the issue?
• What is their attitude towards it?
• What do they really care about?
• Who has influence over them?
• What influence or power do they have over the issue?

An example table, drawn up for a fictitious NGO advocacy initiation, is provided on the next page:

Target/ influential	What do they know about the issue?	What is their attitude towards the issue?	What do they really care about?	Who has influence over them?	What influence or power do they have over the issue?
1) Provincial government Chief Executive, Governor or Province, Provincial Council	The have very little exposure to the problem, especially in rural areas of province	Not important: they don't think there's anything wrong in the lack of sanitation services, open defecation in rural areas etc. However, members of Council, Governor and Chief Executive, who live in provincial capital, have their own latrines/pour flush toilets	Getting donor aid into the province: Council members care about votes and elections in two years' time; they're keen for their names to be linked with a good project investment in province	World Bank and other major donors; the electorate (Council members)	
2) District government officials	Slightly more exposure to the issue than provincial level	Not very interested	Increasing their level of funding, in particular in relation to the Provincial government and attracting donor aid into district	Donors; Provincial government	These actors have potentially strong voices and if they can be exposed to the problems and convinced of the need they may be able to influence decisions to invest more financial resources into WSS
3) The media	Little exposure	Not relevant or important	Circulation figures; interesting stories		
4) Ministry of Water officials	Good understanding of the issues involved	Split: those based at district level are keen to see changes; national level staff have other priorities	Budget Allocations Standards in sanitation and other services	Ministry of Finance; World Bank	Ministry of Water officials do have access to the Ministry of Finance officials and could
					demonstrate both good field practice and the benefits of investing increased resources into WSS
5) World Bank (major funders in the WSS sector)	Some understanding	Not a priority	Increased 'economic efficiency' in government services		The Executive Directors of the governing body of the World Bank Group are very high level actors and would be difficult to influence. However, one can try to influence the World Bank country Task Managers who have opportunity to influence the Executive Directors when they report on good field level programmes

Clarifying your message

Your message is a summary of the change you want to bring about, based on the work you have done to research your issue and identify key targets. Using solid information and analysis, groups can develop their position on an issue, create compelling arguments and design a message that communicates all this in a nutshell.
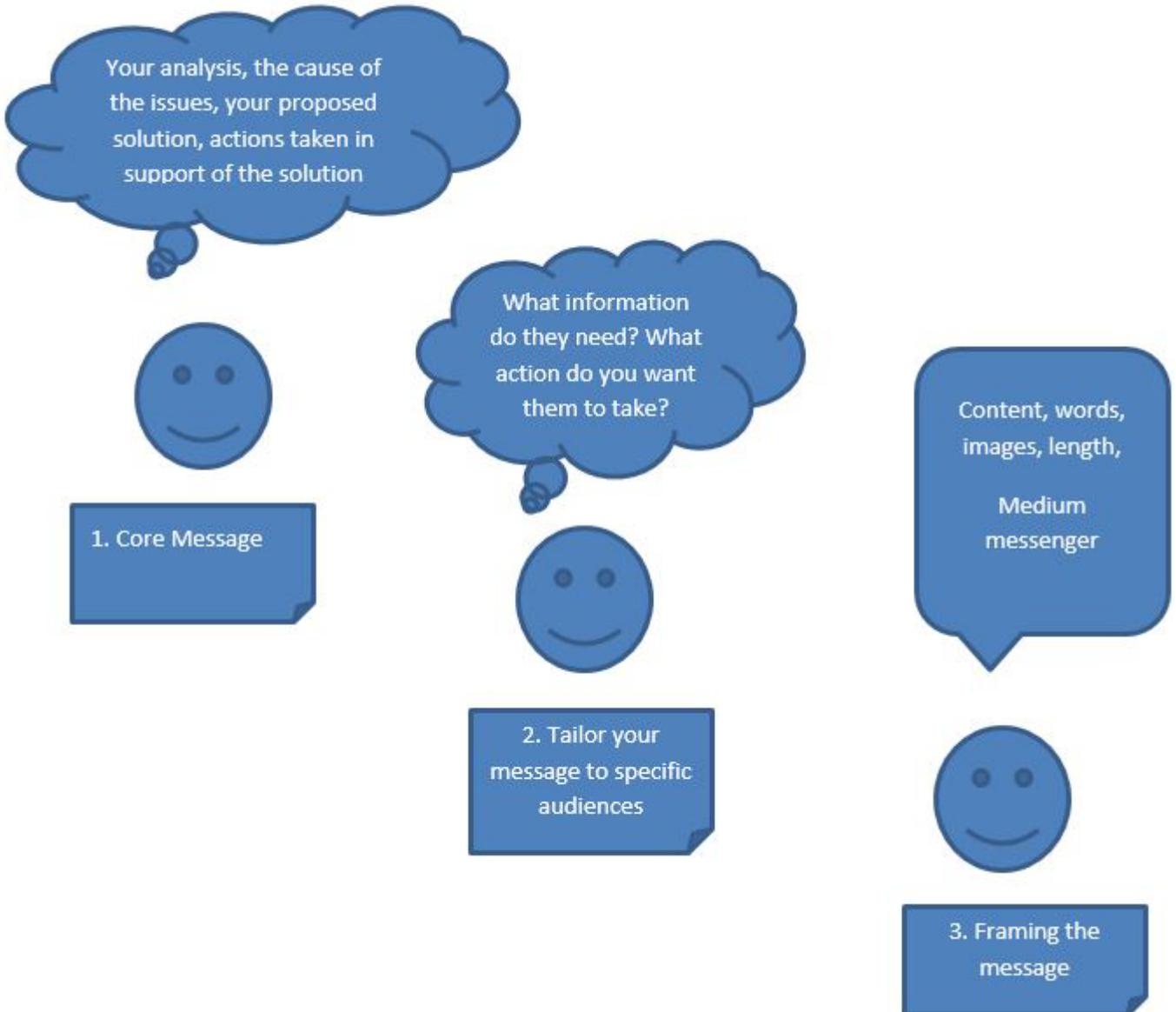
Communication of this message is central to effective advocacy, as is communication in general – between your allies and stakeholders, but also in the presentation of your messages to external audiences, from policy makers to affected communities.

Creating a single message enables all stakeholders – from writers of advocacy materials and event organisers, to spokespeople, staff and volunteers – to be united in the advocacy message. (24)

Framing your message

"What underlies all advocacy efforts is a proposed change in power equations – an essentially political activity. And in the political world, there is no issue which is seen as completely just or right to all parties or individuals... Framing the issue therefore demands both a detailed study of the targets and a comprehensive knowledge of one's own issue." (25)

You should draw up a single message that all communications should promote. It is not a slogan; indeed the actual words might not be used in public. It is a short phrase which specifies the main message that you want your audience to remember. It is useful to test your single message on other people, including those who do not work on your issue, to check that it is easy to understand.

A clear message

• Should summarise the change you want to bring about

• Should be short and punchy, just one or two sentences

• Should be understandable to someone who doesn't know the issue, and be jargon free

• Should include a deadline for when you want to achieve your objective

• Should include the reasons why the change is important

• Should include any action you want the audience to take in response

• Should be memorable

Once your key messages are established, they will still need to be 'framed' according to the audiences you are seeking to reach. While your overall position on the advocacy issue does not change, you should seek to adapt the way you present your message to achieve the greatest impact on a particular audience.

Understanding the issues your advocacy target cares about enables you to make links in your message between your issue and their concerns, and therefore increases the likelihood of a positive response from your target.

However, the process of defining and framing the message also has to be consistent with your overall position. Framing the message has to be done without diluting the facts, compromising core values, or undermining the people you work with.

• Who to frame your message towards: Your analysis of the issue, and who is responsible and influential in policy change, will determine how you present your core message to that particular audience

• Tailor the message: What is the most persuasive way to present your core message to the target audience? What information do they need, and what don't they need? What key action do you wish them, in particular, to take?

• Effective framing: Which practical frame will make your message more effective? What should it contain? In what format should it be delivered? Length, images and even messenger are important.

For example, the issue of lack of clean water and sanitation facilitates, would be framed differently according to the audience the message was aimed at:

Audience	Audience
Finance Ministers	Nationally, diarrhoea accounts for 20% of under-five child mortality and intestinal parasitic infections continue to undermine maternal and child nutritional status, physical and mental development. In 2000 the government pledged to reduce by 2015 the number of children who die before their fifth birthday by two-thirds as one of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). A small investment in clean drinking water and low-cost sanitation facilities will yield a large return in relation to child and adult health and survival. We would like to request a meeting with you to discuss this issue further.
Parliamentarians	Research across a number of countries has shown there are wide ranging impacts realised through access to water and sanitation. These include time saved from fetching water; calorie-energy saved; improved health, especially for children; positive and significant environmental impacts; increased agricultural production; avoided days lost from school; increased community capital as well as increased psychological benefits. In addition on-going support for communities increases their ability to sustain both water and sanitation supply systems and also hygiene behaviour changes. We know that when asked poor people put access to water as one of their top three priorities, if not their top priority. We would like to request a meeting with you to discuss these issues further.
Health professionals	The World Health Organisation asserts that 65% of infant deaths from diarrhoeal diseases, like cholera, in developing countries could be prevented by providing safe water and sanitation. It has recently been estimated that diarrhoea is the second biggest killer of children in the world's poorest countries. Access to clean water has wide ranging health benefits for communities and environmental improvements like sanitation have bigger impacts and lower costs than curative medicines. We would like to request a meeting with you to discuss some joint work with you.
Broadcast media and the press	Ruvimbo is six years old. Her mother walks five kilometres each morning to the nearest clean water point to collect drinking water for the family. However, when Ruvimbo and her friends are thirsty, they drink from the nearby riverbed. That's also where the cattle and goats drink. Ruvimbo's family have no latrine and use the riverbed in the early morning before it is light. Ruvimbo has two brothers and one sister: he had another two sisters but both died of dysentery before they were four years old. Ruvimbo has visited his cousin who lives in the nearby town, where there is a good water supply and each house has a latrine. He has seen that his cousin's family do not fall ill and his aunt has lost no babies because of sickness. He wishes there were similar facilities in his village.
General public	Clean water saves lives: water-borne diseases and poor sanitation today claim thousands of lives in rural Tanzania. Each village should have at least one borehole and adequate latrines. Talk to your local councillor today to find out how you can help to bring life-saving facilities to your own village and see your children flourish.

The medium

Effective messaging relies on careful attention not only to the message itself, but also how it is transmitted – known as the 'medium'.

It is worth considering the most effective medium to carry your message, and the most effective messenger to deliver it – all of this will be determined by the audience you are trying to reach.

The medium and the messenger

Medium	Messenger
Letter Phone-call Meeting Press release TV/radio interview Leaflet Poster Press advertisement Research paper Conference	An organization Member of staff Beneficiary Independent expert Neutral narrator Celebrity

Section 3 Making advocacy happen

This section will help you to build on the strategic background – research, identifying targets etc. – you have developed for your advocacy, and to convert this into action plans.

It offers theory for good execution of advocacy action plans. The following chapter offers actual methods of carrying out advocacy, ranging from lobbying meetings to mounting media campaigns.

Key to this chapter is an examination of the action based steps in the planning cycle (see page 11 – confirm this).

Remember, the advocacy planning cycle is only a tool. In the real world, you will have to adjust both your planning and your actions, and do things in a different or parallel order. You may even have to return to earlier steps, in light of information or progress as it emerges.

What you will learn from this chapter

- *What some key advocacy actions are*
- *How to examine what resources, capacity and budget you have, for carrying out actions*
- *How to strike stronger partnerships, for more effective advocacy*
- *How to plan your advocacy actions*

There are a number of approaches to advocacy, and a whole host of activities that can be used to mount advocacy work. These specific advocacy actions are outlined in the following chapter, but this chapter will show you how to create a plan to implement various actions as part of your advocacy on any particular issue.

• Advocacy actions can be grouped under four broad headings:

• Lobbying: the process of trying to directly influence decision-makers, such as politicians, civil servants, or corporate chief executives

• Public campaigning: activities to engage the public, and to mobilise visible support for your position

• Media work: raising public awareness of your issues, with a view to changing public attitudes and behaviour, and encouraging support for your other advocacy actions

• Capacity building: increasing the knowledge of those affected by a particular issue, and increasing their skills and developing their structures to enable them to carry out their own advocacy.

The next chapter breaks these different elements down into concrete actions. These streams of advocacy actions can work to complement each other. Any advocacy project will need to work on several levels, employing each of these categories of action, if they are to address governments, donors, the public and the media.

While your emphasis in some spheres will depend on the context and different activities will be employed as a result, you are still likely to need a broad range of activities to achieve your goal.

An advocacy project may employ different approaches simultaneously, aimed at different target audiences, or feature one approach aimed at the same target audience over time. This is where partnership working (see below) begins to become particularly important.

Through collaboration, two different organisations can employ different approaches to the same advocacy target, using their strongest skills and resources, whilst working towards the same end.

The advocacy continuum

There is a range of approaches to advocacy, some of which are confrontational, while others involve working alongside advocacy targets to achieve desired change.

You might think of these different approaches as belonging to an inter-related continuum:
Cooperation – education – persuasion – litigation – contestation (28)

In the case of WaterAid, for example, a similar continuum is used:
Expose – oppose – compose – propose (29)

Because of WaterAid's relationships with government, and track record in information and evidence provision, WaterAid's advocacy actions tend to fall into the second half of the expose – oppose – compose – propose continuum. WaterAid's 'insider' actions include providing information, lobbying, giving advice and sharing knowledge.
Meanwhile, some other NGOs and community organisations in the WSS sector tend to focus on the first half of the continuum. Their 'outsider' actions are more likely to be campaigning, lobbying and media work. To make advocacy work more effective, the gap between such 'insider' and 'outsider' advocacy approach needs to be bridged. Both parts of the continuum need to be mixed, to achieve advocacy goals.

What resources and capacity do you have for advocacy?

Before you can finalise which activities you will carry out, it is vital to consider what resources you have at your disposal.

In reality, you are likely to have to continually consider resources as you make progress with your advocacy actions. Assessing and allocating resources before you begin advocacy work is not always possible.

Indeed, part of your advocacy work may be to raise finances or lever additional resources in order to carry out other advocacy work. The resources you have available for advocacy work will be a mix of financial, human capacity and common or shared knowledge.

Examining each of the elements in turn will enable you to identify any gaps that need filling before you can begin a particular action.

• *Money:* what money do you have available for this advocacy project? Where is money coming from: your organisation, partners, and other funders? Are there likely to be cash-flow problems, or difficulties getting authorisation for spend? Roughly how much do you think you will need to implement the activities you are considering? Is your budget realistic, and based on actual costs or quotes?

• *People:* who will be available to work on the different aspects of the project?

• *Skills and experience:* do the key people have the right skills and experience? If not, can you train them or get other people involved?

• *Other human resources:* do you have access to other people who can help? Do you have volunteers to distribute leaflets, campaign supporters to write letters, community members to attend meetings?

• *Partners:* what could potential partners deliver?

• *Information and knowledge:* have you been able to do enough research and analysis on the issue, on your objectives and solutions, and to identify your targets? If not, do you need to look again at the earlier steps in the advocacy planning cycle?

• *Relationships:* what relationships do you, your staff, volunteers and partners have which you will be able to use? These may be among target audiences, influentials or in practical areas such as materials design or the media

• *Reputation:* do you or your partners have a strong reputation among the target audiences, with the public or the media? If not, have you developed strategies and tactics to get around this? Can you recruit influential spokespeople or celebrities to speak on your behalf? Do you need to work in partnership with another, better-known organisation?

• *Time:* do you have enough time to implement your project effectively? Are there particular deadlines that you have to meet? Are there external events that you wish to use, such as elections, national or local political meetings, government planning cycles or international summits?

Forging the right relationships with allies

Partnerships, alliances and even short-term coalitions can greatly enhance advocacy by bringing together the strengths and resources of diverse groups to create a more powerful force for change.

Coming together to bring about social change is nothing new to people in the developing world. Improved communications technology and the challenges of sustainable development are leading to stronger alliances among civil society organisations. The entry of such partnerships into public policy is a positive step that provides new opportunities to engage in collective advocacy.

Advocacy alliances

Relationships amongst advocacy allies come in many shapes and sizes, and are described in various different ways: alliances, networks and coalitions. What they have in common is that they link individuals and organisations that share common values and concerns, and which are working towards a common objective or a common action.

Advocacy alliances can be long- or short-term. In the short term groups may come together to lobby on a particular issue for a specific time only, then go back to working separately when that time is complete. The 2005 Make Poverty History campaign in the UK is one example of this. In longer term coalitions, groups come together initially to lobby together, and continue to gain strength and voice and results over a number of years. The Jubilee Debt campaign is an example of this.

There are many good reasons why striking good partnerships is an effective way to mount advocacy campaigns. Through bringing together organisations or individuals with different expertise or experience, advocacy alliances are able to carry out a more wide-ranging set of advocacy actions. They allow a variety of interventions, including public mobilisation, lobbying, education and information provision, where one organisation acting alone might not be able to deliver such a combination.

Alliances also allow advocacy actions to take place at various levels, as different partners exploit their access and influence with different levels of decision-making, from information relationships with community leaders, through to formal channels for lobbying government departments. Another key benefit of alliance work is that it offers opportunities to learn and build capacity within each of the partner organisations. When building alliances, you might consider what each partner can learn from each other.

Alliances certainly do bring advantages to advocacy work, but they can be difficult to form and difficult to sustain. They tend to suffer from unrealistic goals or expectations. For any organisation considering progressing an alliance, the associated investment you will need to put in should be considered from the outset. You should also consider whether entering into an alliance will help to achieve success, or whether some of your potential allies might be more effective as independent actors. In short, you will need to assess whether by working together you are more likely to succeed, and whether the alliance itself will succeed.

Pros and cons of alliances

Advantages
- *Strength and safety in numbers*
- *Broadens support base*
- *Increases access to policy makers*
- *Expands base of information and expertise*
- *Creates new networking and partnership opportunities*
- *Shares workload*
- *Fosters a sense of synergy*
- *Adds credibility and visibility*
- *Opens opportunities to create new leaders*

Disadvantages

- *Politics of identity/culture*
- *Distracts from other work*
- *Generates an uneven workload between stronger and weaker members*
- *Requires compromise*
- *Causes tensions due to imbalances of power*
- *Limits individual organisational visibility*
- *Poses risks to profile/reputation*

Creating alliances

Taking a step-by-step approach when forming a new alliance will contribute to its strength and flexibility later on. The first step in any alliance is to consider who the best partners might be. You will need to think broadly about possible allies. Your analysis, already carried out, of the different stakeholders in your issue will assist you to identify key allies and those organisations who are most likely to be effective partners in achieving your advocacy goals. You will need to carry out some research to explore common interests and to define your expectations for working together.

Balanced alliances

A good alliance must find a balance of skills, in order to be effective. You might research the following issues, when considering which partners to link up with.

• Communications capacity

• Policy research and expertise

• Sectoral representation, to engage different stakeholders

• Regional representation, to promote cross-fertilisation

• Organisational capacity, to support the activities of the alliance

• Collaborative work culture, to adapt to the needs of the alliance

• "Inside"/"outside" advocates.

The next step is to consider the ingredients of a successful alliance, and how these will be applied to the alliance you are considering:

• Having a common goal or interest

• Choice of partners

• Creating clear governance structures

• Open communication between partners

• Ability to develop action plans, with long- and short-term outcomes.

Of these, one of the most important is for the members of your alliance to share a common purpose. If the alliance is to be strong and united, such a goal will need to be defined by the alliance jointly, not imposed on it by one stronger member.

It is sometimes possible that allies can pursue complementary goals, rather than a single shared goal. Carrying out joint advocacy work may be a more effective way to help partners achieve their goals, but there would need to be equal priority given to each partner's aims.

In the same way, alliances should be regarded as successful even if they do not clearly achieve the common goal to which the partnership is working.

Partners should remember to look inward at the numerous wins that may come, even with the loss of a specific campaign. Success of this kind is incredibly valuable, for building future alliances and for making an immediate impact on those who have engaged in the advocacy work.

There are a number of factors which will influence whether an alliance will be successful.

• Representative: does the alliance give equal weight to the voices of all the partners, and their stakeholders, within it? All perspectives should be heard. This is vital for legitimacy and therefore influence

• Evidence: between them, allies must have quality evidence to submit if the alliance itself is to be regarded as legitimate and credible. Such evidence must be well presented

• Persistence: all alliance members will need to be prepared for the fact that influence requires sustained pressure over a long period of time

• Influencers: the partnerships must include those who have the power and influence to get things done in the policy arena

• Links: where allies have links with others who can contribute to the advocacy work and advance its agenda, the alliance is likely to be strengthened. These can complement other strategies

• Networking: partners need to be able to communicate easily, so information technology links are vital, as well as face-to-face opportunities

• Communication: tensions and conflict may arise amongst allies, these must be discussed openly, and time must be taken for conflict resolution and problem solving

• Equality: attention must be given to allies both giving to and gaining from the relationship

Planning for action

With your goals, research and allies in place, the next step is to bring all this work together into an action plan. Action planning should be coupled with a detailed budget, and both might require revision as the programme develops and plans change. As you carry out activities, there will be internal and external changes that affect the outcomes of your work. You should ensure your action plan is flexible enough to take changes as time goes on. Periodic reviews and reflection, built into your planning process, will help you to stop and assess whether you need to adjust your plans accordingly.

Even if things are likely to change, you should still begin with a detailed action plan and budget which offers a starting point and framework from which to make those adjustments. Remember when planning, advocacy work can be slow and time consuming. You need to plan a long-term commitment and have a realistic view of timescales when doing your advocacy planning work.

Good planning is essential for effective advocacy work, so always consider the following:
• Goals, objectives and strategies: these long-term aims are in line with your overall vision. They define in broad terms where you are, where you want to go and how you believe you can get there
• Advocacy projects or programmes: these are medium-term planned periods of activity aimed at influencing and changing the policy environment and public opinion around a particular issue. Activities should achieve some of your overall advocacy strategy objectives. (Occasionally they are referred to as advocacy campaigns, but we have chosen to reserve the word 'campaign' for public campaigning, which is covered in the next section)
• Tactics, actions or activities: these are short-term specific activities within the larger change strategy, designed for a specific moment and opportunity, such as research, lobbying, public mobilisation and media work. Their purpose is to shape a project and capture the attention of people in power, in relation to your issue
• Monitoring and evaluation: this involves monitoring progress and evaluating your impact so you can change your strategy and activities as necessary, and learn for the future
• Participatory planning for citizen-centred advocacy: participatory approaches to planning community action achieve your advocacy goals by making empowerment and active citizenship a practical reality

How your plan might look
Action plans take various forms, but all should detail exactly what you plan to do, when it needs to happen, and who is responsible. You might consider drawing up a table, like the following:
• You should organise your plan in terms of its objectives; this will provide an overview of your advocacy project and what you need to deliver
• The indicators column is where you will record your intended outcomes; that will allow you to see when you have achieved successes
• Record in the review column the dates when you will review progress. It is at these dates where you might consider how your plan and budget need to be revised

Objectives	Targets	Activities	Indicators	Timing	Responsibility	Review
Gain permission to establish four community managed Governance hubs in the X district of the city, that provide easy access to information on city's service delivery .	City water utility	Exposure visits for utility representative to visit community water points in another city.

Lobbying meetings with targets to explain how the payment and maintenance system could work.

Engage the media to highlight the unfairness of these communities Currently lacking access to water. | Utility agrees to the proposal and allocates a budget for four water points to be constructed. | By June 2017 | The NGO's advocacy manager and urban programme manager | January 2017 |
| | Local government | Submit reports demonstrating the health benefits of the water points. | Planning permission is granted for the construction of the four water points | By December 2017 | The NGO's health advisor | June 2017 |
| | Corporate landlord | Build pressure from the company's employees. | Company pledges to donate land on which to build the water points | By March 2017 | The NGO's trustees | January 2017 |

In addition to the overview, you will need a more detailed outline of what actions are needed, and when.

You should also take account of certain external dates which your activities might need to tie in with, such as international conferences or consultation dates. Good advocacy is also about getting your message, or your report, or your representative to the right meeting or person at the right time.

Don't forget to schedule monitoring and evaluation activities into this timeline. Another way to approach detailed planning is to do it by activity, rather than by timeline. This may be particularly useful if different colleagues or teams are responsible for different types of work. You will, of course, still need to build in account of timings and significant dates.

The resulting activity plan might look something like this:

Broad Area	Activity	Who	When
Lobbying	Letter to X with report Meeting with Y Leafleting at summit Deliver petition and report	date date date date	name name name (likely to be same person, team or organisation)
Public campaigning	Materials produced Letter writing Petition	date date date (nb ready for delivery – see above)	name name name
Media work	Media list ready Press release sent Report on website Press adverts placed	date date date (nb needs to coincide with letter to X – see above) date	name name name name
Awareness raising	Posters Community meetings Workshops	date date date	name name name

You may need to produce more detailed plans or a series of separate plans. A large event, such as a workshop, conference or press launch will also require a detailed plan of its own (for each of the various activities), alongside the main advocacy plan. You will need to ensure your detailed plans fit into the overview, so that everything is well coordinated.

Planning checklist

The Save the Children Fund advocacy handbook suggests the first step after completing an action plan is to carry out a reality check. You need to assess whether your proposed plan is realistic and appropriate.

• Are you ready to implement your plan? Are you clear about your objectives? Do you have your evidence and solutions in place? Do you know your audience? Do you have good contacts among your influentials? Do you know what activities you are going to carry out? Have you decided what advocacy style or approach you are going to use?

• What are you expecting from your partners/allies? Are you sure of their motives and goals? Do they enhance your credibility? What will happen if they drop out?

• What resources – financial, technical, human – are available? What are the implications for your plan? Do you need to build in some training activities to your plan?

• How will you coordinate and monitor the different approaches you are using? Do you have a plan for integrating them and avoiding bottlenecks?

• Are there any risks? How will your activities affect the reputation of your organisation? How might it affect your funding to do other activities? Might you lose valuable staff? Could other current partners no longer wish to work with you? What can you do to mitigate any negative outcomes?

• What would you do if? What are your alternatives, contingency plans or fall-back positions?

External conditions may change and you may have to rethink your plans – build in flexibility so you are prepared for this.

Planning for monitoring and evaluation

The final, but essential, step in good advocacy is to develop a separate but related action plan for monitoring and evaluation.

Thinking about evaluation should be fundamental to all the planning stages, carried out alongside your planning, not as an afterthought.

• What do you want the outputs of each activity to be? For example, you have distributed X thousand leaflets, or the issue has received Y amount of media coverage, or X hundred members of the public took action and showed their support

• What outcomes do you intend these outputs to lead to? For example, the government is amending its policy on Z, or the local government has allocated X% of its budget to WSS

• These details will allow you to plan milestones, against which you can review your progress and later evaluate your success and overall impact

This is a very complex area and it is often difficult to evaluate exactly what actions led to particular outcomes, or what the final impact was. However, if you plan for evaluation before you begin, you will have a far better chance of reaching a meaningful assessment than if you wait until the project is underway or even over.

Section 4 Advocacy actions

There is a variety of effective actions that your advocacy programme action plan will need to include. Employing different actions, at different levels, appropriate to the audience and decision making level, is likely to be much more effective than using only one or two different advocacy methods in one way.

This section offers you an introduction to some different advocacy tools that you can adapt to your own issue, and include appropriately in your own action plan.

What you will learn from this chapter

- *How best to prepare for the different phases of lobbying meetings*
- *Some tools for getting your message out into the public arena, and how to direct your messages at particular audiences*
- *The power of the media, with practical tools you can use for getting your message covered*
- *Tips for publishing your own messages and research in reports, on websites etc*

Lobbying

Lobbying is usually defined as attempting to directly persuade decision-makers and influentials.

It can be both formal, through letter writing and scheduled meetings, or more informally at chance meetings, through leaflets or invitations to events etc. The cornerstone of lobbying is shaping the agenda of the meeting around a 'deliverable' for the decision-maker.

Not all lobbying expects to reach a conclusion or success immediately. Often, lobbying can be based around negotiation first, with longer term aims.

Preparing for a lobbying meeting

Preparing well for lobbying meetings is critical as it will help you to be clear about what you want to achieve, how to go about it during the meeting, and how best to follow up what was discussed and negotiated.

The key issue is clearly identifying what the decision-maker can deliver and how this fits into your overall advocacy strategy/advocacy agenda! With this in mind you should ensure that in your preparation for the lobbying meeting you:

• Research your lobbying targets, and get to know them. Use your analysis of your target's values, knowledge and experience to inform your tactics.

• Clarify your goal: what outcome do you want? Will it solve the problem? Is it realistic? Have clear and concrete policy 'asks', informed by your analysis, evidence and proposed solutions

• Identify your policy 'wins', informed by information and intelligence about what is feasible, what will be opposed and what differences in positions are

• Contact like-minded organisations for potential collaboration and support. Alliances, particularly with influential groups or individuals, can strengthen a negotiating position

• Have persuasive case studies, statistics, facts and figures to hand. Information can be a powerful negotiating tool

• Make sure you and other spokespersons are well briefed on the issues lobby target – this will increase your confidence and your credibility

• Meet with the other NGOs beforehand if you are going to meetings with decision-makers or influentials as part of an NGO delegation. This will enable you to discuss the points you want to raise at the meeting, and allow you to cover the issues you want discussed at the meeting itself. Decide who will make the points from among your group; allocate roles including lead spokesperson and note taker. Agree points amongst lobbyists, what responses to questions or styles are to be used

• Prepare a brief (one page) of lobby points, which can be left with the lobby target and serve as an aide memoir. Anticipate the counter arguments which the decision-maker may make and have your answers prepared

During the lobbying meeting
Smaller numbers of people can lead to a more constructive, less defensive atmosphere. Open the meeting by introducing everyone around the table. If you know that the decision-maker is hostile to your position, you might point out areas of common ground or mutual interest, and then proceed. Indicating a willingness to compromise at the outset can be an effective way to create a friendly climate. This can help in identifying the true reasons for opposition to change.

Present the most important points first, but then give the decision-maker time to talk and listen fully to what they have to say. While it is important to have minimum and maximum positions, it is not effective to put them out on the table initially. If a negotiator reveals the least they are willing to settle for, your lobby target will not be motivated to negotiate beyond that minimum. In terms of style, engagement is usually more effective than condemnation. It may sometimes be appropriate to be tough, it is seldom appropriate to be confrontational, especially if you intend to follow up the lobby meetings with further ones.

Be clear on what you want the decision-maker to do (but be flexible) and gain firm commitment from them. If power holders or decision-makers have previously decided that they will not be influenced to change their position, this may paralyse the process. You will need to understand each other's position, and provide more evidence to strengthen your position.

Use consistent body language: keep your voice calm and regular, relax your shoulders, be conscious of what your demeanour and tone are indicating.

Try not to let the discussion get off track; if it does, interrupt politely and bring the discussion back to the central issue. During the lobby meeting you need to very clearly identify and discuss the 'policy ask' that the decision-maker is capable of delivering. This is the most important point. If a question comes up that you cannot answer, say you will get back to them, and always follow up such a promise.

At the end of the meeting, thank the decision-maker for their time and re-state what you understand they have said they will do.

After the lobbying meeting

Follow up the meeting with a thank you letter to your lobby target, which also includes a summary of the points that were raised, refers to any agreements or disagreements that arose during the meeting, and outlines what the next steps are.

Follow up on any action points that were agreed at the meeting, and share the information and details of what was discussed during the lobbying meeting with others/colleagues. Follow through if your proposal is accepted.

Suggest a drafting committee is established with a representative from your organisation; offer your organisation's services to assist the officer responsible for implementing change; if your formal offers are rejected, keep informal contact; follow through all procedural levels until policy change becomes a reality at all levels. Don't forget to thank everyone involved and state how you intend to go forward.

Project visits

You may find that arranging a visit to an effective project is a good way for lobbying to take place. Seeing a positive example of the proposition you are lobbying for can convince sceptical decision-makers, as well as giving the opportunity for community members themselves to speak on their own behalf.

The downside is that project visits can be expensive, require lots of planning and time commitment on behalf of participants – particularly the decision-makers, which they may not wish to commit.

Writing letters

Writing a letter can be another direct and formal lobbying tool as part of your advocacy. Remember, though, that public figures receive many letters, so you will want to ensure writing is the most effective and appropriate way to get your message across.

Public campaigning

Public campaigning is the process of engaging the public, and getting them to take some action to demonstrate their support for your advocacy project or advocacy position.

The main objective of public campaigning is to demonstrate to your advocacy targets that there is significant public concern about the issue and wide support for your position. That can be particularly effective because, very often, the public are voters and are always consumers. As individuals they may not have much influence, but united behind a particular position they can exert considerable pressure.

An important objective is to directly influence the public's understanding of, and attitude towards, a particular issue; and to change their behaviour.

A side benefit of public campaigning is that it can offer an excellent opportunity for capacity building. Linking up with partners to launch public campaigns means both can learn from each other.

Your public campaign may be nationally focused, calling for a policy change in a particular country, or at an international level. You may even be calling for a range of changes in different countries.

Whatever your public campaigning work, it is vital that your positions and statements are backed up by evidence, particularly your own project work.

Appropriate public campaigning

It is vital to remember that different countries have different laws and cultural norms that will influence how you carry out campaigning work. In your advocacy action plans, you should already have considered what is appropriate, and even legal, in the context in which your advocacy work will take place.

Some of the key ways to implement public campaigning are:

• Direct media: Distinct from media and publicity work (covered below), direct media involves creating advertising campaigns, putting leaflets in magazines, or directly sending them out to a mailing list, or putting leaflets or posters in places where they will most effectively reach your audience.

•This kind of direct media work is not easy to get right, nor is it particularly cheap. Creating posters, for example, may be cheap but they are difficult to target accurately.

• Advertising, if you can afford it, can be particularly effective. An eye catching advert, with clear messaging about your issue, gives you control of what you want to say, and you can ask people to do something as a result.

You may wish to seek outside expertise if you wish to get direct media right.

Manifesto: A manifesto is likely to be the cornerstone of any public campaigning. A manifesto is a short outline of your campaign messages, available to the public, which uses clear and simple common language to explain your position. It should state why you are campaigning, the problem you are addressing, and the solutions you are proposing. You can then use your manifesto in leaflets, in publicity campaigns and on your website, as a clear statement of your campaign asks.

Getting visual

Whether producing leaflets, a manifesto, a website or even TV and magazine adverts, you will need to give your audience an easy way to recognise your campaign. Linking up all the different strands of your visual materials is best done through developing a consistent visual identity.

You need to develop a logo or series of images and phrases that all of your campaign materials should feature, and you should use the same colours and fonts.

Before designing any materials, give real consideration to what you actually want that material to do, who you want it to reach, and what you are asking of your audience.

The public taking action: What actions do you want your campaign supporters to take? Your public campaigning may aim to 'recruit' people to your cause, and take action on it. Or it may be more directed to influencing the way the public and politicians behave. Either way, your public campaign should seek to motivate a large group of people to act in a certain way, in favour of your proposals. It may start small, but even a small group of people can help to slowly encourage more to come 'on board'.

Mass writing: A popular campaigning tool in Western Europe and the USA is asking people to send letters, postcards or emails to a particular target, raising specific concerns and requesting specific results. You will need to provide people with the necessary tools, such as sample letters, ready printed postcards or an email template.

Petitions: Collecting a large number of signatures, with names and addresses, on paper or through a website, can be an effective way to demonstrate mass support for your position. Consider how you will deliver the petition to achieve maximum impact, and don't forget to secure media coverage. Ensure too that you adhere to local data protection laws.

Events: Campaign events, such as speaker rallies, a march or a vigil, or even arranging a delegation to your target's offices, can attract media coverage. However, large scale events do take a lot of work, and can be very expensive. You might consider if there are any other events you can 'piggy back' onto, having an information stall or leafleting campaign.

Using the media

The media can play a significant part in public advocacy work. Television, radio and press offer the opportunity to both reach decision-makers, and to influence wider public opinion.

The mainstream media is targeted at the general public, but can also have considerable influence over decision-makers and other opinion-makers who respond directly to articles in certain prestigious newspapers or certain programmes on the television and radio, particularly if they are aware of that media's influence over public opinion.

Your advocacy work should, therefore, treat the media as both a tool for advocacy, but also an influential target of your advocacy

Why use the media?

- *Get your issue onto the political public agenda*
- *Make your issue visible and credible in policy debate*
- *Inform the public about your issue and proposed solutions*
- *Recruit allies among the public and decision-makers*
- *Change public attitudes and behaviour*
- *Influence decision-makers and opinion leaders*
- *Raise money for your cause*

Like all aspects of advocacy, media work requires clear goals and carefully planned actions. Before you begin any media campaign, you should properly plan what you want your media advocacy to achieve, and how you will go about it.

Key questions to ask include:

What message do you want to convey?
- Who do you want to reach with the message?
- How will you reach this audience?
- How will you utilise each type of media?
- How will you time your media effort to complement your other strategies?
- How will you measure success?

It is important to assess your advocacy targets, and what forms of media they have access to. Many rural communities now have access to radio, and some read national newspapers on a daily basis. Urban, industrialised populations may be more easily influenced through television, while professional audiences may respond to articles in key publications and periodicals.

You should then research the media itself. Which publications or programmes already cover your issue or similar issues? How do they pick up new stories? How free are they to say what they think (is there censorship)? What is the style and format of the various programmes/publications, and how can you fit in with this? How can you contact them?

Make sure you understand the role of the press in your country: is it outspokenly critical of the government or government-controlled; which audiences do they reach and what's the style and tone of different publications?

TV and radio

Getting your message or your spokesperson on to TV or radio is one of the most effective ways of getting your message out there. Building relationships with key broadcast journalists, and always offering a spokesperson to be interviewed for current affairs programmes, is vital for achieving this kind of coverage.

TV can be particularly effective, because for many influential decision-makers and opinion leaders, current affairs and news shows are likely to be a core source of information for them.

Identify whether TV audiences are the ones you are targeting.

Meanwhile, radio reaches a wider audience than any other medium, and is accessible to people who are otherwise isolated by language, geography, conflict, illiteracy or poverty. Radio also has the power to motivate people by building on oral traditions. Community radio stations can play a significant role in increasing participation and opinion sharing, improving and diversifying knowledge and skills and in catering to health and cultural needs.

However, radio is a transitory medium. Most people cannot listen again to a show, or ask for information to be repeated. Many people also lack access to radios, electricity or the batteries to power them.

Reaching the media

Building a contacts list enables you to rapidly pass your messages on to all relevant media when you have a news story. If you use your contacts list like a database, recording any contact you have with a journalist, it will assist you in building and maintaining relationships with them.

In many countries you can buy a media list prepared by specialist companies, but if that approach is too costly, you can construct your own by reading, watching and listening to local media, and noting which issues specific journalists cover.

You may wish to make contact with key journalists and editors just to introduce yourself and tell them about your issues. If they have met you, they will be more inclined to come to you when they are working on a story, and they will pay more attention to any information you send. Investing time in building relationships with journalists and editors also enables you to run ideas past them, to see what aspect of your story is most suited to their needs.

Getting into the media requires more than just good relations. You cannot always hope that friendly journalists will find your issue newsworthy, because often it won't be. The key to good story selling is good timing, and linking your own message with the breaking news.

You should look for news opportunities, such as a natural event, a speech or anniversary to which you can link your story. Keep a record of future events in your diary that you could link your issues to. When your story is already in the news, even peripherally, it is easier to sell in your exact messages. Your task is to offer a story or photo opportunity that illustrates a new or local perspective, or which dramatises a particular point of view.

Acting fast is often the key, and so is providing all the information in one place so that the journalists' job is easier. Websites are being used increasingly in this way, providing backup information, images, quotes and more, all in one place.

The most common method for getting your message to any kind of media is a press release. It is a written document that outlines concisely the issue you wish the media to cover, and is distributed by fax, post or increasingly by email to the journalists you are seeking to reach.

A well written press release should make life easy for the journalists, giving them enough information in a short, punchy style to persuade them to run your story.

Press releases can fulfil various functions:

• Give advance notice of an event

• Provide a report of a meeting, or convey decisions

• Announce a new campaign, or provide progress reports

• Provide background information

• Circulate speeches, report details etc

Good press releases

News release structure

• *Start the release with a simple, descriptive and catchy headline to grab attention, and include the date of the release*

• *The opening paragraph tells the story in a nutshell, and tells the reader: who, what, when and where. The 'why' can be covered in subsequent paragraphs, which progressively expand the details*

• *News releases are pyramid shaped. Put the most important information first, and the background information lower down*

• *A quote is a useful means of changing the tense, tempo and interest, and will usually appear as paragraph three*

• *A 'Further information' section should contain your contact name and telephone number on which you must be available*

• *Finish with 'Notes to editors', include the most recently agreed wording for the paragraph about the work of your organisation, in addition to any specific notes relating to the news release*

• *Finish with 'Notes to editors', include the most recently agreed wording for the paragraph about the work of your organisation, in addition to any specific notes relating to the news release*

Writing style

• *A good news release reads like a story. Your story will usually be about the people being helped, doing the helping, or making the donation, rather just about the message*

• *The story should not be the only the hook to gain coverage. It should also provide a clear illustration of the message. Start with what you're trying to say (message), then find a way to say it that is different and interesting, and that illustrates it clearly (story)*

• *The quote must sound like someone actually said it. Try to get at least part of your key message into the quote – it's the one part no journalist should alter*

• *Avoid jargon, emotional language and charity-speak. Always bear in mind the audience, whether newspaper readers, journalists, listeners etc*

• *Keep your copy clear and accessible. Always explain acronyms the first time you use one. Only use capital letters at the start of sentences and for proper nouns*

Format

• *Try to make the release one page only, with ample spacing between lines. Send it out on your organisation's letterhead paper*

• *At the end of each page, if you have more than one, write 'More/...' in bold in the bottom right hand corner*

• *At the finish of the body of the release write 'Ends' in bold at left hand margin*

• *Check your spelling at least twice and get someone else to read it over*

Pushing the message

Publishing documents, producing materials and carrying out public campaigning face to face through speaker meetings and events, are likely to be an important part of any advocacy project.

Getting communications right

Five factors should be considered when a communication is being prepared and approved:
• Policy consistency and consistency with organisational plans and priorities
• Your organisation's identity
• Quality of product and content
• Risk to reputation
• Security risk to staff, partners and beneficiaries or to the whole organisation

Reports

Reports can be used to support lobbying activities by sending information to targets and influentials; they also provide background for journalists and partners, and perhaps even the public.

The way in which you present the results of any research is as important as its quality. In all cases, thought needs to be given to the audience, and the way the report is presented should be tailored accordingly. Remember to put in place strategies for disseminating your report.

Most reports contain an executive summary, which is often the only part of a report that is actually read. A report aimed at an advocacy target should also contain a brief list of the three or four key points or actions you would like them to take.

Conferences, seminars and workshops

A public event can be used to influence the targets you invite, and you can even invite them to speak. Such events also offer opportunities for media coverage, and to raise awareness among journalists, partners and the general public.

Many NGOs use community-based workshops for citizen training and education as part of their legal rights and policy advocacy efforts.

Conferences with high level speakers or compelling topics can also draw mass media attention. In many countries, a gathering of international visitors may attract media coverage.

Tips on public speaking

How to prepare for a talk

Ask yourself: Who? Why? What? When? How? Where? Who is your audience? Why are you doing your talk? What do you want your audience to think and do after your talk? In other words, what are your objectives? When are you going to do your talk? How will you do your talk? Where will it be?

Decide on your key messages. Decide on three or four (no more) key messages you want to get across and concentrate your presentation on these.

Structuring your talk. Like the old saying, "Tell them what you're going to tell them, tell them, and then tell them what you've told them."
• **Beginning:** introduce yourself. Tell them what to expect i.e. how long will you talk, what about, what visual aids will you use, when can they ask questions.
• **Middle:** key points illustrated with examples.
• **End:** summary. Call to action.

Make notes. Everyone has their preferred way of preparing notes for a presentation. These may be either a full script (although you will sound like you are reading!) or writing out the beginning and end (which helps a smooth start and a confident conclusion), or use outline notes with headings, sub-headings, and key words or phrases to guide you.

Rehearse. You will find that rehearsing, even on your own in an empty room, can help you familiarise yourself with your material. It will also help you to judge the timing, get used to the sound of your own voice and build confidence.

Visual aids. These can provide striking visual impact, and may be a useful to support a presentation. 10-15 good quality slides have a greater impact than 25 –30 poor ones. Try to use just a few words on your slides, and use them as prompts for your talk. Try to think of other engaging ways of presenting your talk.

Leaflets, news sheets and posters [31]

Printed matter can be used as part of your public campaigning to raise public awareness among large numbers of people. They should be tailored, with particular messages and approaches, depending on who your intended target audience is. You should be clear who your target audience is and how you are going to distribute the leaflet or news sheet before you start designing and producing it.

Once you have decided that a leaflet or poster is an appropriate tool for your campaign, it should be designed to have maximum impact on your audience. Your headings should be eye-catching while avoiding being sensational. The content should include a simple presentation of the facts relating to your advocacy issue, and a clear statement of what you want your audience to do about it.

How you distribute the leaflets or where you place the posters will depend on your target audience and the resources you have available. If you have very limited resources, you may decide to target the distribution very specifically to key audiences.

Websites

A campaign webpage, or even micro-site, provides users with an accessible, user-friendly and authoritative information resource. It can also be a place for the exchange and communication of ideas and views. It particularly offers opportunity to engage the public through online petitions or message boards.

Your website should contain the background information for your advocacy project, as well as supporting materials such as press releases, reports, stories, images and quotes. Anyone visiting your site should be able to find everything they need and, if possible, to be able to download files.

Where appropriate, this will allow you to produce more concise paper materials because you can refer people to the full detail available online.

However, many millions of people in the developing world still cannot easily access websites and many people are still not used to using the internet. Poor design, including information overload, can also prevent people from finding what they need on websites.

Video and drama/street theatre

Street theatre or similar public events can help to raise awareness among communities, and engage the wider public. Vitally, it also offers the opportunities for stakeholders to tell their own stories and become involved in advocacy work.

Drama provides an opportunity to present facts and issues in an entertaining, culturally sensitive and accessible way. In many societies, drama is a form of communication through which people can comfortably express their views. However, the number of people reached is limited compared to other means, and some critics suggest that it can trivialise serious issues.

Video is a relatively expensive advocacy tool. However it has the potential for impact among both audiences with low literacy (assuming the facilities for broadcasting are available) and developed country audiences increasingly attuned to audio-visual presentations rather than the written word.

Section 5 Monitoring and evaluation

Monitoring and evaluating the impact of advocacy can be a difficult task. Many fail to do it, despite building it into their advocacy plans. Nevertheless, monitoring and evaluating advocacy programmes is an important and unavoidable part of advocacy work.

Monitoring and evaluation must be central to your advocacy action plan right from the beginning, something that takes place alongside research, planning and execution of your plans, and which influences how you work at every stage.

By building it into advocacy planning from the start, you can connect the goals you want to achieve with the development of indicators for success. On-going monitoring acts as a way of measuring the progress you have made at every stage.

Carrying our periodic evaluation allows you to identify any impacts that your advocacy work is having at the same time as the planning and doing takes place. Evaluation is not just about analysing the end result, for example, the completion of a piece of work, but an appraisal of longer term impact.

Monitoring and evaluation relies on collecting and analysing information about the positive and negative aspects, and impacts, of your work and its progress.

What you will learn from this chapter

• The aspects of work that can be monitored and evaluated
• Some of the challenges of monitoring and evaluating advocacy work
• Questions you can use to review progress in your advocacy

A test of quality advocacy planning is the ease by which your plans can be monitored, and how your impacts can be evaluated.

Plans with clear objectives, indicators, targets and a stakeholder analysis make monitoring very simple; whereas if your objectives are vague and unspecific, it is almost impossible to monitor or evaluate your progress.

What are the challenges of monitoring and evaluating advocacy work?

A great deal of NGO monitoring and evaluation – not just of advocacy work – tends to focus on inputs and outputs, with less attention given to the more challenging but ultimately more important outcomes and impact.

Evaluation is the assessment of the impacts from advocacy and is full of methodological challenge. Some of the particular difficulties associated with assessing the impact of advocacy work – in contrast to that of practical project work – are listed below:

• Advocacy is often a long-term activity and policy change may be incremental and slow and implementation may lag significantly behind legislative change. It is therefore often hard to say when a significant change has occurred

• The process of change is often unpredictable

• Multiple objectives – advocacy objectives may sometimes be process orientated and include policy changes, programme changes, networking, opening up democratic space for citizens and increased accountability from service providers

• Hidden decision-making processes may be used by bureaucracies and politicians

• Cause and effects are usually difficult if not impossible to clearly demonstrate, as you will be working to influence using a number of advocacy tools, and it may not be clear which activity made the difference to the direction taken by the decision-maker

• Advocacy work is often carried out through networks and coalitions and whilst this is likely to increase the visibility and power of advocacy work, it also makes it more difficult to attribute the results to the work of a particular organisation or

assess the exact contribution of each organisation or group

• A variety of approaches is commonly used at the same time, some more confrontational, others based around private debate. This combination may be effective but renders the evaluation of the contribution of each approach difficult

• Much advocacy work is unique with little repetition

How can you review progress in advocacy?

For all of the challenges associated with evaluating advocacy, the outcomes and the impact of advocacy work need to be recorded. Where possible we need to measure quantitative as well as qualitative indicators.

Inevitably, the indicators to measure progress towards advocacy objectives will mainly be qualitative. They may often have to be proxy indicators, as results of advocacy are often intangible (especially the intermediate results before policy change is achieved). This makes the monitoring and evaluation of advocacy more difficult, but the principles remain the same.

In practice, it will be necessary to monitor advocacy in a wide range of ways, including, for example: monitoring your target, your relationships, the media, your reputation and public opinion. However, it is vital the monitoring and evaluating system does not get too complex – keep it simple.

Given the contested outcomes of advocacy, it will be useful if data collected for monitoring and evaluation can sometimes be triangulated – using different sources of information; using different methods of data collection; and, using different people to collect data.

Advocacy activities also need to be periodically examined in the light of your organisation's aims, in order to prevent advocacy work losing its sense of direction or absorbing resources without being able to justify or account for their use.

Sharma's Advocacy Training Guide (37) includes a self-assessment questionnaire, which is a good place for those planning and carrying out advocacy work, to start to review their progress.

You may wish to answer the questions as a group, or as individuals, and then bring your results together for analysis.

Advocacy objective

• Is your advocacy objective moving smoothly or have you encountered obstacles? What are the obstacles and how can they be overcome?

• What else can you do to move your objective forward? Would building new alliances or increasing your media outreach help move your objective through the decision-making process?

• If your objective does not seem achievable, should you alter it? What would be achievable?

• Could you achieve part of your objectives by negotiating or compromising?

• How much does the policy/programme change reflect your objective? Did you win your objective entirely, partly or not at all?

• Can/should you try to achieve the rest of your objective during the next decision-making cycle?

• Or should you move on to an entirely new advocacy objective? What are the pros and cons for each decision?

• Did the policy/programme change make a difference to the problem you were addressing? If you achieved your objective in whole or in part, has it had the impact you intended?

Message delivery/communications

• Did your message reach the key audiences? If not, how can you better reach those audiences?

• Did your audiences respond positively to your message? Which messages worked? Why? Which did not work and why? How can you alter the messages which were not effective?

• Which formats for delivery worked well? Which were not effective and why? How can these formats be changed or improved?

• Did you receive any media or press coverage? Was it helpful to your effort? How could your media relations be improved?

Use of research and data

• How did using data and research enhance your effort?

• Were data presented clearly and persuasively? How could your presentation be improved?

• Did your advocacy effort raise new research questions? Are more data needed to support your advocacy objective? If so, are the data available elsewhere or do you need to conduct the research?

Decision-making process

• How is the decision-making process more open because of your efforts?

• Will it be easier to reach and persuade the decision-makers next time? Why, or why not?

• How many more people/organisations are involved in the decision-making process than before you began? How has this helped or hindered your efforts?

• How could you improve the way you move the decision-making process forward?

• What alternative strategies can you pursue to help take the discussion forward? Should you target different decision-makers? Should you consider different activities e.g. joint learning seminars?

Coalition-building

• How was your coalition successful in drawing attention to the issue and building support for the advocacy objective?

• Was information distributed to coalition members in a timely fashion? How could information dissemination be improved?

• Are there any unresolved conflicts in the coalition? How can these be addressed and resolved?

• Is there a high level of cooperation and information exchange among coalition members? How could internal coalition relations be enhanced?

• Did the coalition gain or lose any members? How can you enlist new members and/or prevent members from leaving?

• Does the coalition provide opportunities for leadership development among members?

• How was your network helpful to your advocacy? How can you expand your network?

Overall management/organisational issues

• Is your advocacy effort financially viable? How could you raise additional resources?

• Is the accounting system adequate? Can you provide to funders an accurate accounting of how money was spent?

• How could your financial resources have been used more efficiently?

• Were all events produced successfully and meetings run smoothly? Which were not and why not? How could logistics be improved?

• Are you or your organisation overwhelmed or discouraged? How could you get more assistance?

• Should you narrow your goal or extend your timeframe to make you effort more manageable?

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