



Advocacy

KEY INFORMATION SHEET 4

In development processes, participation of civil society organisations (CSOs) is a critical factor for the promotion of sustainable development. In a democratic society there are many different groups, often with competing interests. In order to make the voices of a group heard - and to bring specific opinions and needs to the attention of policy makers and development organisations - advocacy can be an effective tool.

Why is advocacy important?

CSOs play a large, and growing, role in policy formation at local, national and global levels. Moreover, accountability has become an important issue for organisations who have to 'show' that they are addressing the needs and priorities of their stakeholders.

Although poverty alleviation has been on the agenda of CSOs for a long time and massive investments have been made, poverty has not been alleviated.

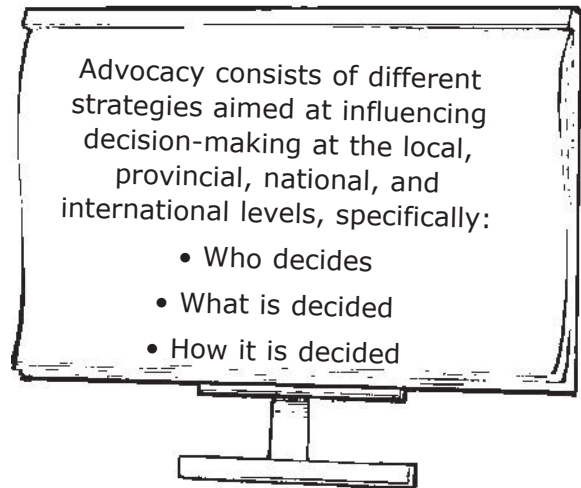
Only when the people concerned are empowered and are able to influence policy development, practices and implementation, can lasting change occur.

Power resides in the hands of actors in private (market and civil) society and public life (the state). Some contribute to insecurity (in food, livelihood, health, etc.) and violations of human rights of marginalised people and communities. Advocacy can be used as a tool to overcome or reduce insecurity.

“ We must become the change we wish to create ”
~ Gandhi ~

The **purpose** of advocacy is to achieve specific policy changes that benefit and empower the population involved in this process. Effective advocacy is conducted according to a strategic plan and within a reasonable time frame' (The Areas Foundation).

What is advocacy?



The goals of advocacy for a NGO could be:

- Making the organisation's voice heard and getting its viewpoint across to achieve its vision.
- Building support for an issue or cause and influencing others to take action
- Persuading government officials to prioritise particular programme approaches or services and making sure that the necessary financial resources are provided.
- Informing the general public and community about a particular issue or problem and mobilizing them to apply pressure

The 10 steps to success:

An advocacy process needs to be planned carefully in order to reach its goals:

1 Define the issue around which you want to promote a policy change. This should be an issue that is widely felt by the constituents of the advocacy group - access to healthcare or water for example. A policy analysis can be used.

Policy analysis:

- Review policies that relate to the specific issue or problem
- Identify the key actors and institutions that make decisions as well as those who can influence the policy actors and decision makers
- Identify and analyse key strategies and commitments outlined in the policy
- Analyse which institutions and actors are responsible for carrying out the policy commitments

2 Articulate an advocacy goal based on the advocacy issue. This should be long term, the change you want to see. For example: improved sexual and reproductive health among youth. Then set your objectives: short-term, specific, measurable results. For example: all primary schools in the area to introduce sexual education in their curriculum within two years. The objectives should be SMART: Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-bound.

3 Identify the key policy audience: the decision-makers who have the power to bring about the desired change, and the people or institutions who can influence the decision makers. To do so, power mapping can be used...

Power mapping is a way to identify and analyse the key policy actors who have influence, or power, over whether (and how) policy commitments are implemented. Power mapping helps identify who needs to be influenced and define your potential relationships with those in power. Policy makers could be for example parliamentarians, local officials, council members or ministry officials.

4 Develop advocacy messages for each identified audience.

The message should

- be tailored to the interests of the specific audience.
- inform, persuade, and move the specific audience to action.
- include a specific call to action for that audience on what they can do to help realise the policy objective

A good message

- defines the issue
- states solutions
- describes the actions that need to be taken

5 Select appropriate communication channels, activities and materials to deliver the advocacy messages to the identified target audiences. Ensure these are adapted to the local context and audience.

Activities might include:

- organising a media briefing
- developing a briefing packet, fact sheet or flyer
- hosting a public debate
- organising a conference for decision makers
- producing radio and television announcements
- convening a community or village meeting
- using social media, e.g. Twitter, Facebook

Power mapping





Use online advocacy for:

- Mobilizing and Coordinating (Coordinating with peers and allies; Mobilizing your community through mobile phones; Mobilizing online communities)
- Documenting and Visualizing (Documenting your issue; Explaining your issue; Mapping your issue)
- Informing and Communicating (Building a collaborative resource; Quick updates on your campaign or issue; Reaching online communities; Tracking your issue)

6 Gather and analyze data using appropriate quantitative and qualitative information to support the advocacy process. For example: if access to potable water is a goal, one needs to know how many people do not have access and what the feasible options for access are.

7 Broaden the support base among civil society members and other allies. For example: build partnerships.

8 Raise funds and identify and mobilize other resources (equipment, volunteers, supplies or space) to support the implementation of the advocacy campaign.

9 Having done the above, you can now develop a detailed **plan of action and implement** the advocacy strategy.

10 Develop a monitoring and evaluation plan to assess whether the activities are effective in contributing to progress in meeting the advocacy objectives.

Keep in mind

Often advocacy activities are carried out in a very turbulent environment and it will not always be possible to follow each step in the advocacy process exactly as it is planned on paper. Nevertheless, a systematic understanding of the advocacy process will help to plan well, use resources efficiently, and stay focused on the ultimate advocacy objective.

Note

Advocacy for individuals exists as well. This usually concerns defending the Human Rights of one person faced with e.g. the existing Legal, Health or Benefits system.

“An enlightened citizen is an indispensable ingredient of the infrastructure of democracy”

~ Barbara Jordan ~

Further reading & information:

- **ADVOCACY AND COMMUNICATION.**
<http://www.idasa.org/media/uploads/outputs/files/Advocacy%20&%20Communications%20Training%20Manual.pdf>
- **ADVOCACY. Building Skills for NGO Leaders**
www.cedpa.org/files/666_file_advocacy_english_all.pdf
- **Advocacy Strategies and Approaches.**
<http://books.icimod.org/index.php/search/publication/515>
- **Advocacy 2.0 Guide: Tools for Digital Advocacy**
<http://onlineadvocacy.tacticaltech.org>

- **Cross-posting**

<http://advocacy.globalvoicesonline.org/wp-content/uploads/crossposting.pdf>

- **An Advocacy Tool Kit for Hospices and Palliative Care Organisations.**

http://www.impactalliance.org/ev_en.php?ID=12421_201&ID2=DO_TOPIC

- **MOBILISING COMMUNITIES ON YOUNG PEOPLE'S HEALTH AND RIGHTS**

http://www.familycareintl.org/UserFiles/File/Anglo_TrainingGuide_June2008.pdf