ADVOCACY and COMMUNICATIONS: A Rough Guide

Key advocacy concepts and techniques

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What is Advocacy?

- A set of targeted actions directed at decision/opinion-makers in support of a specific policy issue. Advocacy represents the strategies devised, actions taken and solutions proposed to influence decision-making at the local/state level to create positive change for people and their environment.

- Advocacy involves getting those with power to correct a situation. Directed at influencing policy, laws, regulations, programmes, or funding—decisions made at the upper-most levels of public or private sector or community.

- Developing an advocacy campaign requires clarity about the goals we seek, available strategies and resources, and potential allies and opponents.
The Basic Elements of Advocacy

- Coalitions
- Objectives
- Data
- Audiences
- Fundraising
- Presentation
- Evaluation

So do you need advocacy?

Should we advocate?

- Yes → Start planning
- No → gather more information
- Possibly → but more research needed
- No – but review later
The Dynamic Advocacy Process

Stage 1: Identifying issues for policy action

Stage 2: Developing solutions

Stage 3: Building political support

Stage 4: Bringing issues, solutions and political will together for policy action

Stage 5: Evaluating the policy action

Not a recipe but still….

1. Goal setting (one/multiple or shifting goalposts)
2. Gathering policy and political information
3. Assessing risk
4. Building strategic relationships
5. Establishing your credibility as an advocate
6. Linking advocacy to your business priorities
7. Maintaining focus
CREDIBILITY CHECKLIST

✓ Can you, or your colleagues, legitimately speak on behalf of those affected by the issues?
✓ Are you, or your colleagues, known and respected by the policy makers involved in the issue?
✓ Do you, or your colleagues, have information or expertise that is relevant to the issues?
✓ Will the policy makers involved be interested in your opinion or that of your colleagues?
✓ Are there people within the country office who can effectively lead an advocacy initiative on the issues you are considering?
✓ Are you, or your colleagues, perceived as objective and trustworthy, or politically biased?

WHAT ADVOCACY IS NOT

Advocacy relates to influencing decisions of policy makers. Generally does not mean:

✓ Information, Education, and Communication
✓ Informing the government about your organization
✓ Raising public awareness about your organization and its programs
✓ Fund-raising
Roles in advocacy & policy development

Policies are not made just by members of parliament/ people who are policy makers.

If you want to work for policy development, you should plan on working with many of the people or groups listed below:
- program managers and staff
- technical specialists, analysts, planners, advisors
- coalitions (alliances)
- media
- communities
- policy makers

Which communication tool?

- Characteristics of the target audience
- Type of communication
- Resources available
- Skill base or expertise at hand
- Financial efficiency
- Credibility of the chosen tool/medium
- Existing channels of communication
Common tools

- Digital video, films & TV
- Radio
- Folk media
- Print material
- Telephone, Computers, Internet
- Public display boards
- Inter-personal
- Media relations

Successful advocacy?
What are your possible indicators

- Well functioning coalition formed around specific issues
- Networks and allies visible and supporting the coalition and advocacy action in different ways including in-kind and financial contribution
- High level of participation of different stakeholder in policy dialogue/law reform
  - Beneficiaries through testimonies, pressurizing, demonstration
  - Support by community leadership structures on the advocacy action
- Level of participation by media on the advocacy action (From content analysis)
- Contribution of resources towards advocacy action (Programmes, strategies, policy formulation or law reform)
- Policy formulated and policy passed
- Law promulgated/changed/text changed
- Laws enforced
- Policies implemented through national programmes
THANK YOU