

ADVOCACY IN ACTION



*This unit was compiled and written by Joan Isaac
who led a CID Advocacy Workshop in March 2003*

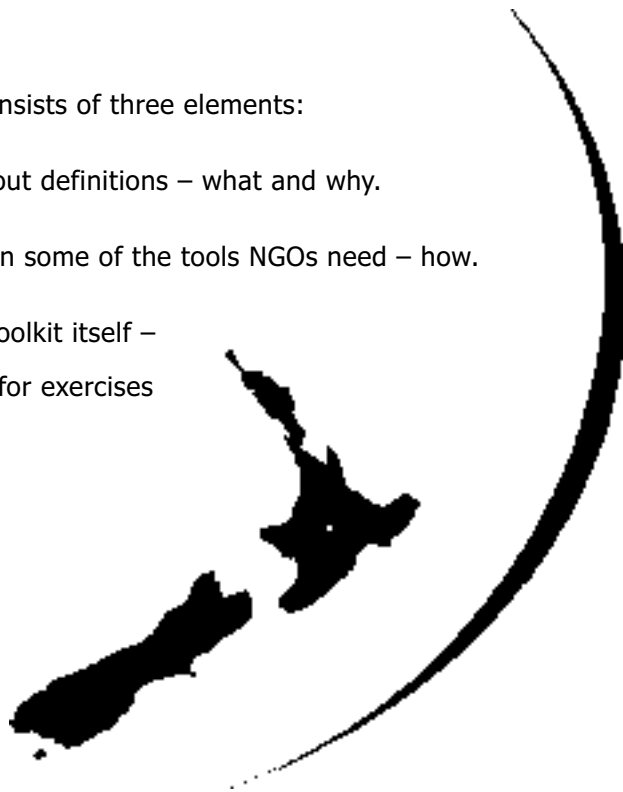
How to use this resource

Each unit in this folder consists of three elements:

The **cream** pages are about definitions – what and why.

The **apricot** pages contain some of the tools NGOs need – how.

The **grey** pages are the toolkit itself –
pull out reference sheets for exercises
and activities.





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SECTION 1

ADVOCACY IN ACTION: AN OVERVIEW





ADVOCACY IN ACTION: EXPLORING ITS POWER AS A DEVELOPMENT TOOL

Introduction

The purpose of this resource is to help strengthen the advocacy capacity of New Zealand international development NGOs in order to influence the New Zealand public and its Government to participate more actively and effectively in international efforts to eliminate poverty throughout the developing world.

This resource describes the use of advocacy as a strategic development tool. It contains:

- Information about advocacy to provide an understanding of:
 - what advocacy is
 - its strategic nature
 - its use as a development tool
 - the different models which determine advocacy approaches.
- Tools to help structure thinking about advocacy approaches, priorities and strategies.
- Practical guidelines including:
 - planning models and examples.

This resource is illustrated with material from a two-day CID Advocacy Workshop involving representatives from ten NGOs.

It also draws extensively from a number of good practice advocacy guides and manuals produced by international NGOs; *British Overseas NGOs for Development (BOND)*, *WaterAid*, and *Save the Children (UK)* (Full references for these are given in the Resource section of this module).



ADVOCACY DEFINED

The word advocacy began as a legal term but is now generally defined as speaking on behalf of someone or acting in support of a cause.

Advocacy is:

- Influencing change in political and bureaucratic processes on behalf of someone or some group
- The process of using information strategically to change policies that affect the lives of disadvantaged people *BOND 1999*
- Advocating on behalf of the voiceless. *Global Women in Politics 1997*

Advocacy is a planned strategic process which development agencies, civil society groups and individuals can use to bring about change.

The advocacy approach adopted by most international and New Zealand organisations is “people-centred advocacy”. This means involving the affected communities themselves in advocating for change as participants in the process, not as the objects of the process.

This definition of advocacy is the one used throughout this resource.

Advocacy works on many different levels and there are a range of definitions which demonstrate the diversity of dimensions and approaches. There is no “one right way”.



ACTIVITY ONE

What does Advocacy mean to you?

From CID Workshop 2003

Advocacy is:

- campaigning, lobbying, speaking out on behalf of the underdog
- a principles based change approach which is well researched and founded on fact
- using the power of the idea to change hearts and minds
- sometimes confrontational
- raising awareness and providing opportunities for action
- not just about delivering services but identifying and addressing systemic problems
- influencing the thinking of people in order to change systems and structures
- the long haul – achieving one objective and then moving to the next one – you rarely get there!
- hard work
- passion, commitment, impact
- always looking for the appropriate language and/or presentation to effect change
- flexible
- campaigning for fairness and equity
- about authenticity – bringing the voices of the disadvantaged to the table
- engaging on an individual level with those you are advocating for, and those you seek to influence
- practising what you preach
- recognising that humour is invaluable
- building alliances rather than framing people up as opponents
- sometimes frustrating and demoralising and can lead to burnout
- based on consideration of questions of legitimacy – what gives us the right to advocate for others?

Advocacy should not:

- fragment organisations
- engage in internal fighting
- say one thing and do another.



ADVOCACY AS A DEVELOPMENT TOOL FOR CHANGE

Advocacy as a tool for change encompasses a range of activities.

1. Advocacy can occur at different levels

From personal to local community level and from there to national and international levels. Change at one level can lead to change at another eg, a groundswell of change at the local level may lead to a change in policy at the national level.

2. Advocacy can occur at different stages in the decision-making process

It encompasses working for change in any of the following areas by changing or influencing:

- *Who makes the decisions:* community representation, participation of civil society
- *What is decided:* legislation, policies, budgets, programmes practices
- *How it is decided:* accountability and transparency; participation of local communities to be affected
- *How it is enforced or implemented:* accountability, awareness raising.

3. How Advocacy occurs, or the way in which it occurs is important

People centred advocacy means involving the affected communities themselves in advocating for change. This requires:

- accountability and transparency
- the participation of the people/communities that will be affected
- their active involvement in advocating for change.

4. People-centred advocacy has its own change dynamic.

Since the community controls the process it has a voice and is enabled to learn new skills which:

- strengthens its capacity, organisation and power and its involvement in decision-making
- increases the legitimacy of community participation
- improves the accountability of public institutions
- improves the material situation of individuals
- expands their self-awareness as citizens with both responsibilities and rights.

WaterAid – A guide to advocacy, p9



Advocacy: benefits and advantages, risks and concerns

Advocacy is essentially a change process and as such can have both positive and negative effects.

Determining the *benefits* of the outcome of an Advocacy initiative provides the rationale for what organisations intend to do.

It is equally important, however, to be aware of the *risks*. Risk analysis is a critical part of planning a strategy or campaign.

ACTIVITY TWO	
Advocacy offers: <i>From CID Workshop 2003</i>	
Benefits/Advantages	Risks/Concerns
Ethical solutions and alternatives	Agencies become self righteous
An opportunity for the voices of the vulnerable/marginalised to be heard by decision makers	Co-option (not cooperation) of the poor and dispossessed – a sense of manipulation and then alienation
Passion and commitment to the development partners	Disillusionment of the poor and dispossessed – promising much, delivering little
Partnership not ownership	Knee jerk reaction to issues/problems
Satisfaction and achievement not re-victimisation	Failure to recognise complexity and the linkages between issues which can sometimes lead to a solution itself causing a significant problem downstream
A means of addressing underlying causes	Not seeing the value of other perspectives – cultural, personal, ideological
Access to a rich mix of values – an important part of the democratic process	The media is rarely capable of dealing with complexities and positives
Opportunities for creative problem solving	Organisational purity and principles in tension with pragmatism
An alternative voice to government in addressing need	If seen as too aggressive and anti-government, agency might lose credibility and even access to government funding
A way of getting to root causes	



ADVOCACY PRINCIPLES

Most NGOs have guiding principles and ethical statements which provide a common basis of understanding to guide their work.

It is helpful for organisations to develop a separate but aligned set of principles for their advocacy work.

Each agency must decide for itself what is essential and what its advocacy priorities are.

EXAMPLE: WaterAid advocacy principles

- Working from knowledge and evidence
- Entering dialogue on priority issues
- Working in alliances/partnership/networks
- Building capacity
- Creating and promoting awareness

WaterAid – A guide to advocacy, p48



ACTIVITY THREE

Suggestions to help develop advocacy principles

From CID Workshop 2003

- Speaking in solidarity "with" the poor/dispossessed, not "for" the poor/dispossessed
- Having legitimacy/credibility in the area you are focusing on
- Having the mandate – based on a sound working partnership with the people who own the cause
- Working in partnership – being consultative
- Being motivated and committed
- Working from well researched/informed material which is sound, strong and credible and which understands/acknowledges opposing arguments and conflicting views
- Thinking around all the consequences and interconnections of activities
- Being prepared to tackle the apparently impossible
- Being true to principles and acting consistently
- Commitment to the long term
- Transparency
- Accountability
- Responsibility (explain, rationalise)
- Being prepared to challenge one's own organisation regarding principles to live up to
- Openness at a personal level – being open to intuitive judgements
- Building capacity in the partners
- Building partnership & alliances
- Knowing the message and target audience
- Creating awareness and being able to **measure** this appropriately



DIFFERENT ADVOCACY MODELS

Each organisation has a particular approach to the way in which it operates. Its strategies and activities come from the model (or style) it works under.

Organisations fit somewhere along this continuum and most use more than one model at any given time, or over a period of time.

Co-operation – Education – Persuasion – Litigation – Contestation/Confrontation

WaterAid – A guide to advocacy, p47

Definitions

Cooperation: The organisation is considered to be an important ally by those in power and works alongside its advocacy targets to achieve the desired change.

Education: The organisation is an authority on the topic. It has the expertise, the experts and the research to provide accurate and complete data/information to back up its position. Its advice/research is accepted and trusted.

Persuasion: The organisation uses a range of strategies to gain support; education, constructive rational argument, cost benefit analysis, ethical/moral suasion, emotional suasion. Persuasive reasoning perhaps captures the tone of this model.

Litigation: The organisation uses the legal and political systems to mount legal challenges to existing practice or interpretation of the law, and to change the law.

Contestation/Confrontation: The organisation's strategy is to use physical and legal force to create change. It uses direct action linked to media coverage, the threat of litigation and publicity, the threat of political and organisational embarrassment.

ACTIVITY FOUR				
Identify where your organisation fits on the continuum				
Co-operation	Education	Persuasion	Litigation	Contestation/Confrontation



ADVOCACY IN ACTION – A PERSONAL REFLECTION

Kate Dewes: The New Zealand Peace Foundation, the Disarmament and Security Centre

Kate has a Ph.D. and is an O.N.Z.M. (Officer of the New Zealand Order of Merit). She has coordinated the South Island Regional Office of the Aotearoa/New Zealand Peace Foundation for 20 years. Between 1988–90 she served on the Public Advisory Committee on Disarmament and Arms Control, and was reappointed in 2000.

A pioneer of the World Court Project (WCP) – an international campaign by a network of citizen organisations which led to a legal challenge to nuclear deterrence in the International Court of Justice – Kate was on the International Steering Committee of the project from 1992–96.

She has been a Vice-President of the International Peace Bureau from 1997–2003 and recently served as the New Zealand government expert on the UN Study on Disarmament and Non-Proliferation Education from 2001–2002.

Kate says advocacy must be clear about its purpose.

Advocacy comes from a base of pure intent. This:

- guides the way you dialogue with people
- guides the way you have dialogue with those who have opposing views.

It should be based on research which:

- is your authority – gives you legitimacy
- is thorough so that you have credibility when arguing your position – you know the counter arguments and can back them up with reputable sources
- should be provided for and shared with other groups.

It is important to:

- respect others, those with opposing views, your self, your own group
- respect those with opposing views and not view them as the “enemy”
- always acknowledge any changes of stance/values of those with opposing views or those you need to influence
- be respectful of “dress code” when talking with decision-makers so they cannot dismiss you on grounds of appearance rather than substance.



Model the processes you want achieved:

- be flexible when working with others, you cannot dictate to, or own each others processes
- be alert to each new situation – it maybe appropriate to share the roles of the note – taker, presenter, researcher etc. in response to different cultural processes.

Make choices:

- take risks in order to gain benefits
- sort out your bottom lines.

Build a support group to stand beside you and stay there. Use them to help you:

- find ways to cope – with your family, own movement and the establishment
- juggle family and advocacy sensitively – there can be a danger of family alienation.

Learn to:

- deal with the Tall Poppy syndrome
- deal with accusations such as “you’re selling out because you’re sitting with men and dressing up”.



SECTION 2

GETTING STARTED – AN ACTION PLAN PRIMER





INTRODUCTION

Using the resource

Advocacy is a dynamic process; a cycle of continuous learning. Each phase of the process feeds back new information which requires revisiting early assumptions and decisions in order to inform the way ahead.

The order in which the tools are used will vary according to the issues, the approach, or the organisation that is running the campaign.

It is important to adapt the planning and action processes to suit:

- your organisation
- the context
- the particular campaign and
- your resources.

The processes and models described in this resource are a guide not a straightjacket.

The *Action Plan Primer* provides examples of planning models drawn from good practice advocacy guides and models published by international NGOs (*see Resources p43*) and is illustrated with material from the CID workshop Case Study.

The Case Study issue used was:

Designing an 0.7% advocacy campaign* as a joint NGO project.

This was chosen because it was relevant to the work of the NGOs and had the potential at a later stage to provide a basis for joint work on a common project.

* A campaign to persuade Government to produce a policy demonstrating how it would move towards spending 0.7% of GNI on ODA by 2015



STEP ONE: RESEARCH, ANALYSIS & DATA GATHERING

Organisational analysis – looking at ourselves

A Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats (SWOT) analysis is a well known and useful approach to organisational analysis.

A SWOT analysis is used to scan the environment of an organisation or group of organisations and can be used to:

- identify any critical issues or priority areas to be addressed
- identify strategic issues or challenges facing the group
- identify internal and external stakeholders' different expectations
- identify areas of strengths and weaknesses within the group
- assess any external threats and opportunities
- provide insights into the performance of the organisation/s
- assess the effectiveness of policies and procedures; and identify significant political, legal, social, technological, economic or demographic changes in the organisation/s environment.

In this case the SWOT analysis was used to look at the strengths and weaknesses of the NGOs as a group, and to think about the way these might offer opportunities or threats to the group as a whole, and to different elements of the group.

Suggested Approach

Gather together a number of people across a full range of stakeholders.

The wider the range of people participating, the more encompassing and useful the exercise will be.

It is important that:

- the group be encouraged to put forward as many ideas as possible
- that no criticism or judgement of any idea is made until the end
- every idea must stay until it is discussed, accepted, ranked or discarded.



OBJECTIVE: DESIGNING A JOINT NGO 0.7% ODA ADVOCACY CAMPAIGN

CID WORKSHOP 2003: SWOT ANALYSIS

The participants identified the following characteristics of NGOs as a group.

<p>Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lots of development experience Cooperation between NGOs Commitment Global networks Knowledge Research skills – research base Skill range Breadth of experience Resources Links with academic community Capacity Professionalism Grassroots testimony Diversity International legitimacy – Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) Domestic legitimacy – huge number of people connected to NGOs Mechanisms for NGO accountability are in place (VASS) Internal analysis – integrity Access to govt Media relationships & access International solidarity Brand value – collectively 	<p>Weaknesses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Careerism Competition between NGOs Personality conflicts Ideological debate and conflict Small/size of membership Fragmented NGO community Strain on Human Resources (people) and time Limited capacity to utilise more funds Internal uncertainty and misgivings Other priorities among NGOs Lack of capacity to absorb and administer extra money (both NGOs and NZAID) Dissension internally Decision-making by committee Patch protection Brand competition
<p>Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Diverse approaches possible Media relationship and access Government links could be maximised/exploited Sympathetic MPs NZ pride in being a leader in aid Current political environment (potentially sympathetic govt) Government surplus – state of economy Government has signed on to MDGs Steps/definition of campaign New alliances/members Growth linking Government/NGO partnership growth Pacific community partnerships Refugee/migrant groups partnerships NGO capacity to do more with more \$ 	<p>Threats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of public interest, knowledge Public misconceptions Negative image of NGOs – one scandal can affect all Change of Government Media “Red tape” tangle Competition for money and image Self promotion Opponents publicly sabotaging rival NGOs Public apathy External agencies who disagree with the campaign Government co-option Competition with domestic agencies Capacity of NZAID to absorb more \$



Analysing the Issue

Having examined, determined and recorded the organisational capability the next step is to analyse the issue.

Analysis and research is important for a number of reasons:

- to increase efficiency
- to avoid embarrassing or politically damaging mistakes
- to help target effort and resources most effectively.

"... as soon as the problem has been defined people may have immediate ideas about how to solve the problem through advocacy. The temptation is to move straight away to work on the basis of those ideas – to get moving as quickly as possible.

But these initiatives need to be channelled into a coherent framework, developing further advocacy solutions along the way so that you end up with a strategic advocacy programme where all activities complement each other, directed towards our common purpose."

Save the Children (UK)

The Steps:

- 1) Break the issue into its component parts or "sub issues" and list them in a table.
- 2) For each issue or "sub issue" identify the
 - consequences of the problem
 - causes
 - possible solutions or alternatives

A simple table can be helpful for this stage of the process.

Problem Analysis Framework			
Sub-issues	Consequences	Causes	Solutions
Sub-issue 1			
Sub-issue 2			
Sub-issue 3 etc.			

WaterAid – A guide to advocacy



Another useful approach to issue analysis is a "Problem Tree".

This is a group process which helps people visualise the links between the main issue, resulting problems (or consequences) and the root causes.

The Problem Tree

The Steps:

- 1) Draw the tree – on the ground or on flip chart paper
- 2) Write the **main problem** on the trunk
- 3) On individual pieces of paper write the **consequences/problems** that result from the main issue. These are stuck onto the branches as leaves.
- 4) On individual pieces of paper participants then write the **causes** of the problems which are then stuck on as "the roots" of the tree
- 5) Record the results

WaterAid – A guide to advocacy

The following table illustrates how this works in practice.



CID WORKSHOP 2003 EXAMPLE: PROBLEM TREE

Main Problem: Not enough funds for Aid work.	
Objective: Increase ODA funding to 0.7% of GNI	
Root Causes	Consequences/problems
<p>Neo-liberalism permeated society (1980s)</p> <p>Domestic priorities</p> <p>Conflicting needs – domestic/ international;</p> <p>Not a priority with govt or public;</p> <p>No commitment from govt or public;</p> <p>Attitudes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NZ is too poor • it's not our problem • it's not NZ's responsibility • ignorance • NZ should look after itself first • it's the Third world's own fault. <p>NZ doesn't implement international charters</p> <p>Lack of understanding of international charters and the role of development in "the world"</p> <p>NGOs are limited and there is a lack of unity</p> <p>Unfair trade, debt problem, lack of commitment to international charters and development, aid as an "industry"</p> <p>Huge vested interests blocking/diverting aid, lack of confidence, knowledge in way some countries operate, corruption, conflict, problem the way aid is managed</p> <p>Not enough \$ being put into aid and development</p>	<p>Not enough development education in NZ so domestic attitudes remain narrowly focused</p> <p>NGOs capacity not utilised fully, or developed</p> <p>Competitiveness between NGOs</p> <p>Short term project mentality</p> <p>Money controlled here (NZ) – partners on the ground not empowered to make decisions</p> <p>Major \$ going to inappropriate bi/multi-lateral agents</p> <p>Inability to meet MDG</p> <p>Plight of people living in poverty not addressed</p> <p>The consequences lead to self-perpetuating problems: eg, illiteracy programmes not done well, continuing high illiteracy rate, no education, no growth, continuing burden</p> <p>Poor health and educational outcomes, higher mortality, continuing poverty, links to hopelessness, links to terrorism</p> <p>Growing gaps between urban and rural haves and have-nots.</p> <p>Continuing poverty leads to conflict, leads to corruption, leads to oppression, leads to people dying</p> <p>Human rights abuses lead to environmental degradation, lead to civil society breakdown, lead to dictatorship, lead to WAR</p>

The results and evidence produced by this analysis is used to help develop your objectives and to inform your Action Plan.



STEP TWO: SETTING SMART OBJECTIVES

Objectives explain why we want to go towards a particular outcome, what we are trying to achieve as steps towards the higher level outcomes.

The identification of objectives will link directly with the evidence from your analysis of the issue/problem.

Smart objectives are:

Specific: what do you want to happen?

Measurable: will you know when you've achieved it?

Achievable: is it possible to achieve given your resources and time?

Relevant: is it relevant to all stakeholders and the real problem?

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

CID WORKSHOP 2003 : SMART OBJECTIVE EXAMPLE

Objective	Persuade a group of government MPs to take on the 0.7% campaign as an issue.
Specific	Get MPs motivated to push the 0.7% campaign within parliament
Measurable	At least 6 MPs take some action (eg, raising it in parliament, caucus etc.)
Achievable	Objective & measures are achievable (we have 6 MPs who are sympathetic)
Relevant	Yes – getting MPs on board is essential (though not sufficient) – 0.7% will have to be achieved through parliamentary process
Time-bound	One year from now (currently in middle of parliamentary cycle)
SMART Objective	Within one year, we have six government MPs who have taken action to advance the 0.7% campaign



STEP THREE: IDENTIFYING THE KEY PLAYERS

The purpose of this step is to identify those with a vested interest in seeing the goals of the advocacy project:

- being realised
- being blocked.

Allies: People who are “on your side” either because they will benefit directly, or because they share the same objectives and want to help bring about these changes as part of a broader movement.

Beneficiaries: People whose lives will be improved by the successful achievement of your advocacy goals. They can also be called “allies” but a beneficiary is often a more passive stakeholder than an ally.

Adversaries: People who are opposed to what you’re trying to do. These people could become allies in time, with greater understanding of the issues, or could be standing in the way of what you’re trying to do. Adversaries can become targets of your advocacy project if you are planning a series of activities to “win them around”.

Internal Stakeholders: A grouping used to define people within your own organisation, network or alliance who are actively collaborating on the design, management and execution of your project. Not necessarily all are allies because some people within your own organisation will be sceptical about doing advocacy work at all, and reluctant to lend their time to it. Individuals in this group are usually people with whom you have regular contact.
BOND Strategy Notes

Influencers: Those who through their position, relationship, knowledge or status are able to influence those with the power of decision making, or the direction of policy changes.

Decision Makers: Those with the authority or power to make the decisions which will effect/ implement the desired change.



CID WORKSHOP 2003:

Some examples relating to the 0.7% campaign

<p>Allies</p>	<p>CID members, branches, constituents Sympathetic MPs Countries that have already achieved the goal OECD DAC committee Some churches Some businesses – BCSD Other NGOs including global groups Unions Academics in development studies Individuals Some prominent New Zealanders NZAID Partners in development</p>
<p>Beneficiaries</p>	<p>Overseas partners Consultants/contractors – private sector People in developing countries Governments in developing countries Pacific People NGOs Staff of NZAID & NGOs</p>
<p>Adversaries</p>	<p>Business (some) Some politicians Ministers for other domestic programmes Domestic ministries Some public Some domestic NGOs – other demands on government funding</p>
<p>Internal Stakeholders</p>	<p>NZAID CID & Other international development NGOs Contractors/consultants</p>

Note: People/organisations can be in more than one of these categories at any one time.



Building Alliances

For maximum effectiveness NZ international development NGOs need to collaborate; work together, engage on joint projects, remain committed as a group.

Advantages:

- Provides an opportunity to share expertise, knowledge and lessons learned
- Provides access to other resources such as funding
- Several groups speaking with one voice are more likely to be taken seriously than if each group works separately
- Working within partnerships or networks bolsters morale, support and solidarity
- Partnerships with or between young people are a good way to ensure their voices are heard
- Working in partnerships is also a first step towards strengthening civil society and furthering the social change process which many see as a central goal of advocacy work.

SCF (UK) Advocacy Handbook

Key Factors for Success:

Without these the alliance/partnership will fail.

- *Transparency:* each of the partners must understand the objectives of the other parties even if they do not share them fully.
- *Common Purpose:* there must be common ground between the parties, even if the techniques and approaches differ.
- *Acceptance of different approaches:* an ability to work with or around different approaches.



Key Decision Makers and Influencers – Identifying Targets

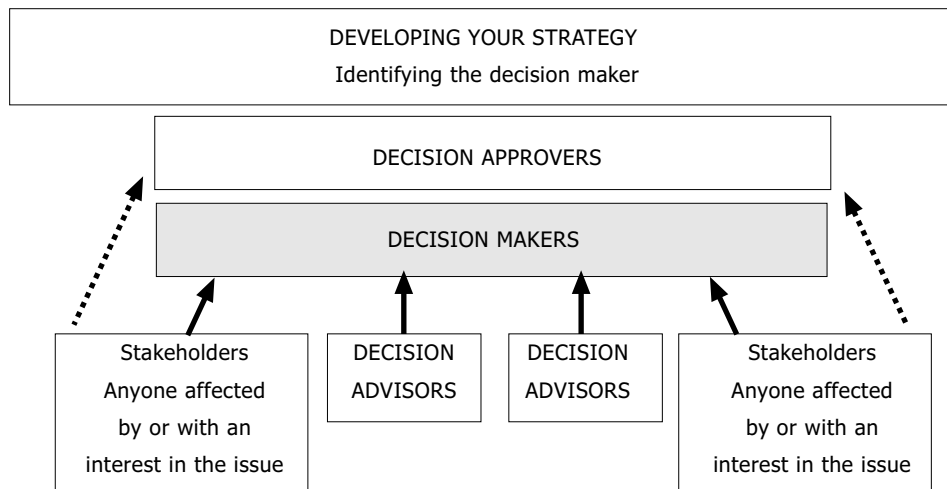
Analysing the context

In order to change things it is important to understand how change occurs. We need to identify what happens in reality, rather than what happens in theory.

This requires an analysis of where and how the decision-making process takes place for the selected issue:

- Where are the decisions made about this particular issue?
eg, there is no point in directing advocacy activity at local government if the decisions are made nationally
- How are those decisions made?
eg, organisations may find the most important decision making steps happen informally
- Who are the influencers?
eg, officials, friends or family, the public
- Who makes the decision/s?

One approach to this process is to draw up a table such as the following which will help identify the targets and influencers for each of your advocacy objectives.



Source: *Global Small Arms Resource Handbook*

The advocacy strategy should target each of these decision levels in order to influence and inform the “decision maker”.

Next to each target list:

- What do they know?
- What is their attitude?
- What do they care about?



- What information do they need?
- Who has the power?
- Who are the key influencers?

The process of drawing up this table will provide guidance for the subsequent stages in the advocacy planning cycle, such as:

- Which of these people (targets and influentials) need more information?
- What information do they need?
- Who may be directly opposed to the issues?
- What are the key pressure points that the targets care about that can be taken into account when framing the message and selecting tools and approaches?

Influences and influencing

When considering how to influence others it can be helpful to gain some personal insight into how we ourselves are influenced so that in turn we can focus on how best to influence our advocacy targets.

This is a group exercise although individuals will also find it useful to work through the steps.

HOW ARE YOU INFLUENCED?	
Step 1	Select a decision you have recently made at work or home.
Step 2	<p>Ask yourself the following:</p> <p>What was your final decision?</p> <p>What was the competing information?</p> <p>What information convinced you to change your mind?</p> <p>What means or media was used for the information to reach you?</p> <p>Why did you believe it?</p>
Step 3	Share your lists with the rest of the group and discuss the means by which each person was influenced.
Step 4	Discuss the selected advocacy targets and which means or tools will be most effective in reaching them.

WaterAid – A guide to advocacy



This exercise illustrates the point that each decision maker is influenced more by some methods than by others, and that in many cases a range of appropriate methods can have the greatest effect.

Additional points:

- Always think about and include in your planning those who are opposed to what you are trying to achieve
- Do the numbers – know the strength of the opposition
- Present credible alternatives.

STEP FOUR: COMMUNICATING THE MESSAGE

NGOs use a wide range of tools to get their message across. Selecting the most appropriate tools for the work builds on the analysis of your advocacy targets.

Choosing Approaches – broad strategies and activities

There are a range of approaches that can be employed in advocacy. Some are confrontational while others involve working alongside advocacy targets to achieve the desired change. These approaches range along the same continuum as **Advocacy Models** and will probably involve more than one approach at any one time, or over time.

- **Policy analysis**
proving the case for change and alternatives
- **Demonstrating solutions**
through positive project work
- **Action research**
documenting the impact of the policies or good practice of other groups especially their impact on the poor
- **Awareness raising**
either with the individual or the general public
- **Campaigning**
highlighting, publicising and mobilising public support
- **Building partnerships and networking**
- **Media work**
raising awareness to the media, and through them the general public and others
- **Mobilising the general public**
to put pressure on the decision makers
- **Creating ways for people to act for themselves**

WaterAid – A guide to advocacy, p48



The tools that give effect to the strategies

Each method or tool has positive and negative aspects in terms of its:

- potential to reach a wide number of people
- cost-effectiveness.

For example, the “free” news media television and radio will be seen or heard by more people than any other method.

However, television coverage is generally measured in seconds whereas radio is more likely to provide more substantive reporting (as can magazines and newspapers).

Flyers and direct mail have the next widest audience. But that needs to be weighed against how much information people actually take in from these media.

THE TOOLS

Meetings	Mass Media	Electronic Media	Print	Visual/audio
Lobbying	Television	Web-sites	Reports	Drama/Theatre
Meetings	Radio	E-mail	Letter writing	Audio tapes
Negotiation	Newspapers	Video	Leaflets	Cassettes
Project visits			News letters	Slides
Demonstrations/ rallies			Magazines	

Selecting what will work most effectively is determined by the results of the analysis already carried out in the earlier three steps:

- Analysis of the issue
- Analysis of the decision makers/targets
- Analysis of what/who influences the targets.

Other factors that will affect the decision about what action/s to take are:

- The organisation’s resources (financial, staff, time, contacts, networks, relationships)
- The advocacy aims
- The organisation’s ways of working – its model, its principles.



Target Audience/s

Gather as much information as you can about the proposed audience/s so that you deliver accurate, credible, appropriate and timely information with the purpose of prompting them into taking action.

How do they make decisions?

- Who do they listen to and for what kind of advice?
- Who are their trusted advisers?
- Where would they go to check/substantiate claims made by your organisation?
- How do they regard your organisation? As an ally, or as the enemy?
- What sources of information do they regard as credible?
- What sources do they regard as inaccurate or biased?

Where do they go for information to help them make decisions?

Crafting the message

The checklist that follows can help to ensure that the message is targeted appropriately and the various steps have been checked or implemented.

Checklist – Crafting the message	Completed/ Yes
Define the message – a simple outline.	
Decide what information is needed. Do you need more research?	
Is the information/evidence credible; accurate, clear, rock solid?	
Craft each message for an individual even if an institution is targeted. Put yourself in their shoes before you begin to communicate.	
Hammer the message home using as many different media as possible.	
The message and language should always be consistent.	
Where possible let those on whose behalf you are advocating speak, write, lobby, tell the stories for themselves.	
The message should be clear and simple, but not over simplified or in danger of creating a distorted message.	
Use the language of the target audience and avoid technical terms or jargon.	
Be clear about what you want your audience TO DO as a result of hearing the message.	
If working as part of a network/collaboration ensure that the message neither surprises nor compromises any of the members.	

Adapted from BOND strategy notes



Note: opportunities to get the message across are few; be ready to seize them and to respond when they do arise.

Preparing a communication/media action plan

Planning is essential for effective communication. The following provides a useful framework.

1) Prepare a timeline

List external and internal events and opportunities you could use as pegs.

2) List the activities to be carried out

Find an appropriate mix of 'tools' for your audience: direct lobbying, public campaign, media, organisational news sheet.

3) Allocate responsibilities for carrying them out

Mechanisms for information and feedback between those involved.
Complementary activities to be carried out by allies.

4) Analyse any problems – potential or current

The position of key players – what might change?

BOND Strategy Notes

Additional points:

Policymakers are busy people who are bombarded with ideas, both good and bad, all the time.

"The bus is crowded" with people trying to make an impact on decision makers, to gain media coverage and to gain public attention.

Organisations need to be particularly focused, vigilant, creative and determined to be heard and understood.



Political lobbying

Advocacy is about change which in most cases involves a shift of power.

An understanding of power relationships is fundamental to achieving political and/or policy change.

As one commentator puts it *“the question of ‘power’ and the changing of power equations is an essential aspect of the process of advocacy. It is therefore a process that is intimately linked with the world of politics.”* WaterAid – A guide to advocacy

Issues of power and politics are not only relevant at national and international levels. Local politics can affect policy change at the community level in much the same way.

The authors of the *SCF (UK) Advocacy Handbook* put it this way.

“if you want to bring about change you need to understand how change happens. This will vary considerably depending on your local context. For example, there is no point directing your advocacy work at local government if decisions are made nationally.

In many cases there are official decision-makers, and processes by which decisions are made. However you may discover that the most important steps in decision making happen informally, or that they are obscured or hidden.

It is important that you identify what happens in reality, rather than what happens in theory... Does formal, legal change necessarily lead to real change on the ground? Who can translate decisions into action?”

To achieve meaningful change we need to research and understand which decision-making processes are relevant to the issue on which we are working.

At the same time there is a need to avoid “party politics” so that the work of the NGO cannot be undermined by accusations of partisanship.

Political lobbying – a strategic approach

Tim Barnett, currently MP for Christchurch Central has had a long career in the voluntary sector both in New Zealand and in England. From those ‘lessons of experience’ he has written a guide called **Political Lobbying – how to plan and deliver a strategy.** (See Resources page 43)

The guide explains what lobbying is and provides a planning process along with checklists, guidelines and helpful hints on each of the steps.

His key messages are:

- See lobbying as a core activity
- You need a valid issue, credible organisation and good timing
- Know and believe in your cause and yourself



- Market the issue well
- Understand your opponents
- Appreciate your target/s
- Sustain your energy
- Make partnerships – there is strength in numbers
- Take nothing for granted and
- Be a negotiator not a beggar – approach the lobby experience as an equal.

Timing

Timing is important.

There is a tendency for NGOs to intervene in the later stages of the decision making process when the die is effectively cast. This limits the effectiveness of the intervention. This can be due to:

- inadequate forward planning
- not having timely access to policy decisions/documents
- unrealistic/inadequate policy response timeframes given by policy makers
- not being in the information loop in the first place.

An understanding of the policy development/implementation cycle and knowledge of policy initiatives is essential so that organisations can be prepared for formal or informal input at the appropriate stage.



STEP FIVE: PUTTING IT TOGETHER

Advocacy as a strategic development tool is a planned process requiring the same work and approach as an organisation's annual or strategic plan.

An Advocacy Action Plan will include a range of elements such as:

- Objectives
- Activities
- Targets
- Mechanisms
- Indicators
- Timeframes
- People responsible
- Reviews: of progress and timeframes
- Monitoring and evaluation.

What is included will depend on the approach and the degree of complexity of the objective or process, and what needs to be measured.

The plan's objectives, targets and results will link directly with the evidence gathered and decisions made during the steps of:

- Research, analysis & data gathering
- Identifying the key players
- Communicating the message.

Advocacy work is most often slow and time-consuming. It requires long-term commitment to achieve real change and action plans should reflect this.

The following two examples demonstrate different approaches to action planning.

These models can be adapted or adopted depending on the project and organisational fit.



1. WATERAID ADVOCACY ACTION PLAN EXAMPLE

Objectives	Activities	Target	Indicators	Timing	People Responsible	Review Planned
1. Improve the conditions in housing, water and sanitation	1a. Lobbying though direct contact	1a. National and local government (politicians and officials) 1b. Neighbouring residents 1c. Other local communities eg, factories 1d. Slum landlords	1a. More money from local/national government 1b. Better housing 1c. Better health care provision	1a. Linked initially with programmes of education and training	X	Xx/yy/zz
2. Community organisation to work for their future	2a. Training and education – participation in defining problem and suggestion solutions	2a. Women	2a. Women participate in defining problem and working for solution	2.a As soon as possible	XX	Xx/yy/zz
3. Empower women in slums to gain confidence and skills to tackle	3a. Training and education to build experience and confidence in lobbying	3a. Women	3a. Women involved in lobbying 3b. Women build good relationships with policy makers	3a. As soon as possible	XX	Xx/yy/zz

WaterAid – a guide to advocacy

2. OXFAM EXAMPLE OF A RESEARCH-BASED APPROACH TO AN ISSUE CAMPAIGN

Set impact objectives					
What do we want to change?	Who are our targets?	How are they susceptible to influence?	How can we best influence them?	What mechanisms can we use?	What are our outputs?
Identify: Policy Knowledge Attitude Practice Objectives	Identify: key & peripheral targets	Analyse current position of targets, public, etc; identify external hooks	Determine optimum mix of approaches, identify broad desired use of channels & products	Identify opportunities in – and capacity of the programme	Estimate anticipated levels of response; set output targets
Set indicators					Review impact objectives

Source: OXFAM

WaterAid – A guide to advocacy



**CID WORKSHOP 2003:
CASE STUDY EXAMPLE OF AN ACTION PLAN**

Planning for elements of an ODA 0.7% campaign

Example One:

What do we need to change to reach the 0.7% goal?	What mechanisms can we use? What do we need to know?
<p>Attitudes</p> <p>To development To support for an increase in ODA For ODA to become more of a priority To an increase in % of GNI to ODA</p>	<p>Research</p> <p>The government's attitude to ODA Their position on ODA The public attitude to ODA The figures: monitor the % of GNI to ODA internationally and in NZ Our international ODA commitments</p>
Who are our targets?	What are they susceptible to influence through?
Government & its partners	Voters, party position, public opinion, hard facts, information
Public & Opposition	Through information (seeing/ hearing) about tragic events Hearing from people who have authority or status Appeals to emotions, morality Peer group pressure Education
Some businesses	Reputation Shareholder pressure Money \$
Domestic NGOs	Their stakeholders Networks Funders Own principles Their membership
Media	Ratings Human interest Reader/viewer attitudes Advertisers



How best to influence our targets?	
	Credible research
Government & its partners	<p>Hard facts – show the benefits</p> <p>Connect real people and real change to the policy</p> <p>Timing eg, election</p> <p>Evidence of public support</p> <p>Providing information/examples of “real” experience</p>
The Public	<p>Information in media – real stories, real people</p> <p>Using prominent people to educate</p> <p>Connecting the issues to NZers</p>

Example Two:

Activities	Target	Indicators	Time	People
1. Costing the advocacy campaign & fundraising	CID & CID members - \$ got	Costing done	ASAP	CID?
2. Meet with MPS who support the objective: Find our more about parliamentary support/ interest groups	MPS who are willing to educate/inform/ influence other MPs	Information acquired	ASAP	Sub-group appointed
3. Develop lobbying dossier/kit: charts power point reference list briefing paper	Potential recruits/ converts	Resource kit completed	3 months	Seconded paid personnel
4. Research Politicians their attitudes backgrounds interests danger areas reputation	List in categories of supporters/neutral/ opposed	Data base & shortlist completed	3 months	Seconded paid personnel
5. Approach politicians build relationships exploit existing connections lobby follow up	Ditto above once short-listed	Meetings arranged Relationships commenced Viewpoints shared	3-9 months	Appointed sub-group



STEP SIX: MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The purpose of monitoring and evaluation is to:

- provide information on the progress of each of the objectives
- evaluate the contribution different elements of the plan and the plan itself are making to achieving the objectives and outcomes
- provide evidence of progress for reporting to funders, sponsors and stakeholders.

The process for each advocacy project should be consistent, planned and regular.

The analysis will include:

- how the advocacy project is progressing against the timelines and targets
- the extent to which the objectives have been achieved or not achieved
- how far the activities are moving the advocacy plan objectives towards the desired outcomes.

The information gathered from regular monitoring feeds back into the project to inform and/or even change future initiatives or elements of the plan.

Questions include:

- Will the objective be achieved in the timeframe?
- Is the timeframe for achieving the objective still appropriate?
- Is the objective appropriately resourced – time, money, staffing?
- Are the mechanisms/interventions achieving their objectives?
- Are the targets still the appropriate ones? Is the information they are receiving the right information?
- Is the objective still relevant – or have some issues changed?
- Will the objective be achieved in terms of time, cost, resources?

Indicators include:

- project progress
- organisational reputation with targets/influencers
- media coverage
- stakeholder attitudes
- public opinion.



For each advocacy project organisations should:

- adopt a consistent reporting format
- adopt a consistent timeframe for reporting on each objective depending on the nature and scope of the project i.e. monthly, quarterly, six monthly
- assign responsibilities for monitoring and reporting.

SUMMARY POINTS

Advocacy is a strategic process. It is

- planned
- professional
- thoughtful
- long term.

There is no one right way to advocate. This and other resources are guides not constraints.

Use and/or develop a process or processes that best suits the organisation.

Keep the processes simple.

Accurate and complete research is critical for reputation and legitimacy.

It is a long term process requiring patience, persistence and adaptability.

Advocacy plans must be monitored and evaluated to measure progress and for reporting to key audiences.

Above all, advocacy work must be built on personal and organisational integrity.



SECTION 3 RESOURCES





RESOURCES

Advocacy What's it all About? A guide to advocacy work in the water and sanitation sector, WaterAid 2001. Online resource.

http://www.wateraid.org.uk/site/in_depth/why_advocacy/155.asp?keyword=advocacy%20guide

Aotearoa/New Zealand at the World Court, Kate Dewes and Robert Green, The Raven Press 1999. Available from the Disarmament and Security Centre, P O Box 8390, Christchurch.

BOND Guidance Notes

Introducing Advocacy 1-4, Online resources only.

<http://www.bond.org.uk/pubs/index.html#uk>

Political Lobbying – how to plan and deliver a strategy, Tim Barnett MP.

Available free of charge from Tim Barnett MP, Parliament Buildings, Wellington.

Working for Change in Education: A handbook for planning advocacy, Save the Children UK, 2000.

Global Small Arms Resource Handbook, Safer World U.K. in partnership with International Alert and Oxfam (forthcoming).

http://www.saferworld.org.uk/arms_security/handbook.htm



