

Advocacy Strategies and Approaches

A Resource Manual

Second Edition



About the Organisations

International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development

The International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD) is an independent regional knowledge, learning and enabling centre serving the eight regional member countries of the Hindu Kush-Himalayas – Afghanistan 🇦🇫, Bangladesh 🇬🇧, Bhutan 🇧🇹, China 🇨🇳, India 🇮🇳, Myanmar 🇲🇲, Nepal 🇳🇵, and Pakistan 🇵🇰 – and the global mountain community. Founded in 1983, ICIMOD is based in Kathmandu, Nepal, and brings together a partnership of regional member countries, partner institutions, and donors with a commitment for development action to secure a better future for the people and environment of the Hindu Kush-Himalayas. ICIMOD's activities are supported by its core programme donors: the Governments of Austria, Denmark, Germany, Netherlands, Norway, Switzerland, and its regional member countries, along with programme co-financing donors. The primary objective of the Centre is to promote the development of an economically and environmentally sound mountain ecosystem and to improve the living standards of mountain populations.

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ICCO's mission is to work towards a world where poverty and injustice are no longer present. The work of ICCO, Interchurch Organisation for Development Co-operation, consists of financing activities which stimulate and enable people to organise dignified housing and living conditions in their own way. ICCO is active in countries in Africa and the Middle East, Asia and the Pacific, Latin America and the Caribbean, and Central and Eastern Europe.

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A Resource Manual

Second Edition

Compiled by
Nani Ram Subedi

International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development
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Foreword

Participation of civil society organisations in development processes is recognised to be a critical factor for the promotion of sustainable mountain development. There is also evidence that mountain people tend to be marginalised from mainstream policy-making processes in most countries of the Hindu Kush-Himalayas. One of the participatory ways to change this situation is to enhance the capacity of community-based organisations (CBOs) to bring the specific opinions and needs of mountain people to the attention of policy makers and development organisations. With this in view, ICIMOD started a 'Regional Programme for Capacity Building of Community-based Organisations in Advocacy Strategies in the Hindu Kush-Himalayas' in 2003 supported by the Interchurch Organisation for Development Cooperation (ICCO), The Netherlands.

The main objective of the programme is to enhance the capacities of CBOs to perform better by developing enhanced skills in advocacy. To achieve this, the programme is implemented in collaboration with over 40 selected civil society organisations and networks mainly from Bangladesh, India, Nepal, and Pakistan. In response to the needs identified by the collaborating partners, ICIMOD focused on enlarging the human resource pool in advocacy skills by organising Training of Trainers (ToT) programmes in advocacy strategies with the support of resource persons from various institutions. A resource book and training manual were developed to provide materials for trainees to replicate the training, and were published in 2005 after being tested in ongoing courses. The manuals proved very popular in the region. To increase their reach and usefulness, ICIMOD supported interested partners to translate and publish the books; the training manual has been brought out in Bengali, Nepali, Hindi, and Urdu.

Based on the lessons learned from subsequent training programmes, issue-based advocacy activities, and feedback from partners and participants, we are glad to present second fully revised editions of both the manual and the resource book. With the support of our partners, we have been able to improve, revise, and add new tools, techniques, and resource materials. We hope that these volumes will again attract a wide audience and contribute to improving the lives of many people in the mountains of the Hindu Kush-Himalayas and beyond!

Michael Kollmair
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Sustainable Livelihoods and Poverty Reduction (SLPR)
ICIMOD

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I would first like to thank Sofia Sprechmann, whose training in advocacy skills in various contexts inspired me to develop this manual. The resource materials from the manual she co-authored, 'Advocacy Tools and Guidelines: Promoting Policy Change'* have been adapted here to capacity building in advocacy in the context of the mountains.

In addition, several examples are included from the countries of the Hindu Kush-Himalayas, that were collected during field visits and from interaction with various organisations: I would like to thank all who contributed to this effort.

Josantony Joseph[†] an experienced advocacy trainer who has worked in many countries, supported ICIMOD as a resource person in ToT workshops in Kathmandu. He also reviewed the first edition of the manual extensively, inserting additional ideas, tools, and techniques. I very much appreciate the significant contribution that he made. Many other people contributed comments and time during the preparation of the manual. I would like to thank them all for their ideas, input, and support.

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* Sprechmann, S.; Pelton, E. (2001) *Advocacy Tools and Guidelines: Promoting Policy Change*. Copyright © 2001. Cooperative for Assistance and Relief Everywhere, Inc. (CARE). Used by permission. CARE International, Atlanta, USA

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

CBO	community-based organisations
CO	community organisation
HKH	Hindu Kush-Himalayas/Himalayan
ICIMOD	International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development
IEC	information, education and communication
NCAS	National Centre for Advocacy Studies
NGO	non-government organisation
NRSP	National Rural Support Programme
RBA	rights-based approach
RTDC	Rural Technology Development Centre – Local Self-Governance Group
SMART	specific, measurable, attainable, realistic and time bound
UN	United Nations
VANI	Voluntary Action Network India

About This Manual

This Resource Manual has been prepared for community advocates and potential trainers of community-based organisations (CBOs) in the Hindu Kush-Himalayan region. It gives background information about the concept of the rights-based approach (RBA) and advocacy strategies, which are taken as prerequisites for social transformation. This book gives generic information about how to make effective strategies for policy and behavioural change. The issue-based advocates can take examples from this book and adapt the concept for their issue-based advocacy. The manual is a companion publication to the Training of Trainers (ToT) Manual in Advocacy Strategies. The ToT Manual provides learning tips in the form of bullet points so that trainers can copy and use these points directly in their training sessions. This Resource Manual provides additional information on the bullet points in the ToT Manual to allow trainers to read about the conceptual directives in detail. The objectives of these two manuals are slightly different but complement each other, and the target audiences of the manuals are the same.

Knowledge and skills in advocacy strategies have to be developed at different levels – for managers, senior trainers, community trainers, and community advocates. Different levels of capacity building programmes need different know-how and conceptual clarity. Therefore, advocacy facilitators should take whatever resources they need from this manual, extracting the required concepts and cases and repackaging them for different types of training programmes. It is not intended that all the materials included in this manual be transformed into a single training programme. Finally, it is important to remember that those who use advocacy tools to promote a particular issue or action also have an important responsibility – to ensure that the issue being prioritised is genuine, that the information is based on a proper factual foundation and adequate scientific research, that selection will help the people that the advocates profess to support, and that any potential harm to any group of people or the environment has been clearly identified in an objective manner.

This revised second edition has been prepared based on the foundation laid by the first edition published in 2005. The concept of any discipline is always changing and two important aspects have been considered while preparing the present edition. The first is the conceptual evolution of advocacy during 2005-2007. The second is the feedback obtained from readers/trainers using both the English version and other editions prepared by some partners who translated the original in whole or in part into their national languages. Both aspects were taken into account while preparing this second edition.

We fear because
We do not know.
We do not know, because
We do not understand.
We do not understand, because
We are not informed.
We are not informed, because
We do not communicate.
We do not communicate, because
We are separated.

– *Martin Luther King*

Therefore, advocacy in communication language is all about communication. But how we communicate makes a big difference. There are two approaches to communication in advocacy:

- Approach 1: ‘You are not doing, so we are doing.’
- Approach 2: ‘You are not doing, so we are kindly requesting/asking you to do.’

Finally,

- Advocacy is all about ‘shaking and weakening the problem tree.’#
- Advocacy should be able to bring long-lasting solutions to the issue selected. There is no ‘blueprint’ in advocacy. You need to be flexible and weigh all aspects of the situation carefully at all times.
- All individuals are human beings. They can be irrational and unpredictable. In advocacy, you need to be like water. The water makes its own course despite the many obstacles on the way.

Omer Khan Khanzada, 16 March 2007, Regional ToT in Advocacy Strategies, Kathmandu

1

Advocacy: An Introduction

The focus of this manual is on the practical understanding of advocacy at the grass roots. This chapter presents the ‘meaning of advocacy’ as collected from the relevant literature and realities of the Hindu Kush-Himalayan countries. It relates the meaning of advocacy to its rationale, i.e., why advocacy initiatives have to be taken up at different levels.

The Concept of Advocacy

This section reviews different definitions of advocacy and relates all definitions to the realities of the Hindu Kush-Himalayan (HKH) region. Past experience indicates that theoretical definitions do not make sense until they are connected to the practical realities of different communities. Based on this assumption, available theoretical definitions are reviewed and connections made with the real-life situation of the HKH region.

Advocacy is the process of raising voices in an effective manner in order to influence others. It is a process rather than a product. When advocacy is carried out to support or empower the marginalised, it is a means of gaining a better policy environment with implications for the implementation of policies, rather than an end in itself. The product of advocacy could be better policies or practices in communities. ‘Policy’ does not mean only those policies which emanate from the government, but also refers to those unwritten practices which have been taking place in communities for a long time. The empowerment of affected people is the ultimate destination of the kind of advocacy work that non-government organisations (NGOs), community-based organisations (CBOs), and people’s organisations engage in, in the hope that it would help the affected people to claim their rights in a sustainable manner.

There are various definitions of advocacy. Some selected definitions are presented below.

“Giving of public support to an idea, a course of action, or a belief”

Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary

The literal meaning of advocacy reflects a way of working that involves the public, engaging them to support a particular approach. This definition accepts the idea of a planned action rather than ad hoc efforts.

Considering the diversity of advocacy experiences and perspectives in different contexts, the Advocacy Institute (AI), which used to be located in Washington, USA, recognised that there is no single ‘right’ definition or approach to advocacy. The methodology that promoters use in their own context must be respected and shared among advocacy practitioners. Keeping this in mind and yet appreciating the need for a working definition, Advocacy Institute proposed the following working definition:

“Advocacy is the pursuit of influencing outcomes – including policy and resource allocation decisions within political, economic, and social systems and institutions – that directly affect people’s lives”

The Advocacy Institute

(The Advocacy Institute has since been reshuffled and relocated.)

The National Centre for Advocacy Studies (NCAS), Pune, India, felt the urgent need to stress that advocacy is not only for, but also through and with the people who are affected, and so stresses the people-centred nature of advocacy:

“Public Advocacy is a planned and organised set of actions to effectively influence public policies and to have them implemented in a way that would empower the marginalised. In a liberal democratic culture, it uses the instruments of democracy and adopts non-violent and constitutional means.”

National Centre for Advocacy Studies

This definition indicates that NCAS has identified a clear linkage between advocacy and a political system’s democratic process. In its literature, NCAS argues that an advocacy initiative must be at the centre of bridging, resisting, engaging, and strategising. Finally, the initiative must be able to create a force that will promote poor-friendly policies using the spaces within the system.

CARE International, an international NGO (INGO), that works in close collaboration with the US government and other national governments, has offered a definition that coincides with the kind of work it is involved in:

“Advocacy is the deliberate process of influencing those who make policy decisions”

CARE

It further defined the key terminologies used in the definition, as follows.

- a) **Advocacy is a deliberate process:** It must be clear who you are trying to influence and what policies you wish to change.
- b) **Advocacy influences those who make policy decisions:** It is not the same as ‘being confrontational’ or ‘shouting’ at the government. Advocacy is not restricted to policy makers who work for the government. Actors from the private sector or from civil society organisations also make policy decisions at their own levels.

Michael Edwards has brought up the issue of north-south relations when talking about rights. He defines the,

“Process of using information strategically to change policies, programmes, laws and behaviours that affect the lives of disadvantaged people.

The process of altering the ways in which power, resources and ideas are created, consumed and distributed at a global level, so that people and organisations in the South have a more realistic chance of controlling their own development.”

A group of participants from the eight Hindu Kush-Himalayan countries has defined advocacy in the context of the region as follows:

“Advocacy is an organised and democratic process of bringing social change by raising voices of the oppressed and influencing the policy and decision makers to ensure effective implementation for a better quality of life for all.”

(Group of ToT participants, March 2007)

A trainer for advocacy strategies says that advocacy is all about, “shaking and weakening the problem tree.” Olga Gladkikh, an advocacy trainer from St. Francis Xavier University, Canada, says that advocacy should be able to bring long-lasting solutions to selected issues. There is no ‘blueprint’ in advocacy. Advocates and activists need to be flexible, and exercise good judgement at all times.

Summary of all definitions

- Planned, organised and logical actions based on the contextual reality.
- A process seeking to highlight critical issues that negatively affect sections of the populace and have been ignored by some individuals or institutions.
- A set of actions with a determined vision of ‘what should be’ based on human rights and a constitutional framework.
- A process of amplifying the voice of the poor and marginalised to attain a fair and just society.
- A process of forwarding logical arguments aiming to influence the attitude of public position holders to enact and implement laws and public policies so that today’s vision can be translated into a future reality.
- A political process, although it remains above party politics and political polarisation.
- Action focusing primarily on public and social policies to have these policies implemented in good faith.
- A process that aims to promote social justice and human rights within communities.
- A collective effort to make governance accountable and transparent.

Finally, advocacy is a strategy to address the policy causes of poverty and discrimination. Advocacy therefore should aim to influence the decisions of policy makers through clear and compelling messages. There are four focus areas which should be targeted by advocacy strategies: (a) creating policies, (b) reforming policies, (c) ensuring that policies are implemented properly, and (d) increasing people’s empowerment. The assumption is that addressing the policy causes of poverty and discrimination by influencing the decisions of policy makers increases livelihood opportunities and increases the ability of people to claim their rights. As a result, sustainable impacts on large populations can be achieved.

When the concept of good governance came in as an influential idea in the development arena, advocacy became a means of promoting good governance at all levels. However, the concept of good governance is very vague, and is very often ‘slanted’ depending on the user of the term (e.g., the WTO, compared to a grassroots NGO), and finding a definite application of good governance is difficult. Advocacy, too, has become a concept with a wide range of connotations. Professionals facilitating the promotion of good governance through advocacy initiatives have begun to interpret advocacy differently. Some tend to include everything related to governance as an aspect of advocacy. Therefore, it is urgently necessary to differentiate between what is and what is not advocacy.

Extension work: Extension works target different aspects of the lives of marginalised communities. The main objective of extension in general is to provide people with certain information and skills related to different aspects of their livelihood. Extension work is therefore planned mainly to influence individual or specific community decisions and ways of functioning, but not the decisions of policy makers that affect many people at once.

Information, education and communication (IEC): IEC is carried out to change people's mind-sets and consequently people's practices at the individual level. For example, in the health sector IEC can be used to promote toilets, the use of condoms, and so on. However, advocacy works to create more far-reaching effects than this type of IEC campaign can hope to achieve. For example, an advocacy initiative could campaign to allocate more money to the health sector.

Information exchange with the government: The simple exchange of information among different institutions without a definite objective is not advocacy. If analysed information is given to a certain government agency with the objective of influencing specific policy decisions, this could be part of an advocacy initiative. Cordial relation-building with decision makers by any means is a foundation for advocacy.

Raising public awareness about certain programmes: Information dissemination to raise public awareness about certain institutions and their programmes is often carried out using different types of media. At present, websites are



Experience sharing on community forest from Nepal with Pakistani participants during the ToT in advocacy organised in close collaboration with Sungi Development Foundation at Abbottabad, Pakistan.

commonly used for this purpose. This kind of information flow does not necessarily help promote an opinion on a certain issue. Advocacy initiatives also use such media to influence policy makers, with this difference that here the information flow focuses on a certain issue and helps promote a definite public opinion.

Fundraising: The primary purpose of advocacy is not fundraising for a specific agency. Sometimes, advocacy is necessary to influence decisions that are related to fund allocations. Advocacy of this type may lead to certain agencies receiving more funds than before. However, this added funding of a particular organisation/group is an unintended consequence, not the primary purpose of the advocacy effort.

Watchdog role of different institutions: The role of watchdog is taken up by some groups to safeguard the interests of certain members/groups of the public in order to prevent negative impacts. However, advocacy is generally carried out after something adverse has occurred. Thus the watchdog role is primarily a preventive measure while an advocacy initiative is generally a curative action. However, after a policy has been created the advocacy group may function to keep track of its implementation. This would of course be necessary in the next cycle of advocacy.

Purpose and Objectives of Advocacy

This section highlights some of the reasons for introducing the concept of advocacy to the development of the HKH region. The deprivation of mountain people in terms of access to decisions and policy considerations is considered the prime reason and is therefore the major focus for advocacy in mountain development.

Poverty alleviation is presently the prime agenda of all governments and most development agencies working in the HKH region. Despite this being at the top of their agenda and despite receiving massive monetary investments, poverty continues to increase in the rural areas of these regions/countries. Needs-based approaches to development have certainly brought positive changes to some extent, but lasting change has become a challenge for all. Development practitioners are now realising that innovative solutions are necessary to meet this challenge. Influencing policy decisions in favour of the poor could be an aspect of the multifarious efforts required to achieve lasting change.

Purpose of advocacy initiatives: Advocacy initiatives generally aim to promote the public good and attempt to bring about social justice in deprived communities. Advocacy seeks to use all available media, fora, and methods to bring issues of

public concern into the conscious agenda of those who make decisions regarding these concerns. The prime goal of advocacy is to reorient public policy towards enhancing the capacity of those who have a weaker voice in the existing political system. Therefore, the necessity for advocacy initiatives can be summarised by the following.

- The causes of poverty and discrimination stem from decisions made at both the household (micro) level and at other (macro) levels.
- It is not only the government but also various actors in the public and private arenas who contribute to livelihood insecurity and the violation of human rights.
- Only a wide range of programme strategies targeted at multiple causes, including policy causes, will lead to the desired impact.
- It should be assumed that policies are human-made and can be changed. Policies should not be taken as immutable, given by some super-human power. Advocacy is an effective tool to bring about policy change.

Objectives of advocacy initiatives: From a holistic viewpoint, various relatively powerful actors in private and public life contribute to livelihood insecurity and violations of human rights. A significant impact can be achieved by changing the practices of these powerful stakeholders. The ultimate goal of an advocacy initiative is to improve the livelihood and human rights of significant numbers of people by changing power relations. Advocacy targets policy makers and implementers at levels above the household. In particular, advocacy initiatives are carried out to meet the following objectives:

- facilitating social justice – gaining access and a voice for deprived groups in the decision making of relevant institutions;
- changing the power relations between these institutions and the people affected by their decisions – thereby changing the institutions themselves; and
- bringing a compelling and lasting improvement in people’s lives.

Prerequisites for Advocacy

By definition, advocacy is a process of raising the voice of otherwise voiceless people. The voiceless can raise their voice when there is an open or transparent system of governance that is run under democratic principles. This section highlights the conditions of communities that demonstrate the need for advocacy initiatives at all levels.

Advocacy is an effective means of achieving good governance at all levels. The concept of power decentralisation has identified certain ideal conditions that



can be applied as indicators for assessing the status of good governance in a society. These conditions explain the parameters that public and private institutions should keep in mind. Ordinary people as citizens of a country deserve the right to review whether or not institutions and individuals are following these parameters. To respect the rights of people is a major emphasis of a rights-based approach to development. If people determine that public and private institutions are not functioning in line with the ideal parameters that they are supposed to follow, they can raise their voice in a manner that is allowed within the constitutional framework. In other words, they can begin an advocacy initiative.

From this perspective, good governance, the rights-based approach, and advocacy initiatives are related to each other. Only a democratic system of government can really open the space for promoting good governance and a rights-based approach to development. Therefore, a democratic system moving towards attaining good governance at all levels of public life is the prime requisite for advocacy initiatives. In this context, the organisations that are willing to take part in advocacy initiatives must pay attention to some ground rules.

Advocacy is not a separate programme and/or an additional activity. You have to be able to embed advocacy into on-going programmes. If you think that your vision and mission are linked to the policy considerations of your state or country,

then attempting to influence changes in these policies needs to become part of your organisational vision. To take up advocacy as a working approach, certain elements would help, as indicated below.

Gathering information about the policy that you want to change: Before beginning any advocacy initiative, it is very important to understand the existing policies, practices, and mechanisms for policy enforcement and the key institutions responsible for policy change. Who are the persons responsible for making decisions? You have to carry out research applying various methods. Such research could use formal or informal methods, depending upon what issue you are taking up.

Assessing risks: Remember no advocacy initiative is risk free. However, you should be able to assess the degree of risk. The most important aspect is the political environment in which you are working. If you analyse the risk properly, there will be less likelihood that you will make a mistake which will cause hardship to you, your partners, and the communities that you are working with.

Building strategic relations: Remember that there are many organisations like yours in society. Policy change is normally not possible through the efforts of a single institution. A collective voice is stronger than a solitary one. Therefore, you must be able to build strategic relationships with other organisations.

Establishing your credibility as an advocate: This aspect is very much related to internal good governance. The organisation willing to take up advocacy must itself be following all the norms and conditions of good governance at the organisational level, and the people around the organisation must believe in you. Otherwise your credibility to represent the population that you would be advocating on behalf of will be severely compromised.

Linking advocacy with organisational vision and mission: It has already been mentioned that advocacy cannot be carried out in isolation as a separate

Credibility Checklist

- Can you legitimately speak on behalf of the people affected by the issue?
- Are you politically neutral – have you gained the image of neutrality in the eyes of the community as far as political parties are concerned?
- Do you have enough information and expertise relevant to the issue?
- Do you have people who can effectively lead the movement that you are going to create on behalf of the community?
- Are you properly known and respected by the policy makers involved in the issue?

programme or activity. It has to be merged into the working strategy of the organisation.

Maintaining focus: Advocacy is not an easy job that can be performed in a short time span. It may take much time to get policy change on some issues. Therefore, you have to be able to maintain your focus on the specific issues over a lengthy period of time.

All the above parameters suggest elements of the foundation necessary to start an advocacy initiative on selected issues. These parameters will also give an indication of whether your ideas fit in with community priorities.

The Concept of the Rights-Based Approach (RBA)

A rights-based approach to development promotes justice, equality, and freedom and tackles the power issue that lies at the root of poverty and exploitation. To achieve this goal, a rights-based approach makes use of the standard principles and methods of human rights through social activism for development interventions.

Development is concerned with the distribution of resources and access to services in relation to health, education, social welfare, poverty alleviation, and income generation. Social and political activism mobilises people to claim the redistribution of power, enabling them to take the decisions that affect their livelihoods, for example, the redistribution of wealth between rich and poor nations through international support, changes in trade rules, the reduction of gender-based discrimination, and the redistribution of farmland.

Human rights are ensured with a set of internationally agreed legal and moral standards. Such universally agreed standards are largely absent in conventional development theory and practice. Rights-based programming holds the people and institutions that are in power accountable to the fulfilment of their responsibilities towards those with less power. This approach also supports rights holders in claiming their rights and involves them in political, economic, and social decisions taking place in society. This approach aims to increase impact and strengthen people's capacity by addressing root causes. A rights-based approach to programming requires the following:

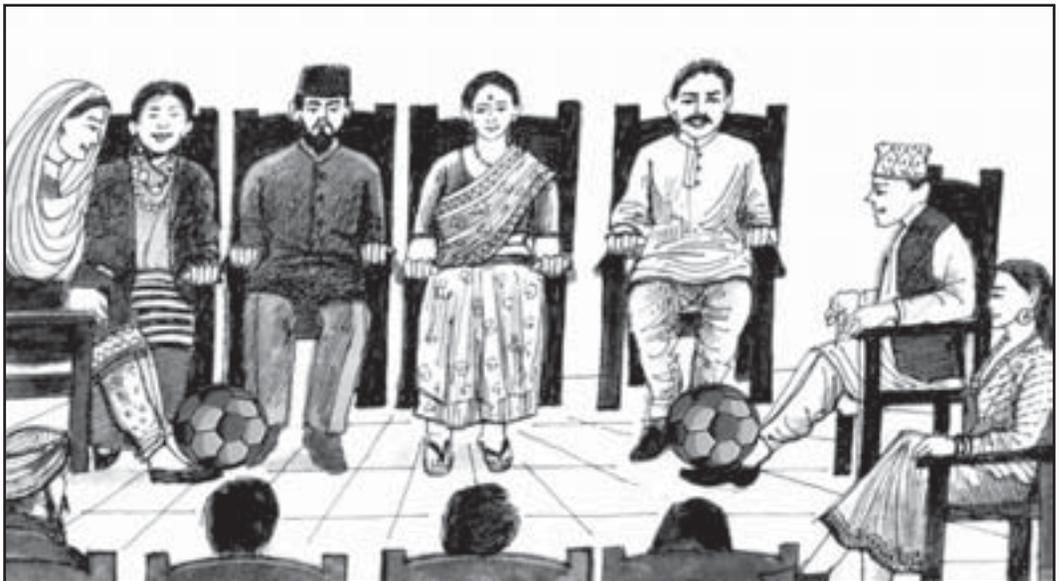
- **Working for a long-term goal** with a clear focus on people and their rights. This requires analysing problems, causes, and responsibilities at local, national, and international levels.
- **Working together** with other government and non-government agencies (and the private sector) to achieve commonly agreed-upon goals.

- **Ensuring equity and non-discrimination** even in cases of the worst rights violations by paying particular attention to the most marginalised people.
- **Strengthening the accountability** of duty bearers to ensure human rights at all levels. This should be achieved by changing laws; ensuring transparency in policy formulation and resource allocation; changing institutional rules and practices; and changing the attitudes and behaviours of the duty bearers.
- **Promoting participation** by supporting rights holders (adults, children, and civil society institutions) constantly.

A goal set within a rights-based perspective is different from simply a set of development targets. A rights-based goal (or vision) is directly related to the realisation of human rights. A rights-based goal is achieved when the rights of the people are fulfilled. Such a goal sets a common ground for different organisations and stakeholders working for the same cause. Without such a goal there is no guarantee that the programme will contribute towards realising the intended rights of the people. Organisations have to prioritise their own actions based on what needs to be done to realise the specific rights, on what others are doing, and in accordance with their own mandate, expertise, and skills

Relation of Advocacy to the Rights-Based Approach

The rights-based approach (RBA) to development has opened up a new avenue of perception of the causes of poverty and deprivation. It is a human rights dimension that has sensitised those working within the development paradigm. Sensitisation is very close to the heart of any advocacy effort. This section



highlights some of the commonalities of these two relatively new imperatives in the development discourse.

Rights-based approaches to development encourage us to pay more attention to the root causes of poverty rather than to the symptoms. Many people in the world are poor and various development agencies exist with different mandates and agendas for poverty alleviation. All of these agencies are offering their services in one way or another to minimise the suffering that poverty creates. However, the root causes of the suffering are often not minimised. Development efforts thus tend to be focused on the symptoms of poverty rather than the causes. The rights-based approach is a step that contributes to the elimination of the root causes of poverty. The basic thrusts of the rights-based approach are as follows.

- Understanding that human beings have inherent rights assured by international standards of human rights and country-level laws.
- Developing a programme focus on those individuals or groups that are disadvantaged due to discrimination and exploitation.
- Shifting the focus to issues that would previously have been considered as beyond them, and closely linked to power and politics.
- Empowering rights-holders to realise their rights and encourage duty-bearers to be part of the solution.
- Encouraging development agencies to be accountable to the people they work with.
- Refocusing development interventions at a variety of levels, not only at the household level.

When policy makers do not fulfil their responsibilities to others, advocacy initiatives can be instrumental in holding them accountable. Therefore, the RBA suggests to development professionals that the starting point of development interventions must be the recognition of people's inherent rights. This approach does not, for example, want to break down long-running welfare distribution programmes, but proposes that everyone must think about people's rights as well. Finally, development efforts should be able to empower people so they can claim welfare programmes in future, as this is within their inherent rights as citizens.

At the present stage of development, many professionals embrace everything as advocacy, but this confuses the issue by making the term ambiguous. The main issue is that a strongly felt need exists to evolve a culture of human rights within civil society rather than to rely exclusively on political rhetoric and judicial proclamations. A meaningful dissemination of human rights ideas at all levels of

education and ongoing training programmes for public officials is related to advocacy. We also need to acknowledge the limitations and constraints of government in implementing human rights in practical situations. Moreover, it is not realistic to believe that the state never violates human rights or that all actions taken by the state are justifiable.

The crucial task, therefore, is to orient all stakeholders towards people's basic human rights, especially for the disadvantaged and disempowered sections of society. Politicians, who are primary stakeholders, must be made aware that no real development, no real sovereignty, and no real freedom will occur without a strong foundation of basic human rights. This requires re-prioritising the government's agenda and the political will to involve all sections of civil society in rigorous action to this end.

When members of a community see their needs perceived as rights, they can claim these rights themselves. The problems of the community become secondary while paying attention to rights. The needs-based approach and the rights-based approach perceive development differently, as shown in Figures 1.1 and 1.2.

Thrust of the rights-based approach: The rights-based approach to development is a conceptual framework for the process of human development based on an international standard. The main elements of this approach are linkages to rights, accountability, empowerment, participation, and non-discrimination (see <www.unhchr.ch> for details).

A rights-based approach believes the following:

- People are made poor and marginalised by certain societal factors. These could be on the surface or could be invisibly rooted below the ground.
- The basic needs of communities have to be established as their basic human rights. This is the primary job of community-based organisations.
- Ordinary people suffering from different problems are the prime source of power for changing their destiny. Collective action is the most important instrument to help them claim their own inherent power.
- Communities themselves can find better ways of organising their lives. Outside support should be used to encourage their own suppressed capacity to be brought out.
- If something is good for their livelihood, the community will do it regardless of outside support. For example, if there are oranges in the garden, people will not wait to learn how to eat. They will start eating anyway.
- Development must be geared towards the marginalised claiming their rights, but this does not mean that there is no need to work towards fulfilling basic needs.

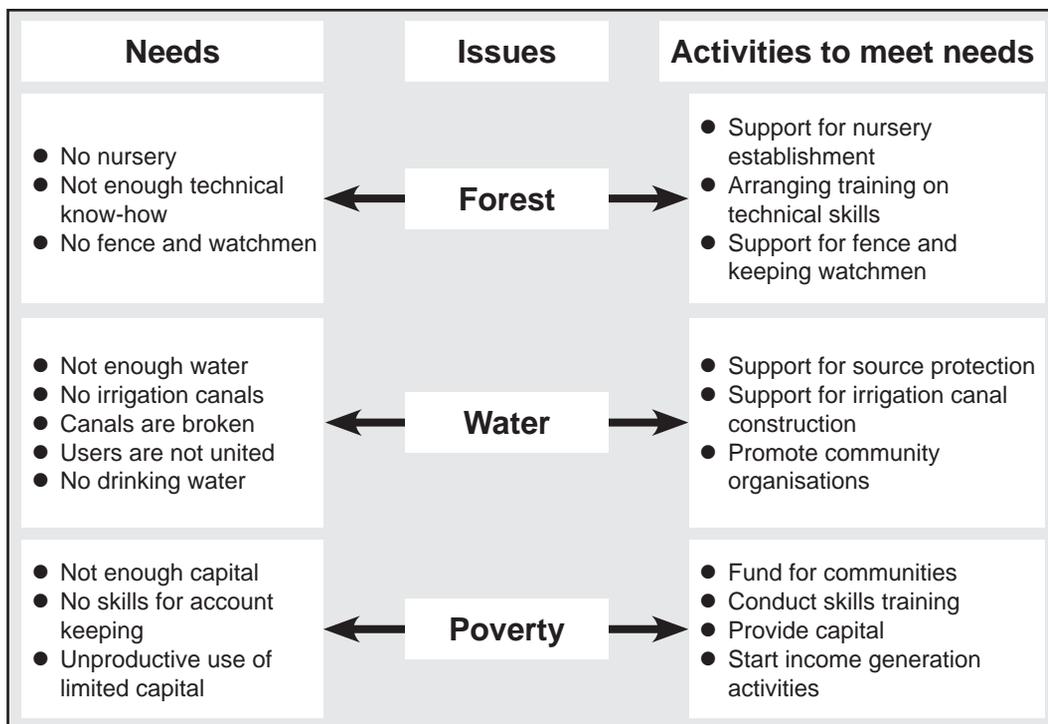


Figure 1.1: An example of the needs-based approach

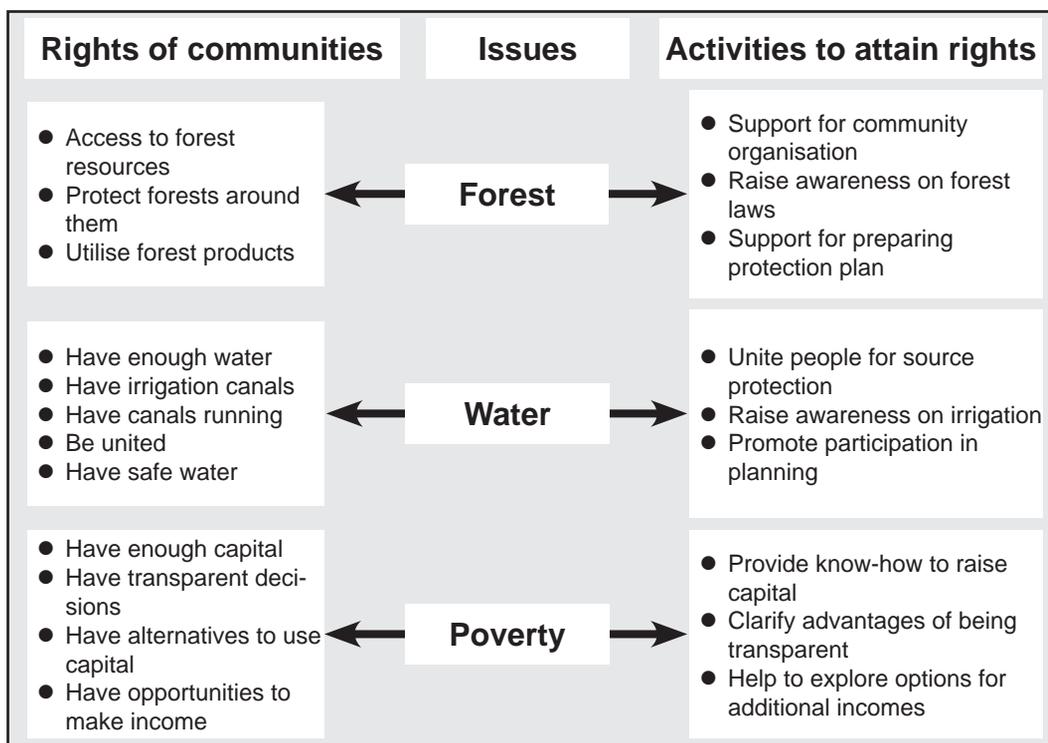


Figure 1.2: An example of the rights-based approach

- “Human beings are at the centre of concerns for sustainable development. They are entitled to a healthy and productive life in harmony with nature.” (Principle 1 of the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development 1992, see <http://www.unep.org>)
- The Human Rights Council of Australia has given extensive thought to the relationship between human rights and development, and particularly to the work of inter-governmental aid agencies. The main concept is that “...human rights and development are not distinct or separate spheres and, therefore, the question is not how to identify points of actual or potential intersection but to accept that development should be seen as a subset of human rights. The realisation of the importance of economic and social rights in the development process and the tendency of governments to ignore steps to their full realisation have led us to look closely at the precise actions needed to realise these rights. An essential aspect of the Right to Development is its emphasis on the centrality of the human person as a subject of the development process.”

Figure 1.3 shows the gradual changes in development paradigms over the past half a century. Some people use the term ‘evolution of development approaches’. If development approaches are viewed in a broad way from the Marshall Plan approach onwards, various changes can be noticed. The main message is that we need to look back at the activities that have been carried out in the past in the name of development.

The diagram presented here is one example of how to explain the paradigm shifts in development approaches. Other such diagrams can be made. However the rights-based approach must always be included in any model or diagram used. Moreover, in a training or awareness raising programme it will be very helpful to explain Figure 1.3 (or a similar model) by analysing a real-life situation or particular context familiar to the participants. The list of characteristics under each approach can be made more extensive. It should also be made clear that there is no claim that the rights-based approach is the only valid approach for all situations, and that the other two approaches are worthless. Welfare and reform programmes are still active and required.

Social Inclusion

If we look at Figure 1.3, there is a circle on social inclusion ‘hanging’ at the end of the rights-based approach which has several area overlaps. One of the reasons for this hanging circle is that the concept of social inclusion is coming up strongly in addition to RBA. Supporters of social inclusion argue that RBA alone will not be a pro-poor approach if it is not inclusive enough.

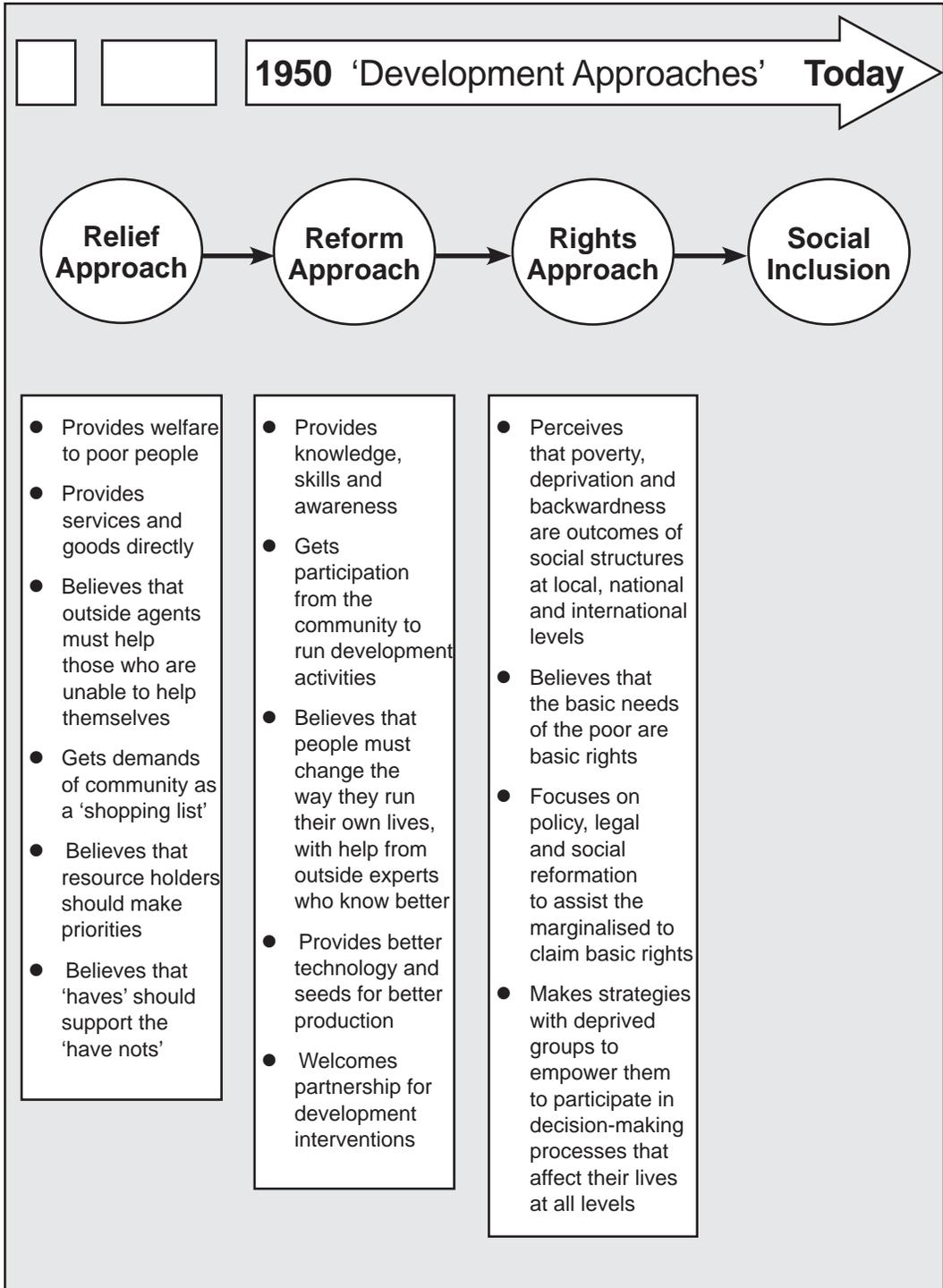


Figure 1.3: The rights-based approach and the development paradigm

The Commission of the European Communities states: “Social exclusion refers to the multiple and changing factors resulting in people being excluded from normal exchanges, practices and rights of modern society. The commission believes that all community citizens have a right to the respect of human dignity.”¹

Social inclusion should be viewed as shown in Figure 1.4. It is a concept that demands the practice of inclusive democracy in all aspects of livelihoods. Social transformation theories argue that irrelevant aspects of life have to be changed to make them compatible with modern lifestyles. It is true that discriminatory cultures such as gender roles and division of work by caste are not fair according to the lifestyle ensured by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. However, someone else should not impose changes. Rather change should be started from within the same culture itself.

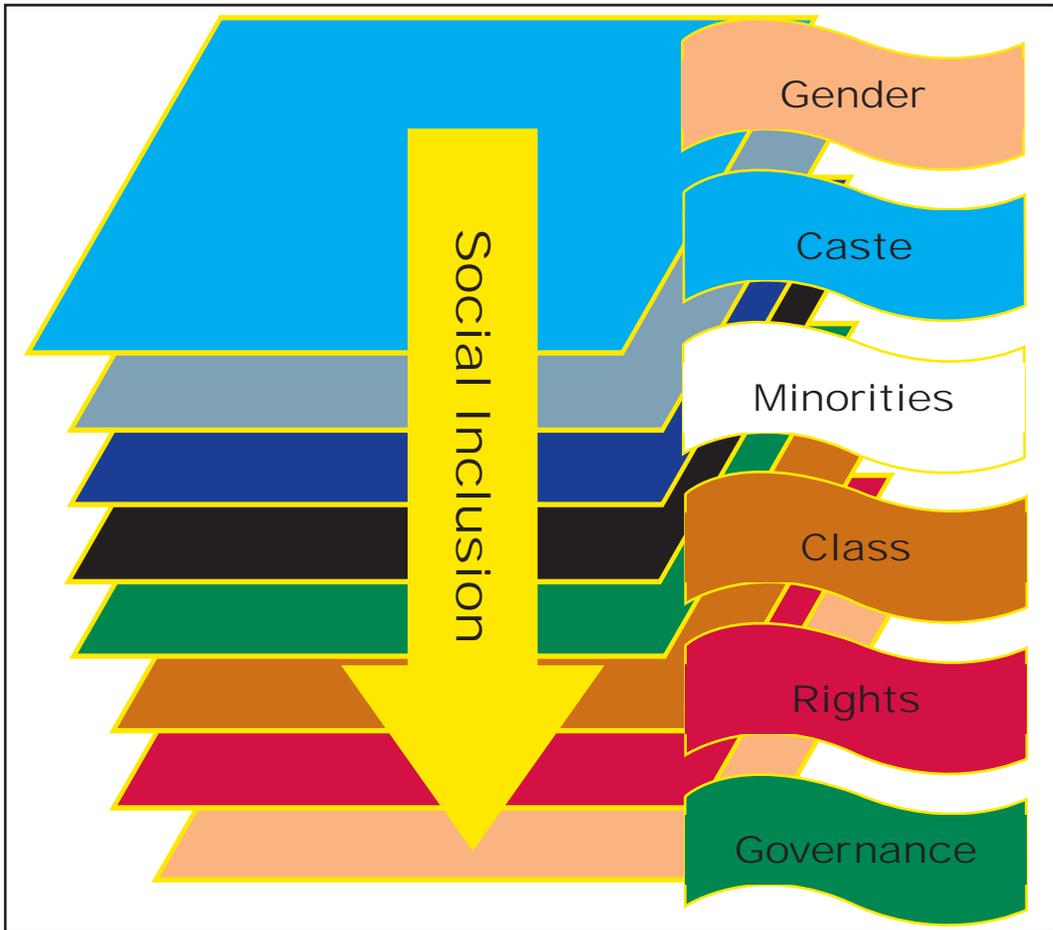


Figure 1.4: Social Inclusion

¹ Commission of the European Communities (1993) *Background Report: Social Exclusion – Poverty and Other Social Problems in the European Community*, ISEC/B11/93. Luxembourg: Office for the Publications of the European Communities.

Summary Sheet

The summary worksheet has been prepared to provide the main content and associated questions included in this chapter in a nutshell. This matrix can also be used for assessing the understanding of participants in different learning programmes.

Summary Sheet for ‘Advocacy: An Introduction’	
Concepts	Some of the questions dealt with in this chapter
1. Concept of advocacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● What is advocacy in general? What are the definitions framed by different institutions? What are the core concepts of advocacy in the context of the mountains? ● What are the myths of advocacy? Where do the demarcations lie between advocacy and other normal activities?
2. Purpose and objectives of advocacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● What is the basic purpose of advocacy? What is the basic purpose of advocacy in the mountains? ● What are the objectives of advocacy? ● What are the connections between objectives in our own organisational context?
3. Prerequisites for advocacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● What are internal preparations needed before starting advocacy? What credibility should an institution have? Where is our own organisation in regard to the credibility checklist? ● What could be the elaborated form of the checklist in its contextual basis? ● What are the processes of assessing external environments?
4. Relation to the rights-based approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● What is the rights-based approach? What are the differences between the needs-based and the rights-based approach? ● What are the core thrusts of the rights-based approach? ● Where are the connections of the rights-based approach in advocacy capacity building? ● What are the features of the contemporary shifting of development approaches? What are the connections between the rights-based approach and advocacy in the changing paradigm? ● What are the areas of advocacy in the changing paradigm of development approaches?

2

Policy Analysis

We now proceed to the essential steps of the advocacy planning framework.

The basic steps of the framework are:

- Policy analysis,
- Outlining of advocacy strategies,
- Finalising advocacy strategies, and
- Framing an advocacy action plan.

These are the basic steps to be considered when taking any action in the name of public advocacy. This chapter describes policy analysis, the first step of the mission.

Policy: In formal language, policy refers to public decisions taken by government authorities. However, this manual focuses on mountain communities where conventional practices and power relations prevail. Many informal policies and norms affect people's livelihoods. Therefore, both formal and informal policies have to be considered for advocacy strategies.

In formal terms 'policy' refers to a plan, a course of action, and sets of regulations adapted by government and other institutions to influence and determine decision making in public affairs. Three basic deficiencies of policies can be identified: (a) lack of policies, (b) inadequate policies, and (c) policies that exist but are not operational. In the mountain perspective of the Himalayan region, the third condition is very common.

Policies also include the behavioural aspects of society which operate as unwritten rules within families and communities. A society's traditional norms are not always in written form, but such norms still function as compelling factors within social life, and have policy implications.

Policy analysis: Knowing the existing status of formal and informal policies is the beginning of policy analysis. Power relations among various stakeholders determine the status of policy enforcement. The gravity of the analysis process is determined by the nature of the issue selected for advocacy.

The nature of an issue can be completely misunderstood if it is only analysed superficially. Addressing problems in a community requires in-depth knowledge of the underlying causes. Solid knowledge about deep-rooted causes is the foundation for identifying solutions that have the potential to achieve high impacts in a sustainable manner. Good solutions are buried beneath the causes, and must be dug out and properly identified.

All information needed for an advocacy initiative must be collected, understood, and kept in a secure place. This includes the plan, regulations, and norms set by the government and other institutions with regard to the issue that is being taken up for advocacy.

Policy analysis is the starting point when trying to discover the underlying causes of poverty and discrimination. If a problem is seen as an issue for advocacy, policy analysis helps deepen understanding of the underlying causes. This process also helps maintain the focus of the advocacy initiative. Policy analysis also examines the dynamics within society in relation to the issue. Without undermining conventional modes of problem analysis and the formation of a problem tree, policy analysis gives priority to deepening the processes of the analysis that is to provide inputs for the advocacy projection (Figure 2.1).

As the first step in the advocacy planning framework, this section presents various tools for policy analysis. Some of the tools come in a logical sequence, while others apply on a random basis. This chapter also makes certain suggestions on processes for policy analysis. It includes knowing the policy issues, identifying key actors, identifying the institutions and individuals that influence the policy environment, and how to craft policy options (Figure 2.2).

Policy analysis is not only important for advocacy but is also needed to reflect the context of the challenge that your organisation is dealing with. The analysis gives you a better idea of how to frame the outcomes and impacts of your action. Therefore, policy analysis is an integral part of your development mission even if you are not carrying out advocacy. Some of the conditions for policy analysis are as follows.

Capitalise on immediate opportunities: While advocacy initiatives should always be well planned, you sometimes have to capitalise on opportunities that arise

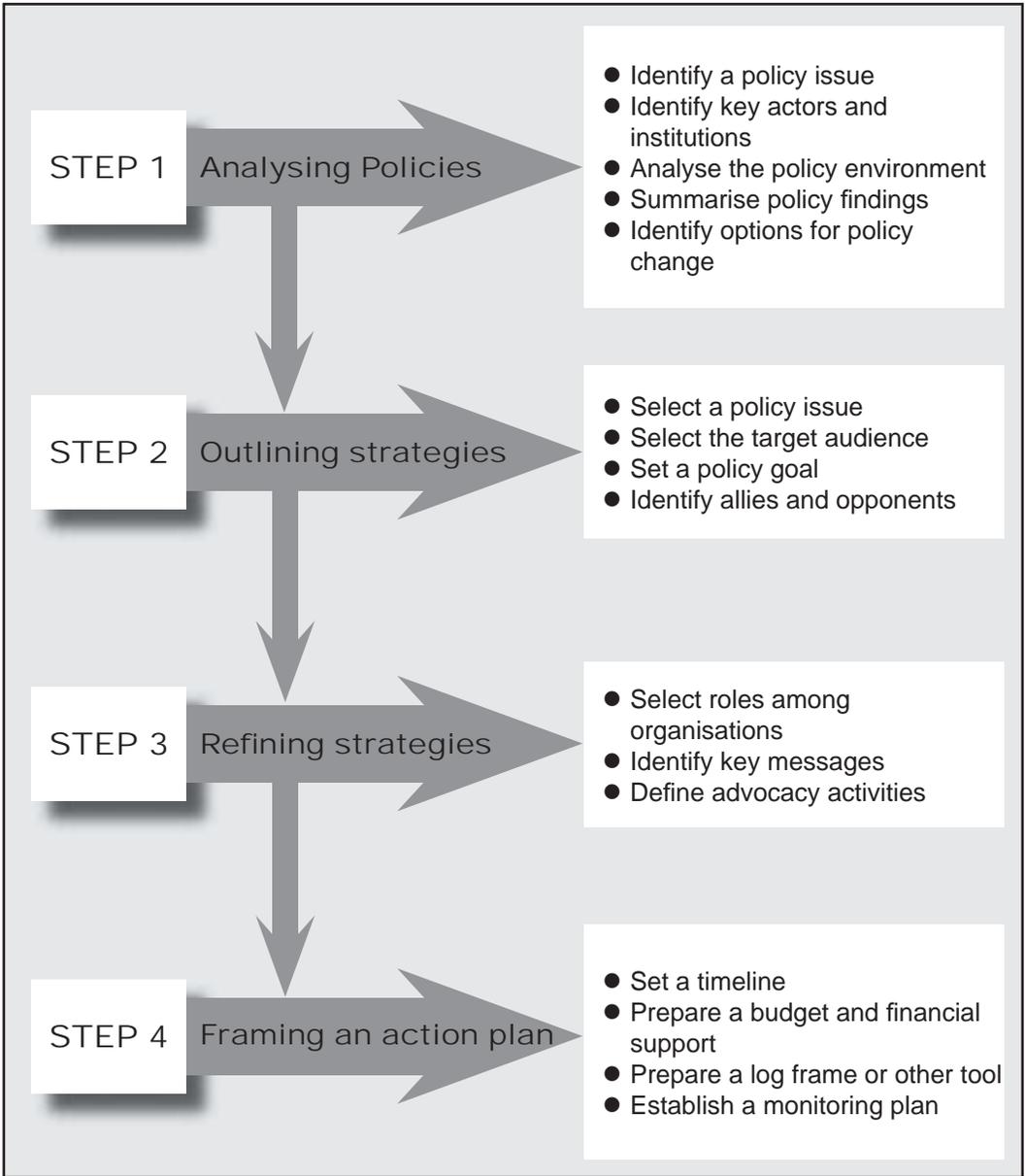


Figure 2.1: Advocacy planning framework – a vertical view point

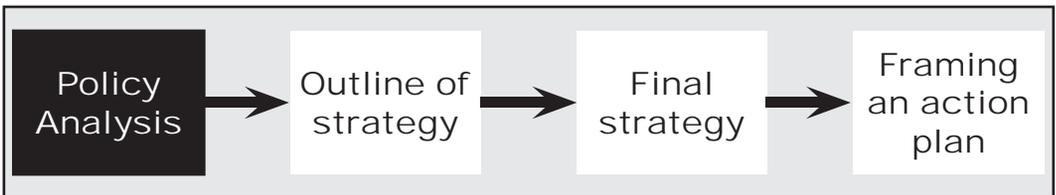


Figure 2.2: Advocacy planning framework – a horizontal viewpoint

immediately. A policy maker, for example, may suddenly come to visit you, giving you an opportunity to influence them in an unplanned way. In this situation, an advocate should not remain quiet, but should make an effort to influence the policy maker, utilising whatever policy-related information the advocate possesses.

Use available information: In some cases, you or your partners may have the policy information that you need. Minor research or no research at all may be sufficient to plan your advocacy initiative properly. If you know the policy causes, the key actors, and the policy environment around your issue, you can proceed on this information alone. You can plan to carry out ongoing research to update and verify available information.

Key elements for policy analysis

- Identification of policy issues – policy causes of poverty and discrimination
- Identification of key actors and institutions who make policy decisions
- Identification of individuals and institutions influencing policy decisions
- Analytical view of political power distribution among the actors
- Identification of formal and informal processes of policy formulation
- Understanding of the social and political context of the communities

Use your best judgement: The fundamental requirement is that the more you analyse issues, the actors, and the policy environment in advance, the more likely your advocacy initiative is to succeed. However, you may not always have the required funds and energy for policy analysis. Therefore, you must use your own best judgement about what to do, and what not to do.

Identification of Policy Issues

Policy causes of poverty and discrimination are referred to as ‘policy issues’ in advocacy. Policy issues include one of the following situations: absence of policy, inadequate policy, and improper enforcement of existing policies. It is good to present reports of your policy analysis in a form other than long essay-type reports. Table 2.1 gives an example of a matrix form. An organisation working to promote women’s education might analyse the information as given here. This is a very simple example. Other examples related to practical field interventions can be drawn in a similar way.

All problems identified in communities have direct or indirect links to policy issues. Policy issues are related to larger political dynamics. As an advocate, you should be familiar with this idea, which is much more complicated than it first appears.

Table 2.1: An example for tabulation of policy issues

Areas for analysis	Present condition	Policy issues	Focus of advocacy
Do existing policies promote women's education?	No	Absence of adequate policy for women's education	Establish new policy
Do existing policies hinder the promotion of women's education?	Yes	Policy functions to discourage women's education	Change existing policies
Are existing policies related to the issue properly implemented?	No	No proper enforcement of policy	Enforce existing policies

Sometimes, such policy connections can be seen or identified easily from field experiences, observation, and interactions. Sometimes, systematic research about existing laws and law formulation processes are required. For some issues, certain groups may have vested interests leading them to influence policy formulation processes. These possibilities depend upon the gravity of the issue and the context in which it is emerging. Through the policy analysis process, you must be able to identify the following.

- **Exact nature of the problem:** What is the problem all about? Is the problem the same as it appears on the surface or are there other hidden factors?
- **Policy causes of the problem:** How is the problem connected with a policy cause? Where is it connected? To what extent is it connected?
- **People affected by the problem:** Which groups or communities are actually affected? How many are affected and in what geographical region? For how long have these people been suffering from this type of problem? Has the situation changed over time or not?

These questions help identify various aspects of a community's problems. Remember that there are some individuals who benefit and would like to keep the situation as it is now.

The analysis demands a review of the historical background of the problem and its relation to policy formulation processes. The review should also identify the supporting mechanisms, opposing groups, ideological connections, and attempts at change at various intervals in time. Such a historical perspective can provide several strategic options for advocacy as well as a vision of future achievements. To make this clear, Table 2.2 gives an example of the tax imposition issue in community forestry in Nepal.

Table 2.2: Example from Nepal: the tax on community forest user group earnings²

SN	Areas of analysis	Findings
1.	What is the problem?	Imposition of 40% ¹ tax on community forest user groups earning in Nepal.
2.	Who are the affected communities?	All user group members (around 2 million people) throughout Nepal are affected by this decision.
3.	What are the supportive policies?	The following are the supportive policy environments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Reflected in various laws and regulations. ● Nepal's Community Forestry Law and Regulations enacted between 1990-2000. ● Local Self-Governance Act and Regulations enacted in 1999/2000. ● Approach paper to Tenth Five-year Plan of Nepal prepared and published in 2002.
4.	What are the restrictive policies and practices?	There is some confusion and contradiction among various laws and regulations in Nepal. While no law specifically restricts the community forest policy of Nepal, there are certain restrictive factors, as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Forest master plan and follow-up plans in relation to maintaining national reserve forest under bureaucratic control. ● Some laws related to the promotion of national parks and reserve areas. ● Contradictory clauses in the Local Self-Governance Act and Regulations. ● Conventional attitudes of bureaucrats working with the forestry sector. This mindset is heavily influenced by institutional corruption in this sector. ● Conventional attitude of politicians who use forest resources as a vote bank during elections. ● Influence of timber mafias for illegal sale of timber.
5.	What is the situation of policy enforcement?	Many policies in relation to community forestry in Nepal are good, but attitudinal problems exist at the operational level. The following points show the present state of law enforcement: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Bureaucrats working with the forestry sector fail to understand that they are 'the servant' of the people. They still believe they are the 'master', 'provider', 'controller' of forest resources. ● Most capacity building programmes supported by foreign agencies are being converted into personal benefit instead of institutional strengthening. ● There is a two-sided forest system – community forest and national forest. This has slowed down the promotion of user groups and community forests.

² This is a learning example from a few years ago. As of 2007, earnings are taxed at 15% for Terai FUGs only.

This example was generated based on information gathered from informal sources. These findings may not be uniformly acceptable to all parties involved in this issue. Facilitators can make several such blank formats available on various issues for group exercises throughout the learning process.

Identification of Key Actors and Institutions

Several types of policies are applicable in all communities. Many people living in mountain villages do not know how policies are formulated and who plays the important roles in formulating those policies. Most policies are formulated with the problems of the plains in mind, and are then made operational in mountain areas as well. However, all policies are formulated with individual efforts being made at different levels. Some individuals are made directly responsible by the state system and others become indirectly responsible, willingly or unwillingly. An analysis of key actors in relation to the issue of imposing a 40% tax on community forest user group earnings in Nepal is presented in Table 2.3.

Advocating for policy change is not possible without identifying the key actors as individuals or as position holders within certain institutions. Sometimes, an individual contributes to policy change as a single person. Sometimes a group of individuals makes a collective contribution. Advocates should be familiar with these different dynamic processes.

Key actors for policy consideration can be grouped into two categories: (a) direct policy makers; and (b) those who do not directly make decisions but who can influence decision and policy makers. Both these types of individuals play a vital role in policy formation, change, and enforcement. Therefore, both are very important from an advocacy perspective. Sometimes, the second category may be even more important for advocacy initiatives.

Advocacy is a form of professional struggle to bring about desired change. As in a war strategy, it is also relevant to know about your opponents who are working as key actors in relation to the issue that you are dealing with. If you do not know much about your opponents, you cannot design winning strategies for your struggle. With a clear picture of the key actors and their roles in policy considerations, you can devise good advocacy strategies.

You can identify the first category of individuals and institutions (direct policy makers) very easily because they are publicly announced as having certain responsibilities. However, identifying the individuals and institutions in the second category (those who influence the decision makers) is challenging since being able to influence policy makers is not something that can be seen. It is not necessary to be visible to influence a decision. Someone living at a distance

from the decision maker can still exercise considerable influence in decision making at local levels.

Table 2.3 provides a summary of an analysis of key actors in a specific policy event. This example was created for learning purposes. If you look at this example, it is very simple and clear cut. However, the real-life situation is not so simple. Several such examples will emerge when you plan advocacy initiatives for a real-life issue.

Table 2.3: Key actors: the tax on community forest user group earnings

	Level of influence in policy decision making	Areas of interest	Resources they have at present	Resources they do not have at present
Key actors in decision making				
Minister of Forest Department	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public support as a successful leader 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Financial and bureaucratic expertise 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analytical data Fresh opinion of users
Bureaucrats of ministry and districts	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promoting 'boss-ism' Managing to procure excessive earnings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Internal finance External projects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Good public image Impartial public opinion People-centred attitude
Parliamentarians	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Being popular leaders Increasing vote banks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Political workers Party lines 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reality of grassroots Mutual trust
Actors influencing decisions				
Timber corporation	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Earning excessive profits Maintaining good linkages with leaders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accumulated profits Good linkages with bureaucracy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public faith Expertise Business security
Those with business interests in timber	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overnight income Individual security 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Group strength Business networking 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Know-how on biodiversity Ways of starting fair business
Local elites	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Popular local leaders Earning extra income 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some people in villages Linkages with govt. ministry 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National interest Technical expertise Development interests

Analysis of Policy Environment

The political system of the country and the democratic culture of the community determine the policy environment as a whole. Working towards such an environment is critical for preparing a good strategy for your advocacy initiative. Policy analysis helps to assess whether policy change is likely to be successful or not.

One of the prerequisites for policy analysis is that there must be some policies operational in the communities with an established form and manner. The policies could be from the government mechanism or from cultural norms based on the traditions of the communities. If the public affairs of communities are running on an ad hoc basis, policy analysis becomes very difficult. The policy environment remains fragile and unpredictable in countries of high transition. Iraq, Afghanistan, Myanmar, Nepal, and Palestine can be taken as examples at present. In general, policy analysis should focus on the following parameters as given in the box below.

- Can people participate in decision-making processes in relation to the issue you are dealing with? Do channels exist and are they accessible for interested people to participate in?
- Who controls the major decisions and at what location? – At the district level, state level, national level?
- Are the issues widely discussed in public? Are people interested in participating in the discussion? Does the media get involved in such discussions?
- What is the level of priority of the current government regarding the issue you are dealing with? Is the government planning to bring in certain changes? What plans and programmes have been discussed in recent years?
- Is there enough political openness for such policy debates in the country or in the location where the people who are affected reside? (See also Table 2.3).

The whole analysis depends upon political openness for policy debates. As one who advocates for the marginalised, you cannot overlook the rules, regulations, and practices that exist in the society. You have to be able to operate your advocacy mission while maintaining a minimum level of legitimacy. If you want to go beyond the broader frame of the state law, your mission becomes a much broader political movement targeting change in the system, rather than the policies within the system.

It is clear that a more democratic society provides more space to NGOs and CBOs to influence policies. Advocacy initiatives are not completely risk free in many contexts. However, democratic society normally poses little risk to different

groups participating in political debates. Advocacy initiators are one of such groups. Therefore, advocates have more options to develop advocacy strategies to influence policy decisions in this situation.

In some political systems, policy decisions in certain sectors are made open and in other sectors they are closed. For example, most democratic countries seem open to policy dialogues on issues related to society (health, education, community development, and others) but closed on issues related to national interest (e.g. defence, security, international relations). Advocates should be aware of this situation while framing advocacy strategies for certain issues. Knowing the informal channels of decision making is also very important. Strategy formulation for advocacy initiatives is almost impossible without a sound knowledge of how policy decisions are made and who controls such decision-making processes. If you formulate advocacy strategies in an ad hoc manner, the likelihood of achieving success is limited. Advocacy in a closed political system may make sense for carrying out some activities at the macro level, but it does not make much sense for those whose rights are denied at present.

Analysis of the policy environment also includes the extent to which social interactions are taking place on the selected issue. If your issue is already an issue of public debate and many people know about it, it will be easier for you to take some steps forward. But if the issue is very new and many people do not know about it, you may need to create public awareness. Then you can expect



people to express their opinion in favour of, or opposing, your line. In addition, all other social and political factors of the country/state affect your advocacy mission. For example, if there is an election in the near future, your normal strategies for advocacy may not work because all social forces will pay far more attention to the election and the change/retention of the government of the day, than to any other policy change. Advocates should be able to strategise their mission accordingly.

International forces impinging on your own government are another important factor to be considered while formulating advocacy strategies. For example, if all external forces (neighbouring countries, donors, bilateral agencies, and so on) are on the opposite pole of the issue, you may not be successful. You need to be able to convert such forces in your favour before beginning your advocacy mission.

Information collection for policy analysis

A potential source of information for policy analysis includes government ministries and departments; and regional, state, provincial, or district branches of the government. Similarly, you can also obtain information from bilateral and multilateral agencies – the United Nations, the World Bank, other multinational banks, and NGOs. The public media is an easily and widely accessible source of information. However, you have to be able to verify the information these sources publish.

Academic institutions, academic research, and publications are also an important source of information. Similarly, you can obtain information from the speeches of government officials. It is of course up to you to judge the reliability and accuracy of the information collected from these sources. Sometimes, the information you want is easily available even on the Internet. However, if you are taking up complex issues, you should seek the help of those who are familiar with the issue and who are a rich potential source of information.

Some examples for finding such information and support are given below. If you are dealing with an issue related to local governance, look at the following tactics.

- Read the local newspapers regularly for at least a week to identify interest groups expressing opinions regarding local governance in your constituency.
- Establish a relationship with the public information desk of the concerned ministry and find out about the various commissions formed in the past and their reports. For example, in the case of Nepal, the concerned ministry for local governance issues is the Ministry of Local Development.

Policy analysis: a case study for discussion

Mining Labourers in the Jainta Hills

The Jainta Hills in Meghalaya, India, contain a large area devoted to coal mining. For convenience, these hills can be called 'Koilapahad' (which means 'coal mountains'). An assessment conducted by ICIMOD in 2003 showed that mining labourers comprise a large part of the informal labour sector in Koilapahad. The mining area is spread over the hills; around 40,000 people from India, Nepal, and Bangladesh work as full-time or seasonal labourers in the mines. The monthly turnover of the labourers is about IRs 2,000. From a legal point of view, most of the labourers from Nepal and Bangladesh are illegal migrants. However, some have already settled in the nearby hills of Meghalaya and Assam, India.

This labour force is contributing extensively to the national economy by providing cheap labour and consequently cheaper coal to consumers, and income for a large portion of the population of different countries. However, the livelihood security of these people is vulnerable. Most of these labourers do not earn enough money to procure reasonable land and housing for their families. The government has introduced laws related to labour security and wage rates but most such matters are settled by informal interactions rather than existing laws. According to law, these labourers are technically illegal and do not have licenses or tax certificates. In addition, the established coal business sector feels threatened by the labourers and fear that any government support for labourers would result in loss of income to the sector.

The problems of these labourers include lack of security of tenure in their workplace, as well as constant harassment from the police and local authorities. The labourers who have already settled in these hills do not have credit facilities, legal services, or social security. A number of laws have been enacted at the state level to ensure security in the workplace for registered labourers. However, these rules and regulations have not been implemented in good faith by the local authorities.

Sometimes these labourers form labour unions, which function like civil society organisations. They also file some of their complaints with local authorities. However, the local authorities trust the contractors and mine owners far more. Nobody listens to the labourers' complaints. There are also some international and national agencies working to improve the livelihoods of these people but they have not had any significant achievements to date.

Questions for discussion

- What problems have been identified? Who are affected and in what location?
- What are the supportive policies for these labourers?
- What policies and practices restrict the basic human rights of these labourers?
- Who are the main actors influencing policy decisions?
- Can these labourers participate in policy decisions?
- Is this analysis helpful for formulating advocacy strategies? If so, explain how.

- Search the Internet and explore the scenario of other countries with regard to local governance. This kind of information gives you a comparative outlook.
- Obtain copies of government laws from the concerned ministry or from other publishers and read them carefully.
- Contact university professors or intellectuals who are interested in this topic and initiate discussions with them on the historical background and intellectual assessments of the policy environment.

This case is an example of the problems that mountain communities have been facing in different countries of the HKH Region. We can all identify such cases in our own geographical areas of work. Therefore, readers are requested to analyse their own practical cases during training and policy analysis in real-life advocacy.

Summarising Policy Findings

A problem tree is a useful visual technique for summarising the findings of policy analysis. You can use the following steps to present your findings in a problem tree format (Figure 2.3).

Problem identification: This can be done for different purposes. It could be for a national programme, a long-range strategic plan, or a simple project. If you are doing this exercise for a larger purpose, the problem could be more general. Poverty, livelihood insecurity, and violation of human rights are all examples of general problems. If you want to identify the problem for a specific project, the problem statements could be the poor educational status of women in a particular area/region, the low literacy rate of a tribal group, or the high infant mortality rate of mining labourers. You have to be clear about the purpose of the exercise. Finally, you should keep the problem statement at the top of your problem tree. For example, in Figure 2.3, ‘high infant and child mortality rate’ is the problem focused on.

Direct causes: A direct cause is very close to the problem. For example, the most direct cause of high infant mortality rate could be diarrhoea. There may be more than one direct cause of a problem. You can keep such contributing causes together side by side.

Behavioural causes: For each of the direct causes, the problem tree identifies the behaviours of the affected community that lead to these causes. You can often find several such behaviours under the cause of the problem. For example, contaminated drinking water contributes to diarrhoea but there are several behaviours that contribute to the contamination of drinking water. As shown in the problem tree (Figure 2.3) these could include not boiling water and an

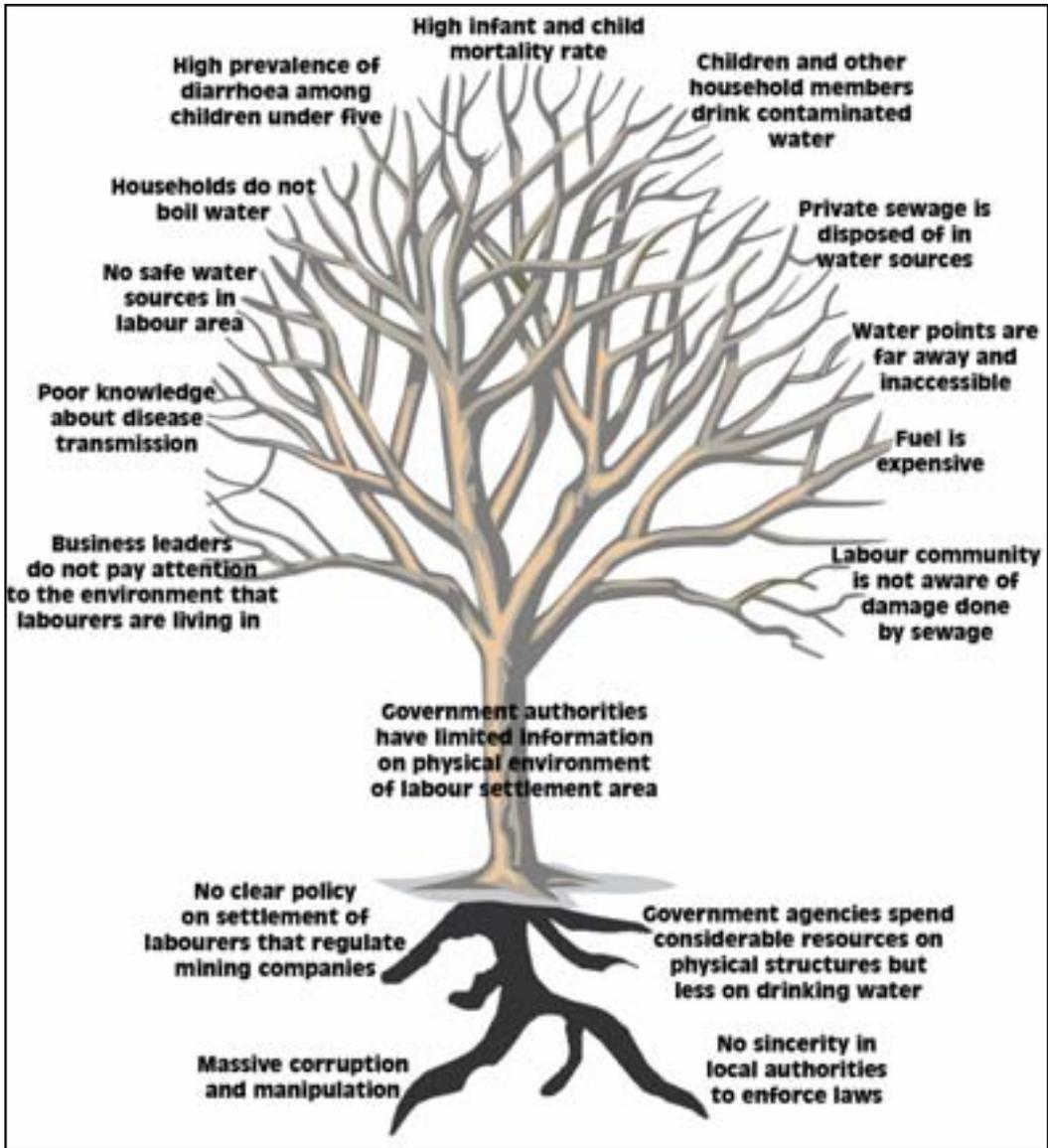


Figure 2.3: An example of problem tree analysis for the case of Koilapahad

unmanaged sewage system. These are the behaviours of the people contributing to water contamination.

Cause that leads to behaviours: This is an even deeper analysis of the causes. The analysis here focuses on why such behaviours appear in communities. To give a simple example, some people are stealing, but why? What factors have made them take to stealing? Regarding contaminated water, we could ask why people behave in a way that causes contamination e.g., lack of awareness of the relationship of their own behaviour to the contamination, lack of potable



water supply because of nearby mines/factories. Thus, this analysis goes even deeper to look for the ‘causes of the cause’. However, this part of the analysis is ‘invisible’. In a real-life situation, you have to discuss the causes in depth with the affected people.

In the example of a problem tree given in Figure 2.3 there are four root causes and one trunk – all of which are related to policy. These are the causes of the problem. You can carry out advocacy for changes in policy and practices in these areas.

Identification of Options for Policy Change

The problem tree presents the root causes of the problem, i.e., causes which are far away from what has been perceived as the cause of the problem observed on the surface. Such continuous ‘digging’ often leads to policy or policy implementation causes, which in turn helps to formulate advocacy strategies.

Up to this stage, you will identify the problem and its causes in different layers. By this level of analysis, you can tentatively figure out your expectations, the ‘vision’ of your advocacy. Do not think that you have only one way of changing this policy or practice. There may be several options. However, each option cannot give you the same degree of impact. This is the challenging part of your analysis (Figure 2.4)

Writing your different options in a matrix format (see Table 2.4) may help you think about the different means available to you for changing policies and practices.

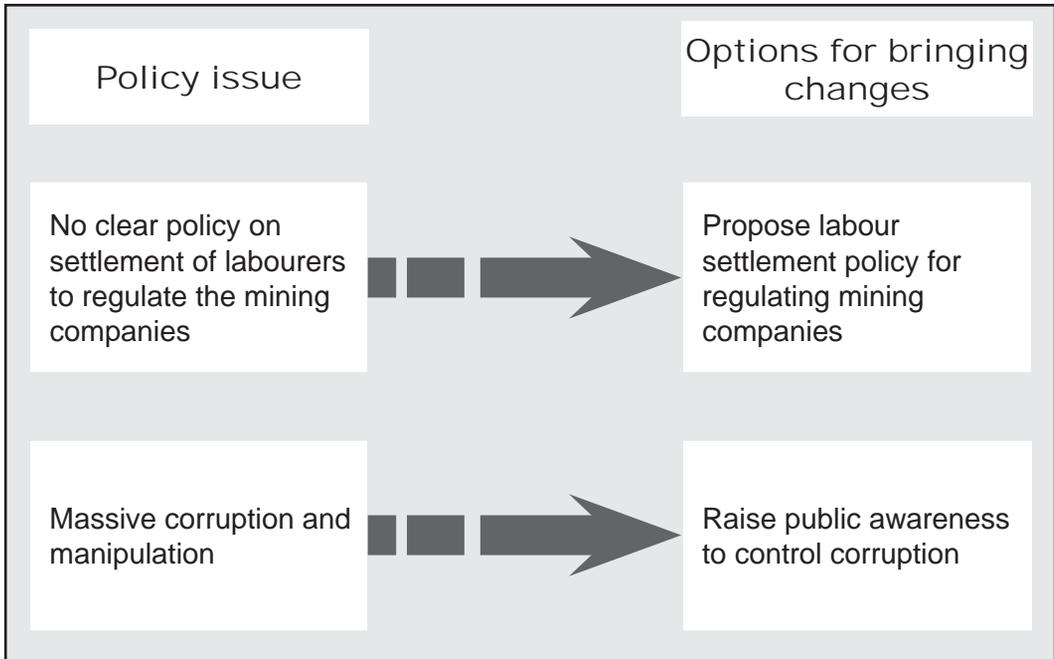


Figure 2.4: Variations in policy options

Table 2.4: Options for policy change

Options	Level of difficulty	Level of impact
Option 'A'	50/100	80/100
Option 'B'	90/100	50/100
Option 'C'	40/100	70/100

You can set your own parameters for measuring difficulties and impacts. In the case of the matrix below, would it be more feasible to choose option 'C' for your advocacy strategy? You can also choose option 'A' but does option 'C' look more achievable and does it create greater empowerment of the people? The selected options can be spelt out in a matrix.

This kind of analysis opens up many choices to allow you to consider the best option for your policy change mission. Your analysis should also consider the following questions.

- Which of the policy options is likely to have the largest and most lasting impact in this community?
- What will be the worst outcome if you do not do anything?
- Which option is likely to be achievable in terms of time, cost, and risk?
- Which option is likely to get support from other organisations?
- Which option do you think more people are opposed to?

- Do you have the necessary expertise for the selected option?
- In which option do you have a comparative advantage?
- Do you have enough know-how, readiness, and an appropriate management structure for risk mitigation?

Preconditions for an Advocacy Initiative

At this stage, you have to decide whether you will take up a particular issue for advocacy or not. For example, you might decide (in collaboration with the people who are affected) that the time is not suitable for advocacy for policy change on the issue selected. Or you could come to the conclusion that although the time is appropriate to initiate an advocacy initiative, you do not have enough funding to cover the cost to complete the mission. Likewise, you could conclude that you do not have the necessary expertise to take up the best option. A cost-benefit analysis can also be carried out before formulating advocacy strategies. The following questions may help your analysis.

- It is possible that your advocacy mission may bring risk to your organisation, your partners, and project participants. For example, the concerned authority can ask your organisation to leave the place. What will you do then?
- As an advocate, your opposition group may arrest you, or may blacklist you as an individual. What will your organisation do if this happens?
- Although it is different from party politics, advocacy is a political activity. Can you manage this process as a development agency? Is it acceptable to your organisation or the board of governors of your organisation?
- Sometimes, the involvement of a particular group or organisation in the policy debate may actually make the situation even worse because of some other extraneous reasons. What do you think about this? Are you sure that your organisation's involvement will, at least, not worsen the problem?
- Remember that advocacy is not the only solution to all problems. There may be other programmes or programmatic approaches to get easy, less time-consuming, and less expensive solutions to the problem. Have you thought about these options?
- In general, advocacy for policy change is a time-consuming process. You cannot plan exactly when you will be successful. If the problem needs immediate action, advocacy may not be feasible. For example, if people are dying of hunger, your advocacy for a poverty alleviation policy may not immediately help those who are suffering. Have you analysed the situation of the affected people properly?

While reading the above questions, many people may be hesitant to even explore the option of advocacy. The intention of these questions is not to 'frighten' the advocate. However, this is a very complex decision that you are about to take.

Therefore, the questions are a reminder of the absolute need to think critically and pay extra attention to the risk factors of advocacy. Ultimately you will not lose anything if you discuss all these points critically. Forewarned is often forearmed.

As an advocate, you may be extra capable. However, the kind of decision making required here is beyond a single person’s capacity as it impacts on large numbers of people including your own co-workers and the people themselves. Therefore, you have to discuss all of these questions in your group or management team. Using the information in this chapter, you can prepare a set of criteria to be used as and when required for selecting advocacy options.

Summary Sheet for ‘Policy Analysis’	
Concepts	Some of the questions dealt with in this chapter
1. Identification of policy issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● What are the problems you are dealing with? Who do these problems affect? ● What are the main policy issues in relation to selected problems – i.e., absence of policy, inadequate policy, or improper enforcement of policy?
2. Identification of key actors and institutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Who are the direct decision makers? ● Who influences the decision makers? ● Are policy makers and interest groups showing interest in bringing about change? What position and opinion do they have? What resources do they have?
3. Analysis of policy environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Can people participate in policy decisions? What channels exist for them? ● What is the location of key decisions? Who controls the decisions? ● Are the selected issues becoming of interest to people? Are the various media channels highlighting the issues? ● What is the priority of the current government? What is the history of these issues? ● What changes are occurring in the political arena? Is the election coming closer?
4. Summary of policy findings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● What are the direct causes of the problems you have selected? ● What are the positions and opinions of policy makers? ● What is the attitude of policy makers?
5. Identification of options for policy change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● What are the impacts you desire from policy change? ● What are your best options for policy change? ● What will happen if nothing is done? ● What options are likely to get public support? ● Who will lead the advocacy process for which policy options?

3

Selection of Issues

Issues for Advocacy

Advocacy is relatively a new concept practiced in the development arena. As part of the rights-based approach, it functions as a tool to protect individual and group rights which are denied by some other actors. Good governance is closely linked to the rights-based approach to development, which argues that development is a process of realising fundamental human rights and freedom³. In the absence of these elements in the community, there is a need for advocacy to attain these in a respectful manner.

The first and most crucial step of each advocacy activity is to identify the contextual theme and scale of the issue to be addressed. In connection with the rights-based approach, the difference between problems and causes is important. Understanding of the terms 'problems', 'causes', and 'issues' is often difficult. Using the tree as a symbol (Figure 3.1) one can distinguish between the openly visible problems (e.g. the branches of the tree) and the root cause of such problems (the rotten roots of the tree). The roots of the problem tree are all issues for advocacy.

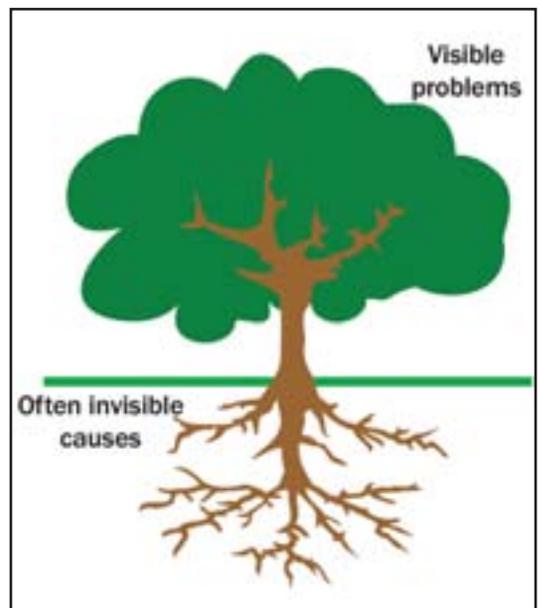


Figure 3.1: Problem Tree

³ United Nations Philippines (2002) *Rights Based Approach to Development Programming, Training Manual*. Available at www.unphilippines.org

It is clear that like the roots of a tree, not all root causes are equal in size and not all have the same importance. Therefore, it is necessary to balance the gravity of the selected cause and the capability of the initiator to bring changes⁴. A small CBO can identify a genuine root cause, but addressing it could be beyond its capacity. In such a case, advocacy cannot be effective in bringing changes to the communities. If a particular agency does not have the capability to deal with a bigger root cause, addressing several smaller causes linked to a big cause is an option so that the bigger root causes of problems can be weakened step by step⁵.

Service delivery projects often focus more on mitigating problems (symptoms) by aiming to provide relief for those who are suffering at present. Advocacy tries to address the root causes of poverty and marginalisation, like access to rights and services and not poverty by itself. There are many cases where development agents identify and start advocacy for change for all root causes at the same time and fail because the consequent drastic changes in the society are not manageable⁶.

Types and Forms of Advocacy

Advocacy is raising voices on behalf of the voiceless. If human rights and the minimum life standard of the voiceless are denied, there should be someone to speak against the elite and authorities which are responsible for maintaining the equitable livelihoods of the people as citizens. Human rights and livelihood standards are vague terms. There may be several issues of human rights and livelihoods if we dig out the roots of the denial. Some of the issues are connected to the attitude and behaviour of duty bearers, some issues are connected to existing policies and other issues are connected with the bigger political system. People normally understand 'advocacy' as the process of raising voices on all issues. Therefore, there is sometimes confusion and misunderstanding about what kind of, and what level of, advocacy we are doing. This chapter presents some clarifications based on practical examples from various organisations located in the Himalayan region and working for capacity building in advocacy.

Three main forms of advocacy are differentiated: people-centered advocacy, policy advocacy, and political advocacy. Their characteristics are summarised in Figure 3.2.

⁴ <http://www.advocacy.org/communicate/>

⁵ Keeling, S.J. (ed.) (2001) *Pro-poor Governance Assessment, Nepal*: pp. 197-199. Kathmandu: Enabling State Programme

⁶ Tondon, R. (2002) *Voluntary Action, Civil Society and the State*, pp. 49-50. New Delhi: Society for Participatory Research in Asia (PRIA)

Parameter	People-Centred Advocacy	Policy Advocacy	Political Advocacy
Key actors	Affected people themselves	Social activists, NGOs and government agencies	Political parties, social leaders and ideologists
Core objective	Changing behaviours and attitudes of duty bearers	Changing policies, laws and systems of instruction for public affairs	Macro-political system, checks and balance of power and mode of representation
Focus areas	Grassroots institutions and stakeholders responsible for public affairs	Policy making institutions at the macro level – ministries, parliament, others	Overall political system at the macro level
Approach	Self-starting, people-centred, and demonstration on a small scale	Mass awareness, lobbying, and campaigning	Mass mobilisation based on party interests and ideology
Kind of advocacy	'Advocacy of the people'	'Advocacy with the people'	'Advocacy for the people'
Process	Bottom-up	Sometimes bottom-up and sometimes top-down	Mostly top-down
Position of activists	They remain within communities	They remain close to communities but not within them	They remain far from communities but try to represent community interests
Mode of communication	Person to person – close interaction by informal media and interactions in smaller groups	Activists to individuals by using mass media and interaction programmes	Politicians to people, mostly by using mass media
Level of participation	Inclusive, effective and meaningful	Sometimes superficial and sometimes inclusive	Mostly superficial and top-down

Figure 3.2: Different Forms of Advocacy

People-centred advocacy

Advocacy, as it is generally understood, is to amplify the voice for a definite purpose of change in policies and behaviour. From this point of view, advocacy has been understood as a systematic process of influencing decision makers at any level. However, who is speaking and whose voice has been heard and whose voice is not heard are often not clear to many advocates. Likewise, there may be good policies at different levels. Deep-rooted social value systems are the main causes of creating and sustaining inequality and injustice in society, and they cannot be changed by changes in policies alone. People should focus on the root

causes along with achieving expected policy change. Therefore, people-centred advocacy is a process of changing behaviour, attitudes, and society's value system and making the nearest stakeholders accountable⁷.

The ideal spirit of democracy is the main driving force for people-centred advocacy. It is a socio-political process that enables and empowers marginalised people to speak for the protection of their rights. After all, people-centred advocacy is, 'of the people, by the people and for the people'. This approach of advocacy acknowledges the critical role of citizens in safeguarding human rights – including social and political rights. The practical behaviour of power holders says that there should be a partnership between the state and citizens in public affairs. Power brokers in society are still reluctant to keep people – regardless of class and caste – on the apex of the state system. People-centred advocacy ensues that there is no demarcation between the state and citizens because the state mechanism is virtually made and owned by the citizens. John Samuel points out that people-centred advocacy is about mobilising the politics of the people to ensure that the politics of the state is accountable, transparent, ethical, and democratic⁸.

Features of people-centred advocacy

People-centred advocacy is a concept which focuses on changes in policies, including policy enforcement, and aims to make a difference in the real-life situation of the affected communities. This is more focused advocacy, and often starts from the grassroots. Normally, people-centred advocacy is initiated by those who are the sufferers. If they need supporters and facilitators, either they have to develop such skills from the community itself or get support from those activists who have organic relations with the real-life situation of the poor. Social mobilisation processes successfully practised in Pakistan believe that such activists must be promoted from the same communities. There may be several contextual features for this kind of advocacy. Some are presented below.

Maintaining a clear ethical ground: People-centred advocacy strongly believes in the 'self starting approach' of social transformation. The integrity and legitimacy of advocates provides ethical grounds for speaking up about certain issues. John Samuel has precisely pointed out in his work that people-centred advocacy seeks to bridge the gap between words and actions, theory and practice, and rhetoric and real-life experience. This advocacy approach challenges you – unless you challenge and change yourself, you cannot change others. Advocacy is an effective means of safeguarding rights and achieving good governance at all levels, but unjust means can never be used for just ends. In other words, if people want social justice, the processes applied when demanding justice must

⁷ CII (2005) *Advocacy and Networking Manual*, p.3. Antigonish (NS, Canada): Coady International Institute

⁸ Samuel, J. (2007) 'Public Advocacy and People-centred Advocacy: Mobilising for Social Change'. In *Development in Practice*. 17(4/5), 615-621

be just, ethical, and legitimate. If these parameters are not working because of unjust power relations, you need to start advocacy to change such culture before going into the real cause.

Following the rights-based approach to development: People should be regarded as active creators of opportunity for their right to live with dignity. The civil society sector at present is increasingly recognising that the ‘project approach’ to development is not going to solve the problem of deep-rooted poverty. Greater democracy, transparency, and accountability are likely to achieve long-term sustainable change for poor people⁹. Therefore, people should get legitimate rights to demand distributive justice in social affairs. Responsible stakeholders set for public affairs must recognise that the citizens are the owners of the state mechanism. At the end of all public work, the state mechanism must be accountable to citizens. People-centred advocacy intends to mobilise people and civil society against violations of human rights and an increasing trend of inequality at the community level because of accountability being ignored. The integration of advocacy with rural development programmes is a process of awakening people on their rights, which promotes the sustainable transformation of the society¹⁰. The rights-based approach clears the ground to initiate the process of bottom-up change. This approach argues that changes in macro-level policies can make a big difference; but that all policies made by macro-level initiatives, taken mostly by politicians, might not be in the interests of the people. Therefore, a rights-based approach adds the value of people’s meaningful participation to the decision-making processes.

Value-driven approach: The values of social justice and human rights are the core driving forces of people-centred advocacy. These values have to be reflected from households to macro-level organisations. People-centred advocacy strongly focuses on those individuals who are seeking to change such values. They need to demonstrate the same values in their individual and household-level actions. Then they will get many followers from the communities and the agenda can be moved towards the upper arena of social transformation – district-level, state-level, or national-level forums. This is people-centred advocacy in the true sense. This situation is beyond the idea of ‘advocating on behalf of the poor’ for pro-poor policies and behaviours, which is often carried out in the name of policy advocacy.

Effective and meaningful participation: Participation is the starting point of people-centred advocacy. It is not only important to have communication for consensus building or making a bigger voice for the same issue, but it is also

⁹ Chapman, J.; Wameyo, A. (2001) *Monitoring and Evaluating Advocacy: A Scoping Study*. London: Action Aid, available at www.actionaid.org.uk

¹⁰ Khan, O. A. (2001) *Reflections on Strategies for Empowerment in Voices of the Marginalized*. Islamabad (Pakistan): Sungi Development Foundation

important to share power, freedom, legitimacy, and accountability. When people are ready to share these individual strengths, new heights of synergy emerge to take up the selected issue in public discourse. Olga Gladkikh¹¹ has explained that politics, power, and people are the key elements of advocacy, but power is the connector of the other two. It is also important to understand ‘power with’, ‘power within’, and ‘power to’ while analysing the importance of participation in people-centred advocacy.

Power within: This is an inner power of a human being, normally gained from socialisation processes. Sometimes one’s own inner potential is not known in the absence of sharing and socialising in social issues. Self respect, self esteem, individual commitment, looking for self-worth, and willingness to contribute for others are the driving forces to generate ‘power within’ at the individual level. When an individual shares his/her feelings with like-minded individuals or groups, the inner potential starts coming out and becomes converted into ‘power with’ for effective action.

Power with: This is the collective power of people when they agree to come together for common tasks. A composite form of power gained from a shared vision and mission gives a synergy effect in terms of influencing and making arguments more logical. The concept of ‘power with’ is different to the multiplication and building of individual talents. Synergetic strength is the product coming out of mutual support of many talents together.

Power to: This is a collective force gained by the people, which can be used for a productive action in terms of policy influence, influence to change behaviours, and other changes in communities. For example, a piece of metal has the potential power of communication if it is used wisely. There are similar other potential elements – plastic, colours, and so on – having the potential for communication. Let us say that the synergetic effect of all potentials is the production of a computer. Now the computer is in a position of ‘power to’ which can make a tremendous change in modes of communication.

In the sense of people-centred advocacy, we can gain a situation of ‘power to’ from the means of effective participation of all strata of the population. In present day politics, democracy at a superficial level is not very effective in generating or regenerating a dignified livelihood for marginalised people. An ultimate aim of advocacy is to contribute to achieving an inclusive democracy at all levels¹² so that all strata of the population can enjoy their rights. Achieving this situation is only possible by gaining ‘power to’ in communities.

¹¹ Gladkikh, O. (2002) *Democracy and Active Citizen Engagement: Best Practices in Advocacy and Networking*. Antigonish (NS Canada): St. Francis Xavier University

¹² Gurung, H. (2002) ‘Sociological Issues in Governance’. In, *Achieving Sustainable Development is Essentially a Task of Transforming Governance*. Kathmandu: Swiss Development Cooperation (SDC)

Power over: This is a negative connotation of power. A few elite people are ruling the majority of the common citizens based on the principle of 'power over' because these elite are more powerful than other people. The power is used for ruling others to gaining individual advantage. The Rana regime of Nepal (1845-1950) exercised this principle very much on a national level. There are still many more such elite groups who are using 'power over' in local governance. People-centred advocacy is mainly initiated to replace such situations.

Practical communication strategies: Advocacy is a set of actions for communication from one party to another in a chain, which, at the end of the day, promotes social actions. John Samuel says that community, collectivism, and communication are closely interwoven phenomena. There are four important 'Cs' within the communication framework. All of these elements must produce positive results for moving the mission continuously in a successful direction. The four Cs are (1) communication to convince, (2) convince to change, (3) change to commit, and (4) commit to convert to the cause.

Communication in relation to advocacy is not only sharing knowledge and skills using certain language. A whole range of communication tools, techniques, and skills have to be considered. Selection of the message and the media used to get the message across is very important. For example, important types of media particularly useful for people-centred advocacy could be the creative use of symbols, picture, leaflets, and drama. Advocacy initiators must be able to learn from people by sharing experiences. Advocates can inspire people and should be inspired by the people. Finally, communication strategies designed for advocacy need to be consistent, continuous, creative, compelling, and convincing.

Policy Advocacy

Policies are those norms applicable in the society which are obligatory to all individuals. Some such policies are made by the state using people's sovereignty. State-made policies are seen as forms of law, rules, regulations, and directives in standard printed form. Some other policies are made by the communities themselves on an understanding based on tradition, culture, religious beliefs and ongoing social norms. Some of these remain in written form but the majority of these forms of policies remain in unwritten form. Therefore, when we talk about 'policies in advocacy', we should not consider only those policies enacted by the state machinery. Community-made and unwritten norms are also equally important for human beings living in a community.

Policy advocacy can be defined as an action for changing policies. The root of the action is the voice from the people. The people who play leading roles in policy advocacy are those who know the present situation best and see benefits

after getting changes in such policies. The voice makers prepare logical actions supported by facts and figures of the present scenario and a vision for the future. The general trend in society is that not all individual citizens can pay attention to policy advocacy. Some people are very busy in their own business. However, there are some people in all communities who are constantly paying attention to policies and analyse the cost and benefits of existing policies. These people keep on raising their voices for part and partial change of such policies, be they government-made or community-made policies.

Broadly, there are three basic objectives of policy advocacy. These are: (a) formulating a new policy if there is a policy vacuum; (b) amendment of an existing policy; and (c) enforcement of existing good policy. People-centred advocacy is also done for the same objectives. There is a significant overlap between people-centred and policy advocacy. However, the scale of the advocacy and the gravity of the issues are different.

Features of policy advocacy

Advocates at different levels carry out policy advocacy. This lies between people-centred advocacy and political advocacy. Issues start from the bottom as people-centred advocacy. In people-centred advocacy, issues related to policy enforcement and behavioural changes get resolved on the ground because there are already good policies in the country. If there are problems in policies for some issues, policy advocacy is required at the upper levels for changing such policies. If policy formulation or change is not possible within the existing system, then the issue becomes the agenda for political advocacy for a radical change in the political system itself. In this way, policy advocacy is the link between people-centred advocacy and political advocacy.

In people-centred advocacy, all affected people should be aware and take part. In political advocacy, all citizens should be mobilised (both those heavily affected and partly affected). The people's movement of Nepal in April 2006 is a recent example. Neither of these conditions applies to policy advocacy. Some advocates and social workers, who remain far from the people affected, can also carry out continuous policy advocacy. For example, some environmentalists can advocate for policy change in the utilisation of natural resources. If policy change takes place, its benefits go to many other people who may not know about the advocacy.

How to analyse the prevailing policy environment is described in Chapter 3 as the first step of the advocacy planning framework.

Connection with livelihoods: There is a saying that the, “poor are not poor by virtue but they are made poor”. In some situations it is possible that some local elite members and leaders might have made other people poor with the help of certain laws and regulations. From this perspective, policies can be the root causes of poverty and deprivation. Poverty alleviation without focusing on its root cause becomes a treatment for the symptoms. This is one of the factors that weakens poverty alleviation programmes in different countries. Changes in policies which were made to protect the vested interests of certain groups indirectly help to reduce poverty.

Use of information technology: A group leading policy advocacy can use information technology (IT) for exchanging news and views among the advocates. The media plays a vital role in educating people about the issue and expected changes in policies. Cross-border alliances and networking are made possible by IT tools and techniques because there is no need for the frequent physical presence of the advocates for policy advocacy. Petitions, public consciousness, and pressure from long distance communication (through email and web sites) are all effective means of carrying out present day advocacy efforts.

Political Advocacy

There are many struggles going on in the world including big political changes in Iraq, Afghanistan, and the countries of the former Soviet Union. Many mountain areas, including those in Nepal, North East India, Bhutan, Bangladesh (the Chittagong Hill Tracts), Myanmar, and so on are facing conflict, sometimes armed and violent. When there is a discussion about advocacy initiatives, social activists like to get in touch with these bigger issues and ongoing conflicts. Sometimes, a big debate takes place to determine whether or not these political issues can be addressed by advocacy efforts. If advocacy is deemed to be effective in addressing these issues of conflict, the debate is what kind of advocacy should be carried out and how such advocacy efforts are different from other advocacy efforts which address policy and behavioural change. Therefore, it is essential to make a demarcation between different types of advocacy.

Political advocacy is the process of making logical arguments against the existing political system by mobilising the like-minded population of the country. For example, a popular peoples’ movement under the leadership of Gandhi in India was also political advocacy because Gandhi and his followers wanted to overthrow the ruling British and establish a people’s democracy in India. In the beginning, this argument was not legitimate under the rules and regulations adapted by the British rulers, but later the movement gained legitimacy from the majority of the Indian citizens. In this sense, all democratic movements are also part of advocacy,

but they are completely different to the people-centric advocacy normally carried out for policy and behavioural change within the broader political framework.

The basic objective of political advocacy is to get a revised political system as per the interest of the majority population of the country. Political advocacy believes in systemic change in government formulation processes and in the management of public affairs rather than changing operational policies. For example, most political advocacy is directed towards constitutional change. If the constitution is changed, all the other operational laws are also changed afterwards automatically and with little effort. For example, since 1993 the Maoist movement in Nepal has been opposing the constitutional framework. Those people who believe in the Maoist movement are not able to follow the provisions envisioned by the constitution of the kingdom of Nepal 1990. This group mainly wants to make a new constitution and political system. There are several other groups in Nepal who also want to bring some changes to the existing constitution, although not drastic changes. Who is right and who is wrong is another dimension of the debate, but all of them are engaged in political advocacy.

Features of political advocacy

Primarily, politicians are the main actors for political advocacy. In a system where there is already a party political system, they can better mobilise mass support through their multi-tier structures. But in a society with no political parties, mobilising mass support for effective political advocacy is far more difficult. For example, there was drastic political change in Nepal in 1990 as a result of a long process of political advocacy carried out by democrats since 1960. It took a long time to mobilise people to reinstall democracy because there was an autocratic government system without the existence of political parties between 1960 and 1990.

Political and people-centred advocacy are both articulations of the people for change. The difference lies in the gravity and scope of the change. The issues actually start from people-centred advocacy, get the attention of the masses, and end with political advocacy. Some of the related areas are described in the following.

Macro and micro linkages: Political advocacy generally starts from the macro level politicians and roots down to the grassroots. If the politicians are not able to deepen their idea of political reformation and take it down to the people, they generally fail and advocacy cannot be converted into an appealing movement. When the idea of reformation from the macro level goes down to the grassroots, it becomes a part of people-centred advocacy. The People's Movement of Nepal

(April 2006) is a recent example. Politicians working at the macro level had been advocating for two years (2004 and 2005) to return sovereignty to the people, which had been taken over by the king. However, it took more than two years to take the issue down to the people. Finally, the people were able to take their sovereignty back from the king by a popular people's movement (taking place from 6 to 19 April 2006).

Connection with livelihoods: At present, social and political leaders working at the micro level are made, trusted, and credited by the people. Otherwise no one, except some intellectuals, can be a leader of a society. Such leaders, if they are true, conceived the idea for change by observing and experiencing the suffering of the people at the grassroots. Today's suffering may be converted into an agenda for political change after say ten years. The main point is that the agenda of political advocacy must be well connected with people's lives. The people-centred advocacy of today can be converted into bigger political advocacy tomorrow.

Comparative outlook: The explosion of communication and transportation networks has brought members of the world community closer to each other. Now a small child can compare the social, political, and economic context of one country to that in many other countries of the world with the help of such networks. When there was no opportunity to compare one reality with others, the system in a particular country was generally acceptable to the people. Most agendas for political advocacy are derived from comparative knowledge and the experiences of people at different levels. For example, a Pakistani child may wonder about the possibility of having an open democracy in Pakistan, as in India. Similarly, a Nepali child can wonder if it is necessary for the king to be an active actor in politics. Finally, such thinking can be converted into political advocacy with the help of committed leaders and supporters.

Global arrangements: In the 21st century, no one is enjoying rights and following duties in isolation. There are many influences from the global community and various undertakings. There are also some instruments in use at the global level, which act as the ideal which should be worked towards. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international treaties and conventions are typical examples. If some of the conditions, positions, and rights guaranteed by international tools are not applied to a particular community or country, people feel depressed and want to find out the causes of this lack, which is directly or indirectly connected with political systems. An advocacy process can be started to change policies. When there are a number of unfavourable policies, then all issues come together as a political advocacy for systemic change. This situation becomes the starting point of political advocacy.

Summary Sheet for ‘Selection of Issues’

Concepts	Some of the questions dealt with in this chapter
Issues for advocacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the issues for advocacy? • Where are the issues for building the foundations of the advocacy effort? • What is the difference between problems and issues? • How are problems and issues related?
Nature of issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are all issues of a similar nature and gravity? • What are the factors to consider while selecting issues? • How many issues can be selected for advocacy? • How should the issues be prioritised?
Types of advocacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How can we categorise advocacy? • How do we determine the level of advocacy? • How do we relate advocacy with the problem tree? • On which category should civil society organisations focus?
People-centred advocacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the features of this category of advocacy? • What level of issues does this category deal with? • Who are the key stakeholders for this advocacy? • What are the focus areas for this type of advocacy?
Policy advocacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the differences between people-centred and policy advocacy? • How do you determine the policy issue? • Who are the actors for this type of advocacy? • What are the expected outcomes of this advocacy?
Political advocacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why do we need political advocacy? • Who are the key actors for this type of advocacy? • How do you relate this advocacy with policy changes? • What are the differences between policy change and system change? • How do you differentiate between system change, policy change, and behavioural change?

4

Advocacy Strategies

This chapter presents a simple guideline for outlining advocacy strategies, the second step in the advocacy initiative planning framework. This step includes selection of the issue, selection of the target audience, setting a policy goal, and identification of allies and opponents. The chapter highlights the way in which the information collected through the process presented here can be moulded.

From the previous chapter you may have realised more clearly that poverty and discrimination are connected directly or indirectly with policy considerations. Identification of the root causes and effects of this connection gives you the opportunity to select advocacy as a tool to overcome or minimise the broader problems from which mountain people are suffering.

After identifying all causes and affects, you may be ambitious. You may want to deal with several issues in order to resolve the variety of problems faced by the communities you are working with. However, a realistic evaluation will probably convince you that you cannot deal with all the issues that you are interested in. Therefore you have to maintain a focus on selected issues (Figure 4.1).

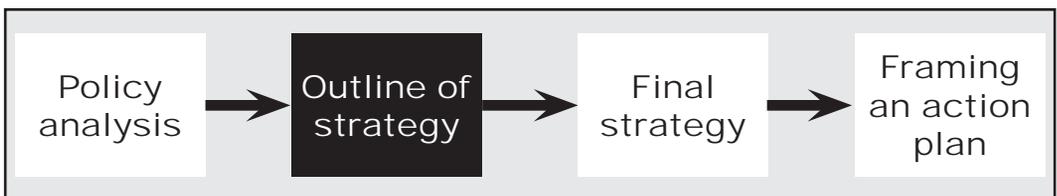


Figure 4.1: Stage two in the horizontal framework

The following steps will help you to maintain your focus as you develop the basic outline for your advocacy strategy.

- Select the policy issues that can be effectively addressed through advocacy and which will have the greatest impact on the problem.

- Select as target audiences those who can support you in your attempt to influence policy makers.
- Set a specific policy goal for your advocacy initiative.
- Identify potential allies and opponents.

Selection of Policy Issues

As a result of analysing one problem, many policy issues may be identified. Some policy issues are very distant from the current problem. For example, in the problem tree presented in Chapter 2 (Figure 2.3), infant mortality is apparently very far removed from the issue of corruption in the government bureaucracy, but as your analysis has shown, it is actually well connected.

Traditional development programmes used to concentrate only on the symptoms of the problem because that is where the suffering is immediate. As a result, they were often not able to affect or change the root causes. For example, one project would introduce different vaccines to reduce the infant mortality rate, while another organisation would train local people on safe drinking water and sanitation aspects. However, a sufficiently deep analysis would indicate that in the case of infant mortality for example, more than one policy issue exists that underlies the problem. However, you may not be able to deal with all issues related to the problem. The following tips will help you select an appropriate issue for your advocacy initiative.

Key criteria for selecting policy issues

- Direct contribution of the policy to the problem
- Visible impact on a large number of people
- Likely to be successful with the capacity that you actually have
- Potential for working in coalitions with other like-minded organisations
- Risk assessment indicates a manageable risk
- Potential for your organisation to advocate effectively

Direct contribution to the problem: Some policy issues contribute to problems directly. For example, in the infant mortality rate example, a labour settlement policy can directly contribute to the problem. Your problem analysis gives a clear indication of the extent to which a policy issue influences the problem. Therefore you will be able to select those issues which contribute most directly to the problems at hand.

Impact on a large number of people: Policy issues usually have an effect on a large number of people. If you are able to make a small change in one carefully-

chosen area of policy this can generate impact on a wider scale. Traditional needs-based development could not produce such impacts in the communities concerned because it tended not to touch the underpinning policies. Therefore, it is recommended that advocates should select only those issues that can generate benefits for a large number of people.

For example, if an advocacy initiative brings about a labour settlement policy in Koilapahad, its impact could be felt by more than 40,000 labourers in a sustainable manner. But if an organisation initiates two drinking water schemes in the labour area, the benefit will only be felt by a limited number of people for a certain number of years, the project not being sustainable. The analysis of the infant mortality problem led to the identification of four policy issues, but not all of them will give equivalent benefits to a large number of people.

Likelihood of success: It is essential to estimate how far one's advocacy effort targeted at policy change is likely to succeed. Since advocacy work in itself is usually a very drawn-out process, people could lose hope and give up the struggle if a frank estimation of success is not made. While making a logical estimate of the likelihood of success, several factors can be reviewed. For example, if policy makers are established in an environment that allows for advocacy, the likelihood of success becomes high. If the policy makers face heavy opposition from other political parties to the proposed changes, the likelihood of success is low. Therefore you have to be able to assess the likelihood of all options based on your policy analysis and must select those options which carry the most likelihood of success.

Potential for working in coalition: The capacity of any organisation to change policy can be enhanced when it joins with other organisations in advocacy. Therefore, opportunities for working with different levels of partners and alliances should be taken into account when selecting the issue. If you think no one will be interested in joining hands to take on the issue, the likelihood of success becomes low. If you find that there are several like-minded organisations willing to work together, this could indicate that this is a more appropriate option.

Risk assessment: An advocacy initiative is not one hundred per cent risk free. Therefore, you must assess the level and gravity of the risk. The risks arising from your advocacy efforts in one area may also affect other programmes running under your organisation. Your organisation's relationship with the government may be damaged, your credibility may be lost, your staff can be blacklisted, and your organisation may lose the benefits it presently receives from different sources. Therefore, it is necessary to carry out a benefit-harm analysis while selecting the options.



Potential for your organisation to advocate effectively: You should assess yourself and decide in your team whether you are a legitimate, capable, leading organisation, and visionary in taking the lead in any advocacy initiative. Remember that organisations or advocates cannot deal with all the issues seen or identified in the community. An analysis of the situation based on the above-mentioned criteria can be presented in matrix form (Table 4.1). The area of labour settlement in Koilapahad is taken as the context for this example. This is an example for learning purposes. In this case, you can choose policy issue 1, because it has elements that are applicable to the majority of the criteria. You can also have your own criteria for selecting an appropriate issue for advocacy in a real-life situation.

Selection of Target Audience

The target audience is the person or group of people who are responsible for bringing about the policy change that you hope to achieve at the end of your advocacy initiative. Whether it is a new policy or the proper enforcement of an existing policy, it is essential to identify decision makers. Your target audience could be the direct decision makers as well as those who are not direct decision makers but who influence decision making. The target audience can be grouped into two categories.

Primary audience: People in this category are responsible for taking direct decisions on the issues that you are dealing with. For example, the State Minister for Mining could be directly responsible for taking policy decisions with regard to the settlement of labourers working in the mines. The Minister of Forests is directly responsible for taking forest-related decisions in the case of the tax

Table 4.1: An example of selecting a policy issue

Criteria	Policy Issue 1 No clear policy to regulate mining companies on labourers' settlements	Policy Issue 2 No sincerity among local authorities to enforce laws
Direct contribution to the problem	This issue has a direct link with the main problems of the area of labour settlement.	This issue also has a direct relation to the problem. However, sincerity depends entirely upon individuals.
Impact on a large number of people	Policy on labour settlement area touches entire labour force working in the mining area.	This issue also covers all labourers but there is no monitoring mechanism.
Likelihood of success	Political leaders and the general public are apparently interested in introducing such a law.	No one is interested in changing the mindset and traditional practices of individuals.
Risk assessment	It looks low risk because everyone wants a systematic labour settlement in the area.	There is a possibility of developing resistance at an individual or collective level.
Potential for your organisation to advocate effectively	This issue matches with organisational vision, mission, and goal. The organisation also has enough staff members to deal with this issue.	It is very difficult to go for an invisible reformation. It may take a long time and much energy to change the individual working attitude of staff members.
Potential for working in coalition	The organisations working around the mining hills are also willing to join hands.	No coalition looks possible to work on this issue.

imposed on Community Forest User Groupss in Nepal. People believe that parliamentarians are directly responsible for the formation of rules and regulations. However, the concerned secretariats are the ones primarily responsible for preparing drafts and submitting them for final approval. Therefore, the bureaucracy of that particular ministry and the ministers are considered the primary target audience in most advocacy cases.

Secondary audience: People in this category do not take decisions themselves but influence the decision makers to a great extent. For example, all contractors who are taking benefits from mining contracts are members of the secondary audience in the case of the Koilapahad labour issue. Similarly, all timber-related business holders belong to the secondary audience in the case of forestry in Nepal. Sometimes, parliamentarians themselves could be the secondary audience because they may be willing to change certain policies but do not have enough majority in parliament.



Learning about different experiences of advocacy by interacting with resource persons at Thane, Mumbai, India

Sometimes, the secondary audience can be the best route of reaching the primary audience because these are the people who maintain a closer relationship with the decision makers. For example, if you want to meet and talk to the minister of a certain ministry, you have to go through that minister's personal assistant. In this case, you can consider the personal assistant to be a member of the secondary audience.

The policy analysis gives you a clear indication of the audience that you have to deal with. The primary audience is easy to identify. However, identification of the secondary audience is not so clear-cut. You will be faced with a series of secondary audiences for one issue. Therefore you should focus on those people with the greatest ability to influence your primary audience. Figure 4.2 gives an example of target audiences for the Koilapahad case.

Primary audience

Remember that audiences are always people, not institutions. The primary audience consists of those people within institutions who have the authority to take decisions. For example, the general manager of a factory is the primary audience if the changes you want to bring are within that factory. If you want to bring changes to a hospital management, the general administrator of the hospital will be your primary audience. If you want to bring changes to national education policy, the minister of education is your primary audience. You can cite several examples according to your case.

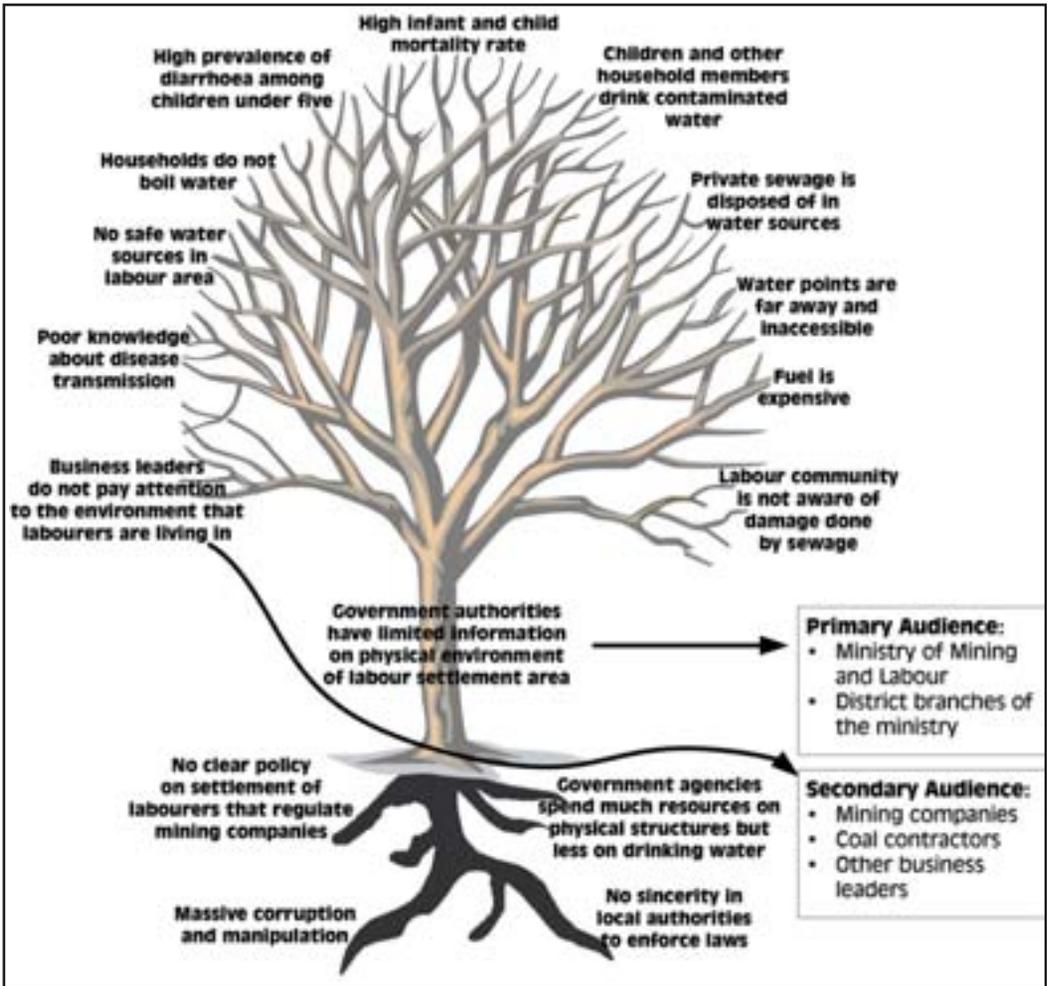


Figure 4.2: An example of target audiences in the Koilapahad case

Selection of Policy Goal

Selecting goals at different levels before starting any intervention is a way of doing things systematically. Such goals should be very specific so that all stakeholders involved in the activity have the same understanding. If the goal is described in vague terms, different people will interpret it differently. Therefore, a goal set for advocacy should be based on the ‘SMART’ principle.

S = Specific **M** = Measurable **A** = Achievable **R** = Realistic **T** = Time-bound

In other words, an advocacy goal should be able to indicate what will change, who will make such changes, what degree of change is expected, and by when the changes will take place. Different goals can be set for different levels. See the following examples, and Figure 4.3.

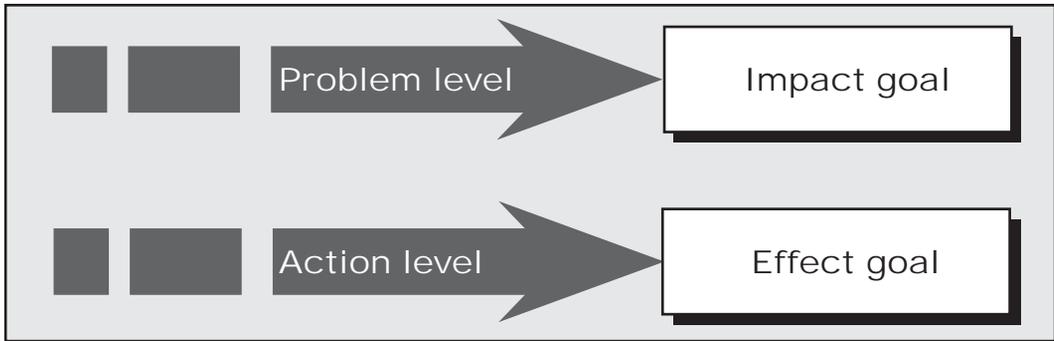


Figure 4.3: Examples of different goals

Impact goal: The final or ultimate impact goal of an advocacy initiative is not very different from the goal of a normal project. Ultimately, changes in policy should bring positive changes in people’s lives. This could be in terms of reducing poverty, discrimination, increasing access and opportunities, and attaining more rights. If policy changes do not bring any improvement in people’s lives, advocacy for these kinds of changes do not make much sense to poor people. Therefore, the final goal of advocacy must be able to address the core problem that you have identified. An example of the ‘impact goal’ related to the labourers’ area of settlement in Koilapahad could be as follows:

“By the end of 2006, the infant mortality rate of 20,000 labourers living in Koilapahad decreased by 30% from baseline status.”

Effect goal: Suppose you are asking policy makers to take certain decisions. If they take such decisions, these actions are related to your effect goal. In other words, your voice influenced them very much. These actions may not have generated much impact on people’s lives but they have taken action, as you were demanding. These actions could be in terms of setting a policy, changing something in the existing policy, changing working styles, changing behaviours, etc. An example of the ‘effect goal’ in relation to the area of labour settlement in Koilapahad could be:

“By the end of 2004, the State Ministry of Labour and Housing passed the labour settlement area management act and enacted it in the Koilapahad labour settlement area.”

You can take the same example of problem analysis as it is presented in Chapter 2 in connection with the effort to set goals at different levels. For a clear understanding, the matrix shown in Figure 4.4 can be used. You can prepare this kind of matrix in your own context for a real-life advocacy planning effort.

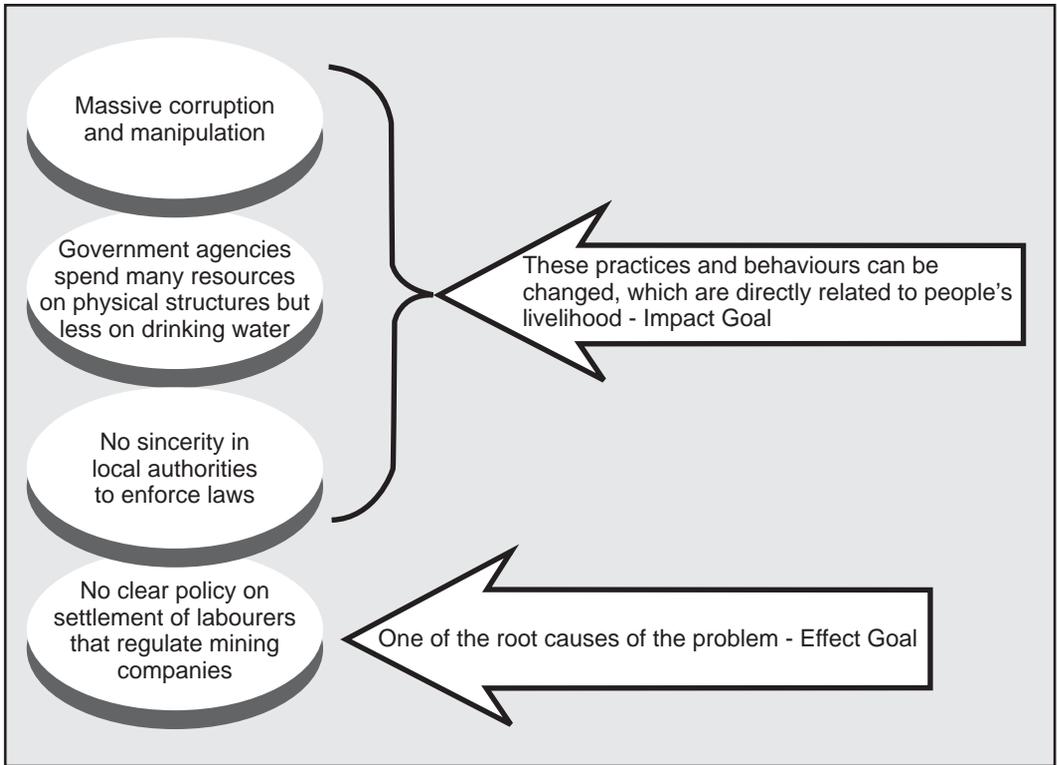


Figure 4.4: Examples of goals in labour settlement Koilapahad issue

Based on the above facts, you can outline an advocacy strategy for Koilapahad as below. The case of Koilapahad is an example based on information collected during field visits and is presented here only for learning purposes. When you are planning your advocacy initiative, Table 4.2 might help you to create similar matrixes to plan your strategies.

Table 4.2: An example of tabulating different audiences	
Policy issue	Lack of labour settlement management policy for coal mining labourers in Koilapahad
Primary audience	Minister of Housing and Mining, the State of Meghalaya, India (This is an example for learning purposes. Name of the ministry could be different in a different state/ country).
Secondary audience	Business leaders, coal mining contractors, and other contractors in coal business.
Effect goal	By the end of 2004, infant mortality rate of 20,000 labourer families living in Koilapahad decreasing by 30% from baseline status.
Impact goal	By the end of 2007, State Ministry of Labour and Housing passing labour settlement area management act and enacting it in the Koilapahad labour settlement area.

Identification of Allies and Opponents

In a general sense, your allies are your supporters and your opponents are those people who are against your proposal for policy change. However, not all of your supporters will be interested in working with you. Some people are willing to give support but are not willing to join in actions. But some of the supporters will be interested in joining your advocacy initiative and would also be interested in taking credit for any successes. These individuals are the people whom we can call 'allies' in advocacy.

Identification of allies: Advocacy for policy change is not possible through a single individual or the effort of one organisation. Experience from many advocacy initiatives indicates that the joint efforts of several organisations and individuals are more likely to minimise risks, draw the attention of policy makers to key policy issues, and get the expected results. Therefore, it is your challenge to identify those who are interested in working with you for the same purpose. If you are able to work in coalitions, you will have the following advantages:

- Possibility of sharing resources, experience, credibility and visibility
- Increasing the likelihood of success
- The opportunity to develop the capacity of less experienced members
- Collective strength for all members
- A feeling of security in case of risk

A coalition of like-minded organisations and individuals can be formed based on the issue and goal you have selected for policy change. After achieving results in a specific issue, such a coalition can be discontinued or can be continued to take up another issue of a similar nature. Recently, the tendency of issue-based coalitions has emerged as a viable way of functioning in different countries. In order to create a coalition, you must not assume that until your initiative came on the scene nothing has happened with regard to the selected issue. There may be others working for the same purpose already. You have to pay attention to the following questions:

- Are other organisations working for the same issue?
- If yes, at what level and in which location are they working? Do coalitions exist already for the same purpose under someone's leadership?
- Are they willing to invite you to be a coalition member?
- Can you contribute to that coalition? Or is it a problem for you to join that coalition?
- What roles do these organisations want to give to you?
- Can you figure out the advantages and disadvantages of joining with them?
- Do other organisations see you as a 'value adding' partner?

If there is a coalition already, you can join with it if the roles given to your organisation are acceptable to you. There is no need to form a new coalition for the same purpose. Duplication of a coalition is more harmful than not having any coalition for advocacy. If you are forming a new coalition, you have to pay attention to the following questions:

- Are you confident with regard to the credibility of your allies?
- Do they add value to your advocacy mission?
- Do they agree with your value, vision, and mission of advocacy initiatives?
- Are they ready to share the potential risks?
- Do you find the conditions of resource sharing during advocacy acceptable?

Identification of opponents: This is as important as the identification of allies. This is the process of knowing your opponents and analysing the reasons why they are opposing your proposal of policy/practice changes. If you do not know the people and the grounds of opposition to your proposal, your advocacy message may proceed in the wrong direction. Your target audience may not be the correct one. Advocacy carried out in this situation is likely to produce fewer or no successes.

In some cases, your opponents could be your secondary audience for advocacy initiatives. Your ultimate aim should be to change your opponents into supporters. If you cannot get them to support you, at the very least, you should try and change them into a neutral force in terms of their influence in decision making. However, you have to follow fair, just, and intellectual ways of dealing with them. In particular, you should consider the following questions:

- Have you prepared a list of organisations or influential individuals that oppose your proposal?
- Have you investigated the reasons why they oppose your idea?
- What is their logical argument? Did you listen to them and analyse their logic?
- Have you analysed the opinions of opponents?
- Do you know the political or ideological biases of your opponents?
- Have you assessed the power poles of your opponents?

When considering the above questions, the person who is willing to analyse the policy environment must carry out research in an unbiased manner. For a big issue, you need to carry out systematic research on its policy environment. Information in relation to the above questions is not available from formal sources. For example, while talking to someone, you may feel that the person is very supportive but in reality the person may be playing a dual role.

In a real-life situation, you will find people have different interests. You cannot categorise them into only two categories – supporters and opponents. The power diagram shown in Figure 4.5 plays a vital role.

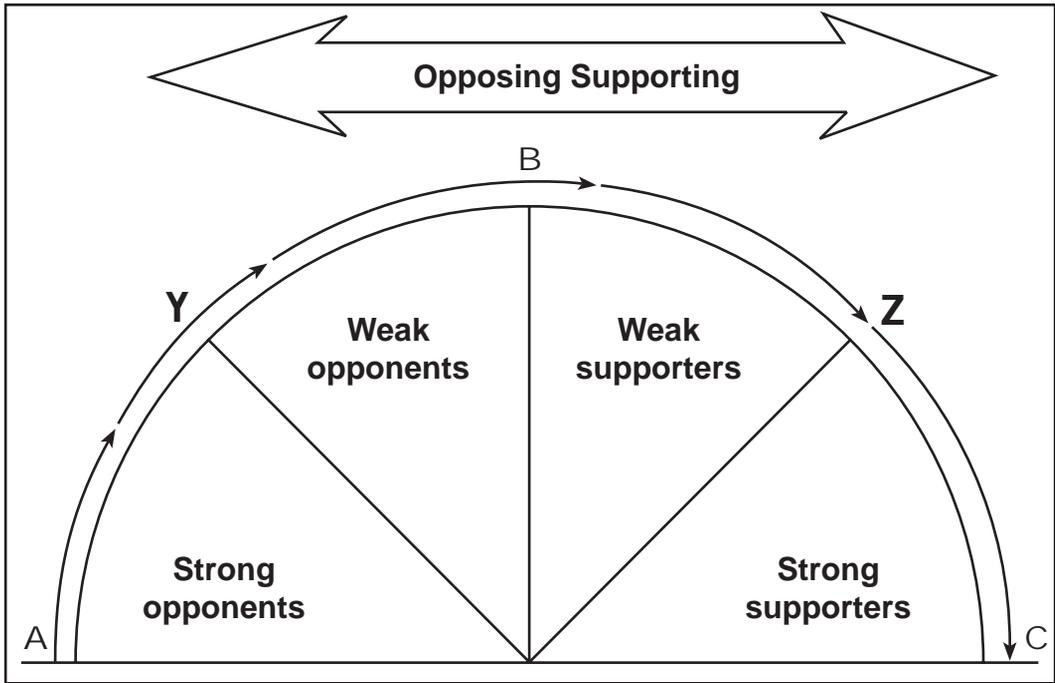


Figure 4.5: Social force analysis

Therefore, in reality, you will get only a few supporters and only a few opponents. The majority of people stay in the Y and Z areas. Sometimes, if you cannot pay proper attention, Z can be converted into Y. Sometimes, if your strategies are strong, Y can be converted into Z or C. The movement of people from one camp to another is a continuous process. Another reality is that the majority of people always remain in Y+Z areas, which are safer zones for them. Therefore, you have to keep these realities in mind while identifying opponents for your advocacy initiative.

While identifying and treating opponents, please consider the following points:

- In advocacy no opponent should be treated as the ‘enemy’. They are simply people who have different opinions about an issue.
- Social advocates should not label individuals as ‘opponents’ based only on assumption or without consultation. You need to talk to them individually and get their agreement to keep and treat them as opponents. For example, if you label a weak supporter as an opponent, the person will be a strong opponent.

- You need to pay full attention to your opponent in terms of their capacity building. Some people may be opposing you because they do not know or understand the issue, and the expected results of advocacy, properly.
- Be advised that advocacy cannot be successful if the majority of the population is not in favour of the idea that you are advocating for.

Networking

The concept of the network came from electronic engineering and started acquiring prominence in the development field during the early 1970s because of an intense realisation among activists about the limitations of individual efforts in dealing with the complex development issues of contemporary society. The concept and development is illustrated through the example of India. The experiences of associations across voluntary organisations were not very encouraging, although several long-standing associational ventures were in existence in India even before independence such as the Association of Sarva Seva Farm, Bharat Sevak Samaj, and the Indian Cooperative Union. The Indian Adult Education Association, and the All India Women’s Conference are further examples of national and international federations of local-level voluntary organisations in the country, but most of these associations either cater for the need of one issue or one section of the society¹³.

These associations played a significant role in the freedom movement, but many such associations have not been able to make the kind of impact for which they were formed. Most of them have lost their relevance as associations today. The most prominent reason for their failure is that they could not keep their separate identity as associations. Since they involved themselves in implementing schemes, they created a situation where it was difficult to call them an association. In fact, the role of an association or federation is quite different from that of an organisation.

Needs of Networks

Networks, although a late 20th century phenomenon, have become part and parcel of the development scenario all over the world today. The word ‘network’ is defined as a formal or informal institutional framework with loose or structured parameters, with detailed tasks and responsibilities for members, and so on. Networks help to link individuals, groups, and organisations from various walks of life and provide greater strength to people working for a common cause. Networks perform a wide range of functions – from sharing and dissemination

¹³ This paragraph was written by Mr. Anil Kumar Singh, Voluntary Action Network India (VANI). Mr. Singh worked in this network as Executive Secretary for more than 15 years. He presented this paper based on his experiences with networks of civil society organisations in India during the Regional Meeting of the Working Group on 5-7 July 2004 held in Kathmandu.

of information to acting as a pressure group to influence policies. Members of a network lend valuable support to each other and help members in perspective building or developing innovative approaches to developmental activities. Networking denotes 'action', a process that would involve a number of actors and would create a dynamic relationship between and among the various actors of civil society.

Voluntary organisations want to associate with each other for three main reasons. Firstly, because most organisations work in small, limited, often remote, rural areas at the grassroots level; remaining focused on that particular socio-political context, which leads to feelings of isolation. As social change agents they find themselves more and more isolated and alone in the larger socio-political context.

Secondly, after some years of work at the micro level, in a limited set of villages and slums, many voluntary agencies begin to realise that they cannot move beyond their local and immediate context unless they find ways to influence the macro levels. As this realisation grows, attempts at association or federation start. Associations, through a process of federating, are seen as a way of developing collective strength among voluntary organisations to enable them to influence macro issues, policies, and frameworks.

Thirdly, voluntary organisations come together because of the need for protection. In situations where the state or other vested interests in society have posed a threat or made an attack on voluntary organisations, there has been a simultaneous response to come together, to associate, to federate, in order to protect the space, the role, the legitimacy, and the credibility of the voluntary organisations. In situations of the tightening of regulatory procedures, harassment, or intimidation by government agencies and law-and-order machinery, or dominant control by donors, many attempts have been made to come together and federate.

The traditional form of organising mechanisms neither provide space for individuals to interact freely with other organised entities nor do they allow a free flow of ideas. On the other hand, networks not only provide the opportunity but also encourage their members to interact, exchange information, begin dialogue, and initiate joint action among those who may be placed in different organisational settings. These settings might be voluntary organisations, government or academic institutions, trade unions, political parties, women's organisations, mass movements, or campaigns. Networks also create the possibility of individuals and organisations working on a similar issue, with somewhat different perspectives, to come together and share information, their knowledge base, expertise, skills, resources, and capacities in order to work together on specific issues.

The role of the network is important in fulfilling the needs of voluntary organisations and for creating an environment favourable to working towards the stated objectives, ensuring people's involvement, influencing the policy makers, and also providing a forum for taking up major issues concerning voluntary organisations.

Purpose of Networking

At the basic level, the purpose of networking is of communication across parties with whom we would like to establish linkages that are necessary to overcome isolation. Networking allows the free flow of experiences and ideas across individuals and groups. Communication in a network can be initiated by anyone and received by anyone. This is the most crucial purpose of a network. The Internet is a classic example for this.

The second purpose is solidarity across parties, the sharing of good ideas, and support during a crisis. These are very important for the existence of any network. Solidarity could be either material or emotional. In solidarity, there is an element of mutual accountability.

The third purpose of networking is to influence others – the public at large, the political parties, the media, the corporate sector and so on. The shared analysis and common vision among various actors of civil society form the basis of influencing public policy. Public policy in the contemporary context may be made by a local, regional, or national government; or a bilateral agency, a multilateral agency, or other actors such as multi-national companies at the national and global levels.

The fourth purpose is that of mobilising energy and resources, particularly among individuals. New ideas, designs, and perspectives emerge as a result of new ways of relating to each other. Networks emerging around socially difficult issues such as child labour, environment protection, violence against women, or human rights, are able to mobilise individuals, groups, energy, and resources among themselves.

Lastly, networks promote linkage building. Bringing together like-minded individuals, groups, and institutions around a shared development agenda can be facilitated through a network. The purpose is not to coordinate the activities of those individuals or groups but to facilitate through systematic communication, the sharing of information, experience, and ideas.

Networks can be used for a variety of purposes. They can be used for achieving short-term as well as long-term goals. Different networks have been used to

achieve different goals and different networks may be relevant for different situations. The relevance of a network can be briefly assessed on the following aspects.

- Networks can be used as a vehicle for identifying, articulating, and discussing issues of major concern which are difficult to deal with inside the existing institutional framework.
- Networks can become an alternative arena for the elaboration and sharpening of new ideas, visions, and perspectives. This is largely because new ideas entail a critique of and departure from the established modes. The existing institutional framework tends to curtail such possibilities.
- A network can provide support to grassroots organisations in times of hardship or when faced with retaliation from vested interest groups. A network can be especially useful for organisations working for awareness building, organising people for their rights, and for social change. These types of organisations inevitably invite retaliation from those with vested interests. Networks are also necessary for dealing with such retaliations as a political strategy.
- Networking can become a relevant strategy for resisting the increasing diminishing of democratic space and functioning at various levels in a given local, national, regional, and international situation.
- A network can be utilised to identify, encourage and revitalise individuals and small groups to support the cause of social transformation.
- A network can be used for the exchange of information, experience and vision across the culture, system, countries, and continents.

Besides these, a network can be the most efficient and flexible mechanism for sharing information, experience and ideas among people from various ideologies, groups, and organisations spread geographically and working on diverse issues.

A network of voluntary organisations and people's organisations can play a major role in the collection and dissemination of information, highlighting people's analysis and viewpoints for building public opinion. Such a network can also lobby and undertake advocacy strategies with policy makers and elected representatives of the people, thereby building solidarity among voluntary organisations and/or people's organisations and preparing a strategy to put pressure on the government. A network's role is crucial because most of the time outside factors play an important part in deciding a country's developmental mode and direction, especially in developing countries.

Categories of Networks

Development professionals have categorised networks differently. While looking at networks from an advocacy perspective, the following two types of networks are very important.

Issue-based networks: During the 1970s and 1980s, several issue-based networks emerged to cater to the issue-specific needs of voluntary organisations, such as health, the environment, and women. These networks can be divided further into two categories – structured networks and loose networks. Structured networks are very effective in information collection and dissemination, lobbying and advocacy, and articulating and developing alternative viewpoints; whereas loose networks mainly mobilise people for campaigns and movements. In practice, however, the two types of networks tend to be antagonistic. They are critical of each other, despite realising each other's strength. Most of the structured networks receive funds from governments and international agencies and have a good infrastructure, whereas loose networks mobilise funds from the public and their member organisations.

Broad-based networks: Broad-based networking emerges out of the realisation that all issues or problems are interrelated and one cannot expect a positive result just by addressing one problem in isolation. Voluntary Action Network India (VANI) is perhaps the only such broad-based national network in India although it does not claim to be so. It has members from all regions, states, and ideologies. In the recent past, some of the issue-based national networks also tried to address important issues other than their own, but their constraints such as objectives and structures did not allow them to work on these issues on a sustained basis. VANI was formed with the objective of addressing all such issues, problems, constraints and so on in a holistic manner. Based on VANI's experience, many broad-based state-level or regional-level networks were also formed in different parts of the country.

Challenges of Networks

The experience of existing networks shows that many face dilemmas or challenges that must be addressed collectively for their continued effectiveness. Some of the commonly identified dilemmas or challenges are as follows.

Participation versus responsibility: Members are always interested in participating in a network to gain news, opinions, or experiences from others; but they generally hesitate to take any responsibility on behalf of the network. Networks should be a collective process where the members' participation and responsibility go hand-in-hand.

Coordination versus control: There is a very fine balance between coordination and control and the network should not attempt to control its members or their activities. By definition, the members of the network remain autonomous and the network should only ensure the promotion of communication between its members or all those who are directly or indirectly associated with it.

Linkages between the individual and the institution: There are two issues related to this dilemma. The first one is the person as an individual member versus being a member of an institution; and secondly linking a person (i.e., a chief executive) to organisational membership versus involving the whole institution as a member organisation. Networks have enormous potential to enlist individuals as members based on their interest, commitment, and resources regarding the issues being addressed. But at the same time, the resources to continue an ongoing campaign also require institutional support and therefore individuals and institutions are equally important.

Information versus action: Information has to be shared in order to promote further action. Networks share information with their members or partners with the expectation that members will act upon that information, but generally find that this does not happen. Members expect that all information will be shared with them but take little initiative to act upon the information shared. Similarly, the network secretariat receives a lot of information from its members without having any idea of what to do with such information. If members find that the secretariat is not using their information after a certain period of time for furthering their objectives, they stop sending information to the secretariat and vice-versa.

Focus versus inclusion: Issue-based networks are generally very focused. But the dilemma arises when they attract only those who are interested in that one particular theme, and work in a manner that excludes all the other organisations who get left out even though they are influential and are effective in their advocacy efforts. Broad-based networks, on the other hand, have the inherent characteristic of being able to attract a wide spectrum of members and people having varied interests and issues. However, the members of these networks want the network to address their issue on a priority basis and this results in the network addressing dozens of issues simultaneously and in turn losing its focus. 'Focus versus inclusion' is the strategic choice that every network has to make and has to stand by for its overall purpose.

Process versus structure: Networking is a process as well as an activity for achieving certain goals and therefore the focus should be always on that process. Institutionalisation of networks is needed to sustain this process, but the

institution should not become heavier than the process, or this will hinder its functioning. The structure should be geared towards facilitating the networking process. Keeping a balance between the process and the structure is a challenge faced by most of the networks.

Existing issues versus new issues: With the changing socioeconomic and political scenario, new challenges are bound to arise, and if networks want to remain relevant for their partners and members, they need to take up new and emerging issues and challenges and work on them. Similarly, issues that have already become important issues for the sector and integrated into the functioning of a large number of member organisations should be dropped from the network agenda, otherwise it will be difficult to concentrate on the new issues and challenges at hand. The staff of the network secretariat need to develop their capacity to deal with new, emerging issues on a regular basis, or look for other avenues to further their interest, capacity, and skill. Management also faces the dilemma of how to retain staff. The turnover of staff (especially professional) is very high in networks.

Static versus rotating leadership: In some networks leaders tend to be static because of their personality, acceptability, and linkages – or perhaps there is no space for others. Sometimes no leadership change takes place unless a person dies or vanishes from the scene. This results in members losing interest because they never get the opportunity to lead the network. In the rotating leadership form of network, the leadership keeps changing – which brings freshness, innovation, and dynamism to the networking process. In a healthy network, every member should feel that some day they will get the opportunity to lead the network. However, too frequent changes in leadership also create problems, as continuity may be disrupted.

Solidarity versus programmatic action: Members generally do not have a problem showing solidarity with an affected person or institution in a crisis situation. But if in a crisis a network decides to carry out programmatic action in support of the person or institution affected, or on the issue, members tend to back out because of the fear of retaliation affecting their own organisation. This is not an affirmative course of action. The dilemma is that in times of crisis every member expects all network members to stand solidly behind them, but when others face a crisis they themselves back out from addressing the issue or extending solidarity.

Summary Sheet for 'Advocacy Strategies'

Concepts	Some of the questions dealt with in this chapter
1. Selection of policy issue	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Which policy issue is critical to your problem? Which could be your best option? ● How many people will gain benefits if you become successful in policy change? Is this a winnable option? ● Do you see any opportunity for working together with other organisations? ● What is the gravity of the potential risks? Can your organisation effectively advocate on this issue?
2. Selection of target audience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Who is the potential target audience? ● Who has the authority to make changes and who would be the primary audience? ● Who has the greatest influence on decisions? – Secondary audience ● Which primary and secondary audience will you select in this issue?
3. Setting of a policy goal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● What is your policy goal based on the SMART principles of goal setting? ● Can you articulate your impact goal? ● Can you articulate the effect goal?
4. Identification of allies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Who are those who are already working on the issue? Do coalitions exist already or are you going to establish a new coalition? ● How can you contribute if others have already started the effort? ● What roles do these organisations want you to play in the coalition? ● Do others perceive you positively as a 'value-adding' organisation?
5. Identification of opponents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Who are the opponents? Are there any organisations or individuals that oppose your proposal of policy change? ● Have you listened to the opinions of your opponents? ● What can you do to convert your opponents into supporters? ● What is a network and networking? What could be the roles and responsibilities of networks and other associated challenges?

5

Finalising Advocacy Strategies

This chapter provides guidelines for finalising an advocacy strategy, the third step of the planning framework. Finalising includes the selection of the roles of different stakeholders, as well as determining messages, and activities.

In previous chapters, the focus of all activities has been on the exploration and analysis of realities related to your selected issue. These findings, presented in a systematic and logical way, will assist the advocate in formulating actions as advocacy Figure 5.1.

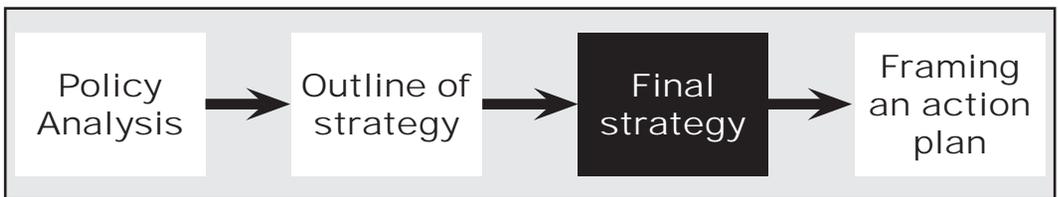


Figure 5.1: Final strategy in horizontal framework

Possible Strategies for Public Advocacy

Some of the strategic choices that advocates should make after selection of issues and visualisation of the expected results of advocacy are summarised in the following.

Constituency building strategy

Ideas for change may emerge from one person. Such an idea could be in the interest of many other people if they understood it properly. The advocate needs to build a constituency among the potentially interested group.

Cooperation/collaboration strategy

This is a strategy under which advocates expect change by working together with opposition forces. For example, the Rural Support Programmes (RSPs) in Pakistan, as social organisations, are seeking social change by working together with the present political system.

Education strategy

This is a strategy to help people realise their inner potential. In most cases, poor people suffer from a 'powerlessness complex'. They do not have the courage to think that they can do anything. Raising awareness about the issue and visualised changes is the first step of this strategy. The subsequent steps include action research, joint collaboration with researchers, and building critical consciousness.

Persuasion (convincing) strategy

In the first place advocates should make their arguments based on evidence, logic, facts, and trends which are collected from their research. All of these efforts have been carried out to persuade the decision makers to get policies or practices changed as per the aspirations of the affected people. This strategy demands a strong research base among advocates.

Litigation strategy

In a democratic system, advocates can also expect to initiate changes by using the legal framework, legal system, and procedures. There are several examples of public litigation on various issues. Advocates submit petitions, ask questions in court, use precedence established by senior judges, and so on.

Confrontation strategy

This is the last destination of advocacy. If nothing happens using all of the strategies mentioned above, advocates can consider this strategy as well. There are two types of confrontation: (a) violent and (b) non-violent. Non-violent means is an acceptable public advocacy strategy. If people go for the violent strategy, the movement goes beyond the scope of public advocacy.

Choices of Strategies

The strategic options outlined above indicate different ways and means to advocate on the same issue. Depending upon the political space, the expertise of advocates, power relations among different groups, available resources, and the strength of the coalition, advocates should select appropriate strategies. For a bigger issue related to a system cause, all of these strategies can be selected for use from different corners and by different groups. But for a small issue

related to policy or behavioural cause, one or two strategies will be enough for an effective public advocacy effort.

Advocacy Approaches

The terms ‘strategy’ and ‘approach’ look the same in many cases; and, in fact, in a practical sense, there are some overlaps between strategy and approach. However, they should be treated differently.

In public advocacy, ‘strategies’ are those tools which determine your main journey, while ‘approach’ determines all the details within the major decision. For example, if you need to go to Gilgit (a Northern Territory of Pakistan), you need to decide first how you will go. You have two options available – by road or by air. Choosing one of these two will be your strategic decision. If you decide to go by road, there are several options available – by local bus, by express bus, by hired car, or by foot. Choosing one of these several methods to reach Gilgit will be the selection of your approach to achieving the goal. Figure 5.2 will help you to choose the appropriate approaches.

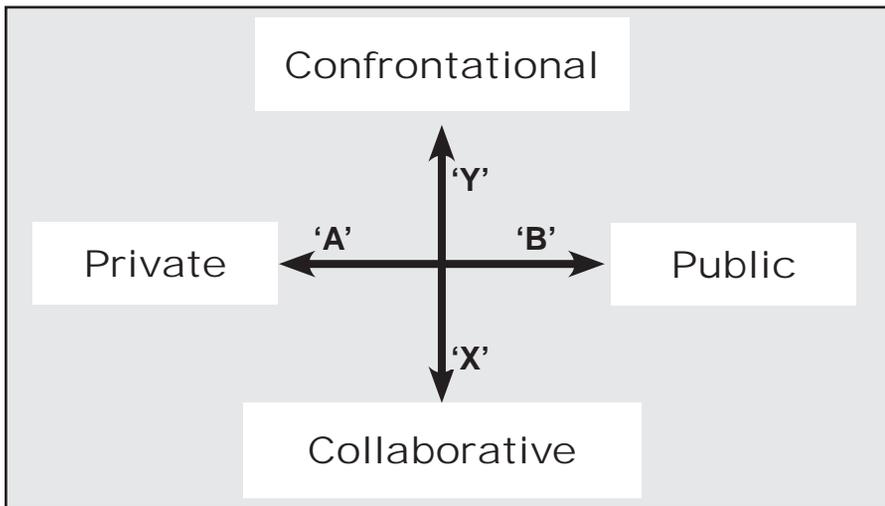


Figure 5.2: Advocacy approaches

Selection of Roles

Your organisation may not be playing a leading role for all the issues selected for advocacy. There may be many other organisations that have more legitimacy for leading the process. If this is the case you have to play a supporting role. In other situations the people who are actually affected by the issue should take the leading role. In this case you can play the role of capacity builder for these people or groups of people. Sometimes it will be necessary for your organisation

to take up the issue and influence the policy makers directly. These all depend on the time, situation, and status of your organisation, and the nature of the issue.

When you finalise your roles at the organisational level, you have then to think about the roles that your staff can play at the individual level. Remember that different staff members can play different roles. You have to be able to give appropriate roles to appropriate staff members. The following tips will help you to determine organisational as well as individual roles as you begin your advocacy approach.

Expert informant: Particularly in the mountain regions, it has been noticed that the main problem is the knowledge gap between policy makers and the people affected. The policy makers have raw information but they do not have independently analysed information. Another reality is that most of the policy makers reside in the plains, and policies are often formulated using the opinions/experiences of these individuals. In this situation, organisations like yours can play the role of expert informant. This is a very low risk role and can be played without much upheaval. Many organisations – particularly international organisations – use the term ‘technical assistant’ for this kind of role. This is actually an advocacy role in terms of policy change. One successful example from Nepal is that many international agencies, including ICIMOD, have played this role to promote community forestry since 1970.

Honest broker: In many areas, the term ‘broker’ does not have good connotations. Depending upon what is acceptable to those you work with, you can change the term to ‘mediator’, ‘negotiator’, etc. The reality, however, is that the person (s) who are playing the advocacy role should be able to work as the link or middleperson between the affected people and policy makers. The prime condition here is the adjective ‘honest’, which must be evident in all aspects of interactions and negotiation. This is the main difference between general brokers and brokers as advocates. A people-centred advocate would also make sure that the ‘power’ that gradually begins to accrue while playing this role does not remain with the individual advocate but is gradually transferred to the affected people themselves so that they can speak for themselves. But until such time as this is possible, an honest broker is needed.

Capacity builder: In the mountain regions, many people know that the rights of the poor are denied. Some of them also know how to claim their rights but they do not have the resources (human, financial, time) to do so. In such situations, organisations like yours can support such groups in filling these gaps. In other cases, people do not even know the provisions in existing laws that could be used

Expert informant role: a case from Uttarakhand, India

Uttarakhand is representative of the conditions prevalent in the Western Himalayas. The people in the region are mainly farmers, practicing subsistence agriculture. A distinct feature of this type of agriculture is that despite the otherwise apparent poverty, it provided food security to the people and virtually no family went to bed hungry. This was because traditional agriculture was based on principles which promoted diversity and rested on maintaining a fine balance between water, soil, air, animals, and plants.

However, today the scenario is different. Agriculture in the mountains has been subjected to unsustainable changes through the introduction of the principles and practices of the 'Green Revolution'. These procedures were actually conceived for water sufficient areas in the plains and hence were alien and unsuitable for the largely rainfed Himalayan slopes. The excessive stress on hybrid seeds, chemical fertilisers and pesticides, monoculture, and cash crops has led to a fall in yields and in the quality of food; has rendered crops vulnerable to new diseases and failure; and has impoverished the land. By uprooting the safety valves that traditional agriculture allowed, the new agriculture has greatly undermined people's food security, self-reliance, and resilience and has had a negative social effect as well. It has broken up people's inter-dependence and spirit of sharing, and engineered migration and an exodus from the villages.

Against this background, Beej Bachao Andolan (Save the Seeds Movement) in Tehri Garhwal has bravely stood up against the challenge posed by the new agriculture and its promoters, and given a voice to farmers' personal angst and public despair. It will not be an exaggeration to say that in the post-Chipko period, it is one of the most original struggles in the Uttarakhand hills, which has brought the malaise and issues of the farming system and farmers' rights to its current prominence in the region.

Today there is a growing awareness and acceptance of the need to conserve biodiversity, preserve indigenous knowledge systems, and to stress the farmers' right to self-determination. But when the Beej Bachao Andolan started almost two decades ago, it was a bold, visionary decision based on deep conviction, and was a movement that seemed to be swimming against the current, because the technology of Green Revolution at the time wore the halo of being a universal panacea.

Questions for discussion

- Do you see any possibility for advocates to play the role of expert informant in this case? If you do, indicate a maximum of three options.
- What other advocacy roles can advocates play here?
- Can you suggest some collaborating agencies for advocacy?

to their own benefit. In this case your organisation can raise awareness. However, it must be noted that not every kind of capacity building programme is necessarily advocacy. Only capacity building efforts which keep a conscious relationship with the goal of policy influence can be considered part of the advocacy initiative.

Lobbyist: This is a process of entering into a direct influencing approach with policy makers. The level and gravity of participation in this process depends on your organisational status. For example, if you are an international organisation, it will be more appropriate for you to be involved at the international level as a lobbyist, but if you are a national- or state-level organisation, it will be more relevant for you to lobby with national- or state-level policy makers. To play a successful lobbying role you should have a strong representation of affected people in the form of a coalition or network. You can also form issue-based allies to make your lobbying role more effective.

A proper policy analysis of selected issues helps to determine which approach is appropriate under which circumstances. Much is determined by the political situation in which you are working. Similarly, another determining factor is the relationship that you have maintained with the policy makers of your constituency. If you have a good relationship with policy makers, for example, you can play a very successful lobbying role in order to achieve the changes. If you do not have a very good relationship, you can play the 'expert informant' role. In the latter case, you could use this role to build relationships, because the data you gather and communicate will give you a strong entry point for a discourse with those in power. The dimensions of advocacy shown in Figure 5.2 will give you an added insight while selecting your approaches.

In each of the roles you can adopt a variety of approaches as mentioned in the diagram. When you remain closer to the 'A' and 'X' areas, you do not face much risk and you may not need a strong mass of people behind you. Your advocacy will be very gentle and be carried out within the context of a smooth relationship with your opponents. They may not even perceive you as an advocate on behalf of oppressed people. However, when you move towards the 'Y' and 'B' areas, you are more at risk and you should have a strong support base behind you to protect yourself and to get the changes made. It is up to you to decide which sort of strategy and approach you want to adopt. You can also remember that other coalition members may remain in different quadrants during the advocacy process for the same issue. This must be kept in mind, and you must proceed accordingly, depending on your organisational limitations and risk-bearing capacity.

It is also important to remember that sometimes a strategy demands that you do not remain with the same approach for a stretch of time. For example, it is

always easy to start from an easy and less risky quadrant – the private and collaborative approach to advocacy. If you are not able to produce any results using this approach, you should move towards public and confrontational approaches. On the other hand, you can initiate a strategy by which some of your coalition members always remain with the private approach while others move towards a public approach so that you are able to exert pressure from both ends. Table 5.1 shows some different roles that coalition members can play.

Table 5.1: Examples of advocacy roles

Target audience	Possible roles
Ministry of Mining	The ministry does not know the physical condition of labourers working in coal mining areas. It is important to give them analytical information about labour, wages, physical living conditions, and their basic human rights. – Expert informant role
Ministry of Labour and Housing	The ministry does have information about labourers in coal mining areas but it does not have analytical information about their seasonal migration patterns and about foreign labourers working in coal mining. – Expert informant role
Business leaders of coal mining areas	These people are always looking for profit but do not have enough information about basic human rights determined by the constitution and international conventions. Hence they could suffer in the international market if they contravene these laws. – Capacity builder role Sometimes, labourers do bargain to get appropriate wages and other facilities but they often fail to get their demands fulfilled. – Honest broker role
NGOs working with mining labourers	These organisations often pay attention only to the immediate relief of the labourers but can be out of touch with the root causes. – Capacity builder role
Local representatives	Local representatives of the area are manipulated by business leaders. They use labourers as a vote bank but do not play any role in protecting their basic human rights. – Lobbyist role

You can play a variety of roles while working on one and the same issue. This also means that it is necessary to be very particular when selecting an appropriate person from within the organisation for a specific role. For example, a good lobbyist is unlikely to be a good capacity builder.

Identification of Key Messages

There are three basic elements in a key message: (a) what it is that your target audience is being asked to do; (b) what is the rationale for doing so; and (c), what are the positive impacts of doing so. In today’s fast-paced world, people

Some tips for designing an advocacy message

- Be specific about what you want to achieve. Propose your vision.
- Frame precisely why you or the affected group(s) with you want to achieve these changes.
- Give options about how you want to achieve those changes. You should suggest a maximum of two options.
- Be specific about what actions you want your audience to take up, and by when. You can give a range of time but be careful not to make it too rigid.
- Include in the message ways to get detailed information about the issue if somebody wishes to get it.
- Use very formal, officially acceptable, and polite language in your message. Do not criticise the policy makers at all.
- Use understandable language from your audience perspective. Avoid using unnecessary jargon.
- Prepare and practice your message before exposing it to the media. For example, if you are going to present it verbally, rehearse several times.
- Choose an appropriate form of media to deliver your message. It is good to select a form of media which is acceptable to your audience too.

often do not have enough time to listen to the history of an issue. Similarly, they do not have time to read a long application or petition. Advocates should design such messages so that the argument can be transmitted in a precise but clear way. However, you must not lose the basic elements you need to include in the name of making the message short. The following tips will help you design such an advocacy message.

During your strategic planning, you can finalise the key messages for your advocacy mission. When you secure funding and exposure to the media, you can develop your message in different forms. However, you should always prepare a back up method of communication. For example, if one form of communication does not work, you should be able to deliver another form of communication containing the same elements immediately.

Your message always depends upon the approach you choose. For example, if you choose the private approach to advocacy, the form of your message would be different. A diary note, some written points, or a simple memorandum would be enough. If you choose the confrontational approach to advocacy, the form of your message would be different. Your key message should be reflected in militant slogans, banners, and similar. If you choose the public approach, your message should be reflected in the form of articles, news items, radio and television interviews and so on. If you choose the collaborative approach, your key message should be reflected in presentations, study reports, seminars, and training programmes. This does not mean that you should use the prepared

message all the time. You can make on-the-spot changes as well, but be sure that you have not lost the key elements of the message.

While working on the same issue, you will often have different target audiences. Within the primary audience, you will have several individuals having different responsibilities. Based on their responsibilities and interests, you should be able to craft the key message. Look at the example of a key message in Table 5.2.

Table 5.2: An example of a key message

Overall message	The recently introduced 40% tax on community forestry user groups income in Nepal has to be removed.
Target audience	Key message
Minister of Forests	Introduction of this tax on community forestry user groups is not within the framework of decentralised local governance that is accepted by the constitution of Nepal. User group members have also invested their time and energy to earn this fund and they are well committed to utilising the fund for local development. Local development is the main thrust of the country. Therefore, this tax has to be removed.
Minister of Finance	If you have funds available at the local level, you would not have to allocate funds for local development. The question is whether we want that fund to first come to the centre and then be sent back to village again or whether it is better to keep the money in the village itself. Ultimately, this fund will be spent on local development.
Political leaders	This tax intends to start an anti-decentralisation process in development. It also discourages local institutions from taking responsibility for local development. This process will encourage even more centralisation in future. Therefore, it is also a matter of your political credibility at the local level. People will be closely observing you whether you support the process of centralisation or decentralisation.
Business leaders (Those with business interests in forests)	You need to change your previous style of business. You may not be able to keep bureaucrats happy and they may not do your work quickly. Letting this funding remain at the local level will not disturb your business at all.
Local representatives	If you are not supporting the removal of this tax from the community forest user groups, such a removal of this tax will be impossible because you are primarily responsible for local development. If you manage to retain this fund at the local level, you are the one who will have higher credibility in the arena of local development. Ultimately, you are the one who is responsible for fulfilling the demands of the people. If this imposition reduces funds at the local level, it will affect your political mission too.

Defining Advocacy Activities

Advocacy activities depend upon the road map that you prepare after several rounds of analysis of the selected issue. The road map shown in Figure 5.4 will help you design specific activities to move onward from each of the milestones. This kind of road map is also helpful for self-monitoring to help you discover whether your campaign is moving ahead or not. The milestones are the objectives set within a timeframe. You will be able to achieve your goal only after achieving several objectives and you need to carry out several activities in order to achieve one objective.

After the problem tree analysis, you need to be able to put your selected issue in this road map format. Accordingly, you can decide activities and also consider the strategies and approaches that you have selected. The parts of planning framework are inter-connected. The main activity of advocacy is making your target audiences listen to your logical arguments on a selected issue. Therefore,

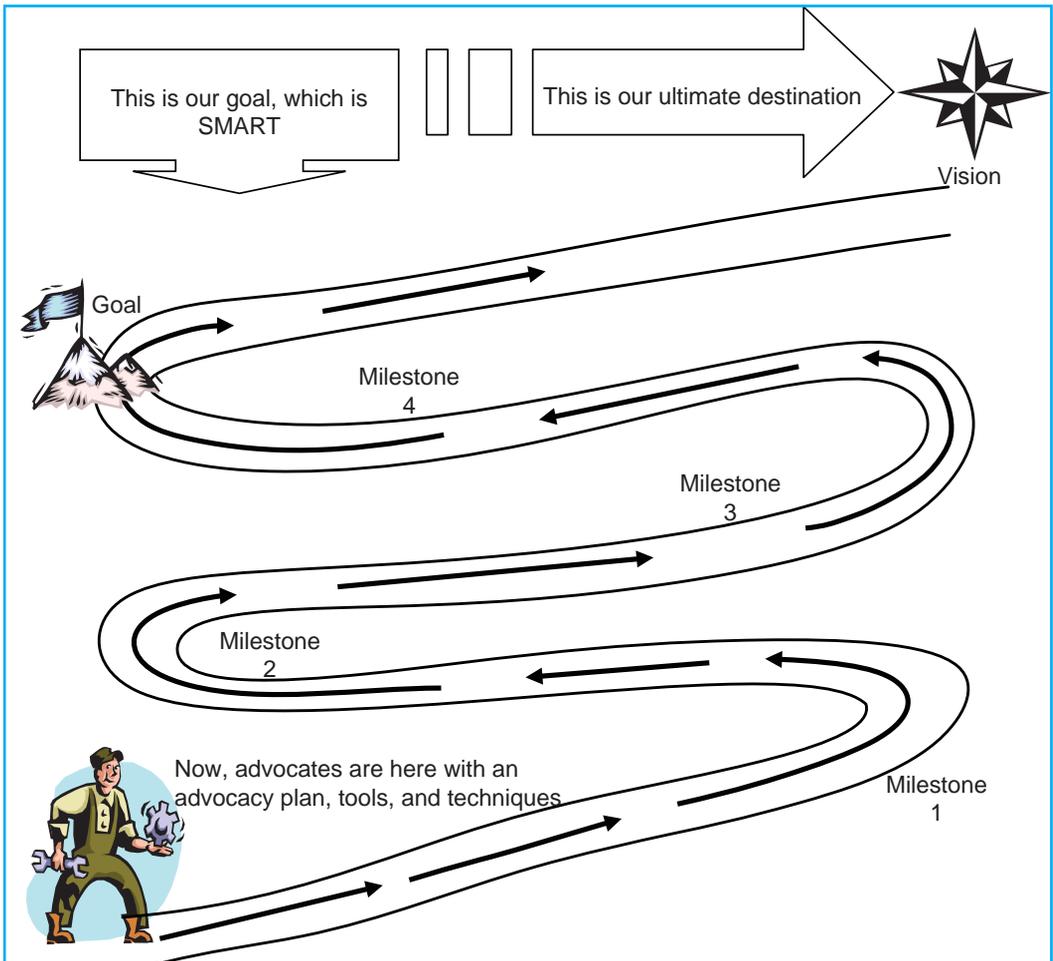


Figure 5.4: Road map for an advocacy initiative

in one sense the entire range of advocacy activities is nothing more than different ways of effective message delivery. Some literature has also used the term ‘advocacy tactics’ for advocacy activities. Advocacy activities depend primarily upon the advocacy approach that you have selected. Table 5.3 will help you to understand this.

The summary sheet at the end of the chapter summarises all the steps and tips presented. You can have a group exercise on the basis of this matrix using the same or a different case study in your training programme.

Table 5.3: Examples of advocacy activities

Advocacy approaches	Possible advocacy activities (example Koilapahad)
Private approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Select all information, analyse, and have enough data ● Identify, meet, and build rapport with key personal assistants of the minister ● Get appointment with Minister of Mining and meet for rapport building ● Invite minister of mining to a formal reception in connection with some other programme and build rapport ● Brief minister about labour settlement problem in Koilapahad ● Provide details of the issue as demanded by the minister ● Similarly, hold other meetings and briefings, and provide detailed information to all other target audiences
Public approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Invite minister to a public gathering, honour him/her, and ask him to speak about the issue ● Brief him/her about all problems and expected policy changes through your speech and presentations in public gatherings ● Publish several news articles about the issue from leading newspapers at the local and state level ● Meet minister with a delegation of people from the affected area ● Give television/ radio interviews about the issue ● Gather several intellectuals and organise paper presentations about the issue and possible options for solutions ● Publish newsletters, reports, and other publications about the issue ● Publish posters and arrange displays in public places ● Similar activities can be carried out for all of your target audiences
Collaborative approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Identify interests of the ministry and plan a joint project ● Plan joint research and identify solutions to the problems ● Prepare a joint action plan and implement collectively ● Carry out capacity building programmes for different levels
Confrontational approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Organise rallies, demonstrations, public gatherings, different types of strikes ● Participate in dharnas (sit-ins), gheraos (surrounding someone), paintings, posters, hunger strikes, and so on ● Organise ‘hunger strike to the death’ as a last step

Summary Sheet for ‘Finalising Advocacy Strategies’

Contents	Some of the questions dealt with in this chapter
1. Selection of advocacy approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● What is the best approach for influencing your audience, both primary and secondary? ● Do you have a good relationship with policy makers and can you use such a relationship in your advocacy process? ● What style of advocacy do you like to follow – private, public, collaborative, or confrontational – or a combination of these? ● Do you lead yourself or do you support others in leading the process? ● Do you have enough capacity to play different roles – lobbyist, broker, expert informant, etc.? ● Do you use the media in your advocacy?
2. Identification of key message(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● What do you want your target audience to hear? ● What policy changes do you want and what support do you expect from other people? ● What are the possible options you have identified? Are you open to different options? ● Can you convey these options to your audiences?
3. Preparation of road map	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● What are the steps to prepare a road map for advocacy? ● What connections are there between milestones and the goal? ● How does a road map guide activities? ● What is the importance of a road map in advocacy?
4. Defining advocacy activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● What are steps you will follow to deliver your key message? ● What other activities do you need to follow to get policy change? ● What could be the best options for delivering your message to your target audience? ● What media do you use to deliver your message?



Visiting a gravity ropeway system in Khairnitar, Nepal

6

Advocacy Action Plan

This chapter provides guidelines for the preparation of an actual advocacy action plan, the last step in the advocacy planning framework (Figure 6.1). This plan includes setting a timeline, preparation of a budget, and preparation of a monitoring and evaluation plan for the advocacy initiative.

The road map (Figure 5.4) is the overall basis of your action plan. Only when you convert the road map into an action plan, will you know the validity of your road map. An inappropriate road map does not guide you to draw a practical action plan. You need to draw a tentative action plan following the directions set by your vision, goal, and objectives as included in the road map. The action plan of an advocacy initiative is very similar to that of a normal service delivery project. Some of the characteristics and considerations of an advocacy action plan are explained in this chapter.

Setting a Timeline

The previous chapter looked at the overall planning of an advocacy strategy. The detailed plan of activities needs a timeline. An advocacy plan needs more flexibility than other service delivery types of programmes because many things in an advocacy initiative are not under the control of the advocates. For example, the political climate and the target audience can change without warning. In this case, advocates need to be willing to change over time and also to re-direct their advocacy strategies at short notice.

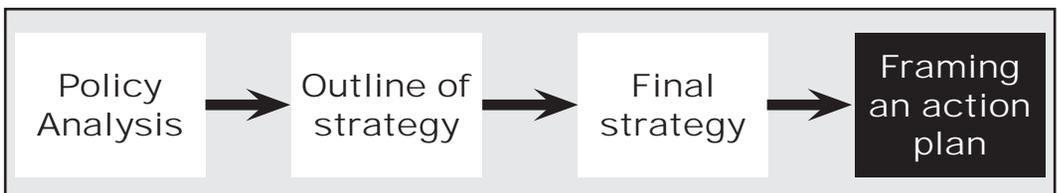


Figure 6.1: Last part of horizontal framework

Similarly, it is very unpredictable when valuable opportunities for influencing the identified target audience may appear, and this can be quite sudden. Advocates should be able to capitalise on these opportunities. In some cases, a policy change planned for five years' time may be achieved within a year. In contrast, after the target audience changes, you may encounter unexpected opposition and the advocacy process may have to be started again from the beginning. In particular, pay attention to the following points.

- The policy environment is not within the control of advocacy groups. It can be changed very quickly. Be flexible in order to capitalise on the changed environment.
- There may be unexpected but important opportunities for influencing policy makers in favour of your advocacy mission. Be ready to capitalise on such opportunities.
- Unexpected events may occur in advocacy. Allocate some extra time for such events.
- If you accomplish your mission earlier than planned, you will be regarded as even more successful. Your planning should be conservative but your thinking should be innovative.

Preparation of Budget

It is also usual to prepare a budget for an advocacy project. However, it is difficult to estimate the cost of an advocacy initiative in advance because you should always be open to inserting new activities, and this involves additional expenditure. This is the main difference between an advocacy budget and the budget planned for a normal service delivery type of programme.

For example, if your target audience suddenly shows an interest in visiting the affected groups of people, you should be able to bring them because it may be a good opportunity for you to influence them in favour of your proposed policy change. This kind of interest cannot be planned and budgeted properly. Furthermore the cost of advocacy activities depends on what type of strategy you want to take up. For example, if you organise a press conference in a big hotel, it may cost a lot. The same conference can be organised in a school building, which may be available almost free of cost. You have to ask yourself which would be more effective from a cost-benefit point of view.

For activities like policy research, policy analysis, designing advocacy messages, preparation of documentary films, and so on, you may be interested in hiring professionals from outside. If you follow this approach, your advocacy activities will be much more expensive. If, however, you have in-house capacity to take up

all these activities, it will be less expensive. Therefore, you have to prepare the budget with enough flexibility and using at least the following headings.

- Overheads – staff cost, supplies, fees, office space, office equipment, communication, travel, other overheads, and so on
- Advocacy activities – meetings, seminars, demonstrations, street plays, and others
- Capacity building for advocacy – internal and external capacity building
- Consulting services – research and others
- Expenses for unexpected activities

To meet those expenses, you can look for interested donors to fund you. Remember that you should be selective about getting funding from donors for advocacy initiatives – to make sure they do not later pressurise you to go in a different direction from that which you and the affected people want to go. You need a separate discussion on how to get funding for advocacy.

Preparation of a Logical Plan of Action

To make your advocacy plan more systematic, it is important to follow a planning tool so that all elements of your plan are reflected in a logical order. Some organisations use a tool known as a logical framework (logframe) as a planning tool. If your organisation is familiar with this tool, you can use it for advocacy planning as well. If your organisation is using a different tool for your normal planning, you can use the same tool for your advocacy planning.

Whatever tool you use, you should be able to show the links between the goal, objectives, inputs, outputs, effects, and impacts in your planning document. Based on these reflections, you can make a plan for the monitoring and evaluation of your advocacy initiative.

Setting Strategies for Monitoring Progress

It is clear that all advocacy activities are not visible and measurable in a quantitative manner as in other normal programmes. For example, lobbying based on the private approach cannot be seen publicly. Similarly, some advocates playing the role of honest brokers may strategically choose to be invisible. However, monitoring and evaluation of advocacy initiatives are even more important than in other programmes, since without such a system in place one could be actually going nowhere while convincing oneself that one is actually doing something useful. Therefore, a monitoring plan has to be prepared carefully and tactfully.

Some of the distinctions between ‘monitoring’ and ‘evaluation’ that people were interested in discussing during a Regional Training of Trainers meeting are given in Table 6.1.¹⁴

Table 6.1: Differences between monitoring and evaluation	
Monitoring	Evaluation
Monitoring focuses on the activities, and whether these activities are leading to the objectives identified earlier.	Evaluation focuses on whether the overall outreach is moving towards the vision and goals of the organisation, and the goals and objectives of the proposal/plan on the basis of which the outreach was started/funded.
Monitoring is carried out during the functioning of the programme	Evaluation is carried out ‘post-activity’ (sometimes mid-term, sometimes at the end of the funding cycle etc.)
Monitoring focuses on ‘efficiency’ (whether the resources are being used optimally).	Evaluation focuses on ‘effectivity’ (whether the outreach has really changed the situation in the desired direction).
Usually monitoring is carried out using internal human resources.	Usually evaluation is carried out using external human resources, supported by internal human and logistical support.

You should follow the same framework for the monitoring and evaluation of advocacy as used for other programmes (Figure 6.2).

It is necessary to bear in mind that the monitoring and evaluation of any programme is a difficult and complex task. The monitoring and evaluation of an advocacy initiative is even more difficult and complex. For example, you cannot claim that the behaviour change of some people is only due to your advocacy activities. There may be several influential factors ongoing in society that has helped to change their behaviour. Similarly, you may get policy change as expected by your advocacy mission but this may not necessarily result in immediate changes in people’s lives. Some changes may come after several years of policy enactment. So, monitoring and evaluation is a complex process in advocacy. Please pay attention to the following points while preparing a monitoring and evaluation plan for your advocacy initiative.

- Do not be impatient to see the positive impact of advocacy in the first year after policy change. Be passionate and flexible enough to judge the impact several years after your advocacy initiative has finished.
- Do not expect that all the credit for getting positive changes will come to you or your organisation. Remember that advocacy is done collectively, joining with many other organisations and individuals like yours. You should also not

¹⁴ This section is adapted from the notes of Josantony Joseph.

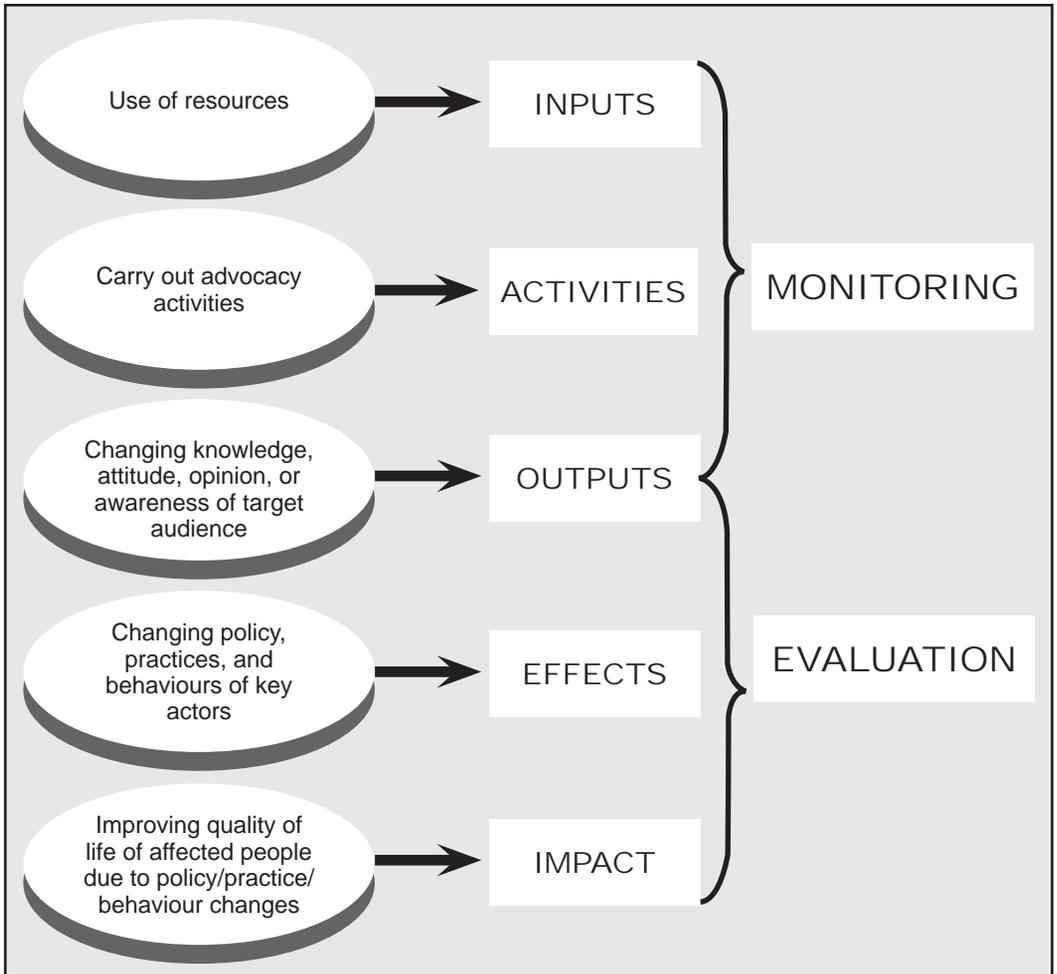


Figure 6.2: Areas for monitoring and evaluation

undermine the contributions of invisible actors. Your status will be that of contributor.

- Focus more on the process rather than on the product. The process you take up is under your control but the product is not within your control. Believe that a good process produces a good product.
- Compare the process of advocacy in one context to another. This will give you useful insights for improving your advocacy strategy.
- Remember that you should revise your advocacy plan more frequently than other normal programmes. Information coming from your monitoring reports will help get revision done.
- You can count policy changes but you cannot count the improvements brought by advocacy in policy enforcement. Therefore, do not expect to be able to quantify everything in advocacy.

- Changes in behaviour are even more difficult to measure. Be passionate and investigate the degree of change in qualitative terms.
- It is good to gather lessons from evaluation, rather than products, in the form of quality of life.
- It is not necessary that all advocacy missions have the success they intended. Therefore, be open to receive and acknowledge the failure lessons of advocacy, which will be very useful for you when revising your ongoing advocacy strategies and future planning.
- Make your funding agencies clear about what kind of advocacy work this is. If your donors want a definite result at any cost, discuss this with them at the beginning. If you do not discuss during the planning stage, you will have a problem at the end.

Summary Sheet for 'Advocacy Action Plan'

Concept	Questions dealt with in this chapter
1. Setting a timeline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● How long will it take to achieve your advocacy goal? ● How flexible are you regarding your timeline? ● Is the situation such that you are likely to achieve your goal in a timely fashion? ● What will be the alternative approaches of advocacy if the situation changes?
2. Preparation of budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● What are your funding sources? Are donors interested in supporting you? What donors should you select for your advocacy initiative? ● What level of profile should you choose for your advocacy activities? Do you prefer to remain 'high profile'? ● Do you have in-house capacity for all the work that you have planned? ● Are you hiring consultants for some of your work? ● What is the level of your flexibility in budgeting? Are you able to revise your budget frequently?
3. Preparation of road map	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● What planning tool are you going to use for your advocacy plan? ● Are you familiar with the tool selected? ● Do you see any advantages in using this tool for advocacy planning? If yes, what are they?
4. Monitoring and evaluation plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Did you think about a monitoring and evaluation plan for advocacy? ● Did you understand the differences between the monitoring of advocacy initiatives and other normal programmes? ● Do you have clarity on focus areas of evaluation of advocacy? ● Do you see overlaps between monitoring and evaluation?

7

Implementation of the Advocacy Plan

Advocacy is all about influencing decision makers in order to obtain changes in policies and practices. When well-planned strategies are in place, advocates should start applying different approaches to start the influencing process. At this stage, advocates should take various decisions based on the chosen strategies.

Action-oriented decisions are taken based on (a) pre-defined strategies, (b) the political environment, and (c) organisational capabilities. However, there are several helpful tips for taking such decisions effectively. This chapter focuses more on such practical tips collected from different cases.

While implementing advocacy initiatives, there are three aspects of operational strategies that advocates should pay attention to. These are as follows.

Communication strategies: The basic context of any background to an advocacy initiative is that one party is demanding rights and another party is denying these either directly or by implication/practice. An advocacy initiative takes place between these two conflicting interests. Communication therefore plays a vital role in forwarding the interests of either party using different communication media.

Strategies for a collective effort: Advocacy can be carried out within a family to ensure the basic rights of all family members. Even in this case, the deprived members of the family must stand together. Advocacy for the public interest is broader than the issues observed within a family and covers decisions that ensure the rights of deprived members of the community in public affairs. A collective effort is part of the spirit of advocacy at all levels.

Tactical strategies: Advocacy is the struggle to get expected changes from other people. It is also natural that all struggles can be sustained only when there is some hope of winning in some area even if the overall struggle is difficult. Advocates should be prompt to apply the appropriate tactics, as and when required, to maximise their chances of winning in different areas. Therefore, advocates at this stage of the initiative should always be ready to take decisions with regard to tactics.

Several examples are cited for each of these strategies in the following paragraphs.

Communication Strategies

There are basically three elements in communication for advocacy: (a) the message should be designed properly; (b) the message delivery should be carried out in a professional manner; and (c) the follow up should be carried out appropriately. If one element is missing or is weak, it can affect the achievements of the whole advocacy mission. Therefore, the following references could be helpful for advocates to make these elements stronger.

Designing a message

An advocacy message should be able to capture (a) a short background of your proposed changes – i.e., why you are raising this issue; (b) at least two options for expected change; and (c) the consequences of not making the proposed changes. Finally, advocates should be able to convince others why the options forwarded through the advocacy initiative are the most suitable.

Often, good and bad messages depend upon the interest of the target audience. However, the literature on this suggests that the initial message should be very concise but clear. If the concerned person wants more details, it is more effective to supply these later on. For this kind of message design, advocates must know the interest of the target audience so that the message can fit. For a big issue and a senior target audience, advocates should carry out a small research project to identify the interest of the target audience. Secondly, advocates should not use jargon and unnecessary elaboration in such messages. It is always good to keep the advocacy message simple, clear, and short. The following questions will help you when designing your advocacy message. Advocates need not answer all questions on a formal notepad. However, these questions will work as an eye-opener.

- What group of people does your audience, both primary and secondary, represent?

- What biases do they have because of their educational or professional background?
- Have they clarified their position or stand already on this issue?
- Is it possible to link the present issue with their interest?
- Do you think that there is some misunderstanding on the part of the audience about this issue?
- What information about the issue do they already have?
- What new information are you offering to them now?
- Do you know what they do outside their work – hobbies and so on – which could be used to make your message more appealing to them?

If you do not know all about your target audience as indicated by the above questions, you can follow very informal ways of gathering such information. You can mobilise your colleagues within and outside your organisation very informally and tactfully so that your audiences do not feel that you are carrying out research about them.

Finally, your message should be understandable from your audience’s perspective. All the words, phrases, and expressions you use must be from fields familiar to your audience. To ensure that your message is clear, test your message with those who are not familiar with your job.



Getting suggestions from one of the prominent social leaders of India, Mr Chandi Prasad Bhatt, during a visit to Chamauli, Uttaranchal, India

Delivery of advocacy messages

Messages can be designed and tested collectively in a team. It is acceptable to send this message by the distance media of delivery – post, newspapers, email, and others. But if you send someone to meet and hand over the message, it is more effective as well as more challenging. Your challenge here is to identify such a person who could influence the target audience through their credibility even as they deliver the message.

Therefore, advocates should select the best one or two persons to deliver the message effectively. Apart from the designed message, the selected persons should also be able to insert additional information about the issue. If they say something contrary to your message, it affects the whole advocacy mission.

Follow up of messages: The general expectation of message delivery by a reliable medium is getting a response on the issues and options provided in the message. This is the ideal. The general tendency is that you have to follow it up if it is of interest of you. At the same time, your target audience should not feel that you are pressurising them so much that they do not have time to think. Therefore, you have to follow a middle path for effective follow-up of the message. The following tips will help you.

Resend the message: If you have delivered the message by electronic media and you have not received any response for a length of time, you could re-send the message asking tactfully for an acknowledgement

Writing a follow-up letter: Write a gentle reminder if you do not get any reaction within your expected or negotiated time range.

Using the meeting for another purpose: If you meet the person by chance in between for another purpose, remind them gently of your conversation. However, you should not react if you get a negative response during this kind of meeting. Take the response positively and request another meeting regarding the issue.

Courtesy call: Depending upon the status of your target group, you can think about making a courtesy call at some time. You need not enter directly into the topic of your issue in this type of conversation but you should create such an environment that the person can say something about your previous message.

Invitation for another purpose: If you organise a programme on another matter, perhaps different to the advocacy issue, you can invite the concerned person. If they agree to participate, you can have a follow up conversation. Acceptance of your invitation itself will be a positive response from your target audience.

There are various ways of reinforcing a message to your target audience. It is very hard to determine which might be effective in which context. The most reinforcing ways are situational. A tactful advocate should be able to catch whatever opportunity arises for message follow up. However, remember that too much follow up for the same message to the same person sometimes produces negative effects. Following the middle path for follow up is convincing to average target audiences.

Media Strategies

The media is the means of communication, and includes newspapers, television, radio, banners, posters, billboards, video, badges, notices, newsletters and others. From a transformation point of view, the media can be categorised into two groups: (a) electronic, and (b) printed. From a design point of view, the media can be divided into four groups: (a) formal, (b) informal, (c) written, and (d) verbal. Newspapers, television, and radio are commonly called mass media, as large numbers of people are targeted in the communication. The mass media forms the central attention for advocacy initiatives.

Ownership and control of the media

The media is regarded as the fourth organ of the state and from this point of view is seen as equal to the legislative, executive, and judicial branches of government in a democratic society. There are various mechanisms for checks and balances among these organs. But in reality it is not exactly like this. In liberal democratic countries, most mass media houses are owned by business people. In autocratic countries, the government often owns and controls large elements of the mass media. In extreme cases, governments detain journalists and editors and shut down the mass media if they are too critical of the programmes and plans introduced by the government.

Most media claim to be unbiased and independent, and say they publish stories from opposing sides independently. Some newspapers have political allegiances, however. In countries with a multiparty system, political parties sometimes indirectly own or control certain parts of the media based on their own political ideology and party interests. These media can then play a vital role during elections by promoting the side they favour.

Thus, ownership and control over the media varies from country to country. What is important for an advocacy initiative is to understand the dynamics of the ownership and control of the mass media. You need to be aware of which approaches the media prefer on the issue you are dealing with. Without understanding these aspects properly, your media strategy can even produce

negative results. The following tips will help advocacy groups to formulate effective media strategies.

- Map out what media exist in the country, province, or region that your organisation should be aware of. This includes newspapers (daily, weekly, journals), television stations, radio stations and similar.
- Identify who owns what, to what degree, and the focus of each of these media.
- Understand their hidden agenda – their ideological or party allegiances.
- Identify which is the most appropriate to your organisation and the issue that you are dealing with.

The media is powerful. It influences public opinion in a short space of time and to a degree that no one can imagine. Keep this reality in mind and carry out careful homework to develop a proper strategy.

Common Interest of Journalists

While you clearly need the media to send messages to your target audience, people working within the media also look for individuals or groups like yours as a source of information that could be exciting for the public. However, these two needs and interests do not always coincide. Advocacy initiators should work out what interests they have in common with those in the media. The following tips should be helpful.

- Media people want news items from you. If you cannot offer them a specific news item, they may not be interested in listening to you.
- News collectors are eager to highlight critical issues in order to catch the attention of the public. If you offer only generic history about an issue, this is generally useless from a media perspective.
- The media always like to capture burning issues and related crises. If your issue is too simple and common, no one will pay attention to it.
- Media people like to examine your organisation's critical viewpoints rather than simply learning what happened.
- They want to dig out the expert opinion of you or your organisation about the issue you are dealing with. If you cannot offer much expertise on the issue, they may use their own judgement, which may not be in your favour.
- Journalists are always interested in highlighting crises of all types. If you are facing an internal crisis like scandal, corruption, or favouritism they will not forgive you. This situation could be very harmful for you and your organisation.

Possible backfire from the media

Some people tend to have negative stereotypes about the media and journalists. Such a perception does not support an advocacy initiative. Therefore, begin your media strategy with a positive and constructive perception of the media. Some considerations are as follows.

- A small weakness in your preparation for using the media can harm your organisation. You must be able to protect your organisation from any harmful consequences from use of the media.
- Journalists are well trained in discovering a message from your level of confidence. Lack of confidence generally indicates either that you are not well prepared to deal with the issue or that you are hiding something. In this situation, journalists could make various assumptions, which could be contrary to your interests.
- In many cases, senior journalists use non-professional workers for news collection. Do not expect ethically grounded journalism from these people. Something small you have overlooked can be noted and reported to their senior reporters. Therefore, you have to be very careful about what level of journalist you are talking to. This is a major challenge when dealing with media people.
- Politeness in dealing with journalists and passion in responding is the best policy. Journalists can ask you harassing questions, but you should not react negatively.

The above experiences reflect the challenges of those who want to use the media as a means of advocacy. Some of the challenges are under the control of advocates (advocacy groups) whereas some are beyond their control. The media houses themselves have created some of these challenges. The magnitude of these challenges are different from place to place and are mostly contextual. Therefore, a two-way effort (from advocates and also from media houses) is essential to minimise these challenges.

Many of these ideas are summarised in the following essay.

Role of the Media in Advocacy: Experience from India¹⁵

It is increasingly being realised that behind the glitter of modern development there is a lot of injustice. Many oppressed groups of our society face injustice (on the basis of caste, gender, race, class), future generations face injustice (mainly in the form of environmental destruction), and other forms of life also face injustice (in the form of cruelty and the destruction of their habitats).

¹⁵ This article was written by Bharat Dogra, who presented it at the Training of Trainers Workshop, 29 June to 4 July 2004, Kathmandu

Although the threats causing such injustice are increasing, there are also many groups of concerned people as well as individuals working hard to fight these injustices. People suffering under injustice also try to fight, and they are not alone. There are several people (or groups of people) who they may have never met but who are working in their own way to stop these injustices. There are groups with various levels of specialised knowledge and expertise in resisting particular forms of injustice, and there are others who come forward in a more spontaneous way to help a just cause. Apart from resisting specific cases of injustice, there is also a much wider effort to create a more just society where the possibility for injustice, and various forms of violence rooted in injustice, will be greatly reduced.

These efforts at various levels try to approach the government, leading national and international institutions, legislative bodies, courts of law, the media, and other influential forums with the aim of influencing their decisions, policies, and programmes. The aim is to try to ensure the withdrawal of (existing or proposed) unjust decisions/policies and the adoption of just decisions/ policies. This can also be called ‘public interest advocacy’, or for the sake of brevity, just advocacy.

The media plays an important role in advocacy initiatives for various just causes and for creating a more just world. First of all, media in the form of newspapers, magazines, television, radio, and others enable us to reach millions of people in a short time, something which is not otherwise possible. Secondly, an issue that is being highlighted in the media also has a greater chance of receiving the due attention of other influential actors including legislative bodies, ministers, senior officials, leading institutions, courts of law and so on.

It is therefore crucial that advocacy efforts obtain the support and involvement of the media. Fortunately, fairly often a small section of the media is willing to be very supportive and is sometimes willing to be considered part of the advocacy effort. There are some ‘alternative’ media outlets which give the greatest importance to these efforts for a just world. In addition, there are some highly concerned persons within the mainstream media who take a special interest in contributing to and helping public advocacy efforts. Advocacy efforts should make it a priority to identify these sources of special support, to make available all relevant information on a regular basis to them, and above all to establish a stable, enduring relationship.

However this is likely to provide only some access to media coverage, and any large advocacy effort should strive to reach the much larger world of mainstream media to try to ensure bigger and better coverage of the issue and ideas advocated by it.

As any good manual on media advocacy will readily tell us, the specific demands and needs of an advocacy effort should be linked to the choice of the media form (printed or electronic, traditional or modern, and so on). Similarly, the immediate need of a particular time or crisis situation will decide whether the print/electronic media should be approached in the form of a press release, or by calling a press conference, by organising a press tour, or writing a series of letters to editors. There are important norms which generally govern these various forms of media advocacy. It is important for anyone leading or playing an active role in any such effort to be aware of these norms to avoid making mistakes and ensure the best possible result from limited resources.

Unlike corporate groups, public interest advocacy groups do not have adequate funds to place advertisements in the mainstream media. In special circumstances, perhaps they can mobilise the resources for limited advertising space, but generally this choice is not available to them. What is more, advertisements are often not the best way of drawing attention to issues of public interest, including some very controversial issues. Readability and credibility are both higher when journalists, editors, and media persons take up these issues on their own. This is why it is important for advocacy groups to have a very creative and constructive relationship with the media. The greatest source of strength is that the media recognises their integrity and honesty, and their sincerity with regard to the ideas and issues being advocated by them.

Such recognition is the biggest long-term source of strength for any advocacy group. The second biggest source of strength is the accuracy of their facts. If the media has faith in the sincerity of the advocacy group as well as in the accuracy of the facts provided by them, the chance that the advocacy group will receive adequate coverage is much higher.

Sometimes, an advocacy group makes the mistake of highlighting itself more than the issues advocated. Sometimes not even a group but a single person is highlighted. This can easily be counter-productive. The greater the concern for the wider issues related to the welfare of humanity (and other forms of life), the greater the likelihood of the media seeing this as a sincere advocacy effort.

However, some advocacy groups complain that despite all their sincerity and hard work they still do not get adequate coverage in the media even though the issues raised by them are important. Some have even worse experiences. They complain that sections of the media are giving space to malicious propaganda against them instigated by powerful vested interests.

This is part of a larger crisis within the media which is seen by many concerned media persons themselves to be moving increasingly away from the most

important concerns of humanity while over-emphasising frivolous issues, scandals, and glamour. In addition there is an increasing stranglehold of big-money interests over huge media empires and these are not interested in issues relating to economic inequalities and social injustice. As overall media concerns increasingly move away from what is needed by a just and sustainable world, the space available for public advocacy groups is also likely to decrease.

So while it is important for individual advocacy groups to try to obtain better coverage for their issues in the media, it is also important to initiate wider efforts to reform the media to make it more receptive to issues of survival, hunger, poverty, and justice. Without compromising the impartiality and freedom of the media in any way, these efforts should include positive incentives for the creative use of the media to contribute to a just world, while also including disincentives for those who habitually misuse the media for unethical purposes.

Efforts to improve the media coverage of issues relating to the creation of a just world should include improvements in the advocacy efforts as well as wider efforts to initiate some long-overdue reforms in the media. Encouragement to public-spirited editors and journalists to promote media initiatives devoted to the creation of a just world can also play a very helpful role.

Coalition Strategies

A coalition is a group of individuals or organisations working for the same purpose. The term ‘ally’ carries the same meaning in advocacy. Other literature speaks of ‘like-minded organisations’ that have a common agenda on a certain issue. It is not necessary to have the same purpose for everything. A coalition can be formed among those individuals and organisations who share at least one common purpose. In advocacy, the policy goal can be the common factor.

A coalition can vary in size and in many other ways. It can be big or small, formal or informal, homogeneous or heterogeneous, and so on. The coalition approach has both advantages and disadvantages.

The importance of coalitions

Stronger and larger voice: Advocacy is often carried out to achieve changes in policies, and requires wide coverage in society. For example, if an initiative succeeds in changing the government reservation policy for tribal groups, this covers tribal communities living throughout the country. An issue that has large coverage requires a larger voice. This does not only mean shouting loudly. It means different people from different corners raising their voices together. This cannot be done through a single organisation alone.

Influential voice: In advocacy, your target audience does not listen to a general voice. The voice you raise must be influential so that the target audience is compelled to listen. A number of organisations and individuals joining forces to raise a collective voice is the power of advocacy, which makes the target audience sit up and take notice.

Coordinated efforts: Advocacy is required when one group is demanding and another group is resisting certain changes. Here the resisting group is called the target audience. The target audience also observes the dynamics of the society very closely. If they hear different messages from different groups or individuals, they think that action is not required or that it is premature to start making changes. But if they hear the same version from different corners, they are compelled to think twice about their resistance. Therefore, a coalition makes a coordinated argument, which is many times stronger than a single voice.

Creating visibility: In the present day, society is full of debate, discussion, and arguments. Responsive listeners must be selective according to their own specific criteria. Therefore, advocates must think about ways and means of making their issue visible to all concerned individuals and institutions. The media is the best way to make the issue visible in a short time and at minimum cost.



Interaction with women's groups at Pipaldanda, Palpa – users of the Women and Energy project

Mutual protection: The resisting group will also be active in protecting their interests. Advocates can carry out a social survey of opinion formally or informally to determine whether their resistance to change is still valid or not. In this process, the resisting group can also play different games to harass advocacy groups. If one organisation or only a limited number of individuals speak out, they can be harassed easily. If many organisations and individuals work together, such harassment is not possible.

Challenges of coalitions

No concept or approach is free of problems. The approach of working in coalitions for advocacy initiatives certainly has its disadvantages. However, we, who are raising our voices for those who face injustice, should take these problems as challenges.

Differences in commonality: Generally, coalition members come from different contexts and backgrounds. There may be similarities on one issue, but commonality in every aspect cannot be expected from diverse group members. Therefore, differences in perception and action are features of a coalition. Differences are not a problem but managing difference is a challenge that requires considerable time and energy.

Sharing credit: It is human nature that everyone likes to take credit for success and minimise their share in a failure. Leadership is responsible for distributing credit, which is not easy. Sometimes, the leadership itself falls into dispute. In this case, the coalition faces a difficult situation.

Disagreement: Ideally, a coalition must provide space for disagreement within certain limits. Sometimes people overstep the limits and disagree due to personal or organisational vested interests. It is also difficult to set user-friendly indicators for such limits. In this situation, a coalition can collapse.

Time: Decision making in a coalition is always a time-consuming process. Participatory approaches, time management, and harvesting successes from unexpected opportunities in advocacy are interrelated. There should be checks and balances among these aspects in a coalition. This is very abstract and often problematic in real advocacy.

Problem of consensus: A coalition is regarded as a forum that takes decisions based on the consensus of all its members. However, obtaining consensus from a diverse group is a challenge. Making decisions based on the majority is not in the spirit of the coalition.

A case study of a mountain state in India

There is a state-level network of NGOs in a mountain state of India (the actual names are not important, this is simply a learning example). More than 20 NGOs working in different parts of the state had joined this network by March 2004. According to the constitution, the network, its leadership, its working procedures, and its structure looked very encouraging. The members of the network represented almost all parts of the state and the network was open to accepting new members.

However, information gathered from other organisations not involved in the network revealed a different and sometimes frustrating situation. One non-member organisation made the following comments about this network.

- Most of the larger and more experienced organisations that have gained credit from the people and that hold large projects from different donors have not joined the network. This situation itself indicates that the network does not represent all the NGOs in the state.
- Most NGO members in this network are busy with their own projects in their own localities. Very few people believe in this network. Many others do not see much benefit from strengthening it. Its management, as of March 2004, remains a skeleton.
- Some people comment that some of the network members do not have a clean image with regard to financial transparency. Some have bad reputations. However, it is difficult to know which member is clean and which is not clean, and to what extent.
- The state's NGOs are polarised into several groups based on leadership. Many people comment that the network was formed by one of these groups. Therefore, there is no question of representation and an independent status in the state. This is one of the reasons why many other NGOs are not joining the network.
- This network lacks a funding base, and is hardly covering its operating costs at present. This network has a hidden interest in conducting different activities for its survival. When the opportunity to start an advocacy initiative came up, this network was very eager to be involved in the process. It claimed that advocacy was the main role of the network and that it would also be possible to form an issue-based coalition among the NGOs and CBOs. This network could be a good medium for such coalition building. However, it was very hard for a potential member organisation to decide whether or not to join this coalition.

Questions for discussion

- Do you think that a new member should join a coalition under the leadership of this network? Give your reasons.
- What prerequisites does this network need to put in place before initiating an issue-based coalition?
- How could a good coalition of NGO and CBOs be formed in this situation?

Not enough time: A coalition is made only for a specific objective. Individuals serving in the coalition are often overloaded by the other responsibilities of their organisation. It is challenging for the member to find enough time for the coalition.

It is not that advocacy cannot be carried out without a coalition. There are several ways a single organisation can carry out an advocacy initiative following the private approach. It is the nature and the context of the issue that determines the necessity for a coalition.

Finally, a coalition needs a strong consensual leadership, and finding this in developing countries is often a challenge. Leadership can be tested in a coalition, which helps develop maturity in leadership. Despite the drawbacks, a coalition is more important than other elements in advocacy and its disadvantages are outweighed by its advantages. Coalitions are especially important for issues with important policy connotations.

Some ways to overcome challenges

Readiness to work with others: A coalition is a way of working together. All members cannot possibly have exactly the same vision, goal, and objectives. However, coalitions are possible because of commonality within diversity. In this context, one has to be ready at the individual and organisational level to work with others.

Mutual trust: Trust must exist among all potential members likely to join the coalition. Trust cannot be built in one day or from one exercise. It depends upon a long-standing cordial relationship. Therefore, trust building exercises should be started long before the actual coalition building on a particular issue.

Common agreement about the goal: All members of a coalition must agree to the ultimate goal. However, organisations perceive the various tasks to be undertaken differently. If all members cannot come together and agree a common framework, there are obviously fundamental differences which will not allow the coalition to work smoothly. An exercise to prepare a common and agreed-upon goal and framework for the advocacy effort is necessary.

Maintaining focus: The leadership of the advocacy effort has the challenge of maintaining the coalition's focus. Sometimes the direction that the advocacy effort might take, the opportunities that arise, and the avenues that could be profitably explored only become visible during the advocacy effort itself. If the focus of the effort is to be changed, a democratic process of decision making

must be followed. Decision by consensus is the most reliable for a coalition. In addition, some coalition members may start going in different directions, following their own paths and ambitions. Again, the leadership of the coalition should be aware of this.

Balance between changes and consistency: To some degree, a coalition needs to maintain consistency in its members' roles – which organisation/individual is doing what. Changing roles overnight does not help a coalition. However, neither is keeping an individual in the same role all the time very constructive. Provision should be made for changing the leadership as well. However, these changes should not disturb the image a coalition has gained. This is the tricky and challenging part.

Sharing credit and blame: A coalition is built for certain tasks. In advocacy not all tasks will succeed. There is also the possibility of receiving blame, and this could have major consequences for the organisation and for individuals. On the other hand, if the advocacy effort is successful, the credit can brighten an organisation's image. How is praise and blame shared among the coalition members? This is a challenge. Normal human nature cannot be overlooked in planning the sharing mechanism.

Fund Mobilisation Strategies

Fund requirements for advocacy activities depend upon the issue, the selected media, and the location of the target audience. Generally, advocacy-related activities are relatively less costly than normal projects. However, funding is a basic requirement for advocacy as well. For normal service delivery projects, required funding can be raised from different donors with similar interests. Some donors are willing to support advocacy initiatives but not as many as for other programmes. The following tips should be helpful for preparing a fund mobilisation strategy.

Internal resource mobilisation: Advocacy is an initiative carried out for, and most optimally with, the affected people. Intermediary organisations mainly function as capacity builders for the affected people. If the affected people themselves do not play an active role in advocacy, the effort is ultimately more likely to fail. Internal resource mobilisation is very important. External resources in advocacy tend to create dependency and a culture of patronage, which is not healthy and is unsustainable for advocacy.

Selective donors: If internal resources are insufficient for mobilising people and delivering messages to the target audience, funding from donors can be sought. However, advocacy groups must be selective in identifying and approaching

donors. This is because the type of donor you work with determines your public image on the issue that you are dealing with. For example, if you are working with the World Bank on an issue related to the disaster of globalisation, you couldn't justify it to the public.

Selective foundations: Foundations are established to promote certain interests at different levels. Such foundations are available at the country level as well as at the international level. However, the issue you are dealing with and the interests of the foundation should match. Advocacy groups should be selective and strategic about seeking funding from foundations.

UN agencies: The UN is ultimately responsible for promoting human rights all over the world through international treaties and convictions. It has also created several wings to enforce such rights. If a national government does not support an internationally approved issue, UN agencies do not hesitate in supporting civil society organisations to pressure the government. Therefore, advocacy groups can identify such UN agencies for collaboration.

Interest groups: Interest groups are people who can do nothing themselves but who are keen to make something happen in society. Such groups can be organised formally or informally. Various interest groups want to promote certain sections of the population to resolve certain issues. For example, some business houses are interested in promoting education for tribal children. Advocacy groups should identify such groups.

Coalition members: Another main source of funding for advocacy is the funding base of coalition members. If the issue is genuine and they are really committed, coalition members should be able to share resources to forward the issue from their own funding base. If required, coalition members could raise funding from their own sources.

Important factors while mobilising funds for advocacy

The factors to consider when mobilising funds are not unique to advocacy. However, there are some important considerations, as below.

Transparency: Whatever funds an advocacy group uses, there must be a high level of transparency. The level and degree of transparency has to be determined by all members of the coalition. Advocacy groups must remember that financial allegations play a major role in the success of an advocacy effort. If funds collected from any source are misused or mismanaged, your opponents will make this an issue to destroy your advocacy initiative.

Cost effectiveness: Your expenditure profile provides an image to the people you are working with. This does not mean that advocacy activities should always be carried out in an inexpensive way. Your activities could be expensive depending upon the issue and target group audience you are delivering your message to. For example, if you want to deliver your message directly to a Member of Parliament of Nepal, you may need to organise a seminar in an expensive hotel in Kathmandu.

Record keeping: Financial record keeping is important for all expenditures at the public level, and even more important in advocacy. If you are not keeping a proper record of your funds, no one will trust you. Mistrust will arise not only from the public but also from your own coalition members. If you do not record everything properly, you cannot be trusted, however clean you are.

Public auditing: This relates to financial transparency. In advocacy programmes, financial transparency among executives is not enough. Every individual who is devoting time and energy to the effort should know what money is coming in and what expenditures are being made, and for what purpose. Comments from the public should be given top priority for building and thinking about expenditure plans.

Frequent sharing: Sharing is necessary for all public organisations, and even more so in coalitions formed for advocacy initiatives. The sharing can be done regarding the financial situation, programmatic achievements, strategic alterations, and procedural operations. If required, public sharing can help with building trust on a wide scale.

Publications: Raising critical issues and debating is normal in advocacy processes. Likewise, it is also the public's right to ask advocates critical questions. Therefore, all financial transactions should be published periodically and brought into the public arena. After all, there should not be anything to hide in an advocacy organisation.

Embarrassing mistakes: This does not mean that advocacy groups never make any mistakes. What happens after a mistake is made is very important in advocacy. If you defend your mistakes, you are making another mistake to hide the first one. This process then spirals. Advocates must be conscious about this 'mistake adding' process and follow the 'mistake reduction' process that requires immediate acceptance of the mistake with the commitment not to repeat it in future.

Negotiation Strategies

Negotiation is the last stage of the advocacy process. It is close to the stage of agreement between two or more groups for resolution of the problem. Communication strategies applied throughout advocacy play a vital role in bringing target audiences to this stage. Neither party has yet won the game. Either party can still come up with a last trick. From a success and failure point of view, arriving at the stage of negotiation is a success in itself. Nevertheless, it is very challenging, tricky, and demands significant skills. The following tips can help enhance the skills needed for this stage in the advocacy process.

Assessment of power dynamics: In most cases when there are negotiations, advocacy groups feel that the issue they have been talking about at length is about to be resolved. This may not always be the case. Calling you for negotiations could be a strategy of the opposition to divide and break the movement. Therefore, you should become even more serious about the final goal rather than starting a victory celebration. Advocacy groups must take their time and observe the power dynamics of the present situation very critically. A realistic estimate of the power relations between the advocacy group and their opponent will give a picture of the possible negotiation. In particular, ask the following questions of your team members and have a critical discussion.

- Who is supporting you and who is supporting your opponents?
- Who are the direct decision makers?
- Who will be influencing the decision behind the scenes?
- What level of preparation have your opponents carried out?
- What could be the best and worst reasons for calling you for negotiation?

Power dynamics are always changeable. Advocates should not assume that the power relations are the same as before. Discussion on all these questions is important for assessing the current power dynamics.

Preparation of negotiation agenda: A negotiation agenda is crucial in advocacy. The agenda itself can determine the entire achievement of your advocacy effort. Keep the following points in mind while setting your negotiation agenda.

- Your agenda for negotiation must match the goal that you have set for your advocacy campaign before starting the process.
- The negotiation agenda must be discussed and agreed upon by all coalition members and affected people. If a consensus of all individuals is not possible, a consensus of representatives is essential.

- Your agenda must spell out what you want to achieve. If your team agrees to establish some level of bargaining, you have to determine the 'dead end' demarcation of the bargaining.
- Do not forget the power and interests of your opponents. Think about your opponents and their reaction to your agenda. If you can discover your opponents' views, this will help you.
- Your final agenda will be what you will do when your opponent says 'No'. You should be fully prepared for this scenario in the form of an activity or other process.
- You have to maintain a high degree of confidentiality in your agenda. If your opponents know what you are going to say and offer, you will be in a losing situation.

Mediation arrangements: Mediation is a middle path in advocacy. Depending upon the issue, some people may already be planning a mediating role between two parties. This is sometimes visible and sometimes not. Some of your coalition members who are able to win your opponent's trust can also play a mediating role in advocacy. The main roles of negotiators are to bring both parties towards a peaceful solution of the problem. To play this role effectively, the following tips are helpful.

- Find impartial and unbiased individual(s) for negotiating roles. Negotiators should not take the side of either party.
- Selected negotiators must be able to win the trust of both sides. If certain people have that image already, it is even better.
- The negotiators must be able to unlock the issue and display it in several components and lock the ideas and opinions of all together.
- They should be able to deal with the problems rather than persons. They should be able to facilitate/moderate heated discussions without personal attacks and avoiding conflict-oriented and bitter language.
- The most important role of mediators is to identify options for mutual gain that lead to a 'win-win' situation.

Selection of timing: Consider that society is not only facing the problems related to your issue. Your opponents might be dealing with several other issues, some of which are larger than yours. For example if a national issue is being hotly debated and you are about to negotiate about a local issue, this may not be an appropriate time. To wait for a better time, you can do some tactful lingering without reflecting any reluctance to negotiate.

The best time for negotiation is when your agenda is receiving attention from the concerned authority. Therefore, the role of the advocate is to conduct informal

research and to find an appropriate time. For example, if there is an election going on or just over, it is better not to plan a negotiation meeting because all the authorities are paying attention to something else.

Selection of a negotiating team: Communication and presentation skills play a large role in negotiation. A skilful person can moderate even a tough discussion constructively. Therefore you must select appropriate people for your negotiation team. If you select the wrong people for the team, the likelihood of success declines.

In this regard, the position held and an individual's skills may be different. For example, the chairperson of your advocacy coalition may not be very skilful as a negotiator. If this is the case, you should be open to selecting another person with the proper skills. This does not undermine the chairperson. If the chairperson must be included to maintain protocol, give the chairperson only a limited role.

A negotiation checklist: All preparation for negotiation is done with an ideal view of the opponent. All of your assumptions may not be correct when you sit at the table for the actual negotiation. Many things will emerge suddenly. The negotiation team should be able to deal with all the new opportunities and challenges.

Protocol: A negotiation team should be conscious about the protocol of the members at the meeting. All procedures should fall within an acceptable protocol. If your opponents do not follow the protocol, do not be concerned. This is their problem, but do not overlook the protocol from your side.

Agenda, objective, and bottom line: A negotiation team must be very clear, confident, and should have the authority to discuss the agenda and the objectives. If you have ambitious objectives for bargaining, your bottom lines should be very clear. Not only the team leader but all members should be equally competent in this regard.

Preparation of options: A negotiation dialogue is not possible in a 'dead end' situation. If you have only one option, your opponents will not necessarily agree. For healthy negotiation, both parties should present several options – as many as possible. The more options you can present, the greater is the possibility that the negotiation will be successful.

Supporting documents: You need to collect, prepare, and arrange documents, data, facts, and figures to support your arguments. You need not show or present everything right away but if you are questioned about the facts, you must be able to demonstrate them. If you say, "I will go to the office and bring the information," the strength of the negotiation is reduced.

Number of team members: Generally, negotiation meetings take place with an equal number of members from both parties. There is no question of majority and minority in this kind of discussion. It is always good to fix the number of team members by mutual discussion with your opponent.

Level of privacy: There should not be anything to hide in a negotiation. Ultimately, everything becomes public. However, certain things should be kept in confidence for a while. Therefore, the level of confidence from your side has to be determined before going to the meeting. The negotiation may not be completed in one day. No team member should go beyond the norms set for maintaining the level of confidence. If someone goes beyond this boundary it creates more harm than good.

Site selection: A negotiation meeting at your own location is good, but your opponent must also accept this. People often prefer a neutral site for negotiations and this needs to be decided openly by mutual agreement.

Logistics: Whatever site you agree upon, you need some logistics. Do not depend on your opponent or someone else for logistical arrangements. Your opponent may offer you something if the selected site is favourable to them. For example, they can offer you food, vehicles, or a place to stay. There is no problem about accepting these things which can help to build trust. However, you have to rely on your own preparation.

Risk Management Strategy

Advocacy is not all about confrontation. Advocacy has several modes and methods, depending upon the issue and context. Advocacy is not as simple a task as normal service delivery. You can easily make people happy with a service delivery programme. For example, if you provide food to hungry people, they will be very happy with you. In advocacy, however, the affected people may blame you if they do not get the changes they expect. Therefore, advocacy is not a risk-free initiative. There are several ways to manage risk. The measures for risk management at the programme level can be analysed in three stages.

Risk during preparations for advocacy

Fully legitimate role: Legal legitimacy is the prime condition for advocacy. If your organisation is supporting affected people to initiate their own advocacy campaign, you have to review your conditions and legal status and determine whether or not you are legally allowed to support such groups. If the conditions set in your registration or agreement do not allow for such support but you want to do so anyway, you are taking a risk.

Following a safe approach: Some issues are directly related to the country's mainstream politics. Generally, more important people such as business leaders, experienced politicians, and high profile interest groups become involved in mainstream politics. In this case, you should assess your strength to determine whether you want to start a struggle at this level. In this case, you would need to be prepared to manage greater risks.

No involvement in political debate based on party interests: Advocacy as such involves political discourse since in a democratic society political leaders elected by the public should be the ultimate decision makers. However, tactful advocates can keep advocacy processes far away from becoming politically polarised. This is a very challenging task, however. You should be careful from the beginning. Entering into the political debate can have serious risks.

Rise above party interests: This point relates to the multiparty political system. You have to be active in the political process in order to promote desired changes for the poor. However, you should keep your arguments above party interests. This is much more tactical and demands a high intellectual capability.

Select honest allies: Select as allies only those who are reasonably honest. If you work with people who have lost social credibility, you cannot maintain your image in society. Having the wrong types of people as allies harms many good organisations.

Risk during advocacy activities

Employ only fair tactics: Advocacy is like a game. There is an equal possibility of winning or losing. How you win and how you lose is also important in this process. If you lose fairly, this will improve your credibility for future advocacy on the same or different issues. However, if you win by compromising the fairness of your tactics, you may gain something at present but will lose your positive image in society, and may have to abandon your interest in advocacy. Therefore, success and failure are facts, but you should never apply unfair tactics in advocacy.

Be tolerant: Tolerance should be an inherent character of advocates. If your opponents disagree with you, and you become angry and publicly upset, this situation will be harmful to your cause. If you remain tolerant and your opponent exhibits anger, this can be a plus point for your advocacy and can even make your opponent feel sympathetic towards you.

Take a far-sighted approach: During your advocacy mission, you will be dealing with several stakeholders one after another. Do not think only about the success

or failure in front of you, but consider the long-term relationship and its possible consequences. In one meeting you may be disappointed, but this may lead to avenues for future meetings and achievements.

Get prepared to utilise opportunity costs: In advocacy, you cannot estimate all possible opportunities at the beginning. You should be able to take advantage of unseen opportunities and give up unnecessary elements. Therefore, you should be alert all the time during your advocacy mission.

Make alternative plans: If one element of your plan does not work, what will you do next? For example, if you cannot meet the minister, what will you do? Will you try to meet the secretary? The personal assistant? Or will you simply leave? Similar back up plans and alternatives are required in all advocacy activities. Prepare as many alternatives as possible, and be optimistic that one of the alternatives will work.

Risk at the end of advocacy

Well-prepared negotiations: If you have prepared your negotiation well you will have discovered alternative possibilities whether your dialogue succeeds or fails. If you are not well enough prepared, you may face great risks after the dialogue.

Healthy agreement: An agreement takes place in a situation of 'give and take'. It is very hard to find a 'win-win' situation in all issues. In some cases, you may be giving more than your opponent. In some cases, your opponents will be giving more and you will be taking. This depends upon the power relationship and the strength of each party. However, your role is to maintain a healthy environment so that your relationship can continue for any necessary follow-up programmes.

Healthy disagreement: Sometimes dialogues simply fail, but this need not end the relationship. One failure could be a stepping stone to future success. At the end of a failed dialogue, sum up the meeting as well as possible in a happy mode. As far as possible, keep the door open for the next meeting.

Risk at the organisational and individual level

Ultimately, individual staff members or volunteers carry out advocacy initiatives in the name of certain organisations or coalitions. Therefore, their individual security in terms of family, career, status, credibility, and benefits throughout the advocacy process is a high priority. Areas of attention can be identified but framing a risk management plan in advance is very difficult. The following questions will be helpful for paying attention to potential risks at the individual level.

- What will you do if your opponent is able to cancel your organisational agreement?
- What steps will you take if your opponent arrests some of your staff? They could even be charged in criminal cases.
- What will happen if your opponent mentally or physically harasses your staff?
- How will you safeguard the family members of staff who are actively involved in advocacy processes?
- What will you do if you receive a letter or call from your opponent asking you to fire some of your staff members?
- What will happen if your opponent 'buys off' some of your staff members by offering them good incentives?
- What steps could you take if your opponent destroys your physical facilities such as telephone, office, other supplies, etc?
- How will you manage your mission if your opponent succeeds in breaking up your coalition?

Based on the situation and context of the advocacy, several other questions of this type may arise in relation to risks during advocacy initiatives. Advocacy organisations must at least think about these potential risk areas and prepare alternative plans using their best judgement.

8

Synopses of Case Studies

Several case studies of advocacy in action have been made available to ICIMOD by different partners. Some have been written up as formal case studies, while others were submitted as concept notes for future research. Some relevant case studies have been selected and presented in this chapter to provide real examples that can be used for capacity building programmes.

Water Preservation System in Uttarakhand, India

Pre-Independence, extensive techniques existed for water preservation in Uttarakhand, India; both before and during British rule. With the help of these techniques people received a reliable water supply, for both drinking water and irrigation. Uttarakhand has hilly areas so it was not possible to dig wells and make big ponds as in the plains. Instead, local people formed committees for the management of 'naula' (canals), 'shroot' (water sources), and 'dhara' (taps). In later years, the participation of the local people was reduced and the use of these techniques dwindled.¹⁶

Today, these methods of water preservation have been almost completely rejected by local people. As a result, over the last few years the level of underground water has gone down and the natural water sources are also becoming smaller. In the hilly areas of Uttarakhand the water problem is getting worse. Water sources should be recharged up to 25%, but at present they are only recharged by 12% to 14%. Because of the regular cutting down of forests and the land area, it is likely that this recharge percentage will go down further in future.

According to the World Bank, 31 countries are facing a water problem. This problem will be greater in future if the right methods of water preservation are not adopted. Through analysis of the whole situation, civil society organisations have been trying to discover ways to continue traditional water preservation techniques in Uttarakhand.

Questions for discussion

- What is the root cause of the problem in this case?
- What are the policy issues?
- Do you see any scope for advocacy in this situation?

¹⁶ This case has been adopted from the work of Tarun Joshi from Nainital district, Uttarakhand, India. Joshi wrote this case as a concept note to initiate further research in this area.

Forest Management in Uttarakhand, India

The people of Uttarakhand have developed their own indigenous system of people's forest management through centuries of experience of living in a mountain environment.

With the advent of British rule after the Gorkha rulers were driven out in 1815, the forests in Uttarakhand became commercially lucrative and a destructive process of wholesale exploitation was initiated. By the end of the 19th century, almost all the commercially valuable forests in the region were taken over by the state. This went hand in hand with an increasing curtailment of people's rights, and anger and resentment soon erupted into many rebellions. To pacify people and seek their cooperation, the British constituted a grievance committee that recommended handing about 10% of the forests back to village communities in British-controlled areas.

The state continues to follow the British claim that villagers are solely responsible for deforestation – they are the enemy, and the only reason forests exist is because of state-controlled 'scientific' forest management. However, the experience of many NGOs associated with the SAMBANDH network of working with the people of Uttarakhand and researching the history of forest management in the state clearly indicates that conservation without meeting people's basic household and livelihood needs is simply not possible. People have to meet their basic household and livelihood needs from somewhere. Simply declaring forest areas out of bounds and leaving people to fend for themselves does not solve the problem of degradation, and violates all constitutional rights. Real conservation can only happen when people have a real stake in the survival of the forests they use.

People can only justify their proposed control over management regimes when they can prove 'scientifically' that their traditional systems are equally effective or more effective compared to state-controlled systems in terms of cost-effectiveness in providing biomass for household and livelihood needs, conserving biodiversity, conserving livelihoods, and supporting the local subsistence economy.

In order to prove that people's traditional systems are in many cases highly effective and deserve official support, it is imperative to go beyond the present emotional rhetoric on both sides and explore comparatively the real situation as it exists on the ground. The results of people's systems and state systems need to be examined according to ecological, economic, and social parameters, and matched with their management objectives. Convincing evidence needs to be generated and presented to the institutions that control the financing of the forestry sector, particularly the World Bank, to convince them that they are supporting the wrong systems politically, economically, and ecologically.

The main objective of this study is therefore to document good examples of people-managed forest in Uttarakhand Pradesh, India, and provide a historical analysis of the traditional efforts at advocacy of village communities to maintain control over their survival and livelihood base – the land, water, and forests.

Questions for discussion

- What are the policy issues to regain the rights of mountain people over natural resources?
- What are the ways and means of balancing both the national interest and people's rights?
- How can we verify the roles of civil society organisations in this context?

Changing Status of the Dalit Community in the Eastern Hills of Nepal

Generally speaking, 'dalit' is defined as those castes and classes of people that are deprived of their rights, social prestige, and dignity. In the Nepalese context, the classes of people who are considered 'untouchable' have fallen behind economically, are looked down on socially, lack awareness in political participation, are less conscious academically, and adopt caste-designated jobs. They are referred to as the oppressed.¹⁷

In Nepal a social order composed of four castes and eighteen different sub-castes was put in place in the Lichchhavi period (200-879 A.D.). Since then, the practice of untouchability has been customary. New occupations emerged along with the development of society and the Aryans, the then-ruling class, had to have a double standard in dealing with the non-Aryans. In that situation, the aristocrats and the ruling class people of Aryan origin continued subjugating the working class and slaves in order to establish and maintain their domination and supremacy. Later, when King Jayasthiti Malla (1360-1395 A.D.) divided people into 4 castes, 38 communal classes, and 725 ethnic groups, the customary practice of untouchability became strongly institutionalised in society.

In Nepal there are two types of dalits – the dalits originating from the plains (Terai) and those of hill origin. The dalits of hill origin mainly involve ethnic groups like Kami, Damai, Sarki, Badi, and Gaine. In the Terai region, they involve ethnic groups like Chamar, Dusadh, Dhobi, Dum, Batar, Khatwe, Mushar, Halakhor, Jhangar, Pattharkatta, Kanu, Teli, Kalawar, Jhangad, and Dom. There are also untouchable ethnic groups within the Newar (ethnic) community: the Kasai, Kusule, Pode, Kulu, Harhuru, and Dhobi. But these ethnic groups are only treated as untouchable in some places, otherwise they simply belong to the neglected classes of people.

In 2001, the total population of Nepal was 22.2 million, of which the dalit class constituted 2.9 million or 12.9% of the total population (census of 2001). About 90% of these people live below the absolute poverty line. Their average life expectancy in 1996 was 50.8 years compared with an average life expectancy for Nepalis overall of 55 years (HDR 1996).¹⁷ The literacy rate of the Nepalese in general is 48%, while that of the oppressed is only 10.7%, and that of dalit women only 3.3%. Twenty three per cent are completely landless and 48.7% have pieces of land only big enough to construct a small house. The highest population of dalits in Nepal is in a district called Saptari located on the eastern plains.

The movement for social equity is not a new phenomenon in Nepal. When reviewing this long-running movement, the following can be cited as examples of success.

- In 1948 the dalit students of Nepal were not allowed to sit and study together with students of other castes. Protesting against this practice, some dalits from Dhankuta district went to the 'badahakim' (district administrator) to file a complaint. The badahakim said that a change in the rule was not possible without a policy change from higher up. As a result, Gajaram Yogi, an alumnus of Darjeeling, built a separate hut at

¹⁷ Subedi, B. (2004) *Changing Status of Dalit Community in the Eastern Hills of Nepal: A Case Study of Dhankuta District, Nepal*. Kathmandu: Human Rights, Social Awareness and Development Centre (HUSADEC)

the side of the playground and started to teach oppressed class students.

- Towards 1978 'Hotel Bhet', a hotel in Dhankuta Bazaar, prohibited dalits from entering the hotel. The dalits had to eat sitting outside and also had to wash their cups and plates themselves. Protesting against this treatment by the hotel owner, the members of 'Nepal Rastriya Dalit Jana Bikas Parishad Dhankuta' (an oppressed class organisation operating in Dhankuta district at that time) went to the district administration office. In response to their complaint, the Chief District Officer ordered the hotel owner to open his hotel to all classes of people.
- On 14 April 2002 the 'Dalit Mahila Sangh Dhankuta' organised a get-together with a view to minimising discrimination against each other within the oppressed community itself. The feast was held at a park and was attended by 50 people including men and women of various ethnic groups belonging to oppressed classes such as Bishwokarma, Damai, and Sarki.

The examples above of successes in campaigning for social equality suggest that the movement of the oppressed class has helped significantly in raising the awareness of the target community and bringing changes to the conservative ideas and attitudes of the non-oppressed communities. It is because of these successes that incidents of inhuman treatment such as discrimination in public places like temples and shrines, government institutions and organisations, inns and rest-houses, hotels, educational institutions, and various cooperatives have not taken place.

Questions for discussion

- What are the root causes of the problem in this case?
- What the policy issues?
- How relevant is this case in other hill areas? What are the common features of the case?
- How do you comment on successful events from an advocacy perspective?



Meeting with members of the Rural Economic Development Association (REDA) in west Palpa, Nepal

Social Capital in Local Governance, Pakistan

Two factors encouraged network formation in Ajad Kashmir (AJK) in Pakistan. Firstly, the National Rural Support programme (NRSP) maximised its ability to reach the poor. Once the networks had been established, NRSP staff were able to save time and resources by using them as intermediaries with the community organisations (COs). The second factor was that activists and CO members wanted to scale up the COs' role in the Union Council by creating a platform to pool resources and undertake collective initiatives to overcome constraints and problems.¹⁸

The networks lined together groups of COs. The three networks are (1) Women's Welfare Organisation Poonch (WWOP); (2) Kiran Welfare Organisation; and (3) Rural Community Development Foundation (RCDF). The WWOP was formed in 1997, KWO in 1999, and RCDF in 2002. The levels of organisational structure, access to financial support, and ability to undertake developmental activities of these networks are linked to their age: the more established the network, the more refined are its systems and approaches.

The office-bearers of the COs themselves are fully accountable to the members, and report on all financial and operational activities during fortnightly meetings. These mechanisms and processes ensure that benefits are not hijacked by the local elite, and greatly reduce the chances of resource fungibility. As a result, effective local leadership, a prerequisite for social capital formation and utilisation, emerges.

Understanding the role, the tensions, and the successes of COs in the networks is important for understanding the processes of social capital formation and utilisation. The networks are able to act as a means for the flow of information, pooling resources, and sharing expertise, thus bringing the benefits of economies of scale. Discrete COs are far less able to lobby for resources.

In AJK, the scattered settlements, poor infrastructure, and mutual dependence on natural resources result in community interdependence. The establishment of a network made it possible for COs in different villages to share water and other resources. Similarly, the roads benefit a number of contiguous communities. Education and health services need to be centrally located around a number of communities. This suggests that there are fewer conflicts, or better mechanisms to resolve them, in AJK than elsewhere.

The WWOP President and staff say they have been successful in socially empowering rural women and promoting the understanding that rural women are able to undertake development activities and manage education and health activities. The WWOP has also encouraged women's roles in politics. For example, in AJK, both men and women are eligible to stand for election as members of the legislative assembly (MLAs), but in general women do not contest elections. Finally one woman candidate was selected as an MLA and is now working with the WWOP to undertake development activities. With the support of this MLA, the WWOP is now a member of various forums including the AJK National Coordination Council of NGOs.

¹⁸ Baluch, M. Saleem (2004). *A Case Study on Development of Social Capital to Promote Local Governance in the Mountain Areas of Pakistan*. Islamabad: National Rural Support Programme (NRSP)

Due to their collective strengths and activism, the COs are involved in holding local public ceremonies and festivals, and in promoting community development activities. They are also engaged in measures related to promoting the welfare, good health, safety, and convenience of village residents, in addition to assisting the village-level revenue officials in preparing records, assessments, and revenue collection.

The networks present a successful model of local development, an effective and efficient local governance system in terms of capacity building of the COs. They also help to improve transparency and accountability in the working of Union Councils and line agencies. There are certainly some opportunities for these networks to expand. The government is implementing some large-scale development programmes through CBOs. The most important of these are the Community Infrastructure Services Project (CISP), an IFAD-funded project to be implemented by GoAJK; and the Integrated Land Management Programme. Technical and financial support from the Pakistan Poverty Alleviation Fund (PPAF) is expected to create significant opportunities to strengthen and develop the networks.

Questions for discussion

- What are the differences between local NGOs and networks?
- What are the issues these local networks are dealing with?
- How do you examine the strategies of these local networks for policy advocacy?



Learning how to prepare an advocacy strategy on a selected issue in the Training of Trainers session in Pakistan

Advocacy Approaches in Local Self-Governance

The Rural Technology and Development Centre – Local Self-Governance Group (RTDC-LSG) is an NGO working to promote local self-governance in the state of Himachal Pradesh in India. Having worked on this issue for over a decade, RTDC-LSG has developed a model of local self-governance called panchayat micro-planning (PMP) and has been engaged since April 2003 in an officially declared pilot demonstration of the model in the Bhatiyat Development Block with the support of the state's Panchayati Raj and the Rural Development Department (PRRDD). This study examines RTDC-LSG's advocacy in the Bhatiyat pilot trial with the goal of illuminating successful advocacy approaches.¹⁹

The contemporary situation of local self governance in the Indian mountains is not encouraging. Although it has been ten years since India made a constitutional provision for local self governance through the Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs), this framework has disappointingly not done enough to support community empowerment in practice. Planning is still done in a top-down manner that does not address the felt needs of the people and results in poor governance outcomes.

In the years leading up to the Bhatiyat pilot trial, RTDC-LSG worked to better understand the nature of local self governance issues, design the PMP model, advocate at all levels for local self governance, network with other stakeholders, and test and refine its perspective through a series of field demonstrations. Local self governance presents an especially interesting advocacy challenge because it involves convincing not only a resistant government filled with vested interests, but also the people themselves who are meant to be empowered through it.

What are the advocacy lessons we can draw from the experience of RTDC-LSG in the Bhatiyat PMP pilot trial? It is important to note that the most effective advocacy would depend on a holistic approach that incorporates all these points. For instance, it may not be especially helpful to network with other stakeholders if one does not pay attention to maintaining a good reputation. Likewise, all of these guidelines are interconnected, in that adhering to any one of them has a positive effect on all the others.

One of RTDC-LSG's strengths is that its advocacy is based on real-world field trials that help improve the model of local self governance and provide unambiguous factual evidence of viability that is more powerful than any theoretical argument. Information, education, and communication about the issue are a vital prerequisite to doing advocacy. The advocate must themselves be knowledgeable, and must transfer that knowledge to the intended beneficiaries and other stakeholders at every stage. A thorough grasp of local self governance issues and constant outreach has enabled RTDC-LSG to create understanding, trust, and support among all classes of stakeholders. Personal experience of the Pradhan office and the Bhatiyat area has been particularly helpful.

¹⁹ Garg, Arjun (2004) *Advocacy Approaches for Promoting Local Self Governance: A Case Study of Bhatiyat Block, Himachal Pradesh, India*. Mandi (HP, India): Rural Technology and Development Centre

The government is not a monolith. There are sensitive people and sub-institutions in every area and level of the government who will be helpful if identified and given an opportunity. Moreover, different constituencies within the government can be played against one another. Constructive collaboration is generally more effective than confrontation, particularly when trying to reform the bureaucracy. When a confrontational stand is needed, it should be disassociated from the collaborative aspect of the advocacy so that enemies are not made unnecessarily.

Networking with other stakeholders, particularly larger-level organisations and forums, pays off in a variety of ways in the long term, fostering awareness of how one's agenda fits into the larger scenario and building useful contacts for the future. To move ahead with this principle, building and maintaining credibility of advocates must be a constant concern. The attitude of advocacy must never be that of asking for a favour from those in power; rather, advocacy should be used from the perspective of demanding one's rights.

Finally, advocacy has already paid many dividends in Bhatiyat, but it remains to be seen how much further the RTDC-LSG can carry the pilot trial and what impact this success will have on the larger picture. The primary advocacy challenge RTDC-LSG will face in the future is to move beyond local trials and mobilise a state-level, mass movement to build a political and bureaucratic consensus that will finally overcome the stubborn resistance of vested interests in the existing power structure.

Questions for discussion

- What are the main issues of local governance in the Indian mountains?
- What are the policy or behavioural causes of existing issues?
- What are the useful lessons that RTDC has learned from Bhatiyat?
- To what extent are the Bhatiyat lesions replicable in other contexts?



A woman activist speaking to partners and collaborators during the partners' assembly organised by Sungi in Pakistan

Livelihood Improvement in Rampuriya Village

Rampuriya forest village is located to the southeast of Darjeeling town in India. It falls within the Sanchel Wildlife Sanctuary under the jurisdiction of Wildlife Division I, Darjeeling. Rampuriya forest block has a total area of 300 ha and lies at an altitude of 1500-1800 metres above sea level, facing southeast. Rampuriya village is similar to many forest villages established in the early 1900s when the Forest Department brought in labourers for forestry operations. The labourers were given small pieces of land on lease for cultivation, to be renewed every 10 years, but their main source of income was as wage earners in forestry operations. Rampuriya village was first established in 1953, as a temporary settlement by the Forest Department for people from nearby areas brought in for felling operations. At the time of establishment, there were only 17 households dominated by the Tamang community. The Forest Department provided the labourers with marginal landholdings for basic agricultural purposes and allowed them to collect dried twigs and broken branches for subsistence.²⁰

The present livelihood pattern of the village community is primarily agricultural. Potatoes are the main cash crop, supplemented by cardamom and other vegetables, mainly peas, squash, pumpkins, beans, and carrots. Rampuriya forest village community continues to be poor due to the unfavourable agroclimatic conditions. Factors such as extreme cold (minimum temperature 3°C, maximum temperature 17°C), uneven rainfall, sandy loam soil with high acid content, and soil erosion make it very difficult for the villagers to obtain good agricultural yields.

It is, however, interesting to note that the poverty is not purely economic. Poverty also prevails in terms of lack of educational facilities for children, poor health and improper sanitation conditions, inaccessibility to the basic services provided by the state and central governments, and lack of power to voice opinions for access to basic social, economic, and cultural rights.

The meagre landholdings are not enough to sustain the livelihoods of these people. The total village land is 41.38 acres (16.75 ha) with an area of 14.82 acres (6 ha) available for agricultural activities. The average land holding per family is 1.38 acres (0.56 ha), of which 0.42 acres (0.17 ha) is available for agriculture. In total the village has 0.85 acres (0.34 ha) of rainfed land, 2.35 acres (0.95 ha) of wasteland, and 21.45 acres (8.68 ha) used for cardamom cultivation.

In order to mobilise the forest village community, the advocacy strategy adopted by ATREE-EHP included equal participation from the village community, Wildlife Division I, other government agencies, civil societies, and Darjeeling Gorkha Autonomous Hill Council (DGAHC). No economic or social activity within the forest village is carried out without the prior knowledge or approval of the Wildlife Division I. The process of establishing relationships with the concerned institutions starts right from the very first step of selection

²⁰ This case is adopted from a case study carried out in 2004 by ATREE (Ashoka Trust for Research in Ecology and Environment) about the impacts of social mobilisation in Rampuriya village

of project villages. All the project villages of ATREE-EHP have been selected after detailed consultation with Wildlife Division I.

One of the most distinct advantages of the participation of the authorities in the process is in galvanising the community members to turn the objectives for village and community development into success stories. This results in an energetic community and raises the probability of achieving the goals and objectives of attaining basic human rights through sustainable livelihood patterns. The other advantage of this strategy is that it gives to the village community the much-needed exposure to the authorities in power. As a result, fear and the perceived antagonistic attitude between the village community and the authorities is also diluted. This exercise has opened up avenues for the village communities to communicate directly with the authorities in power to address issues of utmost importance. The community members are no longer wary of the departments and interact regularly with these bodies.

Periodic visits by the concerned authorities to Rampuriya forest village has also increased due to their involvement in the activities. This serves a dual purpose of effective implementation of the programmes and also keeps a check on the surrounding ecosystem that most of the community members are heavily dependent on. Through all these activities, interaction between the villagers and the authorities has improved significantly and this can only augur well for the community of Rampuriya Forest Village.

Questions for discussion

- What are the policy issues in this case?
- Examine the activities carried out by ATREE in Rampuriya from the advocacy point of view
- List the learning points from this case as examples for advocacy



Partners' Assembly organised by Sungi Development Foundation at Abbottabad, Pakistan in 2006

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