

MANUAL FOR FACILITATORS OF ADVOCACY TRAINING SESSIONS



**Washington Office
on Latin America**



**Center for Development
and Population Activities**

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The Washington Office on Latin America (WOLA) is a nonprofit policy, research, and advocacy organization, founded in 1974 by religious and other civil society leaders. WOLA promotes human rights, democracy, and social and economic justice in Latin America and the Caribbean and encourages a United States foreign policy that contributes to the achievement of those goals.

WOLA's Advocacy Training Program in Central America was established in 1996 to train civil society organizations in the region in the use of advocacy methodologies and techniques. The program seeks to strengthen the capacity of these organizations to influence local, national, and international policy-makers on decisions about key policies and programs. The overarching goal of the program is to contribute to the development of a democratic culture in Central America by promoting values such as equality, gender and ethnic equity, respect for diversity, dignity, tolerance, and human solidarity.

This manual is the product of a team effort by the staff of the Central America Advocacy Training Program and is based on extensive field experience in that region. It was developed in 2000–2001 by Patrick Baltazar and Andrés McKinley, with important contributions from Angélica Alarcón, Joshua Lichtenstein, and Susan Peacock, under the supervision of Danuta Sacher. It contains conceptual and practical tools to increase the effectiveness of individuals and organizations that seek to strengthen and assist advocacy initiatives through training, planning, and evaluation efforts. While the original Spanish-language manual was developed for use in Central America, this English-language edition is intended for broad use in other regions of the world, including Africa, Asia, and English-speaking countries in Latin America and the Caribbean.

The editing and publication of the manual are the result of a joint effort by WOLA and the Center for Development and Population Activities (CEDPA). The manual was translated from Spanish to English by Susan Peacock, with support from Bread for the World (Germany).

We would like to thank the Asociación Mujer Vamos Adelante (AMVA) in Guatemala for its suggestions on how to incorporate a gender perspective into the manual. AMVA's review of the manual was recommended by participants in the Training School for Policy Advocacy that was carried out jointly by WOLA and CEDPA between November 2002 and February 2003.

We hope this manual will be helpful to those persons and organizations that are working to consolidate human rights, democracy, and social justice through advocacy in Latin America and beyond.

Section One: Overview

INTRODUCTION TO THE MANUAL

This manual is the product of six years of experience in Central America, facilitating advocacy training sessions and working in cooperation with specific advocacy campaigns. It offers conceptual and methodological tools to persons who wish to train civil society groups in the participatory planning of advocacy initiatives aimed at changing public policies and programs so that they benefit those in society who are traditionally marginalized.

The manual is organized into four sections:

Section 1 provides an overview of the manual and of the basic principles for facilitating events. These principles cover key areas that all facilitators should keep in mind when undertaking any training, planning, or evaluation activity intended to strengthen efforts to change public policies and programs.

Section 2 consists of two training guides for general workshops. The first focuses on the concept of advocacy, understood both as a change process and as a way to exercise power. A full conceptual understanding of advocacy is key to the planning of successful advocacy initiatives. The second guide in this section introduces the eight steps that make up WOLA's basic methodology for the planning of advocacy campaigns.

Section 3, the most extensive, consists of training guides for each of the eight steps.

Finally, Section 4 contains several appendixes with additional practical material for general reference. It includes a sample workshop agenda, suggestions on how to take minutes, and a selection of group exercises for use in workshops.

Using the Training Guides

Each of the 10 training guides, two general and one for each of the eight steps, is organized in a similar way. Each begins with a summary page listing the learning objectives, key concepts, practical techniques, and learning indicators for the guide. Next, key concepts are explained in detail. The core of each guide is a set of practical techniques that can be used in training sessions, with instructions for using each one. Most of the guides include worksheets to use with the techniques, as well as graphic resources that facilitators can use as handouts or as models for displays to illustrate the ideas discussed.

The facilitator using a particular training guide should first read the summary and the key concepts. He or she can then choose one or more of the practical techniques that seem most appropriate for the group's campaign, taking into account its objectives, the characteristics of the group, and the time available. The facilitator can choose the worksheets and resources that are most useful with the technique selected and photocopy them for use in preparing the session.

BASIC PRINCIPLES OF FACILITATING ADVOCACY EVENTS

The facilitation of advocacy training sessions or of other group processes related to advocacy initiatives requires a variety of technical, pedagogical, political, and artistic skills and knowledge. Facilitators should have at least a primary school education, with good reading comprehension and writing skills. They also need a commitment to advocacy, and the willingness to continue to learn by experimenting with new techniques and methods. It can be said that facilitators are not born, but rather develop through practice and continuous effort to improve and grow.

To be a facilitator also requires a strong commitment to the empowerment of other people. It is important to remember that a facilitator exercises considerable power and influence within the organizing and educational campaigns that s/he seeks to strengthen. For this reason, the facilitator should always be conscious that s/he has a responsibility to promote democratic participation and to seek to empower the group, community, or coalition with which s/he is working. Everything that a facilitator says or does—or does not say or do—has consequences for organizing and educational efforts. These consequences may not always be readily evident, but in the long run may either benefit or hurt a group.

It is therefore important to ensure that decisions made as part of an organizing or educational effort reflect a collective understanding and are based on the experiences of the group. They should not be based solely on the criteria and experiences of the facilitator.

Functions and Responsibilities of a Facilitator

A facilitator should:

- Contribute to the building of common understandings based on the group's own organizing experiences.
- Contribute to the building of common understandings based on the group's educational experiences.
- Learn new things.
- Make the group more aware of its own internal dynamics.
- Stimulate democratic participation.
- Help the group to identify its problems and analyze their causes.
- Motivate the group to define and achieve its objectives.

- Help the group to work through internal conflicts in a constructive manner.
- Plan a logical and orderly process geared toward clear objectives.
- Prioritize and summarize important points.
- Go back to decisions made by the group and urge participants to follow up on them.
- Facilitate evaluation as an integral part of group processes.

Qualities and Skills of a Facilitator

A facilitator should be creative and dynamic, yet at the same time observant and sensitive to the needs and mood of the group. He or she should be patient and flexible, responsive to questions, and open to criticism. It is very important to be committed to gender inclusiveness and to respect cultural and ethnic differences. Finally, the facilitator should be consistent in his or her practices and statements.

Practical Tips for Facilitators

The following are general tips for the design and facilitation of advocacy training sessions or of meetings to plan or evaluate advocacy initiatives.

Before the event

1. Define the objectives of the session with leaders or representatives of the organization (or organizations) that will participate in it. This is especially important when the organization has requested that the session take place. A facilitator should be clear about how this particular event fits within the organization's overall structure and programmatic activities. S/he should try to ensure that it is consistent with the organization's stated mission and objectives.
2. Ensure that the people with whom you are coordinating the event have the backing of the organization and its membership in order to avoid such problems as manipulation, poor attendance, or lack of credibility.
3. Arrange for the facilitation to be done by a team of facilitators.
4. Make sure that whatever technical equipment is needed for the event is available and functioning properly.
5. Gauge the participants' true level of commitment to and involvement in the group's advocacy initiative.
6. Obtain as much information as possible about the organization: its history, current objectives, structure, activities, and internal dynamics. Information can be gathered through interviews, informal conversations, documents, and minutes.

7. Bear in mind the characteristics of the people who are going to participate: their ages, ethnicity, race, gender, knowledge and experience related to the issue, level of formal schooling, responsibilities within the organization, and level of political awareness.
8. Deal with logistical aspects of the event: the schedule, time allotted for lunch, where and how to hang up newsprint, the size of the space, the noise and temperature levels, the availability of break-out space for small group work, and so on.
9. Ensure that the specific objectives of the session contribute to the organization's overall objectives.
10. Ensure the logical sequencing of the content to be presented and select training techniques that will fulfill the specific learning objectives of the event.
11. Be familiar with all the materials that will be used during the session, ensuring their appropriateness for the particular group and issue under discussion.
12. Maintain good communication and coordination within the team of facilitators, agreeing in advance on each person's role and responsibilities.

During the event

1. Make good use of the physical space available.
2. Allow participants the opportunity to express their hopes for the session so that they feel as though their opinions are taken into account from the beginning. Agree upon a schedule and some basic ground rules—the need to be punctual, to listen to other people's opinions, to be brief, to avoid excessive repetition, to respect others, and so forth. In other words, clarify expectations and the “rules of the game.”
3. Create work groups of participants that will have specific responsibilities and tasks during the event to assist the team of facilitators.
4. Before presenting content, agree on how to handle the taking of minutes. It is important to be clear about the type of minutes that are needed, who will prepare them, with what inputs, and by what date. Explain that the minutes will serve as a report to be given to the team of facilitators. They should record the interests and needs expressed by the participants, analyze any difficulties that arose, and note which techniques were most helpful and appropriate and which achieved the best results.
5. Maintain fluid communication among members of the facilitation team, and model a participatory and democratic work style characterized by mutual respect.
6. Use a variety of presentation techniques (cards, newsprint, transparencies, the blackboard, etc.) to convey information and help participants follow a sequence of topics.

7. At the end of each step in the methodology, summarize it and highlight the main points of the discussion in order to clearly mark the end of one step and the beginning of another.
8. Make visual contact with all of the people in the group of participants. Do not direct your attention at only one person or one subgroup of people. When participants speak, they should speak to the entire group and not just to the facilitator.
9. Be creative and use appropriate new techniques to communicate with the participants. Know when to switch to a different technique (for example, after a long plenary, a serious discussion, a sad or emotional moment, or a break or meal). Varying the techniques helps keep participants energized and alert. Do not, however, go overboard and allow the techniques to distract from the content being presented or to curtail debate among the group participants on contentious issues.
10. Recognize and deal with the conflicts and disagreements that arise during the session. It is counterproductive to continue to present content when it is obvious that conflict is brewing or that feelings are not being expressed.
11. Address comments or statements made by any participant that are racist, sexist, homophobic, or otherwise offensive, by questioning underlying behaviors or attitudes instead of attacking the person. The facilitator should make every effort to create a safe and congenial environment in which all participants feel respected.
12. Maintain a high level of motivation within the group throughout the session. It is important to create a positive and friendly environment by using techniques that allow the participants to get acquainted with one another.
13. Do not be afraid to make mistakes! Group facilitation is not an exact science, but rather a trial-and-error exercise. Popular educators often say that “a person who never makes mistakes is someone who is not practicing.”

***Section Two:
Training Guides for
General Workshops***

Training Guide: Introduction to Advocacy

What is advocacy?

Why engage in advocacy?

***What are the main things to keep in mind when
we do advocacy?***

INTRODUCTION TO ADVOCACY: SUMMARY

Learning Objectives

1. Reflect on the concept of advocacy, particularly its desired outcomes and the factors that contribute to civil society's success with advocacy initiatives.
2. Analyze opportunities for and threats to advocacy, given the national and/or regional context.

Key Concepts

1. What is advocacy?
2. Why engage in advocacy?
3. What factors contribute to the success of advocacy initiatives?

Practical Techniques

1. Constructing a definition of advocacy.
2. Advocacy in a word.
3. Brainstorming about advocacy.
4. Advocacy puzzles.
5. Analyzing sources of power for advocacy.
6. A poster of newspaper clippings.

Learning Indicators

1. The generation of theoretical inputs related to the concept of advocacy, its desired outcomes, and the factors that contribute to its success.
2. The identification of opportunities for and threats to advocacy given the national and/or regional context.

INTRODUCTION TO ADVOCACY: KEY CONCEPTS

1. What Is Advocacy?

Advocacy refers to organized efforts by citizens to influence the formulation and implementation of public policies and programs by persuading and pressuring state authorities, international financial institutions, and other powerful actors. Advocacy embraces various activities undertaken to gain access to and influence decision-makers on matters of importance to a particular group or to society in general.

Advocacy as a tool for citizen participation

Advocacy is a tool for real participation by citizens in decision-making by government and other powerful bodies. It is one of the ways—together with elections, open forums, special commissions, and so on—that different sectors of civil society can put forward their agendas and have an impact on public policies, participating in a democratic and systematic way in decision-making about matters that affect their lives. Citizen participation requires:

- Internal democracy
- Human and economic resources
- Consciousness
- Willingness to struggle
- Credibility
- Ability to bring together people across different sectors, socioeconomic classes, races/ethnicities, etc.
- Ability to mobilize large numbers of people
- Good leaders
- Relationships with national and international actors
- Alliances
- A popular vote.

Advocacy as the exercise of power

To the extent that the citizenry is able to influence decisions made by entities of the state, it is exercising its own power as civil society. Advocacy can be seen as the exercise of power by the citizenry in the face of the government's power. Effective

advocacy requires using different approaches to tap into various sources of power. This increases the probability that a government will be responsive to its citizens. Some of these approaches contribute to the accumulation and consolidation of social power, while others contribute to the strengthening of technical capacities.

Advocacy requires:

- Capacity to do analysis
- Capacity to formulate alternative proposals
- Capacity for negotiation
- Research capacity
- Methodological knowledge about advocacy
- Information management.

Advocacy as a cumulative process

Advocacy consists of more than one strategy or activity. It entails the implementation of various strategies and activities over time, with creativity and persistence. Advocacy victories often are preceded by numerous failures. It is important not to give up, but to learn from our mistakes and to continually strengthen an organization in terms of its social power and technical capacity.

Advocacy combines various complementary initiatives in order to achieve an objective. Through a series of small wins on specific issues that may appear not to be of great consequence, an organization or coalition gradually builds the social power and technical capacity needed to do advocacy on more complex issues.

2. Why Engage in Advocacy?

There are many reasons to engage in advocacy. The most important from a civil society perspective are: (a) to solve specific problems through concrete changes in public policies and programs; (b) to strengthen and empower civil society; and (c) to promote and consolidate democracy.

To solve specific problems

The majority of civil society organizations that are committed to justice, democratization, and sustainable development aspire to change one or more aspects of the social, economic, political, and cultural realities in which they operate. Advocacy focuses on solving specific problems within this complex environment. Citizen advocates develop plans and implement strategies and activities aimed at achieving concrete solutions to these problems, most often through specific changes in public policies and programs.

It is important to involve, from the beginning, the people who are affected by the problem that you wish to solve. This helps ensure that the group's or coalition's proposal reflects the priorities of this population and is geared toward achieving real change in their daily lives.

To strengthen and empower civil society

Advocacy, to the extent that it promotes social organization, alliance building, leadership formation, and networking at the national and international levels, stimulates the strengthening and empowerment of civil society. The planning and implementation of advocacy initiatives not only helps to solve immediate problems, but also, over time, contributes to strengthening the organizations or coalitions that engage in advocacy. This in turn prepares them for future efforts that can have an even greater impact on public policies.

To promote and consolidate democracy

Advocacy implies a permanent relationship between civil society and the state. It is an important gauge of a genuine democracy. Engaging in advocacy is one way to strengthen citizen participation in decision-making about public policies and programs and to promote a transparent political culture. As civil society becomes more successful in its advocacy efforts, power relationships between state institutions and the citizenry will be transformed and become more democratic.

3. What Factors Contribute to the Success of Advocacy Initiatives?

A variety of external and internal factors help determine whether advocacy efforts will be successful.

External factors

The reality of every country is different. Therefore, the opportunities for and obstacles to the development of civil society and citizen participation through advocacy must be analyzed within a particular context. Nonetheless, it is possible to make generalizations about important external factors in the political environment of a country that contribute to citizens' ability to influence public policies by engaging in advocacy. They include:

- **Openness to democracy.** Advocacy is most successful when governments are committed to the promotion and consolidation of democracy. In particular, advocacy requires that a government respect basic human rights, including the rights to life, freedom of association, and freedom of expression. Unless these rights are respected, there will be little political space for citizen participation.
- **Social, economic, and cultural equity.** Pervasive poverty and social, economic, and cultural exclusion weaken the capacity of marginalized sectors to organize themselves and to plan and implement initiatives designed to influence public policies. Poverty and exclusion tend to reinforce set attitudes on the part of both

state institutions (“The poor are a threat when they organize”) and traditionally marginalized sectors (“The state is the enemy”). These attitudes are obstacles to building the types of relationships between the state and its citizens that are essential if advocacy is to be effective.

- **Decentralization.** When engaging in advocacy it is important to have access to people with decision-making power and to other key actors. When a state is excessively centralized, citizens have limited access to state institutions, making it more difficult to seek solutions to their problems.
- **Democratization of media access.** The ability to influence and shape public opinion is crucial to the success of advocacy initiatives. Access to the media is particularly important. When control of the mass media is highly concentrated in a few hands, access for some sectors of society can be limited. This negatively impacts their ability to place issues on the public agenda and to influence decision-making about public policies in an effective way.
- **Transparency.** In order to influence the actions taken by the state, citizens must have access to public information. Without such access, groups and coalitions that want to influence public policies will not have sufficient information with which to analyze problems and develop proposals for viable solutions. A culture of accountability is required, in which public officials are responsive to citizens, especially with regard to compliance with specific aspects of a public policy.

Internal factors

Civil society organizations, especially those that come from traditionally marginalized sectors of society, also face the challenge of strengthening themselves internally and accumulating power vis-à-vis the state. The following factors come into play:

- **Internal democracy.** Democracy within organizations is a tool for empowerment. Internal democracy broadens the level of participation, especially among those groups within society that have traditionally been marginalized. This in turn enables the planning of advocacy initiatives that have a higher rate of success. To achieve internal democracy it is important to question traditional gender roles within organizations.
- **Willingness to interact with the government.** Even though advocacy involves the interplay of interests within a political context, which can sometimes be conflictive and polarizing, it always requires that civil society be willing to interact with the government in the most constructive and least conflictive way possible. Interaction with government is the means by which an organization or coalition achieves its advocacy objectives.
- **Willingness to build and strengthen alliances.** Advocacy efforts have the greatest impact when different sectors or groups within civil society work together. In this way, alliances are strengthened and the opposition is weakened.

- **Visualization of advocacy efforts as part of a long-term strategy for transformation.** Even though advocacy is undertaken to achieve concrete results in the short or medium term, it should be framed within a context of broader objectives for social, economic, and political change to be accomplished over the long term. In other words, short- and medium-term results should be aligned with long-term objectives and should help solidify efforts to promote change.
- **Clarity about the mission of the group or coalition.** Advocacy initiatives should grow out of the previously defined mission of a group or coalition. Grounding advocacy work in the stated mission of the group or coalition helps ensure that advocacy is integrated into its overall program, and is not just a distraction or a marginal activity. The mission statement articulates the identity of the group or coalition, clarifying what it does, the problems it seeks to address, its philosophy of change, and the outcomes it hopes to achieve.
- **Basic knowledge of the way state institutions function.** When a group or coalition wants to influence public policy, it is extremely important that it be knowledgeable about the way the judicial system functions, about national and international laws that relate to the problem it hopes to solve, about how different decision-making spaces operate within the state, and about current public policies affecting the issue in question.
- **Full understanding of the political context.** The success of an advocacy initiative is affected by the group's ability to grasp the different dimensions of the political context in which advocacy will occur. Its ability to do objective analysis and to propose alternatives that are politically and technically viable depends on the depth of its understanding of the situation.
- **Information management and research capacity.** Information is power! Citizen advocates need accurate information in order to analyze problems, formulate policy alternatives, understand how decision-making spaces function, identify key actors, determine which strategies to use, and make arguments that support policy proposals. This implies a need to do research or to forge relationships with research institutions whose staff have expertise that can help make advocacy efforts more viable.
- **Educational opportunities.** In order for a group or coalition to become more knowledgeable about issues on which it hopes to have influence, and to increase its capacity to do research and analysis, it is important to provide educational opportunities for its leaders on an ongoing basis.
- **Clear agreements between the individuals or organizations that are working together on an advocacy initiative.** The people or organizations involved in a group or coalition that is engaged in advocacy should reach clear agreements about how they will work together. This will help to clarify the interests and expectations that are in play. It is common for conflicts and

misunderstandings to occur within and between organizations, but these problems can be minimized by reaching specific agreements about internal decision-making and about which individuals within a group or coalition can speak to the press or to government officials. It is important to work through these issues in a transparent fashion, because the agreements reached will increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the joint effort.

- **Availability of human and economic resources for the advocacy initiative.** Advocacy requires resources. In addition to budgeting sufficient money for an advocacy initiative that is to be undertaken, organizations must also assign personnel with relevant training and expertise.

INTRODUCTION TO ADVOCACY: PRACTICAL TECHNIQUES

TECHNIQUE 1:

CONSTRUCTING A DEFINITION OF ADVOCACY

Objective

To draw out participants' ideas about the concept of advocacy and use those ideas as the starting point for a discussion.

Use

This technique stimulates full participation and facilitates the identification of common understandings and essential elements that can be used to form a more developed concept of advocacy. It is especially useful in working with large groups (20 or more participants), although it can also be used with smaller groups.

Process

1. Each participant is given a sheet of paper on which to write, as concisely as possible, his or her definition of advocacy.
2. Participants are paired off (preferably with people they do not know) in order to share their definitions. Each pair should combine their definitions to come up with a new definition of advocacy that incorporates both ideas. This new definition is written on a new sheet of paper.
3. Each pair joins with another pair, forming groups of four, and repeats the process to come up with one definition for each foursome.
4. In plenary, each group of four presents the definition of advocacy that it has been constructed. The facilitator will ask if other participants have questions to clarify the definitions that are presented, without getting into a discussion of their substance.
5. The facilitator asks several questions to encourage a discussion about all of the definitions:
 - What are the common threads that run through all the definitions?
 - What are the differences between the definitions?
 - What are the main elements and key words associated with each definition?
 - What is missing?

6. With input from the participants, the facilitator constructs one definition of advocacy that is based on the ideas presented by all of the participants.

Time

1 hour and 10 minutes in total:

- 5 minutes to write individually
- 10 minutes in pairs
- 15 minutes in groups of four
- 20 minutes for presentations
- 20 minutes of discussion to construct a definition for the entire group.

TECHNIQUE 2:

ADVOCACY IN A WORD

Objective

To stimulate an exchange of ideas about the concept of advocacy.

Use

This technique helps participants focus on key aspects of the concept of advocacy. It is especially effective with large groups of more than 25 participants.

Process

1. Each participant is given a card and instructed to write down one word that conveys what advocacy means to him or her.
2. All the cards are posted so that everyone can see them.
3. The facilitator reads all of the cards aloud. Participants discuss the cards and group together those that have similar ideas. At the end, the facilitator summarizes the main points that have been discussed by the group.

Time

30 minutes in total:

- 5 minutes to write on the cards
- 25 minutes to talk about and group the cards.

Variation

Instead of the facilitator organizing the cards, the participants themselves group the cards as they are hanging them up on the wall. Each participant comes forward, reads his or her card aloud, and then hangs it beside others that have similar ideas, or apart from the others if it is distinctive idea. After everyone has come forward, the facilitator summarizes the ideas that have been grouped together, asking the group to help clarify and fine-tune the ideas under discussion.

This variation allows for greater group participation in analyzing key aspects of the concept of advocacy, but it requires more time.

TECHNIQUE 3:

BRAINSTORMING ABOUT ADVOCACY

Objective

To share ideas about the desired outcomes of advocacy and the internal and external factors that enhance civil society's capacity to engage in advocacy.

Use

This technique helps groups strengthen their understanding of the meaning of advocacy. It should be used with groups that already have a minimal understanding of the concept on both a theoretical and a practical level.

Process

1. Each participant is given three cards. Three sheets of newsprint are posted in the front of the group. One of the following questions is written on each sheet of newsprint, leaving an empty space under the question to hang up cards:
 - Why do we engage in advocacy?
 - What factors within civil society organizations can enhance their capacity to engage in advocacy?
 - What factors in the political environment of a country can enhance the capacity of civil society organizations to engage in advocacy?

2. Each participant responds to the three questions, writing one response on each card. Participants are encouraged to write short phrases, preferably fewer than eight words, using letters that are large enough to be seen easily from a distance.
3. Participants hang their response cards on the three sheets of newsprint.
4. The facilitator reads aloud the cards under the first question, allowing participants to ask clarifying questions about the meaning of what others wrote on their cards (without discussing their substance). Then, the facilitator asks participants if they have more ideas to add to those already listed. The facilitator then groups together cards with similar ideas, summarizing the main points. The same process is repeated for the remaining two questions.
5. The facilitator makes a short presentation on the desired outcomes of advocacy and the minimum conditions that need to be present within civil society organizations and in the country environment. Then s/he asks the participants to comment on how what has been presented complements what they had written on their cards.

Time

1 hour and 15 minutes in total:

- 5 minutes to write on cards
- 40 minutes for discussion, summary, and grouping of the cards
- 30 minutes for the presentation and final wrap-up.

TECHNIQUE 4:

ADVOCACY PUZZLES

Objective

To start a discussion about key aspects of advocacy, differentiating between the desired outcomes of advocacy, the sources of civil society's power, and the internal and external factors that enhance civil society's capacity to engage in advocacy.

Use

This technique allows a number of issues to be covered quickly and dynamically in a participatory fashion. Its purpose is similar to that of the previous technique, but it is less dependent on the group's capacity to generate ideas to be analyzed.

Preparation

The facilitator decides on three symbols and makes three different colored puzzles in the shapes of those symbols. For example, there might be puzzles in the shape of:

- A door, to represent sources of civil society's power
- A key, to represent the factors that enhance civil society's capacity to engage in advocacy
- A padlock, to represent the desired outcomes of advocacy.

Each puzzle is cut into pieces. Each piece has written on it an idea, expressed in very few words, about one aspect of the advocacy process.

Process

1. Each participant is given one or two pieces of the puzzles, depending on the number of participants.
2. The facilitator asks the participants to work together to put the puzzles together, but does not explain how many puzzles there are or what they represent.
3. Once all of the puzzles are put together, the facilitator asks the participants to arrange them in a logical order. In plenary the participants discuss the meaning of each of the puzzles, reflecting on the common elements of all of the pieces in each. The participants give a name to each puzzle.
4. The facilitator guides a final discussion using the following questions:
 - Why did we put the ideas in this order?
 - Do you agree with the way the puzzles were used to represent different aspects of advocacy? Why or why not?
 - What other elements should be included in each puzzle?
 - Which elements should not be included?
5. The facilitator summarizes the ideas about advocacy that the group has discussed.

Time

1 hour in total:

- 15 minutes to put the puzzles together
- 30 minutes for discussion

- 15 minutes for the final wrap-up.

TECHNIQUE 5:

ANALYZING SOURCES OF POWER FOR ADVOCACY

Objective

To stimulate reflection and discussion about the main elements that contribute to civil society’s power vis-à-vis that of the state.

Process

1. The facilitator draws two circles on a sheet of newsprint, one that represents civil society and another that represents the government. The facilitator draws an arrow from the civil society circle toward the government circle, emphasizing that civil society is powerful and that it can exercise its power in order to influence the state.
2. The participants pair off, and each pair receives two cards. Working together, they answer the following two questions, writing each response on a card:
 - What are the sources of civil society’s power?
 - What are the sources of the government’s power?
3. In plenary, the pairs attach their cards to the newsprint, next to the “civil society” and “government” circles that correspond to their answers.
4. The facilitator summarizes the ideas of all of the pairs about the sources of power for civil society and for the government. Participants are encouraged to contribute more ideas to the discussion.
5. The group and the facilitator briefly discuss a specific situation where advocacy is taking place, suggesting specific actions that would take advantage of the sources of civil society’s power.

Time

45 minutes in total:

- 5 minutes to write on cards
- 15 minutes to study the different responses
- 25 minutes for discussion and wrap-up.

TECHNIQUE 6:

A POSTER OF NEWSPAPER CLIPPINGS

Objective

To discuss the state of advocacy in the country, identifying the strengths and weaknesses of initiatives that have been undertaken and challenges for the future.

Use

This technique requires that participants have some understanding of the concept of advocacy and of social movements in their country, although a high level of formal education is not required.

Process

1. The participants form four or five small groups. The facilitator gives each small group two sheets of newsprint, scissors, glue, markers, and several newspapers.
2. The small groups clip images from the newspapers that are examples of advocacy. The images are to be glued onto the first sheet of newsprint in a creative way.
3. On the second sheet of newsprint the small group should draw other images of advocacy that it thinks are important, but that were not found in the newspaper. If everyone in a small group feels that all of the key aspects of advocacy are reflected in the newspaper clippings, then the second sheet of newsprint can be left blank.
4. After the sheets of newsprint are hung up around the room, the facilitator asks several questions to help the participants analyze the “posters.”
 - What do we see in the posters?
 - What are some of the different ways that advocacy is done in our society?
5. After all of the presentations, the facilitator uses the following questions to guide a general discussion:
 - What are some things that have been done well during advocacy efforts in our country?
 - What are some things that have not been done well?
 - Given our reality, what are some challenges that must be faced when engaging in advocacy?

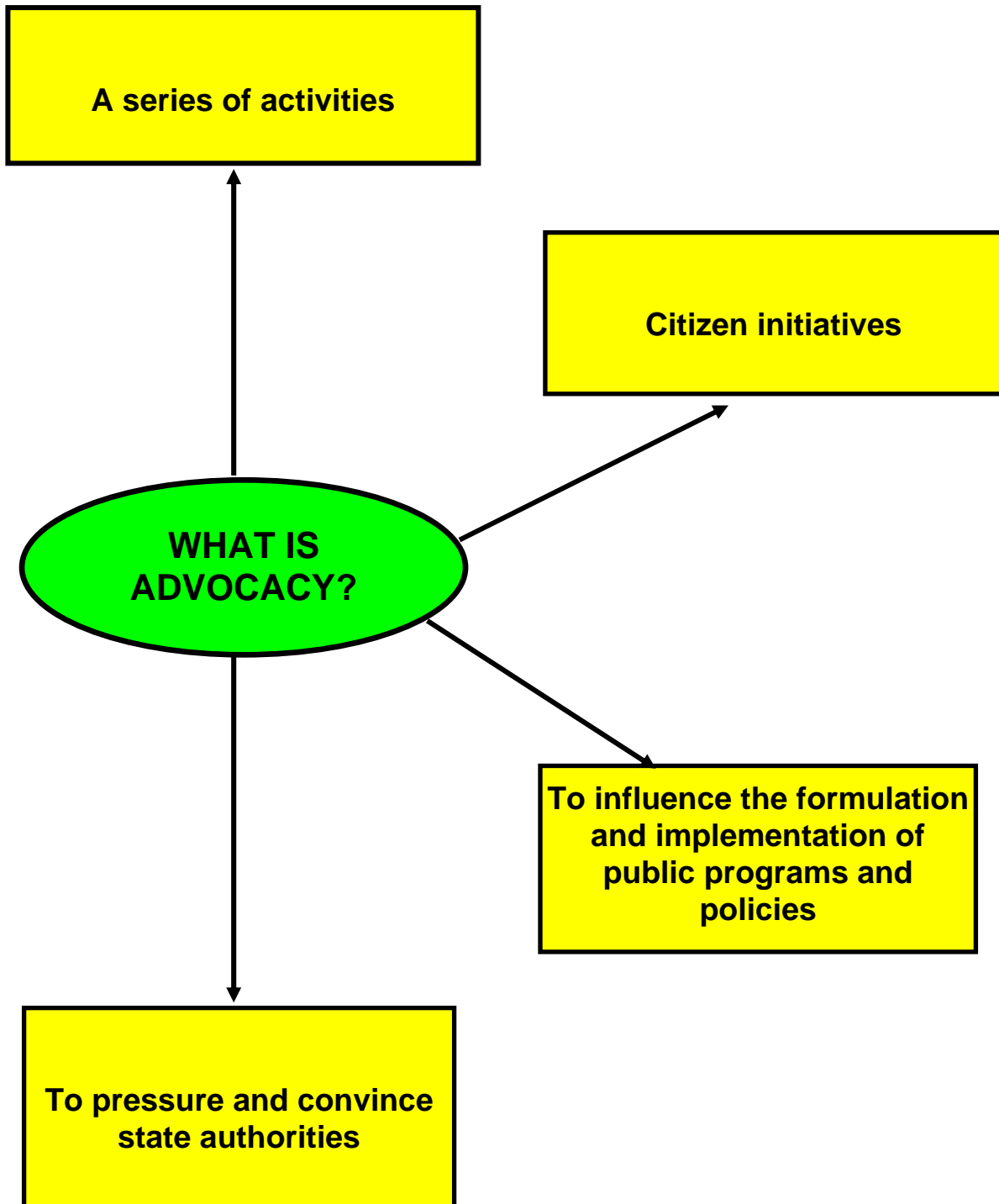
6. The facilitator summarizes what has been said, and then gives a brief presentation about the strengths and weaknesses of previous advocacy initiatives in the country and challenges for the future.

Time

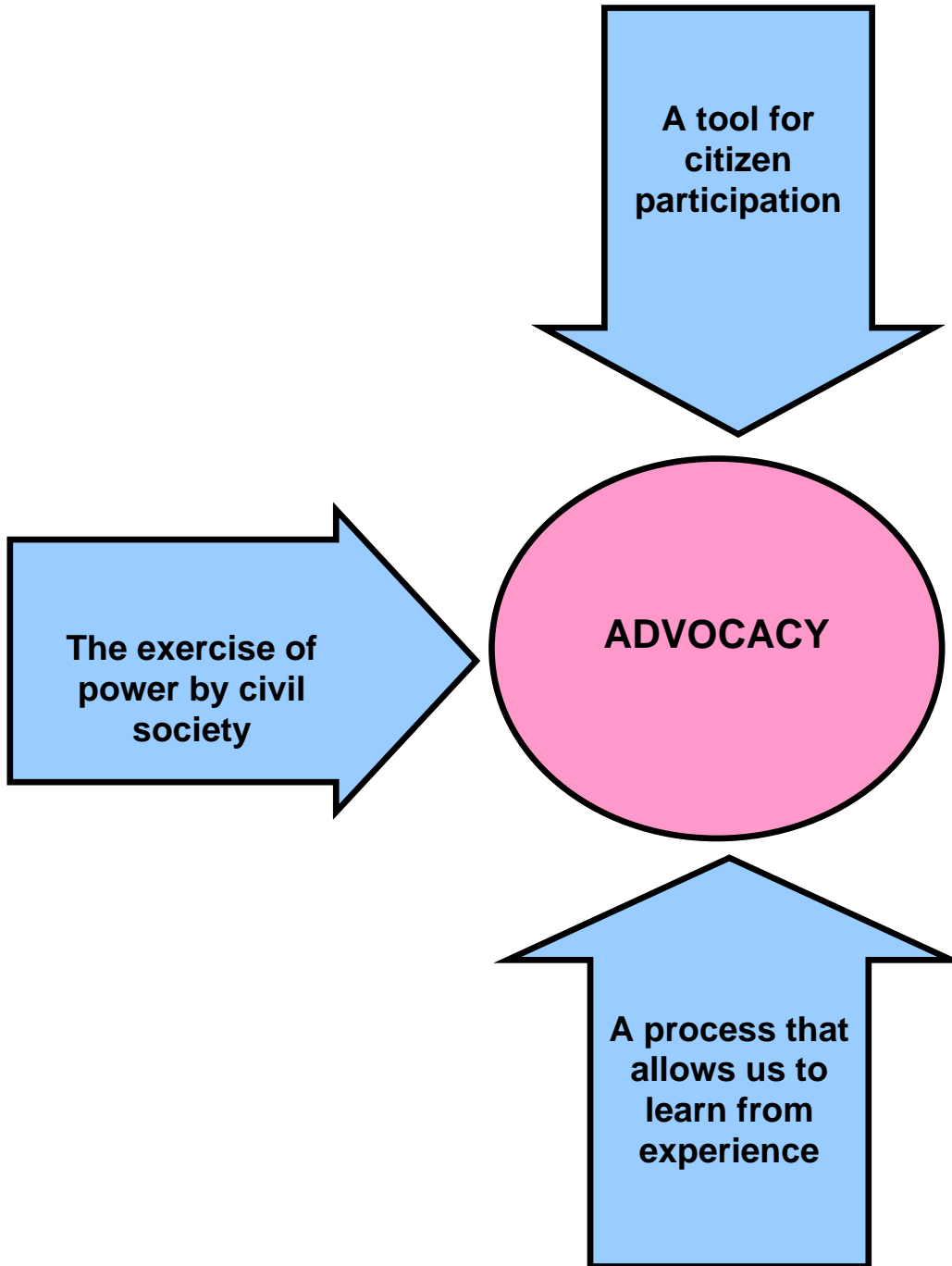
1 hour and 40 minutes in total:

- 30 minutes for small group work
- 30 minutes for analysis of the posters
- 25 minutes for general discussion
- 15 minutes for the final presentation and wrap-up.

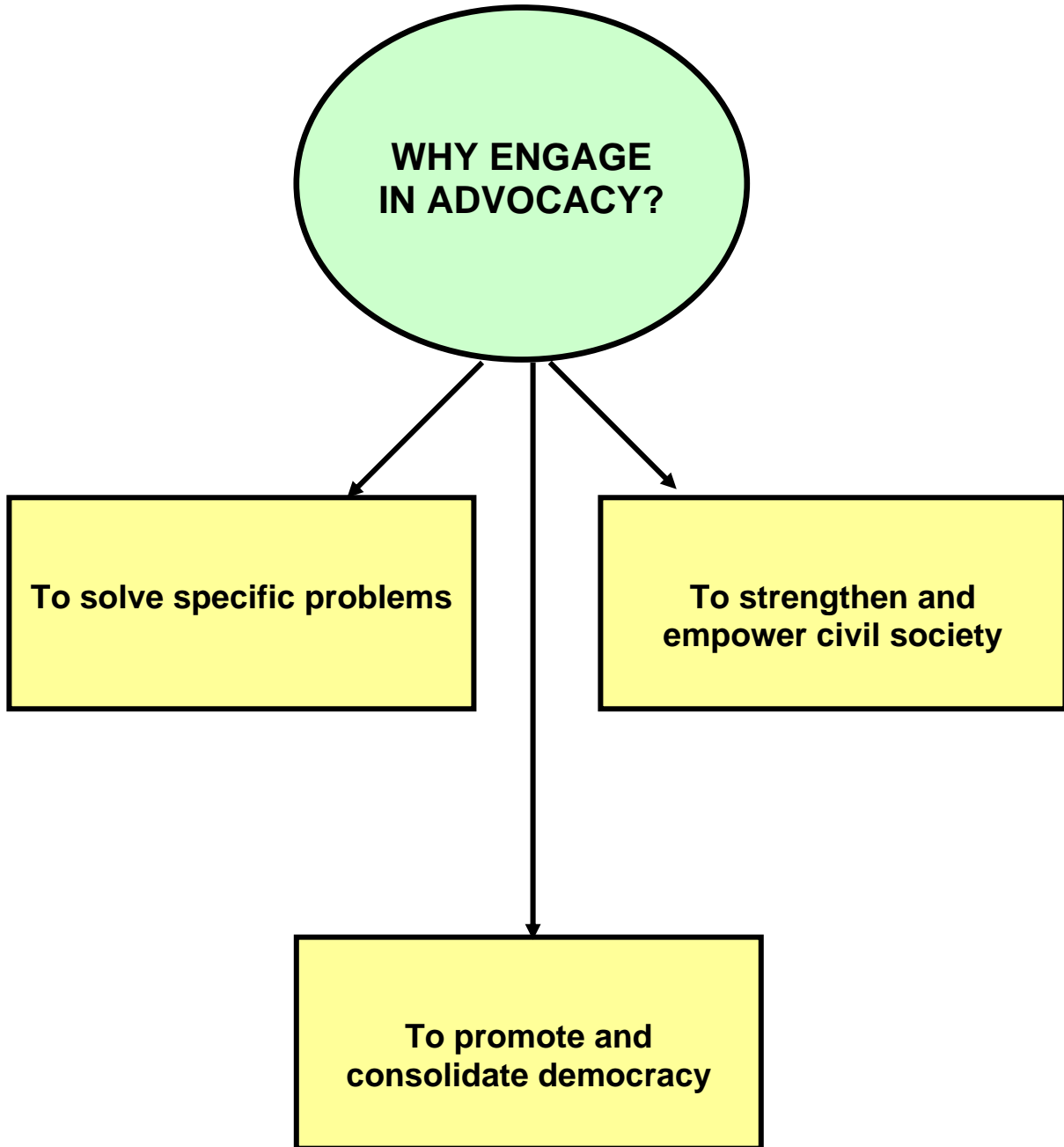
Introduction to Advocacy — Resource 1



Introduction to Advocacy — Resource 2



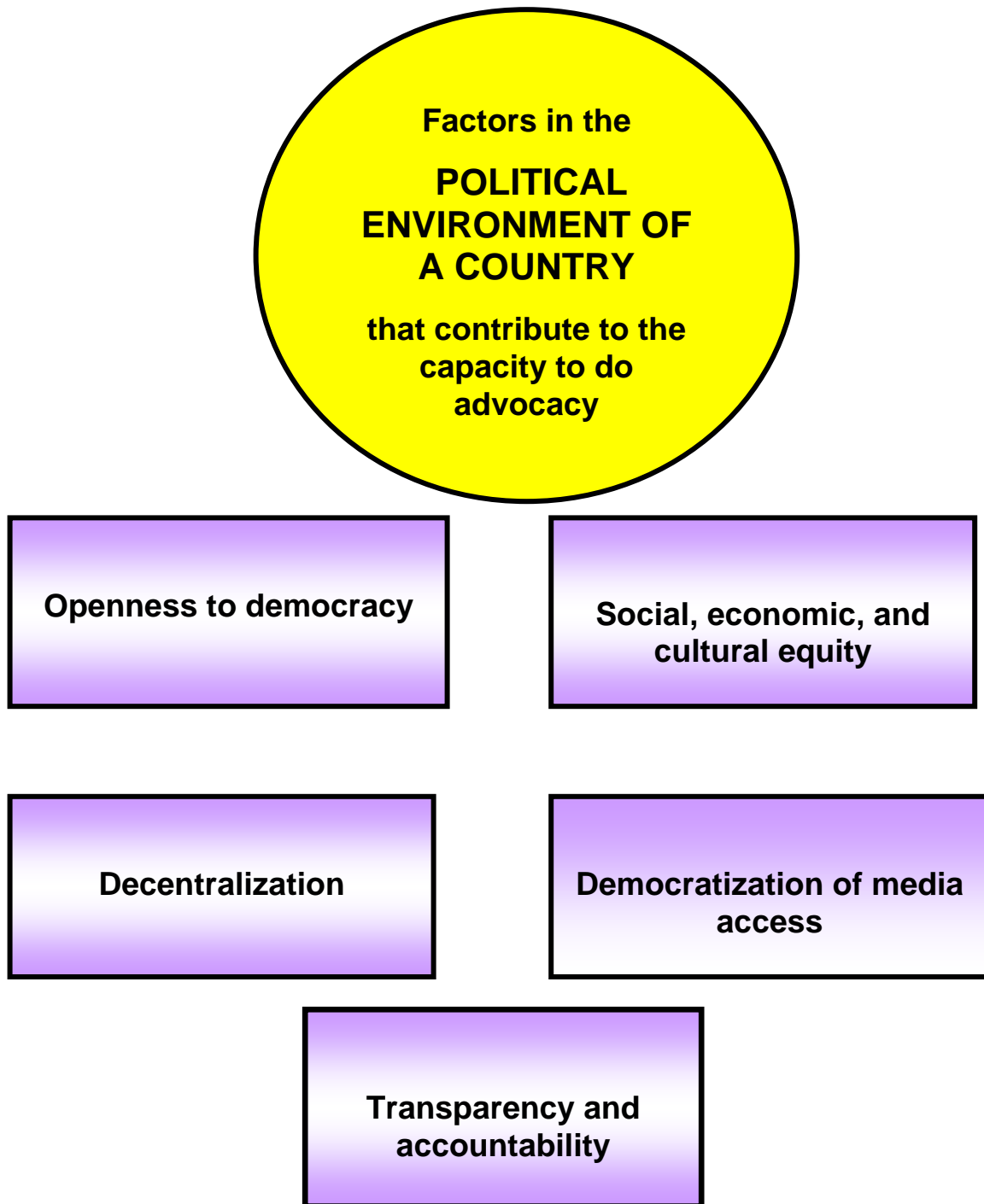
Introduction to Advocacy — Resource 3



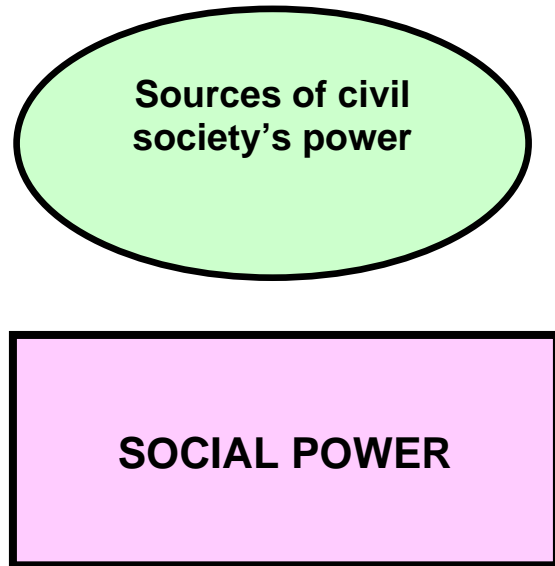
Introduction to Advocacy — Resource 4



Introduction to Advocacy — Resource 5

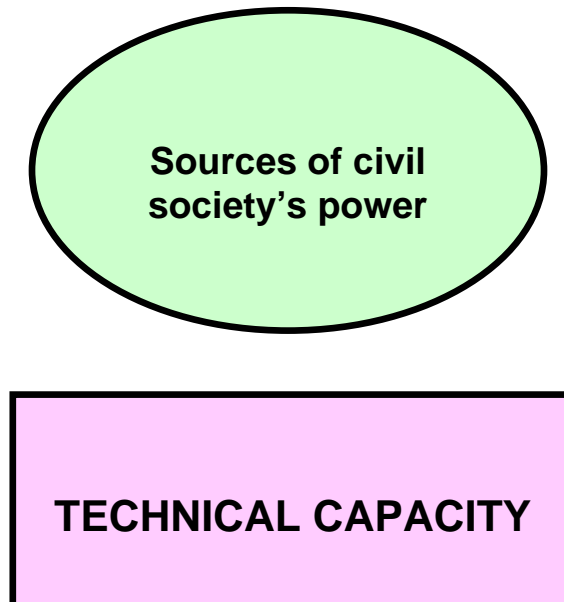


Introduction to Advocacy — Resource 6



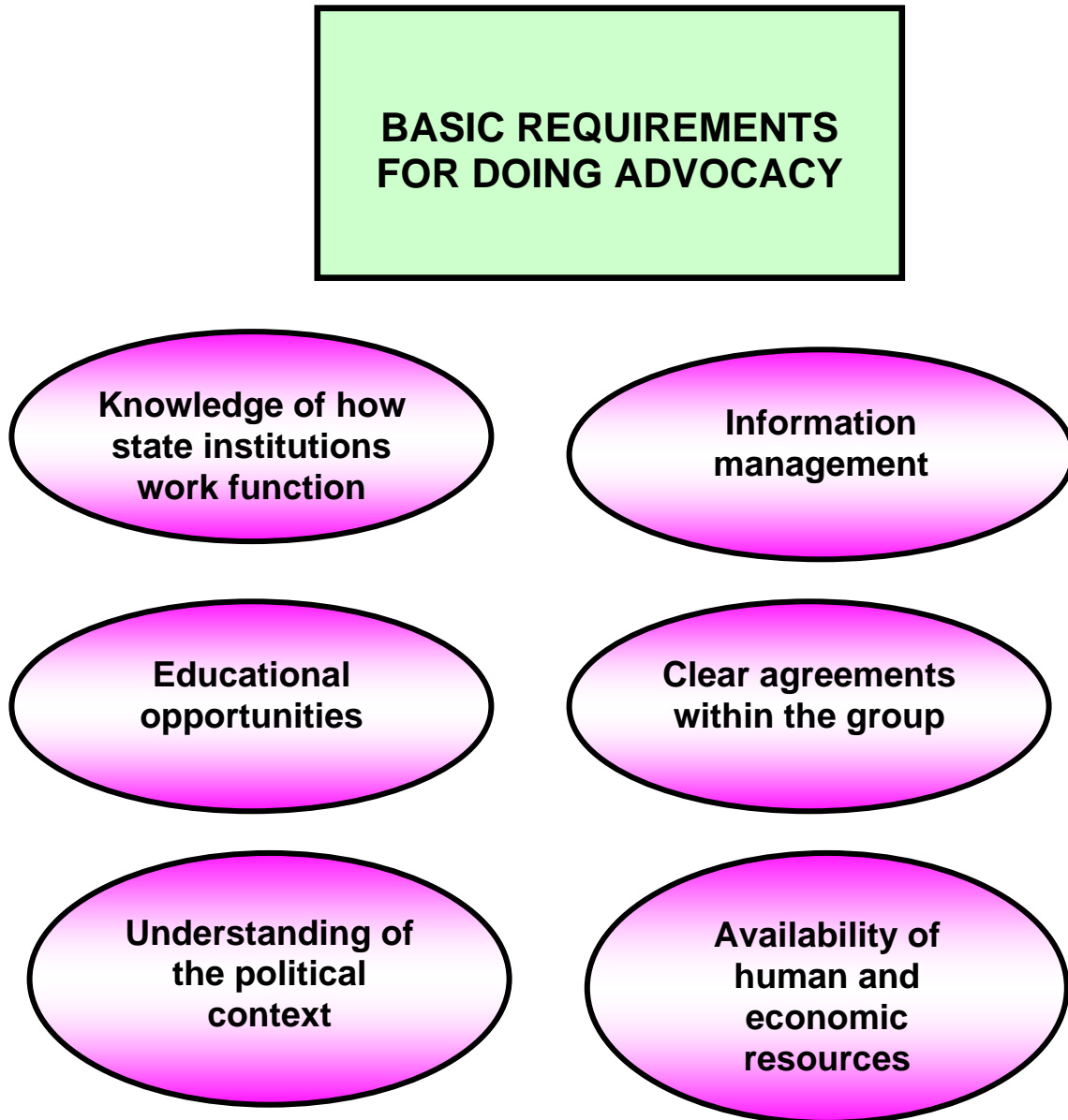
- **Organization**
- **Unity**
- **Consciousness**
- **Popular vote**
- **Credibility**
- **Alliances**
- **Internal democracy**
- **Human and economic resources**
- **Willingness to struggle**
- **Understanding of the current situation**
- **Ability to mobilize large numbers of people**
- **Good leaders**
- **Ability to bring people together across different sectors, classes, races/ethnicities, etc.**

Introduction to Advocacy — Resource 7



- **Capacity to formulate alternative proposals**
- **Research capacity**
- **Capacity for negotiation**
- **Capacity to do analysis**
- **Information management capacity**
- **Methodological knowledge about advocacy**

Introduction to Advocacy — Resource 8



Training Guide:
***A Step-by-Step Approach
to Participatory Planning
of Advocacy Initiatives***

***What are the steps in planning an advocacy
initiative?***

A STEP-BY-STEP APPROACH: SUMMARY

Learning Objectives

1. To facilitate critical reflection about the way that participants have done advocacy in the past, with a goal of identifying the strengths and weaknesses of their efforts and drawing out lessons learned, both theoretical and methodological.
2. To reflect upon the logic of the participatory planning methodology for advocacy.

Key Concepts

1. Logic of the participatory planning methodology for advocacy.
2. Steps of the participatory planning methodology for advocacy.

Practical Techniques

1. Analyzing past advocacy experiences.
2. Logic of the advocacy methodology.

Learning Indicators

1. Identification of strengths and weaknesses in the participants' past efforts to do advocacy.
2. Articulation of lessons learned and/or the methodological steps for advocacy, based on the participants' experiences.
3. Logical ordering of the eight steps of the participatory planning methodology for advocacy.

STEP-BY-STEP APPROACH: KEY CONCEPTS

The participatory planning methodology for advocacy presented in this manual is derived from efforts to influence the public policies of the U.S. government and of international bodies over the last few decades. More recently, the methodology has been improved and enriched with feedback from its application in Central America, resulting in a methodology that is applicable in a wide range of social, political, and cultural contexts.

To use the process presented in this manual, one should keep in mind the following as they relate to a specific advocacy campaign:

- Trajectory and mission of the group undertaking the advocacy campaign
- Nature of the problem that is to be solved
- Decision-making mechanisms within the government
- Specific person with decision-making power, and other influential actors
- Political context or environment
- Organizational capacity to undertake the campaign
- Social power behind the campaign.

The methodology is structured around four questions and eight steps, outlined below.

1. Logic of the Participatory Planning Methodology for Advocacy

The participatory planning process responds to four “logical questions”:

- What do we want?
- Who has the decision-making power?
- What do we need to do to convince the targeted decision-maker?
- How will we know if our strategy is working?

The answers to these questions will help all participants in an advocacy campaign to understand why certain strategies are being used instead of others.

These four basic questions form the basis for a more detailed set of questions, which in turn provide the foundation for the eight steps of the participatory planning methodology.

2. Steps of the Participatory Planning Methodology for Advocacy

The eight steps of the methodology are summarized below. They are presented in more detail in the step-by-step training guides included in Section 3 of the manual.

Step 1: Identify and analyze the problem

What is the specific problem that we wish to solve?

The group starts by examining the stated mission of the organization or coalition that is undertaking an advocacy initiative, and using it to prioritize a particular problem that it wants to solve. This problem is then analyzed in terms of its causes and consequences. The causes are prioritized both by their relative importance and by the feasibility of addressing them, leading to a decision to prioritize one cause.

Step 2: Formulate the proposal

What do we want to achieve?

In the second step, the group or coalition considers possible solutions to the problem that was prioritized in Step 1. That is, it states what it hopes to achieve with its advocacy initiative, both in terms of the demands put forward to decision-makers and more immediate outcomes. The proposal should clearly express what is to be accomplished, to whom the proposal is directed, and the time limit for achieving it. The group should consider both the proposal's political and technical feasibility and the way in which it will contribute to solving the problem. The group should analyze the potential impact of the proposal in terms of political, cultural, and institutional changes.

Step 3: Analyze the decision-making space

How and when will a decision be made in response to the proposal, and by whom?

The third step involves the in-depth analysis of the specific "space," typically a unit within the government, that will make the decision about the proposal. Participants need to understand all the factors that can affect the decision-making process, both inside and outside of formal power structures. This means analyzing the legal framework, existing mechanisms of decision-making, time frames, and budgets, as well as identifying the "real" powers behind decisions that are made.

Step 4: Analyze channels of influence

Who are the actors that can influence the decision-making process?

In this step the group identifies the key actors who can potentially influence, positively or negatively, decision-making about the proposal. These persons are analyzed with regard to their interests and their levels of influence, so that when it is time to design strategies there is greater clarity about who might be supportive (allies), who can be convinced (undecideds), and who might need to be neutralized (opponents). Together with the analysis of the decision-making space in Step 3, the analysis of channels of

influence provides greater insight into how the political environment may impact the advocacy initiative.

Step 5: Do a SWOT analysis

What are the strengths and weaknesses of the group that is engaging in advocacy? What are the opportunities and threats in the political environment in which the campaign is launched?

In the fifth step the group analyzes strengths, weakness, opportunities, and threats (SWOT) affecting the advocacy initiative. It critically examines its own strengths and weaknesses with respect to a particular initiative and decides what actions to take to overcome its weaknesses and increase the chances of success. At the same time, the group analyzes external factors that may help or hinder the initiative.

Step 6: Design advocacy strategies

How can we influence decision-making in order to get the proposal approved?

Next, the group determines which strategies are best suited to effectively influence decision-making about the proposal. Factors to be considered include the nature of the decision-making space, the interests of decision-makers, the constellation of forces in the political environment, and the capacities of the group itself. The strategies chosen should be varied and creative. They may include lobbying, organizing, education or sensitivity-raising, and press work, as well as, when necessary, social mobilization.

Step 7: Develop an activity plan

What must be done to carry out the chosen strategies?

In this step the group develops a plan of specific activities that will be used to implement the advocacy strategies defined in Step 6. This involves deciding upon specific actions that are feasible and deciding how to organize the work. The goals of each activity should be clearly articulated, and a table of activities is drawn up to indicate who has primary responsibility for each activity and the time frame for its execution. The idea is to put together a plan that is flexible, effective, and encourages everyone's participation.

Step 8: Carry out continuous evaluation

What has been achieved? What has not been achieved, and why?

The final step involves making sure that the group sets aside time and space on an ongoing basis to evaluate its own process of planning and implementing an advocacy initiative. Aspects to be evaluated include the execution of strategies, the impact of the initiative in solving (or not solving) the specific problem, its contribution to the empowerment of the group and of civil society, and consequences for democracy.

STEP-BY-STEP APPROACH: PRACTICAL TECHNIQUES

TECHNIQUE 1:

ANALYZING PAST ADVOCACY EXPERIENCES

Objective

To analyze the past advocacy experiences of the participants in terms of achievements, weaknesses, and lessons learned, with the goal of: (a) enriching the concepts and the basic methodology, and (b) identifying the group's weak points so they can be addressed in future advocacy training sessions.

Use

This technique is especially helpful with groups that have previous advocacy experience. It is recommended that the technique be used with groups whose participants come from the same sector or organization and/or have similar experiences doing advocacy.

Preparation

1. The facilitator prepares four symbols in four different colors of paper or cardboard:
 - shoe = step or advocacy activity
 - flower = strength
 - stone = obstacle or difficulty
 - star = achievement

Enough symbols should be prepared so that each small group can have 8 shoes, 6 flowers, 6 stones, and 4 stars.

2. The facilitator draws a road or path on several sheets of newsprint.

Process

1. Participants form a maximum of four small groups of 3 to 6 people each, organized by sector or based on similar past work or advocacy experiences. (For this exercise it is recommended that facilitator gather information in advance about the prior advocacy experiences of the participants in order to determine the composition of the small groups.)

2. Each person in the small group briefly shares an experience that s/he has had as a participant in an advocacy initiative.
3. From the experiences that are shared, each small group selects one experience for more in-depth analysis. If possible, it should be one with which the majority of the small group's members can identify and about which there is considerable information.
4. Each small group analyzes its advocacy experience by answering the following questions:
 - Shoes: What activities were carried out during the process of advocacy?
 - Flowers: What were the most successful activities? Why?
 - Stones: What difficulties were encountered along the way? Why? Which activities were failures? Why?
 - Stars: What were the achievements?

The group writes its answers to each question on the symbols corresponding to those questions.

5. The small groups present their conclusions in plenary, one by one, placing their symbols on the drawing of the road or path. Each small group first positions its activities (shoes), indicating the order in which they occurred. It then illustrates, chronologically, when particular successes (flowers) and difficulties/failures (stones) occurred. Finally, each small group places its achievements (stars) at the end of the path. After each presentation, the facilitator asks the other participants if they have questions about what happened.
6. After all the small groups have made presentations, the facilitator asks the following questions in plenary with the goal of sparking critical reflection on the participants' advocacy experiences to date:
 - What activities were used repeatedly when doing advocacy?
 - What other important activities should have been included?
 - In general, what is going well with our advocacy efforts?
 - In general, what is causing us the most difficulty with our advocacy efforts?
 - What have we accomplished with our advocacy initiatives?
 - In terms of the methodology used for doing advocacy, what do we most need to focus on during this training session?
7. The facilitator does a final wrap-up of the session, pointing to and moving the symbols used in the small group presentations for emphasis.

Time

2 hours and 45 minutes in total:

- 30 minutes to share individual experiences in small groups
- 60 minutes for small groups to analyze one advocacy experience
- 45 minutes for presentations by the small groups
- 30 minutes for discussion in plenary and final wrap-up.

Variation

A variation of this exercise involves socio-dramas. The first three steps of the process are the same, but instead of using the symbols, each small group prepares a socio-drama about one experience of engaging in advocacy. The socio-dramas should respond to the following questions:

- How did the advocacy effort unfold?
- What worked well?
- What did not work well?

After each socio-drama, the facilitator asks the observers the following questions in order to highlight essential elements of the advocacy experience:

- What activities were carried out by the group doing advocacy?
- What was accomplished?
- What obstacles did they face?

Those who presented the socio-drama can make brief comments or clarifications about what happened.

After all of the small groups have presented their socio-dramas, the facilitator does a final wrap-up, summarizing what has been said about the different advocacy experiences.

Time

1 hour and 50 minutes in total:

- 30 minutes for small group discussion and preparation of the socio-dramas
- 60 minutes for presentation of the socio-dramas and plenary discussion
- 20 minutes for final wrap-up.

TECHNIQUE 2:

LOGIC OF THE ADVOCACY METHODOLOGY

Objective

To introduce the participatory planning methodology for advocacy in a dynamic and participatory way.

Use

This technique sparks debate and an initial reflection but does not require prior knowledge or experience with advocacy initiatives.

Process

1. Before the session, the facilitator writes each of the four logical questions and each of the eight steps of the methodology (see Key Concepts, above) on a large sheet of newsprint, one question or step per sheet. The questions and steps are not numbered. The writing should be as large and as legible as possible.
2. The facilitator asks for four volunteers to come forward. Each volunteer is given one of the sheets of newsprint with one of the questions, but does not yet show it to the group.
3. One by one, the volunteers read their questions aloud and hold their sheets up for everyone to see. The facilitator asks the other participants to reflect on what each question means for those who do advocacy.
4. After all of the questions have been read and discussed, the facilitator asks the rest of the group to arrange the four questions in a logical order. The facilitator asks the group which question should go before or after the other, physically moving the volunteers from one position to another, until consensus is reached.
5. The four logical questions are hung on a wall for all to see and the volunteers are thanked.
6. The facilitator asks for eight more volunteers, preferably different people, and repeats the same process of discussion and ordering, this time with the eight steps of the methodology. Each step is then related to one of the four logical questions.
7. Finally, the facilitator summarizes the relationship between the four logical questions and the eight steps of the basic methodology.

Time

1 hour in total:

- 20 minutes to order and discuss the four questions
- 25 minutes to order and discuss the eight steps
- 15 minutes for final reflection.