

What is Advocacy?

How Leading Advocacy Organizations View their Work

Putting a Problem on the Agenda

Advocacy is an action directed at changing the policies, positions or programs of any type of institution. Advocacy is pleading for, defending, or recommending an idea before other people. Advocacy is speaking up, drawing a community's attention to an important issue, and directing decision-makers toward a solution. Advocacy is putting a problem on the agenda, providing a solution to that problem and building support for acting on both the problem and the solution.

— The SARA Project

Who Decides and What is Decided

Advocacy involves different strategies aimed at influencing decision-making at the local, provincial and national levels, specifically:

Who decides—elections, appointments and selection of policy-makers, judges, ministers, boards of advisors, managing directors, administrators, etc.

What is decided—laws, policies, national priorities, services, programs, institutions, budgets, statements.

How it is decided—accessibility of citizens to information and the process, extent of consultation with public, accountability and

responsiveness of decision-makers to citizens and other stakeholders.

How it is enforced, implemented—ensuring accountability so that decisions are put into action, laws enforced equitably, etc.

— Lisa VeneKlasen,
Global Women
in Politics

Gaining Access and Voice in Decision-Making

Advocacy consists of organized efforts and actions that use the instruments of democracy to establish and implement laws and policies that will create a just and equitable society. These instruments include elections, mass mobilizations, civil action (including civil disobedience), lobbying, negotiations, bargaining and court actions.

Advocates design their efforts and actions to persuade and influence those who hold governmental, political and economic power so that the formally constituted decision-makers will adopt and implement public policies in ways that will improve the lives of those with less conventional political and fewer economic resources.

Advocacy has a purposeful result: to change society's institutions by enabling justice and equality advocates to gain access and voice in

the decision-making of such institutions; and to change the power relationships within and among those institutions.

— David Cohen, The
Advocacy Institute

Pleading the Cause of Another

The word "advocacy" sometimes conjures up visions of mass demonstrations and public protests, or well-paid lobbyists in expensive suits. But a lot of advocacy is just a matter of seeing a need and finding a way to address it. It means literally "to plead the cause of another..." Policy advocacy ... carries that "pleading" into the political arena, and does it on behalf of people we may not know personally. It is a practical way to translate basic values like respect for dignity or concern for troubled children into policies and laws.

Advocacy assumes that people have rights, and those rights are enforceable. Advocacy works best when focused on something specific. Advocacy is chiefly concerned with rights or benefits to which someone is already entitled. And policy advocacy in particular is concerned with ensuring that institutions work the way they should.

— Nancy Amidei,
OMB Watch

The Role of an Advocate

Advocates are made, not born. Effective advocates often are service providers who are firmly grounded in the communities they serve. Their firsthand experience in dealing with problems within the community leads them to seek far-reaching, broad solutions. Advocates are dedicated to their communities and are strongly convinced of the need for action and change. They constantly interact with the peoples whose lives they hope to improve, identifying and targeting key issues and developing plans that progress methodically from the starting point to a goal. They help others to realize the need for fundamental policy change and bring people together to influence government, other organizations and agencies, and the public at large.

To reach these groups, advocates develop a coherent, compelling message based on their knowledge of the problem or situation they want to address. The most effective leaders are, first and foremost, communicators. They identify the people they need to influence and find the best ways to communicate with them.

— The Centre for
Development and
Population Activities

Advocacy in Action

Advocacy takes many forms in many settings: organizing community meetings; speaking to neighborhood associations; writing letters or sending e-mails to legislators; drafting press releases and holding news conferences; building coalitions; holding public demonstrations; issuing research reports analyzing government decisions and budgets. In some cases, advocacy campaigns are designed to protect or expand the rights of civil society organizations and the sector as a whole; other campaigns are focused on specific issues — environmental protection, women's rights, employment, reform of national health policies, changes in government policies.

On these pages, we report on five advocacy campaigns — some concluded, some ongoing — which demonstrate the breadth, scope and potential for strengthening civil society and serving the interests of people through public advocacy.

Urban Land Reform: the Philippines

In the Philippines in 1991, a broad alliance of NGOs, grassroots groups and prominent Catholic church leaders, including the country's much respected Cardinal, came together to advocate for secure and safe housing for the urban poor. Known as the Urban Land Reform Task Force, the coalition mounted a campaign to get provisions supporting the urban poor into a draft urban housing bill in the House of Representatives. Specifically, the Task Force

sought to overturn policies permitting the demolition of homes and communities by government agencies and land developers, and legislation that made building and living on unoccupied city lands illegal.



A separate secretariat, staffed by experienced professionals from NGOs working with the urban poor, was formed to coordinate activities and provide technical support to the lobbying effort. The Task Force identified campaign targets and used a wide variety of strategies and tactics. They gathered relevant information and mobilized community residents and prominent figures in support of their positions. In its work with Congress, the coalition targeted key committee chairs and members using its strength and clout to gain concessions, negotiate compromises and protest negative aspects of the draft legislation. Coalition staff and affiliated research groups prepared well-documented policy papers and briefings for Congress and the press.

Grassroots groups mobilized their members to fill the Congressional galleries for

key moments in the debate and coalition staff provided information and draft language to the two representatives of the urban poor who sat on the House committee in charge of writing up the legislation. As the bill moved through Congress, the coalition developed a set of negotiable and non-negotiable points to guide their dealings with government.

The final bill fell short of the Task Force's original goals but most members felt that their work had led to clear policy advantages for the urban poor since the bill established legal criteria for demolitions and a legal basis for people to live on unoccupied lands. The coalition's efforts also increased the political legitimacy and credibility of its member organizations and their issues. In addition, the work gave leaders of the urban poor concrete experience in planning and carrying out advocacy strategies and in negotiating with those in power.

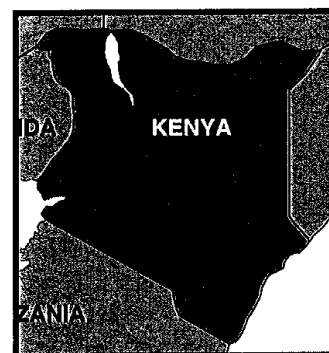
Source: Adapted from "The Urban Land Reform Task Force: A Case Study from the Philippines," by Valerie Miller at IDR, based on the case "Making a Difference: NGO and PO Policy Influence in Urban Land Reform Advocacy," Jing Karaos, 1993.

Promoting Adolescent Health: Kenya

In early 1990, the Center for the Study of Adolescence (CSA) was established to con-

duct research on adolescent health issues in Kenya and to advocate for policies that promote the well-being of young people. CSA encountered opposition from some religious organizations to their advocacy efforts early on. As a result, the Ministry of Education threatened to eliminate the "family life program" from the school curriculum.

Against this backdrop, youth-serving organizations decided in 1994 to establish the Kenyan Association for the Promotion of Adolescent Health (KAPAH) and to conduct advocacy trainings and create an advocacy strategy. KAPAH developed and distributed fact sheets on adolescent reproductive health which



helped to dispel commonly held myths and misinformation. The coalition also worked closely with the press to educate the public about the true content of family life education programs and the extent of reproductive health problems facing Kenya's youth. KAPAH also reached out to its opposition and engaged them

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in consultations in order to understand their concerns and seek to find common ground.

In addition, KAPAH met with individual policy makers. They found that while many of these leaders supported adolescent health privately, it was difficult for some of them to take a public position on the subject. KAPAH then began an effort to support these decision makers both publicly and behind the scenes. Through this activity, KAPAH has developed better relationships with several ministries including the Ministry of Education.

KAPAH's efforts have resulted in a growing number of agencies requesting advocacy training. The debate over adolescent reproductive health in Kenya continues to intensify.

Source: Adapted from "An Introduction to Advocacy: Training Guide," published by SARA.

Protecting the Nonprofit Sector: the United States

In recent years, the United States nonprofit sector has been involved in an ongoing fight to preserve its long-standing right to engage in public policy advocacy. This continuing battle demonstrates that even in countries where civil society organizations are legally protected and the sector as a whole is well-established, the cost of freedom is vigilant and vigorous activity.

In 1994, an increasingly conservative Congress of the United States began considering legislation that would have a sweeping impact on the country's nonprofit sector. Introduced by Representative Ernest Istook from Oklahoma, this proposal — known as the "Istook amendment" — was aimed at preventing nonprofit groups that received federal funding from engaging in a variety of "political advocacy" activities. The amendment's sponsors argued that nonprofits were abusing their tax exempt and legal status by using government grants to lobby the government. Leaders in the nonprofit community, however, felt that the amendment placed unreasonable limitations on advocacy free speech as a condition of receiving federal funds. Says Gary Bass, the director of OMB Watch, a nonprofit group that played a key leadership roll in opposing the legislation, "the message of the

amendment was clear: you should be seen (and do the work), but not heard."

As might be expected, the Istook amendment created a firestorm of protest in the nonprofit sector, galvanizing it as never before in the United States. "Let America Speak"—a coalition of more than 500 national organizations and thousands of community groups—was created to thwart the amendment.

The primary focus of the campaign was to alert nonprofits to what the amendment would do and to encourage a coordinated grassroots response to Congress. This strategy built upon the strength of the diversity of the nonprofit sector and its ability to tell compelling local stories about the importance of advocating on behalf of the people and issues it serves. Within a six week period, the coalition conducted more than 50 briefings in over 25 states and reached more than 1,000 nonprofit organizations. People who attended the

briefings were added to either a fax list or an e-mail list so that they could receive alerts. Overall, the coalition was in regular direct communication with roughly 2,000 state and local nonprofit groups along with some 700 national organizations.

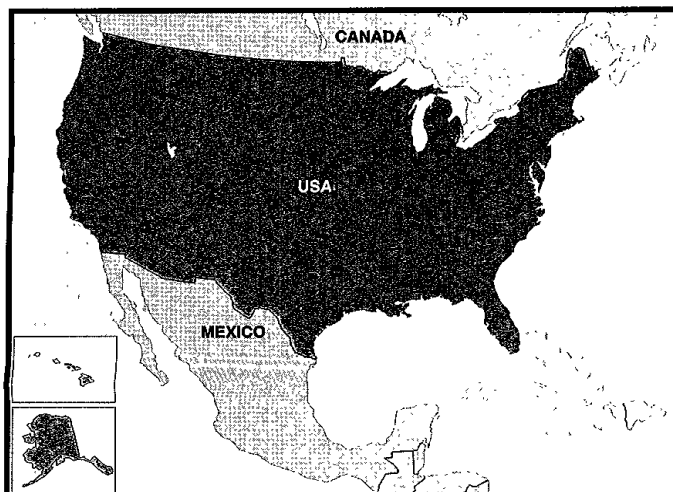
In the end, the Istook amendment was stopped by this vast array of coordinated action. However, it is expected that challenges to the advocacy voice of the nonprofit sector in the US will continue through other legislation. Accordingly, several initiatives have been launched to continue to build the sector's capacity to use new information and outreach technologies.

Source: Adapted from "A Case Study of Nonprofit Advocacy in the U.S.," by Gary D. Bass, OMB Watch. To learn more about the Let America Speak campaign, visit the coalition's web site at: <http://rtk.net/las>

Using Media to Educate Policy Makers: India

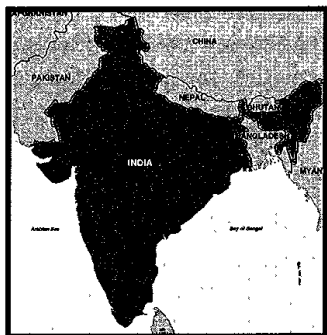
Prerana, the Indian affiliate of the Centre for Development and Population Activities (CEDPA), designs and carries out projects to strengthen skills and build confidence and knowledge among girls and young women. But individual programs like Prerana's can only do so much if policy makers don't know about their existence and success.

To get out the word to policy makers through the media,



Advocacy in Action

CEDPA organized a series of regional conferences on Options for a Better Life for Young Women. At one conference in Nepal, 25 women journalists, lawyers, policy makers



and social service directors decided to declare a "Year of the Girl Child." Their resolution urged the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation to also adopt the Year of the Girl Child. As a result, several countries in the region undertook substantive research on girls, holding seminars and workshops to promote their findings. NGOs joined the effort to help publicize the plight of girls and to develop projects to address their needs.

Word of the Year of the Girl Child spread quickly. Soon it had won support from UNICEF, generating more studies, conferences, publications and vastly greater worldwide awareness about girls' status. Today, the concept is still gathering media attention and strength. This initiative was successful in large part because advocates focused media and public attention on the issue.

Source: Adapted from "Women Use Media to Educate Policymakers about the Girl Child," in "Cairo, Beijing, and Beyond: A Handbook on Advocacy for Women Leaders," CEDPA.

Internet Attacks on Behalf of Street Children: Central America

Bruce Harris works with Casa Alianza, the Latin American branch of Covenant House. Casa Alianza strives to serve and protect the lives of street children in Mexico, Guatemala and Honduras. Following are excerpts of a communication Harris wrote about how Casa Alianza's Legal Aid Offices use "electronic advocacy" in defense of children:

"Internet Attacks! We have developed a list of several thousand people (and growing) from many, many countries around the world who are concerned for the plight of the street children. When an incident takes place which requires international pressure (e.g. the murder of a Guatemalan street child by a policeman; the "social cleansing" murders of six street children in Honduras) we immediately send out an e-mail message to the thousands of people on our list. We explain what has happened, and ask them to send a short, polite message to government officials (we give them e-mail addresses for the Guatemalan or Honduran authorities). Within hours, the

President of Guatemala or the Minister of Foreign Relations received hundreds of e-mail messages from around the world asking for investigations.

"Often it is the first time that these politicians have heard about the incident, and the simple fact that they then call the head of the National Police puts a priority on the case for investigation. We also give our list members the e-mail addresses of the principal media in those countries, and so this in itself becomes a story, and the media write about the fact they have received so many messages, and then themselves go to the police asking about the investigation. From our little computer here and our access to the Internet, we can make things happen. The exciting thing is that it really works!

"We also hold seminars with the street children about the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. Unless a basic human right is reclaimed, then it is not effective. Whereas the street children thought that

being beaten by the police was one of the daily risks of living on the street, they now understand that the police should not beat them and come to the Casa Alianza Legal Aid Offices to complain. We then follow the cases up with an investigation.

"The media is so, so important in human rights work. We have developed an effective, international network of media contacts whom we keep informed and involved. This has resulted in two one-hour specials on the BBC-TV in the UK (then syndicated to more than 45 countries); several US national media programs; a one-hour special on Spanish TV. In my opinion, many human rights organizations do not use the local and international media enough. The media creates opinions, pressure and international shame on governments — all of which help our work."

Source: Adapted from SIT's "Building Global Capacity for NGO Policy Advocacy Training" web site <www.worldlearning.org/sit/cspid/global_capacity.html>



Resource Center

Advocacy Publications, Web Sites, Training and Capacity Building

Publications

Advocacy Sourcebook: Frameworks for Planning, Action, and Reflection

By Valerie Miller and Jane Covey
(Institute for Development Research)

The *Advocacy Sourcebook* is intended for organizations interested in developing and strengthening advocacy strategies and capacities. Published as a loose-leaf binder, this comprehensive tool provides



advocates with ways to analyze past and plan future advocacy efforts, and trainers with materials for adaptation and use in capacity-building workshops.

Drawing on lessons gathered through joint research and projects in Africa, Asia, Latin America and the United States, the Sourcebook offers concepts, planning frameworks, analytic tools for assessing public policy systems, and tools for strategy development; frameworks for understanding and planning organizational capacity-building; suggestions

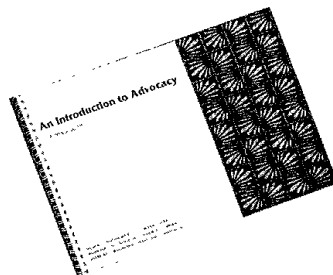
for assessing the impact of advocacy campaigns; and a variety of readings and references. Detailed case studies of successful advocacy campaigns in Indonesia, Zimbabwe, the Philippines and elsewhere are reported.

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An Introduction to Advocacy: Training Guide By Ritu R. Sharma (SARA)

This Guide published by the Academy of Educational Development's Support for Analysis and Research in Africa Project (SARA) provides easy-to-use methods for engaging in the advocacy process. Written and designed



to be highly accessible, the Guide contains tools and group exercises which can be used to identify policy issues,

select advocacy objectives, develop and communicate messages, build alliances and raise funds to support advocacy. Case studies, definitions of terms, checklists and practical action steps are scattered throughout the text.

Although written primarily for use in training sessions, the Guide can also be used by potential advocates as a tool to help them in their own advocacy work. While the SARA Project focuses on Africa, the tools and methods in this handbook are applicable worldwide.

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Cairo, Beijing, and Beyond: A Handbook on Advocacy for Women Leaders Published by CEDPA

Through this Handbook, the Centre for Development and Population Activities (CEDPA) seeks to encourage women in their advocacy activities as a follow-up to the action plans developed at recent international conferences on women, population and social development in Beijing, Cairo and



Copenhagen. The strategies presented here are generally applicable to all advocacy activities for policy change. The focus throughout is on expanding women's leadership in the field of development.

This booklet contains sections on planning for advocacy, taking your message to the public, forging alliances, and advocating for resources. A sample news release, tips on speaking to a community group and preparing to meet with potential coalition partners are offered. The Handbook concludes with inspiring and illuminating profiles of women advocates who are succeeding in building lasting change within their communities.

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So You Want to Make a Difference: Advocacy is the Key

By Nancy Amidei (OMB Watch)

So You Want to Make a Difference was written with three goals in mind: to help citizens feel more confident

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about getting involved in policy advocacy; to equip local leaders with tools so they can teach others about policy advocacy; and to stimulate involvement in democratic decision-making and provide

Forthcoming

The Action Guide for Advocacy and Citizen Participation

by Lisa VeneKlasen (Global Women in Politics)

This Action Guide (available in June 1998) will draw on the experiences of NGOs in several countries to provide information enabling activists, trainers and others involved in development and democracy to promote citizen participation and to democratize decisionmaking.

Written both for trainers and activists to assist in planning, developing actions and strategies and training in advocacy, the Action Guide includes a broad range of concepts, tools, frameworks, examples, do's and don'ts and step-by-step strategies. Also explored are key issues important to advocacy including power, political consciousness, strategic planning, political analysis, problem identification, analysis and prioritization, lobbying, media strategies and message development. The book combines the experiences and approaches of citizen action organizing, popular education and participatory research and appraisal, human rights lobbying and gender theory for a comprehensive approach to the practice of advocacy.

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Public Policy Advocacy Workbook: Women for Social Change in the Yugoslav Successor States

by Miriam Kervatin and Sanja Sarnavska, eds. (STAR Project)

This Workbook (scheduled for publication in June 1998) will be published in Croatian, Serbian, Macedonian, Albanian and English language editions. The book is written by women from the former Yugoslavia who have participated in the STAR Project's policy advocacy training program. Along with theoretical material about advocacy work, the book will contain case studies based on successful and ongoing advocacy efforts in communities in the Yugoslav successor states.

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La Planificación Participativa Para la Incidencia Política: Una Guía Práctica (Participatory Planning for Advocacy)

Published by WOLA

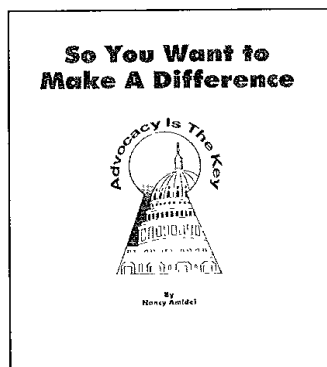
This "practical guide" for advocates will be published by the Washington Office on Latin America (WOLA) in May. Based on the methodology used in WOLA's in-country training programs in Central America, the guide will provide tools and techniques for analyzing a problem, defining advocacy goals and objectives, developing strategies to influence decision-makers and implementing a successful campaign. The guide will initially be printed in Spanish and subsequently translated into English.

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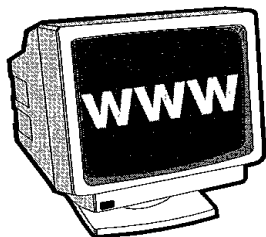


information about key resources. While this publication has a decidedly U.S. focus and presentation, advocates will find many ideas applicable in a variety of settings.

Useful suggestions and tactics are provided on building coalitions, working with the media and influencing policy-makers. An interesting chapter on "fringe benefits of policy advocacy" discusses how advocacy activities empower the individuals involved and help develop stronger and more viable civil society organizations.

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Advocacy Publications, Web Sites, Training and Capacity Building



Web Resources

Building Global Capacity for NGO Policy Advocacy Training

In 1997 the Center for Social Policy and Institutional Development (CSPID) at the School for International Training (SIT) in Brattleboro, VT, USA launched a six month-long collaborative endeavor entitled "Building Global Capacity for NGO Policy Advocacy Training." The project's goal was to assist CSOs worldwide in developing their capacity to influence local, national and international public policies and institutions in the areas of sustainable development, environmental protection, human rights, community action and the empowerment of women and other minorities. The initial phase of the project was funded by NOVIB, the Netherlands Organization for International Development Cooperation.

One tangible outcome of the project has been a web site and gopher which civil society organizations can use to access a

wealth of policy advocacy training resources from diverse cultural and political environments. These include bibliographies, course syllabi, training manuals, case studies and detailed campaign reports, articles, conference proceedings, excerpts of online discussions among more than 100 members of the project's listserve and other types of informal and formal communications concerning advocacy. The final report of the project has recently been posted on the web.

These materials are a unique and invaluable resource for those involved in advocacy throughout the world. Although the initial phase of the project has concluded, SIT plans to continue to update the web site materials and is seeking funding for expanding the program.

CONTACT

Web:

www.worldlearning.org/sit/cspid/global_capacity.html

Gopher: the project's gopher may be reached through the above web site or at the address
<gopher://www.sit.edu>
(then going to the Policy Advocacy folder).

Advocacy Training and Capacity Building Programs

A growing number of advocacy training and capacity build-

ing programs exist worldwide. Below, we profile several prominent efforts. The primary geographical focus of the training activities of each organization is noted in parentheses. Additional listings of training programs can be found at SIT's "Building Global Capacity" web site noted above.

The Advocacy Institute (Focus: US, Central and Eastern Europe, Southern Africa, South Asia)

Founded in 1985, AI has worked with more than 2,500 nonprofit and nongovernmental organizations. The Advocacy Institute describes itself as "a behind-the-front lines organization that studies the art of advocacy to influence and change public policy." Most of AI's advocacy capacity building programs are conducted in its training facility in Washington, D.C. Additionally, AI conducts in-country capacity building programs in partnership with other organizations.

The principal objective of AI's capacity building programs is

to strengthen the ability of public interest, social and economic justice NGOs to effectively and innovatively engage in advocacy to challenge existing power relationships and to hold decision-makers accountable. To strengthen the effectiveness of NGOs and their leaders, AI programs create opportunities for the exchange of experiences and methodologies among advocates, relationship building, skills building and reflection.

AI's training ranges from one-day skill building exercises to four-week intensive programs. Curriculum focuses on such topics as message and strategy development, understanding government budgets, creative uses of information, building alliances, taking advantage of elections to further social objectives, and the role gender issues play in advocacy. Participants in the four-week AI program also undertake field visits within the United States and plan and present their own advocacy campaigns.

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Resource Center

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CSPID (Focus: Global)

The Center for Social Policy and Institutional Development (CSPID), part of World Learning's School for



WORLD LEARNING

International Training (SIT), offers a variety of professional development opportunities for the staffs of NGOs and civil society organizations. Each program focuses on the strategies and methods of policy advocacy in different local or global contexts and on the creation of more participatory, democratic governance.

The Center's flagship program is the International Policy Advocacy Course which brings participants to two major international policy centers — Washington, DC and New York City — to provide a practical, hands-on approach to learning key advocacy concepts and skills NGOs need to influence policies of the UN, the World Bank and other international institutions and government agencies. The IPA course is also offered in French and Spanish on a contract basis.

Participants in the course have come from Angola, Bangladesh, Bosnia, China, Croatia, India, Indonesia, Kenya, Mace-

donia, Malawi, Mozambique, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, South Africa, Uganda and Zimbabwe.

The Center also provides customized in-country one-to-three week training courses and advocacy capacity building in a country or region where there is a need and an organization or donor willing to contract for such services. In-country training addresses the rationale for NGO involvement in advocacy, presents the basic principles and techniques of advocacy and focuses on the policy environment within the country. The Center's in-country technical assistance program is directed at building the capacity of local networks of institutions to offer training and other advocacy support on an ongoing basis.

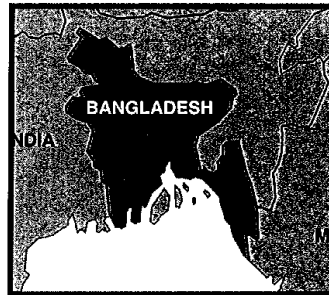
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IDPAA (Focus: Bangladesh)

Founded in 1994 by Proshika, one of the largest national NGO development groups in Bangladesh, the Institute for Development Policy Analysis

and Advocacy (IDPAA) works to "strengthen and facilitate systematic and sustained policy advocacy interventions" within



the country's civil society. These interventions seek to influence national policy processes, reduce poverty and promote sustainable development.

Among its activities, IDPAA identifies and analyzes existing development policies and formulates proposals for new policies; conducts studies and action research on poverty issues; organizes seminars and workshops for raising policy awareness and generating public opinion for policy reform; and carries out issue-based advocacy campaigns aimed at policy reform. IDPAA's policy advocacy campaigns have included national efforts to ban the import and use of lethal pesticides and chemicals, protect remaining national forests and promote an alternative "pro-poor" national budget for Bangladesh.

Since 1995 IDPAA has delivered workshops and train-

ing courses for activists from NGOs and civil society groups in Bangladesh to further understanding of advocacy and build advocacy skills.

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WOLA

(Focus: Central America)

The Washington Office on Latin America (WOLA) promotes policies by the United States and multilateral institutions that advance human rights, democracy and social justice in Latin America. Founded in 1974 by religious and civic leaders, WOLA works closely with NGOs in the region and the USA to promote policy alternatives.



**WASHINGTON
OFFICE ON
LATIN
AMERICA**

In 1996, WOLA launched the Central American Advocacy Training Project to assist civil society organizations in the

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region in developing and offering concrete policy proposals for social and economic change. The multi-year project to provide advocacy training and support is aimed at NGOs working on issues of basic human rights, democratization, police and justice reform and demilitarization. The program is designed to strengthen Central American organizations in the methodologies, techniques and institutional requirements for achieving successful policy influence.

Seven full-time WOLA training staff now operate from offices in Guatemala and El Salvador. To date, 24 advocacy training workshops have been held in Central America with a broad range of CSO partner organizations. These two-day workshops are devoted largely to providing participants with tools, guidance and space to plan and refine their own advocacy strategies around the issues they are focused on. Advocacy campaigns developed through the workshops include efforts aimed at agrarian reform, protecting the rights of indigenous peoples, securing women's rights and reforms aimed at police and judicial systems.

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Idasa (Focus: South Africa)

The Institute for Democracy in South Africa (Idasa) is an independent, public interest organization committed to the promotion of democracy at all levels of South African society. Among its activities, Idasa hosts a variety of workshops, seminars and training courses to promote the theory and practice of democracy and to encourage informed citizen participation in all aspects of social, economic and political life.

A large part of Idasa's work is directed at making available to the public timely, in-depth information about issues before parliament, the national budget and other areas of national concern. Idasa brings its findings to the public through regular publications such as *Parliamentary Whip* and *Budget Watch*, reports such as *The Budget Book* and programs created by its radio unit.

Idasa's Advocacy Support Programme is aimed at building advocacy skills and providing networking support for organisations and individuals wishing to influence public policy making.



The program seeks to create a network of NGO advocacy trainers within South Africa and the region so that NGOs can intervene more effectively in the parliamentary and policy-making process.

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Global Women in Politics (Focus: Africa, Asia, Latin America and Eastern Europe)

The strategy and activities of Global Women in Politics' Advocacy Initiative are based

on an understanding of advocacy which goes beyond policy change. According to the Initiative, "frequently, despite improved policies and laws, public institutions and society continue to operate with the values and behavior that lead to the exclusion of large numbers of people from resources and options to solve common problems. Building true democracy takes more than changing policy, it takes changing the political system itself."

The Initiative is in the middle of a year-long series of regional Training of Trainers workshops in Asia, Africa, Latin America and Eastern Europe. Co-sponsored with regional partner organizations, each workshop is open to 15 men and women with extensive prior experience in training, human rights and social change activities. The selection process is competitive. The intensive, participatory two-week workshop combines peer learning, small group exercises, case studies and other approaches. The Initiative's trainers are an international team with extensive experience in human rights, citizen action organizing, social change and development, popular education and lobbying.

In 1998, the Advocacy Initiative established Advocacy Action Funds in

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Asia and Africa. Grants are made to graduates of the Training of Trainers workshop to enable them to replicate the training in their own countries and to apply their skills to actual ongoing advocacy initiatives.

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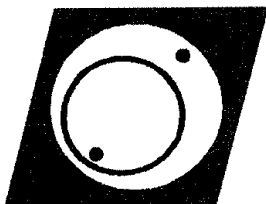
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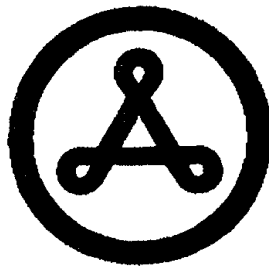
STAR Project (Focus: Croatia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, and Macedonia)

The STAR Project (Strategies, Training and Advocacy for Reconciliation) supports non-nationalistic women leaders and advocacy organizations in Croatia, Bosnia-Herzegovina and Macedonia. The STAR Project regards the leadership of this network of independent women as central to future reconciliation and democracy in the region.



Encouragement, technical assistance and financial support is given to specific projects in NGO development, human rights, women's health, prevention of violence and women's political participation. STAR partner groups combine service delivery with advocacy for social change through democratically-run organizations serving multi-ethnic communities.

In 1997, STAR sponsored (with funding support from the U.S. Agency for International Development) 13 women from Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia and Macedonia to attend the



International Policy Advocacy Course at SIT. Follow-up advocacy mentoring and coaching programs and regional advocacy conferences provide ongoing support to women leaders in the region. Women trained through STAR's program are now the only NGO activists in the region who have had intensive

advocacy training. This summer, another group of women from the region will again be sponsored to participate in SIT's advocacy program.

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Arias Foundation (Focus: Central America)

The Arias Foundation for Peace and Human Progress of Costa Rica is a not-for-profit organization whose mission is to build just and peaceful societies in Central America. In 1996, the Foundation launched its advocacy program entitled "The Formation of a Democratic Culture in Central America." The objective of the program is to contribute to strengthening and consolidating democracy in Central America by achieving more active and effective participation of civil society organizations in decision-making processes.

One project of the program is "NGOs as Advocates for Social Change" which seeks to investigate strategies and to identify organizations' strengths and weaknesses in advocacy.

Through the program, national studies have been developed to provide information about advocacy activities being initiated by a representative group of 11 NGOs in several countries. A set of advocacy training materials is being created that focus upon the methodologies identified in these advocacy case studies.

Synopses of the case studies are available through the Foundation's web site (most are in Spanish only). The published case studies can be ordered from the Foundation.

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A Basic Advocacy Methodology

The organizations profiled in this issue's Resource Center have developed various methodologies which have proven successful to civil society organizations in formulating their advocacy campaigns. The following advocacy methodology was developed by the Central American Advocacy Training Project of WOLA.

■ Analyze the problem

1. Select the general issue to be addressed and identify one specific problem to be resolved.
2. Break the problem down into manageable components and identify how each is or could be affected by official programs and policies.

■ Define the proposal

1. Develop one or more policy proposals to address specific aspects of the problem.
2. Ensure the proposal is clear, specific, measurable, feasible, and motivating.

■ Analyze the decision-making space

1. Who will make the decision that you are attempting to affect? (This person becomes the "target" of the advocacy campaign).
2. How is this decision made?

3. What is the timeline for the decision?

■ Create a power map

1. Draw a "power map," placing the target of your advocacy campaign in the center, identifying all of the actors who influence the target, and drawing arrows from the actors to the target. Be sure to include the press, international agencies, the church, civil society, etc.
2. Classify the target and each of the actors as allies, opponents and undecided. Actors for which there is no available information should be classified as undecided and starred.
3. Prioritize the allies, opponents, and undecided based on the degree of influence that each has on the target. The five to ten most important allies and undecided actors will form the basis for a plan of visits to be made, to be elaborated in the activities section.

■ Analyze your institutional capacity

1. Identify the organization or coalition that will coordinate the advocacy strategy.
2. Analyze the strengths and weaknesses of this group related to advocacy.
3. Brainstorm possible solutions to address the weaknesses identified.

4. Select two to three activities to strengthen the group's capacity to carry out advocacy, and include these in the activity plan.

■ Develop a strategy for influencing the target and undecided actors

1. Analyze the target actor. Brainstorm:
 - the general interests and motivations of the target.
 - the target's interests and motivations related to the specific proposal.
 - the arguments that the target might make.
2. Define the arguments and strategies that could be used to help convince the target of the merits of the proposal.
3. Review the central points of the strategy: Will the campaign be public or private, grassroots or high-level? How long will it take to carry out?
4. If the campaign is aimed at influencing public opinion, define a media and outreach strategy

- What are the messages that you hope to convey through the media?

- How do you convince journalists (using the same analysis of interests and motivations carried out above) to write columns or articles on the subject?

- Identify the various methods for garnering media attention: newsworthy activities, phone calls to friendly journalists, bulletins, press conferences, etc.

■ Plan and implement activities

1. Plan all of the specific activities necessary to refine and approve the advocacy plan and achieve the strategies outlined. For each activity it is necessary to define the individuals responsible, the timeline, and the human and material resources needed. Examples of activities are:
 - preparation of short written statement(s) of what you want decision makers to do.
 - visiting the decision maker.
 - preparation of supporting documentation or research.
 - enlisting pronouncements of support by key individuals and institutions.
 - constituent mobilization.
 - press releases, press conferences.

■ Reflect and evaluate

1. Periodically stop to reflect on the success or failure of specific initiatives and the overall campaign.