Advocacy Strategies and Approaches: Overview Paper

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1. Introduction

Advocacy is the active support of an idea or cause expressed through strategies and methods that influence the opinions and decisions of people and organisations.

In the social and economic development context the aims of advocacy are to create or change policies, laws, regulations, distribution of resources or other decisions that affect people's lives and to ensure that such decisions lead to implementation.[1] Such advocacy is generally directed at policy makers including politicians, government officials and public servants, but also private sector leaders whose decisions impact upon peoples lives, as well as those whose opinions and actions influence policy makers, such as journalists and the media, development agencies and large NGOs.

By "pro-poor advocacy" we mean advocacy for political decisions and actions that respond to the interests of people who directly face poverty and disadvantage. For those pursuing the goal of equitable and pro-poor ICT access, advocacy as a means to bring about change can be appropriate in a range of circumstances, including:

> (a) *Where ICT policies could have the effect of reinforcing poverty and discrimination*. For example, "e-government" projects that use the internet to improve access to public services may, for those without internet access, have the reverse effect, unless they are complemented by other measures to enable universal access to the internet.

> (b) *When appropriate ICT policy change could be expected to improve poor people's lives and livelihoods*. For example, the adoption of broadcasting policies that enable community-based organisations to establish their own radio or television services.

> (c) *As part of a wider programme of support for pro-poor ICT access*. For example, the impact and effectiveness of investment in public ICT access centres may be improved by advocacy efforts to adopt and mainstream good practice such as community participation in management or use of free and open source software.

There is much that has been written on advocacy and how to gain influence. Some of the basic tenets of the art of persuasion, found in political science and communication studies, appear also in early Greek and Chinese philosophy.[2] It is widely recognised, for example, that change comes rarely from force of logical argument alone or from the presentation of irrefutable evidence in support of the changes required. The latter is most starkly demonstrated by the slow response to climate change warnings. Much depends on the character, approach and

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[1] Sofia Sprechman and Emily Pelton *Advocacy Tools and Guidelines: Promoting Policy Change* (Atlanta: CARE, 2001)
[2] Notably in the writings of Aristotle and Confucius.

credibility of those seeking change and the receptiveness of those they are seeking to persuade. Advocacy is inherently political and an understanding of political dynamics is at the heart of effective advocacy.

Even the most clear-minded advocacy for pro-poor ICT policies can meet resistance for various reasons, including lack of political will, bureaucratic inertia, and counter arguments from well-resourced interest groups pursuing their own advocacy efforts. Effective advocacy therefore requires research to map out the policy terrain, the principal actors, the political relations and the interests at stake. In the ICT policy field this terrain typically will include government departments, communications regulators, telecommunications service providers, media organisations, sector associations and growing numbers of civil society interest groups. Careful planning and a strategic approach are therefore needed if results are to be achieved.

Policy change rarely happens overnight and is often linked to broader change in the political environment. Effective advocacy requires long-term as well as short-term thinking, an understanding of the points of resistance and the means to gain traction, the readiness to form alliances, and the flexibility to seize windows of opportunity.

This overview describes some of the more commonly used advocacy techniques, from critical engagement such as policy monitoring and policy dialogue, through organised campaigns for policy change, to pathfinder and demonstrator projects that can inform and influence future policy making. It highlights the importance for people facing disadvantage to be able to assert their own needs and interests. It explains step by step how to devise an effective advocacy strategy for ICT policy reform. It is accompanied by case examples and signposting to further tools and resources.

2. Techniques for effective advocacy

Policy monitoring and public accountability

Almost all effective policy-related advocacy efforts commence with observation and monitoring of the implementation and effectiveness of policies already in place. These might include, for example, commitments to ICT infrastructure roll-out, universal access policies, support for community-based ICT access centres, public interest broadcasting policies, or regulatory mechanisms to ensure fair pricing of services.

High profile ICT policy monitoring by civil society advocacy groups can, on its own, contribute to improved policy implementation and effectiveness by highlighting public policy targets and drawing public attention to under-performance or to policy failure. Governments and public bodies, especially in democratic societies, are sensitive to critical reports, and more so when these are based on robust evidence and analysis, come from a credible source, and are widely published and disseminated.

Policy monitoring by civil society groups may be in the form of one-off investigation into a particular area of interest; it may consist of a baseline study, perhaps at the commencement of a new policy, and a follow-up study later to establish what results were achieved; or it may be a periodic monitoring report, such as an annual review.

Policy monitoring and public accountability are made easier where government departments and other public bodies, including regulatory organisations, maintain

and publish data and reports in a timely fashion and undertake research and consultation to facilitate decision making in the public interest. Where this is not the case, where the information is poor or unreliable, or where independent data is needed, civil society organisations and coalitions may organise their own research and data gathering, or they may rely on third party sources such as commercial and academic research.

Right to information laws can help and, in countries where such laws are weak or absent, their adoption or improvement has itself been a key demand of civil society organisations, not only those working in the communication policy field. In some cases investigative journalism may be needed to root out and expose policy failings.

Impact may often be enhanced by involving citizens and civil society organisations in the process of policy monitoring and review and by gathering demand-side data using techniques such as citizen surveys, social audits and participatory policy review. Such social accountability mechanisms[3] have gained increasing recognition as effective means of strengthening civic engagement in policy making and policy monitoring.

Policy dialogue – ICT and mainstream development policy

Policy monitoring alone may prompt corrections to policy failure or lead to improved policy implementation, but most civil society groups concerned with ICT policy also carry their own ideas about what policies are desirable. They are interested in gaining influence earlier in the policy-making process. At its most straightforward this involves engagement in policy dialogue with bureaucrats and politicians.

The Women of Uganda Network (WOUGNET),[4] for example, has a core programme activity on "gender and ICT policy advocacy" with a focus on equitable access to ICTs and engendering ICT policy making. Their priorities include not only a focus on existing ICT policies such as the Rural Communications Development Fund (a levy applied to telecom providers to support areas that are underserved by markets) but also engaging in policy development processes such as the review of the National ICT Policy. WOUGNET participates actively in government-organised stakeholder consultations on ICT policy, it contributes its own studies and reports, and it responds to draft policy proposals.

Civil society organisations like WOUGNET, whose field of interest is in the development of the use of ICTs, tend to focus their policy dialogue efforts on areas of policy making that are explicitly and primarily concerned with ICT policy: universal access arrangements, national e-strategies, etc. This may seem an obvious strategy but, on its own, it can also have the drawback of limiting policy dialogue to a relatively narrow range of actors – especially those who already share a similar outlook or others perhaps more interested in ICT growth than in pro-poor development.

Strategic engagement in policy dialogue on pro-poor ICT access can also be gained by taking, as a primary focus, areas of mainstream development policy – education, health, rural livelihoods, and so on – and contributing to more strategically framed development policy making such as the preparation of

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[3] Carmen Malena, Reiner Forster and Janmejay Singh *Social Accountability: An Introduction to the Concept and Emerging Practice* (Washington: World Bank, 2004)

[4] www.wougnet.org

National Development Strategies.[5] This perspective can assist in gaining traction for a pro-poor ICT access agenda across a broader political and policy-making spectrum. It can also assist better understanding of the real world policy choices that politicians and their constituents face – cleaner water or faster connectivity, more clinics or more ICT access centres – and better articulation of the role of ICTs in poverty reduction.

For effective pro-poor ICT policy dialogue, engagement on both fronts may be the most productive strategy: ensuring that ICT policy making is informed by a pro-poor perspective and strengthening that position by building support across government, especially those most engaged with poverty reduction and pro-poor development.

Campaigns for policy change

In India, in 1996, the National Campaign for People's Right to Information (NCPRI)[6] was founded by social activists, journalists, lawyers, professionals, retired civil servants and academics. Its goal was to campaign for a national law facilitating the right to information. Its first step was to produce, with the Press Council of India, a draft right to information law. After years of public debate and the passage in several Indian states of right to information laws, the government of India passed the Freedom of Information Act 2002. The Act was weakly drafted, subject to widespread criticism and never brought into force.[7] Continued campaigning and a change of government led eventually to adoption of the Right to Information Act 2005.

Civil society campaigns for policy change rarely achieve rapid results. They require patience, tenacity, courage and conviction. There is no blueprint for success, but there are some common denominators to almost all successful advocacy campaigns.[8] It is essential, for instance, to maintain clarity in communications: goals should be clear and achievable; messages should be compelling for those to whom they are intended; calls to action should be specific and concise. Good planning and organisation must combine with the ability to mobilise broad coalitions of public and political support towards a common goal.

Policy campaigning is goal-oriented advocacy in which civil society groups and coalitions aim to set the policy agenda rather than simply to monitor or respond to government policy making. It involves taking action and initiative. It can be exciting and empowering for those involved, but it can also be hard work, frustrating, and ultimately unsuccessful. Before adopting a campaigning orientation it is worth asking whether the goals could be better achieved by dialogue or quiet negotiation.

Campaigns for policy change draw on a wide range of tools and tactics, including public demonstrations, protests, letter writing, lobbying, use of media and the internet, and legal action. Campaigning is often confrontational in nature. After all, a campaign would not be needed if the government or private company was receptive to the policies being advocated. Conversely, it is often the dynamic of conflict that gives a campaign momentum, spurring media attention and recruiting public support.

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[5] The 2005 World Summit on Aid Effectiveness included a commitment by developing countries to prepare National Development Strategies incorporating the Millennium Development Goals.

[6] www.righttoinformation.info

[7] Toby Mendel *Freedom of Information: A Comparative Legal Survey* 2nd ed. (Paris: UNESCO, 2008)

[8] See, for example, Chris Rose *How to win campaigns: 100 steps to success* (London: Earthscan, 2005) and Kirsten Wolf *Now Hear This: The Nine Laws of Successful Advocacy Communications* (Washington: Fenton Communications, 2001)

Campaigns are often built in response to particular opportunities or threats arising in the context of the process of policy change. For example, the transition from analogue to digital distribution systems for television is moving ahead rapidly worldwide, with only limited time for civil society organisations to gain guarantees of access to the new channels. In Uruguay, a law first drafted in 2005 by a coalition including community broadcasting activists, journalists and labour unions was adopted in 2007, guaranteeing an equitable distribution of frequencies between private, public and civil society organisations. The law has ensured that civil society groups have a legal entitlement to use part of the digital television spectrum.

In Ecuador, the process of adopting a new constitution that began in 2007 under the presidency of Rafael Correa was seen as an opportunity by civil society groups engaged in media and ICT advocacy to challenge the existing political economy of the communications environment and to propose a new communication rights framework. The new constitution adopted in 2008 included the explicit entitlement of all persons to universal access to information and communication technologies, together with a right to the creation of social media, including equal access to radio frequencies.[9]

Some civil society advocacy organisations may have several campaigns running at the same time, each with distinct goals requiring different alliances and strategies. In other cases a single-issue organisation, or a coalition of like-minded groups, may form to campaign towards a single policy goal, as in the example of India's campaign for a right to information law. International campaigning organisations, such as Amnesty International and Greenpeace, have tested their campaigning methods over many years. Some of the lessons learned are also relevant to ICT policy advocacy.[10]

Building the advocacy capacity of stakeholder groups

As noted in the introduction to this toolkit, poor people face systemic barriers in their access to information and in their means to exercise their right to freedom of expression. The lack of "voice" of disadvantaged groups is a challenge at the core of pro-poor advocacy on ICT access.[11] It is one of the reasons why advocacy for equitable access to ICTs is important. At the same time, it compromises the ability of disadvantaged people themselves to advocate for their own communication needs.

This is a critical issue that demands the attention of any organisation engaged in pro-poor ICT advocacy. We stated earlier that "pro-poor advocacy" means advocacy for political decisions and actions that respond to the interests of people who directly face poverty and disadvantage. They are the primary stakeholders. Their lack of voice can be overcome in two distinct ways. As Drèze and Sen describe it: "One is *assertion* (or, more precisely, self-assertion) of the underprivileged through political organisation. The other is *solidarity* with the underprivileged on the part of other members of the society, whose interests and commitments are broadly linked, and who are often better placed to advance the

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[9] Valeria Betancourt *Access to ICTs as a right: The case of the constituent process in Ecuador* (Montevideo: APC, forthcoming)

[10] See, for example, Amnesty International *Amnesty International Campaigning Manual* (London: Amnesty International, 1997)

[11] See, for example, Deepa Narayan *Voices of the Poor: Volume 1: Can Anyone Hear Us?* (Washington: World Bank, 2000)

cause of the disadvantaged by virtue of their own privileges (e.g., formal education, access to the media, economic resources, political connections)."[12]

There are a great number of "pro-poor advocacy" organisations that are not, by any means, populated by people with first-hand experience of poverty. Rather they are run by well-educated middle-class professionals for whom pro-poor advocacy is a vocation. This is as much a reality in the ICT policy field as in other development sectors. That such people have chosen to work for and in solidarity with those who face the daily struggle of poverty and deprivation is, of course, to be welcomed – social solidarity is very often an important component of advocacy and political action – but, on its own, it is also "a somewhat undependable basis of authentic representation of the interests of the underprivileged."[13] Solidarity has multiple motivations, is not always accompanied by shared perspectives, and may be more effective at attracting support when it conforms with dominant ideologies.

Thus building the advocacy capacity of self-help groups of the disadvantaged and of community-based and working-class organisations is at least as important as *doing* advocacy *for* the poor. Effective pro-poor advocacy on access to ICTs must include strategies likely to lead to an increase in the voice and influence of the underprivileged sections of society in ICT and other policy making. This may include, for example, strengthening the communications capacity of disadvantaged people's organisations and support for development of grassroots communication initiatives like community radio. Such strategies can be effective in enabling people who are disadvantaged and marginalised to speak out directly on the issues that affect their lives and livelihoods.

The Bangladesh NGOs Network for Radio and Communication (BNNRC),[14] for example, is a national network that combines a programme of advocacy in ICT policy areas such as right to information, community broadcasting and e-governance, with practical support for rural knowledge centres and community radio stations.

Deccan Development Society (DDS)[15] is a grassroots organisation working with women's *sanghams* (self-help groups) in about 75 villages in the Medak District of Andhra Pradesh, India. The 5,000 women members of the Society are mostly Dalit, the lowest group in the Indian social hierarchy. As part of a broader strategy in pursuit of "autonomous communities", the women of DDS established the DDS Community Media Trust, including a video production unit and Sangham Radio, the first rural community radio in India and the first women's radio in South Asia.[16]

The right-to-information movement in India drew, among other inspirations, on empowerment-based approaches to public accountability pioneered by Mazdoor Kisan Shakti Sangathan (MKSS) in Rajasthan, including public hearings where accounts, including public expenditure records, were read aloud at independently organised village meetings and local people were invited to give testimony.[17]

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[12] Jean Drèze and Amartya Sen *India: Development and Participation* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2002), 29

[13] Ibid. 30

[14] www.bnnrc.net

[15] www.ddsindia.com

[16] For a case study on Sangham Radio see also Vinod Pavarala and Kanchan K. Malik *Other Voices: The Struggle for Community Radio in India* (New Delhi: Sage, 2007)

[17] Rob Jenkins and Anne Marie Goetz "Accounts and accountability: Theoretical implications of the right-to-information movement in India" *Third World Quarterly* 20, 3 (1999): 603-22

Pathfinder and demonstrator projects

New ideas in policy are not always easy to communicate to those who influence or make decisions, particularly where they involve new or unfamiliar uses of ICTs. It may not be until an idea has been demonstrated in action that it is fully understood.

"Pathfinder" or "demonstrator" projects can therefore be an effective alternative strategy for ICT policy advocacy. If success can be demonstrated in practice, it can have the dual impact of mobilising further demand and interest and of motivating policy makers to take decisions that encourage replication and scaling-up. Such initiatives can be resource intensive. They may require certain policy decisions before they can proceed, but policy makers may also be more receptive to allowing a limited experiment to test and demonstrate an idea than to agreeing a major policy change.

RITS (*Rede de Informacão para o Terceiro Setor*)[18] was founded in Brazil in 1997 to strengthen civil society organisations' communications capacity. The organisation has built an impressive network for monitoring ICT policy and campaigning on equitable access. A demonstrator project organised by RITS in partnership with Sampa.org led to the establishment of 128 community-based telecentres in São Paulo, with an estimated half a million users per month. The model offers free public access and training support, is based on free and open source software, and promotes community involvement in management and development of the centres as a space for community organisation. With support from Petrobras, it has been replicated in 50 locations across Brazil. The Brazilian government is now considering investment in 10,000 new telecentres drawing substantially on the experience of the RITS demonstration.

The Nigeria Community Radio Coalition, launched in 2003, has mobilised broad support for its campaign goal of seeing community radio services established in Nigeria. As part of its strategy for opening the door to community radio development, it has proposed a pilot scheme in at least six locations to be distributed across the country's geopolitical zones. The proposal for a pilot scheme has been supported by the National Broadcasting Commission and by the National Fadama Development Programme, which has committed funding for preparation and infrastructure.

3. Advocacy planning and implementation

In this part we look at the practical steps involved in ICT advocacy planning and implementation. The stages outlined draw on principles of strategic planning and project management combined with political analysis and communications.[19] For each of the stages we set out some key considerations to be addressed. At several points we pose questions rather than solutions. There is no single template for pro-poor ICT advocacy. The questions are intended to assist the process of planning and design.

A.   *Preliminary steps*

(i) *Identifying the problems and the policy issues*
What is the pro-poor ICT access issue to be addressed? Why is it important and to whom? This may have been highlighted through research, expressed as a

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[18] www.rits.org.br

[19] Among others, this section draws from the advocacy research and experience of Amnesty International (1997), Sprechman and Pelton (2001), Wolf (2001), Rose (2005) and IFEX (2005).

demand by grassroots organisations, or it may have a normative basis, for example, it has been identified by comparison with good practice elsewhere. Does this problem have a policy dimension? What current policies reinforce the problem? What changes in policies could lead to improvement? Who is responsible for those policies?

(ii) *Defining the advocacy goal*

It can be helpful, at the preliminary stage, to define the goal of the proposed advocacy initiative. What positive change can be expected to result if the initiative is successful? Is the initiative intended to improve access to information, to promote dialogue, or to strengthen voice and influence? Or will it contribute to all of these things? Or to broader development goals? Who will be the primary beneficiaries of the initiative?

(iii) *Consulting and building relationships*

Building relationships is intrinsic to any successful advocacy effort and should also commence at an early stage. Before engaging in detailed policy analysis and planning it can be important to consult with other organisations, especially those which share similar goals and interests. Has any similar initiative been tried before? If so, what were the results? Is anything similar being considered or planned? Are there opportunities to build a partnership-based approach from the outset?

(iv) *Establishing credibility as an advocate*

The credibility of the organisation, partnership or coalition that is advocating change is likely to be a key factor in its success. Does it have a mandate to speak on behalf of those who are expected to benefit? Does it have specialist expertise? Does it have influence with decision makers? What could be done to strengthen the credibility of the initiative – for example, further research and consultation, better alliances?

B.   Analysing the policy environment

(i) *Identifying relevant policies, laws and regulations*

Having decided, in principle, to consider advocacy as a strategy to achieve pro-poor ICT access and having undertaken some preliminary work to define the advocacy goals, the next stage involves closer analysis of the policy environment, starting with an audit of the relevant policies and political institutions. What policies are already in place (for example, national e-strategies, e-government, media development, digital divide initiatives)? How are these reflected, or not, in current laws and regulations? It is important also to be aware of relevant international treaty obligations, laws and standards.

(ii) *Mapping relations of power and decision making*

Where are policy decisions taken and who has influence over them? For example, is the focus on government policy and, if so, which ministries and departments are responsible? What other ministries have an interest in the impact of the current or proposed policies, for example, rural development, education? Are there other public bodies with relevant influence or responsibility, such as a communications regulator or a national media council? What about the legislature or parliament – are there interest groups in the policy area? Can support be usefully mobilised across different political parties? Who else has influence over the key political decision makers?

(iii) *Considering the options for policy change*

Would a change in policy alone be sufficient to achieve the advocacy goal? Or might the proposed policy change also require legal and/or regulatory change? What about the economic impact – are there taxation or public spending implications that should be taken into account? Are there alternative approaches to be considered? Could the goals be achieved incrementally or do they require a fundamental change in policy? What policy options are most likely to attract support, or generate opposition?

C.   Developing the strategy

(i)   Focusing on the goal and objectives
In developing the strategy, and in the light of more systematic analysis of the policy environment, it is advisable to return to the advocacy goal and to set specific and realistic objectives that can be achieved within a reasonable, defined timeframe. It should be possible at the end of such a period to say whether or not they were achieved. If the goal is ambitious it may be necessary to set more limited and incremental objectives – for example, raised awareness, commitments of support, pilot projects – that can contribute to achieving the goal over a longer timeframe.

(ii)   Identifying the target audiences
It is useful to distinguish between primary and secondary audiences. The primary target audiences are the institutions, and the individuals within them, who have authority to make the policy decisions that are sought. These are generally determined by the policy goal and objectives. The secondary audiences are those who are best placed to influence the decision makers. These may include politicians, public servants, the media, development agencies, influential NGOs and so on.

(iii)   Identifying allies and opponents
It is important to identify both the potential allies and the likely opponents. What other organisations share similar goals and concerns? Would they support the initiative, be open to partnership or to joining a broader coalition? Are there already coalitions in place? What risks might there be in alliance or coalition building? What groups or organisations might feel threatened by the proposals? Could this coalesce into organised opposition? What can be done to reduce the risk of opposition?

(iv)   Selecting the advocacy approach
What advocacy strategies are most likely to influence the target audiences? Will it be effective to work through dialogue and negotiation with policy makers? What is the likely impact of public pressure – can it be expected to lead to a positive response or to resistance? What sort of treatment can be expected from the media: supportive, hostile, or indifferent? Are there incremental strategies that might be more likely to achieve results? Through what mechanisms might competing interests be brokered?

(v)   Identifying the key messages
In relation to the goal and objectives, what messages are likely to be persuasive with the primary audience? What about the secondary audience – are different messages needed for different audiences? If the approach taken is public or based on a broad coalition, what key messages are likely to mobilise the broadest support, gain traction in the media, or have a viral effect, with the audience itself acting as a multiplier?

D.   Framing the plan

(i)   *Preparing a plan of action*
Effective advocacy requires good organisational planning. Having defined the goal, objectives and strategic approach, it is important to be systematic in mapping out the actions to be taken to achieve results, including timelines and milestones. This is best brought together in a logical framework including measurable progress indicators.

(ii)   *Budgeting and identifying resources*
Cost considerations are likely to influence the approach to be taken. Policy monitoring and dialogue, for example, may be achieved with just limited staff or volunteer time and the means to publicise the results. A media-oriented advocacy campaign might require substantial publicity costs from the outset: preparing news releases and placing stories, commissioning photographs or a video, designing posters and other campaign materials. A capacity-building project or a demonstrator project might require significant investment in equipment and training. Organisations working in ICT policy advocacy will frequently have the skills and know-how to harness new ICTs in their advocacy work – for example, using email, text messaging and Web 2.0 technologies to assist with data gathering, coalition building and mobilisation. Funds and other resources will need to be sufficient to sustain the project for its duration.

(iii)   Risk assessment
What are the main risks to successful project implementation? Risk analysis involves assessing the impact of each particular risk and the likelihood of it happening. It is useful to rate both impact and likelihood (e.g., low, medium, high). How can the high and medium risks be managed to reduce their impact and/or likelihood? Particular attention needs to be paid to any risk of harm to individuals. In many countries, media workers, internet activists and freedom of expression defenders have faced threats, harassment and violence in the course of their work. Might the planned advocacy provoke state repression? Are there non-state actors that pose physical dangers?

E.   Implementation

(i)   Getting the message across
Good communications is at the core of effective advocacy. This requires attention to the message, the audience and the means of delivery. The message needs to be clear: it should explain what is being proposed, why it is needed, and what difference it would make. It also needs to be compelling: it should be crafted to the interests and knowledge of the audience. The means of delivery must ensure it is received and heard – whether, for example, a written proposal, face-to-face presentation or public demonstration. It is rare that a single advocacy message will be received and acted upon. The message needs to reinforced, by repetition and through the influence of secondary audiences.

(ii)   Using the media
The media – radio, television, press and online media – have a particular role to play in public advocacy initiatives, especially campaign-based approaches. Not all advocacy work uses the media, and a media-based approach carries risks as well as opportunities. The media can bring a mass audience, potentially increasing profile and credibility, but they can also bring bad publicity and may contribute to mobilising opposition as well as support. Using the media requires planning and skills, including building contacts, knowing the media audience, writing press releases, placing stories, being interviewed, providing visual imagery and organising newsworthy events.

(iii)   Building partnerships and coalitions
Most advocacy initiatives involve some degree of mobilising public support behind the proposal. What partnerships and alliances are most likely to assist in mobilising broad-based support? What processes can best achieve trust, collective ownership, and effective collaboration? Should the initiative operate as an open coalition and, if so, what mechanisms are needed to enable participation and to assure accountability? Is support needed to build the advocacy capacity of partner organisations? Media and the internet can also be used to recruit and mobilise broad-based public support.

(iv)   Employing tactics and negotiation
Advocacy is rarely a one-way communications process. Some advocacy work is more reactive than proactive towards policy makers, or is explicitly dialogical. In any case, policy and decision makers may well respond to advocacy proposals with their own questions or alternative proposals. Other interested parties may launch strategies to counter the proposals being made. It may become necessary to modify the proposals to achieve results. What alternatives might be considered? What counter proposals can be expected? What is non-negotiable and what could be up for discussion?

(v)   Monitoring and evaluation
Throughout the implementation phase it is important to monitor the process, the results and the policy context. Mechanisms are needed to track activities such as meetings and communications and to monitor results such as media coverage and expressions of public support. Data needs to be maintained on the target audiences: contact details, positions they have taken, offers of assistance and so on. The process and results should be evaluated not only at the end of the planned timeframe but on a regular basis so that adjustments, if needed, can be made to the strategy and plan of action. Advocacy invariably takes place in a dynamic environment, especially when the focus is on ICTs. The policy terrain can change for social, political or economic reasons that are independent of the advocacy initiative underway. The ability to react quickly and flexibly, to spot windows of opportunity, and to anticipate new challenges requires close monitoring of the policy context and of broader trends.

Case studies

Three case studies have been provided for this module as well as a list of additional resource material. The advocacy case studies are outlined below:

Project	Project description	Highlights
São Paulo Telecentres Project	A successful example of how practical ICT demonstration at a local level can support national advocacy for policy change	This partnership-based project mobilised policy, investment and technical support leading to the establishment of 128 community-based telecentres. It eventually influenced national-level digital-inclusion policies.
Advocacy for community radio in Nigeria	A five-year advocacy project seeking policy change to enable the establishment of community radio services	This case study illustrates their approach and the challenges when campaigning for ICT policy change. It also highlights the lessons learned: for instance, how commitments to change policy mean little without political will.

| Rural Knowledge Centre Movement | The story behind the "Mission 2007: Every Village a Knowledge Centre" vision that has the goal of extending the benefits of rural ICT access to 600,000 villages in India | This case study documents how a project has evolved into a mass movement in India and influenced similar initiatives in Asia and Africa, and has mobilised high-level support from public, private and civil society organisations. |

There are also case studies in other modules of this toolkit which are particularly relevant to advocacy:

Project	Project description	Highlights
The Huaral Valley Agrarian Information System, Peru	This project is providing phone and internet access for poor farming communities and access to an agrarian information system	This case study illustrates the importance of leadership and vision to ensure that lobbying and advocacy are undertaken both within communities but also with the government. The community, through its irrigation board, was able to lobby for changes in the existing restrictive ICT policy and regulatory frameworks.
Nepal Wireless Networking Project	Low-cost and easy-to-maintain wireless networks used in harsh and remote locations in Nepal to provide phone and internet access to dispersed and marginalised communities	The advocacy efforts of the local champion, Mahabir Pun, resulted in the government changing its restrictive telecoms policies that previously prohibited the use of wireless networks, while also dropping the costs of licences to under USD 2.

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