

This *Guide* talks a lot about the differences between advocacy where organizers *speak on behalf of the “voiceless,”* and advocacy where organizers work with the “voiceless” *to speak for themselves.* In this chapter, we describe outreach and mobilization activities that build citizen participation and enable excluded groups to advance their rights and hold decisionmakers accountable.

But outreach and mobilization activities are also important for policy advocacy where citizen participation is not a core objective. Some *policy-centered* efforts focus on the need to prove numbers of supporters with less concern about what those numbers think or gain by collaborating.

However, on a practical level, policy gains without broad-based organized support are unlikely to be implemented. When advocates lobby “on behalf of” communities, they are often perplexed when their efforts fail. In some cases, they alienate constituents and can even generate hostility to “outsiders”. People, even poor communities, do not like others telling them what they need and think.

In contrast, *citizen-centered* outreach and mobilization strategies focus on empowerment and citizenship. They educate and activate. However, as discussed in Part 1, generating involvement in advocacy can mean breaking through ingrained patterns of withdrawal or resistance to change, which takes time and resources. It requires dialogue, education and action designed to practice new forms of citizen behavior and build organization. This is why the *planning* aspect of advocacy described in Part 2 is as crucial as the *doing* aspect discussed in this Part.

“Just as mobilizing without consciousness leads to narrow victories, so too, awareness-building without organizing to win concrete victories can lead to frustration, a reinforcement of a sense of powerlessness, or a critique of the world that is perceived as inaccessible or irrelevant to the everyday lives and realities of ordinary citizens.”

Julie Fisher, *The Road from Rio*, 1993

Outreach and mobilization are closely interconnected. In this chapter, we look at the following aspects of outreach and mobilization:

- **Different Ways to Do Outreach and Mobilization:** exploration of types and the role that outreach and mobilization play in advocacy.
- **Designing Outreach and Mobilization Strategies:** considerations in structuring ways to involve people.
- **Mobilizing Moments:** a review of moments that present political opportunities for mobilization.

Outreach includes a wide variety of strategies – participatory planning and organizing, media, education, mobilization and direct recruitment -- that aim to gain the support and direct involvement of constituencies and to build their capacity as active citizens.

Mobilization engages people as political protagonists and includes activities that build and use the strength of numbers, and organization.

The last part of the chapter is a case study on the experience of a federation of community-based women’s organizations in the Philippines. This case shows how an organization

Constituency-building Strategies that Link Thinking to Action



made choices based on their principles, and what those choices meant for their outreach and mobilization, as well as their advocacy more generally.

Different Ways To Do Outreach & Mobilization

Outreach and mobilization include a diverse range of activities that:

- transform people's concerns into the organized expression of rights and specific proposals for change;
- recruit sympathetic and affected people to be involved;
- enable people to practice citizenship and public leadership.

Outreach and mobilization strategies can also:

- expand public and political support for specific advocacy efforts;
- demonstrate citizen support for your issues;
- increase legitimacy and leverage to reach and be persuasive at the negotiating table;
- generate broad ownership of a campaign;
- create new forms of practicing and expressing citizenship;

- strengthen the bond between the grassroots base of a campaign, organizational leadership, and lobbyists.

Organizers who see constituency-building both as a practical strategy for leveraging power, and as a way of promoting inclusive participation, will devote sufficient time and resources to do it. But in many cases outreach and mobilization are reduced to the bare minimum necessary to advance a policy agenda and appear legitimate.

Outreach Strategies

There are many ways to do participatory outreach. The Guide focuses on four main strategies:

Participatory Planning & Organizing

The strategies described in Parts 1 and 2 that engage constituents in analyzing their situation, choosing priority issues, information-gathering, exploring solutions, planning strategies, and understanding power dynamics are all valuable ways of doing outreach. Asking people what they think, what is important to them and what they want to do gets people involved.

Media

In Chapter 13, we describe different ways to reach out to concerned citizens, policymakers, politicians and others through the media. Some media strategies involve citizens in the creation of public messages. Others transmit messages to inform and motivate action.

Events

Strategies that bring concerned citizens together – like a town meeting, a music concert with a political message, an “accountability session” (all described on the following pages) - can convince other citizens to join your ranks.

Direct Recruitment

Recruiting new supporters can be a part of the three strategies above or it can be a separate initiative. The polling, canvassing and door-to-door strategies (discussed in Chapter 8) aimed at finding out what people care about are an opportunity to recruit. During mobilization events it is important to have an information table to let people know about a campaign and how to get involved. (See *Organizing for Social Change: A Manual for Activists in the 1990s*, *ibid.*, for detailed advice on recruitment strategies that can be adapted for different contexts.)

Since participatory planning and organizing, media, and direct recruitment strategies are discussed elsewhere in the *Guide*, this chapter focuses on mobilization events.



Creative outreach strategies

Designing Outreach and Mobilization Strategies

Designing ways for people to participate in policy debate and political processes takes some imagination. In particular, disadvantaged groups may feel skeptical, and even fearful, about getting involved in politics. In some cases, traditional kinds of citizen engagement, such as Parent-Teacher Associations can be empowering and effective. In other cases, new forms of citizen action, like accountability sessions with government and corporate leaders, stakeholder juries, scorecards for candidates and parties, and street theater, have a greater impact on both the citizens involved and the individual and institutional targets of advocacy.

It may be difficult to think creatively about activities that involve constituents equally as leaders and organizers. In some cases, NGO leaders are unsure if grassroots people are able to speak directly to a public official when they, themselves are nervous about doing it. While the constituents in your advocacy efforts may not speak like professional lobbyists, the

In advocacy, NGOs have legitimacy when speaking about issues they work on or specific interests they have as organizations. Concerns are raised, however, when NGOs speak on behalf of people who have not given them the authority to do so.

fact that they *live* the problem being addressed gives their voice *power and legitimacy*.

Citizens need to be prepared before they mobilize. They need:

- clarity and agreement about the issue they are addressing and why;
- knowledge of how the political system can help address their issue;
- strategies and skills to articulate demands and alternative solutions;
- organization to give them a base of collective power from which to speak;
- a sense of identity with a broader campaign, and an understanding of how their actions link with other advocacy strategies;
- an understanding of the power dynamics in which they operate and the risks they may face;

Downward Accountability

Grassroots democracy — Activism 'from below' — Downward accountability.

All these terms ... deal with a fundamental part of our mandate: who do we speak for? It's fine for civil society organizations (CSOs) to advocate for the poor and marginalized, but unless CSOs can demonstrate a real link with their constituency, those in power are unlikely to listen. CSOs have a role beyond advocacy: they are interlocutors, facilitating communication between the disenfranchised and those in power. To play that role, they need legitimacy, which feeds back into the need to connect: governments will not listen if they believe CSOs do not have a constituency, and marginalized people will not let CSOs advocate for them if the latter do not represent them accurately. A further issue is how much CSOs are willing to integrate their constituency into their organization, in order to achieve this representation. Some CSOs are afraid a democratic practice will interfere with maintaining a coherent mission and operational effectiveness. But this is a tension that must be resolved in favour of increased democracy if organizations want to maintain the trust that their constituencies have placed in them. Ultimately, that trust is the measure of how well CSOs fulfill their mandate to strengthen civil society.

Kumi Naidoo, Secretary General, CIVICUS, from *Working for pro-poor social, economic and development policy, the advocacy work of the South African National NGO Coalition*, www.civicus.org/main/server_navigation/skeletons/Civicus_01/framework/navigation.cfm?contentid=3C85E92C-7D55-11D5-A9CF00508BDFD42C.

- a clear, tested message to communicate to the public and decisionmakers.

Criteria for Designing Mobilizing Actions

Below are some criteria for designing actions.

If possible, actions should:

- *present opportunities to learn new skills* — such as planning, defining clear demands, public speaking, going door-to-door to get others involved, running a meeting, etc.;
- *offer practice in leadership* — encourage new leaders to emerge, and build their leadership skills;
- *demystify politics and power* — by exposing people to how public decisionmaking works through direct contact with decisionmakers, research about how decisions are made, etc.;
- *have a concrete and feasible aim* — constituents must be able to see their victories and assess their losses;
- *boost morale* — give constituents a sense of their collective possibilities;

- *encourage people to try new things* — if they have never spoken publicly before, they should be encouraged and helped to do so.

Actions should also:

- *be thoroughly planned* — careful planning increases confidence;
- *be fun* — people's lives are full of demands and duties, so advocacy has to be more than just exhausting;
- *take account of the political environment* — to ensure that your constituents do not take unnecessary risks.

Sometimes, it is not possible to check off everything on this list. In reality, there are times when it is more important to take action quickly than to wait until there is a common argument.

One of the strengths of the global protest movement that emerged in 1999 to influence international economic policy has been its ability to mobilize quickly on a global scale. In

What is an ACTION?

We use "action" here as it is used in "citizen action organizing" (see *Organizing for Social Change: A Manual for Activists in the 1990s*, *ibid.*). Actions involve a group of people affected by an issue who make known their concerns to those who have the power to change things. A good action gets the attention of those with power, generates public support and, above all, provides constituents with opportunities to practice organized citizenship.

How confrontational an action is will depend on the political environment, the risk of political repression, the capacity of the constituency groups and accessibility of the target. If your issue is highly-charged or the political environment repressive, actions must call attention without bringing on unnecessary risk.

"In mere days, the use of actions can cut through months, and sometimes years, of bureaucratic red tape. More important is the impact on participants. People come away with a heightened sense of their own power and dignity, while their opponents are made to appear smaller and more vulnerable. At the same time, relationships of power are clarified because problems that might have been attributed to misunderstanding or lack of communication are seen sharply for what they really are — the conflicting interests of public good against private greed. In the process, loyalty to the organization is build up because people see it actually working for them and realize that their participation is essential to its success."

Adapted and quoted from *Organizing for Social Change: A Manual for Activists in the 1990s*, *ibid.*, p.48.

1999 and since, distinct groups with diverse agendas and tactics converged to protest at high-level meetings about trade and economic policy in different cities. The groups were loosely held together by the common aim of making the governments and international agencies more accountable to people's interests. There are pros and cons to this strategy. Diversity, the scale of mobilization and the element of surprise gave the protestors the power to prevent consensus among the governments and institutions at the meetings. Turning this into a real opportunity to present alternatives and to expand the policy dialogue has been more difficult. It is here that the lack of a common argument is a problem.

Mobilizing Moments

In this section we describe different kinds of actions that use different political moments to mobilize constituents and capture the attention of decisionmakers.

During Elections

Elections are an ideal time for mobilizing because parties and candidates are competing for votes, and the voters are looking for infor-

mation. The power of the vote can be the ultimate leverage citizens have over decisionmakers — the power to remove them from office. Additionally, the vote provides organizing opportunities where people's collective interests can influence the election process. For example, you can involve constituents in the following actions:

Voter education and “get out the vote”

Constituents can choose the issues that are most important in selecting parties and candidates, and they can organize voter participation around those key issues. The example on the next page is from South Africa where the Tshwaranang Legal Advocacy Centre produced a local government elections brochure to educate citizens about what local governments need to do to end violence against women.

Referenda

In some countries, it is possible to place an issue on the ballot so that citizens can vote directly on policy questions. This is, for example, common at the state level in the U.S. You can use this method even when it is not part of the formal political process. Citizens can run a voting campaign parallel to the

Reflections on Mobilizing

No mobilization is perfect. Naomi Klein responded to the criticisms about global economic protests in the following way :

“Maybe the protests in Seattle and Washington look unfocused because they were not demonstrations of one movement at all but rather convergences of many smaller ones, each with its sights trained on a specific multinational corporation . . . a particular industry (like agribusiness) or a new trade initiative (like the Free Trade Area of the Americas). These smaller, targeted movements are clearly part of a common cause: They share a belief that the disparate problems with which they are wrestling all derive from global deregulation, an agenda that is concentrating power and wealth into fewer and fewer hands. Of course, there are disagreements—about the role of the nation-state . . . about the speed with which change should occur. But within most of these miniature movements, there is an emerging consensus that building community-based decision-making power—whether through unions, neighborhoods, farms... — is essential to countering the might of multinational corporations.”

Klein, Naomi, “The Vision Thing”, *The Nation*, July 10, 2000.

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT: STEPS TO END VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

1. What is violence against women? Did you know...?

- Violence is any act or threat that causes physical, psychological or emotional harm to women or men.
- Violence against women takes different forms including sexual violence (rape - forced sexual intercourse, sexual harassment - unwanted sexual acts in the work place)
- Domestic violence (violence in the home) is: sexual abuse; physical abuse - slapping, kicking, punching; emotional abuse - intimidation, name calling, etc.; and femicide - killing of women by husbands or boyfriends.

2. What can we do to address violence against women at local government level? Did you know...? Through citizen participation, individually and collectively, we can make our communities safe from all forms of violence? Some examples of how we can address violence against women include:

Participation - By registering and voting in local government elections. Ensuring that the political party you vote for has specific programmes that address violence against women.

Information - By obtaining and sharing information about what local government services impact on addressing violence against women.

Monitoring - By attending regular public meetings to ensure that political parties /councilors carry out programme on violence against women. By writing letters to newspapers to inform others in community if councilors are not fulfilling their obligations.

Reporting - By reporting all cases of sexual, domestic or femicide to police and at community policing forums. Joining or supporting women's organisations that offer services to abused women. Examples include volunteering your time for counseling, assisting in fundraising for shelters for abused women. Setting up Neighborhood Watch in your street to monitor any criminal

3. Which local government services address problem of violence against women? Did you know...?

The following local government services or functions can address violence against women in communities:

Street Lighting: Police reports show that women are more likely to be raped by strangers in areas with poor lighting. To prevent rape and other crimes like mugging and assault, communities need to ensure that all streets have adequate lighting. **ACTI ON:** Report faulty lights to municipality. Where lighting is not sufficient, make request for adequate lighting to municipality.

Public transport buses and trains: The problematic nature of public transport system places women in a vulnerable position by creating an unsafe environment. Police reports and research show that women are often raped, assaulted or mugged in deserted taxi, bus or train station. **ACTI ON:** Report unreliable bus or train services to transportation department. Draft petitions calling for speedy regulation of the taxi industry. Challenge bus and train price increases if these are not matched with improved services through boycotts, petitions or letter writing.

Housing: Council houses and flats. The lack of alternative housing or accommodation (for example safe houses or shelters) is often one of the reasons why women stay in abusive relationships. Shelters are limited and supported by non-government organizations. **ACTI ON:** Communities should ensure that women (single or married) with children are given first preference or priority for council housing. Communities should support local shelters and provide accommodation for women who choose to leave abusive relationship.

Municipal Health Clinics: Health services offered by some municipal clinics do not provide service for sexual and domestic violence. Counseling, a mental and emotional health service is often not provided by clinics. Counseling, of raped and abused women, can assist mental and physical healing. Clinics often claim that there are no financial resources to provide counseling. **ACTI ON:** Individuals can volunteer their time to providing counseling at municipal clinics, (provided that they are trained as counselors).

Parks: Rape (and other forms of sexual abuse) by strangers can take place in deserted areas like parks at night. In reported rape cases, couples who spend time in parks and other secluded areas have been attacked and raped. **ACTI ON:** Communities need to monitor parks and ensure that parks are locked at certain times. Communities need to embark on awareness programmes of public safety and rape.

elections where they ask voters to register their views on a specific topic. In this way, you take advantage of the run-up to the elections to gain support for your issues.

Create an issue platform

Worldwide, citizens have developed issue platforms to educate voters and candidates. There are many examples of environmental platforms, fair trade platforms, health platforms, etc. In several African countries, women have spelled out their priority demands through the creation of a “Women’s Platform”. The platform is used to educate voters, candidates, and parties and assess which candidates and parties to support. A platform can be used to pressure parties to improve their own platform on your issues. See the example in Chapter 8 from Benin. A similar platform was developed by women’s groups in Botswana (see box).

Electoral scorecard

A fun way of educating voters is by grading

candidates and parties through a standard school report card. In some places, a giant report card has been presented in a public forum to challenge candidates on their position. The example on the next page is from South Africa.

For an in-depth look at another example of outreach and mobilization during an election, see the case study from the Philippines at the end of this chapter.

During Policy Review

Policy can be made at the local, district, state, regional or national level depending on the form of government. Often constituents relate more to their local council than to the national legislature. Further, many countries are decentralizing government, giving local governments increased power. However, while local policymaking may be more directly accessible, local governments often have narrow mandates, few resources, and can be parochial

The “Women’s Manifesto”

In Botswana, the day before the political parties were to announce their platforms for the 1994 elections, Emang Basadi, a national women’s group, announced the “Women’s Manifesto” at a public ceremony attended by advocates and press. The 20-page document described eight priority issue areas affecting women. These issues came out of community consultations and dialogue with women’s groups, NGOs, political leaders, government and activists. The Manifesto was later used in voter education programs to measure candidates and political parties against criteria that included commitment to gender equality, women’s rights and social justice.



Women from various political parties, women’s NGOs, Emang Basadi members, marching to the district commissioner’s office to present the first copy of the Women’s Manifesto (2nd Edition) to be sent to the President of Botswana July 1999.

From *Together For Change: The Botswana Consultation*, African-American Institute- Emang Basadi-UNIFEM, 1995
Photo from Keboitse Machananga, Emang Basadi

Example Report Card: The United Democratic Movement (UDM)

A coalition of South African women's groups issued the following report card on one political party's local election platform. The United Democratic Movement (UDM) received a failing grade on gender and women's issues.

Evaluation: F [Failing]

"The UDM's Local Government Manifesto: 'We Care and Deliver', claims to be a better plan for the future. The manifesto promises free water for 'deprived areas,' 'access to electricity' in rural areas, and basic services, safe streets and reasonable rates in urban areas. Included in the party's urban issues is 'proper schooling' although this is a provincial and national government function. The party also promises "respect for traditional leadership" in rural areas. The manifesto does not clarify what the party means by this and does not take into account the problematic nature of many traditional beliefs with regard to women's equality. This omission is of concern to anyone with a gender perspective. In a document titled 'Local government in Crisis, Innovative Solutions: the UDM Approach' the party further explains its local government policy. The party states its mission as 'uniting communities at the local sphere of government by stimulating and creating a stable and orderly environment for growth and development, the rendering of equitable, sustainable and cost-effective services and eradicate poverty and imbalances in communities. This will be achieved through optimal consultation and co-operation with all stakeholders without bias to either the rural or urban areas and in consultation with traditional leaders where they exist.' This document does not talk about women, women's issues or gender. All references made to the role of the mayor are made in gender specific terms - male of course, while references to the voter are made as 'he/she'... we might be accused of nit-picking, but if a party can't even get the language right when it costs nothing and doesn't require any real action - what can we expect from them as our representatives?"

and prejudiced. In some cases, lack of clear procedures and technical know-how compound the problems. On the other hand, the fact that decisionmaking may not yet be entrenched at the local level can create openings for citizens.

Creation of a citizen's advisory group

The creation of a citizens' advisory group on an issue under policy debate provides an opportunity to articulate issues and propose solutions. In some cases the group may be officially sanctioned and provide formal input. But even when it is not, it can play a role educating the public and policymakers. When the advisory body includes regular citizens – for example consisting of a domestic worker, a rural farmer, a doctor and a businessperson — it demonstrates a broad base of support. Experience shows that citizen groups also need to be vigilant when joining government-

sponsored bodies to avoid wasting scarce time and resources on an effort that will not affect decisions.

Hearings

In some countries, governments have provided opportunities for NGOs and grassroots groups to participate in hearings on the content of legislation. Even if your government does not do this, a *Mock Hearing* can be organized to imitate an official one. Mock hearings can be entertaining for the media and the public when they take a humorous jab at the proceedings and behavior of leaders. In India, citizens groups have used public hearings successfully to challenge corrupt officials. Key elements of successful hearings include: time (the longer the hearing, the less likely the press will remain throughout), who testifies, and topic (testimonies should be brief, interesting and delivered by someone tied to the issue).



Citizen policy juries

Citizens' juries engage people in making judgments that feed directly into policy. Although the details differ, the basic approach involves a government or sponsoring agency and 10 to 20 citizens randomly selected to consider a policy matter. The citizens are given information, resources and time to reach their own conclusions. In some places, the selection process ensures a diversity of perspectives. Like legal juries, the jurors are expected to come up with a common position about what the government should do about an issue. In the UK, citizens' juries have debated such diverse issues as education policy and decency in television. In Scotland, citizens' juries were complemented by "stakeholder juries," made up of representatives from agencies able to take action on the citizens' recommendation. The process can be empowering for citizens and for policymakers, as well as produce better policy.¹

Town meeting

A town meeting typically brings together citizens with political leaders from a community to discuss problems. The gathering can be called by citizens' groups or by officials, but should always involve some decisionmakers with power over the solution. In the meeting, citizens ask questions, make demands or propose solutions. A town meeting can attract good media coverage.

International Events

The same strategies mentioned above, such as citizens' juries and hearings, can be adapted for international events.

UN conferences

In Chapter 11, we describe how different UN conferences have become moments for citizens' groups to combine mobilization with lobbying (see page ###). A strategy of parallel NGO fora has now been institutionalized for

UN conferences that enable the official discussions to take into account NGO views. A number of NGO representatives have also gained official status to observe, and sometimes participate in, their country's delegation.

International policy meetings

In the last fifteen years, activists have used the occasion of World Bank, International Monetary Fund, G-8, and World Trade Organization meetings to mobilize and influence these institutions. Groups have used policy research and parallel citizens' fora to get the attention of key leaders and the public. The growing frustration by advocates with the institutions' lack of responsiveness have sometimes escalated into widespread protests. See "Activism In the Economic Sphere" on page ###.

Visits by international VIPs

Most governments and corporations like to present a good front for Very Important Persons (VIPs) visiting from other countries. These VIP visits are usually covered by the press and thus, provide a great opportunity to get attention for an innovative program or a social issue that is the subject of advocacy.

Other Citizen Events for Key Moments

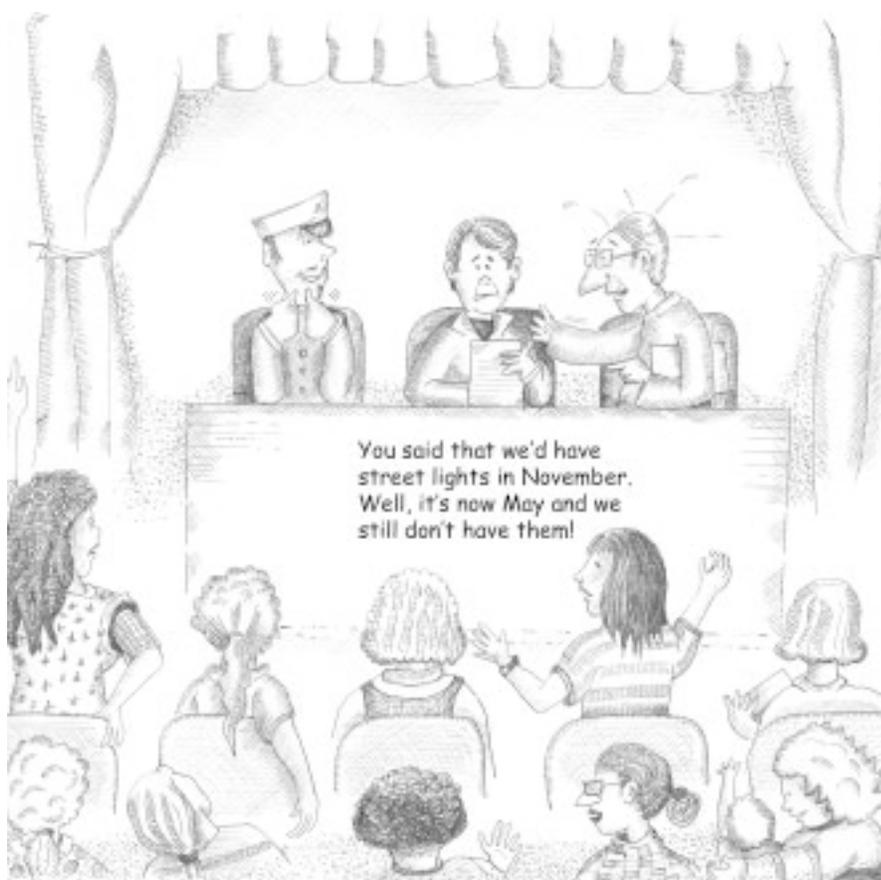
Accountability session²

This is a community meeting held for the purpose of holding public officials accountable. An accountability session requires a high turnout of people, and a carefully presented list of specific demands, such as legislation, funding, reparations, services,

etc. In Nicaragua during the 1980s, the government held gatherings called Face the People (*Cara Al Pueblo*), where government leaders listened to citizen complaints and demands and made commitments for follow-up. Government-initiated accountability sessions are increasingly used in Brazil and Bolivia where citizen participation is mandated by law.

Ideally, a citizen-initiated accountability session convinces policymakers to agree to take measures to address problems. Events should be professional and serious, but should also be fun. Ideally, they should end with a clear decision on further action.

You can adapt the following *Checklist for Holding an Accountability Session* planning your own events.



Accountability session

- ___ Are your key leaders on the planning committee?
- ___ Have you used the strategy chart (see pg. #) to plan the accountability session, taking into account your power?
- ___ Do you have main demands (usually substantive), a list of escalation demands, and some fallback demands (usually procedural)?
- ___ Are the proposed date and time for the accountability session suitable for your constituency?
- ___ Have you confirmed the date and time with the target?
- ___ Do you have an appropriate site that is accessible, centrally located, and equipped to handle your needs?
- ___ Have you made a realistic “turnout” plan? Are there enough people assigned to work on “turnout”? (Turnout refers to the number of people who will come to the event.)
- ___ Is there a good press plan? Have you arranged for the:
 - ___ Initial press release
 - ___ Follow-up calls to media
 - ___ Press packets at the session
 - ___ Visuals for photographing
 - ___ Press table and person staffing it
 - ___ Special area for television crews
 - ___ Post-session press release
 - ___ Calls to press people who didn’t attend
 - ___ Thanking press people who covered the session
- ___ Does the agenda demonstrate power over the target and give your leadership visible roles?
- ___ Does the agenda include the following components:
 - ___ Welcome and purpose
 - ___ Opening prayer, song, or words that inspire
 - ___ Community residents speaking
 - ___ Collection
 - ___ Demands and target’s response
 - ___ Summary Statement
 - ___ Adjournment
- ___ Have you taken care of logistics? Have you arranged for:
 - ___ Refreshments
 - ___ Room set-up
 - ___ Room decorations (posters, banners)
 - ___ Music or entertainment
 - ___ Baskets or buckets for collecting money
 - ___ Words for chants or songs
 - ___ Demands scoreboard
 - ___ Audiovisual equipment
 - ___ Microphones
 - ___ Extension cords
 - ___ Sign-in sheets and sign-in table
 - ___ Room clean-up

- Will you provide child care? Is there a good room available?
- Are there carpools or transportation arrangements available?
- Do you have a dress rehearsal schedule?
- Is someone assigned to greet the target as she or he enters the building?
- Are your key leaders and staff assigned to the following roles?
 - Chair (leader)
 - Chair's messenger (leader or staff)
 - Scorekeeper (leader)
 - Chair's organizer (leader or staff)
 - General organizer (leader or staff)
 - Target greeter (leader)
 - Press contact (leader or staff)
 - Press spokesperson/s (leader)
 - Speakers on the program (leaders)
- Have you recruited other volunteers and emerging leaders for the following roles:
 - Ushers
 - Microphone holder
 - Person with the sign-in sheets
 - Person to distribute handouts
 - People to collect money
 - Refreshment servers
 - Music or entertainment fill-ins
 - Child care
 - Applause and audience participation starters
- Does your follow-up include:
 - Sending a confirmation letter to the target
 - Sending thank you notes to everyone who helped
 - Celebrating key people
 - Checking attendance lists against those who said they would come and/or deliver people
 - Meeting with the planning committee to evaluate the session

From *Organizing for Social Change: A Manual for Activists in the 1990s*, Midwest Academy, 225 West Ohio, Suite 250, Chicago, Illinois 60610, p. 67.

Public information meetings

A public information meeting focuses on one issue. With enough publicity, and if the problem is widespread, you can attract many people. It is important to prepare a list of demands before the meeting, and be sure to have accurate facts, quotes, etc. The information should be presented simply and concisely.

Citizen evaluations

Similar to citizens' hearings, this involves a meeting to evaluate a government policy or program. It allows people to express their views and make proposals. A simple house-to-house survey before the meeting can recruit people to attend the meeting and give some insight into people's concerns.

Petitions

Gathering signatures provides opportunities for constituents to meet each other, talk about issues and gain a sense of support. Petition drives can be followed by a town meeting or accountability session to publicize and dramatize the support for your cause.



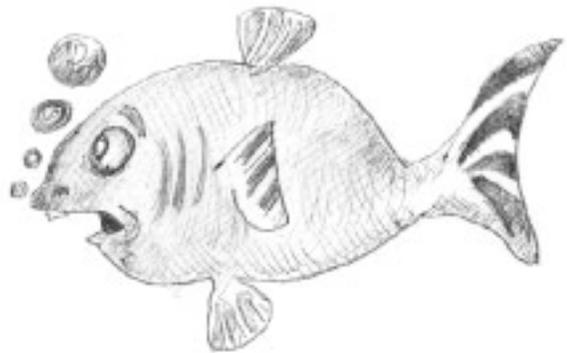
Awards & Booby Prizes

Inventing awards for particularly good or bad behavior can be a fun way to educate people and attract media attention. For example, the Peruvian NGO, Centro de la Mujer Peruana Flora Tristán, developed two media awards. "*Fem TV*" was for the best commercial presenting women in positive roles. "*Sapo (toad) TV*" was for the worst commercial presenting women in degrading roles. One publicity firm that received the "*Sapo TV*" award was so concerned by the negative publicity that they made a different kind of commercial and a few years later received the "*Fem TV*" award.

Rallies, marches, and vigils

In many countries of the world, grassroots constituents participate in advocacy through street marches, rallies, or vigils. When organizing such events, there are several things to consider:

- Are there opportunities for participants to do more than simply walk or stand with others? Are there ways in which they can



The power of numbers

play a more active role, for example by speaking or organizing?

- What are the political risks involved in a mass-based event? Is it legal?

Large numbers of people chanting, marching, or holding candles can draw the attention of decisionmakers and the general public. However, if you overuse mass gatherings, they may not be taken seriously. Some ways to enhance their impact include:

- Get enough supporters to make a visual impact. A poor showing suggests that you do not have support.
- Have a clear purpose and message. Everyone involved should have a basic understanding of what the issue is, and what is being proposed.

Activism In the Economic Sphere

In response to growing poverty and the gap between haves and have nots that have accompanied economic globalization and liberalization, citizens' groups are focusing their advocacy more on international corporations, investment groups, and economic policymaking. Economic issues at the forefront of advocacy include consumer rights, agricultural productivity, food security, environmental

degradation, workers rights and labor conditions, and the unregulated movement of factories, jobs, and financial investments that contribute to boom and bust instability in poorer countries in the world.

The economic sphere offers many strategic moments for mobilization, including investors meetings, CEO retreats, stockholder meetings, meetings of the international economic and trade policy groups, and others.

In some cases, people are mobilizing around consumer rights. For example, people are taking action against corporate mishandling of healthcare services, labeling of food, genetic engineering, and poor quality products. These activists argue that governments are not regulating the market sufficiently, thus forcing citizens to use their power as consumers to persuade corporations to be more socially responsible. Local and international boycotts, media campaigns, protests, pressure on CEOs and Boards of Directors, monitoring labor conditions, and educating venture capital institutions are among the strategies being used. See the following two examples.

Student Alliance to Reform Corporations and United Students Against Sweatshops

There are two well-organized national student groups based in the US that are focused on corporate responsibility: Student Alliance to Reform Corporations (STARC) and United Students Against Sweatshops (USAS). USAS was founded in 1998 and has stopped many universities from buying sweatshop-produced apparel for sports teams and campus shops. USAS has chapters at more than 160 campuses in the United States and Canada. STARC was officially launched in 2000. It has a database of about 2,000 members and a presence at 130 schools. STARC's projects include pressuring colleges to invest in socially responsible companies. Both STARC and USAS harness students' power as consumers and investors to influence corporate policy. They have used the Internet for posting information and training packs, fact sheets and logistical information to facilitate their nationwide organizing efforts.

Summarized from <http://ns.rds.org.hk/via/>

Via Campesina

Via Campesina is an international movement that coordinates the global advocacy of peasant organizations, agricultural workers, rural women, and indigenous communities from Asia, Africa, America, and Europe. It was constituted as a world organization in 1993 and works on issues such as food sovereignty, agrarian reform, credit and external debt, technology, women's participation, and rural development. The primary objective of Via Campesina is to develop solidarity among members in order to promote economic equality and social justice.

Via Campesina is very creative in how it mobilizes constituents around the world to participate in campaigns. For example, Via Campesina organizations from India, Brazil, Colombia and Western Europe participated with more than 450 farmers in an international caravan that passed through 12 European countries to make their demands known through protests in front of the head offices of transnationals. Via Campesina's mobilization around the WTO meeting in Seattle in 1999 included:

- Planting a tree in a city park to symbolize the peaceful struggle for a healthy environment;
- Organizing a demonstration in front of a fast food restaurant to protest the use of transgenics and hormoned meat;
- A gathering in front of an alternative producers market to support fair and local markets, controlled by agricultural workers;
- Participating in demonstrations and holding regular press conferences.



Summarized from <http://ns.rds.org.hk/via/>

Purpose

To assist groups in developing strategies for citizen mobilization.

See Chapter 16 for tips on running the meetings to plan and evaluate your action.

Process

(Time: 2 – 3 hours)

- Using the questions below, design a mobilization. You must identify the what, why, who, where and when of the action and weigh the potential risks and opportunities for your organization. If the action involves risks, specify how you will minimize them. The following questions review much of what was covered in the planning chapters and may help you design your mobilization plan.
 - What is our issue? (Who does it affect and how? Do we need further research to find out more about it?) See the exercises and tools in Chapter 8 and 9 if you haven't done this.
 - What is our proposed solution?
 - Who is responsible for the problem and what would we like them to do?
 - Which government agency or department deals with this problem? Which official in that agency makes the decisions affecting this problem? Who are the other stakeholders? Who would oppose or support a solution? (See Chapters 10, 11, and 12.)
 - What can we do to get the attention of the relevant officials? What is the political risk involved in different options? Are there ways to lessen the risks? What can we accomplish by each of the different options?
 - What do we need to do to prepare for the action? How many people should be involved? Do we need resources?
 - What do we want to communicate and how? If it is a public event, who should speak for the group? What should they say? (See Chapter 13 on messages and media.)
 - What are the different tasks and who will be responsible for each task?

The following chart on large paper can assist planning and coordinating.

| Mobilization Action and Rationale: | | | |
|------------------------------------|------|-------|-----|
| TASK | WHEN | WHERE | WHO |
| | | | |

- If your plan involves public speaking, practice first until the speakers are confident. Then, carry out the plan. Does everyone know his and her responsibility and role?
- After your action, evaluate — What impact did our activity have? Did we achieve our goal? What did we learn from planning and carrying out the activity? Next steps?

Adapted from *Organizing for Social Change: A Manual for Activists in the 1990s* by Bobo, K., J. Kendall, and S. Max. Midwest Academy, 1991.

Introduction

Founded in 1987, the DSWP is a national federation of community-based women's organizations scattered across nine regions of the Philippines. DSWP's members are drawn from the marginalized communities of Philippine society – peasants, workers in the formal and informal sectors, youth, urban poor, fisherfolk, indigenous peoples and Muslims. DSWP's objectives are:

- To fight against all forms of discrimination against women;
- To promote a form of development that recognizes the role that women can and do play;
- To raise women's level of consciousness, self-confidence and economic independence;
- To increase women's participation in all levels of decision-making;
- To work together with other women's and mixed organizations to promote common goals and objectives.

Electoral Advocacy: Constituency-Building for the Party List Law

As in many other countries, marginalized groups in the Philippines have been excluded from effective political participation. To address this problem, organizations pressed the Filipino legislature to enact a law that would guarantee fuller representation of these groups in Congress. In 1995, the Party List System Act was signed, and in 1998 it was implemented for the first time. The law reserved 20% (52 seats) of the total number of seats in the House of Representatives for organizations and new political parties which get at least 2% of the total votes cast at the national level. Women were among the sectors identified as eligible for representation under the law.

DSWP followed the debates and process related to the Party List Law closely. They held meetings with other mass and rural-based organizations to both critique the law and explore how it could benefit them. In these meetings, initially grassroots leaders were concerned about how they could play a role in the organizations that had already decided to participate in the elections. The women were concerned about the background, composition and track record of these groups, and challenged their commitment to grassroots women.

Finally, DSWP decided to organize BABAYI, as a national alliance of grassroots, community and sector-based women's organizations involved in political issues. DSWP reached this decision together with several rural-based groups outside of the federation when it became clear that all other women's party list groups were dominated by middle-class, educated or elite women. The grassroots leaders wanted an organization that would not treat them as mere supporters. They wanted to be active participants and play a role in decisionmaking for the party. They felt this would not be possible in the other organizations. At the same time, they recognized that the Party List Law presented the possibility of expanding the concept of representative politics.

BABAYI was an experiment – it was an entirely new experience in the history of Philippine politics. There was a range of inevitable difficulties which women confronted pragmatically. These included:

- Lack of financial resources
- Lack of political or electoral experience
- Lack of connections with national political figures or the media
- Lack of public recognition

These difficulties were compounded by the fact that the electorate hardly knew the Party List Law existed, and many disadvantaged sectors were skeptical about the value of elections.

There were, however, also strengths to balance these difficulties. The major strength was the idealism of the women, which motivated them to work hard and dedicate scarce resources to BABAYI. They were uncompromising in their opposition to exclusive politics, and committed to creating a more inclusive type of politics.

Unlike other party list groups, BABAYI had a built-in constituency at the national level. Enormous effort went to gaining the support and participation of thousands of other rural-based women's organizations. Eventually, BABAYI had more than 3,000 local women's groups – poor women's organizations – as its members.

Another difference from other women's party list groups was the manner in which BABAYI selected nominees to for its House of Representatives list. BABAYI ensured that there was geographic and sectoral diversity. BABAYI's list of nominees was the only one that included ordinary women.

BABAYI ran its campaign on the basis of women's ideals of what politics should be. BABAYI's positions, even on controversial issues, were never compromised, even if it meant antagonizing some people and losing votes. The campaign was seen as a rare moment when the public was inclined to listen to poor women.

BABAYI developed and publicized its legislative agenda as well as informational materials on the party list law. It established core groups at the village level and engaged people through local meetings, forums, women's rallies, and house-to-house campaigning. It also carried out election and post-election monitoring.

These electoral efforts led to:

- A better understanding among DSWP members as well as other rural-based groups of the concept of "authentic" politics and the importance of women's participation in politics.
- An increase in the number of women, and specifically community-based women, who ran for local office. More than 260 DSWP local leaders ran and won in the 1997 barangay (village) elections.
- Accreditation for BABAYI by the official agency for party list elections as a grassroots, women-led national alliance. The campaign period was used to do consciousness-raising on women's issues and advocacy for laws and policies for women.
- A significant number of local women's groups are represented on the Local Special Bodies in many areas of the country.
- A constructive relationship between DSWP chapters and local government units (LGUs) in many areas. It is now common for LGU officials to consult women's organizations in their areas about LGU programs.
- An increased interest in women's issues by LGU officials. DSWP members find that sometimes the LGUs are not opposed to women's issues, but they may not know what to do.

Since the elections, the DSWP has been involved in lobbying for more gender-sensitive legislation and policies. To this end, DSWP has conducted advocacy training and has lobbied for electoral reforms, improved legislation and services for women workers, and bills on sexual harassment and rape.

Challenges & More Challenges

Despite some important advances, DSWP's approach to advocacy is not without its weaknesses and problems.

The holistic approach is time-consuming and entails a lot of human, material and financial resources.

Although the federation has many leaders who are committed to working for it on a voluntary basis, because of the nature of DSWP's membership, the federation does not have enough leaders with technical skills and expertise. DSWP will have to invest more resources into technical capacity-building.

Material and financial resources are always scarce. The federation cannot depend on its membership for all of the material and financial resources it needs for its work. The DSWP needs to find ways of raising funds that make the work sustainable.

Attempting to work on several problems is also taxing, time- and resource- consuming, and overwhelming. At times other groups perceive DSWP as lacking focus because of its involvement in so many issues. Nevertheless, the federation needs to keep abreast of what is happening on all fronts to meet the interests and needs of its members.

Attempting to influence men – even the "progressive" ones – can be frustrating. While men may accept the importance of women's issues at the ideological level, translating this into concrete action, especially in their organizational and personal lives, is a different matter.

14 Case Study: Constituency-building and Electoral Advocacy

DSWP's use of participatory approaches sometimes prevents quick action. This is especially true with respect to more controversial issues, which require thorough discussion.

DSWP Insights from Doing Advocacy

For advocacy to be effective, a holistic approach is critical, particularly if the advocacy is to get the direct involvement of the women it aims to serve. Some of the lessons are:

Organizing and constituency building is a must. To be effective, advocacy on women's issues must be supported by a critical mass. Ordinary women must not only understand the issues, they must own them. This means that poor women's issues must be at the forefront of the advocacy. If this is so, community women and women's groups will *lead*, and not simply support, the advocacy.

Public education is essential. Advocacy success depends on support from the broader public. This demands information and education. Use of the media is indispensable because it reaches all corners of the country.

The participatory approach needs to be balanced with outputs. While participatory methodologies are critical to ensuring that women steer the advocacy process, advocates equally need to be able to respond quickly to specific situations. This is especially true for legislative advocacy, which needs to be closely synchronized with the legislative process. To this end, constituencies need to give lobbyists a mandate to maneuver quickly. Constituencies must agree on a minimum and maximum position to define the parameters of negotiation.

National means the whole nation. National level advocacy must be truly national. Activities must not be concentrated in the urban areas. When advocacy does not have a meaningful base across the country, it is easily dismissed by decisionmakers as the actions of a few noisy, urban, troublemakers.

Negotiating skills are a must. Negotiations inevitably happen at some stage in successful advocacy. The advocates need to be armed with negotiating skills, a clear grasp of the issue at hand, a clear position and the data necessary to back up that position. Tact and articulateness are important qualities. Women advocates need to assess when being "irritating" can work for the advocacy, and when it can harm it. Advocates must keep in mind that there will be future advocacy campaigns, so they must avoid needlessly antagonizing people who are in a decisionmaking role.

Advocacy requires common sense. Doing advocacy can be frustrating. It brings the advocates eye-to-eye with the people and institutions who perpetuate the status quo. The idealism of advocates needs to be tempered with pragmatism. If one attempt at advocacy fails, there are always lessons to be learned. Advocates can try again, and use other strategies to achieve their desired gains. The important thing is the recognition that advocacy is a never-ending task. As long as there are advocates with a desire for change, there will be advocacy.

Summarized from a case study written by Elizabeth Cunanan-Angsioco, National Chairperson, Democratic Socialist Women of the Philippines, for the Global Women in Politics Program of the Asia Foundation.

NOTES

¹ For a detailed description of the process and cases see *Citizens' juries: Reflections on the UK Experience* by Clare Delap, in PLA Notes, #40, IIED, February 2001.

² See *Organizing for Social Change: A Manual for Activists in the 1990s*, Midwest Academy, 1991