

Start Here!

Introducing Advocacy and the Climate Change Advocacy Toolkits



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The purpose of this toolkit is to help readers understand the purpose of advocacy and the different approaches that can be taken. It will also guide readers on how to use the other toolkits to develop and implement an advocacy plan.

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The Climate Change Advocacy Toolkits

These toolkits aim to guide and support civil society actors in the South in their efforts to advocate for pro-poor climate policies. They include a mix of:

-  instructions on how to plan and conduct advocacy interventions,
-  a range of case stories on how civil society works to influence climate change policy-making, and
-  references for further reading.

The toolkits are developed and published by *Southern Voices on Climate Change*. Since 2011, this Programme has supported around 20 civil society networks in the global South to advocate for climate policies that benefit poor and vulnerable people. The Programme is implemented by the Climate Capacity Consortium, comprised of four Danish and two international NGOs, with CARE Denmark as lead agency, and IIED as co-publisher of the toolkits. Funding is from DANIDA from the Danish climate finance envelope.

Further information on the Southern Voices networks and the Programme is available at www.southernvoices.net

'Action without vision is only passing time, vision without action is merely day dreaming, but vision with action can change the world'
Nelson Mandela



Why advocacy?

The world is overheating. Global temperatures are rising, affecting our climate. Poor and marginalised communities are feeling most of the effects of climate change and yet little is being done to support them. Governments are either afraid to take the bold steps that are needed, or they are being dominated by elite interests who are not interested in saving our planet or protecting its people. So what can we do? We need to ensure that governments in the North and South are held to account for their actions; that the voices of the poor and marginalised are heard by those in power; and that the policies and practices of governments and other actors change to respond to the changes in our climate. We need advocacy.



Why now?

Countries in the South are waking up to the realities of climate change, and as a result, many are starting to address climate change in their national planning processes. Southern Voices partners and other civil society networks and organisations in the South have played, and continue to play, a key role in raising awareness about the threat posed by climate change and in advocating for action. Many countries are in the process of preparing national climate change related policies and legislation, including new national policies or strategies on climate change, Nationally Appropriate Mitigation Actions, national energy policies, and Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and forest Degradation (REDD) policies and programmes. In many countries in the Global South civil society is critical to policy processes that aim to tackle climate change and protect the poorest and most vulnerable communities from its impacts.¹ These toolkits include a number of case studies where civil society has been particularly effective at influencing emerging national level climate change responses. A key priority has been to try and ensure the needs of the poorest and most vulnerable are not ignored.

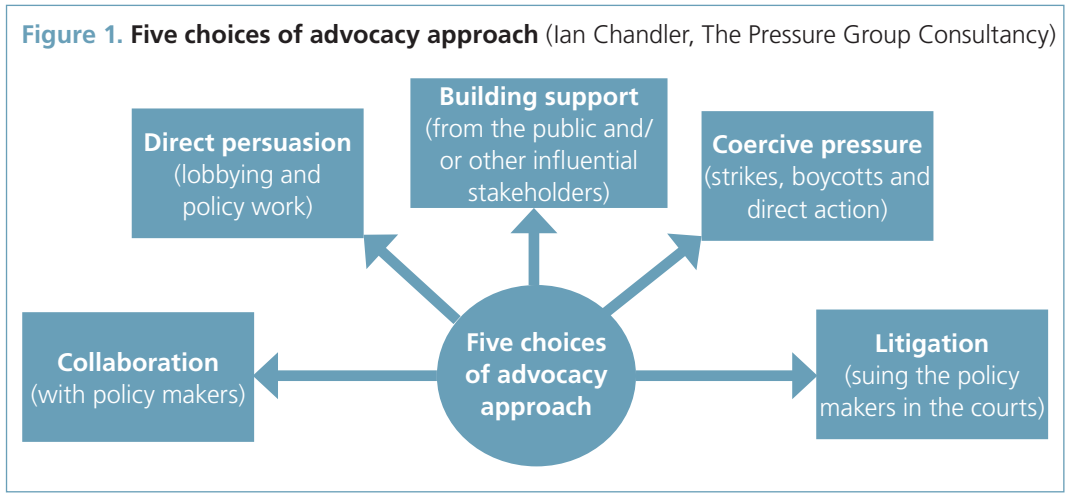


What is advocacy?

Advocacy is a process of influencing selected people or institutions in order to achieve desired policy, practice, social, behavioural or political changes that will benefit particular groups.

It is more than just protest (although you might use protest as one of your tactics in advocacy) – you protest against something but you advocate for something. It is also more than just raising awareness (although again, you might need to raise people’s awareness as one of your advocacy tactics). In most cases, however, lack of awareness is not the main barrier to change – it is usually something far more deep-seated. In order to be effective in our advocacy, to make a real difference to the future of this planet and the people living on it, we need to understand the barriers to change and develop strategies to overcome them.

This means that advocacy can take many different forms. Most advocacy falls into one or more of the five approaches shown in the diagram below.



1. See Reid, H., G. Ampomah, M. Olazábal Prera, G. Rabbani and S. Zvigadza (2012) *Southern voices on climate policy choices: analysis of and lessons learned from civil society advocacy on climate change*. IIED, London.

Within each of these five broad approaches, there are many variations and strategic choices to be made.

In making your choice of advocacy approach, you also need to take into account the **risks**. Not every approach is legal or appropriate in every country or for every organisation. Vested interests and political elites can react against some forms of civil society advocacy, so care must be taken if you are putting yourselves or others in danger.

Defining some advocacy terms

Advocacy or campaigning? What's the difference? One area of confusion is that the two terms are used differently by different people and organisations:

- Some see advocacy and campaigning as synonymous terms, both being umbrella terms for all forms of influencing (including, for example, lobbying and public campaigning).
- Some will see advocacy and campaigning as broadly the same, except that they see advocacy as being more reactive and direct, and campaigning being more planned and proactive and involving multiple channels of influence.
- Others use the two terms very differently. For them advocacy relates to engagement in government and inter-governmental policy processes. Campaigning, on the other hand, they equate to generating support and pressure from public audiences – an approach that is more accurately referred to as 'public campaigning'.

For the purposes of these toolkits, we shall use the first interpretation (i.e. advocacy and campaigning as words that can be used interchangeably).

A campaign is a project or organised course of action designed to achieve a specific response from a particular audience. Therefore we can have fundraising campaigns, election campaigns, advertising campaigns and advocacy campaigns. When we use the term 'campaign' in these Advocacy Toolkits, we mean a planned advocacy project (which may or may not involve engaging the public).

Public campaigning is a type of campaigning or advocacy that involves generating and mobilising support from the public (or segments of the public).

Lobbying is a type of campaigning or advocacy that involves direct engagement with decision makers (or other individuals of high influence), usually through face-to-face meetings.

Policy work is a general term for engaging in policy dialogues, including official government policy consultation processes. It can include research and analysis to identify policy recommendations.

Public awareness / Awareness raising: Increasing the knowledge of the public (or sections of the public) concerning the existence of a particular problem or issue.

Public education: Increasing the understanding of the public (or sections of the public) concerning the nature and/or causes of a particular problem or issue.

Alliance building: Generating, mobilising and coordinating support from other groups and organisations for a particular solution to a problem or issue.

Activism: Mobilising activity of supporters or affected communities in order to generate publicity and/or lobby and pressurise decision makers.



How to use the Climate Change Advocacy Toolkits

Each of the toolkits is based on the practical experience of civil society organisations associated with the Southern Voices programme around the world. They have been structured to help you plan and deliver effective advocacy to combat the causes and effects of climate change, to support and protect poor and vulnerable communities and ensure that their voices are heard by policy makers locally, nationally and globally.

Start with a plan...

Toolkit 2: Planning Advocacy sets out a simple framework and process for advocacy planning that will help you to keep focused, make informed choices and maximise your chance of success.

Develop your messages...

Toolkit 3: Framing the Debate helps you to focus, frame and deliver your messages so that they influence the perceptions and behaviours of your audiences.

Form (or strengthen) your networks...

You might choose to work on your own, but often you will be doing advocacy together with other civil society organisations. *Toolkit 4: Strengthening Advocacy Networks* gives some tips and examples of how to form and strengthen those networks and alliances.

Lobby the decision makers...

Toolkit 5: Influencing Decision Makers helps you to navigate your way around the corridors of power, plan your engagement with government policy makers and legislators, and conduct effective lobbying meetings.

Build support from the public...

Not all advocacy has to involve communicating with the public, but in most cases we will need to build popular support for our objectives to put pressure on the policy makers, as well as to change public behaviours. *Toolkit 6: Engaging the Public* provides some inspiring examples and a guide to developing effective public campaigns.

Engage with the media...

Getting positive coverage in the media can be a great asset to a campaign, and *Toolkit 7: Engaging the Media* shows us how.

Ensure local voices are heard...

It is important that policy makers hear the voices of those who are most vulnerable to the effects of climate change. *Toolkit 8: Supporting Local Voices* gives some techniques that we can use to support poor and vulnerable people to speak out.

Make sure promises are kept...

Getting policy commitments from governments is not enough – we have to ensure that these commitments are put into action so that results are seen on the ground and in the air. *Toolkit 9: Policy Implementation & Finance* provides tools for tracking policy implementation and budget allocations.

The Climate Change Advocacy Toolkits have been structured to help you plan and deliver effective advocacy



Background to the Climate Change Advocacy Toolkits and the *Southern Voices on Climate Change Programme*

The Southern Voices Programme is an extension of a project implemented by the Climate Capacity Consortium in 2009-2010 entitled 'A stronger voice for developing countries in the international climate negotiations'. The consortium was formed in 2009 as a joint effort to promote the engagement of Southern civil society organisations in the international climate negotiations.

This was followed by the *Southern Voices on Climate Change Programme*,² which aims to increase the capacity of civil society organisations and networks in selected developing countries to carry out climate change advocacy and monitoring activities and raise public awareness at national, regional and international levels. This will help implement and develop climate change policies and programmes, and promote environmental integrity and sustainable development, ultimately benefiting poor and vulnerable people. Since 2011, the Programme has supported ten national, eight regional and two thematic civil society networks around the world. The Programme will finish during mid-2014, but will be followed by two thematic initiatives: 1) Southern Voices on Adaptation to Climate Change, and 2) 'Promoting pro-poor low carbon strategies'. Both continue to support Southern climate policy networks. For more information please see: www.southernvoices.net

When the *Southern Voices Programme* was first initiated, detailed guidance on how to conduct climate change advocacy was unavailable, and networks engaged in advocacy and awareness raising activities using a 'learning by doing' approach with support from members of the climate capacity consortium. In 2012, advocacy experiences from across the networks were compiled and synthesised into an international report 'Southern voices on climate policy choices' (see footnote 1). Networks achieved a great deal from these efforts, as documented in the many case studies described in the report and the new ones presented in these Climate Change Advocacy Toolkits. The aim of these toolkits is thus to share these experiences with others and also provide guidance and a number of analytical and practical tools to help civil society actors plan and conduct their climate change advocacy activities better.

2. Supported by Danida, the official name of the programme is *Southern Voices Capacity Building Programme*.

Authors and contributors

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Toolkits in this series

Toolkit 1: Start Here! Introducing Advocacy and the Climate Change Advocacy Toolkits

Toolkit 2: Planning Advocacy

Toolkit 3: Framing the Debate: Messages and Communication

Toolkit 4: Strengthening Advocacy Networks

Toolkit 5: Influencing Decision Makers

Toolkit 6: Engaging the Public

Toolkit 7: Engaging the Media

Toolkit 8: Supporting Local Voices

Toolkit 9: Policy Implementation & Finance

Have your say

Readers are invited to provide feedback on the Advocacy Toolkits and experiences of their use at the Southern Voices discussion forum <http://forum.southernvoices.net/categories/toolkit>

Cover photos

Climate change advocates attending the first ever public demonstration in Doha, Qatar during COP 18

© Southern Voices on Climate Change

A training session for journalists and NGO communicators to understand effective climate change messaging

© Climate Change Working Group, Vietnam

Southern Voices networks meeting at the PreCOP19 Climate Change Advocacy Workshop

© Southern Voices on Climate Change

SUSWATCH, a Southern Voices network, delivers an intervention during COP18

© Southern Voices on Climate Change

Staging events such as 'Fossil of the Day' held during UN Climate negotiations can help frame the issue to reach a wider audience

© CAN International

The media are powerful tools you can use to get your advocacy message across

© Southern Voices

Involving villagers in decision making is key to strengthening pro-poor climate change policies

© CARE Denmark

CCN-Nigeria advocacy visit on adaptation to National Orientation Agency

© Climate Change Network Nigeria



**Strengthening southern voices in
advocating climate policies that
benefit poor and vulnerable people**



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For further information www.southernvoices.net