

# **Disability Rights Advocacy**

## **An advocacy manual for disability rights activists**

**By**

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**Disability rights advocacy**

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## **Preface**

We as Action on Disability and Development-Zambia Programme realise that there is need to support Disabled People's Organisations (DPOs) in the area of building their capacity to advance their issues in as far as the promotion, protecting and respecting of their rights is concerned. It is in this view that we are supporting the DPOs to build their advocacy skills. Advocacy is new phenomenon in African democracy. It is one phenomenon that needs to be developed in the persons with disabilities as individuals so that they develop their organisations.

In countries with scarce resources, there is high competition for such resources. It is those who are termed to be 'powerful' who will be able to access the resources. The weak and vulnerable remain behind. It is therefore very important to have persons with disabilities and their organisations strong enough to influence policy and practice change for the purpose of accessing the scarce resource on equal basis like the rest of the other citizens.

This simple manual will give basic knowledge on advocacy work. It defines advocacy and gives the planning process. It also gives hints on the lobbying process. ADD-ZAP will continue to support training in advocacy work to persons with disabilities in order to have them enjoy their rights and fundamental freedoms on equal basis with other citizens. With the adoption of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, it is important that DPOs rise and call for their rights.

Signed,

Henry Chanda,  
Country Director,  
ADD-ZAP.

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## **Acknowledgements**

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You may realise that the major source of this material is Ian Chandler who is the Managing Consultant of the Pressure Group Consultancy Limited. I will never to thank him greatly for building my advocacy skills through the mentoring he has been doing through Sight Savers. In view of this, I thank Mr. Joseph Munsanje, the Country Director of Sight Savers-Zambia, for allowing me to gain wide experience in structured and practical advocacy work.

## Introduction

Advocacy is a growing phenomenon in new democracies. It is becoming a very essential tool policy and practice change. Advocacy is defined by many different people in different ways but in short, it is all about social movement to achieve change. It is high time persons with disabilities and their organisations engaged in more structured and practical advocacy work that could achieve reasonable change.

The adoption of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in December, 2006 gives good reason and ground for serious advocacy. The convention is an international instrument that is aimed to ensure that the rights of persons with disabilities are promoted, protected and respected. It should be used for advocacy at all times. Policies, laws and programmes of every state should conform to the principles of the convention. Therefore, persons with disabilities and their organisations should ensure that their governments ratify and domesticate the convention. It is therefore important for all DPOs to understand the principles enshrined in the UNCRPD.

The UNCRPD does not explicitly define disability. It rather attempts to state who persons with disabilities are. It says, "Persons with disabilities include those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others."

The principles of the convention are:

- (a) Respect for inherent dignity, individual autonomy including the freedom to make one's own choices, and independence of persons;
- (b) Non-discrimination;
- (c) Full and effective participation and inclusion in society;
- (d) Respect for difference and acceptance of persons with disabilities as part of human diversity and humanity;
- (e) Equality of opportunity;
- (f) Accessibility;
- (g) Equality between men and women;
- (h) Respect for the evolving capacities of children with disabilities and respect for the right of children with disabilities to preserve their identities.

The above principles are essential to know because DPOs should engage in advocacy knowledgeably.

It is also important to select advocacy issues that hinder on definitions, for instance, advocacy to recognise sign language as a language. The UNCRPD provides for the following definitions:

"Communication" includes languages, display of text, Braille, tactile communication, large print, accessible multimedia as well as written, audio, plain-language, human-reader and augmentative and alternative modes, means and formats of communication, including accessible information and communication technology;

"Language" includes spoken and signed languages and other forms of non-spoken languages;

"Discrimination on the basis of disability" means any distinction, exclusion or restriction on the basis of disability which has the purpose or effect of impairing or nullifying the recognition, enjoyment or exercise, on an equal basis with others, of all human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural, civil or any other field. It includes all forms of discrimination, including denial of reasonable accommodation;

"Reasonable accommodation" means necessary and appropriate modification and adjustments not imposing a disproportionate or undue burden, where needed in a particular case, to ensure to persons with disabilities the enjoyment or exercise on an equal basis with others of all human rights and fundamental freedoms;

"Universal design" means the design of products, environments, programmes and services to be usable by all people, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation or specialized design. "Universal design" shall not exclude assistive devices for particular groups of persons with disabilities where this is needed.

DPOs should not ignore the above provisions because most of the advocacy issues are around, communication, language, discrimination, accessibility etc. For us to be effective, the above provisions should be at our finger tips. Please know the above provisions by heart. Do not memorise, know and understand them.

This manual is a simple guide that could be used by all persons with disabilities. It would be helpful if it was translated to local languages so that even those communities based DPOs could use it.

## Chapter 1

### WHAT IS ADVOCACY?

All the people have got the right to be treated equally. But due to certain circumstances including gender, social status, race, age, illness and disability, certain groups are usually discriminated in society. It is in such circumstances that the groups or their representatives speak out to seek the recognition and respect of their rights. This process is then referred to as advocacy.

It has been discovered that advocacy has got many different definitions. Many of these definitions are based on the nature of organisation defining advocacy. It also depends on the ultimate objective of that particular organisation. The general definitions of advocacy are as in the examples below:

- Advocacy is arguing in favour of something, such as a cause, idea, or policy.
- Advocacy occurs when an individual engages in dialogue about an issue they care about.
- Advocacy is about championing a campaign on a policy issue for the purpose of changing policies and laws for the benefit of the people concerned.
- Advocacy is a process of supporting and enabling people to: express their views and concerns; access information and services and; defend and promote their rights and responsibilities.

Some advocacy definitions are specific for the organisations and are made in line with the vision and mission of the organisation. For instance, the definition of advocacy according to Sight Savers is:

“A purposeful activity that is aimed at changing the attitudes and behaviours of those individuals: policies and practices of those institutions whose actions affect the elimination of avoidable blindness and social inclusion of people who are blind.”

The other specific definition is from elderly persons and it says advocacy is *“a one-to-one partnership between a trained, independent advocate and an older person who needs support in order to secure or exercise their rights, choices and interests”* (Older People’s Advocacy Alliance UK).

It is clear that Sight Savers and Older People’s Advocacy Alliance have their own vision, mission and objectives. It is in this perspective that advocacy is normally treated as “needs focussed”.

For the purpose of this manual and people working with persons with disabilities, advocacy is a planned process whose ultimate goal is to influence change the behaviours and practices of people and institutions who can directly or indirectly affect the promotion, prevention and respect of the inherent human rights and fundamental freedoms of persons with disabilities.

This definition is coined after a long experience of working with persons with disabilities and their organisations. Deriving from the definition, we realise that advocacy is planned. It does not take place without planning. This planning could either be written or unwritten. Many villages have done advocacy planning without writing down the plan. For instance, villagers in many parts of the country have sat down to demand for the construction of roads in their areas. They have not been writing their advocacy plans but have been successful. Despite being unwritten, the villagers always sit down to plan the process.

The planning process goes through a similar route as will be observed later in this manual. The definition also indicates that advocacy is a process. It is important to note this. If we do not take this fact seriously, we shall always be frustrated by advocacy work. It does not bear fruits in one day. It is short, medium and long term. It is about influencing change. Normally, the change sought is about the promotion, protection and respect of the inherent rights and fundamental freedoms of persons with disabilities. The change takes place in people and in institutions.

It should be noted that in advocacy the activists are getting into a battlefield that is competitive. It is the role of the advocates to ensure that the advocacy issue being pushed is well packaged with clear messages to break the competition. Every advocate in the battlefield promotes their own view. According to Ian Chandler (2006), these other views can arise from: vested interests; different values; alternative perspectives and other priorities. With this in view, it is important to observe the views of others groups but sell your view in a well structured but simple manner.

### **Why do we engage in advocacy?**

This is an important question which many people have failed to answer. In a workshop I conducted with members of the Deaf Association in Zambia, I got the following answers:

1. We do advocacy in order to raise awareness among people.
2. We do advocacy in order to change the thinking of the government.
3. People carry out advocacy for the purpose of changing laws.
4. Advocacy is done to make us achieve our rights.

The above answers are good. In the process of carrying out advocacy the above are achieved. The ultimate goal of carrying out advocacy is to change the living standards or conditions of persons with disabilities for the better. We cannot do advocacy just to change the thinking of people or to changes laws or carry out awareness and end there. These changes need to go further to have the lives of the affected people for the better. So, advocacy should at the end have the behaviours of people and practices of institutions

towards making life better. Advocacy should achieve an aim or goal where the persons with disabilities enjoy their human rights and fundamental freedoms.

So, when planning advocacy the aim or goal of our advocacy should reflect how the rights and freedoms of persons with disabilities are enjoyed to make their lives better. Examples of an aim should read:

“to have children with disabilities receiving quality education with all their educational materials available to them”.

The aim or goal of our advocacy should then clearly show the impact of the advocacy work on the beneficiaries. In the above aim, the impact is that children with disabilities will be receiving quality education. They will be enjoying their right to quality education.

### **What should we change in order to achieve our aim?**

The advocacy mentor of Sight Savers International, Ian Chandler says we should have “changes in institutional practice or individual behaviour that will contribute to the fulfilment of our aims”. The changes that we want to happen make up our advocacy objectives. Let us look at our aim. Our aim as in the above example is:

“to have children with disabilities receiving quality education with all their educational materials available to them”.

Now, what should happen or change in order to achieve this aim. The following may need to change:

1. Policies and laws.
2. Implementing practices of these policies and laws.
3. The mindsets and attitudes of people.
4. The way people behave, act or react towards issues affecting persons with disabilities.

The above changes will help us achieve our aim. So, these are what our objectives are based on. Examples of advocacy objectives are as follows:

1. To have children with disabilities in the classroom receiving instructions with all their appropriate learning materials.

To have children with disabilities in private learning institutions receiving low cost education with adequate learning facilities and materials to enhance quality education. The above objectives are outcome based. They reflect the outcome of our advocacy. At this stage the learning conditions of children with disabilities would have not changed for the better yet.

Never forget to make the objectives SMART. I guess we are already familiar with the acronym SMART. This stands for S- specific; M- measurable; A- achievable; R- relevant and; T- time bound.

Specific means that the objective should be clear on what needs to be changed and by whom. Measurable means that what needs to be changed should be measured at one stage. People should be able to determine the amount of change that has taken place. Achievable means that the intended change issue should be reasonable and realistic in terms of

attainability. You do not set objectives with actions that can never be achieved. Relevant means that the change issue should be of relevance to the advocates or the beneficiaries. Last, there should be some deadline to be met. Advocacy should not be indefinite. An example of a SMART objective is as follows:

The Ministry of Finance and National Planning to increase tax rebate to employers employing at least three persons with disabilities by 50% in the next national budget.

It is specific in who should act (Ministry of Finance) and what should be done (increase tax rebate by 50%). It is measurable in that 50% of the current rebate can be easily calculated. It is achievable obviously and realistic to government. It is relevant to persons with disabilities because it will attract employers to employ persons with disabilities. It gives the time, i.e. in the next national budget.

It is important to have SMART objectives for the purpose of being clear and focussed. When we are clear and focussed even our planning become easier. This will help us monitor and evaluate change. The advocates will be able to follow what they are monitoring or evaluating.

When we look up at our definition of advocacy, we realise that it addresses two targets for change. It targets institutions and individuals. Therefore we have two sets of objectives in advocacy, those which target institutions and those that target individuals. Objectives that target institutions aim to change policies and practices in those institutions. For instance the above example of an objective is targeting an institution, the Ministry of Finance and National Planning. It aims to change a policy. The ministry has a certain amount as rebate to employers as a policy. The practice to change is the implementation of the tax rebate to the employers. Automatically, we realise that advocacy should not end at changing policies of institutions but practices. Policies have got no bearing on persons with disabilities but the practices. It is in fact easy to change policies than to change practices.

To understand the change issue, he should be given knowledge for him to understand. Only when he understands the issue can he change his attitude towards the issue. Then his behaviour can change. His behaviour in reflect in having him write the letter.

Objectives that target individuals aim at changing attitudes and behaviours of the individuals. Individuals sometimes do not change because of their attitude. The perception of the individuals on the change issue should be changed first before changing their behaviour. It is difficult to change the behaviour if their attitude is not changed. An example of such an objective is as follows:

The area MP to write a letter to the Ministry of Education demanding for three qualified special needs education teachers in the only school in our constituency by 30<sup>th</sup> December, 2010.

The MP is an individual who needs to be educated on the issue. His attitude towards the issue should be changed. That is only when can he write the letter of demand with an open

mind. He would be able to follow up the letter because he would have been educated on the issue.

### **WHO GETS INVOLVED IN ADVOCACY?**

In most cases we have seen people getting engaged in advocacy just because there is an issue directly affecting them. It should not be the directly affected only who should be engaged in advocacy. Certain issues affect everyone. For instance, if women with disabilities feel aggrieved with the way the education system discriminates them, it should be recognised that this affects a chain of people. Firstly, this issue affects the households these women come from. The neighbourhood will be affected because they will be living with a person who will be an economic burden on them. The social workers get affected because the number of clients increases and begin to compete for scarce resources. The church and other charities also get burdened. So, all these groups need to get into some of advocacy work around the same issue. These people are usually referred to as stakeholders.

In view of the above, advocacy is done by the directly affected, who are the beneficiaries; it is done with the beneficiaries and done for the beneficiaries in certain circumstances. Advocacy by the beneficiaries here means advocacy done by persons with disabilities as individual activists, groups or associations. The persons with disabilities identify the advocacy issues, plan and implement their advocacy plans. They do the research, lobbying, campaigning, monitoring and evaluation themselves. They may of course bring in experts who are not disabled to assist them with some technical aspects of advocacy like research etc. But they remain the principles advocates. In such circumstances, the persons with disabilities should carry the advocacy skills and have the necessary resources required. This type of advocacy is the most appropriate because it carries the power of legitimacy and ownership. It carries the power of knowledge over the issue or problem it reduces the risk of being challenged or frustrated by decision and policy makers.

Advocacy with persons with disabilities normally comes in when the persons with disabilities do not have the skills and appropriate resources. Some agencies come in with skills and funds to support disabled people's organisations. They equip the DPOs with skills and give them funds to implement advocacy activities. At the same time, they continue to work with them in implementing the activities. In certain circumstances, persons with disabilities are joined in advocacy by groups of people who get affected by a problem which consequently affects them. For instance, teachers for learners with disabilities may be affected by a problem of having no resources to deliver quality education. The teachers may work with persons with disabilities to carry out advocacy. This could happen with social workers, development workers etc.

There have been some challenges in some circles where persons with disabilities feel sign language interpreters cannot be joined to advocacy for people who are deaf. Or, personal assistants joined in advocacy for people who are blind or deaf-blind. In such circumstances, the deaf, blind and deaf-blind should be left to do the advocacy themselves. This is an ethical issue and it simply needs to be adhered to. The role of the sign language interpreters and personal assistants is to interpret and assist the persons with disabilities. The other role of associations of sign language interpreters and personal assistants would be to educate the advocacy targets and public on their role in the lives of the deaf, blind and deaf-blind persons. They should avoid speaking on behalf of the persons with disabilities. They can work with persons with disabilities in their advocacy work by simply carrying out education programmes on their role. This is a very controversial issue in advocacy work, when it comes to who should work with persons with disabilities.

The other angle of advocacy is working for persons with disabilities. This happens in circumstances where the particular persons with disabilities do not have the capacity and capability. They do not have skills; cannot acquire the skills; do not have the funds and cannot utilise the funds. It happens normally with young children with disabilities who can speak on their own. It happens also with those adults with profound mental disabilities. It should be carefully noted persons who are mental health users have the capacity and capability to do advocacy by themselves. It only comes to those persons with profound mental disabilities who are not able to take charge of their own affairs permanently. The world over, persons who are mental health users have viable and vibrant associations engaged in advocacy work by themselves.

In circumstances where the beneficiaries cannot do the advocacy, parents, care givers, lawyer; the clergies and social workers do the advocacy. Parents and care givers for children with disabilities, especially those children with intellectual disabilities have developed the concept of 'self-advocacy'. This is where the children and youths with intellectual disabilities are equipped with skills to speak for themselves. The concept is working.

In all forms of advocacy, people should be alerted of the global slogan of "Nothing about us without us". There should be no advocacy work about persons with disabilities without the persons with disabilities.

At this stage, it is essential to understand that advocacy is a contested game. It is a game in which persons with disability will advance their issues in competition with many other issues from different groups. At the same time it is a competition in which persons with disabilities will be pushing their issues to government and other decision makers in competition with the views those government decision makers hold. So, it is important to realise this as we get into advocacy. We should never aim to get into advocacy to win and make the government officials and other decision makers to be on the losing side. Our negotiations should always aim for a win-win situation rather than a win-lose situation. At the end of it all, we should be able to sit down with government and any other target and say, "together, we have done it".

For instance, persons with disabilities carried out some specific advocacy for the ratification of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. This was through a petition to the President of the Republic of Zambia. The government ratified the convention exactly after twelve days from the day of the petition. Persons with disabilities should not say “we have won and government has lost”. It took the will of the President to have the convention ratified in a very short time. So, persons with disabilities and other civil society should say, “together we have done it”. This is the spirit of advocacy as a contested game.

## Chapter 2

### Developing an advocacy strategy

It is important to always have an advocacy strategy when getting into advocacy work. When getting into advocacy, it should be noted that we are getting into a battlefield. We are therefore like soldiers who need to have a strategy before getting to war. A strategy will assist us to know what we want, who our target is, which people will help us, have action plans and to implement the action plans in a more organised and structured manner. Generally, an advocacy strategy gives us a clear picture of how we will reach our destiny. A strategy should not be treated as a very complex thing by those in advocacy.

Let us look at this example. When you are about to travel to another town as a wheelchair user, there are some certain issues you need to look at before you start off. The first thing you will obviously need to know is your destination. Where do you want to go? You can never start off from your home without a reason. You must have a reason of going where you want to go. Why do you want to get there? You will also need to know how you get there. How do I get there? It is important to select the most appropriate and accessible way of getting there. What resources do I need? As a wheelchair user, you need to identify people who will help you with your luggage and wheelchair. Who will assist me get around, on and off the bus? Every wheelchair user needs to identify the obstacles that may confront them and how they will overcome them. When you answer these questions, you would have set your strategy.

In advocacy you need to know the advocacy issue and understand it thoroughly, you should know who is affected and who can bring about change. You need to have the right resources for your advocacy. You must be very clear of your destiny or your aim. You must also be clear of how you get to your destiny or aim. This gives you clear objectives.

In view of this, a useful strategy makes it easy to achieve four things just from the onset:

- a. Clearly identifying and defining an issue and its possible solutions;
- B. Making it easy to get more people involved;
- c. Bringing the people who have the power to bring about the solutions you want directly into contact with your organisation;
- d. Knowing how much you need and raising the money or other resources you need to carry out the work you plan to do.

The process of advocacy planning is somehow complex. It needs the presence of a trained expert in order to develop a clear strategy. In order to have a clear strategy for structured advocacy, there is need to be guided through the process. After going through the process for many times, then you can do it on your own. It is sometimes challenging because within the same group or organisation, you will find different views. This may derail the planning process. Different individuals will at first be holding different views and interests. All this needs to harmonise just as you start the planning process.

The other challenge is that you plan without real understanding the responses you will receive from different stakeholders. You may even be uncertain if the other beneficiaries who are not there during the planning process will share your view. You are not even sure if supporters will fund your cause. It is therefore important to use an expert, if you are planning advocacy for the first time.

In order to overcome the above challenges, you need to begin your planning with research for the purpose of developing evidence for your advocacy. The research will also help you identify the right target and supporters. Advocacy should be evidence based. Without evidence, it is difficult to advance your issue. There must be evidence of the issue and its effect on the beneficiaries.

Advocacy planning should involve as many people as possible. The views of many people, especially the affected should be taken into consideration. The views of other concerned stakeholders should also be captured. Sometimes, it is important to consider the views of the potential target. In short, advocacy planning should be consultative and participatory. The views of different groups and individuals should be harmonised. The process of planning should have a leadership. There should be an individual or team facilitating the whole advocacy planning process. The planning process usually takes more than one month from my experience.

It involves the following stages:

1. Issue identification.
2. Problem analysis.
3. Drafting objectives.
4. Situation analysis.
5. Capacity assessment.
6. Finalising objectives.
7. Devising advocacy plans.
8. Implementing the plans.

9. Monitoring and evaluation.
10. Revising the advocacy plans.

(Source: Ian Chandler, The Pressure Group Consultancy Limited).

Let us now go through the planning process.

### **1. Issue identification**

The issue is what affects the persons with disabilities. This issue normally arises as a result of regular complaints from many persons with disabilities. It arises as a common complaint from the different categories of persons with disabilities. There are some common issues that cover all categories of persons with disabilities, for instance, access to quality education, meaningful employment and participation in public life. The issue is normally picked up as 'discrimination'.

There are some issues that are specific for each category of disability. Such issues come about due to the different barriers arising from that particular disability, for instance, issues around sign language for those who are deaf; Braille and mobility for those who are blind; physical access for those who are physically disabled; respect and self realisation for those with mental disabilities. Other issues concern those with partial disabilities like hearing aids and low vision devices. The deaf-blind have their issues around communication. Those with multiple disabilities have multiple issues.

This brings us to the issue of general issue identification and planning; and specific issue identification and planning.

After the issue has been identified, it still remains vague. It is very important at this stage to carry out research to establish evidence for effective advocacy. The research can either be quantitative or qualitative and may follow all the research requirements. It may sometimes be a simple desk review. This depends on the issue.

### **2. Problem analysis**

When the issue has been identified it needs to be converted into a problem. The problem should be clear and be common to the majority of the beneficiaries. For instance, one common issue given above is access to quality education. This should

be converted to an actual problem. There are many problems persons with disabilities face in education. So, the problem should be clear to enable easy analysis. For instance, 'there are inadequate trained teachers to handle inclusive schooling in which learners with disabilities would acquire education that gives value to their future life'.

There are many tools used for analysing advocacy problems. In this manual, we shall focus on problem and solution trees. The problem and solution trees assist us to dissect the problem by looking at the causes and effects on persons with disabilities. This tool also assists us to develop objectives for advocacy and the impact of the advocacy work. This means that at the end of the problem analysis we should be having our draft objectives and aim. We should also be able to see where we would like to be at the end of the successful advocacy work.

### **Problem tree**

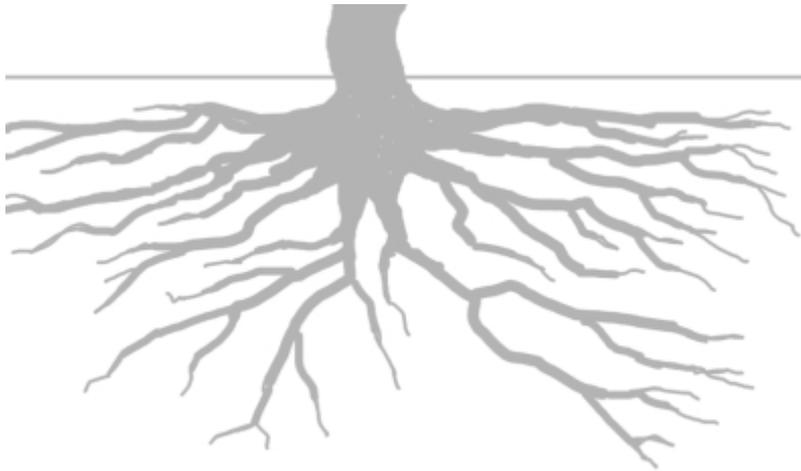


Solution tree

Branches

Trunk

**Roots**



### **3. Objective drafting**

The third stage of drafting objectives is directly generated from stage two. The objectives are the roots in the solution tree. The objectives are prioritised and the most effective ones in achieving the solution, which is the advocacy aim, are selected. Remember, advocacy objectives are outcome focussed.

### **4. Situation analysis**

A situation analysis is an assessment of the advocacy situation in the environment. This environment may be a community, a district, province, country or region. This is very important to note because advocacy may be done at district level by the

Disability District Networks or at national level by the national Disabled People's Organisations. Therefore we have an internal and external situation. The internal situation is an assessment within the organisation. On the other hand, the external situation is the assessment of the external environment.

There are many tools that could be used for internal situation analysis. These include: resources assessment, skills assessment, activity analysis, power analysis and SWOT analysis.

**Resources assessment:** You assess the resources your organisation has. This includes infrastructure, finances, human resource, networks, technology and time.

**Skills assessment:** This is the assessment of the skills you have within the organisation. This includes skills in advocacy, management, resource mobilisation and financial accountability.

**Activity analysis:** This involves analysing the activities that need to be taken and checking the possible time for implementing or completing each of the activities. Timelines can be used in this analysis.

**Power analysis:** This involves assessing the power your organisation carries. There are different types or powers the organisation may carry. This is analysed in comparing to the power of other organisations out there.

**SWOT analysis:** SWOT stands for Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats. The strengths and weaknesses refer to those strengths and weaknesses your organisations have in terms of implementing advocacy work. It includes the finances, human resource, time, reputation etc. The opportunities and threats are those things opportunities and threats outside your organisation that can affect your advocacy.

When you have done your SWOT analysis, you have to enhance your strengths, change your weaknesses to strengths, take advantage of your opportunities and neutralise your threats.

The external situation analysis is done using a tool called the PESTLE analysis. PESTLE stands for Political, Economic, Social/cultural, Technological, Legal and Environmental. This gives you how the external environment in terms of friendliness to advocacy work is.

**Political:** You need to assess the political environment. This includes assessing the political system. Political systems are either democratic, dictatorship, theocratic or kingdoms. It is easier to do advocacy in a democracy than a dictatorship. The political environment includes assessing the time in the political cycle of the country. Is it during election time, just before, just after or during the neutral and election free time? Which politicians or political parties are allies or enemies? What political structures exist; wards, constituencies, districts, provinces etc and how can they be utilised?

**Economic situation:** Assess in which economic system you are. We have three main systems: free market economic system; command or centrally driven economic system and mixed economy. Also find the strength and weaknesses of your economy. Check the economic priority sectors of your government. Is your sector a priority? Which sectors are competing? This is where you need to follow and track the economic policies of the country. Track both the development plans and budget presentations. This is done by looking at the previous and current plans and budget presentations as you plan.

**Social/cultural situation:** This looks at the social dynamics of your area. It includes assessing the norms, values, customs, religion and traditions of the area you will be carrying out advocacy. For instance, your advocacy strategy will be different if you are advocating for the rights of women with disabilities in an Islamic environment compared to a Christian environment.

**Technological environment:** Assess the technological situation in your area. Can you use the internet/blog/Email for your advocacy? Can you use TV or radio effectively? How is the communication system? This can also lead you to assess whether it is possible to demand for certain types of technology in a certain sector. For instance, is it SMART to demand for a laptop for every child with a disability in school? All these questions need to be answered here.

**Legal situation:** Many persons with disabilities and their organisations struggle around advocacy for policy and legislation reform. In the event of the adoption of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, this aspect is very essential. You need to understand your policy and legal frameworks. First of all, does the legal system allow freedom of speech? Does it allow for freedom of assembly and association? These aspects are important in planning advocacy. It is also important to establish the policies and laws that will directly and indirectly affect your advocacy work. If you need to change policies and laws, which policies and laws are they? What do they say and what needs to be changed?

**Environment situation:** Normally this refers to the geographical environment. You look at the weather, climate and geographical position of your area. It is difficult to advocate for accessible roads in a flood plain if your country is not technologically developed. Some advocacy needs to assess the climate patterns, e.g. when should elections be held to let all categories of persons with disabilities participate. Obviously, the rainy season is terrible for persons with disabilities.

If your assessment has been good, it is easy to get into advocacy with a clear picture of what is already obtaining outside your organisation. Always do a PESTLE analysis!

## 5. Capacity assessment

This is where you assess the capacity of your organisation to carry out advocacy. During the situation analysis, we did an internal situation analysis. For this exercise we selected some tools to be used. The same tools could be used for the organisational capacity to do advocacy work. These include: resources, skills assessment, activity assessment, power analysis and SWOT analysis.

The tools can help you tell whether you can go ahead to do advocacy or not. (Refer to situation analysis.)

Look at this interesting analogy and think about it critically.

Five ways of knowing who will win (from Sun Tzu's Art of War)

- i) Those who know when to fight and when not to fight are victorious
- ii) Those who discern when to use many or few troops are victorious
- iii) Those whose upper and lower ranks have the same desire are victorious
- iv) Those who face the unprepared with preparation are victorious
- v) Those whose generals are able and are not constrained by their governments are victorious.

(Source: Ian Chandler, the Pressure Group Consultancy Limited.)

You now imagine you are a General planning for war, where the war here is advocacy. How would you use this analogy?

When getting into advocacy you should assess the power capacity you have. According to Ian Chandler (2006) there are two main types of power. These are internal and external power. Internal power is power that you carry yourself. This includes confidence and capacity in terms of finances and skills. External power is derived from the way your target views you. This includes: expert, legitimate, representation, reference, resource/trade, reward and punishment, (Ian Chandler, 2006).

- Expert power: Your target views you as an expert in issues concerning the rights of persons with disabilities. So, you need to utilise the power as far as you can. It is at this point that when planning for lobby meetings you need to select people who will really exhibit this power.
- Legitimate power: This is the power you get because of the fact that you are from an organisation that is legally registered and you were duly elected.
- Representation:
- Reference:
- Trade:
- Punishment and reward:

## **6. Finalising objectives**

The sixth stage in the advocacy strategy development plan involves finalising the advocacy objectives we looked at in stage three. In stage three the objectives were simply pulled out of the solution tree. We needed to do a situation analysis and capacity assessment before finalising the objectives. We can only finalise these objectives after we are satisfied that we have the capacity, as an organisation, to carry out effective advocacy. So, the draft objectives are finalised simply by making them SMART.

We can make the objectives SMART when we realise, during the situation analysis and capacity assessment, that we will be able to achieve them.

## **7. Devise advocacy plans**

After finalising our advocacy objectives we now go ahead to do our action plans. These are the plans that we indicate all our advocacy actions. There should be some actions for each of the objectives set above. It is at this stage when the budgets are also looked at.

## **8. Implementing advocacy strategy**

After we have the action plans, we implement our advocacy strategy. We shall look at how we implement our advocacy strategy in our next chapter.

## **9. Monitoring and Evaluation**

As you implement advocacy strategy, it is important to monitor and evaluate the work. We shall look at monitoring and evaluation separately in another chapter.

## **10. Revise advocacy strategy**

The revision of our advocacy strategy always emanates from the monitoring and evaluation results. When we evaluate our advocacy work and realise that we are not progressing, we need to revise the advocacy strategy. We revise the advocacy strategy regularly. After revising we may get back to:

- i) Start the whole process of planning again. This is when we realise we have gone wrong.
- ii) Stage two, where we simply have to analyse the problem again. The advocacy issue remains the same but is analysed again.
- iii) Stage five, where we need to do the capacity assessment again.
- iv) Devising the action plans again.

The above planning process could be divided into the following phases:

- Phase 1: Know what you want to change
- Phase 2: Identify best influencing strategy
- Phase 3: Devise action plan
- Phase 4: Implement action plan
- Phase 5: Monitor & Evaluate Progress

### **Why do we write strategy papers?**

It is important to understand that writing advocacy strategy papers is very essential. As already stated previously, we cannot get into advocacy without a strategy. We write advocacy strategy papers in order to consolidate our plans. Our plans should be consolidated so that our action plans are line with our objectives for the purpose of achieving our aim. A strategy paper outlines exactly what we need to do and how much we

need. So, it gives us direction. It keeps us on the right track. The advocacy strategy paper gives us confidence in our work because we are sure of what we want to do. The process of developing the strategy paper puts us in the right picture of who we are, what we want to do and where we want to be. It could be used to mobilise supporters. It can also be used to mobilise finances. A clear strategy paper can attract funding from many donors. We write strategy papers so that we find it easy at the monitoring and evaluation stage. The strategy paper can be a guide for evaluation even if the evaluator is an external one.

The advocacy strategy should include the following:

- i) Advocacy aim
- ii) Primary objectives of the advocacy
- iii) The target
- iv) Key strategies including audiences and secondary objectives
- v) Proposition
- vi) Action plans
- vii) Resources and budgets
- viii) Risks and assumptions
- ix) Monitoring and evaluation process

The planning process in advocacy is very essential and should be managed very well. Effective and efficient planning should be managed by the person in charge of advocacy in the organisation or the Chief Executive Officer. This calls for adequate financial resources and skilled human resource. The officer in charge of the advocacy work in the organisation should be present during the whole planning process. This officer should offer support to the advocacy expert assisting in the planning. This is also essential because if the plan is absorbed during the planning process, it becomes easy to implement. It also becomes very easy for the responsible advocacy manager to present the strategy paper to other approving bodies.

## **Chapter 3**

### **Implementing advocacy**

The most exciting stage of advocacy work is implementing the advocacy strategy. Planning is very hectic and tedious. It is complex. But if the strategy is clear, it becomes exciting to implement. There are many approaches to implementing the advocacy strategy. It could be implemented by the Chief Executive Officer and his full time staff on behalf of the organisation and the persons with disabilities. This usually works well when the CEO is a person with a disability.

The other way is by putting in place an advocacy committee that will be working with the CEO or advocacy manager in the organisation. The advocacy committee could comprise different stakeholders including other DPOs. It is important to have a representative committee. The role of the committee would be to coordinate the advocacy work. Advocacy is about social mobilisation. The best way for social mobilisation is to include as many stakeholders as possible in the advocacy work. A new phenomenon of mobilising as many stakeholders is evolving. This is the phenomenon of having Advocacy Platforms. The Advocacy Platform is a big body that comprises, if possible, all stakeholders who have interest in the issue. Such a platform meets once or twice per year. The purpose of such a big body is to have many stakeholders championing the issue. In Zambia, the concept of a Disability Platform was born within the Sight Savers supported advocacy work.

The management of the advocacy work needs to be managed effectively and efficiently. This is why there should be a dedicated manager to manage the implementation process.

The manager should ensure that the whole implementation process is well coordinated with adequate financial resources allocated timely. The manager should ensure that the process is in line with the strategy paper. This means that the target audiences should be kept involved. The action plans are followed. The monitoring and evaluation process is in place. The manager should always monitor the successes in the advocacy implementation and regularly share them with the rest of the stakeholders on the Advocacy Platform. This should be done every time there is indication of success.

Note: Celebrate all advocacy achievements made whether small or large. It forms part of the influencing strategies. Celebration encourages more supporters to join the advocacy work and reduces the power of the target.

### **Advocacy Activities**

There are many advocacy activities that we can get into. Some are quite complex but with practice, the skill develops. The main advocacy activities are:

- Research: Investigating issues and problems, gathering evidence and identifying recommended solutions or courses of action.
- Activism
- Alliance Building
- Awareness Raising
- Campaigning
- Communications
- Lobbying
- Policy Work
- Public Education

(Source: Ian Chandler, The Pressure Group Consultancy Limited.)

### **Strategic Approaches**

#### **Rational**

This is where we get realistic and present facts and figures. We ensure that we do our research and present facts and figures as they are. Normally, this advocacy strategic approach is used by professionals.

#### **Collaborative**

In this strategic approach, we share responsibilities with our targets. We as DPOs provide certain skills or resources in order to achieve our aim. Sometimes, the DPOs could provide resources while the target, e.g. government would provide skills for research. This sort of advocacy approach is usually non-controversial. It works very well where the DPOs have got resources.

#### **Political/Pressure**

This is the most common strategic approach among DPOs. Pressure is put on the target to change. It is effective when properly planned. This is where you find press statements, petitions, picketing, demonstrations, boycotts etc.

### **Legal/litigation**

This strategic approach seeks redress through the courts of law. This should be the last resort. It usually calls for a lot of funds and skills. It is very controversial and no one likes it. Otherwise, it works wonders. It is a new approach in DPOs found in developing countries. The Zambia Federation of Disability Organisations has adopted this strategic approach through its project, ADEPt (Advancing Disability Equality Project).

We can select one or combine two or combine all the four strategic approaches depending on our skills and resources.

### **Advocacy and Media work**

In implementing advocacy work, we cannot run away from using the mass media. The mass media is an effective tool of bring about social change. Let us remember the old saying within the media fraternity: the media can build or destroy; it can shape society. A lot of advocacy work has been successful because of effective use of the media. When we refer to the media, we are talking about the electronic media, i.e. including radio, television, internet; print media including newspapers, magazines, and newsletters. In today's world of high technology influential advocacy could be done even through social networks on the internet. We have had of advocates being influential in championing anti-Islamic activities on social networks. This could be a bit difficult for persons with disabilities, especially in developing countries because very few access the networks. Good enough, this could be accessed even on the cell phone.

This brings us to realise that the media gets used differently in each country depending on the political system and situation. That is why it is important to do a situation analysis before getting in advocacy work. In Zambia, the media is a good tool of advocacy. There is a degree of freedom of expression and tolerance. But as we change governments, we need to assess the view of the politicians towards the media.

### **Why should we work with the mass media?**

It is inevitable to work with the media because the media is effective in change and shaping the views of society. Society depends on the mass media for information. The society depends on the media before adopting a side on issues. People adopt positions because the majority of society is for the view. They support a view because the class to which they belong is for that view. The media makes politicians and decision makers 'bend' towards a certain view when under pressure from the media.

The other fact is that the mass media reaches out to many people at one go. This is especially so in the case of the radio and television. Mostly, the media, when used effectively, is free or very cheap. It is free when it comes to news stories. People have argued this way, "I had this on radio, so please, do not argue with me!" This is how influential the media is.

When the whole media carries the same view, it is difficult for politicians to make contrary views especially when the view is backed by evidence. Some politicians and decision makers may be arrogant though! If the media has to be meaningful to the disability movement, the movement has to ensure that their issues are real and evidence backed.

### **Advantages of working with the mass media in advocacy**

The advantages of working with the mass media include, but are not limited to the following:

- i) The media reaches out to many people at once, especially the radio and television.
- ii) The mass media is free or cheap if effectively utilised, especially for news items.
- iii) The mass media, if strategically selected can be targeted to a specific group of decision makers or opinion formers.
- iv) The mass media is influential, decision makers would like to be covered positively rather than negatively. So, if they appear to ignore issues around the rights and fundamental freedoms of persons with disabilities, they get affected.
- v) The mass media if effectively targeted will always follow you for stories. It is hungry for news. Here, we simply need to be news makers.
- vi) The media will give the advocates the views of its target without necessarily meeting the targets. Politicians and decision makers are difficult to meet, but are fast in responding to media statements.
- vii) Depending on the advocacy issue, the mass media can raise the profile of the organisation thus raise opportunities for financial support on the advocacy work?

### **Disadvantages of working with the media in advocacy**

The mass media may sometimes put us to a disadvantage. The disadvantages include, but are not limited to the following:

- I) The media may distort or misrepresent our issue.
- II) The media may be expensive if not effectively utilised. Press conferences in hotels are expensive. Paid-for media statements are expensive.
- III) The media may be biased. This is so especially for government sponsored media if we are advancing an advocacy issue against government.
- IV) The media may be frustrating by not covering our issue. Sometimes, our issue will always be a 'basket' story. This frustration has been reflected even on the news reporters who take the stories to their news editors. We shall meet sentiments like "I thought your story was news worth but my news editor through it to the basket".

The advantages of using the media could be enhanced while the disadvantages could be avoided. It is important to ensure that the disadvantages of using the mass media do not impact on us as advocates for the promotion and protection of the inherent rights and fundamental freedoms of persons with disabilities. This should be taken care of during the planning stage. The risk analysis should analyse the disadvantages of working with the media and neutralise them. This is why it is very important for

managers of organisations of persons with disabilities to ensure that during the advocacy planning stage, risk analysis and management is done at all means.

### **How do you select the media to work with?**

The selection of the media to work with is affected by many variables. These variables also depend on many factors including the advocacy issue being championed. The advocacy issue normally determines the target, advocacy audiences and type of messages to be disseminated. So, in selecting the media, you select the media that will have impact on your advocacy target. If you advocacy target is a Permanent Secretary in a government ministry, obviously, you will avoid community media that does not reach the capital city where the PS is normally found. You also do not target a youth magazine that is published in local languages because it is clear that people that the PS do not read such magazines.

The selection of the media will also depend on the audience we want to influence and seek support. This raises questions like: is the audience urban or rural? What is the education level of the target audience? Are we targeting an audience comprising a particular profession, e.g. teachers, doctors, architects, engineers? Are we targeting the whole nation or local people only? The answers to these questions will assist us select the media to work with.

When selecting the media, there is need to analyse the media we are selecting. We have the print and electronic media. Which one is more effective for our issue, target and audience? It is also important to assess the bias of the type of media. We have media biased to government or ruling parties; media biased to community news; media biased to religious stories; media biased to opposition parties and; rarely, media that is neutral. This analysis is done in comparison to our advocacy issue. Normally, advocacy issues that question government's integrity and respect for human rights would rarely be covered by media that is biased to promoting government agenda. Such issues like: corruption in government ministries have affected the education of children with disabilities would be readily covered by media that have a bias to the community or the opposition political parties.

Apart from bias, media houses have got ideologies, for instance, "a paper that digs deeper", "bringing the community to your doorstep", "promoting the development work of government" etc. These ideologies have got an impact on the type of stories, features and programmes the media carries.

Depending on your advocacy issue and position, the media that is to be selected should have a desired outcome. It should change the position of our audience. It should gather support. It should change the attitude and behaviours of our targets. It is important to be seen to be politically neutral as we use the media.

### **How do we draw the media to us?**

Many times, leaders in the disability movement have complained that the media is not sensitive to disability issues and does not cover such issues adequately. This could be true. It could be that the disability movement has not attracted the media. The question then is,

### **What does the Media want from us?**

The media, especially the private media, is in business. Business is about gaining benefits in terms of profit. So, the media wants stories that will attract people to buy and read their newspapers or magazines. The media wants stories that will cause people to listen or watch the radio or television respectively.

Stories that affect the emotions of people are attractive to the media. The media also wants news stories. In most cases the media wants stories that are topical. These are stories that everyone is focussing on, International conferences, elections, games, international commemorations etc. During election time, the media will cover stories related to elections. So, link and connect your advocacy issue to elections. Always link your issues to the topical issues. The media will carry them. We should always be careful not to be carried away and divert from our issue. We should always remain focussed and clear about our advocacy issue.

One other important factor is that the media wants voice quotations, pictures and videos. So, ensure that when giving a story to the media, you should avail yourself for a voice recording if it is radio or picture if it is a newspaper, or a video shot if it is TV. Make your stories simple and short. It is important to be innovative when seeking media coverage. We need to be opportunistic.

We can be innovative and opportunistic in working with the media by catching the media people where ever they are. For instance, during certain commemoration like International Women's Day people usually go for marching. We need to move close to the media and ask for an interview. Offer an interview on the human rights situation of women with disabilities and link your advocacy issue to that. Never wait for the media to follow you. The media is sometimes choked with stories.

The media has got many different types of coverage. We need to understand these and find ways of utilising them. The media has got news stories which the print or read. Such news stories are highly competitive because they fight for limited paper space or air space. For instance, on radio news, we should know that we are competing for ten to fifteen minutes of news coverage. In the print media, we are competition for the front page. So, we should package our news stories to bit the competition.

We also have radio and television panel discussions. How do we get there to have our issue discussed? Sometimes, it could be a different topic being discussed on a phone-in panel discussion. We need to phone-in by linking our issue to the discussion. Different panels discuss different issues; we can always link every public discussion to disability issues. Documentaries are attractive to the public. How do we capture the media to carry documentaries or feature stories on our issue? Invite the media to carry a specific disability issue on a documentary or link your issue to a documentary being planned. All this calls for an innovative disability movement.

Sometimes, it is important to contribute to the "letters to the editor" page. A lot of people enjoy reading letters to the editor. We need to be enthusiastic about this page. It is influential and can call for a debate that can influence your target. In this age of technology,

we can open our own website specifically for advocacy work. Social networks can also be used to open debates.

When in advocacy work, we must ensure that we read, listen to and watch our media. This is very important because it will help us to understand the media we are working with. It will also assist us to monitor the reactions towards our issue by both our target and audiences. By following our media, we will be able to identify individual media personnel who have got the passion towards disability issues or related domains in the public. It is at this time when we select the correct media and individual media personnel to work with. Always have specific media personnel that will champion your issue. Such people always create news stories, features or documentaries on our advocacy issues without being reminded. Work closely with them but never corrupt them to carry or cover your stories. The media personnel to work with should not be limited to active reporters but editors, photographers, producers and presenters. We may even develop relationships with DJs who will be able to propagate our issue as they play music.

### **Press statements**

There are different ways of issuing press statements to the media. The first is by writing down your press statement and distributing it to the media houses. The second is by phoning the different news rooms and issuing the statement through the phone. The third is by calling a press conference. The other way is by walking into a news room and offering yourself for an interview. All the three are effective. The effectiveness depends on the issue being advanced. Stories that need explanation, statistical evidence need to be written and submitted in writing. Such statements tend to be long.

Very brief and specific issues can be given to the media through a recorded telephone interview. Such statements are good for stories that are already familiar with the media. The reporter receiving the telephone statement will have very few questions to ask. Where you feel the media will need your picture or video, it is essential to walk into the news room and offer the statement there.

Press conferences need good planning. These should only be used when it is very necessary. The media personnel will never attend your press conference if your first press conference was a time waster to them. Make sure the statement to be issued will capture the attention of the media. Make sure it is topical and worth travelling for from the news rooms. Never call for press conference regularly. One or two press conferences per year for the disability movement are enough. Press conferences are sometimes prompted by certain circumstances. A press conference may be called to respond to a serious issue affecting persons with disabilities.

For instance, if the national budget has just been announced by the Minister of Finance and it is realised that it seriously omits issues of persons with disabilities, it is necessary to address such issues through a press conference. This will display the emotion that persons with disabilities attach to it. Conferences of such magnitude need to be held jointly with other DPOs to demonstrate solidarity over the matter. Joint press conferences carry a lot of weight and easily influence the target. An example of such a press conference is one that was held to call for the ratification of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with

Disabilities. It was a joint press conference by the DPOs and other civil society. It had great impact on the target because it achieved its objective.

When writing or delivering your press statement, ensure that the important issues are all in the first paragraph. Give the situation of what is there, what should be changed and how it should be changed as a summary in your first paragraph. Make it simple. Then you proceed with the details of the issue. In a press statement indicates what the issue or problem is. Indicate how it affects persons with disabilities. Also indicate how it affects the community and society at large. Sometimes you may indicate how it affects the target, e.g. government. Lastly indicate what should be done and how this will positively change the lives of persons with disabilities and the society at large. Avoid beating about the bush. Make sure your issue is relevant and realistic.

### **Interviews with the media**

In our advocacy work, we will be required to appear on different types of media interviews. There are many types of interviews. The most important are radio and television interviews. Of course you may provide interviews for news, but for the purpose of this section, we refer to long radio or television interviews. These interviews may be pre-recorded or live.

With the current technology, pre-recorded interviews are good. These are interviews which are done before publication. The interview is done and recorded. The recorded version is then edited. It is during this editing that the appropriate points may be picked for publication. Sometimes, the interviewee may be available to assist the technician in editing the interview.

Live interviews are sensitive because they are not edited. All the mistakes and errors get shown without editing. Many people are nervous with live interviews.

Ian Chandler provides the following 'Dos and Don'ts for interviews, especially live interviews.

### **Dos and Don'ts**

- i) Prepare well – know exactly what your main point is, what you want to say and anticipate difficult questions and how you are going to answer them;
  - Be on time (turn up early);
  - Get your main points in early;
  - Keep calm and polite – passionate is good, angry isn't;
  - Keep to the point – don't waffle or get diverted;
  - If you don't know the answer, say so and then get to your main point;
  - Practice, practice, practice

(Source: Ian Chandler, The Pressure Group Consultancy Limited.)

When turning up for a television interview, make sure that you appear smart and presentable. You do not need to exaggerate your dressing. Just make sure you are presentable to the public who are going to be watching you. Sometimes, you may wear a T-shirt carrying an advocacy message. This will present your message as you talk. Avoid mammering when on television. This includes fidgeting about, shaking and so on. Be steady

and ignore the camera. There has been an observation that people who are blind tend to move their heads from left to right and back when in an interview. This could be avoided.

Let us now debate the following issues for interviewees with disabilities on live television programmes:

- i) Do I need to leave my wheel chair to a sofa in the studio?
- ii) Should my crutches be seen on television lying down in front of me or on my side?
- iii) Should I keep my dark glasses on to avoid been seen with 'damaged' eyes or keep my dark glasses on?
- iv) Should I attempt to use my residual unclear voice on television when I am deaf or leave everything to my sign language interpreter?
- v) Should I appear on an interview with my assistant or aid when I have an intellectual disability or leave everything to my assistant or aid?
- vi) Should I allow my sign language interpreter clarify issues which are not clear during the interview?

The above questions are not exhaustive. Many more questions should be asked over how interviewees with disabilities should appear on live television programmes. Such questions should be asked bearing in mind the rights of persons with disabilities.

## Chapter 5

### Lobbying

#### What is lobbying?

Lobbying is defined differently by many different lobbyists. In my work and reading around advocacy, I have come to understand that lobbying originates from the term 'lobby' (I cannot remember the source). I have come across literature stating that it originated from people who visited the lobby of their National Assembly to talk to their MPs during breaks, before sessions and after sessions. The people waited for their individual members of parliament and spoke to them about their issues and problems. Such people kept on saying, "we are going to the lobby", so everyone called them lobbyists and the activity as lobbying.

We observe, therefore that lobbying is a one-to-one meeting between the lobbyist and target who could be decision maker. Lobbying is inevitable in advocacy. Some schools of thought combine lobbying to advocacy and refer to 'advocacy and lobbying'. Some tend to isolate advocacy work as being broad. This makes lobbying as one of the advocacy activities. Indeed, lobbying is one of the many advocacy activities. It is a regular activity in advocacy.

- You are not trying to win an argument. If you go into a lobbying situation with that attitude, your beneficiaries will lose.
- You are trying to persuade the other person to take a particular course of action that ultimately will benefit your beneficiaries.
- Success only comes from a Win-Win situation.
- Influencing Styles

**Factual:** influences by a presentation of the facts; there is an emphasis on detail and documentation.

**Intuitive:** influences by stressing the benefits of a solution; the emphasis is on the creative approach to new possibilities.

**Normative:** influences by an appeal to a common set of beliefs; emphasis on a fair solution; behaviours tend to be based on emotions.

**Analytical:** influences by showing causal relationships between parts and then synthesising them.

- Influencing Styles
- You have these unconscious preferences, and you need to be aware of them.
- Your lobbying targets will also have their own unconscious preferences, and you need to recognise them.
- You need to be able to “speak the same language”.

### Qualities of a good lobbyist

- i) Must be knowledgeable with advocacy lobbying skills and lobby issue.
- ii) Should carry compassion and dedication to the lobby issue.
- iii) Should be a good time manager.
- iv) Should be composed and patient.
- v) Should be stable and consistent but not rigid.
- vi) Should be observant and be able to predict responses in targets.
- vii) Should know when to speak and when to listen; what to say and when to say it.

Lobbying, just like any other activity in advocacy, must be prepared. Although it should be prepared, we have some impromptu lobbying that occurs whenever the opportunities occur. Such lobbying can take place anywhere. It occurs wherever you find your target or any person who is your audience. Impromptu lobbying can take place in the lobby of any building, at a party, in a workshop, during dinner gatherings, in a train etc.

For instance, you could be travelling on a bus. Suddenly a minister comes to sit next to you. This is the opportunity to introduce yourself and the organisation you work for, then present your issue right there. Do not be very formal. Make sure he says something about it. If possible get an appointment to see him at his office. Give him your business card and get his. When you get back to your office call his office to formalise and confirm the appointment. Such lobbying is effective although many lobbyists think that it is improper to present official issues to government officials when they are not in their offices. Of course some officials do not like this. The goodness is that they will say, “Please, why don’t you see me when I’m in my office?” This is excellent. You should quickly say, “When should I see you exactly? Please put me in your diary. I will come with two other colleagues.” Never forget to formalise the appointment immediately you get back to your desk.

With that impromptu lobby session, you can plan a formal lobby meeting. This is done in phases. There are three phases to lobbying. The first is pre-meeting phase- planning for the meeting. The second is the meeting itself. The third phase is post-meeting activities.

### **Phase 1: pre-meeting phase**

This phase occurs before the lobby meeting. This is the planning stage for the meeting. Even before you make the appointment, you should know why you want to have a meeting with your target. Set up the agenda for the meeting. This agenda should be clear and short. Select the delegation, i.e. the people who will go with you. A number of three people are good for a meeting. It is best never to go alone for a lobby meeting. Ensure that your delegation is one that will not be intimidated by your target. Your delegation should comprise lobbyists who know the advocacy issue very well. It is appropriate to have a person with a disability among the lobbyists. Some targets have challenged lobbyists saying, "Why are you talking about persons with disabilities when they are not with you? Who are you to represent the?" This is where the question of representation comes in. It is also important to include women and men in your delegation.

After you have established your agenda and delegation, make the appointment. When making the appointment ask the following questions politely:

- i) We would like to meet the PS, with whom will he be with?
- ii) How much time are you giving us?
- iii) What else should we come with?
- iv) In which room are we meeting him?

Remember to give your agenda to the PS in advance. After this, make a thorough research on who the PS is and what he understands about your issue. Read the policy or law that the PS operates under. Put your data in order. Give yourself roles; what to say; when to say it etc. Some lobbyists usually meet to discuss how they will conduct themselves in the lobby meeting. Get back to your influencing styles and remember them. Plan on how you will use them during the meeting. Remember, a well planned meeting is normally successful.

Examine your delegation:

- i) Are you a legitimate leadership?
- ii) Are you the right representatives of other persons with disabilities?
- iii) What is your reputation is it questionable?
- iv) Do you have a known criminal record?
- v) Do you have known political or partisan inclinations, especially to opposition political parties?

Put together your position papers, policy briefs and brochures in readiness for the meeting. It would be good if the documentation is neatly filed for your lobby target to read.

Persons with disabilities who need assistants should select the assistants of their choice. If the lobbyists are deaf, they should select a competent sign language interpreter. If they are blind they should select a competent personal assistant. Deaf-blind persons should ensure

their assistants are very well competent to avoid embarrassment. Please do not use children. All personal assistants must be presentable.

### **Phase 2: the meeting**

This stage in lobbying is very important because it will reflect who we are. Remember that whatever we present and how we present it reflects our organisation. In fact, in many cases, it reflects the disability movement. So, we should bear this mind. So, get to the meeting on time. It is to be in the reception at least ten minutes before the appointment time. If you made the appointment through the secretary, politely mention that. State the time of the appointment and the organisation you are coming from. Then, remain relaxed until you are ushered in.

When you get into the meeting establish a relationship with the lobbying target. Accept his offer of seats and thank him for accepting to meet you. Quickly introduce your delegation by name and position in the organisation. Please avoid unnecessary talk at this stage. The lobby target may take advantage of you and divert you from the beginning.

When given the time, present your issue and what you want from the target very quickly. In many cases, the target would have known your issue if you had already written to them. So, be brief and to the point. Remember to refer to your sources of power. Remember, also to use your influencing styles. Present your issue the way you planned it during the pre-meeting phase. As you are presenting your issue, be observant on how your target is behaving. Observe both his verbal and non-verbal actions. You should take note of these because they translate into what the target is thinking about your issue and you. Give your target the time to respond to you.

Mostly, you may engage into a question and answer session. The target will ask you questions which you need to answer. You may ask questions which your target should answer. Make the meeting a negotiation table. Engage in meaningful dialogue. Allow the people sitting with the target to ask you questions. Remember never to be diverted by the target. Sometimes, your target may engage you into discussions that not relevant to your issue. You should ensure that you remain on track. Feel free to let your target realise that you are not interested in the discussion he is bringing. You can start suggesting possible solutions at the stage when your target wants to divert you.

When suggesting solutions, ensure that you give your target options. This allows for win-win solutions. Ian Chandler suggests that you use the "If...then..." language. For instance, you could say, "If you feel government cannot make adjustments to all the buildings, and then it should engage all building owners to do so at their own cost." Discuss as many possible solutions as you can, as long as such solutions lead to resolving your advocacy issue. You may not get the answer in that meeting but something leading to resolving the matter would have been agreed upon. The target may give you another appointment to allow him to research further or consult. He may refer you to a higher office or appropriate office.

When you are sure you are satisfied with the meeting, give a summary of your discussion. Repeat your resolutions to the meeting and thank the target for giving an opportunity to meet him and his team. Hand him the file you had prepared for him. As you shake hands to

leave, you can now talk about anything else not related to the meeting. You can comment on how good his office is. If he is the Permanent Secretary for Education, tell him you heard him launch the opening of five schools and congratulate him for that. This normally relaxes the mind of your target if you had given them a hard time.

Note the following during your meeting:

- i) Do not be taken up with teas and snacks in your meeting!
- ii) In Zambia, we have got traditional cousins; avoid that if your target is one!
- iii) Avoid getting angry, no matter what!
- iv) Do not get intimidated!
- v) Turn off your phones!
- vi) Ask for permission if you have to do audio or video recording!
- vii) Remain confident throughout!

### **Phase 3: post meeting activities**

Many advocates call this phase the 'follow-up' stage. Of course it is. All the activities in this phase are related to the meeting.

Ian Chandler outlines the following actions in phase three:

- i) De-brief immediately.
- ii) Review what took place in the meeting.
- iii) Gauge potential for further movement.
- iv) Give each other feedback.
- v) Plan your next steps.
- vi) Write up your notes of the meeting. Circulate them to your colleagues and network partners (taking into account the conflicting demands of transparency and confidentiality)

(Source: Ian Chandler, The Pressure Group Consulting Limited.)

It is important to write to your lobby target after the meeting. You need to thank them for the meeting. In your letter indicate the resolutions. If, possible, tell your target that you will be getting back to them in a given period to follow-up the agreed resolutions.

Remember to always follow-up. Never leave issues to sleep.  
Confirm what was agreed.

### **Modes of influence**

There are two situations where you will need other modes to influence your lobby target. The first is when you do not have enough power to influence. The second is when you do not have access to the target.

When you realise that you do not have enough power to influence, you use the powerful. You may use parliamentarians, the media, the church, other strong NGOs etc. When you cannot access the target, you can get your issue to him through other people close to you. For instance, you could talk to a civil servant, who in turn would talk to a Director, who has access to the Permanent Secretary. You could use this mode of influence to make

appointments. Some lobbyists have used wives of PSs and Ministers to make appointments and it has worked.

## Chapter 5

### Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring and evaluation is a key component of advocacy work. We cannot do without M&E.

#### What is M&E?

**Let us examine monitoring first. Monitoring** is a continual process of collecting data that is being generated from the advocacy process. The data being collected varies. It is data about what we are doing. It is also data about what others are doing. The data also includes how our advocacy target is responding and reacting to our advocacy work. As we are in the process of implementing our advocacy work, the beneficiaries, who are persons with disabilities in general, continuously respond to the process because it affects them. This data of how the beneficiaries are affected should be collected.

Data collection in advocacy is in two ways. We could be collecting quantitative data, for instance, the number of audiences agreeing with your advocacy issue at the beginning of the work. As the advocacy work proceeds, many more audiences support the issue. This data could be presented in terms of figures or percentages. The data is used to monitor the support we are gaining. The figures could be used as a source of power. Qualitative data is also collected in form of pictures, videos, letters, newspaper cuttings, news footage, reports and interview etc. A data base can also be developed depending on the type of advocacy work we are engaged in.

**Having looked at what monitoring is, let us now look at evaluation. Evaluation** is a process assessing the whole advocacy process after a certain period in order to determine the

impact being made. This is done through reviewing the data collected during the monitoring. Evaluation is done after six months, one year or at the end of the advocacy project. This could be done by internal staff or external consultants.

Evaluation is done in order to inform and modify current plans, to learn from experience and improve future planning. It is also meant to make us be accountable to beneficiaries, supporters, donors, managers, trustees and other staff, (Ian Chandler, 2006).

**In M&E, we also carry out impact assessments. Impact Assessment** is a process of measuring how effective you have been in achieving your aims and objectives. Remember that the aim in advocacy is how the work will change the lives of persons with disabilities. So, we need to measure how the lives of the beneficiaries have changed. This is very effective if a base-line survey was done at the beginning of the advocacy work. That is why it is important to do a situation analysis when planning advocacy. When assessing the impact, it will be clear if a comparison is done.

The impact is not only on the beneficiaries but on the advocacy target and audiences. This assesses on how much the objectives have been achieved. Remember again that advocacy objectives should be outcome based. They should also be SMART. This makes it easy to assess the impact on the target and audiences.

#### **Why should we do M&E in advocacy?**

It is important to do M&E in advocacy for the following reasons:

- i) To check progress in your work.
- ii) To review advocacy objectives and strategies.
- iii) To report to stakeholders like beneficiaries and donors.

#### **Challenges in advocacy M&E**

M&E in advocacy is challenging. It becomes challenging especially when the planning process was not done properly. Advocacy tends to be a long process that is sometimes frustrating. The M&E process therefore sometimes becomes boring. It is involving and costly. Sometimes, what you are monitoring may not even be clear to you. When doing advocacy work, you may not be the only one carrying out advocacy on the same issue. So, when it comes to measuring what impact your specific advocacy work has done, it becomes very difficult. This has sometimes brought arguments among advocates. Each group will claim to have been the one that has caused a certain change.

Advocacy work is in many times not concrete. It is not like project development where you can count the number of houses you have build for persons with disabilities and know exactly how many people have benefited. It is easy to evaluate concrete projects. Sometimes, advocacy impact is abstract.

Let us examine this example. Persons with disabilities felt they were not respected by fellow villagers. They formed an advocacy committee to target the village headman. The village headman passed a decree that whoever disrespected persons with disabilities in that village would be sent away from the village. The villagers changed. Persons with disabilities later reported that they were being respected. This measurement is not as concrete as counting the number of houses built in a construction project.

The following questions are provided by Ian Chandler for M&E.

- i) How efficiently did we use our inputs to achieve our outputs?
- ii) How effective were our outputs in achieving the desired outcomes from our audiences? Were there unexpected outcomes?
- iii) How much impact did these outcomes have on the target and our policy objectives?
- iv) What other factors influenced the target?
- v) How much did the change in policy have an impact on the lives of our “beneficiaries”?

(Source: Ian Chandler, The Pressure Group Consultancy Limited.)

### **The need for a monitoring officer**

It is important in advocacy to have a specific officer specifically handling the monitoring process. The officer should be a person who understands advocacy work. This is very important because the officer should be able to capture correct data that is appropriate and relevant to the advocacy process. The officer should be able capture both statistical (quantitative) and qualitative data.

If the organisation is running a website, this officer should be responsible for managing the website.

The end.