



**Monitoring & Evaluation of Advocacy Campaigns
Literature Review**

Ecumenical Advocacy Alliance
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This literature review was undertaken by EAA and its members in preparation for developing a Monitoring and Evaluation Tool for advocacy work. The exercise highlighted that advocacy evaluation is an emerging field still lacking a formal scholarship. One of the main challenges is that advocacy draws on so many disciplines that conducting a literature review requires delving into many different fields. The complexity of advocacy evaluation may explain why there are currently so few manuals to assist evaluators and virtually no step-by-step guide. Despite growing interest over the past decade, advocacy evaluation materials are still in an early stage of development and this review confirms that the proposed M&E Tool is relevant and timely.

A timeline of sources suggests a definite trend in advocacy evaluation. International development organizations and donors became interested in the field in the mid 1990s. However at some point funding for initiatives petered out and the baton was taken up by individual practitioners and academics writing from their own experiences and observations. Eventually these efforts also appear to have run out of support. The first decade of 2000 witnessed a surge of interest by four US foundations that continue to support research and documentation of advocacy evaluation.

Although monitoring represents an important function in advocacy evaluation, the literature focuses mainly on evaluation, which can be retrospective, prospective or developmental, i.e., supporting staff and organizational development. There is a consistent message in the literature that evaluation of advocacy work should avoid overtaxing or threatening staff and should be based on common sense. The optimal evaluation is carried out in the spirit of learning.

Challenges to advocacy evaluation have been amply discussed in the literature and there is considerable consensus on the subject. Evaluation is made more difficult because advocacy can take place over a very long term – up to decades. Most advocacy work has many different components and there are multiple actors involved. This makes it practically impossible to identify *attribution* and organizations and donors will need to be satisfied with identifying *contributions* to reaching an advocacy goal.

One of the newer topics emphasized in the current literature is the need for advocates to develop a theory of change to demonstrate that their advocacy design is sound. A theory of change can be as simple as a short paragraph, but it is rapidly becoming a formal approach in which the main concern is to identify and address hidden assumptions about change. While most advocates go through the steps of conducting a problem analysis, identifying stakeholders, etc., few articulate a theory of change. For this reason evaluators are likely to be asked to evaluate work for which there is no documented theory of change. Familiarity with the concept will enable evaluators to facilitate a session with individuals responsible for advocacy work in order to retroactively build a theory of change that can be used during a retrospective evaluation. Another technique for facilitating the design of sound advocacy work is the composite logic model, which resembles more closely the common logical framework.

Early advocacy evaluation literature has a definite international development focus while recent literature focuses on domestic US advocacy. As a result of this dual pull, there is no standard set of categories for evaluating advocacy work that is appropriate to both environments. For example, the international development literature does not develop the issue of mobilizing public support for advocacy while the US literature is less concerned with issues of democratic space. After reviewing several models presented in the literature, the following seven broad categories for evaluating the *impact* of advocacy work were identified for EAA and subsequently received positive feedback from the members of the M&E Tool committee. These include:

1. Policy change (effectiveness in reaching and implementing desired policy change)
2. Capacity of civil society organizations
3. Democratic space
4. Policy impact
5. Empowerment
6. Social norms
7. Base of support.

There are considerable differences in the extent to which each category has been developed. It is relatively straightforward to identify evaluation indicators for the dimensions of policy change, capacity of civil society organizations, and democratic space. Policy impact presents a mixed bag. On the one hand development organizations have been assessing programs and services for a long time. On the other, they are not as advanced in assessing impact of advocacy on the rights of different groups. Finally, although their importance is consistently emphasized in the literature, evaluation of empowering communities, transforming social norms and building a base of support remains under-developed.

This literature review underscores that an advocacy evaluator is expected to be familiar with a wide variety of topics. These topics range from the basics of organizing and conducting an evaluation to theories of policy and social change, advocacy strategies and the concrete aspects of assessing progress on indicators that are appropriate for a given campaign. The complexity of advocacy evaluation makes it all the more important for evaluators to have high quality reference material at their disposal.

Within the scope of this review it was not possible to examine every area. Important topics such as theories of social movements, transnational advocacy networks and analysis of communication campaigns will have to be deferred to a future effort. There is plenty of work to do in advocacy evaluation and it is the hope of EAA that this literature review serves to advance the field.

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MONITORING & EVALUATION OF ADVOCACY

Literature review

I. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this literature review is to examine current thinking about different aspects of evaluating advocacy work as a preparation exercise for developing a monitoring and evaluation tool for EAA and its members. Upon reviewing dozens of publications, journal articles, books and websites, a number of observations became clear to the reviewer:

- **Advocacy evaluation is an emerging field** and it cannot be said that a formal scholarship has emerged yet. Nevertheless, interest in the field is growing at a rapid rate. As the Innovation Network points out, in 2005 there were no sessions on advocacy evaluation at the American Evaluation Association conference. In 2009 there were 14 advocacy and policy sessions at the conference. (Innovation Network, 2007)
- As it is practiced by EAA and its members, **advocacy draws on so many disciplines that none of the current writing addresses all its facets**. Indeed it may be impossible to do so coherently in any single document.
- Possibly because of the complexity of the subject, there are **no comprehensive manuals for evaluating an advocacy work available for public access** (although it is possible that organizations have developed guides for internal use). The closest public document is *A Guide to Measuring Advocacy and Policy* written by Jane Reisman, Anne Gienapp, and Sarah Stachowiak of the Organizational Research Services for the Annie E. Casey Foundation in 2007. More recently Julia Coffman of the Center for Evaluation Innovation wrote *Overview of Current Advocacy Evaluation Practice* (2009), which discusses some of the issues around an evaluation, such as whether the evaluation will be internal/external, what methodology will be used and what will be measured.
- **There is considerable difference between US advocacy evaluation and advocacy evaluation as seen by those who work in international development**. Since most of the recent literature originates in the US, it needs to be adjusted to meet the needs of people working in other countries.

...We concur with the consensus from a recent Grantmakers in Health gathering of more than 50 funders of advocacy. They concluded that there is no particular methodology, set of metrics or tools to measure the efficacy of advocacy grant making in widespread use. In fact, there is not yet a real "field" or "community of practice" in evaluation of policy advocacy. (California Endowment 2005)

1. Overview of the Sources

More than 100 sources were reviewed for this exercise. Sources were drawn from online publications and an academic library search. A number of EAA members shared internal documents with the reviewer. Additionally, various experts and organizations (such as ActionAid, which was very active in this field in 2001-2005) responded to requests for a copy of an internal report. The search focused initially and primarily on anything related to advocacy evaluation and then expanded to include specific topics such as policy change, social change, and communications campaigns.

The review of documents pointed to a pattern among the publications. When this was also suggested by Justin Whelan in his literature review, the reviewer did rapid analysis of titles and found the following that the literature could be divided into three categories:

In the mid 1990s / early 2000s most of the work was done by international development organizations and donors. For example, DFID partially funded an ActionAid research project and USAID produced the Advocacy Index. Oxfam also did some interesting work. At some point,

however, funding for advocacy evaluation from those sources appears to have run dry. Seemingly, this occurred before such projects were able to publicize the evaluation of any campaigns. Another explanation for the dearth of documentation from this period is that it slightly pre-dated public accessibility of electronic media on the internet.

In the mid 2000s there was an increase in academic articles on the topic. Many interesting articles appear, in particular those analyzing international advocacy. A number of scholarly projects were initiated specifically on the subject of advocacy evaluation. However, these either ran their natural course or funding ran out.

In the mid to late 2000s there is a surge of interest in advocacy evaluation from four foundations based in North America. Together with a handful of research consulting firms they are literally driving the field of advocacy evaluation today. Increasingly concerned about understanding the impact of campaigns run by their grantees, these foundations invested and continue to invest heavily in conducting research and developing tools for grantees, funders and evaluators. While they have a domestic focus, they have relevance for those evaluating campaigns outside the US.

2. Limitations

It is important to point out that this literature review includes only English-language sources. While there was an attempt to identify sources from other countries, the large majority originate from the US, with a few key texts originating from the UK and a handful from Australia. This situation is probably due in part to the fact that advocates rarely have time or funding available to document their experience. Another reason may be the absence of a global depository for this type of information.

There were some attempts to identify material from historically activist countries like India and the Philippines, but without much success. In particular the reviewer regrets the noticeable absence of material from European NGOs that are reflecting on the subject of advocacy evaluation today. It is hoped that this literature review will be taken forward by others in the future and that advocacy evaluation sources from across the globe will be identified and collected in one location.

3. Literature Review Structure

The structure of the literature review emerged as a result of the reading. The main sections are:

- I. Introduction.**
- II. Definitions.** What do we mean by monitoring and evaluation of advocacy? What are the different types of evaluations?
- III. Challenges to Advocacy Evaluation.** Advocacy is a complex process and campaigns can take decades. What are the challenges to advocacy evaluation?
- IV. Theory of change.** The literature insists that advocacy work should be based a sound theory of change. What is a theory of change and what should it look like?
- V. Frameworks and Indicators.** There are various categories that evaluators use to assess advocacy work. What are the various frameworks, their benefits and drawbacks? After a framework has been selected, what indicators are used?
 1. Policy change
 2. Capacity of civil society organizations
 3. Democratic space
 4. Policy impact
 5. Empowerment
 6. Social norms
 7. Base of support
- VI. Conclusion.**

The original aim was to include evaluation of communication campaigns and transnational advocacy networks as well as issues around organizing an evaluation and presenting evaluation findings. However, these topics proved to be beyond the scope of this exercise and will be addressed at a future opportunity.

II. DEFINITIONS & TYPES OF EVALUATION

This literature review did not look into definitions of advocacy because this is a subject that EAA has already reviewed in other publications. It uses EAA's official definition of *advocacy*, which includes awareness raising, campaigning/public mobilization, and policy engagement. Additionally, this report uses the phrase *advocacy campaign* to refer to the set of strategic activities organized in support of an advocacy objective (this could include lobbying and is not limited to public education of mobilization campaigns). EAA recognizes that member organizations may have their own interpretation of the term *advocacy* and that some members have a narrower definition of *campaign*.

Although the reader is likely familiar with the terms, it may be a good idea to review the definition of monitoring and evaluation:

Monitoring refers to gathering information about advocacy activities over the course of the campaign in order to assess if you are doing what you set out to do.

Evaluation refers to analyzing the information gathered at a specific point in time in order to assess impact and consider whether the goal was well-defined in the first place.

Why do we need to monitor and evaluate our advocacy work?

Monitoring and evaluation allows us to assess progress of our advocacy work so that we can know if we need to make any adjustments. Advocacy evaluation helps us to:

- check whether our advocacy work is on track;
- check whether any changes need to be made to the strategy;
- determine whether the objectives have been achieved; and
- learn from our experiences to avoid making the same mistakes in future advocacy work
- produce credible reports for donors and supporters;
- generate financial and political support.

Monitoring

O'Flynn (2009) points out that monitoring and evaluation relies more on common-sense than the adoption of complex tools and techniques. Each project should be monitored on an ongoing basis to:

- assess the extent of success;
- respond to unpredictable events;
- provide regular communication, share experiences and build relationships;
- document and learn from the process; and demonstrate results.

Mechanisms for monitoring include meetings, minutes, calls and project records. It also includes collecting and analyzing information on **internal issues** (how well activities are implemented), **external issues** (relevant changes in the context), **collaborative issues**, and **progress towards objectives**. (O'Flynn 2009)

Evaluation

Evaluations can be **retrospective** or **prospective**. A retrospective evaluation is done after the campaign has been implemented and in that sense it is backward looking and cannot be used to make adjustments, although it does allow the identifying of lessons learned. A prospective evaluation is built into the campaign and allows for continuous monitoring and adjustment. It also increases

transparency and promotes a learning culture. (Guthrie 2005, Coffman 2009) A third type of evaluation is the **developmental evaluation**, which aims to support program, staff and/or organizational development (Patton, 2009). Recent advocacy evaluation literature places considerable importance on using advocacy evaluation as a learning and organizational development tool.

O'Flynn (2009) explains that an evaluation will attempt to answer the following questions:

- How appropriate were the original objectives and to what extent were they achieved?
- What if any impact did any change have on the lives of communities?
- What factors contributed to success or failure?
- Which specific approaches worked and which did not?
- What should have been done differently given hindsight?
- What needs to be changed in the future as a result of this evaluation?

III.ADVOCACY EVALUATION CHALLENGES

A prospective evaluator reading about advocacy evaluation is likely to become alarmed at the multitude of challenges encountered by experts. It seems as if half the literature is dedicated to listing the difficulties of evaluating advocacy work. Below are some of the most frequently mentioned challenges presented in no particular order. Since the intended audience is familiar with advocacy, these challenges are not discussed in detail.

Long timeframe. Advocacy work can take decades before the ultimate objective is reached. Normally NGO and donor project timeframes are much shorter than the time it takes to complete a campaign and observe the impact of policy changes. This makes it necessary to identify intermediate objectives. Due to the long timeframe of some campaigns, resources may not always be available to continue the work.

Complexity. Advocacy has many different components from media and lobbying work to changing social norms, and monitoring implementation and impact of policies.

Attribution. Advocacy cannot be done alone but requires contributions from multiple actors. Policy change is also affected by other external events. As a result, it is usually impossible to identify causality, i.e. to prove that a particular actor or activity had a direct effect. One solution to this challenge is to focus on *contribution* rather than attribution. In other words, to focus the analysis on identifying likely influences and assessing how much influence the campaign appeared to have had. (Patton, 2008)

Unpredictability. Because of the role of external forces, advocates may do everything right in a campaign and still not achieve the goal. Advocacy is not linear and there may be backtracking or suspension of a campaign when it is overtaken by other events. Triumphs are not written in stone and may be reversed.

Changing strategies and objectives. Campaign strategies must adjust to current events and advocacy often requires compromise. As a result, the campaign objectives may change over time, so that at the time of the evaluation the outcomes no longer correspond to the original state objectives.

Knowledge accumulation is rare. Unfortunately, most advocacy work is not documented and even when they are the lessons are not shared, sometimes because it is not advantageous to make a strategy public. As a result, lessons from one campaign are lost and have to be relearned by the next campaign organizers.

Having reviewed definitions of monitoring and evaluation and some of the main challenges that evaluators will face when assessing a campaign, it is time to turn to the first topic of interest, developing a theory of change for a campaign.

IV. Theory of Change

All too often, advocates design campaigns without concretely demonstrating why a particular set of interventions will lead to a desired outcome. Recognizing that a strong logical construct is likely to increase the probability of success, recent literature is giving more and more attention to this topic. This section focuses on the concept of 'theory of change' as a way of representing the logic behind a campaign strategy. It also takes a brief look at a second type of representation, the composite logic model. Evaluators need to be knowledgeable about the subject (even when campaign managers are not) in order to better assess why a campaign failed to achieve the desired change. While it is not necessary to include both a 'theory of change' and a composite logic model in a campaign design, the two can be complementary.

To avoid confusion it is important to note that the use of the term 'theory of change' ranges from articulating a very basic idea to express the logic behind a campaign (it can be as short as one or two sentences) to the more complex and formal approach described below.

1. Definition & Relevance for Advocacy Evaluation

As Justin Whelan points out in his literature review, 'theory of change' has been gaining prominence in recent advocacy evaluation literature. Although as a concept it has been present in the evaluation community for at least the past two decades, there is no mention of it in early advocacy evaluation literature. For example, Chapman & Wameyo's seminal *Monitoring and Evaluating Advocacy: a Scoping Study* (2001) makes no reference to theory of change and even today the concept does not figure in most current advocacy manuals and guides.

Andrea Anderson reports that a 1995 publication of the Aspen Institute Roundtable on Community Change makes one of the earliest references to a theory of change (Anderson, 2004). In it, evaluator Carol Weiss theorizes that failure to clearly articulate desired change in complex programs makes evaluation difficult:

[...] Stakeholders of complex community initiatives typically are unclear about how the change process will unfold and therefore place little attention on the early and mid-term changes that need to happen in order for a longer term goal to be reached. The lack of clarity about the "mini-steps" that must be taken to reach a long term outcome not only makes the task of evaluating a complex initiative challenging, but reduces the likelihood that all of the important factors related to the long term goal will be addressed.

Weiss popularized the term theory of change as a way to describe the set of assumptions that explain both the mini-steps that lead to the long term goal of interest and the connections between program activities and outcomes that occur at each step of the way. She challenged designers of complex community-based initiatives to be specific about the theories of change guiding their work and suggested that doing so would improve their overall evaluation plans and would strengthen their ability to claim credit for outcomes that were predicted in their theory."

The ActKnowledge website, which makes various resources available to the public, notes that "over subsequent years a number of evaluations have been developed around this approach, fueling more interest in the field about its value."

All too often an enthusiasm for advocacy means that NGOs 'work on' a particular issue without any clear idea of how their actions will achieve change. It is rare that NGOs are explicit about how advocacy will realistically achieve policy change, let alone clear about how that policy change will be translated into positive practice that helps poor people in the long term.
(Coates and David, 2002)

The growing importance of theory of change in advocacy evaluation is highlighted in *A Guide to Measuring Advocacy and Policy* (Reisman 2007), which when talking about the evaluation process states, "Start with a theory of change." According to that publication, a theory of change,

...addresses the set of linkages among strategies, outcomes and goals that support a broader mission or vision, along with the underlying assumptions that are related to these linkages (i.e. "If we implement these strategies, why do we expect these changes will occur?"). Theory of change has been called many things: a roadmap, a blueprint, an engine of change, a theory of action and more.

In other words, theory of change is a process (and the result of that process) that aims to explain why we think that certain interventions will lead to the desired change. Other definitions of theory of change include a process designed to show the expected impact of a complex change initiative (Anderson, no year) and a specific and measurable description of a social change initiative (Actknowledge website). In addition to defining how strategies and actions will achieve change, a theory of change serves to communicate a vision for change to stakeholders (Reisman, 2004). As Actknowledge says on its website material, "If it is good and complete, your roadmap can be read by others and show that you know how to chart your course." A theory of change can help all involved develop a common understanding of what is being tried. (Guthrie, 2005) Perhaps most importantly, "*a theory of change helps avoid implementing a mistake.*" (Anderson, no year)

Many of the documents that mention theory of change provide only a brief definition of the concept. Guthrie et al in *The Challenge of Assessing Policy and Advocacy Activities: Strategies for a Prospective Evaluation Approach* (2005) indicates that for some the theory of change can be a one-sentence description. This literature review examines a more developed definition of the approach.

It is fortunate that a handful of U.S.-based institutions have made the understanding of this concept and the development and piloting of appropriate related tools their priority. Examples include the Annie E. Casey Foundation, the Aspen Institute Roundtable on Community Change and ActKnowledge. It is from their publications that we can begin to understand this approach.

But before getting to the specifics of theory of change, it is reasonable to ask why this topic needs to be addressed when considering evaluation of advocacy. After all, theory of change is basically used as a planning tool.

The reason is that in order to evaluate a campaign properly, we need to know whether the logic behind the campaign design is sound. Only then can we begin to assess whether the management of the campaign has been effective and the extent to which the campaign has been affected by factors beyond the control of campaign organizers. Using a theory of change allows us to evaluate whether assumptions were flawed or accurate and whether contextual conditions are accounted for. ActKnowledge and the Aspen Institute Roundtable for Community Initiatives add,

"Proponents of using a Theory of Change as a framework for evaluation emphasize the ability to integrate process and outcomes evaluation because the theory asks "what happened" and "how and why did that happen," so that each outcome is evaluated in terms of how well it was met and what processes were in place that brought it about, or at least are believed to have brought it about." (ActKnowledge and Aspen Institute, Making Sense 2003)

In this author's experience providing training to dozens of organizations around the world, very few of which had written advocacy plans, it is clear that few organizations currently develop a theory of change for a given campaign. Evaluators today are likely to be asked to assess campaigns for which there is no written theory of change and thus it is important for them to understand the basic steps involved in preparing a theory. Once they understand the process, they may be able to facilitate a

session with individuals responsible for a campaign to retroactively build a theory of change that can be used during the evaluation.

2. Theory of Change: Basic Steps and Information

A theory of change is usually presented in a visual diagram that allows the reader to see the big picture quickly. It does not usually provide a specific implementation plan. The purpose of the process is to allow people to think about what must be changed before doing it. (Reisman 2007, Anderson – no year)

ActKnowledge identifies the following steps in building a theory of change (Actknowledge website). Whenever possible, the steps should be done with a group of stakeholders participating.

In brief, the theory of change starts by identifying a clear ultimate goal and working backwards to establish preconditions for reaching that goal. At each step any assumptions are examined. The next step is to identify indicators. Only when these steps have been completed are the activities or interventions identified. Finally a narrative is drafted to explain the theory of change in everyday language.

Another way to understand theory of change is to imagine a *problem tree* and a parallel *program tree* which tackles a critical part of the problem tree. The assumptions then become identified as those parts of the problem tree that your program will not tackle but that need to be addressed in other ways.

Tim Aldred, Progressio

a) Identifying clear goals and assumptions

The theory of change process begins by articulating the ultimate goals of the campaign. ActKnowledge and Aspen Institute explain that the more specific and clear the theory of change, the easier it will be to identify where events did not occur as predicted. (ActKnowledge and Aspen Institute, 2003) Setting a clear goal is harder than it sounds and pilot testing of the process suggests that participants had a difficult time with this step. (Anderson, 2004)

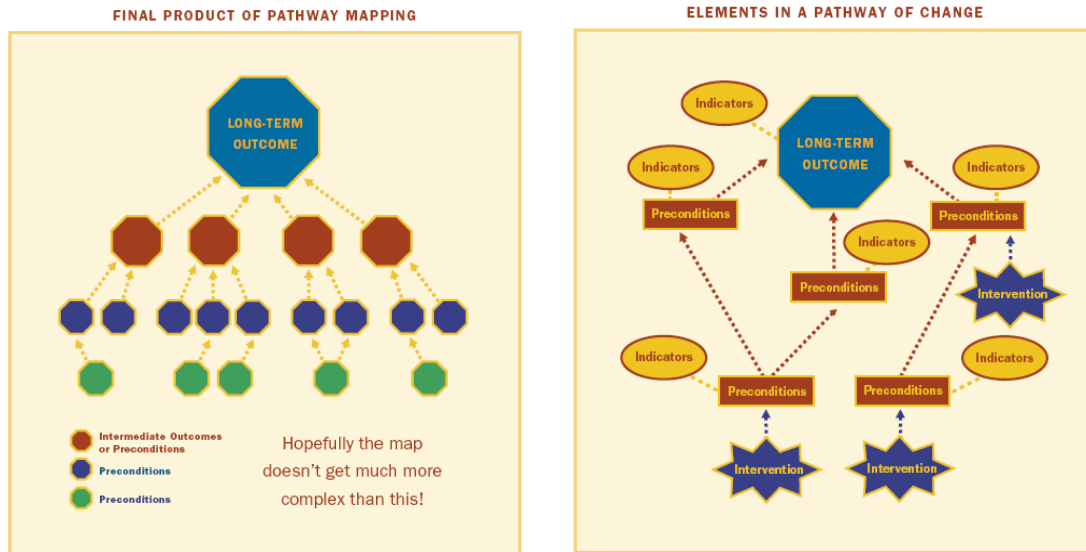
"Any initiative is only as sound as its assumptions." (ActKnowledge, *Superwomen*) For this reason, a critical aspect of the process is to identify and explain any assumptions that are implicit in the model. In the view of ActKnowledge and the Aspen Institute there are three main types of assumptions:

- A. those that explain how the intermediate outcomes link to the long-term outcome
- B. those that explain why the identified outcomes are the complete set of necessary and sufficient preconditions
- C. those that explain the connection between activities and expected outcomes.

Added to these are assumptions about how factors in the environment may positively or negatively affect the final outcome.

Assumptions sometimes draw on theory from academic research. When there is no literature available on an issue, campaign organizers can ground their assumptions on locally generated empirical evidence (or from a similar context). However, the literature suggests that when facilitators were used for this process, they were able to uncover many incorrect assumptions that were based on participant values and beliefs. To illustrate, in one case study team members assumed that local partners lacked sufficient resources and capacity to address an issue, when in fact this was not the case.

The left diagram below shows the long-term outcome and all the necessary preconditions. Interventions and indicators have been added to the right diagram. (Anderson, no year)



b) Backwards mapping

The theory of change process depends on defining all "**necessary and sufficient preconditions required to bring about a given long-term outcome**" (Anderson, 2004). The process of backwards mapping is used to connect outcomes to arrive at 'initial condition' (basically at the starting point of your program or campaign).

The literature notes that focusing on necessary and sufficient preconditions is one of the more difficult tasks in the process.

In *Guided Example: Project Superwomen*, Actknowledge and the Aspen Institute provide an excellent example of developing a theory of change. If, for example, the goal is for survivors of domestic violence to find stable adequate employment, necessary preconditions are that (a) they attain coping skills, (b) have marketable job skills and (c) have appropriate workplace behavior. In order to get reach (b) and (c), they will need to attend skills training and have access to employers who are educated on how to use interns.

Examples of assumptions for this project include:

- D. there are jobs available in non-traditional skills for women.
- E. non-traditional jobs (electrical, plumbing, carpentry) are more likely to pay a livable wage and provide stable employment
- F. women can learn non-traditional jobs.

c) Developing indicators

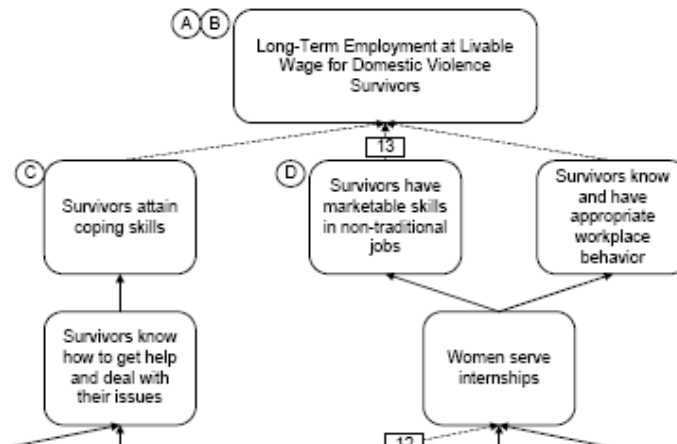
Developing indicators is not new to evaluators, so we will not elaborate on this topic here. In the theory of change one or more indicators are developed for each outcome. For example, in the having marketable job skills in the above Superwoman example, the indicator will be related to employment (such as remaining at least six months in a job that pays a specified minimum wage).

d) Identifying interventions

"Indicators tell the story of how success will be recognized." One of the advantages of a theory of change is that the mapping of outcomes tends to increase awareness of a wider variety of ways to intervene than would otherwise have been apparent. (Anderson 2004) Although a more in-depth analysis of theory of change is beyond the scope of this literature review, it is important to note that

when outcomes are well mapped out and assumptions documented, it will not be necessary to intervene at each step. In the partial example presented below, the solid lines represent connections that will occur without the need for intervention. As long as the prior preconditions are met, these outcomes will be met. The circled letters A, B, etc. represent the assumptions discussed above while the square boxes (e.g. 13) represent interventions.

Stage 4: Interventions



e) Writing a narrative

As ActKnowledge points out, writing a narrative forces the designer of the activities to translate the diagram into everyday language. The narrative should include:

- **Background:** context and the need
- **Long-term goal:** ultimate desired outcome
- **Intermediate goals:** What and how these goals are important for themselves as well as for the ultimate goal.
- **Assumptions and Justifications**
- **Interventions:** The initiative's activities and programs
- **Program Logic:** The understanding that guides every step of the initiative

Extract of sample narrative: "Based on the assumptions that women can learn non-traditional skills and that employers could be identified that would hire them, the project's goal was to provide both the training and support needed by this population in order to enter and remain in the workforce. The group believed that most of the women they could train would be single mothers, coming from abusive situations and would need psycho-emotional counseling, especially regarding low self-esteem and impaired coping skills. They also recognized that even women whose lives are fairly stable might face crises from time to time requiring practical help or psychological support. For some of the women who had not worked before, the group included training in non-traditional skills, training in workplace expectations and intensive psychological supports. Based on their resources, the group decided that they could provide assistance with some crises, such as housing evictions or court appearances, but could not be responsible for completely stabilizing the lives of their clients. This dictated their screening process ensuring that new women entering the program had already settled major issues, such as housing, substance abuse, or foster care." (*Guided Example: Project Superwoman*, ActKnowledge and Aspen Institute Roundtable on Community Change, 2004)

3. Observations

The introduction of theory of change to advocacy is a recent phenomenon and for this reason the literature is sparse and the examples – such as the *Superwoman* example described above – still tend to be drawn from the programs that provide services rather than advocacy campaigns.

One point that is already being made by the literature is that theory of change, while a powerful tool that can help design effective campaigns, is a time consuming process that may be too demanding in terms of time and capacity of team members. For this reason, there will likely be a need for initial training and/or facilitation to complete the process or build internal capacity to manage the process. However, as we will see elsewhere in this report, most advocacy evaluations will require some initial form of external assistance even without the introduction of a theory of change.

In 2001 the US-based Wallace Foundation awarded planning grants to potential partners for them to pilot the tool and develop a theory of change for their program. One of the lessons learned from the experience was that introducing a new approach this way placed a lot of pressure on the organizations that were trying to secure grants – even though they had received training and had facilitation made available to them. Thus, having potential partners develop a theory of change as a pre-requisite to receiving a grant may not be a good strategy to introduce the approach. (Anderson, 2004)

One of the benefits of the theory of change approach is that the more organizations and campaign managers try to account for all the factors that are needed to bring about change, the more likely they are to set realistic goals and design appropriate interventions. (ActKnowledge and the Aspen Institute, 2003). Developing a sound theory of change is one way to increase the likelihood of success of a campaign.

It is important to note that whether used as a planning or evaluation tool, there are certain risks associated with reviewing the quality of the theory of change late in the process and finding out that it is flawed. Actknowledge and the Aspen Institute (2003) point out that program implementers "usually do not foresee discovering that their fundamental philosophy is flawed, or missing pieces, and do not expect to be "exposed" to others."

Finally, the literature notes that participation of key stakeholders at each stage of the development of a theory of change is critical in order to avoid going too far down the planning process before realizing that the logic is faulty. (Actknowledge website)

Note from the author: While the theory of change may be new to some, it contains many of the elements of other more common advocacy techniques. For example, the theory of change process resembles a negative or mirror image of the problem tree exercise that is often used in advocacy to identify and analyze problems to be addressed through an advocacy campaign. In the problem tree exercise, one starts with a problem and works backwards to identify the intermediate and root causes of the problem and decide at what level a campaign will be effective (given existing resources and conditions). In the theory of change model, one identifies the ultimate goal and works backwards to identify the appropriate intervention(s) by meeting preconditions for success. The important difference is that the theory of change requires an explanation of assumptions and justification for why a given intervention is expected to lead to the desired outcome or goal. All too often this aspect is missing in documentation on advocacy campaigns as observers wonder why campaign managers believe that a certain intervention (such as a mass march) is going to influence decision makers.

4. Composite Logic Model

Another tool for visually representing the elements of the advocacy campaign is the **logic model**. Used in program planning since the 1970s, the logic model was the first widespread attempt to depict program components so that activities matched outcomes. The terms theory of change and logic model are often used interchangeably and cause some confusion so it is worthwhile taking the time to understand the difference. (Clark and Anderson, 2004)

The basic logic model, or logical framework, is a table that presents inputs, outputs, and expected intermediate and long-term outcomes. These are often accompanied by critical assumptions about a project, something along the lines of:

Resources	Activities	Outputs	Intermediate Outcomes	Long-term Outcomes	Goals	Assumptions
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Some important differences between a logic model and a theory of change include:

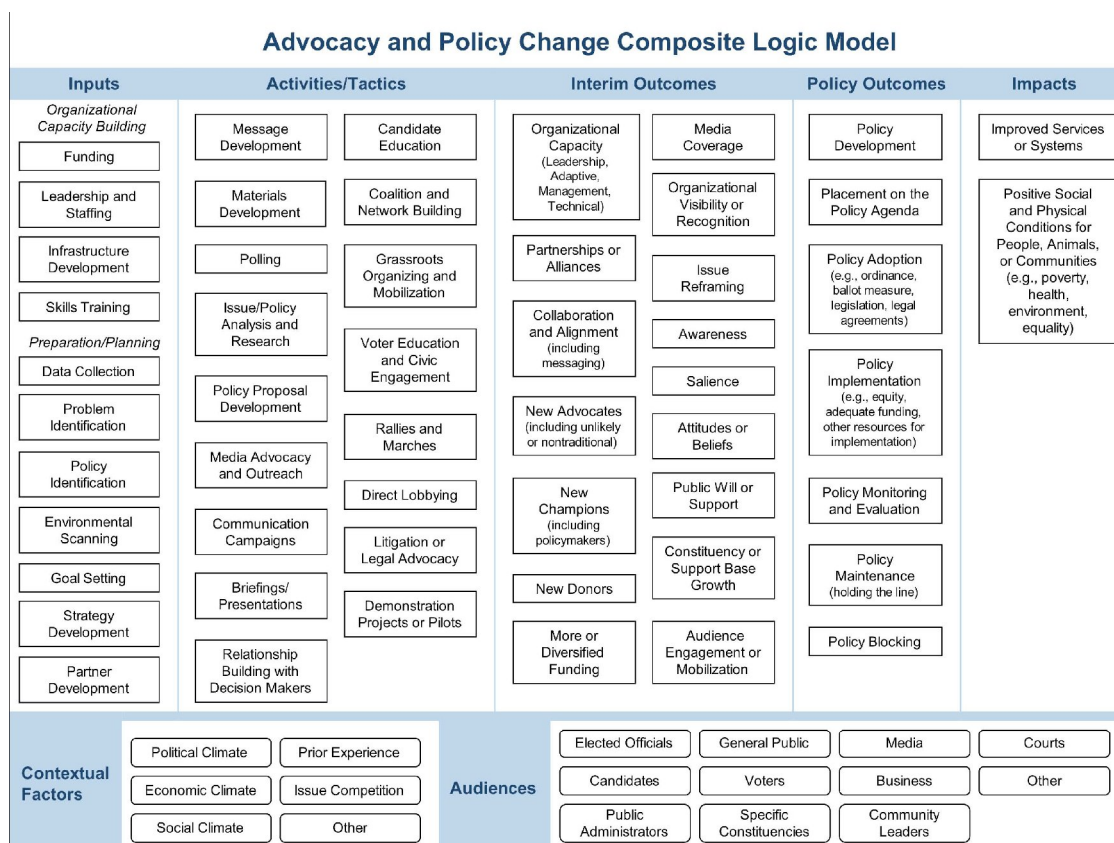
- theory of change starts with goal and immediately works out assumptions, whereas the logic model usually starts with a program;
- theory of change does not necessarily outline the implementation plan;
- indicators are not necessarily defined in the logical framework.

Theory of Change vs. Logic Model – Theories of change broadly describe a project, linking its activities or strategies with desired outcomes, and in particular describing the how and why of those linkages. Logic models tend to be more graphical in nature and attempt to map out all elements of a program, though they tend not to describe how and why the pieces are interconnected. Logic models are more useful for describing an existing program than they are useful for shaping new programs. (Cal Endow 2005)

In 2007, a group from the Harvard Family Research Project, the California Endowment, the Atlantic Philanthropies, and the Annie E. Casey Foundation developed the **composite logic model** to guide advocacy planning and evaluation. In addition to the main categories of inputs, activities, outcomes and goals, the composite logic model adds three more categories: impact, contextual factors and audiences.

The diagram below includes all the different possible categories. The role of the evaluator is to select which components are relevant to the advocacy strategy being evaluated.

An interactive version of the Coffman PowerPoint presentation available on the Innonet website visually illustrates how the composite logic model can be used to guide an evaluation. The presentation can be accessed at http://www.innonet.org/client_docs/File/advocacy/evaluation_clm_use.ppt and is definitely worth exploring for a few minutes.



The composite logic model can be a very useful tool for advocacy evaluators because it visually represents many aspects of a campaign in one diagram. However, the categories would need to be adjusted for to meet the needs of EAA members and of others working in international development.

V. Frameworks, Benchmarks and Indicators

1. General Frameworks

a) Review of Terms

For the sake of clarity, it may be helpful to review the definition of terms used in the field of evaluation and that appear frequently in this section.

Inputs	Resources (e.g. staff, project costs)
Outputs	Activities
Outcome	Expected impact/change as a result of the outputs.
Benchmark	Outcome defined in advance as one that will be monitored or evaluated.
Indicators	Evidence that shows outcome is achieved.
Process indicators	Measurement of organization's activities.
Outcome indicators	Measurement of change as a result of activities/outputs.
Framework	Group of concepts, in this case group of benchmarks with corresponding indicators.

b) Benchmarks and frameworks

As we saw in the previous section, the purpose of the theory of change is to articulate a vision of change for the campaign while justifying why we think specific proposed interventions will lead to the desired goal. The next step is to develop a framework with benchmark categories for evaluating progress. Once this is done we can define specific indicators to measure progress. As Guthrie (2005) puts it, benchmarks are like road signs, pointing us in the right direction; indicators are what let us know that we have arrived. In this section we first identify broad benchmark categories and then examine indicators for each category in greater depth.

Ideally, benchmarks are developed within a team – preferably one that includes representatives of the affected or represented group. Most of the literature recommends developing general benchmarks and allowing managers of projects or campaigns the flexibility to adjust these to their particular situation. One of the refreshing aspects of advocacy evaluation literature is the frequent reference to using common sense.

The challenges in developing benchmarks and indicators include differences in stakeholder attitudes toward evaluation, developing meaningful ways of measuring or documenting change, and the burden of data collection on grantees. *Guthrie et al (2006)*

The challenge with developing benchmarks is that advocacy as such is an emerging discipline and it is by nature complex. As yet there is still no standard framework for evaluating campaigns. There are, however, three publications that have carefully examined the topic. These include:

Monitoring and Evaluating Advocacy: A Scoping Study by Jennifer Chapman, and Amboka Wameyo. London: ActionAid (2001).

The Challenge of Assessing Policy and Advocacy Activities: Strategies for a Prospective Evaluation (2005) by and Part II *Moving from Theory to Practice* (2006) Kendall Guthrie, Justin Louie, and Catherine Crystal Foster.

A Guide to Measuring Advocacy and Policy. Jane Reisman, Anne Gienapp, and Sarah Stachowiak (2007).

The following frameworks are discussed very briefly and do not do justice to the work of the authors. However, there is a real danger of getting too deeply involved in a discussion of frameworks because of the absence of standards for advocacy evaluation. What is important is to know what is in the literature and move as quickly as possible to a reflection of what makes sense for the members of EAA.

Chapman and Wameyo (2001) reviewed various frameworks and note that they all emphasize the need to examine different dimensions of success.¹ To summarize briefly the extensive discussion of frameworks in that publication, the following common themes reappear in various approaches:

- Policy success
- Strengthening civil society capacity for advocacy
- Enlarging democratic space
- Supporting people-centered policy making.

Guthrie et al (2005, 2006) highlight the distinction between process and outcome indicators. **Process indicators** measure the organization's activities while **outcome indicators** measure the impact of

¹ The models they reviewed included IDR, New Economic Foundation, Oxfam Policy Department, Keck and CIIR (now Progressio) and USAID's Advocacy Index, which we will review under the section on strengthening civil society.

those activities. For a long time evaluation focused on process indicators, but there a definite shift to outcome indicators is taking place.

Guthrie reviews various advocacy frameworks, including the Chapman common themes presented above. They also present some distinctive frameworks. For example, the Women's Funding Network evaluates campaigns according to their impact on:

- Changing definitions/reframing
- Community or individual behavior
- Shifts in critical mass
- Institutional policy
- Holding the line

The above framework recognizes that policy change may not always be possible and thus provides encourages measuring changes in influence. It also is a good reminder that holding the line – or preventing policy and legislation from regressing – is sometimes an important aspect of advocacy and in some circumstances it may be the measure of success of a campaign.

The framework used by the Alliance for Justice is two-pronged. At one level it looks at:

- Outcomes
- Progress towards goals
- Capacity building efforts

It also looks at cross-cutting activities such as:

- Policy change
- Constituency involvement
- Network building
- Coalition building
- Mobilization
- Media advocacy

The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development's (OECD) Development Assistance Committee's (DAC) Evaluations looks at seven general evaluation criteria that evaluators may want to keep in mind:

1. **Relevance.** Are objectives consistent with needs of affected group?
2. **Effectiveness.** To what extent were objectives met?
3. **Efficiency.** To what extent were resources/inputs converted to results?
4. **Sustainability.** To what extent will benefits continue after campaign?
5. **Impact.** What were the positive and negative, primary and secondary long-term effects of the campaign?
6. **Coherence/complementarity.** To what extent do the campaign activities and outputs logically allow campaign objectives to be achieved? Are there any contradictions between the campaign objectives and the objectives of (1) coalition members, (2) donors, or (3) communities?
7. **Community value added.** To what extent does the campaign (particularly if it involves a coalition) add to benefits that would have resulted from other kinds of interventions?

http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/evaluation/methodology/methods/mth_qes_cri_en.htm

The criticism by the authors is that this framework, while comprehensive, "seems to be more a collection of typical advocacy activities rather than being a coherent theory about how activities lead to change, so it does not suggest sequence or relationship among the different outcomes."

The 2006 Guthrie publication adds to the mix one additional framework used by Innonet during its evaluation of Coalition for Comprehensive Immigration Reform around the stages of policy change process. The categories include:

1. Heightened awareness about an issue (Are people talking about it?)
2. Contribution to debate

3. Changed opinions/Getting allies
4. Changed policy
5. Policy change is implemented
6. Positive change in people's lives

In 2004, the Annie E. Casey Foundation (AECF) published *Theory of Change: A Practical Tool for Action, Results and Learning* with a framework that included impact, influence and leverage areas. However, by 2007, these are replaced by the following categories (Reisman, 2007):

1. Shift in social norms
2. Strengthened organizational capacity
3. Strengthened alliances
4. Strengthened base of support
5. Improved policies
6. Changes in impact.

At this point it may be useful to compare the original Chapman common themes of 2001 to the Reisman categories of 2007:

	Reisman et al (2007)	Chapman/Wameyo (2001)
Policy success/change	x	x
Policy impact	x	
Capacity of civil society	x	x
Strengthened alliances	x	
Democratic space		x
Empowerment		x
Base of support	x	
Social norms	x	

It is important to note that the original frameworks examined by Chapman usually include an assessment of **policy impact** as part of **policy change**. (It is not that they did not think about it.) Subsequent literature, however, regularly emphasizes addressing these two issues separately.

All proposed frameworks consistently mention **capacity of civil society** as an essential category for advocacy evaluation. Few frameworks include a specific category for **alliances** and it can be argued that forming alliances represents one aspect of a strong civil society. Thus it is reasonable to include alliances under capacity of civil society.

There is less mention of **increasing democratic space** in current advocacy evaluation literature, probably because recent publications have a domestic U.S. focus and advocates in the U.S. are working in an open political environment. For groups working in more closed societies, this category is critical as advocates may spend considerable energy on opening up channels of communication and influence with policy makers and it is only fair that their efforts be measured.

Similarly, although the U.S. literature emphasizes the participation of the affected group in campaigns, it does not focus as much on **empowerment** as the international development literature. In fact, the word empowerment does not appear even once in the Guthrie and Reisman reports. For groups working in countries with closed political systems, controlled by elites, or in which population groups are otherwise marginalized, empowerment will likely to be a central focus of an advocacy campaign and success in this area needs to be measured.

According to Reisman et al, **strengthened base of support** includes issues related to public mobilization, voter behavior, public awareness, public will and even media coverage. This category does not appear articulated in this way in the international development literature. However, as constituency building is critical for successful campaigns this is an important category for inclusion in an evaluation framework.

The inclusion of **social norms** is also a fairly new introduction. Policy reform is most successful when it is aligned with the social value base. Given the long-term aspect of some campaigns, this category would be a useful measure of progress when the advocacy goal is not likely to be reached for a long time.

Based on the above observations, the following benchmark categories would appear to cover the main areas that EAA members would want to evaluate.

8. Policy change
9. Capacity of civil society organizations
10. Democratic space
11. Policy impact
12. Empowerment
13. Base of support
14. Social norms

Note that the categories are not presented in any particular order of importance. Also, there will inevitably be some overlap between the categories. In particular, the issue of the media could be included in more than one category.

2. Policy Change

The purpose of advocacy is to influence decision makers to adopt or change laws and policies (and sometimes even practices that are not regulated by policies) that affect a particular population. For this reason, an understanding of the policy process is critical for evaluators of advocacy campaigns. This section focuses specifically on policy change, leaving impact assessment for the next section.

There is a vast scholarship on policy formulation and policy change and it is impossible to take more than a superficial look at the topic here. The challenge is magnified because publications on the subject of advocacy evaluation tend to have brief sections on policy change and present quick snapshots of different policy theories.

Chapman and Wameyo (2001) point out that many of the challenges confronting advocacy evaluation relate to the policy dimension, mainly because so much attention has been given to this aspect of advocacy. As we have seen in the above introduction, challenges related to policy include the long timeframe, complexity, difficulties of attribution, and the need to change or compromise policy objectives in order to gain a partial victory.

The California Endowment (Guthrie 2005) echoes Chapman's view when it states that advocates need to "avoid over-emphasis on legislative solutions" and not forget to include such activities as awareness raising and constituency building. Advocacy is not only about changing laws and advocates need to make sure that they are targeting their efforts at the right level, e.g. implementation of existing policies rather than passage of new legislation.

Traditional theory dating back to the late 1960s distinguishes several stages of the policy process that can be considered a starting point for evaluating policy change (Jenkins-Smith and Sabatier, 1994):²

- problem identification

²Also referred to as 'stages heuristic.'

- agenda setting
- policy formulation and adoption
- policy evaluation and reformulation

In its pro-poor framework, UNDP (2009) uses slightly different categories to analyze the policy process:

- formulation
- approval
- implementation
- oversight.

Davies (2001) points out that advocacy efforts may focus on different aspects of policy such as:

- policy making process (e.g. agenda selection, transparent process)
- specific policy objectives
- budgets
- means of implementation
- monitoring of results
- independent verification of results.

To the above categories we can add **defensive** objectives that aim to maintain the ground that has been gained and avoid having earlier policy victories overturned.

Gurthrie (2005) also notes that problems gain saliency (relative importance/priority compared to other issues) because of:

- availability of information
- occurrence of a focusing event
- personal experiences or powerful symbols
- feedback complaints by constituents.

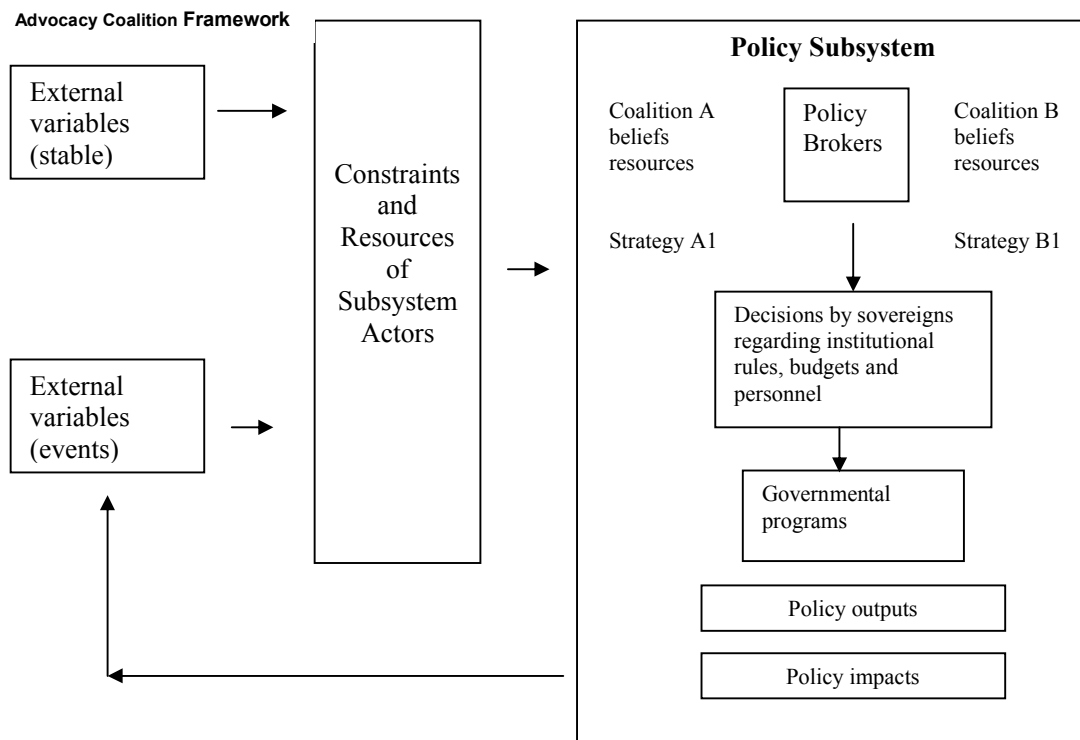
a) Three Streams Approach

Although there are various other theories related to public policy change, here we mention only two of particular interest: the three streams approach and the advocacy coalition approach. John Kingdon's three streams approach introduced in the mid 1980s conceptualizes the policy process as three largely unrelated currents. The first is the **problem stream**, which includes all information about actual problems and current and past policy efforts to address those problems. The second is the **policy stream**, which is composed of all the actors who research and analyze policy issues, including researchers, advocates and other specialists. Thirdly is the **political stream**, which includes elections, legislative leadership contests and campaigns by interest groups. Developments in the economic environment and changes in the mood of the population also effect shifts in the political stream. A 'window of opportunity' opens up for policy reform when a problem is recognized, it is researched and a viable policy proposal is made (policy stream) and politicians find it to their advantage to approve. (Sabatier 1991, Guthrie 2005, Whelan 2009)

b) Coalition Advocacy Framework

Sabatier introduces the Advocacy Coalition Framework in the early 1990s because he sees the need to improve existing approaches so that they:

- take into consideration a longer term view of policy change (at least a decade)
- focus on policy subsystems, i.e. the "interaction of actors from different institutions who follow, and seek to influence, governmental decisions in a policy area".
- look at intergovernmental dimensions (for domestic policy)
- can be conceptualized as belief systems.



As we can see from the above representation of Sabatier's approach, two types of external factors affect policy: stable variables and events that affect the constraints and resources of a policy subsystem. Stable variables include:

- attributes of the problem area
- distribution of natural resources
- fundamental socio-cultural values and social structure
- basic constitutional structure (rules).

Events include:

- changes in socio-economic conditions
- changes in public opinion
- changes in systemic governing coalition
- policy decisions and impacts from other subsystems.

The Advocacy Coalition Framework assumes that actors can be grouped into coalitions of people who share a set of beliefs and act together. Beliefs have a three-tiered structure. Seen from a policy perspective, the **deep core level** includes beliefs about existence, human nature, freedom, social equality, etc. These beliefs are very difficult to change. At the next level are the **'policy core' beliefs**, for example those that give priority to environment over development (or the reverse), perceptions about how serious a problem is, and expressions of the deep core beliefs, such as the appropriate division between governments and markets. Some of these beliefs may be hard to change, but others may change over time. Finally is the set of narrower **secondary policy beliefs** within a specific policy domain that will affect views about policy preferences such as budget allocations and role of specific institutions.

Jenkins-Smith and Sabatier test various hypothesis related to the Advocacy Coalition Framework and the results mostly support their theories. One interesting finding is that while hypotheses about beliefs adequately describe purposive organizations (founded on beliefs), they are not supported by examples of groups that promote material interests.

"Because purposive groups rely on members' commitment to a broad platform of policy positions, typically based on a specific ideology, they are very reluctant to change any part of that belief system. On the other hand, members of material groups are preoccupied with bottom line material benefits and willing to allow group leaders to say almost anything to obtain them."

The Advocacy Coalition Framework emphasizes the importance of considering policy change within a larger framework of external factors and competing belief groups. It also serves as a reminder that the belief aspects of an issue heavily influence how advocates behave:

"They will resist information suggesting that their core or policy core beliefs may be invalid or unattainable, and they will use formal policy analyses primarily to buttress and elaborate those beliefs or attack their opponents' views"

As a result, changes in the policy core beliefs are usually a result not of cognitive factors, but to changes in external events.

c) Comparison of Six Theories of Change

In order to illustrate to advocates how change can occur, Sarah Stachowiak (2007) presents six theories of change from various disciplines:

Theory (key author)	Discipline	How change happens	Theory useful when:
Large Leaps (Baumgartner, Jones)	Political science	Significant changes in policy and institutions can occur when the right conditions are in place.	Large-scale policy change is the primary goal Strong capacity for media advocacy exists
Advocacy Coalition Framework (Sabatier, Jenkins-Smith)	Political science	Policy change happens through coordinated activity among a range of individuals with the same core policy beliefs.	A sympathetic administration is in office A strong group of allies with a common goal is in place or can be formed
"Policy Windows" (Kingdon)	Political science	Policy can be changed during a window of opportunity when advocates successfully connect two or more components of the policy process (three streams: problem, policy, politics).	Multiple policy streams can be addressed simultaneously Internal capacity exists to create, identify, and act on policy windows
Messaging & Frameworks Prospect Theory (Tversky Y Kahneman)	Psychology	Individuals' policy preferences or willingness to accept them will vary depending on how options are framed or presented.	Issue needs to be redefined as part of a larger campaign or effort A key focus of the work is on increasing awareness, agreement on problem definition, or an issue's salience
Power Politics Elites Theory (C. Wright Mills, Domhoff)	Sociology	Policy change is made by working directly with those with power to make decisions or influence decision making.	One or more key allies in place Focus on incremental policy change (e.g., administrative or rule changes)
Grassroots / Community	Social	Policy change is made through	A distinct group of individuals is

Organizing Theory (Alinsky, Biklen)	psychology	collective action by members of the community who work on changing problems affecting their lives.	directly affected by an issue The advocacy organization can and is willing to play a "convener" or "capacity-builder" role rather than the "driver" role
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d) Intermediate Indicators

Once it has been decided that policy change is necessary and an advocacy campaign is launched, success is usually easy to evaluate because it is measured by the degree to which a long-term policy objective is reached (although there are frequent attribution problems). The key question for evaluators is: if the end of the campaign is not yet in sight, how can we measure progress towards the policy objective?

Chapman and Wameyo (2001) discuss models for assessing progress of policy change initiatives. For example, Oxfam's Policy Department:

- Greater awareness of issue
- Contribution to debate
- Changed opinion
- Changed policy
- Implementation of policy change
- Positive impact on lives.

The difficulty with the Oxfam approach is that without having access to the original Oxfam documents (which do not appear available online), it is not clear whether the above categories measure changes in just the policy makers or in other categories of stakeholders.

Chapman and Wameyo also present a set of indicators developed by Keck and Sicking (Activists Beyond Borders):

- Issue creation and agenda setting;
- Change in discursive positions or policy commitments of states and international organizations;
- Institutional procedural change;
- Influence on policy change in 'target actors' which may be states, international organizations, or private actors;
- Actual behavioral change in target actors.

It is clear that the Keck and Sicking indicators focus on policy makers.

In the *ABCs of Advocacy* (Mansfield 2010), the following general behavior change indicators are suggested and can be used with any target individual or group. Here the questions are adjusted for a target group of policy makers:

	Questions
Knowledge	What do they know about the issue? Have they learned anything new?
Saliency	How important is this issue for them? What other issues are more important?
Attitude	Is there attitude towards the issue negative or positive? What influences their attitude?
Norms	How does their working environment, constituency or party affiliation affect their attitude and behavior about the

	issue? Is the environment changing?
Self-Efficacy	How much control do they feel they have over the problem? Are they more or less convinced that they can help solve it?
Behavior Intention	Have they expressed any intention of supporting the issue, whether in meeting or to the press?
Behavior	Have they taken any concrete action to support your policy proposal, such as sponsoring or voting in favor of a bill?
Skills	How have skills changed as a result of the campaign? As policy makers are they better able to present arguments on the issue?

Finally, Davies (2001) proposes a whole list of **indicators to measure progress in a lobbying meeting**. There is a progression from most superficial type of engagement to the most substantive

- meeting minutes and/or documentation of agreements at made meetings
- who initiates meeting
- willingness to meet (e.g. mining companies)
- delay/speed in establishing meeting
- official status of meeting
- status of meeting participants
- language used in a meeting
- roles at the meeting (e.g. representing others for a negotiation, not just oneself)
- level of trust shown at meeting (e.g. sharing documents, expressing differences)
- level of confidence in participant knowledge and capacity
- agreement reached
- willingness to continue process
- formalization of the meeting process.

As Davies points out, however, the presence of any of the above indicators does not necessarily signify real progress towards the advocacy objective. Interestingly, Davies suggests that the expression of differences of opinion and ability to resolve those differences as a measure of trust.

e) Conclusion

In order to be successful in their efforts to affect policy, advocates will need to have a *very deep* understanding of the policy process and political landscape. In addition to the usual problem analysis, corresponding research (if needed), and stakeholder analysis, this means identifying and analyzing policy targets - down to the level of the individual - and clearly understanding the constraints under which they work (e.g. political obligations, election concerns, or budgetary constraints).

Since policy contexts vary so much, it is critical for evaluators to have a solid understanding of the policy context of the country where they are working. The above section has focused on policy change in a national context. International or global advocacy – including a brief glimpse of international finance institutions and multinational organizations – will be reviewed in the section on transnational advocacy networks. The question of the extent to which public opinion affects policy change will be addressed in the section on building public support.

As with the general advocacy evaluation literature, there appears to be no standard framework yet for evaluating policy change resulting from an advocacy campaign. The challenge for the M&E Committee will be to figure out how the above approaches can be used to present a simple framework for this purpose.

3. Capacity of Civil Society Organizations

In *What Makes an Effective Advocacy Organization?* Jared Raynor, Peter York and Shao-Chee Sim (California Endowment, 2009) point out that little work has been done to develop a framework for evaluating advocacy capacity of organizations. Most existing frameworks focus on direct advocacy implementation skills and omit other important elements of institutional capacity.

A review of the literature suggests that this observation is correct - up to a point. While it is true that existing advocacy capacity assessment frameworks focus primarily on skills, a handful does look at broader institutional issues. While none of them comprises the breadth and sophistication of the Raynor model, each of the three presented below presents its own particular strengths.

a) USAID Advocacy Index

In 1993 the U.S. legislation required that all federal government agencies begin to report on the measurement of their performance. In response to this, in 1998 USAID developed a *Handbook of Democracy and Governance Program Indicators*, which included an Advocacy Index – a list of possible indicators suggested for measuring the development of advocacy capacity in civil society organizations. The Advocacy Index was designed to meet concerns that quantitative indicators were inadequate for measuring progress in democratic processes and criticisms that qualitative indicators were too subjective. As a compromise, the Index is made up of qualitative indicators that are given a score on a scale of 1-5 along with specified criteria or examples of evidence to guide score.

An example of one indicator is given in the box below. The person measuring the indicator "Issue is timely" will have to decide whether any of the "following possible elements" are true and provide a narrative to explain the score.

Score:

1) **Issue is timely**, with the following possible elements:

- Issue is of vital concern to the group's constituents
- Issue is critically important to the current or future well-being of the CSO and/or its clients, but its importance is not yet broadly understood
- New opportunities for effective action exist
- At least a few key decision makers are receptive to the issue

The original Advocacy Index had seven capacity areas relating to issues such as the selection of the advocacy agenda, research, policy formulation, and coalition building. However, these areas were intended to be *illustrative* and when the Index was applied by Pact in Zimbabwe, the list was expanded to the following 12 capacity areas:

1. Issue (on which CSO will advocate) is timely and significant.
2. CSO collects information, carries out research, and gets input about the issue.
3. **CSO systematically consults its members and the public on the issue.**
4. CSO formulates a **viable** alternative policy position(s) on the issue.
5. **CSO provides a gender analysis of the implications of alternative policies.**
6. CSO allocates resources (especially time and money) for advocacy on the issue.
7. **CSO provides public education/builds public support through public meetings and the media.**
8. CSO builds coalitions and networks, to obtain cooperative efforts for joint action on the issue.
9. CSO takes action to influence policy or other aspects of the issue.
10. CSO takes follow-up action, after a policy decision is made, in order to foster implementation and/or maintain public interest.
11. **CSO demonstrates institutionalization of advocacy role.**
12. **Organization demonstrates sound financial management and internal governance.**

(Note: bolded items were added to the original USAID Advocacy Index.)

Unfortunately it was not possible to locate a report analyzing the final results of the Pact Zimbabwe project. However, a publication documents the process by which the index was applied to Pact grantees (Hansen, 2005). Steps included:

- workshop introducing the framework
- one-on-one meetings to provide further explanations
- workshop to anchor understanding of the Advocacy Index by using local cases
- baseline self -assessment by grantees
- self-assessment reviewed by funder and comments drafted
- independent panel reviews assessment and dialogue follows
- follow-up assessments are conducted annually.

A number of lessons were learned from the experience:

- The tool is applicable to various advocacy levels and objectives.
- Organizations need clearly defined advocacy issue prior to conducting self-assessment.
- Baseline assessments tended to be based on the overall organizational capacity while annual performance assessments were based on advocacy capacity.
- The process itself was considered to have an inherent value.
- Application of an index has financial implications and is time intensive.
- The process of gaining ownership of the tool takes time.
- Staff turnover significantly affects institutional capacity.

b) Pact Ethiopia

Separately, in early 2000s Pact Ethiopia developed an Advocacy Capacity Assessment Tool with the following capacity areas:

- **Governance** - board, vision and mission, and constituency
- **Management Practices** - organizational structures, information systems, program development
- **Human Resources**
- **Financial Resources**
- **Advocacy Strategy**
- **External Relations**
- **Networking and Coalition Building**
- **Sustainability** – e.g. community empowerment, local institutions providing ongoing support

As with the Advocacy Index, completion of the Pact Advocacy Capacity Assessment Tool requires scoring a series of statements on a scale of 1 to 5, as illustrated in the textbox below.

Sample indicator from the Pact Ethiopia Advocacy Capacity Assessment Tool					
A. GOVERNANCE					
3. Constituency					
a. There is a well-defined constituency targeted for advocacy.	1	2	3	4	5

The Pact Ethiopia model does look at larger issues beyond skills, such as thinking about sustainability issues and having board members who are committed to advocacy issues, although the tool does

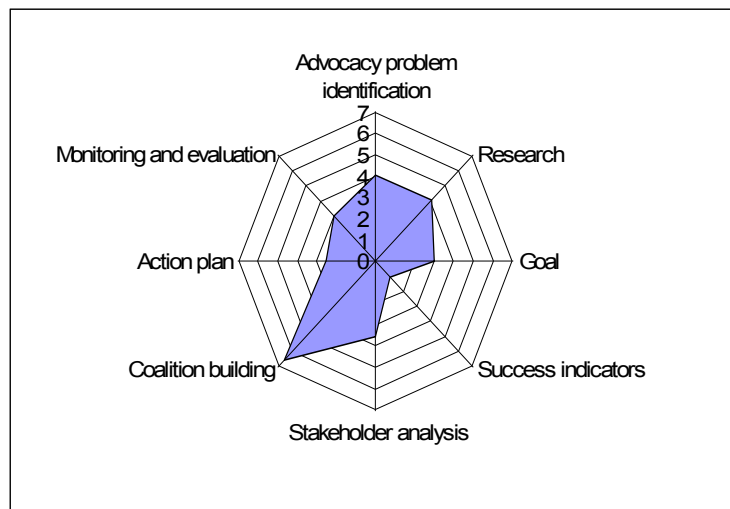
appear to be a close adaptation of a regular organizational assessment tool and not one designed particularly for advocacy.

c) Diakonia

In the early 2000s, Diakonia in Cambodia developed a self-assessment tool. This tool takes as its point of departure the advocacy planning cycle and uses the same scoring system as USAID and Pact. It includes eight capacity areas:

- Advocacy problem identification
- Research
- Goal setting
- Indicators
- Stakeholder analysis
- Action plan
- Coalition building
- Monitoring & evaluation

This model most closely resembles the type that Raynor criticizes for being too skills-oriented, but it does cover all the main direct advocacy skill areas. Additionally, the use of a spider chart provides a visual representation of the organization's capacity and makes strengths and weaknesses easy to identify:



d) California Endowment

The advocacy capacity assessment framework proposed by Raynar et al in the California Endowment publication proposes four areas of organizational capacity areas that are necessary for supporting the internal capacity of civil society organizations. These include:

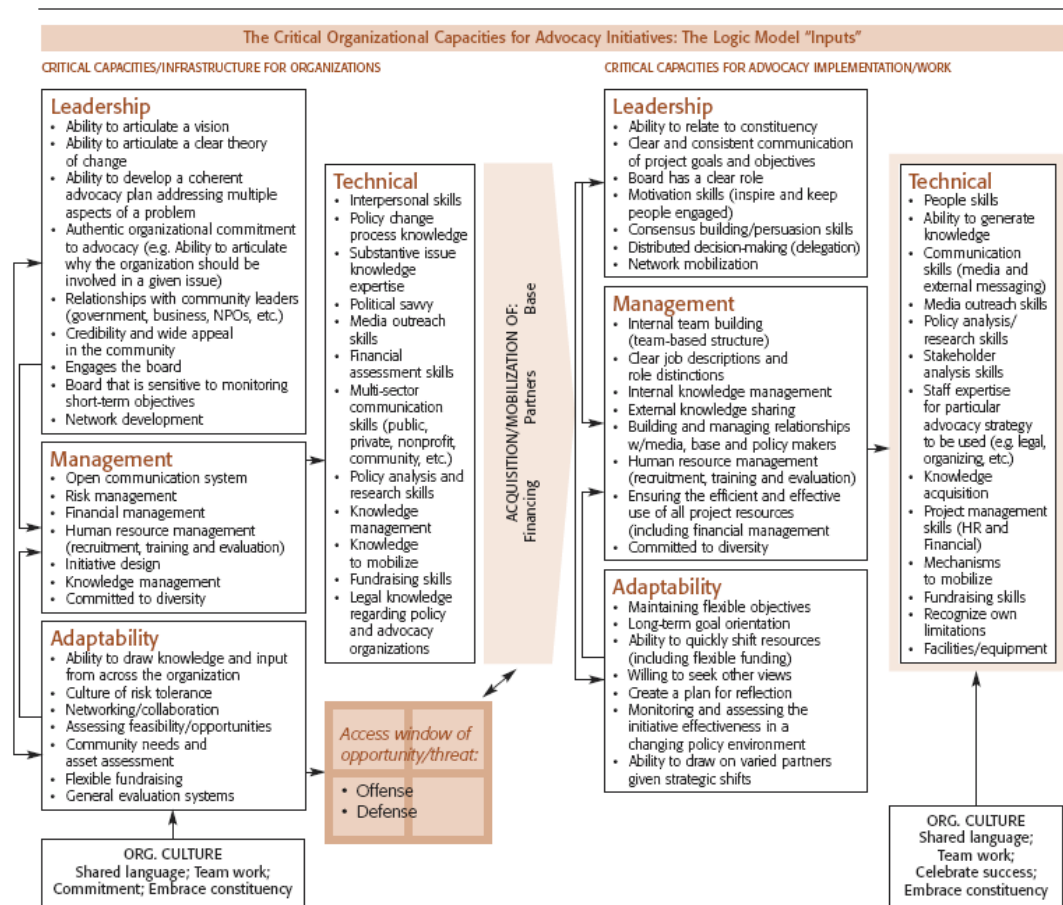
- Leadership – create and sustain vision, inspire, direct, and innovate
- Adaptive Capacity – monitor, assess and respond to internal and external changes
- Management Capacity – ensure effective and efficient use of organizational resources
- Technical Capacity – implement all of the key organizational and programmatic functions

The authors review distinctive characteristics and challenges of advocacy groups. For example, advocates think of themselves as doers, not thinkers. They tend to focus on building isolated skills, not enhancing programmatic performance. Advocacy work by nature requires adaptability and places the organization's reputation at greater risk. Finally, Funders are anxious that resources are being used effectively. (Raynor et al 2009)

California Endowment Advocacy Institutional Capacity Areas			
Leadership	Adaptive Capacity	Management Capacity	Technical Capacity
Motivation & persuasion Board leadership Strategic vision Sharing leadership	Building strategic partnerships Strategic positioning Resource flexibility Monitoring & measuring progress	Non-staff resource management Staff coordination External relationship management Human resources Financial management	Strategic communication skills Policy issues & processes Interpersonal skills Finance and fundraising skills Legal knowledge Facilities and equipment

The above approach includes some capacity areas that are critical to advocacy and do not appear in the other frameworks, such as ability to develop a clear theory of change and ability to manage risk. The entire California Endowment logic model for capacity is presented below:

Figure 3: Detailed Capacity Logic Model



e) Networks and Sector-wide Change

The building of networks, alliances and coalitions represent a key advocacy strategy. Raynor identifies capacity areas related to building strategic. These include ability to:

- Fill critical gaps and leverage resources
- Utilize established networks
- Understand how organization's agenda fits into a broader network of issues
- Bring key decision-makers to the table
- Recognize the range of partnership.

According to Chapman (2001), there is not enough information available about establishing and monitoring networks for advocacy. In the decade since that publication was written, networks have received considerable attention and there should be considerable more material available on this subject.

In reviewing the work of ActionAid, Chapman (2001) considers briefly some long-term indicators of a strengthened civil society sector. These include

- greater synergy of aims
- more activities in networks
- changes in collaboration (increased trust, solidarity)
- increased effectiveness of civil society work.

f) Conclusion

The above examples present very different criteria for evaluating capacity of civil society organizations to do advocacy work. The USAID Advocacy index focuses on all the activities related to policy change such as collecting data, formulating realistic policy proposals and interacting with policy actors. It also focuses on building support for action and follow-up to policy changes. The Pact Ethiopia example focuses on a variety of management capacity areas. The Diakonia model includes general advocacy skills such as setting goals and indicators and indentifying stakeholders. Finally, the California Endowment separates out capacity areas according to their leadership, adaptive, management and technical qualities.

The challenge in developing an M&E Tool will be to decide what capacity areas should be included and the level of detail needed. Note that although a discussion of evaluating networks goes beyond the scope of this literature review, this topic will need to be included in the M&E Tool.

4. Democratic Space

Increasing democratic space refers to the extent to which an advocacy campaign creates channels and opportunities for civil society to be involved in future policy making. Put slightly differently, democratic space refers to increasing the space for civil society to participate and dialogue on policy formulation and policy enforcement. Using the original framework developed by IDR, Chapman describes democratic space as follows:

This might be by providing mechanisms for the participation of disenfranchised sectors in policy dialogue, increasing the political legitimacy of civil society organizations, and improving the attitudes and behaviors of government officials and elites towards NGOs and grassroots groups. It includes broadening overall tolerance and respect for human rights and increasing the accountability and transparency of public institutions. (Chapman, 2001)

Writing in 2001, Chapman explains that "there is little information on what 'space', 'political space' or 'democratic space' might look like in different cultures and at different levels, from the micro to the national and international."

a) Analyzing the political context

Opening up democratic space is naturally going to be of a greater concern in societies where government decision making is not transparent and civil society is not able to demand accountability. Using Gaventa's framework of open, closed, and invisible power systems (explained earlier in this report), Coates and David (2002) point out that a different evaluation strategy will be needed for different political environments:

In an **open or pluralistic society**, advocates can assess democratic space by looking available public records on decision making and interviewing stakeholders to see how they are involved in the decision making process (such as testifying before a committee or meeting with legislators) .

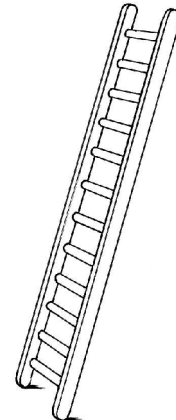
Evaluation of democratic space in a **closed or elitist system**, will involve evaluating progress on key influence pathways and assessing whether the campaign is able to build 'the power of many' through coalitions and engaging the support of powerful figures.

In an **invisible or ideological system**, evaluation will focus on areas such as building capacity of civil society, empowering the affected group, and assessing changes in social norms and understanding,

b) Democratic Space Indicators

Chapman presents ActionAid's ladder for democratic and political space, which represents different levels of civil society participation in policy making. Starting from the bottom of a ladder and going up, the different levels of participation are described below:

1. CSOs given **no information** about decisions or processes
2. CSOs given **information on decisions** taken
3. CSOs given information on **decision-making processes**
4. CSOs given opportunities to **provide information** to decision makers
5. Regular **forums for consultation** with CSOs exist.
Decision-makers open to **dissenting voices**.
6. **Transparency** and feedback from consultations.
7. Evidence that CSO input is **influencing** policy.
8. **Decision makers engage** with CSOs in determining policy agency.
9. Increased range of decisions opened to CSO input.



c) Conclusion

Impact on democratic space appears to be a more straightforward dimension of advocacy to evaluation. Unless a member of the committee has more relevant information, these categories appear sufficient for the needs of EAA members.

5. Policy Impact

Historically, the evaluation of development programs has focused on *outputs*, that is to say, the activities and services delivered by programs. It is only since the 1990s that organizations and funders have begun to focus on *outcomes*, or the intermediate and long-term changes that affect individuals and communities.

Although current advocacy evaluation literature regularly mentions the need to evaluate impact of policy changes the topic is never explored in detail. One possible explanation is that the authors assume that evaluators can draw on existing policy and general development literature. In fact, that is a time-intensive process. This gap in the literature highlights the need to bring together material on the different threads that make up an advocacy campaign. This section reviews what current advocacy evaluation literature has to say about impact indicators and briefly looks at policy, development and

rights literature. Here the focus is on changes in quality of life of affected groups while changes in empowerment are looked at separately.

a) Current Limitations

In *Closing the Circle* Claire McGuigan refers to a growing concern regarding an implementation gap in NGO advocacy work:

There is a growing level of concern over whether it is meaningful to strive for policy change at all. This is accompanied by a recognition that by achieving NGO access to new policy forums and limited forms of citizen participation, without real change, NGO efforts may reinforce the status quo, rubberstamping the decisions that are actually implemented. At the same time, very few NGOs have attempted actually to measure the impact of policy change — as a result of their advocacy — on people's lives, and this is clearly the most difficult area in advocacy impact assessments. (McGuigan, 2003)

Linda Mayou points out that past efforts at evaluating advocacy have focused too much on outputs:

Frameworks for advocacy impact assessment have focused on assessing the quantitative success of advocacy strategies themselves, rather than the relevance and poverty impacts of any policy changes for the officially-stated beneficiaries. (Mayou, 2003)

According to Mayou, donor-commissioned studies of advocacy impact assessments have found that although many advocacy organizations are concerned about legitimacy and impact, most do not have M&E systems. Mayou also points out that including grassroots participation in an advocacy evaluation has a number of implications, namely:

- Impact indicators will need to be decided in a participatory manner.
- Stakeholder analysis needs to include gender, class, ethnic group and other dimensions of differentiation relevant to the particular issues concerned.
- Greater emphasis on participatory and diagram methods for grassroots learning to ensure the equal involvement of women and men with low levels of literacy and/or facilitate communications across language barriers.
- Greater attention to accessible methods of dissemination, tailoring dissemination methods to particular audiences.

McGuigan echoes Mayou's views by stating that impact evaluation should not only be limited to changes in the quality of life of a group, but should also "take into account a change which the person considers significant for themselves, a view which will depend on their age and gender, among other factors." (McGuigan, 2003 – citing C. Roche *Impact Assessment for Development Agencies*, 1999).

b) Outputs, Outcomes and Impact Indicators

In *Linking Policy Interventions and Livelihoods Impacts*, Chadwick et al explain that policy impact assessment can be used to "assess what has changed due to policy change versus a similar situation in which there was no policy change by identifying positive evidence as a result of the change but can also compare outcomes of two different policies, or compare same location with different point in time." (Chadwick et al, 2003)

Monitoring Government Policies (CAFOD, Christian Aid and Trocaire, 2007) differentiates between policy outputs and long-term outcomes/impact. Examples of **policy output indicators** include:

- government spending on services
- number of people who access services
- % of total number of target service users in region who access services
- reasons people give for not making use of services
- characteristics of service users
- level of satisfaction with services.

To these we can add items such as attitude of service providers towards the users/clients. Examples of **policy outcome/impact indicators** include:

- awareness of public regarding a problem, services, and their rights to services
- how access problem has affected their life
- how access to services has affected their life – positively or negatively
- long-term socio-economic indicators.

In the above example, the number of people who access a service is considered an output while outcomes/ impacts are reserved for longer-term changes. However, others interpret the categories in a slightly different way. For example, Chadwick et al (2003) use the following slightly different definitions:

- **outputs:** efforts by implementing agency to implement
- **outcomes:** effectiveness of implementation efforts
- **impacts:** changes in household/individual conditions.

Using Chadwick's definitions, the number of people who access services would be an outcome (rather than an output indicator, as defined by CAFOD). Impact is defined as "changes to the conditions of people's lives and the environment, which reflect stated and unintended effects of the policy changes." Policy impacts as they relate specifically to livelihoods can be categorized into direct impacts (immediate impact on the asset profile of the household) and indirect impact (subsequent changes to asset profile).

Reisman (2004) provides two major impact dimensions: individual/family and population level. The **individual and family outcomes** can be categorized as follows:

- changes in attitudes, perceptions and beliefs
- changes in knowledge
- changes in awareness
- changes in skills
- changes in behavior
- changes in health
- changes in family stability
- changes in financial status.

United Way looks at changes in participants' knowledge, attitudes, values, skills, behavior, condition and status, as illustrated below:

- Know the daily nutritional requirements for a pregnant woman (**knowledge**)
- Recognize that school achievement is necessary to future success (**attitude**)
- Believe that cheating on a test is wrong (**value**)
- Are able to read at the sixth grade level (**skill**)
- Use verbal rather than physical means to resolve conflict (**behavior**)
- Have improved health (**condition**)
- Reside in a permanent, independent setting (**status**)

(Plantz et al, 1997)

Population level outcomes include:

- changes in health
- changes in education
- changes in social conditions
- changes in economic conditions
- changes in safety.

In 2007, Reisman describes impact as "the ultimate changes in social and physical lives and conditions, i.e., changes in individuals, populations and physical environments that motivate policy change efforts." Examples of conditions include poverty, habitat, diversity, health, equality and democracy.

As Chadwick points out, there is not likely to be complete agreement on indicators anytime soon: "Firm opinions are often expressed about what does or does not constitute a valid indicator, and it is futile to expect that one will be suitable for a variety of applications."

c) Evaluating Services

Policy change often impact government services. Glasgo et al (2006) use an approach called RE-AIM to evaluate health programs:

The Reach, Effectiveness, Adoption, Implementation and Maintenance (RE-AIM) framework offers a comprehensive approach to considering five dimensions important for evaluating the potential public health impact of an intervention. The model includes (i) **Reach**, the percent and representativeness of individuals willing to participate; (ii) **Effectiveness**, the impact of the intervention on targeted outcomes and quality of life; (iii) **Adoption**, the per cent and representativeness of settings and intervention staff that agree to deliver a program; (iv) **Implementation**, the consistency and skill with which various program elements are delivered by various staff and (v) **Maintenance**, the extent to which individual participants maintain behavior change long term and, at the setting level, the degree to which the program is sustained over time within the organizations delivering it (<http://www.re-aim.org/>).

UNFPA explains that indicators can be quantitative (number, percentage, rate, ratio) or qualitative (relating to compliance, quality, extent of, level of). Qualitative indicators need to be expressed in quantitative form:

This can for instance be done by using a scoring system. A scoring system to track improvement in the quality of RH services over time could include an indicator such as “the percent of existing SDPs with a score of four out of a total of five points on a quality of care checklist increased from X to Y”.

Establishing impact targets is particularly difficult. Baseline data, historical trends, stakeholder expectations, expert findings, and accomplishments of similar programs are methods suggested by UNFPA for setting targets.

d) Evaluating Impact of Rights Campaigns

Whether it is putting an end to torture, preventing early marriage or facilitating access for the disabled, many campaigns have to do with rights of sub-groups of a population. Evaluating progress on rights campaigns is particularly difficult, but as Ian Gorvin of Human Rights Watch (HRW) points out, evaluation and sound data are vital for combating opponents:

There are many—our direct targets and others—who would like to discredit and dismiss human rights organizations, or are skeptical of the value of condemning human rights abuse in the absence of an appetite among influential governments to apply meaningful leverage. Both the hostility and the skepticism raise the stakes for us to explain our purpose and our tactics, including in terms of how we assess that we are effective. (Govin, 2009)

Gorvin points out that at the time of writing in 2009 Human Rights Watch was not alone among established and respected organizations in the field of human rights to lack a systematic evaluation and documentation system to assess the success of HRW projects. An important drawback was the absence of a mechanism to record institutional memory – thus valuable lessons learned would be lost forever. However, while the decision to begin developing a formal system stemmed from a desire to understand how to become more effective, it also raised concerns among staff that workloads would be increased and unreasonable expectations set. HRW agreed that staff should participate in the development of indicators and that indicators should include insubstantial indicators such as “we challenged and debunked the alternative, more expedient narrative policymakers had been include to listen to.”

In the article Gorvin indicates that HRW is currently developing a concept of “Monitoring, Learning and Impact” that can be used to inform strategy and is owned by staff at all levels. No specifics are provided, except that the concept will use a three-tiered approach:

- evaluation at project level (5-6 projects per year)
- evaluation of country work (one region per year)
- evaluation at organizational level (aggregate project-level findings).³

In 2006, UNDP has developed a set of indicators for human rights based approaches to development. These indicators are helpful for evaluators who need to develop impact indicators for campaigns that deal with rights issues. The section below is extracted directly from *Indicators for Human Rights Based Approaches to Development in UNDP Programming: A User's Guide* (UNDP, 2006).

To begin with, UNDP recognizes two main categories of human rights: (a) **civil and political rights** and (b) **economic, social and cultural rights**. Both sets of rights have positive and negative dimensions. States have three obligations with regards to rights:

- to **respect** requires states to abstain from violating integrity of individuals or impinging on their freedom;
- to **protect** requires states to prevent violation of rights by others;
- to **fulfill** "involves issues of advocacy, public expenditure, governmental regulation of the economy, the provision of basic services and related infrastructure, and redistributive measures."

The table below describes examples of these rights:

TABLE 3. CATEGORIES AND DIMENSIONS OF HUMAN RIGHTS

HUMAN RIGHTS DIMENSIONS			
	I RESPECT (no interference in the exercise of the right)	II PROTECT (prevent violations from third parties)	III FULFIL (provision of resources and the outcomes of policies)
Civil and political rights	Torture, extra-judicial killings, disappearance, arbitrary detention, unfair trials, electoral intimidation, disenfranchisement	Measures to prevent non-state actors from committing violations, such as torture, extra-judicial killings, disappearance, abduction, and electoral intimidation.	Investment in judiciaries, prisons, police forces, and elections, and resource allocations to ability
Economic, social, and cultural rights	Ethnic, racial, gender or linguistic discrimination in health, education, and welfare and resource allocations below ability.	Measures to prevent non-state actors from engaging in discriminatory behaviour that limits access to health, education, and other welfare.	Progressive realization Investment in health, education, and welfare, and resource allocations to ability

Indicators for Column I in the table measure the **degree to which states are responsible for violating human rights** (e.g. measures of incidences of torture, or acts of discrimination in public health authorities).

Indicators for Column II measure the **degree to which states are able to prevent non-state actors and other third parties from violating human rights** (e.g. incidences of third party deprivation of liberty or denial of access to private sector health provision).

Indicators for Column III measure the degree to which states **provide the necessary resources and policies for realizing and promoting the protection of human rights** (e.g. investment in police training on issues of torture and inhuman treatment or investment in the infrastructure for health, education and welfare).

The above typology will be useful in developing a framework for the M&E tool.

³ Inquiry with HRW resulted in response that they have not published anything new on the topic since the article was written.

e) Challenges of Impact Evaluation and Tips

Although development organizations have been evaluating programs for decades, evaluating impact of advocacy campaigns pose special challenges. As Chadwick explains, "the development of *policy* impact indicators presents different challenges to those at the *project* level. The complexity of the processes, the wide range of external influences, and the time lag between policies being adopted and producing measurable livelihood impacts all mean that convincing evidence of direct and exclusive policy impacts is rare." (Chadwick, 2003)

UNFPA describes the following common problems in specifying indicators:

- Indicators do not correspond to output level. (e.g. set output indicator when in fact you want to measure outcomes)
- Indicators do not include an objective standard.
- Indicators targets are set without reference to a baseline.
- Too many indicators are defined.
- Indicators seem unrealistic due to lack of data.
- Inconsistency between the universe of the output and the indicators. (e.g. with regard to geographic coverage)
- Infrequent use of gender sensitive indicators. (UNFPA, 2004)

CAFOD makes the following recommendations when choosing impact indicators:

- Develop unique combination of indicators.
- Some outcomes are more difficult to measure than other (e.g. vulnerability) – often useful to consider what behavior most closely manifests the trend you are trying to measure and find an indicator linked to that behavior.
- Indicators should be SMART (specific, measurable, achievable given resources, realistic given context and time bound).
- Indicators should produce evidence that is accurate and verifiable.
- Be selective – choose a few precise, clear indicators that can be tracked well
- Track changes over time. (CAFOD, 2007)

UNFPA reiterates the need for program stakeholders to be included in the selection of indicators and suggests the following tips:

- Review the wording and intention of the output.
- Avoid broad statements.
- Be clear and type of change implied in the output.
- Be clear about where change should appear (individuals, counterpart organizations, communities, regions)
- Specify the targets for change. (UNFPA, 2004)

Margaret Plantz et al point out the following challenges based on the experiences of the United Way in the U.S.:

- harder-to-measure outcomes, e.g. when have anonymous participants, or migrant population.
- organizations tend to work on outcome measurement in relative isolation – need system for sharing information about successful efforts
- those who review outcome measurement plans (board members, funders, volunteers, etc.) may little/no experience nor expertise in the programs whose plans they are reviewing.
- establishing reasonable ranges for performance benchmarks. (Plantz et al, 1997)

Plantz (1997) et al review a number of lessons learned regarding measurement of outcome indicators. To begin with, conducting outcome measurement is feasible, even for small organizations. Top management commitment is necessary for success and programs must identify their own outcomes. Creating a logic model is a helpful way to think about how what changes people affected by the policy change will experience. Outcome measurement does not always require new or additional data

collection, although having an external person to assist with data collection and analysis the first time can save time and improve results. A trial run of the outcome measurement system is essential. Finally, setting outcome targets before having at least one year of baseline outcome data is counterproductive because program managers will have no idea what is an appropriate target.

Finally, O'Flynn (2009) reminds us that even if the objective has not been achieved, "the project may have resulted in other positive (or negative) changes for the target groups."

f) Examining Indicators from Actual Cases

Absent from current literature is a sense that policy impact indicator categories have been analyzed using actual cases. Thus the author decided to review a few actual cases to see anything more could be learned. The list of indicators on the following two pages was generated from 23 campaigns presented in *Advocacy in Action*, a publication produced by DanChurchAid in 2010. The cases are all situated at the national or local level (none at the international level). Examples of topics covered by the campaigns include:

- improving the situation of women (eliminating early age of marriage and honor killings, changing child custody laws)
- addressing political issues (selection of Supreme Court Magistrate candidates)
- improving health services (treatment of People Living with HIV/AIDS by government health officials)
- addressing nationality and identity issues in post-communist countries
- increasing social benefits for the elderly
- increasing access to library services
- creating access to voting polls for the disabled
- reducing corruption in education.

Note that with the exception of social benefits for the elderly, no real economic campaigns are represented. Also, because the list is generated from a few cases, there are not many examples in each category and some typical examples are absent. The indicators represented by the campaigns can be loosely categorized as follows:

Policy/Law is a straightforward category and relates to whether policies or laws have been changed as a result of a campaign.

Government implementation. This category includes budgeting for the affected group, setting up establishing government functions (or services, although we have no examples here) to address a problem, and including the affected group in government processes. Other categories within government implementation include transparency, enforcement, participation and process/appeals.

Access & Quality of Services/Benefits relates to quantitative issues such as the number of people accessing services and allows us to examine equity issues by comparing access by one sub-group relative to another. It also allows us to assess the quality of services and determine barriers to access.

Policy/Law, Government Implementation, and Access & Quality fall under the general category of outputs, or products that result from the policy change. The remaining categories relate to outcomes, or how the policy change has impacted the perceptions and situation of affected individuals. While there is admittedly some overlap between the groupings, it is still useful to identify broad categories:

Perceptions relates to changes in attitudes held by the public or by concerned groups.

Cases/Reporting looks at instances of complaints related to a problem.

General Situation/Prevalence examines how the situation has changed in the general population.

The category **Other** was created for unexpected outcomes, such as having other non-related programs established as a result of a campaign.

Hopefully the various perspectives presented above will help to clarify what categories could be useful in assessing the impact of a policy on the affected community.

Indicators drawn from Cases – Output and Outcome

POLICY/LAW

Child custody falls under civil code.
Honor killings become a crime under the law.
Election law altered to require that polling stations be accessible for disabled.

GOVERNMENT IMPLEMENTATION

Budgeting

Budget funds allocated for social benefits / pensions of elderly

Functions (& Services)

Commission established and functioning.
DNA bank created to help identify victims in future, mapping of where victims are found.
Steps in land registration process are simplified, period shortened

Inclusion

Elderly included in planning and other decision-making processes.
Elderly issues appear in local government documents, plans and budgets.

Transparency

All candidates undergo complete screening process (no last minute candidates introduced to list by high officials).
Increase in information available to families of victims.

Enforcement

Increase in enforcement of penalties in cases of corruption.
Legal recourse increase in cases taken to court and penalties.
Action taken against police and other responsible officials in cases of complaints.
Disputes are resolved – mechanism in place for resolving disputes.
Action taken against those who take away child prematurely from mother.
Cases of honor killings are prosecuted.
Increase in action taken against employers who violate CEDAW.

Increase in enforcement of penalties for selling cigarettes or alcohol to minors.
Penalties imposed against perpetrators of domestic violence.
Underage women who run away receive support and men, parents or sheikhs responsible for allowing marriage are punished.

Process & Appeals

Company and government conclude agreement regarding a process to address labor disputes.
Mechanism of appeal for disputes is in place.

SERVICES – ACCESS & QUALITY

Number of elderly receiving benefits.
Access to social services as affected by nationality or identity status.
Changes in quality of treatment of people with nationality issues by government officials.
Decrease in number of requests that are turned down.
Government provisions regarding disabled are integrated, action taken by higher government authority to ensure compliance.
Increase in use of library by girls.
Resumption of health referrals out of Gaza.
Client access to ART.
Change in government perception and treatment of homeless when it comes to registration.
Decrease in processing time.
Attitude of health staff towards PLWHA improves.

PERCEPTIONS (PUBLIC, STAKEHOLDERS)

Changes in public and stakeholder perception on how people are being treated by police.
Increasing disapproval of early marriage.
Perception of elders as to whether local government is including them in process

and offering more services/benefits to them.
 How homeless perceive government treats them and whether they think that government allows them to register.
 Decrease in perception about corruption in universities.
 Change in public attitude towards honor killings.
 Change in public attitude towards women parliamentarians.
 Increase in public disapproval of early removal of children.

CASES / REPORTING

Decrease in reports of rights violations.
 Increase in number domestic violence complaints (with expectation that this will eventually followed by a decrease)
 Increase in complaints/reports of early marriage.
 Increase in number of cases of women seeking/receiving protection services.
 Increase in number of registered land transactions.
 Reduction of number of women who report violations of CEDAW by employers (might start with increase in reporting as women gain confidence to report)
 Cases for normalization of nationality that take place, # estimated people living without nationality or documentation.
 Decrease in reports of corruption in education.
 Decrease in incidents of violence against women.
 Number of complaints by working women; number of resolved cases; ratio of resolved cases to total complaints; degree to which resolution impacts workers.
 Increase in # of homeless people registered.

GENERAL SITUATION / PREVALENCE

Increase in number of disabled who vote.
 Decrease in sale of cigarettes and alcohol to minors.
 Decrease of advertising of cigarettes / alcohol, particularly in areas where children are present.

Decrease in smoking and drinking by minors.
 Decrease in honor killings.
 Decrease in number of victims for which there is no information on their fate.
 Decrease in land disputes.
 Reduction in number of children prematurely removed from custody of mother.
 Reduction in number of underage marriages.
 Advancement of equal rights for women in the workplace (e.g. reduction of salary gap, more women in key positions)
 Change in women's representation in parliament.
 Accomplishments of women parliamentarians (bill introduced, importance of their positions on committees, public profile, etc.)
 Change in quality of life of elderly (as demonstrated through surveys, interviews)
 Ratio of registered homeless to total homeless.

OTHER

Repercussion / Multiplier Effect - other programs for girls started as a result of this campaign.

g) Conclusion

Evaluation of policy impact – how changes in policy benefit/harm communities in the long term – is one of the areas that will require more work when designing a Monitoring and Evaluation Tool. Evaluators need to have a clear understanding of what advocacy managers consider outputs, outcomes and impact indicators. They also need to know how evaluating changes in services that result from a policy change differs from evaluating the impact of rights campaigns, to differentiate between change at the individual level versus change at the community/social level. They must be prepared to assess economic, social and political impact of their advocacy work.

This dimension is particularly important because it represents the ultimate goal of advocacy work: to improve the quality of life of a sub-group of society that has been put at a disadvantage until now.

6. Empowerment

One of the dimensions of advocacy evaluation is the extent to which a campaign increases the ability of those affected by a problem to advocate on their own behalf – in other words 'empowerment.' In this section we examine definitions of empowerment, how empowerment is facilitated, indicators for measuring empowerment and challenges faced by those seeking to empower communities.

a) What is Empowerment?

In the mid 2000s, ActionAid conducted extensive research on empowerment as part of its advocacy action research. In *Critical Webs of Power and Change*, Chapman et al define empowerment as **strengthening individual and group potential for engaging in different levels of public debate and governance through the development of political consciousness**. Empowerment is about challenging and transforming inequitable power relations. Consequently, it is never neutral and usually entails some degree of tension and controversy.

Empowerment will always have as its main aim strengthening the political awareness and the potential of the person or group to become active protagonists in the struggle for rights.

Chapman et al,
Critical Webs of Power

"To overcome poverty and social injustice it is necessary to face real – but sometimes hidden – structures of domination and privilege which are maintained by diverse types of power relations. These can be especially difficult to confront since in some cases they involve not only challenging the oppressive exercise of power by public authorities but also by those closest to us - relatives and spouses or partners." (*Critical Webs of Power*, 2005)

Key principles pertinent to empowerment that are espoused by ActionAid include:

- **Empowerment requires a sense of group solidarity and collectivity.** It also usually involves **changes in self-perception**.
- **Empowerment is not an outside process.** Although it can be initially facilitated by an outside actor, community members must eventually have full ownership for the process to be sustainable.
- **Leaders are almost always men** and they rarely take gender into account.
- **Capacity to confront challenges will be conditioned by the socio-cultural, economic and political context** and it is not always possible for groups to take on leadership roles. There may be a role for outside actors/organizations to play in high-risk situations. However, contextual constraints are no excuse for avoiding challenging power relations.
- **Empowerment strategies need to translate consciousness-raising into action.**

Chapman adds in a separate publication entitled *Rights-Based Development: The Challenge of Change and Power* (Chapman et al, 2005b):

- **Empowerment is a long-term process** that requires commitment. "It can take years to transform deeply entrenched forces of marginalization and impoverishment."
- **Empowerment deals with formal and informal forces** (state/government; private sector; communal; cultural; multilateral).

b) How does one empower individuals and groups?

Empowerment consists in helping groups gain abilities, confidence, and a sense of power. In *Rights-Based Development: The Challenge of Change and Power*, Chapman et al identify the following empowerment processes:

- Organizing
- Mobilizing
- Enabling participation
- Shared analysis of causes, context and power
- Consciousness-raising
- Joint decision-making/action: private, public, legislative, legal
- Relationship building
- Supporting/accompanying/challenging.

It is interesting to note that Chapman does not list 'capacity building' as a process.

In *We the People*, published by the New Economic Foundations (2002), Perry Walker makes a point about reinventing democracy that is relevant to campaign empowerment tactics. The author argues that the ability to debate is central to supporting democratic processes (and by extension to promoting the inclusion of otherwise marginalized groups). This type of empowerment can take place by:

- facilitating debates on issues of public concern
- ensuring discussions help people form opinions
- ensuring discussions have influence
- legitimizing decisions.

The above processes for encouraging empowerment will be helpful in guiding evaluators seeking to identify how a campaign can work to empower a specific group.

c) Identifying Empowerment Indicators

In 2006, John Cameron wrote about the evaluation of the Nepal NGO and Community Based Organization Participatory Learning and Advisory Project (NPLAP) funded by DFID. The project aimed to enhance the work of NGOs and CBOs in reaching and empowering poor and disadvantaged groups. An evaluation of the work of intermediary organizations (IOs) in supporting 85 poor and disadvantaged people's grassroots groups (P&D) used the following categories related to empowerment:

- **P&D Relationships.** This category in fact assessed the IOs relationship with P&D groups.
- **P&D Action:** formation of groups, identification of issues, programs initiated by groups and networks, joint initiatives with IOs.
- **P&D Achievement:** access to services, natural resources, changes in community trends and practices (wage rates, discrimination, informal interest rates, dowry/bride practices, religious including), change in quality of life.

The evaluation showed significant improvement in evaluation categories. "Given NPLAP's primary goal, it was very satisfying to see the most significant gains in 'value-added' were in the relationship to P&D, suggesting real accountability gains." Finally, the evaluation highlighted that the empowerment of P&D groups takes time.

ActionAid worked with farmers to ensure collective and active **participation** in the pricing of their produce. Formation of a farmer's union that began **negotiating** with hotel owners for guaranteed prices for their products. Formation of a disabled movement to **lobby** for disability rights. (Chapman, 2005b)

In *Advocacy Strategies for Civil Society* (Fox, 1997), USAID suggests that the following capacities and characteristics are necessary to have an empowered citizenry:

- Functional literacy
- Facilitators that can increase self-awareness.
- Altruistic leaders.
- Belief in value of associating together.
- Ability to identify, prioritize and deliberate on problems.
- Understanding of process of decision making.
- Awareness of economic and social rights, including laws, policies and regulations.
- Awareness of political rights and duties as citizens.
- Understanding of basic functioning of government.
- Ability to act on and resolve locally-identified problems.

In *Closing the Circle*, Claire McGuigan (2003) reprises the Political Empowerment Process and Women's Empowerment Framework presented by VeneKlasen and Miller in *A New Weave* (2002) and originally adapted from Margaret Schuler and Sarah Hlupekile Longwe.



The above political empowerment diagram suggests that after individual and collective consciousness have been raised empowerment is achieved when groups:

- reflect on actions
- develop new leaders
- build citizens groups
- lobby
- plan and implement strategies
- organize and communicate information about rights, laws and problems and
- gain skills.

At that point citizens can begin to exercise their political power.

The Women's Empowerment Framework

Levels of Empowerment	Description
Control	Women and men have equal control over production and the distribution of benefits.
↑	
Participation	Women and men participate equally in decision-making in all programmes and policies.
↑	
Conscientisation	Women and men believe that gender roles can be changed and equity is possible.
↑	
Access	Women gain access to resources such as land, labour, credit, training, public services, and legal rights on an equal basis with men.
↑	
Welfare	Women's and men's material needs, such as food, income and health care are met.

The Women's Empowerment Framework indicates that basic needs must be met before women can begin to gain access to resources. By raising their consciousness, women can begin to participate on equal footing with men in decision making, finally achieving equal control over production and distribution of benefits as men.

Although it focuses on women, the Solidarity Center's Indicator of 'Participation and Empowerment' sheet drawn from the Canadian International Development Agency provides many examples of empowerment-related indicators for groups formed by development projects:

Quantitative participation indicators

- Level of input (NGOs, government departments)
- Number of meetings attended
- Profile of those who attend meetings by sex, socio-economic grouping, age, and ethnicity
- Level of contribution at meetings
- Levels of participation to baseline study (not clear)
- Audit of resources
- Participatory development of rules
- Reduced reliance on external funds
- Frequency of attendance at meetings
- Number individuals in key decision-making positions, by socio-economic grouping
- Rotation of leadership positions
- Participation in evaluation
- Degree to which lessons of evaluation are acted upon.

Qualitative participation indicators (typically related to organizational growth, group behavior and self-reliance)

- Perceptions of level of participation (pin-point levels of participation on scale of 1 to 5)
- Degree of solidarity and mutual support
- Ability of group to prevent and resolve conflict.

The resource stresses the difficulty of measuring empowerment and reaching consensus on the definition of empowerment before identifying indicators. Indicators will change depending on whether the focus is personal, economic, or political change (or a mix). A rough time scale, number of people to be affected and degree to which they will be affected must also be taken into consideration when setting indicators.

Quantitative political empowerment indicators

% of seats held by women in local decision-making bodies

% of women in decision-making positions in local government
% in local civil service
% of women registered as voters; % of women eligible voters that vote
% of women in senior/junior decision making positions in unions
of women who participate in public protests and political campaigning (as compared to men)

Quantitative economic empowerment indicators

changes in employment/unemployment rates (for women, men)
changes in time-use of selected activities in the household
salary/wage differentials between women and men
average household expenditures for women vs. men
ability to make small purchases independently
% of available credit, etc., from different sources that go to women

Quantitative social empowerment indicators (over time)

of women in local institutions
extent of training and networking among local women
control of women over fertility decisions
mobility of women outside the residence

Qualitative empowerment assessment indicators

It is very difficult to reach consensus on qualitative indicators of empowerment.
Changes in Women's awareness of local politics and legal rights (compared to men)
Changes in perceptions of women regarding empowerment
Perceptions of women regarding self-respect.
Perceptions of women regarding changes in economic autonomy.
Perceptions of women regarding how decisions are made in the household.
Independent autonomy of women in household decision making.

Qualitative empowerment analysis indicators

How changes in legislation have empowered or disempowered different groups.
Role of different institutions in empowering/disempowering groups.
Changes in decision making by women in their household.
Changes in how women are organizing to increase their empowerment.
Are socio-economic changes experienced by groups leading to greater empowerment?

Even though the above indicators focus on women, they can easily be adjusted for other sub-groups of society. Of particular interest is the penultimate indicator: how women are organizing to increase their empowerment. This appears to be a long-term indicator of sustainability of empowerment efforts.

One source (which unfortunately escapes the author at the time of this writing) highlights the role of dissension between NGOs and the groups they seek to empower. When NGOs truly empower groups and communities, both sides will feel comfortable to express **differences of opinions** and **different positions on issues**.

d) Challenges to Empowerment

Chapman (2005b) points out that it is important for organizations to be aware of the dynamics of power within their organization and with their partners. Organizations are a microcosm of the world and if they do not respect their own staff and their partners, true empowerment of communities cannot take place. On a similar note, in *Critical Webs* Chapman argues that the very term 'empowerment' is at risk of being co-opted by certain institutions and emptied of its meaning.

Another challenge raised by Chapman is the risk that empowerment efforts will lead to disappointment and continuation of the status quo:

Numerous cases speak of poor people coming together, mobilizing and opening channels of contestation. Yet these processes do not necessarily lead to effective action. ActionAid staff and our partners – particularly at local levels – need more support on how to ensure that initial processes of training and awareness raising are sustainable and expand into broader collective experiences. Very often there is no change in power relations, and people are not able to free themselves from the status of simple 'beneficiaries' [...] Approaches that do not lead to tangible progress in people's lives can lead to disillusionment and cynicism about rights-based approaches.

Nyamugasira (1998) challenges the perception that NGOs who have increased their advocacy efforts truly represent marginalized groups such as the poor, women and children as they claim. He sees achievements of NGOs being at best mixed.

The author references the new division of labor that began in the late 1990s as Northern NGOs began to focus more on systemic change at the international level while Southern NGOs took center stage representing the poor. However, the poor are hard to reach and sometimes can even be invisible. NGOs are often not 'residential and operational' in the areas where the groups they are claiming to represent are located. CBOs are a coping mechanism aimed to deal with one problem at a time and often not representing the poorest. Finally, even when they are present, NGOs can distort the message of the voiceless because they are self appointed and are not accountable to their communities.

In fact, NGOs rarely have constituencies that have mandated them as their advocates. [...] With all due respect, many Southern NGOs do not qualify as 'indigenous' in that they are not born out of the situations in which the poor live. Rather, they are modeled on the Northern NGOs who founded and/or fund them, often with strings attached. Consequently, they feel accountable more to the North than to the local poor whose values and aspirations it is hard to prove that they represent.

Nyamugaisra argues that all NGOs regardless of their origin should "obtain people's mandate and regularly return to have it renewed" and as part of the process they need to learn how to "disempower themselves in order to empower others." They can do this by becoming 'accompaniers,' asking questions that help grassroots advocates identify the issues themselves and prepare their own questions for those in power. Other ways they can contribute to empowerment is to help them learn to evaluate themselves and use their contacts to gain access to policy makers.

The above indicators will be useful in generating a list of broad empowerment indicator categories for the M&E tool.

e) Conclusion

The literature consistently emphasizes the importance of empowerment – moving from powerlessness to consciousness-raising and action – as a key indicator of success of advocacy work and one that is most likely to result in sustainable gains. Nevertheless, there appear to be no standard criteria for measurement of empowerment in the advocacy literature. The above discussion provides a good starting point but it may be necessary to look for additional sources specifically on empowerment. A rapid review indicates that most of the literature on empowerment focuses on gender issues.

7. Social Norms

a) What are social norms?

Organizational Research Services defines social norms as the "knowledge, attitudes, values, and behaviors that comprise the normative structure of culture and society." (Reisman, 2007) Social norms represent the behavior that we consider to be expected of us by society and we self-regulate our behavior according to how we think society will respond to deviations from the norm. Social norms can be implicit or explicit and can be transmitted through non-verbal behavior.

Social norms are kept in place through three mechanisms:

- pure coordination motive (we avoid accidents by all driving on the same side of the road)
- threat of social disapproval or punishment for norm violations
- internalization of norms of proper conduct (we apply the norm even when there is no one to observe us). (Durlauf and Blume, 2007)

b) Why are social norms important for advocacy?

Reisman points out that "advocacy and policy work increasingly has focused on this area because of the importance of aligning advocacy and policy goals with core and enduring social values and behaviors." The view is echoed by Jennifer Chapman (2005) as follows:

Indeed policy changes on their own are rarely enough to ensure changes in people's lives. For example legislative and policy changes in women's status are often several stages removed from the lived realities of women in Africa. In politically authoritarian contexts, the gap between policy and practice is most marked: high profile initiatives on behalf of women often bear little or no relation to the harsh realities of women and do little to change them. This is not to say that international or national policies or conventions have no use – indeed they can provide an important lever or tool for activists, but on their own they are rarely sufficient to make positive changes in poor or marginalized people's lives.

In some cases the discrepancy between what policies state and what is done may be because advocacy efforts have focused on influencing national-level policies with no corresponding effort directed at traditional practices and customary laws that have a direct bearing on individual lives at the community level. For example, the constitutions of nearly all countries explicitly accord equal status and rights to men and women. That has not prevented customary laws from effectively barring women's access to land and inheritance in many societies.

Shifts in social norms can take place among decision makers, the affected population or the population at large. Changing social norms is particularly important in situations where behavior is deeply entrenched in society, not regulated by laws or policy, or where the affected population is outside the political process. An example of entrenched practice not regulated by law affecting a population that is not politically engaged is the female genital mutilation of young girls. In past societies when women did not have the right to vote, shifts in social norms were needed first in order to mobilize women to demand the right to vote.

c) Indicators for Social Norms

Reisman (2007a&b) indicates that shifts in social norms can be measured according to:

- awareness of an issue
- increased agreement about the definition of a problem (e.g. common language)
- change in beliefs, attitudes and values
- knowledge about the severity of an issue
- knowledge about what actions to take
- salience/importance of an issue
- willingness to support an issue
- change in alignment
- voting behavior.

To the above indicators we can add two that Will Parks (2005) includes as indicators of social change:

- expanded public and private dialogue and debate (in family, among friends, at community gatherings, in the political process)
- Increased accuracy of the information that people share in the dialogue/debate.

Reisman (2007b) explains that due to the subjective aspect of social norms, data collection typically includes surveys, focus group discussions and interviews. There are two main approaches to data collection regarding social norms. The first is to ask retrospective questions in which respondents reflect on how they have changed as a result of the campaign. The second is to compare the views of respondents with those of individuals who were not targeted by the campaign activities.

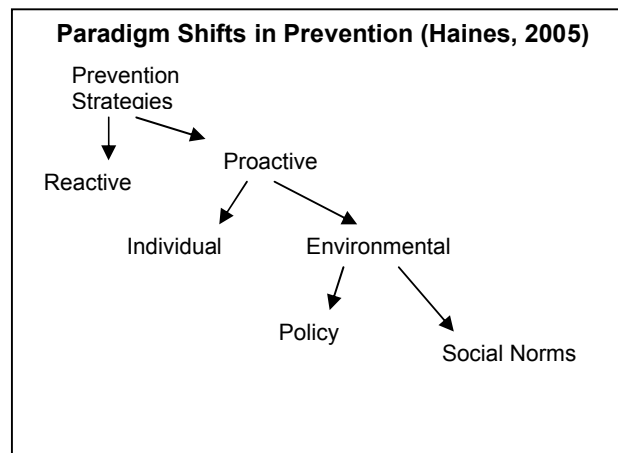
d) Marketing Social Norms

An interesting emerging topic is the idea that work specifically targeting social norms can have a powerful effect on behavior change. As with all work related to behavior change, the concepts are being tested first in the health sector and in particular are being used to address problems affecting youth in peer settings. For example, considerable work has been done in countries like the US, UK, and Canada on the problems of alcohol and drug consumption among youth. The theory is that working on the environment and clarifying misperceptions related to social norms can effect change in ways that traditional health education interventions have been unable to do. As the Social Norms Research Center website explains:⁴

The Social Norms approach gathers credible data from a target population before consistently telling it the truth about its actual norms, via a number of marketing strategies. With repeated exposure to a variety of positive, data-based messages, the misperceptions that help to sustain problem behavior are reduced, and a greater proportion of the population begins to act in accordance with the more accurately perceived norms of positive behavior.

The effects of social norms on personal and group behavior have been well documented in research literature. Social norms theory dictates that members of a social group are influenced by their perceptions of social norms, even if their perceptions are ill-informed. Within the context of student alcohol consumption for example, if the population believes that most students drink heavily, then this misperception is reflected in a higher rate of problem drinking. If students believe that drinking heavily constitutes normative behavior, there is a greater likelihood that they too will drink more heavily, while at the same time believing that protective behaviors and moderation are uncommon. If the number of students who overestimate heavier drinking as normative behavior is reduced, then there will be a corresponding reduction in actual heavier drinking. While University student alcohol use is the example here, the theory is transferable to a number of different social issues for a wide age-group, such as bullying, sexual assault prevention, health and nutrition, drug use and racism.

Michael Haines et al (2005) explain how approaches to behavior change have altered in recent years. The traditional reactive approach focused on fear-based communication emphasized health risks of certain behavior but researchers found that the effects of this approach diminished as people began to think negative outcome unlikely. This approach was exchanged for a more positive proactive strategy that focused on changing individual attitudes by building self-esteem and confidence. However, the impact and efficiency of this approach was not proven.



⁴ www.socialnorms.co.uk.

The focus on the individual has shifted to the environment, "those powerful elements in the cultural context beyond the individual's personality and values that may determine behavior." The environmental approach has two main dimensions: policy change and social norms.

Haines suggests that there are three main causes for misperceived norms:

- assume one incident of behavior is an indication that the behavior occurs regularly;
- tendency to pay attention to unusual behavior and ignore more common (but less colorful) behavior;
- shocking cultural media and shocking media advocacy techniques draw attention to taboo behavior.

e) Conclusion

To summarize, the social norms approach consists in collecting information about social norms (attitudes and behavior) to identify any misconceptions and then uses marketing techniques to clarify and publicize those misconceptions in order to change individual and group behavior. It is similar to other media approaches with the main difference that the message itself is a social norm (e.g. Most Students Don't Smoke!). Because the social norms approach is dependent on messages, regular monitoring is essential to ensure that the proper messages are being received.

Recognizing that the social norms approach is currently being used mainly in the health/public health sector and that it consists in clarifying *misperceptions*, which will not always be the case, this approach still has relevance for advocacy campaigns. It will be particularly important in contexts where perceptions of social norms have a strong influence. One dramatic example that comes to mind is perceptions regarding social norms and honor killings in the Middle East. Studies that could definitively demonstrate that the majority of the population do not condone honor killings – but silently accept them because they think they are in the minority – could dramatically alter the social landscape.

We have seen that paying attention to social norms is important for campaigns in which social values play a role in the successful implementation of a policy change. However, advocacy evaluation literature only discusses the topic superficially and it is necessary to draw on the literature from other fields such as behavior change communication to learn more.

Having reviewed this topic briefly, we can now move to the final category of advocacy evaluation indicators, building a base of support.

8. Base of Support

Nearly every campaign needs a base of support. The only exception might be a campaign about a very technical issue that is being run in a country with open democratic processes. In such cases, it is theoretically possible for a campaign to be limited to lobbying of legislators by technical experts. In the vast majority of other cases, however, the legitimacy of the campaign and its ultimate success depend on the ability of advocates to mobilize a base of support.

Reisman (2007a) defines base of support as:

The grassroots, leadership and institutional support for particular policy changes. The breadth, depth and influence of support among the general public, interest groups and opinion leaders for particular issues provides a major structural condition for supporting changes in policies. This outcome category spans many layers of culture and societal engagement, including increases in civic participation and activism, “allied voices” among informal and formal groups, the coalescence of dissimilar interest groups, actions of opinion leader champions and positive media attention.

Reisman includes in her example of outcomes items such as media coverage and breath of partners (coalitions). Since media monitoring and assessment of coalitions are more straightforward topics and are covered in general advocacy manuals, we will not deal with them here. For the purposes of this literature review, we will limit the examination of base of support to:

- building public will
- constituency building
- mobilizing support

The above sections are not standard because the subject has yet to be standardized in advocacy evaluation literature. In the view of the author, they represent a continuum of increased involvement of campaign supporters – one that takes up where the last chapter (Social Norms) left off. Since the topics are difficult to separate out, there may be some overlap.

a) Building Public Will

Public will is an important component of advocacy. For example, the absence or presence of public will has affected national policy in the United States in historic events dating back to the 1776 Revolution all the way up to the Vietnam War and the War in Iraq. Wars galvanize the public and issues are often framed as wars to mobilize public will (e.g. war on poverty, war on drugs). According to Salmon et al (2003), research on public will suggests that the ability to mobilize public will for change is less related to the characteristics of the problem than to the "power, resources and skills of those who seek to mold public sentiment."

Definition

Building Public Will (Friedenwald-Fishman, 2005) identifies the main strategy for building public will as a communications campaign that integrates mass media activities with grassroots outreach methods with the aim of building a "deeper public understanding and ownership of social change."

Building public will means impacting where people rank an issue in their priority of compelling social causes— it is about a long term or permanent attitudinal shift that is manifested in peoples' commitment to taking action to create change in systems. Shaping public will on any issue requires a multi-dimensional approach to changing attitudes and impacting behavior. (Friedenwald-Fishman, 2005)

The authors explain that public will is achieved when a critical mass of community members and leaders are galvanized around an issue to form a "new or different set of fundamental community expectations."

'Building public will' is not to be confused with 'influencing public opinion.' Public opinion can help to pass a specific initiative but by nature is creates vulnerability because "public opinion can be effectively swayed and changed back and forth utilizing the same techniques" whereas public will strategies "focus on long-term change built over time by engaging broad-based grassroots support to influence individual and institutional change."

Concepts and Principles Related to Building Public Will

Friedenwald-Fishman et al (2005) identify the following four principles as being essential to successful attempts to public will building include:

- **Connecting through closely held values.** "Values trump data when it comes to decision making." Advocates must find a way to establish a close connection between the values of members of the public to the issue.
- **Respecting cultural context.**
- **Including target audience in development and testing of messages.**
- **Integrating grassroots and traditional communication methods.**

Salmon (2003) reviews various models related to public will campaigns and presented briefly below:

Social problem construct. Problems are redefined as social problems when:

- an influential group takes the issue and asserts that it is affecting many people;
- statistics are used to demonstrate the extent of the problem and the need for serious attention;
- an obvious solution can be proposed.

Agenda building. Institutions, including government and the media, have limited resources and advocates must capture their attention in order for an issue to emerge on the policy agenda.

Framing. Issues gain prominence according to how they are defined in terms of language and symbolism. Framing the issue serves to engage an audience (the public, decision makers, members of the media) while isolating any opposition.

Mass communication and perceptions. The literature has demonstrated that mass media is not effective in persuading people to adopt specific attitudes, but it does help *set the public agenda*. Salmon gives credence to Elisabeth Noelle-Neumann's controversial theory that the publicizing of public opinion acts as social control, i.e., that as one issue gains prominence in the media as the majority opinion, others who do not share that opinion become more reluctant to talk about the issue.

Social capital. Social networks can advance a public will campaign by (1) facilitating education, (2) exerting influence on decision makers, (3) increasing the credibility of a campaign, and (4) reinforcing awareness of a long-term campaign if momentum wanes.

Social marketing. Although there are certain limitations, marketing techniques drawn from the private sector can be used to build public will.

Challenges to Building Public Will

Salmon (2003) lists the following challenges for advocates aiming to mobilize public will:

- **Partisan labeling.** While campaigns that aim to change individual behavior are usually acceptable, campaigns to mobilize public will may be "criticized and delegitimized as rooted in politics or partisanship."
- **Achieving 'effective' public opinion.** Documenting public opinion is only useful if it "reaches the systematic agenda of decision makers" through lobbying, another form of communication, or public mobilization.
- **Changing concepts of community.** Whereas 'community' has mainly referred to a geographic location in the past it is becoming increasingly important to think in terms of social-psychological terms and networks. Nevertheless, community remains an important aspect in building public will because although individuals make choices, they are affected by the institutions in their environment.

Indicators for Measuring Public Will

Friedenwald-Fishman et al (2005) describe the following steps to building public will and corresponding indicators:

Step	Indicator
▪ Framing and defining the issue or problem	Audience moves from not being aware of the problem, to early awareness that frames the issue as one of relevance to them.
▪ Building awareness about problems or needs	Audience: <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ participates in testing (messages, campaign

- collateral, etc.)
 - gains awareness and depth of information through trusted relationships, affiliations, media.
- Becoming knowledgeable/transmitting information about where and how the problem can be impacted or changed
 - Audiences hears about the issue through multiple channels with identification of specific desired changes and the mechanisms for change
- Creating a personal conviction that change needs to occur
 - Audience:
 - gains a sense of ownership/ dedication to impacting the problem and its causes.
 - identifies specific actions to take
 - commits to making a difference
 - takes action and recruits others to take action.
- Evaluating while reinforcing.
 - Audience is exposed to messages/actions that validate their choices and encourage continued action and the recruitment of others.

An interesting characteristic of public will is the way it can remain silent and even apathetic unless it is unleashed by a catalyst. Although public will can be measured in theory by public opinion polls, it can be very unpredictable – as the April/May 2010 demonstrations of national public outrage at the immigration laws passed by the State of Arizona in the United States. Certainly Arizona legislators did not expect that within two weeks of the bill passage all major state events would be boycotted by the rest of the country. Similarly in Uganda in 2006-2007 government sale of public forest lands to an entrepreneur nearly brought the country to a standstill. Thus, when contemplating any policy change it is critical to have a sound measurement of public opinion - not only of the immediate constituency, but of all stakeholders (which in the case of Arizona represented a much wider audience).

b) Constituency Building

While the formal definition of constituency is the group of voters that are represented by an elected official, in advocacy the term is used to refer to any population or group that a campaign might represent. This includes people that are served by the campaign (or affected by the problem being addressed) and those who support the campaign.

As the Continuous Progress: Better Advocacy through Evaluation website explains,

Building a constituency or advocacy base for your cause can often be the most important component of a successful advocacy campaign. Citizens who believe in your advocacy goal and become engaged advocates are your most powerful allies, especially over the long run.[...] Policy elites often underestimate the public's level of concern about global issues, which seriously undermines the efforts of advocacy groups to represent a strong constituency and diminishes the pressure that policymakers feel. Many of these elites, and especially elected officials, correctly perceive that there is a significant gap between what the public thinks about global issues, and the actions they take (or rather do not take) to act upon these beliefs. This is why it is so critical to invest in constituency building efforts, and to help members of the public speak up and make their beliefs and concerns known to decision makers and to the media.⁵

Janice Hirota and Robin Jacobowitz analyzed three education reform projects to examine the relationship between constituency building and policy change efforts to find that:

Engaged constituencies bring on-the-ground goals, insights, and concerns to policy debates, thus contributing substantively to the shape and meaning of reform, as well as to its visibility

⁵ <http://fp.continuousprogress.org/node/25>.

and legitimacy.[...] Broad-based community and organizational involvement in a reform effort can create the necessary ongoing and long-term continuity to sustain change. (Hirota, 2007)

The authors present three paradigms for building constituency while doing policy work:

Paradigm 1: **Broadening the constituency base** creates greater visibility and legitimacy for reform efforts. Participation of constituents in policy debates and decision making helps define the issue.

Paradigm 2: **Building constituent capacity** contributes to developing plausible solutions and increases credibility with policymakers.

Paradigm 3: **Shifting notions of accountability** (for example by increasing participation of constituents in institutional processes) helps to institutionalize new roles for constituents and sustain constituent access to institutional power.

Indicators for Building Constituency

Given that literature on indicators for measuring the success of constituency building work is very limited, the author has generated the following list of possible indicators drawn from various sources:

- Constituency is clearly defined
- Constituency is knowledgeable about issue and campaign
- Constituents have positive perception of how campaign is managed, whether they are informed by the campaign organizers, and whether the campaign is being responsive to them.
- Organizational structure and capacity to recruit, educate, and build capacity of constituents.
- Communication systems in place to quickly mobilize constituents.
- Grassroots presence in place to coordinate with and mobilize constituents.
- Opportunities for constituents voices to be heard (public forums, meetings)
- Constituents know what actions they can take and they take action (letters to editor, letters to legislators)

Additionally the following characteristics are likely to lead to a stronger campaign and a more sustainable campaign outcome:

- Campaign regularly disseminates reports to constituency.
- Constituents are part of the campaign design.
- Constituents are part of the campaign structure and decision-making processes.
- Constituents are given opportunities to participate in a meaningful policy dialogue and be heard.
- Campaign is accountable to constituency.
- Constituents are integrated into institutional processes.

c) Mobilizing for Action

Even when there is widespread public support for a cause, advocates may still find it hard to mobilize supporters during a campaign. As Pamela Goddard points out in an article entitled *Meeting the Challenge of Mobilizing Grassroots Advocacy in Support of Clean and Abundant Water*,

Motivating citizens to become politically active on behalf of environmental issues has long been a challenge for the conservation community. The problem is that while public opinion polling consistently demonstrates widespread support for clean water, the public has yet to make the vital connections between water quality, water quantity, and the impact of population pressures.

Although the public is thinking about water, thought does not directly translate into action. This merits a discussion of what motivates people to act. According to the Midwest Academy, a renowned training center for grassroots organizers, people take action when they are aware of a problem, when they understand the problem easily, and when they believe they can make a difference.

Once citizens decide to become involved, what are the venues in which they wish to take action? According to Diane MacEachern, author of *Enough is Enough: The Hellraiser's Guide to Community Activism*, most people begin with steps in their own backyard. They share information with their families, friends, and communities and often start with simple actions like writing a letter to an elected official regarding a neighborhood concern. (Goddard, 2002)

Based on the current literature, mobilizing for action has yet to be singled out as a topic for evaluation of advocacy campaigns. However, as many campaigns do organize actions that consume valuable resources in terms of funding, time and energy of organizers, it is reasonable for evaluators to examine the extent to which campaigns are able to effectively mobilize support for a cause.

Not only does advocacy evaluation literature not address this topic, there does not appear to be an evaluation literature for activism or social mobilization in general – at least not online.⁶ This is understandable as activism is historically driven by citizens and the issues of documentation and evaluation are not likely to arise in such cases.

For the purpose of this literature review, we are limited to set down a series of questions that could be used to evaluate mobilizing for action:

- To what extent is the civic action able to mobilize participation? What is the profile of participants?
- To what extent have campaign managers been able to forge a link between the values and concerns of potential supporters and the action?
- How did the event concretely contribute to advancing the objectives of the campaign?
- If the campaign is a long-term one, can the mobilization effort be sustained?
- If possible, how has the action been linked to a more prominent event (hook)? Has there been attempt at coordination with other concurrent movements or events?
- Have the organizers been able to take advantage of electronic technologies (texting, email, social networking platforms) for mobilizing action?
- How has gender equity been addressed in organizing action?
- What was the role of the campaign managers in the action? Did they act as organizers, coordinators, mobilizers or advisors? If they are not organizing the event directly, to what extent have campaign managers been able to build capacity of event organizers?
- How did the organizers anticipate (and deal with) risk of violence and attempts to block the action? How were they able to ensure non-violence?

d) Conclusion

The building and maintenance of a base of support is critical when research and lobbying alone will not persuade decision makers to follow the desired course of action. Yet this dimension is also still emerging in the literature. In the absence of a standard framework presenting the various aspects of this dimension of advocacy, this review identifies three main categories representing a continuum from less to more active support for a campaign. The aspects of building public will, building a constituency and mobilizing for action appear sufficient for the needs of the EAA M&E tool, with each aspect having clearly identifiable and measurable indicators.

⁶ At the time of this writing, the author is trying to obtain hardcopies of some promising materials.

VI. Conclusion

The above literature review highlights growing interest in the field of advocacy evaluation over the last 15 years, although the interested parties have evolved over time. The challenges to advocacy evaluation are well documented and generally accepted, including the difficulty of identifying attribution and the unpredictability and long-term aspect of advocacy work. Certainly there is consensus that advocacy evaluation requires resources and time (for professionals who are already overburdened) and that most advocates are not in a position to systematically evaluate their efforts. Above all, advocacy evaluation needs to be commonsensical and presented as a non-threatening learning experience to those who work is to be assessed.

The literature refers insistently on the need for a theory of change for any advocacy work. The current logical framework is not an adequate substitute for a theory of change. Practitioners do not appear to be familiar with the concept yet and one can anticipate some resistance from the field. It may be necessary to introduce the concept gradually. From the evaluation perspective, however, understanding of theory of change (and even constructing a theory retroactively because it was not done initially) will help evaluators understand what went wrong in a campaign and why.

There appears to be a slow but ongoing movement towards standardizing broad categories for evaluating impact of advocacy work, although these differ according to whether the work has a domestic or international focus. The main categories include (in no particular order):

1. Policy change
2. Capacity of civil society organizations
3. Democratic space
4. Policy impact
5. Empowerment
6. Social norms
7. Base of support

Evaluating policy change (the extent to which the desired change was achieved and implemented), capacity of civil society organizations, and democratic space are straightforward categories and the literature provides clear guidelines on indicators for them.

Evaluating policy impact is a mixed category because NGOs have extensive experience evaluating impact of programs and services, but to this we must add the capacity to evaluate changes to the protection and promotion of rights work, which is a more complicated topic for which limited material currently exists. Additionally, the advocacy evaluation literature does not discuss evaluation of programs and services in depth and there is a need to look to development literature to identify appropriate indicators.

All of the literature consistently emphasizes the need for greater effectiveness of advocacy in empowering communities, building a base of support to influence decision makers and transforming social norms to ensure that policy changes translate into practice. Yet these categories remain the most under-developed and there is very little discussion in the advocacy evaluation literature. This is not to say that there is no literature on those topics, but that they have not adequately addressed by those working in advocacy. Community organizers are more focused on empowerment, health care professionals on social norms (mainly to change individual behaviors) and politicians and activists on building a base of support. This highlights areas for future research that will benefit the community of professionals interested in advocacy evaluation.

To the above gaps, we can add the need for a literature review of transnational advocacy networks (and general international advocacy) and evaluation of communication campaigns. There is plenty of work to do in advocacy evaluation and it is the hope of EAA that this literature review serves to advance the field.

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