

BASIC DEFINITIONS IN ADVOCACY, LOBYING/ INFLUENCING AND ACTIVISM

The constitution of Uganda

Article 38 of : Civic rights and activities

1. Every Uganda citizen has the right to participate in the affairs of government, individually or through his or her representatives in accordance with law.
2. Every Ugandan has a right to participate in peaceful activities to influence the policies of government through civic organisations.

Article 41: Right of access to information

- 29.
1. Every citizen has a right of access to information in the possession of the State or any other organ or agency of the State except where the release of the information is likely to prejudice the security or sovereignty of the State or interfere with the right to the privacy of any other person.

What is advocacy?

- Is the deliberate process of influencing those who make policy decisions.
- can be a means of convincing policy makers to fulfill their human responsibilities to others (to hold them accountable).
- Means to mobilize attention to a particular policy issue. (Porter, 1995)
- Speaking on behalf of the voiceless

CHANGE: Advocacy is about change

Effecting changes in:

- Laws

- Policies
- Practices (implementation of policies and laws)
- Behaviors of those with the power to effect change (knowledge and attitudes)
- Power relations and structures
- Protecting rights

It is not about....

- Awareness raising as an end in itself....
- Changing the behavior of individuals as an end in itself....
- Informing Government about your organisation

Lobbying/influencing

Its a form of advocacy with the intention of influencing decisions made by the government by individuals or more usually by Lobby groups

Lobbying/influencing can generally be defined as any attempt to influence a politician or public official on an issue.

Lobbying/influencing requires dedicated efforts;

- To build relationships with key stakeholders/actors,
- To strengthen researchers' ability to communicate findings to different groups of people,
- To increase policymakers' capacity to understand and use evidence when making decisions.

Activism

- Its a doctrine or practice that emphasizes *direct vigorous action* especially in support of or opposition to one side of a controversial issue
- Its the process of *campaigning in public* in order to bring about change.

Which of these best describe lobbying/influencing, advocacy and activism?

- Press release
- Petition
- Policy brief
- Demonstrations
- Community Baraazas
- Strikes
- Street matches
- Policy brief
- Press release
- Different parties
- Dialogue
- Consensus-driven
- Negotiation
- Boy cotts

Insider Approach Strategies

Dialogue

Quiet persuasion

Constructive engagement with decision-makers (policymakers' panel)

Emphasises policy research and analysis

Face-to-face meetings

Seminars/breakfast meetings with decision-makers etc

Outsider Approach Strategies

Exerts public pressure from outside

Tends to be more oppositional

Emphasis on public campaigning

Direct action

Media work

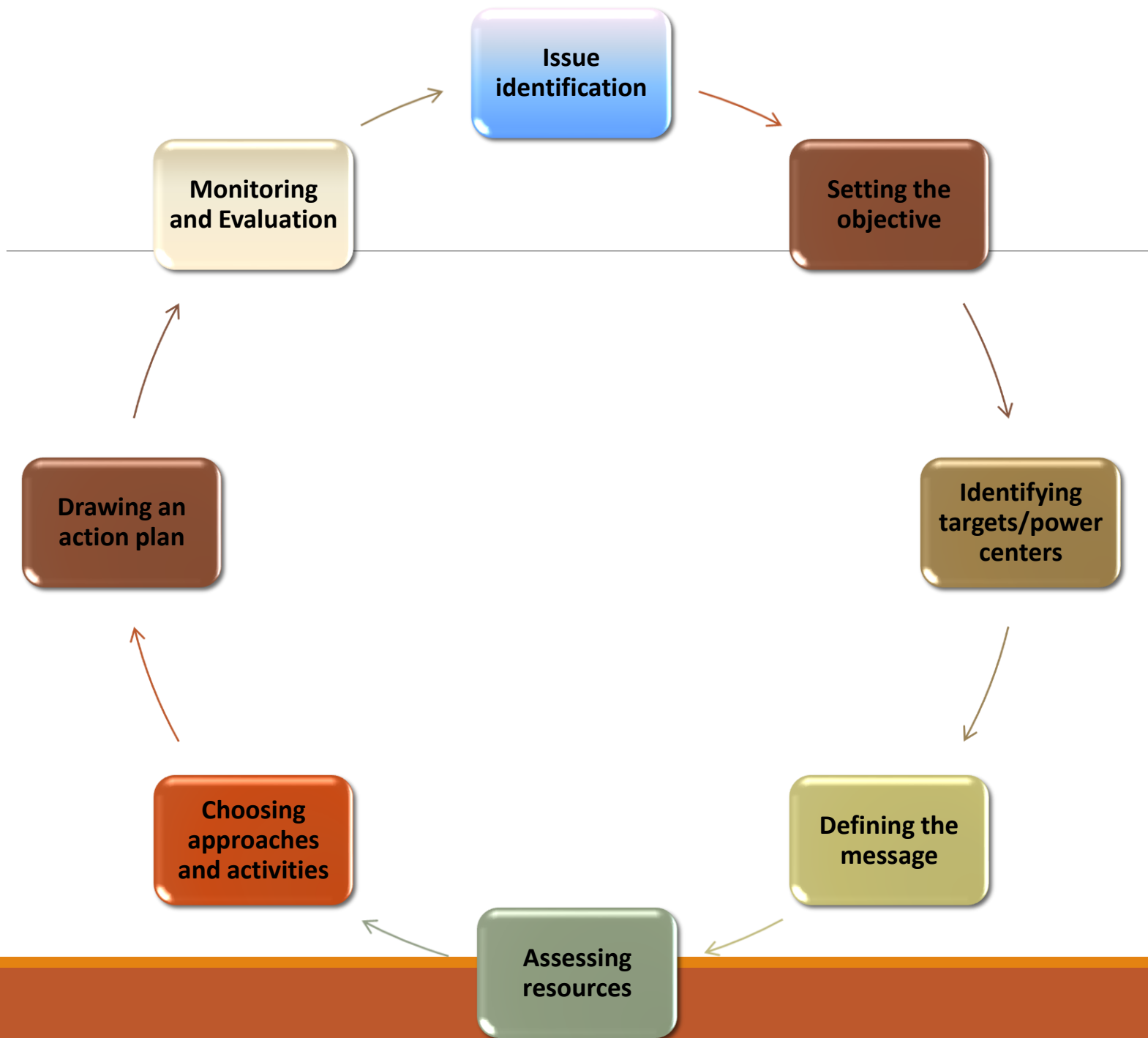
Usually deployed when the insider approach is not yielding results

Which way to go?

Depends on;

- a) The issue you are dealing with
- b) The mission, culture and values of your institution
- c) The political culture of the day
- d) Your theory of how you can bring about change

INFLUENCING CYCLE



Issue identification

Will working on the issue;

- Result in real improvement in people's lives?
- Give people a sense of their own power?
- Be widely and deeply felt?
- Build lasting organisations and alliances?
- Provide opportunities for women and others to learn ?
- Develop new leaders?
- Promote awareness of, and respect for, rights?
- Link local concerns with larger-scale, even global, issues?
- Provide potential for raising funds?
- Enable the organisation to further its vision and mission?
- Be winnable? Does it have a clear target, timeframe and policy solution?

Key things to consider when research about an influencing/advocacy issue

- What information do you need?
- Where can you find the information?
- Who will contribute to your research?
- How will you collect the information?
- How will you analyse and present the information?

Research should be:

- Objective, not biased
- Representative of the whole group on whom it is focused, not a single viewpoint
- Accurate and reliable
- Methodical and systematic

OBJECTIVE SETTING

- Specific: what exactly do you want to happen?
- Measurable: will you know when you have achieved it?
- Achievable: is it realistic or even possible to achieve your objective, given your resources and time?
- Relevant: is it relevant and appropriate to all stakeholders, and to the problem itself?
- Time bound: by when do you want it to happen?

Identifying targets/power centers (stakeholder mapping)

For each target, you might ask:

- What do they know about the issue?
- What is their attitude towards it?
- What do they really care about?
- Who has influence over them?
- What influence or power do they have over the issue?

Message development and delivery

- a) Should summarize the change you want to bring about
- b) Should be short and punchy, just one or two sentences
- c) Should be understandable to someone who doesn't know the issue, and be jargon free
- d) Should include a deadline for when you want to achieve your objective
- e) Should include the reasons why the change is important Should include any action you want the audience to take in response
- f) Should be memorable
- g) Who is best suited to deliver the message?
- h) What medium is to be used to deliver the message?

The medium and the messenger

Medium

- Letter
- Phone Call
- Meeting
- Press release
- TV/Radio interview/adverts/commercials
- Leaflet
- Poster
- Petition

Messenger

- Staff
- An organisation
- Independent expert
- Celebrity
- Beneficiary

Assessing resources

- a) Money
- b) People
- c) Skills and experience
- d) Partners
- e) Information and knowledge
- f) Relationships
- g) Reputation
- h) Time

Approaches and activities

- a) Capacity building
- b) Lobbying
- c) Media Work
- d) Public campaigning
- e) Documentation

Action Plan

Objectives	Targets	Activities	Indicators	Timing	Responsibility	Review

Challenges of monitoring and reviewing advocacy and influencing work

- a) Advocacy is often a long-term activity and policy change may be incremental and slow
- b) The process of change is often unpredictable
- c) Hidden decision-making processes may be used by bureaucracies and politicians
- d) Cause and effects are usually difficult if not impossible to clearly demonstrate, as you will be working to influence using a number of advocacy tools, and it may not be clear which activity made the difference to the direction taken by the decision-maker
- e) Advocacy work is often carried out through networks and coalitions and whilst this is likely to increase the visibility and power of advocacy work, it also makes it more difficult to attribute the results to the work of a particular organisation or assess the exact contribution of each organisation or group (*attribution and contribution*)

- *If you have an hour to chop a stack of wood, it is worth spending the first half hour sharpening your axe. Ideally this is what advocacy/influencing cycle is all about*
- *If you want to walk faster, walk alone but if you want to reach faster, walk together or with others.*