

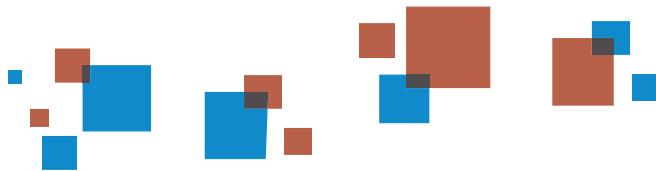
Volume VII

**Basic Leadership Development Course**  
**Manual for Facilitators**

**Networking, Organizing for  
Social Change and Policy Advocacy**



Asia South Pacific Association  
for Basic and Adult Education  
*Learning Beyond Boundaries*



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## **Asia South Pacific Association for Basic and Adult Education**

ASPBAE

ASPBAE is a non-profit, non-government regional organisation with membership throughout the Asia Pacific region. It has operational relations with UNESCO. Its overall purpose is to strengthen the theory and practice of adult education as a contribution to individual and social development.

Today, ASPBAE covers a wide diversity of groups and individuals involved in both formal and non formal education, working with and through government agencies, universities, NGOs, community groups, trade unions, indigenous peoples, women's organisation, the media and other institutions of civil society. Their educational activities reflect global and regional imperatives in the promotion of people's empowerment and sustainable development.

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## Casting the Net

The term networking has become common usage in the vocabulary of development in contemporary time. Reference to Networks and networking is made in practically every discussion on the theme of development. Different meanings have been giving to the concept of Network. In its history of more than two decades, the practice of networking as a mechanism for mutual communication and influence has grown. There is a real need to distinguish Networks from other forms of organisations that have become common within the community of development actors in civil society.



### Objective

Learning about networking and building alliances and ways to keep a Network alive

Time required	Material Needed	Expected Outcomes
1 hour 45 minutes	Case study on sustaining Networks, ASPBAE case study	By the end of this session, participants will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand how a Network is formed</li> <li>• Know the key factors required for keeping it functional</li> <li>• Know the value of a Network</li> </ul>

### Activity A

Ask the participants to brainstorm what Networks mean to them using the letters of the word NETWORKING written vertically on the board.

On the basis of this brainstorm, the group arrives at a definition of a Network.

## Activity B



Ask the participants to hold hands and form a line. Lead the line through the room, going through the archways of interlinked hands. Tell participants that they should hold tight to each other's hands as they follow you - the leader. After a few twists and turns, you leave the group and ask them to untangle themselves without letting go of hands.

As participants work at straightening themselves out, suggest that Networks could be as tangled as their line. Say that there are different forms of Networks and ask if they can identify any of them.

## Activity C

Divide the participants into their groups and ask them to discuss the following:

- What are some characteristics of effective networking?
- What are some constraints to effective networking?
- Identify three (3) things that you could try to improve your networking.
- Identify three (3) concrete networking follow-up efforts that you can do.

The groups report back. Synthesize their responses to create the image of a person with:

- Head as attitudes
- Heart as values
- One hand holding a bag as Tool Kit of things that can be done
- One foot on the ground to represent being grounded
- The other foot stepping over a hurdle as constraints
- The other hand reaching out to a poster as the levels of networking



## Activity D

End the session with a presentation on ASPBAE as an example of a regional Network – its evolution over time to respond to the needs of the region/ its members; changes in thematic area; strategies adopted; communication lines. Link this with leadership qualities, transformative leadership, organizing for social change.

## Notes to the Facilitator

Defining the term “Network” (as opposed to an organisation): “People connecting with other people who have common values, for sharing ideas and resources”

People - group, individual, and organisations drawing information from each other.

### What is the meaning of networking? What are the purposes of networking?

Four distinct purposes of networking:

1. **Resource and energy mobilisation:** A means of mobilising energy and resources for advocacy-short and long term goals
2. **Communication:** To communicate across cultures, political systems, countries, continents, contexts, providing access to information otherwise not easily available
3. **Promotion of co-ordination and linkage building:** Not only to co-ordinate activities but, to facilitate more systematic communication, sharing of information, experiences and ideas
4. **Influencing Public Policy:** It can be used as a political strategy for dealing with repression and opposition, can provide support, protection and solidarity



### Characteristics of a Network:

The major characteristics of the Network organisation are:

- Informal and flexible
- No centralised planning- activities and events depend on the initiatives of the members
- There are no experts – the diversity and variety of experiences are recognised and respected
- Shared responsibility and ownership

- Democratic functioning
- Capacity to mobilise resources for collaboration
- A network requires a co-ordinating point, not for supervision but to promote and catalyse

## Forms of Networking

Network essentially takes three distinct forms. Various networks go through different forms throughout their history and may change forms as their purposes get more elaborate and modified. These forms are not actually exclusive but they are distinctively identified and utilised.

The first one looks at Network as loosely organised relationships.

This form is a more common description of Network among researchers, practitioners, development actors, etc. In this form, linkages across individuals, groups and organisations are informal; there is no formal membership criterion. This form is most appropriate for mobilising energy and communication, which is left to the individual's initiatives and not necessarily co-ordinated in any significant area.

Loose



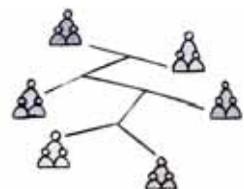
The second form takes a shape of Associations, where slightly formal relations with individuals, groups and organisations exist as members of the Network. One of the important characteristics of an Association is that its leadership and decision-making structure depends on the membership. The Network as an Association is able to perform the functions of co-ordination and influencing public policy much better than a loosely organised mechanism.

Centralised



The third form of a Network has been a time-bound one, around a particular theme or event or issue or concern. These Networks rarely become Associations with formal membership or organisations engaged in programme implementation.

Decentralised



## ASPBAE Regional and Sub Regional networking: Issues to consider

ASPBAE, in regional and sub regional networking, had to consider following issues.

- **Communication:** Cultural differences vis-à-vis sense of response time; frequency of communication; interpreting messages, use of English language, state of communication equipment and infrastructure, access to it, etc.
- **Context:** Global/regional context, local relevance: How to bring together
- **Leadership:** Communicative, inspirational, inclusive, consensual, participatory
- **Resources:** Differences in standard and state of communication equipment, access to it
- **Involvement:** Expectations of involvement and degree thereof, different expectations of outcomes
- **Human Resources:** Lack of human power, reliance on staff, one or two key people are available sometimes

These issues are pivotal while planning and implementing organisational growth oriented activities and programmes.

### What sustains Networks?

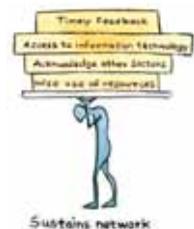
- Wise use of resources
- Acknowledge other sectors
- Access to information technology
- Timely feedback

### Barriers

- Political instability
- Information gap
- Natural disaster

### How to overcome obstacles?

- Create learning
- Meet often
- Set guidelines
- Develop management information system
- Sharing of website
- Quarterly/half year publication
- Civil society organizations
- Address language barrier



## Challenges with networking:

There are several generic issues that the experience of networking, building and sustaining Networks has thrown up. These are generic to all kinds of Networks and each network deals with them in its own specialised way.

### 1. Involvement vs. Responsibility:

- Need to promote the idea of contributing not just receiving; that it is a two way process, pro-active in sustaining it; fast response time

### 2. Co-ordination vs. Control:

- Need animators, convenors or co-ordinators to energise

### 3. Linkage between the person and of the institution:

- Need for institutional back up but yet some constraints

### 4. Information vs. Action:

- Ensuring there is a purpose behind the sharing of information, not just for its own sake
- Need clarity of expectations regarding action

### 5. Focus vs. Inclusion:

- Scope of focus - Who: converted/unconverted/openness to new members

### 6. Process and/or Structure:

- How much minimal structure is necessary



## Opportunities of networking through ASPBAE

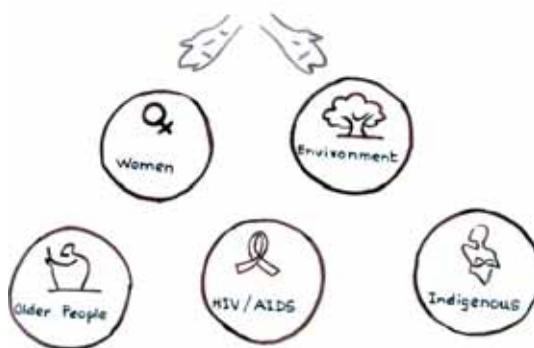
a. Direct to individuals

b. Offering to be part of a Network which discusses/exchanges information on:

- Adult learning concepts and methodologies
- Education Watch
- Advocacy strategies
- Capacity building
- News of events/training

c. Thematic programmes for:

- Women
- Environment
- Older people
- HIV/AIDS
- Indigenous



# Organizing for Social Change

## Objective

To understand the basic principles of community organizing

- what is community organization; and
- what is the need to involve the community in any project aimed for them

Time required	Material Needed	Expected Outcomes
1 hour	Videos of Community Based projects	By the end of this session, participants will be: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conversant with strategies for community organizing</li> </ul>

## Activity

Begin the session with a video presentation of viable alternatives and pro-active approaches used by any community in the region.

After the video presentation, ask participants to convene into sectoral groups and discuss the following:

- Two effective community organizing strategies you have used in your work/organization
- Two effective policy advocacy strategies used in your group



Community Organizing Strategies	Policy Advocacy Strategies
Prepare local leader	Meeting with all stakeholders
Use of popular education/media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• signature campaign</li> <li>• neutral people group (mediator)</li> </ul>
Participatory	
Motivating community leaders	Using political groups, judges, religious men
Coordinating with local leaders	Educate community/action research
Social capital	Networking with institutions
Adoption of different cultures/custom	



- Community organizing is a building ground for policy advocacy
- To be effective, strategies in both community organizing, and policy advocacy should go hand in hand; they are inter-related and complementary
- Micro level work is linked with macro level work

**OR**

Prepare case studies of projects that use different techniques/approaches – eg. Top down, not inclusive of the community, donor driven agenda, disconnected between advocacy and the grassroots reality.



Divide the participants in groups and give each group one case study. Ask them to analyze and critique the case study in the light of all that they have learnt during the last few days, including rights based approach, gender inclusion, leadership types, social mapping.

### **Discussion Guidelines**

- Are programs planned as per the community needs?
- Does the donor's agenda overtake an organization's plans?
- How can grassroots operations strengthen the program's advocacy plan and benefit the community and the organization?

The objective of this exercise is to highlight that quite often organizations fall into a trap of planning projects and programs that are top down and/or donor driven; that they may not take into account the actual needs of the community they work in. The activity should also highlight the principles and values in community organizing.

### **Reference Material:**

*Presentation on Movement and Social Change.*

## Policy Advocacy & Campaign

### Objective

Learning about advocacy – its meaning, nuances, planning appropriate strategies and methods

Time required	Material Needed	Expected Outcomes
2 hours	Flip charts, markers, board/ display area, pins/sticky tape	By the end of this session, participants will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand why we need policy advocacy, how does one go about it</li> <li>• Understand how campaigns are designed and how they work</li> </ul>

### Activity A

Give participants 3 minutes to come to the board and write words that come to their mind when they hear the term 'Policy Advocacy'.

Synthesizing responses, present a definition of Policy Advocacy eg. **"Policy Advocacy is the deliberate process of influencing those who make policy."**



### Activity B

"The Bottle Game" – Ask participants to form a circle. Place empty plastic bottles in the centre of the circle. Tell participants that every time you give signal they must reach out and pick up a bottle. Let them know that the more bottles they pick up the better they are doing in the game.



When all the bottles are picked up, stop and ask participants about the game.

- Did every one get a bottle?
- Why not? What stopped them?
- Were there any factors that helped or hindered people from getting the bottles?

Relate this game to the reality of poverty and discrimination that is prevalent in the world.

Policy Advocacy strategies are a recognition of the fact that

- Causes of poverty and discrimination stem both from decisions at the household level **and** from decisions made within the community leadership structures, national legislatures, international organizations and powerful institutions.
- Only a wide range of programme strategies targeted at multiple causes or “entry points”, including policy causes will lead to the desired impact of reducing poverty.

### Activity C

Ask the participants to divide themselves into sectoral groups and plan a campaign or policy advocacy strategy.

Give the groups 30 minutes for discussion and planning, after which they will present to everyone. Presentation should be for a maximum of 5 minutes per group.



After the presentations are over, draw their attention to the process within the groups. What were the different steps they took to plan the campaign or advocacy strategy? End with a presentation of a framework for advocacy.

*Refer to Presentation 'Policy Advocacy'.*

### Activity D

In a brainstorm, ask participants to share

- Examples of effective advocacy campaigns
- What could be the possible reasons that made the campaign successful

Note these down on flip charts which are displayed for later reference by participants. This exercise should not exceed 10 minutes.

Close the session with a brief presentation to participants on the current available platforms for education advocacy that ASPBAE is closely associated with, eg. The Millennium Development Goals and/ or Education For All.

*Use Presentation – ASPBAE RWS.*

This can be followed by another Presentation on effective communication and policy advocacy methods. Besides these, you may choose to exhibit more presentations based on the relevance of the topic to the group. The options are listed below -

1. Advocacy
2. Education Policy Advocacy

## Notes to the facilitator

Common words related to Advocacy:

*influence, input, changes, persuasion, meetings, campaign, trust, negotiation, networking, struggle, lobby, awareness, sharing information, participation, control, supporting, involvement and consultation.*



### What is Policy Advocacy?

There is a tendency to view all of what we do for 'change' as policy advocacy – awareness-raising, skills building, conscientization and organizing. However there is a specific understanding of policy advocacy that needs to be articulated.

Policy advocacy may be explained as the deliberate process of influencing the formulation, modification, altering, implementation and discarding of public policy.

A 'Policy' is a plan, course of action or set of regulations adopted by government, business or institutions designed to influence and determine decisions or procedures. "Public Policy" refers to those instruments and actions adopted by governments which define the framework within which social actors (and business too) can act.

Advocacy involves delivering messages that are intended to influence the actions of policy makers. Audiences of NGO Policy Advocacy typically include governments at the local, national and regional level, and bilateral donors (e.g. USAID, DANIDA, and DFID) and multilateral donors e.g. World Bank, Asian Development Bank).

## Advocacy

- Means amplifying the voice
- Usually involves a combination of different strategies for mobilizing support and producing change
- Advocacy strategies attempt to solve a problem step-by-step by getting at its systemic causes and focusing on specific issues



## People - Centred Advocacy

- Enables and empowers the marginalized to speak for themselves
- Aimed at achieving social transformation through the realization of human rights: civil, political, economic, social and cultural



## Rights Based Approach

- People are not passive beneficiaries or charity seekers of the State or government. State is bound to guarantee all human rights to all human beings.
- Citizens are the owners of the State. Hence, the State should be transparent and accountable to citizens and defend human rights.
- It seeks to bridge the gap between micro-level activism and macro-level policy change. It stresses a bottoms-up approach to social change.



## Participation

- Not a mere strategy to manufacture consent, manipulate consensus or extract cheap labour.
- Principle based on an inclusive moral choice; participation means sharing power, legitimacy, freedom, responsibilities and accountability.
- *At the core of the advocacy that we do – there is a learning process.*

## Communication

- Advocacy is a communicative act and a set of actions that involves communications designed to promote social action.
- Communication is not merely the use of language. It is an attitude, a willingness to share; to learn; to reach out; and to speak
- The clarity of the message is as important as the choice of medium



## Preparatory to launching into advocacy, a foundation needs to be built of the following elements -

**Gathering policy and political information:** Before any advocacy effort is initiated it is important to understand how key institutions work and identify the key decision makers for the issues one would like to address.

**Assessing risk:** Understanding the socio-political and cultural environment in which the Policy operates is important. A benefit-harms approach that encourages advocates to be aware of the external environment and the overall impact of programmes is useful to take practical steps that can minimize unintended harms.

**Building strategic relationships:** Cultivate relationships that could play a significant role in the policy making process. Who do policy makers turn to for advice? What sources of information do policy makers trust? Who are the key actors in the sector? Networks and Coalitions are excellent opportunities to discuss and find partners in advocacy.

**Establishing credibility as an advocate:** When others respect, trust and value what you say you will be recognized as a spokesperson on behalf of the others. Experience has also shown that when advocacy is grounded in field work the effort has been most recognized and respected.

**Linking advocacy to programme priorities:** There should be a clear connection between the policy work you plan to do and the existing programmes and staff capacities. There should be support within programmes for the advocacy issue. To be effective, strategies both in community organizing and policy advocacy should go hand in hand; they are inter-related and complementary.

**Maintaining focus:** Since realising Policy change is usually a prolonged process the issues should be clear and prioritised, enabling advocates to stay focused.

## Planning an Advocacy Initiative

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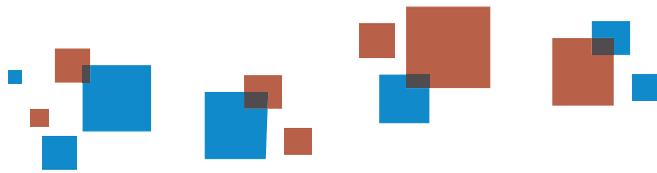
<b>Step 1</b>	Analyzing policies	Identify a policy issue Identify key actors and institutions Analyze the policy environment Summarize policy findings Identify options for Policy change
<b>Step 2</b>	Outlining an Advocacy Strategy	Select a Policy issue Select target audiences Set a policy goal Identify allies and opponents

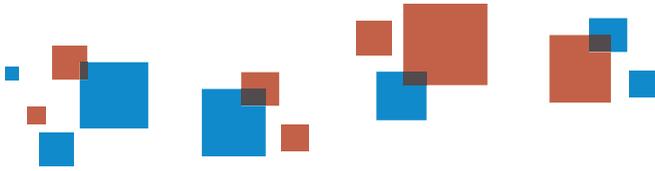
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<b>Step 3</b>	Refining an advocacy strategy	Select roles Identify key messages Define advocacy activities
<b>Step 4</b>	Framing a plan	Set a timeline Prepare a budget Prepare an action plan Plan for monitoring and evaluation

Some of the requirements for effective advocacy as well as enabling conditions or factors for successful advocacy work:

- Credibility of NGO - NGO work record, experience and expertise, reputation – technical know-how, more accurate grassroots information, access to a particular constituency etc., have worked with other public agencies before
- Perception of NGO motives – Genuine? Self serving vs. greater good? Transparent or hidden agendas?
- “Autonomy” – Independent of political parties; from source of funds (may not be a problem – but colours perception)
- Accountability
- Size and/or visibility – sheer capacity brought by size brings greater attention to advocacy agenda, ‘size’ may also be viewed as measure of organisational success
- Advocacy proposal which can draw from already stated, broad objectives of the concerned policy institution and the wider apparatus has a higher likelihood of engagement and a greater chance of hearing
- Advocacy points should be well-defined and specific, rather than extensive. A longer term objective may be posed but a more narrow focus is advisable if tangible results are to be expected in a limited time. Further, short-term outcomes (gains) can invigorate and sustain future efforts and create favourable conditions for future efforts. Therefore, a readiness to consider incremental vs. radical change; the necessity of compromise
- Highlight arguments/issues which would attract the largest set of allies and alienate as few as possible
- Project the issues rather than the organisation or leaders





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