

EVERY  
**ONE**

EVERY  
**Day**

EVERY  
**Way**

Can do effective **Advocacy!**

## Ideas and tips for strengthening our advocacy to prevent violence against women!

**Advocacy** is a set of actions, big or small, that aims to influence people who hold power to create positive social change and empowers those who are experiencing oppression to create a more just society<sup>1</sup>.

### A successful advocacy campaign has the following characteristics:

**Series of actions:** *Advocacy that moves beyond one activity e.g. one protest march.* A successful advocacy campaign comprises a variety of actions that are deliberately planned to be complementary and build on each other.

**Designed to persuade:** *Advocacy that convinces people that the desired social change is positive and beneficial.* In order to get support from those who have the power to create change, advocacy activities and messages should be positive and benefits-based, indicating that the community will gain from preventing violence against women.

**Intentional:** *Advocacy that sends consistent messages to specific people who have the power to create positive change.* Identifying your advocacy issue(s) clearly and concisely makes it easy to develop consistent messages, i.e. messages that promote the same change in different ways. The same message should underlie electronic media, print media, lobby meetings, petitions, marches, and any other means we use for advocacy. It is important to also ensure that all of our champions speaking out on the issue use the same consistent message.

**Strategic:** *Advocacy that is carefully planned to achieve clear and concise goals and objectives.* This involves researching the issue to have comprehensive information about it, developing clear goals, and SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time-bound) objectives. It also involves systematic planning, monitoring and evaluating progress in order to determine whether to change your strategy. Research, planning, monitoring and evaluation do not have to involve large statistical surveys, however, should be systematically planned and executed.

**Works in alliances:** *Advocacy that brings various stakeholders on board will be stronger.* An advocacy campaign that works in isolation would encounter various challenges and likely have limited success. We all have different strengths and working with other like-minded people and organizations enhances our advocacy efforts.

**Fosters positive change:** *Advocacy that works to create positive change in society to have everybody (women, men, girls, and boys) fully enjoying their human rights, living free of violence or the fear of violence.* A successful advocacy campaign for the prevention of violence against women would break the large goal of equality and non-violence for all into smaller specific goals that help communities move closer to realizing this vision in manageable, positive steps.

<sup>1</sup> This reader has been adapted from Ayer, V. & Bunn, C. (2004). *Advocacy Expert Series: Book 1 Advocacy Campaign Management (1<sup>st</sup> ed.)* Pact Cambodia. [http://www.pactworld.org/galleries/resource-center/advocacy\\_series\\_module1.pdf](http://www.pactworld.org/galleries/resource-center/advocacy_series_module1.pdf)

# Lobby Meetings: An Important Advocacy Strategy

Advocacy campaigns utilize several complimentary activities to attain their goal and objectives e.g. marches, petitions, media awareness, lobby meetings etc. Lobby meetings are held with leaders in the community or country who are decision-makers, either directly or indirectly. Lobbying is the art of persuading public officials, usually to support or oppose a law and the enforcement of that law<sup>2</sup>. In other cases, lobby meetings may involve convincing a leader to support policy draft or take a public stand calling for change.

Just like the advocacy campaign, a successful lobby meeting should be well-planned and executed. In most cases, the leaders whom your organization is engaging are very busy and you want to make sure you get the most out of the few minutes you have with them. Here are a few suggestions for holding a successful lobby meeting.

## Tips for *preparing* for a lobby meeting:

1. Clearly identify and be able to articulate your specific advocacy issue related to violence against women prevention:
  - Make sure you are comfortable articulating in a clear and concise manner in only a few minutes.
  - Practice with others first!
2. Learn more about the leader you are going to engage: what are her/his real interests? How will you catch her/his attention? How does supporting your issue benefit her/him?
3. Ensure you are able to *clearly* articulate what action you want the leader to take and point out how it will be beneficial to her/him and the community.
4. Select an appropriate time and location for the meeting, i.e. a time at which the leader is available to meet in person considering her/his busy schedule.
5. Prepare a one-page write up about the issue which summarizes each of the above points: specific problem/issue, why it is relevant to her/him, the action requested and by when, how it will benefit the community, and organizational contact information.

## Tips to consider *during* the lobby meeting:

1. Make sure you stick to the agreed meeting time and arrive at least 15 minutes before in order to gain your composure for the meeting.
2. Initiating the meeting: Thank the leader for her/his time and introduce yourself(-ves) in a professional and succinct manner. Remember to be polite, respectful, and use the proper titles to address the leader
3. Present the issue in a clear and concise way so that the leader is able to understand the problem, its magnitude, who is affected, action needed, and what she/he is expected to do. Try to get the leader to commit to taking the desired action within a specific timeframe (this allows for meaningful follow up as you monitor progress).
4. Ending the meeting: As you close, repeat what has been agreed regarding the commitment made by the leader, offer thanks for her/his time, and hand her/him the one-page write up.
5. As a follow up to the meeting, send a letter to the leader thanking her/him for the time and gently reminding her/him of commitments and timeframes agreed upon.

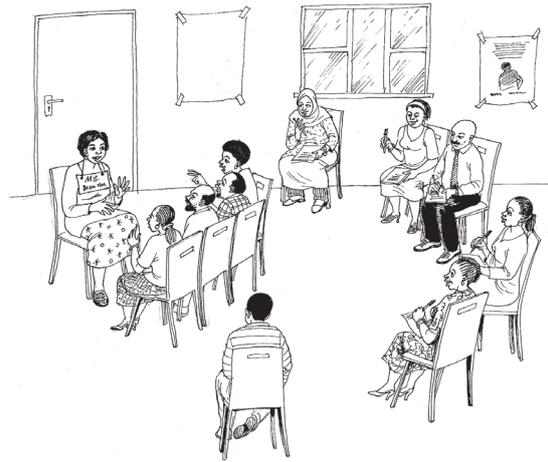
<sup>2</sup> Ayer, V. & Bunn, C. (2004). *Advocacy Expert Series: Book 1 Advocacy Campaign Management (1<sup>st</sup> ed.)* Pact Cambodia. [http://www.pact-world.org/galleries/resource-center/advocacy\\_series\\_module1.pdf](http://www.pact-world.org/galleries/resource-center/advocacy_series_module1.pdf)

# Activity for Practicing Advocacy Skills

Successful advocacy requires regular practice and careful planning. We may need to practice several times in our offices to ensure that we are ready and that our advocacy activity is effective. Now that you have some tips for holding effective meetings, below are some role play ideas to help you practice your skills.

## Preparation:

1. A list of leaders you would like to engage and their positions
2. Manila Paper
3. Markers
4. Scissors
5. List the following tips for *Successful Lobby Meetings* written neatly on flipchart paper:
  - a. Concisely articulate the issue/problem
  - b. Clearly state what change you want to see
  - c. Express what specific action is needed by the leader and by when
  - d. Explain how it will benefit her/him and the community



## Activity (2 hours):

1. Using the markers and manila paper, cut out rectangular name labels from the manila paper and write the names of the leaders you would like to engage on them. Some of your leaders may have items that are easily associated with them, for example if they wear a certain type of hat or a wig for a magistrate, crown for a king, skin or bark cloth for a traditional leader; you may use these as props to make the exercise fun or create some yourself.
2. Select from among the staff who will act as which leader (start with at least 3).
3. Divide the rest of staff into 3 groups (ideally each group should not exceed 6 people). Assign each group a particular leader from among the 3 drawn above whom they will have to engage in a lobby meeting.
4. Explain to the groups that they must prepare for a 7-minute lobby meeting with their assigned leader using the tips written on the flip chart. Show them the prepared 'Successful Lobby Meetings' flipchart and ask them to structure their meeting accordingly. Give them 25 minutes to prepare.
5. When 25 minutes are up, take turns having each group 'lobby' their leader for strictly 7 minutes while the other groups observe.
6. As each group is presenting, ask the rest of the participants to write down their assessments of the group based on the tips.
7. After the first group has conducted their mock meeting, ask the rest of the participants to share their comments. Facilitate a group discussion about the issues which emerge in relation to the guidelines and tips. After 8-10 minutes, move to the next group's meeting.

8. After all of the presentations, facilitate a plenary discussion with the participants, asking them what they learned from these role plays and how it will influence their advocacy going forward. Write their responses on a flip chart take out.
9. After 10 minutes conclude the session with the following: *“Lobbying leaders for their support is one of the many actions we can take in our advocacy to prevent violence against women. We usually lobby or meet our leaders if we want them to support, oppose, or enact enforcement of a law or policy, endorse an activity, or take a public position on an issue. Even if you are not meeting high-ranking leaders in your work, this guidance can help all activists to think more strategically about how we engage and influence others to create positive change in our communities. Successful advocacy at all levels should be well-planned and strategic and therefore requires practice. Practicing our activism is as important as the activism itself; it makes our efforts more effective and also more fun!”*