

## Mobilizing resources for advocacy

### Key messages:

- **Advocacy is resource intensive. It requires investments of funds, staff time and materials. The resources available for advocacy often change the shape of advocacy strategy and its planning. It is also a critical factor in sustaining advocacy efforts over the long term.**
- **It is essential to know the available likelihood of resources for an advocacy issue at the outset.**
- **Preparing a budget for advocacy involves looking at costs related to team functioning, advocacy planning coordination, advocate activities and campaigning, networking, staffing and other miscellaneous expenses.**
- **Analysis underpinning the evaluation advocacy strategy should take a close look at the opportunities to mobilize additional resources. Raising funds for advocacy can be part of the evaluation advocacy agenda itself.**

### Preparing a budget for advocacy

Budgets for an advocacy effort should be considered as part of advocacy planning. How much will it cost to run an advocacy project? To begin, include the core costs of maintaining and strengthening advocacy capacity, as well as resources needed for specific actions. Core costs would include **team functioning costs** (e.g. travel, conference calls, staff recruitment, team development, capacity building); **advocacy planning coordination costs** (including monitoring the implementation of the plan and evaluation; research); **advocacy activities and campaigning core costs** (e.g. preparing introductory campaign information, campaign materials, conferences and events). There are of course inexpensive and expensive ways to pursue each strategy. Hiring a public relations or a consulting firm, for example, can be an important way to communicate your key advocacy messages, but it is costly. Holding meetings, writing media commentary, or arranging site visits are relatively lower-cost activities.<sup>1</sup> Other costs include **networking with government at national and regional level** (e.g. attending conferences, policy-makers' and donors' trips, policy-maker events, policy-maker information, representational expenses); and **generic coalition and staffing costs**.<sup>2</sup>

Successful budgeting cannot be achieved single-handedly. In particular, everyone who is responsible for spending money should be involved in the budgeting process. A comparison can also be made with costs of similar activities undertaken in other countries.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Sprechmann S., Pelton E., (2001). *Advocacy Tools and Guidelines Promoting Policy Change*. CARE.

<sup>2</sup> Adapted from Gosling L., Cohen D., (2007). *Participant's Manual: Advocacy Matters – Helping children change their world*, International Save the Children Alliance.

<sup>3</sup> PARIS 21. (2010). *Advocating for the National Strategy for the Development of Statistics, Country-level Toolkit*.

## Fundraising for advocacy

Mobilizing funds for advocacy serves as an agenda for advocacy as well. Some ways to mobilize resources for advocacy include influencing donors and institutions to fund certain issues, encouraging individual supporters to give to advocacy; accepting funds from the private sector and sharing resources in alliances and coalitions. This is an additional area that can benefit by creating strategic partnerships. Pegging the advocacy to larger funding stream can also provide several resources. For instance, advocacy on promoting the use of evaluation in policy-making can be pegged to the development of sustainable development goals (post 2015), which will have a steady funding stream available.

In many ways, fundraising parallels the advocacy process itself: you must set realistic goals; target audiences; develop persuasive messages to reach those audiences; build alliances and trusting relationships; and, leverage decision-making at donor institutions. Too often, fundraising is seen as the last item on the agenda. But without resources your advocacy effort will not go far. Therefore, seeking resources must be integrated into your strategy from the beginning.

### Some things to keep in mind while fundraising:<sup>4</sup>

- The laws which govern the giving and receiving of donations vary from country to country. Therefore, before you begin soliciting contributions, do some preliminary research.
- Remember to explore all potential funders carefully. Sometimes agencies wish to support initiatives in the communities in which they work, however, often funders have an agenda or certain conditions attached to their donations. Make sure that these agendas do not compromise your advocacy objectives.
- Depending upon the donor agency, certain kinds of information, language, and presentation style will elicit a positive response from funding sources. Research each of your funders individually to learn about their particular interests and preferences. Funders generally like to see:
  - A well-run and efficiently managed organization, coalition or effort.
  - Funders may want to see budget information from past years as well as future projections of the CSO/VOPE.
  - Examples of successful programmes.
  - A good strategy and a reasonable chance of reaching your advocacy goals.
  - What it is that distinguishes your work from other organizations in the same field.
  - Reasons why your work is important and necessary.
  - What any previous contribution they made has accomplished.
  - Information on group members' track records and successes in advocacy.

Just as in advocacy, relationships are key. Invest time and energy in getting to know individuals at funding agencies. Ask your members for contributions. Membership fundraising reduces your dependence on large donors and can give members a sense of purpose and renewed enthusiasm when they see that their contributions are making a difference.

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<sup>4</sup> Adapted from Sharma R. (2007). *An Introduction to Advocacy: Training guide*. SARA, HHRAA, USAID.