# THE POWER OF EVIDENCE IN ADVOCACY

## RESOURCE PACK FOR TRAINERS ON EVIDENCE-BASED POLICY ADVOCACY IN EAST AFRICA

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# FOREWORD

Striving to influence policy and its outcome is a process of ongoing interaction between various actors, as well as the internal and external forces that affect their beliefs and actions. It is also a process of unexpected revelations, big disappointments and a test of patience and perseverance.

Throughout the policy process these actors make decisions that affect its outcomes: about what evidence to use and consider to be credible; about who to work with while designing, implementing and evaluating policies; about how to implement a policy on the ground; and, about how to monitor its impact. These decisions will inform policy changes and the use of tools to reach the overall development and political goal of reducing poverty.

ESRF is one of ODI s partners in a seven year DFID-funded programme which aims to establish a worldwide community of practice for think tanks, policy research institutes and similar organisations working in international development, to promote more evidence based pro-poor development policies. Most members of this Civil Society Partnership Programme (CSPP) are in developing countries, but the programme also fosters collaboration between countries and across the North-South boundary.

The CSPP programme helps members to support each other through training, exchange visits, sharing of information and collaboration on projects to generate and use research-based evidence to improve development policy at national, regional and global level. I am impressed to see the amount of useful materials produced by the programme, which is proving be an invaluable resource for those of us trying to ensure that policies are not only politically driven but also empirically sound, that credible evidence is valued by policymakers as well as academics.

This toolkit is inspired by the vision that while these tools are useful, they also need to be contextualised to reflect the realities. Needless to say, influencing water resources policies in Kenya will be vastly different from influencing them in Bangladesh, given the unique political, geographical and social situations of the two countries. This volume, therefore, aims to ground generic tools on real policy evidence from East Africa. It aims to help foster a conversation in the development community of East Africa on the ways to make policies link to evidence by offering information on various tools, as well as providing examples and methods on how to gather, analyze and use evidence for policy advocacy in Uganda, Kenya and Tanzania.

While many of the tools are well known and used by practitioners, it is the case studies which make this publication unique. In the true spirit of collaboration, I would like to thank the editors of the toolkit for making this possible and ODI for proving the funding. I would also like to thank Naved, Vivian, Suma and the CSPP for supporting the publication of this manual from its inception to its final output. The CSPP partners in the East Africa region were also actively involved.

I hope Civil Society actors not only in East Africa but in other regions of the globe will also find this toolkit useful and continue to provide comments and insights that will enable us to revise and update it continuously; all feedback will be gratefully received.

With best wishes

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# PROFILE OF INSTITUTIONS INVOLVED

## Overseas Development Institute

The Overseas Development Institute (ODI) is Britain s leading independent think tank on international development and humanitarian issues. Its mission is to inspire and inform policy and practice which lead to the reduction of poverty, the alleviation of suffering and the achievement of sustainable livelihoods in developing countries. It does this by locking together high-quality applied research, practical policy advice and policy-focused dissemination and debate. ODI works with partners in the public and private sectors, in both developing and developed countries. ODI s Research and Policy in Development (RAPID) programme aims to improve the use of research in development policy and practice through improved: knowledge about research in policy processes; communication and knowledge management; awareness of the importance of research; and approaches to capacity development in the area.

ODI s seven-year DFID-funded Civil Society Partnerships Programme (CSPP) aims to ensure that Southern voices are heard, and that they are based on sound evidence, by establishing a worldwide network for think tanks, policy research institutes and similar organisations working in international development. Most members are in developing countries, but the programme also fosters collaboration between countries and across the boundary between North and South. The programme helps members to support each other through training, exchange visits and sharing of information, and collaborates on projects to generate and use research-based evidence to improve development policy at national, regional and global level.

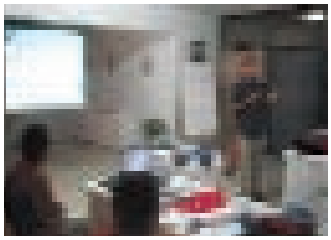
## Economic and Social Research Foundation

The Economic and Social Research Foundation (ESRF) is a leading not-for-profit non-governmental research institute in Tanzania which analyses and formulates socioeconomic and development policies, builds the requisite capacities for managing and implementing such policies at various levels of society and acts as a knowledge management centre in these areas. The mission of ESRF is to conduct and disseminate policy-related research and to build capacity in economic and social policy analysis and development management. As a part of this mission, ESRF has grown into the premier source in Tanzania for information on development policy issues. ESRF is guided by a work programme which consists of an in-house research programme, capacity-building programmes and policy dialogue activities. In addition to programmed activities, ESRF provides consulting services on a wide range of policy and development management issues. ESRF s objective is to strengthen capacity building and to disseminate and share information with stakeholders. In order to fulfil this objective, ESRF conducts policy-related research and trainings and organises workshops. These enhance understanding on policy options within government, the development partners, civil society and the private sector.

## Impact Development Management Consultancy (IDMc)

Impact Development Management Consultancy (IDMc) is a Tanzania-based development management partnership providing consulting services. The organisation works to improve partner performance in policy through mentoring, coaching and various aspects of capacity building. IDMc has a comparative advantage in addressing issues related to policy, programme and project design, implementation, management, monitoring and evaluation. The founders have worked extensively in areas of policy management, including the facilitation of numerous policy change processes. IDMc has supported government institutions, NGOs, CSOs, donors and UN agencies with various forms of technical assistance. As well as founder partners and technical and support staff, IDMc has established and is currently maintaining a database of associate specialists hired on short-term contracts to complement in-house skills and technical competences.

## Collaboration



CSPP and ESRF have been collaborating closely in the past few years. Different team members from CSPP and ESRF have been involved in providing training to various CSOs in Eastern Africa (Tanzania, Kenya and Uganda) on how to link lessons and research with advocacy activities, as well as offering suggestions and advice on ways to improve policy engagement and approaches to advocacy in the future. It is envisaged that this collaboration will lead towards future activities between CSPP and ESRF and its partners, and thus strengthen the skills and capacity of CSOs for sustained influence on policy in Eastern Africa. This report has been jointly produced by ODI, ESRF and IDMc, building on workshops held in Eastern Africa as well as a vast amount of material produced by ODI, ESRF and partners. The aim is to document systematically the learning on the process of advocacy and engagement with policymakers in countries of Eastern Africa. Based on this, practical suggestions are put forward for CSOs in Eastern Africa which are working on policy, to help these become better policy advocates.

## Contributors

This manual was edited and compiled by a team of three trainers from ODI, IDMc and ESRF.

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## Other contributors

The editors would also like to thank by name the whole team of trainers from the region, who contributed greatly to this manual through the training of trainers workshop in Dar es Salaam in 2006 (see group photo in Annex 1). The Uganda team consisted of Ms Rosemary Adong (Community Development Resource Network); Mr Charles Nsubuga (Uganda Participatory Poverty Assessment Process); and Mr Chris Busiinge (Kabarole Research Centre). The Kenya team included Ms Elizabeth Kamau (ABANTU for Development); Mrs Lucy Mwaura (Kenya Women Political Caucus) and Mr Nicholas Otieno Owino (AFREPREN/FWD). The Tanzania team included Mr Simon Shayo (Tanzania Gender Networking Programme); Mr Francis Omondi (Research on Poverty Alleviation); Mr Rodrick Maro (Legal and Human Rights Centre); and Mr Bernard Kindoli (The Foundation for Civil Society).

# ACRONYMS

| | |
|---|---|
| AFREPREN | African Energy Policy Research Network |
| AI | Appreciative inquiry |
| CDRN | Community Development Resource Network |
| CEFORD | Community Empowerment for Rural Development |
| CIDA | Canadian International Development Agency |
| CSO | Civil society organisation |
| CSPP | Civil Society Partnerships Programme |
| Danida | Danish International Development Agency |
| DFID | UK s Department for International Development |
| ESRF | Economic and Social Research Foundation |
| FFA | Force-field analysis |
| HIV/AIDS | Acquired (Human) Immunodeficiency Virus/Syndrome |
| IDMc | Impact Development Management Consultancy |
| IDRC | International Development Research Centre |
| INGO | International NGO |
| JICA | Japan International Cooperation Agency |
| KKP | Koalisi Kebijakan Partisipatif (Coalition of Participatory Policy) |
| NGO | Non-governmental organisations |
| Norad | Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation |
| ODI | Overseas Development Institute |
| OM | Outcome mapping |
| PEAP | Poverty Eradication Action Plan |
| PPA | Participatory Poverty Assessment |
| PRSP | Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper |
| PSR | Poverty Status Report |
| RAPID | Research and Policy in Development Programme |
| REPOA | Research on Poverty Alleviation |
| Sida | Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency |
| SMART | Specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, time-bound |
| SWOT | Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats |
| TGNP | Tanzania Gender Networking Programme |
| UN | United Nations |
| UPE | Universal Primary Education |
| USAID | United States Agency for International Development |

# 1. INTRODUCTION

This resource pack is aimed at change advocacy civil society organisations (CSOs) and their supporters. It provides tools and frameworks to enable such CSOs to use evidence effectively to influence change for the benefit of the poor. The resource pack summarises information from various sources, including various ODI toolkits on bridging the research and policy gap and discussions from a training workshop ( Bridging the Research Policy Gap ) which involved the participation of change advocacy CSOs from Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda.

The pack has been developed as part of the Civil Society Partnership Programme (CSPP). This is a seven-year capacity-building programme funded by DFID with a main objective of strengthening the role of Southern CSOs in using research-based evidence to promote pro-poor development policy. The ultimate aim of the CSPP is improved contribution by CSOs to pro-poor national and international development programmes.

The CSPP organises consultative meetings between ODI and CSOs allows participants to learn more about how CSOs can use research-based evidence. The meetings also enable an exploration of the demand for this sort of programme, and identify potential collaborators in the South. It was during such meetings that participants from the Eastern Africa region expressed a need for a resource pack to guide CSOs in evidence-based policy advocacy work.

This resource pack has been built from experiences gained in evidence-based advocacy by CSOs from the Eastern Africa region. As such, it documents stories and experiences in the application of the various tools and methods under the Research and Policy in International Development (RAPID) framework. Examples are centred on the application of the RAPID framework tools and methods in evidence-based advocacy in Eastern Africa.

## 1.1 Objectives of the Resource Pack

The objectives of the resource pack are to strengthen capacity in advocacy of CSOs by:

- Enhancing understanding of the power of evidence in influencing policy for the benefit of the poor;
- Providing various tools and frameworks for evidence-based policy advocacy;
- Providing a guide on how to organise and deliver evidence-based advocacy training with a view to helping others improve their performance in terms of influence on policy.

## 1.2 Structure of the Resource Pack

The resource pack is divided into 11 sections. These consist of a mixture of tools and frameworks elaborated by means of experiences and case studies. Case studies on good practice are provided, specifically on the use of evidence in promoting change for the benefit of the poor.

- Section 1 outlines the objectives of and background to the resource pack.
- Section 2 gives a brief overview of some of the concepts found to be critical by change advocacy CSOs from Eastern Africa.
- Section 3 looks at spaces and entry points in the policy process which allow for CSO engagement in change advocacy.
- Section 4 introduces the policy context and its relevance to change advocacy. This section also provides change advocacy CSOs with tools to help assess the policy context and ideas on how to use assessment results to better influence policy.
- Section 5 familiarises evidence-based advocacy CSOs with the rationale for developing a policy influence strategy, and tools and strategies for developing and promoting such a strategy.
- Section 6 introduces CSOs to strategies for communicating with policymakers for the benefit of the poor.
- Section 7 looks at attributes of successful policy advocates, with a view to helping CSOs identify strengths and areas for improvement.
- Section 8 provides tools and methods to help CSOs become successful policy advocates.
- Section 9 deals with monitoring and evaluation in the context of policy change advocacy efforts.
- Section 10 looks at knowledge management issues.
- Section 11 covers design and delivery of evidence-based advocacy training.

# 2. KEY CONCEPTS

Before we look at how CSOs can use evidence to promote change for the benefit of the impoverished and marginalised, it is important to examine a few concepts that are used extensively in this resource pack.

## 2.1 Civil Society Organisations (CSOs)

CSOs are organisations which work in partnership with other stakeholders to mediate and facilitate interactions between households and the state on matters of public concern. Advocacy CSOs represent the interests of particular groups within society, such as the poor, communicating the concerns of their constituents to policymakers, also informing constituents of policy decisions which concern them. Often, CSOs, especially those in Eastern Africa, have tended to work in isolation, not forging close partnerships with other stakeholders such as government or the private sector. This has contributed to a large extent to the low uptake of CSO evidence by other stakeholders, including policymakers.

In pursuing the interests of the poor, CSOs perform a multiplicity of functions, including:

- Representation;
- Technical inputs and advocacy;
- Capacity building;
- Service delivery;
- Social functions.

Experience from Eastern Africa shows that CSOs are performing all of the above functions, venturing more and more into social functions. CSOs are now involved in setting election manifestos as well as participating in election monitoring and tracking public expenditure, especially in the area of HIV/AIDS. There are different types of CSOs:

- Think tanks and research institutes;
- Professional associations, for example the Tanzania Law Society;
- Human rights advocacy bodies and other such groups, including CSOs such as the Lawyers Environmental Action Team (Tanzania), the Human and Legal Rights Centre (Tanzania) and the Uganda Lawyers Association;
- Foundations and other philanthropic bodies;
- Trade unions and worker cooperatives;
- Media/journalism societies;

- Community-based organisations;
- Faith-based organisations;
- Cross-national policy dialogue groups.

## 2.2 Other Key Terms

### Evidence in advocacy

Evidence refers to a result or output of a research process. Individuals and organisations seeking to transform society and to sustain gains over time use evidence to justify the course they are taking. The social transformation intended by evidence-based change advocates is one which ensures the rights of impoverished and marginalised people.

### Knowledge

Knowledge refers to forms and locations of information; processes (e.g. creation, sharing, storage, use); key activities and tools; staff capacities; relevance, monitoring and evaluation.

### Policy

The word policy as used in this resource pack refers to any government intervention affecting individuals, groups and institutions. The focus is on public policy adopted and implemented by government, and also that which affects the public or is visible to the public. This may include:

- Agendas/policy horizons;
- Official statements or documents;
- Patterns of spending (government budget);
- Implementation processes;
- Activities on the ground.

### Policy influence

This refers to CSO interaction with the policy process to effect concrete changes to poor people s lives and to the relations and structures that cause poverty.

### Research

Any systematic effort to increase the stock of knowledge including:

- Critical investigation and evaluation, theory building, data collection, analysis and codification related to development policy and practice;
- Action research;
- Self-reflection by practitioners oriented towards the enhancement of direct practice.

Two types of research are commonly employed to generate evidence for change advocacy. These are basic social science research and applied research. Basic social science research seeks to identify fundamental factors behind broad categories of social phenomena. Applied research seeks to investigate more specific situations or events, and is often more concerned with the effects of various policies. The type of research to be used as evidence to influence policy will always depend on the type of problem and/or issue the change advocates are seeking to address.

Both basic social science and applied research use various methods and techniques to collect, analyse and interpret information. These can be divided into qualitative and quantitative methods. Quantitative methods involve the analysis of specific measured variables; this contributes to an understanding of the magnitude or importance of a particular research question. Qualitative methods allow for descriptive analysis of a problem using logic and persuasive argument rather than numbers. This method seeks to explain relationships between variables and responds to the *why* questions in research.

> Experience from Eastern Africa reveals that, although policymakers are increasingly insisting on quantitative evidence, they are also becoming wary of the integrity of some information generated by such means. In Uganda, policymakers questioned the validity of quantitative research which alleged that 1,000 people were dying of HIV and AIDS each day. However, it is important to note that good research combines qualitative and quantitative methods and must be generalisable.

Research passes through different stages, including:

i. Definition of the problem that the CSO is seeking to address, including definition of the target (affected group) and elaboration of the magnitude of the problem;

ii. Design of the research study;

iii. Implementation of the study;

iv. Determination of practical applications (policy programmes) and implications;

v. Communication of research findings and implications;

vi. Application of results to policy, programming and interventions.

Not all kinds of research pass through all of these stages, nor does all research go through the stages rigorously and in order. It is important, however, that research which intends to generate evidence to influence policy does go through all of the above stages. Bypassing some of the stages might reduce the integrity and credibility of research results, impacting uptake by policymakers. Evidence from the workshop on *Bridging the Research and Policy Gap* showed that uptake of research by policymakers had been high where all stages had been followed.

Research design influences how accepting policymakers will be of results or evidence generated. Although there is no rule of thumb, experience shows that, where possible, it is better to adopt an interdisciplinary approach in designing a research project to influence policy. Approaching a research question from various perspectives increases the chances that policymakers will use the findings. Some key research design strategies include:

- Involving the intended audience from the beginning of the research project;
- Understanding the information needs and constraints of the intended audience;
- Inviting inputs into research design;
- Reflecting intended audiences in the actual design.

## Research and policy links

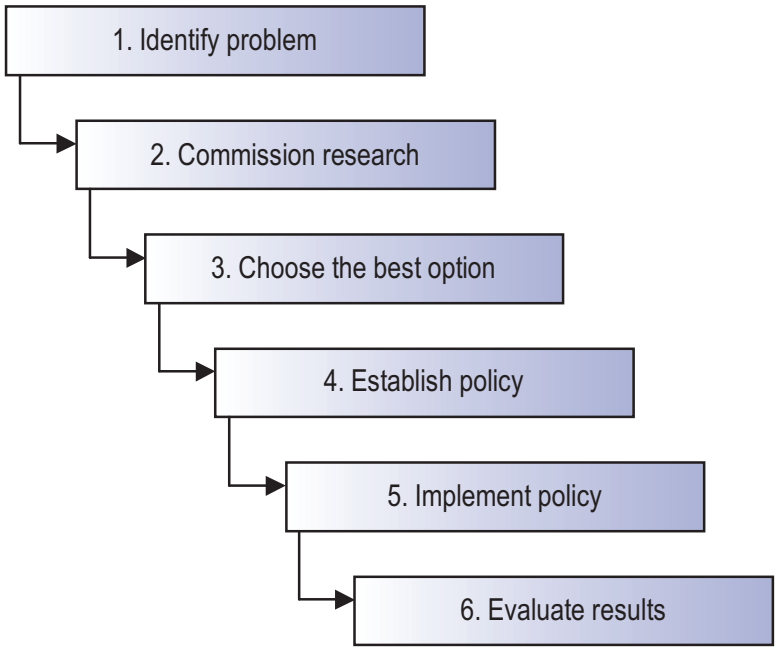
Research and policy links are about the extent to which research evidence contributes to change towards more pro-poor policies. Evidence from the Eastern African region shows that such links are not automatic: once conducted, CSO research will not necessarily be considered or accepted by policymakers. CSOs need to be aware of certain conditions to ensure that the evidence they have worked to collect contributes to improving the lives of the poor by influencing policy.

# 3. SPACES FOR CSO ENGAGEMENT IN POLICY ADVOCACY

## 3.1 CSO Engagement in Policy Processes

There are spaces for CSO engagement in policy advocacy to be found within the policymaking process. In order to locate these and influence policy, CSOs need actually to understand such processes. This will help CSOs target evidence more appropriately. There are many ways of looking at the policymaking process; for simplicity s sake, Figure 3.1 depicts a policymaking process as a linear sequence. In the first step, problems are identified. In the following steps, research is commissioned, results are analysed, best options are chosen, and policy is developed, implemented and finally evaluated.

Figure 3.1: Generic policymaking process




## 3.2 The Reality of Policymaking

As is often the case, reality is quite chaotic in comparison with a simple and compact model. Experience from Eastern Africa shows that sometimes policies are formulated without following the linear logic presented in Figure 3.1. Policies sometimes come about without any research being commissioned. This is particularly the case when such policy involves incremental changes to a current policy. In some instances, a multitude of processes, both closed and open, contribute to the formulation of one policy.

Experience from Uganda shows that research, including that carried out by CSOs, preceded the revision of the Poverty Eradication Action Plan (PEAP) and informed it at least twice. Uganda commissioned its first Participatory Poverty Assessment (PPA) in 1998, in 36 communities in nine districts. This assessment came to a number of findings which influenced budgetary allocations and policy interventions, both at the centre and in local governments, in the areas of water, education and health. For instance, findings indicated that water was one of the most critical problems for the rural poor in Uganda. As a result, the government increased the budget for this area by 300% in the following financial year. As a consequence, countrywide rural access to safe water has reached 61.3% and 52% in the wet and dry seasons, respectively. In addition, findings indicated that the rural poor were not accessing health services. This was also confirmed by the Uganda National Household Survey of 1999/2000, which noted that 50% of the rural poor who did not seek care from health units attributed this to inability to meet the cost. Thereafter, the government abolished user fees for government health units, which led to a dramatic increase in the utilisation of government health facilities, especially by the poor. Such findings influenced policy direction and the PEAP revision of 2000.

In November 2002, the government of Uganda embarked on the process of revising the PEAP for the second time. This process began with the development of the Poverty Status Report (PSR), which notes the status of implementation of the PEAP. The PSR brought together all the available evidence on progress and outstanding challenges to inform the PEAP revision towards the current PEAP (2004/5 to 2007/8). Several research initiatives informed this revision process also. These included National Census data (2002) and the Uganda National Household Survey (2002/3), providing quantitative research evidence used in the current PEAP. In 2002, the government commissioned its second PPA, in 60 communities in 12 districts. The purpose of this assessment was to deepen the understanding of poverty gained in PPA 1 and also to gather people s perceptions of and experiences with government policies that had been put in place as a result of the first assessment. The findings of PPA 2 provided qualitative evidence which also informed the PEAP revision. In PPA 1 and PPA 2, participating CSOs included: ActionAid, Centre for Basic Research, Development Research and Training, Uganda Bureau of Statistics, CDRN, Kabarole Research Centre and CEFORD. All of these came under one partnership for the Uganda Participatory Poverty Assessment Process, led by the government of Uganda as represented by the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development.

In Tanzania, experience shows that the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) 2002-5 was formulated hastily, paying no attention to the steps in the generic linear policy formulation model. The formulation process was chaotic and characterised by secrecy. Individuals were invited to contribute to discussions in 30-minute meetings in which they were hardly given time to understand the issues or present evidence. Multiple processes were involved, such as sector reviews and studies, all feeding in into the PRSP formulation. As a result, although many CSOs were targeting official PRSP formulation processes, they were missing out on being a part of other policymaking processes which were also feeding into the PRSP.

# 4. ASSESSING THE POLICY CONTEXT

## 4.1 The Policy Context

The policy context refers to policy actors, their institutions and the evidence they are likely to call upon in policy formulation, implementation and evaluation. It also refers to players in policy formulation and their perception of CSOs as key players throughout the policy process. Knowledge of the policy context enables CSOs to identify opportunities which they can take advantage of to influence policy. It also enables them to identify risks and consider how to prevent or mitigate these. Lack of or inadequate understanding and assessment of policy contexts has often made it hard for CSOs to engage effectively in policy processes. During the training workshop, CSOs in Eastern Africa acknowledged that they sometimes had minimal impact because they had not done much in terms of mapping the policy context, including not understanding or inadequate reading of the policy environment and the likely reaction of policymakers to issues. The Eastern Africa CSOs acknowledged that sometimes they were engaged in policy advocacy without being clear on which policymakers to target and their interest or disinterest in the policy proposals, and without adequately considering and coordinating timing of advocacy campaigns.

### Policy context: key areas

- Macro-political context (democracy, governance, media freedom; academic freedom);
- How policymakers think (narratives and policy streams);
- Policy implementation and practice (bureaucracies, incentives, street level, room for manoeuvre, participatory approaches);
- Decisive moments in the policy process (processes, votes, policy windows and crises);
- Maximising chances even through context is crucial.

Understanding context involves CSOs asking the following questions:

i. Who are the key policy actors (including policymakers)?

ii. Is there a demand for research and new ideas among policymakers?

iii. What are the sources of resistance to evidence-based policymaking?

iv. What is the policy environment?

   a. What are the policymaking structures?

   b. What are the policymaking processes?

   c. What is the relevant legal/policy framework?

   d. What are the opportunities and timing for input into formal processes?

v. How do global, national and community-level political, social and economic structures and interests affect the room for manoeuvre of policymakers?

vi. Who shapes the aims and outputs of policies?

vii. How do assumptions and prevailing narratives (which ones?) influence policymaking; to what extent are decisions routine, incremental, fundamental or emergent, and who supports or resists change?

By understanding the motivations of policy actors, AFREPREN in Kenya was able to identify policymakers who were supportive of their pro-poor energy policy proposal. Understanding the policy context also guided AFREPREN in finding opportune moments for the introduction of change in energy policy in Kenya. AFREPREN introduced the pro-poor energy policy in Kenya at a time when the government was looking for solutions to the problems of deforestation. AFREPREN s proposal focused on tax reductions on kerosene as an alternative to fuel wood, perceived by the Kenyan government as the main contributing factor to deforestation. This option fitted well with overall government policy.

### Missed opportunity through poor timing

HakiElimu, an education policy advocacy NGO, has been a respected messenger of change in the education sector in Tanzania. The NGO has worked closely with the Ministry of Education and Culture to promote good governance in the education sector. Part of its advocacy strategy is use of both electronic and print media to influence public opinion and the government on good governance through dissemination of research and information. HakiElimu adverts focusing on good governance had been running in the electronic and print media for almost two years until 2005; before this point, the third phase government had had no problems with HakiElimu adverts. The government suddenly took issue with HakiElimu, banning electronic adverts when these disseminated findings of the government-funded public expenditure review of the education sector. In the government view, the adverts showed little appreciation of the achievements made in the education sector by the third phase government. The question is, why did this government, which had previously not raised problems, react so negatively to HakiElimu adverts in 2005? The year 2005 was an election year, and the ruling party was seeking re-election on the basis of key achievements, with performance in the education sector cited as a key success story. Thus, although policymakers had been happy with HakiElimu s messages previously, these were perceived negatively during election time. HakiElimu s decision to continue with the messages during election time was a bad reading of the policy context

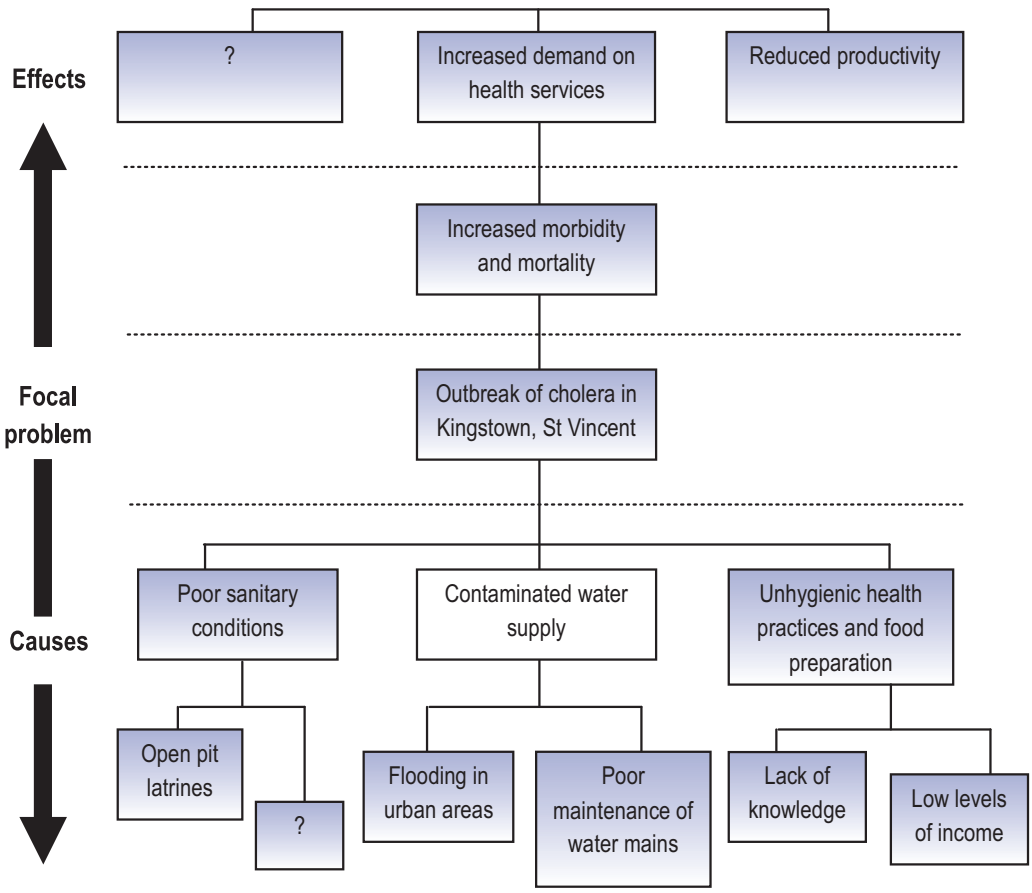
### The need for context assessment tools

Context assessment tools include various techniques which can help CSOs identify policymakers, institutions responsible for management of various aspects of the policy process, their motivations, and how these shape the uptake or rejection of their research inputs. An introduction to these makes up the following subsections.

## 4.2 Problem Tree Analysis

Problem tree analysis, or situation analysis, is a tool/technique which synthesises the results of an analysis of an undesirable situation by breaking these down into direct and underlying causes. The problem tree helps define the problem which policy advocates are seeking to change through a policy intervention. It also helps in identification of direct and underlying causes of the identified problem as well as its effects. A clear definition of the problem is an important element in the planning of a policy advocacy project. In advocacy work, a problem represents a policy issue which needs a policymaker s attention. A problem is therefore a cause of an undesirable situation and not the undesirable situation itself. For instance, lack of clean and safe water for the poor is not a problem; rather, it is a symptom of a problem. The problem in this case is what actually causes this lack of water.

Figure 4.1: Problem tree analysis




Source: adapted from Start and Hovland (2004: 27).

## Advantages of problem tree analysis

- It allows the problem to be broken down into manageable and definable chunks. This enables a clearer prioritisation of factors and helps focus objectives.
- There is more understanding of the problem and its often interconnected and even contradictory causes. This is often the first step in finding win-win situations.
- It identifies the constituent issues and arguments, and can help establish who and what the political actors and processes are at each stage.
- It can help establish whether further information, evidence or resources are needed to make a strong case or build a convincing solution.
- It deals with and identifies present issues — rather than apparent, future or past issues.
- The process of analysis helps build a shared sense of understanding, purpose and action.

The problem tree analysis provides a good framework for identifying the focal problem and its linkage to the underlying causes and effects. As shown in the example of problem tree analysis presented in Figure 4.1, the focal problem of an outbreak of cholera in Kingstown, St Vincent is caused by several factors which are hierarchically linked. As such, the problem tree analysis presents several hierarchically linked effects of the identified focal problem.

### Influence of culture in conducting problem tree analysis

Evidence shows that the definition and/or identification of causes of a social problem, direct and indirect, is not a completely objective process. In fact, this process is very much influenced by culture. In Bangladesh, 5,000 pit latrines were constructed as a solution for people who had to defecate along the river banks: the underlying cause of this problem was seen to be a lack of toilets. The target groups did not use the pit latrines and toilets because what was perceived as an underlying cause was a cultural issue; toilets would actually alter the culture of the target group. If this had been known, strategies could have been developed to orient target groups on a new culture.

### Objectives tree

The objective tree tool is closely linked to the problem tree analysis. The objective tree can easily be developed by rephrasing each of the above variables (core problem, direct and underlying causes as well as effects) into positive desirable outcomes — as if the problem/causes had already been treated. In this way, root causes and consequences are turned into root solutions, and key project or influencing entry points are quickly established. These objectives may well be worded as objectives for change. These can be fed into a force-field analysis as a useful next step.

## 4.3 Force-Field Analysis

Force-field analysis (FFA) is a technique informing decision making, particularly in planning and implementing social change programmes. FFA can help CSOs understand whether political actors (e.g. ministers) they are trying to influence will accept or reject their recommendations. It helps CSOs identify the forces that will drive and resist a proposed change as well as assessing the source and strengths of these forces. FFA can be applied to policy advocacy at all stages of policy development, from agenda setting to policy development, implementation and monitoring and evaluation. Understanding forces for and against proposed change allows CSOs room for manoeuvre. Figure 4.2 provides an example of a FFA depicting forces in support of and against the plan to initiate a food accessibility programme for slum dwellers in Tanzania (Jangwani) and Kenya (Kibera). Based on the scores in Figure 4.2, the forces in support of the plan are greater than those against the plan. This means that there is a lower chance of resistance to the change as introduced by the plan.

Figure 4.2: Example of a force-field analysis

| Forces FOR change | Score |
|---|---|
| Farmers willing to try new methods | 2 |
| Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security willing to collaborate | 4 |
| Reduces reliance on food relief | 2 |
| Community demand for food access | 5 |
| Push from Ministry of Health to improve nutrition | 3 |
| CSOs have skills and knowledge | 4 |
| | **20** |

| Change proposal |
|---|
| To initiate food accessibility programme for slum dwellers (Jangwani valley residents, Kibera or any other slum area in Kampala) |

| Forces AGAINST change | Score |
|---|---|
| Unreliable meteorological data | 2 |
| Extension workers overstretched by new work | 4 |
| Political resistance by local councillors | 2 |
| High costs of implementation | 4 |
| Land infertility | 3 |
| | |
| | **15** |

Source: Mind Tool, available at http://www.psywww.com/mtsite/forcefld.html.

### How to use FFA

- Carrying out FFA involves various stakeholders, including policymakers, advocacy groups introducing change, and those who are likely to be affected by the change (target beneficiaries, implementing agencies, etc).
- Ask the group to vote for the different forces identified. For example, ask each person in the group to vote for the weight of the force. Then calculate a simple mean: this aggregates all information from the different participants to arrive at an answer which is made up of little parts of many answers.
- Once you have weighted the forces and added them up, you will have an idea of the difficulty of the problem ahead.
- If the forces against are stronger than the forces for, then your answer to the problem posed might be that it will be difficult to convince policymakers to take action. Then you need to ask yourselves, how can you change this? Basically, you need to strengthen the forces for reform (or add new ones) at the same time as reducing or countering the forces against.

## 4.4 Stakeholder Analysis

Stakeholder analysis is a process to determine whose interests should be taken into account when developing and/or implementing a policy advocacy project. Stakeholders are people or organisations that either i) stand to be affected by the proposed policy or reform or ii) can influence those who are making policy. That is, they could make or break the policy change project s success. They may be winners or losers, included or excluded from decision making, users of results and/or participants in the process. Stakeholders can usually be grouped into the following categories:

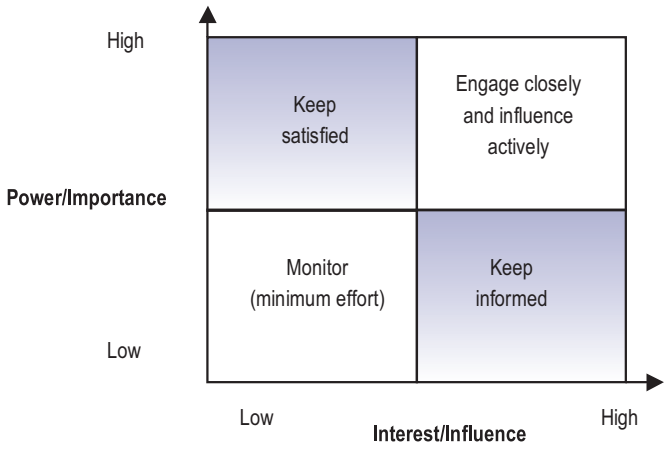
- International/donors;
- National political (legislators, governors);
- Public (e.g. ministries of health, social security agencies, ministries of finance);
- Labour (unions, medical associations);
- Commercial/private for-profit, non-profit (NGOs, foundations), civil society and users/consumers.

Stakeholder analysis is useful when conducted before an advocacy project is implemented because it enables CSOs to detect and act to prevent potential misunderstandings about and/or opposition to the policy issue being advocated. When a stakeholder analysis and other key tools are used to guide implementation, the policy advocacy project is more likely to succeed.

Stakeholder analysis may generate a long list of stakeholders. Prioritisation is key because time may not allow lengthy work with all stakeholders. As such, it is important to consider who should be the focus of the policy advocacy project. Often, it is important to focus on those who are likely to support or inhibit your change project.

Stakeholder prioritisation can be achieved by using a key stakeholder prioritisation matrix, as presented in Figure 4.3. In using this, first brainstorm a list of stakeholders by asking who stands to lose or gain significantly from the policy and whose actions could affect the policy s success. Then position each one at the appropriate point between the axes. Importance , along the vertical axis, means the degree to which a stakeholder stands to lose or gain from the policy. Influence , along the horizontal axis, refers to the relative ability of a stakeholder to affect policy outcome.

## Figure 4.3: Matrix to prioritise key stakeholders

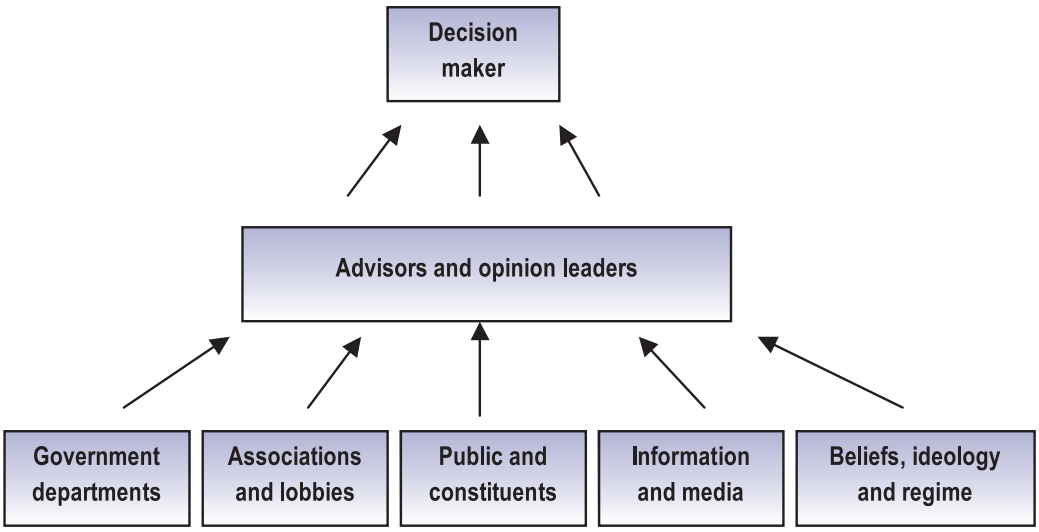


## 4.5 Stakeholder Influence Mapping

Stakeholder influence mapping, or power mapping/arena influence, is a tool to examine and identify the individuals and groups with the power to effect a key decision. It also investigates the position and motives of each player and the best channels through which to communicate with them. It is important to differentiate between the decision makers, who have the actual responsibility to make the decisions in a specific policy area, and their opinion leaders, who can influence them, or lead their opinion, and who are generally more accessible. It is key to note that the relative importance of opinion leaders in influencing decision makers varies from one country to another. In Eastern Africa, opinion leaders are not listened to by policymakers; instead, experts in government departments are more influential. It also important, however, to note that absolute power and autonomy in decision making is a myth. Policymakers depend on a group of advisors, without whom they cannot operate, and are accountable to a wide group of interest groups, constituencies and lobbies. They may be influenced by the nature of the information and research, how it is reported in the media, political regime, not to mention their own beliefs and ideologies. It is often helpful to map this information as a pyramid of actors and influences.

Many techniques can be used to depict the relative influence that different individuals and groups have over decision making. The tool presented in Figure 4.4 presents a simple approach to stakeholder influence mapping. It is a visual technique and is especially useful as an aid for discussion among several people. Participants arrange different policy stakeholders within a triangle or pyramid . The closer a stakeholder is to the policy at the top of the pyramid, the more influence they have over the policy in question.

Figure 4.4: Influence map: simple approach to stakeholder influence mapping




In the map in Figure 4.4, the distance from the bottom represents the route by means of which influence can reach the decision maker. It is worth trying to detail the key individuals and institutions that carry the influence — whether they are specific people, newspapers, churches or so on. This allows the group to analyse possible influence channels — entry points to effect change.

### Policymaking in parliament: influence at play

The British parliament is a good example of a government body which has little control over decisions made but a high degree of influence over ministers (main decision makers) through debates, questions, select committees or high status and well connected individuals. A think tank can justify targeting parliament in order to influence a minister, as influence will be carried to him/her through the pyramid. On some issues and at certain points in the policy process, parliament does have real decision-making powers. Influence channels might be public opinion (particularly in a constituency) or media editorials. A think tank might then decide to focus its energies on informing the media or the public.

## 4.6 SWOT Analysis

A SWOT analysis is a strategic planning tool used to evaluate the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats involved in a policy research project or in any other situation requiring a decision. This tool can help CSOs identify their capacity to pursue advocacy projects successfully. Critical questions during the SWOT analysis are: Does the CSO have the resources to pay for all activities in the policy influence strategy? Does the CSO have the skills and the staff required? Does it know the right people, have the right connections or belong to the right networks? It might be that before the CSO implements its policy influence strategy, it needs to hire new staff, raise more funds, establish new alliances, learn new skills, etc.

SWOT analysis can help the policy advocacy team identify its internal strengths and weaknesses in terms of undertaking evidence-based policy advocacy work, including evidence gathering and communication of evidence. Similarly, the opportunities and threats questions can explore the external environment influencing research as well as the way that research is adopted and adapted for poverty reduction. Results of a SWOT analysis can be best communicated in a SWOT matrix (see Figure 4.5).

### Figure 4.5: Example of a SWOT matrix

| Internal factors, review of the past, facilitative factors | External factors, anticipation of the future, hindering factors |
|---|---|
| **Strengths**<br>▪ Abilities, knowledge, expertise, experience, what do you do well, at what are you better than others<br>▪ Credible research institution/department and researchers, relied upon by policymakers, researchers with strong networks in government and private sector/international development agencies etc | **Opportunities**<br>▪ Context change towards more inclusive policy processes |
| **Weaknesses**<br>▪ Past research work done badly and rejected<br>▪ No support from some sections in society<br>▪ Inadequate funding<br>▪ High researcher turnover | **Threats**<br>▪ Other groups or forces not supporting the proposed change<br>▪ Change of government or donor policy |

## 4.7 RAPID Framework

The RAPID framework is an integrated framework for understanding and assessing the interaction between political context, evidence, links and external influence. Figure 4.6 provides a summary of the key questions that evidence-based advocacy CSOs need to ask in order to understand the four interrelated aspects in the RAPID framework, what they need to do and how to do it.

### Figure 4.6: The RAPID framework

| What researchers need to know | What researchers need to do | How to do it |
|---|---|---|
| **Political context**<br>▪ Who are the policymakers?<br>▪ Is there policymaker demand for new ideas?<br>▪ What are the sources/strengths of resistance?<br>▪ What is the policymaking process?<br>▪ What are the opportunities and timing for input into formal processes? | ▪ Get to know the policymakers, their agendas and their constraints.<br>▪ Identify potential supporters and opponents.<br>▪ Keep an eye on the horizon and prepare for opportunities in regular policy processes.<br>▪ Look out for – and react to – unexpected policy windows. | ▪ Work with the policymakers.<br>▪ Seek commissions.<br>▪ Line up research programmes with high-profile policy events.<br>▪ Reserve resources to be able to move quickly to respond to policy windows.<br>▪ Allow sufficient time and resources. |
| **Evidence**<br>▪ What is the current theory?<br>▪ What are the prevailing narratives?<br>▪ How divergent is the new evidence?<br>▪ What sort of evidence will convince policymakers? | ▪ Establish credibility over the long term.<br>▪ Provide practical solutions to problems.<br>▪ Establish legitimacy.<br>▪ Build a convincing case and present clear policy options.<br>▪ Package new ideas in familiar theory or narratives.<br>▪ Communicate effectively. | ▪ Build up programmes of high-quality work.<br>▪ Action research and pilot projects to demonstrate benefits of new approaches.<br>▪ Use participatory approaches to help with legitimacy and implementation.<br>▪ Clear strategy for communication from the start.<br>▪ Face-to-face communication. |
| **Links**<br>▪ Who are the key stakeholders?<br>▪ What links and networks exist between them?<br>▪ Who are the intermediaries and do they have influence?<br>▪ Whose side are they on? | ▪ Get to know the other stakeholders.<br>▪ Establish a presence in existing networks.<br>▪ Build coalitions with like-minded stakeholders.<br>▪ Build new policy networks. | ▪ Partnerships between researchers, policymakers and policy end-users.<br>▪ Identify key networkers and salesmen.<br>▪ Use informal contacts. |
| **External influence**<br>▪ Who are the main international actors in the policy process?<br>▪ What influence do they have?<br>▪ What are their aid priorities?<br>▪ What are their research priorities and mechanisms?<br>▪ What are the policies of the donors funding the research? | ▪ Get to know the donors, their priorities and constraints.<br>▪ Identify potential supporters, key individuals and networks.<br>▪ Establish credibility.<br>▪ Keep an eye on donor policy and look out for policy windows. | ▪ Develop extensive background on donor policies.<br>▪ Orient communications to suit donor priorities and language.<br>▪ Cooperate with donors and seek commissions.<br>▪ Contact (regularly) key individuals. |

## Political context

Political context relates to the questions in the RAPID framework which help CSOs understand the policy process in terms of its politics, institutions, and actors and their motivations. Understanding and identification of the political context by CSOs is necessary if their recommendations are to filter in into the policy process and if they want to secure support and/or acceptance of their option by policymakers.

### Lining up a research programme with a high-profile policy event

AFREPREN launched its research on energy tax reforms in Kenya at a time when policymakers were under pressure to implement performance contracts relating to government commitment towards a reduction in deforestation. The AFREPREN policy intended to contribute to the wider deforestation policy by introducing options for a reduction of tax on kerosene. By lining up research with a high-profile event, AFREPREN increased the chances that policymakers would accept their recommendations as these supported the broader policy of implementing performance contracts relating to reducing deforestation.

## Evidence

The RAPID framework questions on evidence provide an opportunity for policy advocacy CSOs to produce research results which are supportive of their change agenda as well as meeting decision-making information needs of policymakers. Responses to these questions may help CSOs produce research that is credible, challenges existing wisdom, uses research approaches and methodologies that can stand the test of time and presents simple but powerful messages. Credibility of methodologies as well as the people involved in research is proving to be a key determinant of acceptance of research results by policymakers in the Eastern Africa region. Increasingly, policymakers are becoming receptive to CSO evidence. They are also raising concerns on the quality of methodologies as well as the manner by which CSOs communicate their research. With regard to quality, there is a trend for preference by policymakers in the Eastern Africa region of both qualitative and quantitative methodologies. However, concerns are also being raised about the credibility of some of the quantitative data generated by CSOs. Other issues of concern to policymakers with regard to credibility of methodology are those related to coverage of studies. Discussions with policymakers in the Ministry of Planning, Economy and Empowerment in Tanzania revealed that much CSO research is narrowly focused with a low coverage in terms of either geography or population. While this evidence may be useful for lower-level policymaking it is not adequate for influencing policy meant for the wider society of Tanzania.

The RAPID framework also provides CSOs with questions which can guide them in packaging and communicating evidence. The manner in which evidence is presented and communicated influences its uptake by policymakers. The evidence from Eastern Africa shows that CSOs fail to package and present their research results in a way that attracts the attention of policymakers. Often, CSOs give policymakers huge documents which are then hardly read. Targeted policymakers may be facing too many other political pressures to afford the time to go through such reports.

## Links

Links relate to those questions which help CSOs identify and establish relationships with policymakers, networks, power and competing discourses. Strong links between policymakers and researchers increase the uptake of research by policymakers. Evidence from Kenya shows that links between researchers and policymakers, obtained through the involvement of policymakers in a research study, contributed to a large extent to the easy uptake by policymakers of the AFREPREN study.

### Strong research and policy links can sustain change

One of AFREPREN's strategies for influencing energy policies in the African region is to work in partnership with energy professionals in respective governments. Seeking to influence the energy policy in Kenya, AFREPREN has always worked closely with the ministry responsible. Professionals in the Ministry of Energy participate in AFREPREN planning meetings. The AFREPREN proposal for a reduction in tax on kerosene not only was discussed between the Ministry of Energy and AFREPREN, but also saw AFREPREN working to support the government department responsible for energy in the preparation of a policy proposal. This came in the form of a paper for submission to the cabinet - an institution responsible for decision making in the government of Kenya.

## External influences

The questions on external influences help CSOs to map out actors, institutions and other factors outside the policy process but with a great influence on policymakers choices/decisions. The main external factor identified by CSOs is that of aid. Bilateral and multilateral donor funding has been one of the major influences on policymaking processes in many of the developing countries in the South. In Uganda, donor influence led to the adoption by the government of Universal Primary Education (UPE) in 1997. Similarly, CSOs from Eastern Africa identify foreign aid, donors and the international development agenda as having a major impact in terms of influencing policy decisions related to growth and poverty reduction.

# 5. STRATEGY TO INFLUENCE POLICY

A strategy to ensure that evidence influences policy should be made up of a series of well considered steps on how best to engage different stakeholders in a policy-influencing project. The strategy has to have specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time-bound targets (SMART). The main objectives of a policy change advocacy strategy are i) to ensure CSOs remain focused on the agenda and ii) to maintain a relationship with and gain support from those the CSOs are trying to influence. It also outlines who makes each contact and how, what message they communicate and how they follow up.

A strategy for policy advocacy should include the following:

- Definition of the problem or the envisaged change and the justification for it (use the problem tree analysis).
- Description of the context by showing forces which are likely to support the proposal and those opposing (use force-field analysis).
- Definition of the audience(s) and relative influence on the proposal (use stakeholder analysis and influence mapping).
- Regarding audience the strategy should answer the following questions:
  - Who needs to make these changes?
  - Who has the power?
  - What is their stance on the issue?
  - Who influences them?
  - Given this, who are the targets for influence?
- Definition of the message, to meet the information needs and presentation style of targeted policymakers. In this regard, the message should consider the following ideas:
  - Why should things change (or what is the evidence to support your case?)
  - How can you make sure that the evidence is credible and legitimate ?
  - What can the target audience hear (frameworks of thought)?
  - Language, content, packaging and timing.
- Description of the messenger: A messenger is a person or medium (institution) promoting a change. Several questions can guide a CSO in choosing a messenger. Answering these can help CSOs make the right decisions as well as anticipating the consequences of these.
  - Who is a trusted and credible messenger? Does the targeted audience trust the person asked to deliver the message? If the targeted audience has a negative perception of the messenger it will reduce the value of the message.
  - What medium is appropriate (campaign, public mobilisation, formal/informal lobbying)?
  - How will you package your information?
  - Role of media.

## Choice of messenger is key

The choice of a messenger is a critical element in securing the attention of policymakers. Experience from Eastern Africa shows that successful change advocacy campaigns have mostly used soft messengers in the beginning and enlisted hard messengers later during the campaign lifetime.

- Identification of capacity (resources, staff, time, partners and funding) for implementing a strategy (use SWOT analysis and/or readiness assessment tools). This is important in determining if the CSO is able to carry out the advocacy campaign.
- Definition of promotion activities and tools. These may include use of various communication media including posters, policy briefs and others.
- Definition of monitoring and learning objectives to ensure the change campaign secures and sustains the envisaged change.
- Role of persuasion in sustaining change: the development and implementation of a policy influence strategy relies heavily on CSO capability in the field of persuasion. Key principles of persuasion include:
  - Separating people from problem;
  - Focusing on interests, not position: remember the interest of a change advocacy CSO is to improve the conditions of the poor through government policy;
  - Creating options for mutual gain;
  - Insisting on using objective criteria;
  - Managing human emotions separately from the practical problem;
  - Highlighting the human need to feel heard, understood, respected and valued.

# 6. COMMUNICATING EVIDENCE TO INFLUENCE POLICY

Communication is about making research and/or evidence accessible, digestible and available in time to influence the relevant policy decision. That is, CSOs need to communicate their research and evidence effectively to bridge the communication gap between researchers and policymakers. Often, policymakers complain of the inability of CSOs to communicate effectively in the policy process. A key challenge for change advocacy CSOs is that of communicating evidence better — including packaging and translating evidence generated to target products with clear messages. The gap has often resulted into underutilisation of research by policymakers.

## 6.1 Communication Gap: Researchers and Policymakers

Experience gained in the last 18 months by the CSPP details a serious communication gap between researchers and policymakers in developing countries in Asia, the Pacific and Africa. Several factors may impair communication between researchers and policymakers. These include:

- Lack of direct communication between researchers and policymakers. This particularly occurs when there are no strong links between researchers and policymakers. It can also happen when researchers do not involve policymakers in their research programmes. This results in research results and research communication strategies that are incongruent to the needs of policymakers. A good example is where research results are presented in huge documents without due attention to the time pressure on policymakers.

- Researchers employ increasingly complex methodologies and complicated statistical procedures. These are difficult to explain to policymakers, a large proportion of whom are not familiar with technical procedures. Instead of explaining the methodology carefully and in accessible language, explanations offered are often sparse and filled with jargon.

- Many researchers do not know how to present their research results in ways which might influence policy decisions. Instead, they generate lengthy research reports which contain discipline-specific language not readily understood by those outside academic circles.

- The ineffective communication pattern perpetuates itself, in part because translating research findings into readily accessible formats provides small payoffs and few short-term benefits in academic circles.

## Bridging the research and policy communication gap

There are several pragmatic practices and procedures for strengthening communication between research and policy actors.

- Understanding of learning styles of policymakers. This is important in enabling researchers to adopt styles which can facilitate communication with policymakers. Figure 6.1 presents a summary of the different learning and information styles of different policymakers.
- Understanding of preference of information formats of different policymakers.
- Allowing two-way communication between researchers and policymakers.
- Using simple language. Experience from Eastern Africa shows that language has become a problem between researchers and policymakers. Researchers are increasingly using complicated concepts, leaving behind policymakers as well as those they claim to serve. It is important to avoid jargon and complex language in research-policy communication.
- Paying careful attention to time. CSOs need to capitalise on tipping points (sensitive areas where they can introduce an issue into a policymaking agenda).
- Identifying and engaging speakers who can provide objective, high-quality research and implications for policy.
- Presenting policy implications which span the political spectrum.
- Identifying and developing a communication strategy on the basis of information needs, work culture and writing preferences of policymakers.
- Establishing and supporting links between policymakers and researchers throughout the research and advocacy project.

Figure 6.1: Differences in information needs for three groups

| Characteristic | Researchers | Policymakers | Policy implementers |
|---|---|---|---|
| Kind of information | Focus on what we do not know; prefer questions | Focus on what we do know; prefer answers | Focus on what we need to know to implement policies; prefer asking questions to get answers |
| Level of detail | More detail on narrow topics | Comprehensive overviews which emphasise malleable factors policy can influence | Like some detail, but on pragmatic procedures and best practices for operationalising policies and programmes |
| Source of data | Focus is representative samples that produce knowledge that can be generalised | Focus is often comparison of how a policymaker's constituency stacks up to a similar city, county, state, or region | Focus is local and how programme models and best practices can be adapted to different circumstances |
| Approach and timing | Cautious; sceptical; tentative; reflective; progress in research can take years to achieve | Reactive; to enhance re-election chances, must respond quickly in a fast-paced, fluid environment; progress can occur within weeks | Action-oriented and pragmatic; often required to respond despite incomplete information and insufficient resources |
| Criteria for decision making | Statistical probability; sound research methods and designs; publication in peer-reviewed journals | What is possible through negotiation and compromise; persuasive rhetoric and the single anecdote can be powerful | Combination of a decent knowledge base with clinical judgment, observation, and the experience of reputable sources |
| Views of ambiguity and complexity | Excited by ambiguity and complexity | Counterproductive to embrace complexity because you have to take firm positions on issues | Energised by complexity but still have to simplify enough to make decisions |
| Emphasis | An emphasis on sample, methods, and analysis to improve the quality of future research | Little attention to sample, methods and analysis as scholars review only high-quality studies | An emphasis on sample to assess similarity to the local context and on methods to allow for replication and adaptation |
| Organisation | Building in a logical progression to the conclusions at the end | Placing the most important conclusions for policy at the beginning | Placing the most important conclusions for practice at the beginning |
| Writing | In-depth discussions with discipline-specific terminology and technical graphs and illustrations | Concise, easy-to-read reports with accessible language, active voice, short sentences, frequent paragraphing, and simple graphs and illustrations | Reports of moderate length with some technical language and illustrations to allow communicating with researchers and demonstrating accountability to policymakers |

The RAPID framework has developed various tools and strategies to assist change advocacy CSOs in communicating their evidence-based social transformation proposals to policymakers. The Eastern African experience identifies the following tools and strategies as useful in bridging the research and policy communication gap.

## 6.2 Pre-testing a Message

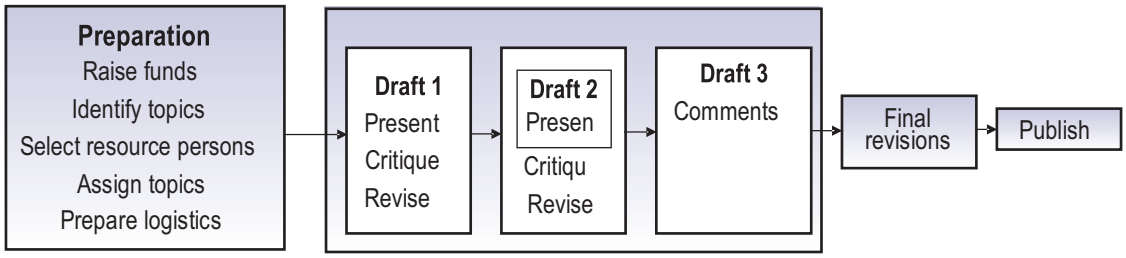
Pre-testing as a communication tool involves determining whether the intended recipients will receive and understand the message, by sharing it with a representative sample of the target audience. Pre-testing seeks to assess a message s strengths and weaknesses prior to its implementation. There are three ways to pre-test an advocacy message: polls, focus groups and the brother-in-law test. Many politicians rely on polls to check their statements and policies and to develop an image, a political position and sound bites. Focus groups can be expensive and several need to be carried out with different sections of the target population (one focus group can provide skewed results). These do have the advantage that they can be facilitated by the researchers themselves. The cheapest and easiest way to test the message is to find and talk to one person ( brother-in-law ) who represents the target audience. Ideally, this should be someone who can give you frank feedback, possibly a family member.

## 6.3 Writeshops

Writeshops are intensive workshops to for writing information materials in a short time. These are especially useful because they speed up production and make it more efficient. The aim is to develop materials, revise them and put them into a final form as quickly as possible, taking full advantage of the expertise of the various writeshop participants. Writeshops have the advantage of bringing together the diverse skills, organisations and backgrounds of participants, which is key to ensuring that numerous ideas are represented in the materials produced. Members of the intended audience (e.g. teachers, farmers and extension personnel) can help pre-test the text and illustrations during the writeshop.

Writeshops may generate different types of publications, including leaflets, booklets or bound books. The format and design can be set beforehand — or decided by the participants during the writeshop itself. Publications from writeshops contain only relevant and practical information. The writeshop is not a vehicle for lengthy literature reviews or for presentation of unnecessarily detailed data. Whenever possible, it provides technological options that show more than one way of doing the same thing. As Figure 6.2 shows, writeshops pass through six stages.

Figure 6.2: The writeshop process




## 6.4 Writing Policy Position Papers

A policy paper is an analytical piece of writing representing a proposal from an initiator, which may be an advocacy CSO or an individual, requesting policymaker intervention to address a policy issue. As a communication tool, a policy position paper does not simply offer facts or provide a description of events; rather, it uses facts and descriptions to evaluate policies, to develop questions for analysis, to provide evidence for the answers to these questions, and to make recommendations for action.

Policy papers may be used to address any policy problem, from a decision on use of nuclear power in a regional conflict to the type of solid waste disposal plan to adopt. The nature of the problem to be addressed and the needs of the decision maker(s) should determine the format of the position paper. Variations on position papers are staff reports and option papers; each is prepared with the needs of the decision maker in mind and each should contain certain elements:

- Letter of transmittal from the CSO to the government institution responsible for the issue advocated for by the CSO. It should state the intended action and note who should take it.
- Executive summary describing all the elements of the position paper. This could be a maximum of two pages.
- Problem history/background, providing adequate explanation of the problem in terms of its genesis, its underlying and root causes and its relevance to policymakers.
- Problem definition, stating the problem, those who are affected, their location and the cause of the effect. This section should also describe the methodology used in analysing the problem as well as the consequences of the problem.
- Alternative solutions/policies. The CSOs need to list all alternatives considered as well as explaining why some alternatives were chosen for further analysis and others were not. This section should also identify risks and initial thoughts on costs (social, economic, political and environmental).
- Recommendations. This is basically description of the policy recommendations, rationale for the recommendations, and plan for implementation and monitoring and evaluation.
- End material containing various references used to develop the policy position paper.

## 6.5 Lobbying

As a communication tool, lobbying involves CSOs building relationships with decision makers and allowing information to flow with a view to winning people over to their ideas. The effectiveness of lobbying is usually not in the amount of noise generated but in getting policymakers to agree or support and effect changes in line with the view of the lobbyist. Successful lobbyists possess the following characteristics:

- Understand targets needs, concerns and sensitivities and assemble their arguments accordingly;
- Understand the system, how it works and where decisions are really made;
- Swim with the tide;
- Work early while policy is still malleable;
- Understand the need to show and prove a constituency of interest.

## 6.6 Campaigns

An advocacy campaign is a series of actions aiming to bring about a (policy) change. Campaigns are valuable instruments for CSOs to mobilise the political will necessary to improve development policy and practice. Campaigns can help by increasing awareness support, by using non-traditional channels of influence and by pooling resources. Many NGOs and CSOs employ campaign strategies. One of the most effective campaigns at global level was the international campaign to ban land mines. Effective campaigns include the following characteristics:

- Reflect social, political and economic contexts;
- Identify a clear problem and a solution;
- Understand the political context, including the interests, institutions, processes and individuals that matter;
- Require some kind of engagement with government rather than confrontation;
- Stay engaged through the whole policy process: to have a real impact, campaigns need to go beyond agenda setting and ensure that policies are actually developed/ implemented;
- Form effective coalitions that increase the legitimacy and political clout of a campaign: a structured campaign can help to build strong and sustainable relationships;
- Generate relevant and credible evidence: rigorous evidence is vital to campaigns as it helps to win battles about what and how important a problem is;
- Communicate effectively: it is crucial that the target audience and strategy are clearly identified (popular communication channels, such as media, rallies and celebrity support are useful);
- Be persistent: CSOs often expect change to happen right away, but most successful campaigns take a long time and require a continuous and persistent approach.

# 7. FUNDAMENTALS OF ADVOCACY

## 7.1 Defining Advocacy

The various tools and frameworks discussed in Chapters 1 through 7 are essentially intended to improve advocacy work of CSOs which are working to improve the living conditions of the poor. As such, advocacy in this context refers to a strategy used by individuals, CSOs and activists to influence the choices and actions of those who make policies, laws and regulations, distribute resources, and make other decisions that affect the wellbeing of the poor.

Lessons from the Bridging the Research and Policy Gap workshop, bringing together advocacy CSOs from Eastern Africa, revealed that many CSOs have used advocacy to influence changes which are having impacts in terms of improving the wellbeing of the poor.

### CSO advocacy programmes contributing to pro-poor policies

The Tanzania Gender Networking Programme, working in collaboration with other human rights CSOs (HakiArdhi), advocated for change in land policy to ensure that women and other disadvantaged groups had access to land as an essential economic asset. The advocacy work, which took more than two years, contributed to the review and formulation of the Tanzania Land Act of 1999 and the Village Act of 1999. The two acts have clauses which specifically recognise the right to land of women. TGNP and HakiArdhi were given a platform to present their views to cabinet and parliament. HakiArdhi was incorporated into the commission investigating land matters in Tanzania.

In Uganda, CDRN advocated for an alternative PEAP: the current PEAP was perceived to be donor-imposed and inadequate in terms of the needs of Uganda's poor. The alternative PEAP is intended to refocus the official PEAP towards issues perceived to be of priority for the poor of Uganda.

## 7.2 Advocacy Strategies

Advocacy activities/strategies involve delivering messages intended to influence policymaker actions. Policymaking in developing countries involves a multitude of players and institutions, including multilateral organisations such as the UN and the World Bank, bilateral development aid agencies such as donors (Danida, USAID, Norad, CIDA, Sida and JICA etc), national governments, local governments and some big corporations.

Advocacy activities can be categorised into two:

- Direct advocacy: Asking policymakers in person to take action. This strategy has been used successfully by CSOs in Eastern Africa. Occasionally, CSOs have identified critical persons and invited them to talk or take particular actions. In Tanzania, the Foundation for Civil Society has supported a number of CSOs to hold direct discussions with ministers and permanent secretaries, with a view to encouraging them to act on issues perceived to be important to their constituencies. The NGO Policy Forum in Tanzania organises breakfast talks, in which ministers are presented with issues needing their immediate attention.
- Indirect advocacy: CSOs target policy change by influencing public opinion through the media. The Tanzania Media Women s Association used the media to raise public awareness and encourage action against sexual abuse and rape.

## 7.3 Rules for a Successful Advocacy Project

The following rules provide a foundation for CSOs wanting to build a successful advocacy project. They are intended to help CSOs reduce risks and maximise potential in advocacy.

- Understand the problem/change the CSO is intending to bring about. Problem tree analysis can be a useful tool to map the problem, its impacts and its root cause. Change can be an issue in the policy area in which the CSO is working. Understanding the change enables the CSO to map context factors, such as who else is working on the issue, which government actors are necessary to make change happen, etc. Understanding change also helps the CSO assess risks associated with addressing the problem.
- Set specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, time-bound (SMART) objectives. This allows for learning on the part of advocacy CSOs.
- Define the target audience — those who are the target of advocacy or communication.
- Define who to work with, identifying a niche through SWOT analysis and stakeholder analysis, as well as skills needed and benefits and pitfalls of collaborations. This is about identifying partners and collaborators and building relationships with them.
- Explore the reasons for wanting to make the change (i.e. why should things change and the evidence to support this), how to make sure the evidence is credible and legitimate and what the target audience wants to hear.
- Prepare an advocacy statement which is concise and persuasive, capturing what the CSO wants to achieve, why, how and by when.
- Define how to communicate a message and evidence (how to target and access information, who is a trusted and credible messenger, what is the appropriate medium, how to package information, and the role of media).

An advocacy statement should guide any change advocacy project. This is a concise and persuasive statement which shows what the CSO wants to achieve, why, how and by when. The statement should:

- Communicate with the CSO target audience and encourage action;
- Provide answers to policymakers problems rather than making statements of intent;
- Use simple language to communicate strong messages;
- Specify for whom the advocacy project is advocating.

The following needs to be borne in mind while preparing for an advocacy project:

- For whom the CSO is advocating;
- Who needs to make the intended changes;
- Context: who has the power to make change happen;
- Stance on the issue held by those who have the power to make change;
- Attitudes and behaviour of those who have the power to make change happen;
- Influence of those who have the power to support or block the advocacy campaign.

# 8. BECOMING A SUCCESSFUL POLICY ADVOCATE

## 8.1 What is a Policy Advocate?

A policy advocate is an individual or institution seeking to influence policy using systematic and well considered policy influence strategy. Policy advocates use research findings to keep attention focused on society s development needs. Policy advocates are defined by their styles and strategies with regard to communicating evidence to policymakers. Policy advocates create an enabling framework for constructive dialogue between change advocacy CSOs and policymakers.

Different strategies and tools can help policy advocates communicate research findings to influence policy. These include:

- Understanding the targeted audience, including policymakers, institutions and individuals who are influential on the issue for advocacy.
- Understanding the motives and drive of the policymakers the CSO is intending to influence.
- Understanding avenues and/or spaces for policy advocacy: there are different avenues for policy advocacy, including the following:
    - The media, including newspapers, radio, television and the internet, are important conduits of information. Individuals who produce the news play an important role in providing policymakers and the public with information. Like policymakers, they are interested in the meaning of research, not the process, and are adept at using everyday language to communicate.
    - Local programme administrators — directors of community-based non-profit organisations — can legitimise programmatic research findings by confirming that their experiences match research results, translating technical research jargon into everyday language and urging adoption of research recommendations.
    - Advocacy and professional organisations: policymakers listen to advocacy and professional organisations because these represent a defined part of the electorate. Although advocacy and professional groups may sometimes be perceived as self-serving or single-focused, officials still like to know how these organised groups and the voters they represent will respond to a new initiative or policy proposal.
    - Foundations: these are important funders, communicators, distributors and legitimisers of quality research. Additionally, foundations can convene meetings of research and policy teams to discuss specific issues of concern. They are often governed by well known business and civic leaders. The larger foundations are often staffed by individuals with technical research expertise.

Strategies and tools useful for policy advocates are given in the following sections.

## 8.2 Networking

Networking involves CSOs engaging in relatively stable relationships of a non-hierarchical and interdependent nature. These link together a variety of actors who share common interests with regard to a policy, and who exchange resources to pursue these shared interests, acknowledging that cooperation is the best way to achieve common goals. Policy networks connect public policies with their strategic and institutionalised context: the network of public, semi-public and private actors participating in a policy field. Interdependency is central to the network approach. Actors in networks are interdependent because they need the resources of other actors to achieve their goals. As such, the network can be viewed as a solution to the coordination problems which are typical of complex modern societies.

Open issue networks are those where self-selecting actors with common interests exchange information and resources. In closed policy communities, there is limited but more stable participation.

## 8.3 Community/Public Participation

Community participation in decision making is an important part of the democratic process, but one with which governments and bureaucracies are not always comfortable. These actors often struggle to find appropriate models that will include more voices in decision making, especially those most directly affected by the decisions, while at the same time not undermining the legitimate roles of elected representatives or government agencies.

### Public participation in policy formulation in Indonesia

An example from Yappika (Civil Alliance for Democracy) describes the experiences of the Coalition of Participatory Policy (KKP on the draft legislation) with procedures for law formulation. This organisation was the result of the first united effort to establish a foundation for public participation in policy formulation in Indonesia. Despite the plethora of institutions working on democratisation of the policy process, an authoritarian form of governance is still strongly entrenched in Indonesia. As a consequence, its dominant characteristics and main actors strongly reflect and sustain a process that distances people from the process of policy formulation. Aiming to change this situation through continuous advocacy work, KKP has been able to achieve increased public support and awareness regarding policy development and support from members of parliament, particularly from the five largest functions in the House of Representatives, in terms of adopting its recommendations on people's rights to participate in policy formulation processes. KKP has realised that, although the methods and techniques used to make policy more evidence based can be varied and innovative, the impact of evidence largely depends on its robustness vis- -vis dominant discourses, the nature and objectives of political parties and the openness of legislative procedures.

## 8.4 Entrepreneurship

Policy entrepreneurship is the act of using a unique style to get a piece of research evidence to influence policy and/or get picked up and acted upon by policymakers. Individuals engaged in such acts are called policy entrepreneurs. Policy entrepreneurs must not only be creative in reshaping policy proposals to their advantage, but also be skilled in shopping for the most advantageous venue or forum in which to present their new ideas.

The primary attributes of the policy entrepreneur are:

- Alertness to new opportunities;
- Persistence in advocating an idea;
- Rhetorical ingenuity in framing an idea in a novel way.

Simon Maxwell of ODI has developed four models of policy entrepreneurship in order to help researchers identify their strengths and weaknesses, so that they can capitalise on their strengths, develop on their weaknesses and improve the impact of research on policy. These models are:

i. Storytellers (communicators): Successful policy entrepreneurs need to be good storytellers. Narratives are simple, powerful stories that help policymakers understand a complex reality. Powerful narratives which have informed policy are those on: getting the prices right, structural adjustment, the Washington Consensus, the Post-Washington Consensus, and debt relief as the answer to poverty reduction. Good storytellers can convince. Be careful, though, and examine the nature (age, time pressure) and cultural sensitivity of policymakers. Storytelling may not amuse some.

ii. Networkers: Networkers know many people and interact with them. Policy advocates need to understand that policymaking usually takes place within communities of people who know each other and interact. If you want to influence policymakers, you need to join their networks. Former US President Lyndon Johnson used the phrase being inside or outside the tent . If you are inside the tent, your voice is heard and you will have an influence. If you are outside, you will not. Networkers who are good are likely to have more policy influence than those who are not.

iii. Engineers (doers): These are good writers of policy frameworks but may have poor face-to-face communication skills. This comes from the literature about street-level bureaucracy which is informed by the phrase policy is what policy does . There can be a significant gap between what politicians and policymakers think that they are doing and what actually happens on the ground. Researchers need to work not just with the senior-level policymakers, but also with the street-level bureaucrats . Policymakers need to see things working in practice, or know that they are currently not working, if they are to be convinced to adopt a policy or make a change from an existing one.

iv. Fixers: These are the individuals who know who to talk to. These are king makers. They work to understand the policy and political process and know when to make their pitch and to whom. These people have various sources of power which gives them the ability to persuade and convince policymakers.

v. Policy entrepreneurship questionnaire: The policy entrepreneurship questionnaire has been developed by Simon Maxwell to help policy advocates assess the policy entrepreneurship methods that they are over or under-using. The questionnaire contains a set of questions representing the four models of policy entrepreneurship. At the workshop for Eastern African CSOs on Bridging the Research and Policy Gap , participants examined the original questionnaire and agreed to contextualise it to take into account the policy situation in Eastern Africa (see Figure 8.1 for the contextualised policy entrepreneurship questionnaire). Individuals participating in training used this to find out what model of policy entrepreneurship they were using.

To complete the questionnaire, read each question carefully and then rank the four possible answers from 1 to 4, giving 1 to your first choice, 2 to your second choice and so on. There should only be one number in each box. When you have completed the questionnaire, add up all the scores for (a), all the scores for (b) and so on, and complete the table at the end. The total of all scores should be 150.

## Figure 8.1: Policy entrepreneurship questionnaire for Eastern Africa CSOs

| | Question | Your ranking | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | (a) | (b) | (c) | (d) |
| 1 | When confronted by a new issue in development, my immediate reaction is to:<br>a. think about it and analyse the situation;<br>b. call my contacts and see who else is interested;<br>c. talk it over with colleagues;<br>d. contact influential decision maker(s) for a chat. | | | | |
| 2 | In trying to find support for my work, my first line strategy is usually to:<br>a. talk about it and solicit ideas;<br>b. find out who else is working on the topic and set up a collaboration;<br>c. seek a commissioned study from a ministry or operational agency;<br>d. see who will be interested to support the work. | | | | |
| 3 | My project proposals are usually:<br>a. focused on a timeline that will deliver solutions;<br>b. joint proposals, with collaborators who will carry out parts of the work;<br>c. in the form of a two-pager I can present to the ministry;<br>d. presented verbally at any convenient time and place. | | | | |
| 4 | I think of the role of theory in research as follows:<br>a. should provide overview of recommendations and methodologies;<br>b. important alongside the theories of other disciplines;<br>c. of limited use in the real world;<br>d. helpful in small doses, to underpin my 'expert' status. | | | | |
| 5 | The most valuable data in research:<br>a. is the punch line and the requirements of the specific audience;<br>b. comes from different sources and is put together to triangulate results;<br>c. is based on practical experience in the field rather than formal surveys;<br>d. can be deployed to build/shift an argument. | | | | |
| 6 | When there is a steering committee for my work, I like it to consist of:<br>a. good communicators, who can help me simplify;<br>b. a multidisciplinary mix of researchers who see different angles;<br>c. practitioners who have experience of struggling with implementation;<br>d. politicians, NGO campaigners and others who make things happen. | | | | |
| 7 | Research works best when:<br>a. it is focused on a specific solution to a specific problem;<br>b. people from different disciplines bring different perspectives;<br>c. a mixture of researchers and practitioners merge different approaches;<br>d. it is simply and rigorously designed and presented in a timely manner. | | | | |
| 8 | When it comes to writing up, I prefer to:<br>a. wait until the ideas are truly polished;<br>b. share preliminary findings with colleagues as I go along;<br>c. test out my ideas in the field before deciding what I think;<br>d. try out preliminary ideas on my favourite policymaker. | | | | |
| 9 | Looking at the impact of my work, I have been most successful when;<br>a. I have told stories that others can pick up as part of transfer process;<br>b. data-based reports are also authored by those with other perspectives;<br>c. the outputs consist mainly of consultancy reports;<br>d. I have been able to feed ideas quickly into the political process. | | | | |

| | Question | Your ranking | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | (a) | (b) | (c) | (d) |
| 10 | The final chapter of a research report should:<br>a. provide an elegant overview of the 'narrative';<br>b. summarise the various lessons learned by me and my collaborators;<br>c. tell the agencies what to do;<br>d. be oriented to the needs of policymakers. | | | | |
| 11 | When I choose how to disseminate the results of my work, I give priority to:<br>a. the punch line and the requirements of the specific audience;<br>b. publication in cross-disciplinary journals;<br>c. briefing papers or similar for busy policymakers;<br>d. convincing recommendations for policy and decision makers. | | | | |
| 12 | I have finished a piece of work when:<br>a. I can tell the story;<br>b. our network agrees on the findings;<br>c. the agency I am working with signs off on the project;<br>d. I see change beginning to happen on the ground. | | | | |
| 13 | I think evaluation of a project should be based on;<br>a. changes that have occurred;<br>b. assessment by a research network panel and stakeholders;<br>c. user feedback;<br>d. the number of references made in difference sources. | | | | |
| 14 | I feel a project has been successful if:<br>a. network members and other stakeholders give positive feedback;<br>b. the people I meet at conferences tell me they like it;<br>c. the funding agency asks me back to do more consultancy;<br>d. political speeches and policy statements reflect my thinking. | | | | |
| 15 | I am happiest:<br>a. talking;<br>b. sharing;<br>c. observing;<br>d. meeting influential people. | | | | |
| | **Total score for each answer** | | | | |

## Scoring and interpretation

In scoring the questionnaire, a low score indicates that you make extensive use of a particular style of entrepreneurship; a high score indicates that you make little use of a particular style. The (a) answers correspond to a storyteller; (b) to a networker; (c) to an engineer; and (d) to fixer. A score of 37 for each indicates that you use each equally. For each type, less than 30 is low and less than 23 is very low. More than 44 is high and more than 52 is very high.

Remember, the total of the four scores should be 150. For example, Jane filled in the questionnaire. The total of the four scores was as follows: (a) storyteller: 21; (b) networker: 49; (c) engineer: 42; (d) fixer: 38. These results suggested to Jane that she spent an above average share of her time storytelling and a below average share networking. She wondered whether she should spend a little more time at meetings and workshops, and a little less time polishing and simplifying the results of her research.

# 9. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Monitoring in evidence-based advocacy refers to continuous assessment of the contributions that an advocacy activity/programme makes to the relevant outcomes. Two questions need to be answered in planning such monitoring: how to collect data and how to use this information to make decisions.

Monitoring assists change advocacy CSOs to assess whether their evidence-based advocacy effort is actually making an impact on policy or not. It is important to note that the extent of policy impact takes time to assess; policies affected may vary. A case study of FARM AFRICA in Uganda shows that research evidence does not always have the same success in different contexts. With regard to policy influence, monitoring means having capacity to respond to new evidence and making it inform your policy influence strategy.

## 9.1 Monitoring an Advocacy Activity

Monitoring a policy influence advocacy activity can be effectively achieved by means of a monitoring system. This is a series of steps and procedures detailing the ways in which relevant information will be collected and be provided to the right people at the right time to enable them to make decisions.

### Focus of monitoring in a change advocacy activity

Monitoring in evidence-based advocacy focuses on:

- Partners with whom the CSO is working to effect change;
- Intended change (positive) in behaviour of those with whom the CSO is working directly (i.e. those the CSO is trying to influence);
- Unintended consequences of the advocacy strategy (problem definition, audience identification, message(s) and messengers, promotion, etc);
- Change in the overall context of the advocacy strategy.

### Monitoring indicators

Indicators are information showing CSOs how they are doing in relation to their advocacy agenda. There are qualitative (descriptive information) and quantitative (numerical information) indicators. These are used in monitoring systems as a concrete way to collect and organise information. Indicators for change advocacy efforts should tell i) about changes occurring as a result of a change advocacy intervention; and ii) whether the activities and actions planned by a change advocacy organisation are actually occurring as planned.

## 9.2 Outcome Mapping

Outcome mapping (OM) is an organisational learning methodology which characterises and assesses the contributions that development programmes make to the achievement of outcomes. This monitoring methodology shifts away the focus of monitoring from assessing the products of a programme (e.g. policy relevance, poverty alleviation, reduced conflict) to focus on changes in behaviours, relationships, actions and/or activities of the people and organisations with which a development programme works directly. Outcome mapping establishes a vision of the human, social and environmental improvements to which the programme hopes to contribute, and then focuses monitoring and evaluation on factors and actors within its sphere of influence. The programme s contributions to development are planned and assessed based on its influence on the partners with whom it is working to effect change. In essence, development is accomplished through changes in the behaviour of people. These changes are called outcomes . Outcome mapping helps an advocacy project to be specific about the actors it targets, the changes it expects to see, and the strategies it employs. As a result, it can be more effective in terms of the results it achieves.

### Focus of outcome mapping

- Provides the tools to think holistically and strategically about how a CSO intends to achieve results.
- Focuses on outcomes instead of impacts: rather than attempting to measure the impact of the programme s partners on development, outcome mapping concentrates on monitoring and evaluating results in terms of the influence of the programme on the roles these partners play in development.
- Forces CSOs to limit their planning and evaluation to their sphere of influence. That is, advocacy programmes identify the partners with whom they will work and then devise strategies to help equip their partners with the tools, techniques and resources to contribute to the development process.
- Deals with changes in the behaviour of CSOs direct partners; in this case, they may be those individuals in the policy context who are identified as critical to making change happen.
- Engages partners (those whom the CSOs are trying to influence) in the adaptation and application of change. Such engagement means that partners will derive benefit and credit from fulfilling their development roles, and development programmes will be credited with their contributions to this process.
- Allows for adaptation and application of change by those the CSOs are trying to influence. As such, the focus goes beyond an advocacy CSO s outputs (such as change in policy) to assess the extent to which development partners adapt and apply the changed policy.
- Looks at how programmes facilitate change rather than how they control or cause change.
- Reviews the logical links between interventions and outcomes, rather than trying to attribute results to any particular intervention.
- Integrates monitoring and evaluation into the planning stages of a programme.

### Stages in outcome mapping

There are three interrelated stages in outcome mapping. These are:

i. Intentional design stage helps a programme establish consensus on the macro-level changes it will help to bring about and plan the strategies it will use. It helps answer four questions: Why? (What is the vision to which the programme wants to contribute?) Who? (Who are the programme s boundary partners? That is, who are the individuals, groups and organisations with which the programme interacts directly to effect change, and with which the programme can anticipate some opportunities for influence?) What? (What are the changes being sought?) How? (How will the programme contribute to the change process?)

ii. Outcome and performance monitoring provides a framework for the ongoing monitoring of the programme s actions and the boundary partners progress towards the achievement of outcomes. It is based largely on systematised self-assessment and provides the following data collection tools for elements identified in the intentional design stage: an outcome journal containing progress markers (a set of graduated indicators of changed behaviours for a boundary partner which focus on depth or quality of change); a strategy journal (strategy maps); and a performance journal (organisational practices).

iii. Evaluation planning helps the programme identify evaluation priorities and develop an evaluation plan.

#### Application of outcome mapping to evaluate a development programme

A programme s objective may be to provide communities with access to cleaner water by installing purification filters. Traditionally, the method of evaluating the results of this programme would be to count the number of filters installed and measure changes in the level of contaminants in the water before and after the filters were installed. A focus on changes in behaviour begins instead from the premise that water does not remain clean without people being able to maintain its quality over time. The programme s outcomes are therefore evaluated in terms of whether those responsible for water purity in the communities not only have, but use, the appropriate tools, skills and knowledge to monitor the contaminant levels, to change filters or to bring in experts when required.

Source: Earl et al (2001).

## 9.3 Appreciative Inquiry

Appreciative inquiry (AI) is a process of collaborative inquiry, based on interviews and affirmative questioning, which collects and celebrates good news stories of a community. These stories serve to enhance cultural identity, spirit and vision. AI as a monitoring method focuses on what works and how this can influence work in other areas. It also focuses on making the best of what works. AI seeks, fundamentally, to build on past and present capacities: achievements, assets, unexplored potentials, innovations, strengths, elevated thoughts, opportunities, benchmarks, high point moments, lived values, traditions, strategic competencies, stories, expressions of wisdom, insights into the deeper corporate spirit or soul — and visions of valued and possible futures.

As a monitoring framework, AI looks at the positive side of human and organisational capacities by: Focusing on potentials and possibilities;

- Seeking to show what the organisation aspires to and not what it failed on;
- Analysing high point stories;
- Focusing on dreams and proposals;
- Focusing on planning and implementation.

AI can offer a good monitoring framework, as it allows CSOs to learn by listening to and understanding the positive aspects about those they are trying to influence (policy actors and their institutions) and link such positive energy to their change agenda. The monitoring framework focuses on and appreciates the positive changes in the behaviour of policymakers, no matter how small these are, as a necessary step towards improved pro-poor policy.

### Application of AI in the agriculture sector

A good example of AI is its application by the Research on Poverty Alleviation (REPOA) team in Tanzania. REPOA is a local policy research CSO in Tanzania, currently documenting success stories related to policy change in the agriculture sector. It looks specifically at the poverty impact of contract farming models promoted by the government of Tanzania. The purpose of the research is to apply the art of listening from those experiencing change in order to appreciate the role that different models of contract farming are playing in improving the livelihoods of the poor. Unlike many other kinds of research, this example is looking for success stories.

# 10. KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT

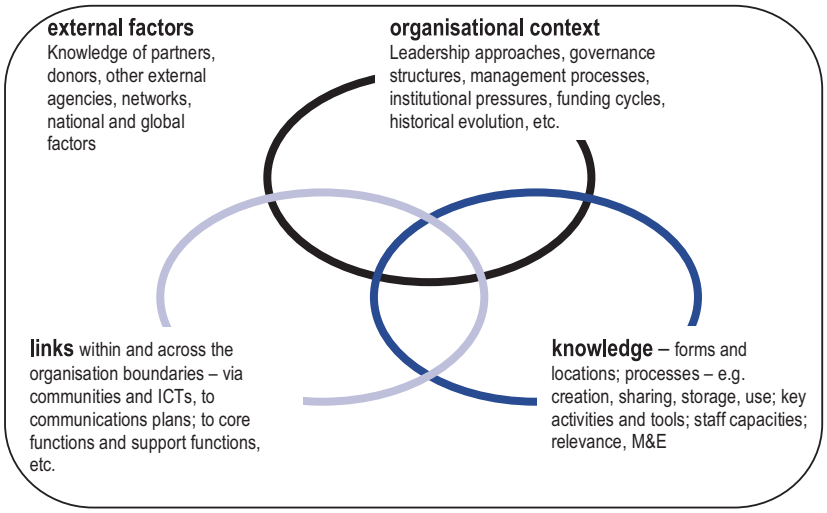
## 10.1 Definition of Knowledge Management

Knowledge management refers to the process for capturing, storing and sharing knowledge so as to learn lessons from the past and from elsewhere — overcoming the boundaries posed by time and space. In recent years, a growing movement has emphasised the advanced application of knowledge and learning as a means to improve development and humanitarian work. This movement has led to the widespread adoption of learning and knowledge-based strategies among the range of agencies involved in such work, including donor agencies, multilaterals, NGOs, research institutes and the plethora of institutions based in the South, including national governments, regional organisations and indigenous NGOs.

## 10.2 The Knowledge Strategies Framework

The knowledge strategies framework is useful for devising and revising knowledge management strategy.

Figure 10.1: The Knowledge Strategies Framework




- The external factors: How does the knowledge and learning strategy address issues emerging from external relationships and factors?
- The context: How do issues of institutional governance, politics and economics support or hinder the knowledge and learning strategy?
- Links: How does knowledge and learning link to structures, functions, core activities, supporting activities and processes of a given organisation?
- The knowledge: How is knowledge and learning understood and applied within each organisation? What tools are used, why and how?

## 10.3 Organisational learning

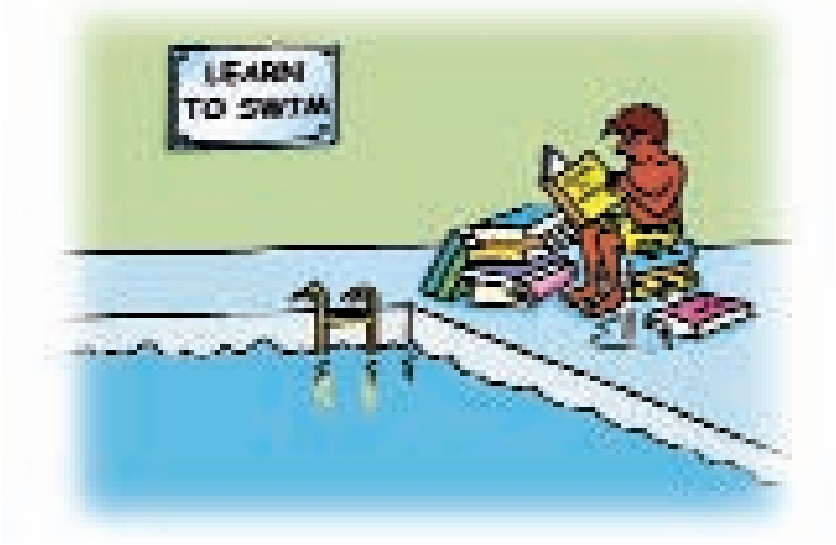
Organisational learning is an important element of the organisation knowledge management system. It is important to know that different people learn differently. There are at least four different learning styles2.

### Activists: learning by doing

Activists are people who learn by doing. They like to involve themselves in new experiences and will try anything once . They tend to act first and consider the consequences afterwards.

### Theorists

Theorists like to understand the theory behind the actions. They need models, concepts and facts in order to learn. They like to analyse and synthesise, and feel uncomfortable with subjective judgements.



## Pragmatists

Pragmatists are keen on trying things out. They look for new ideas that can be applied to the problem in hand. They like to get on with things and tend to be impatient with open-ended discussions; they are practical, down-to-earth people.

## Reflectors

Reflectors learn by observing and thinking about what has happened. They like to consider all the possible angles and implications before coming to a considered opinion. They spend time listening and observing, and tend to be cautious and thoughtful.

# 11. DESIGNING AND DELIVERING TRAINING

Designing and delivering training on evidence-based policy advocacy is aimed at strengthening the capacity of CSOs through familiarisation and orientation with tools and frameworks for policy influence.

## 11.1 Determining Training Needs

This involves trainers conducting a rapid assessment of targeted CSOs to determine their performance in policy influence as well as their competences in use of evidence in policy influence. This is a necessary step for the trainer to determine the extent to which targeted CSOs are achieving their objectives in evidence-based policy advocacy. During assessment, the trainer will identify:

- Those factors (competences) inhibiting and/or promoting utilisation of CSO research by policymakers;
- Areas for capacity strengthening, including training;
- Knowledge and skills gaps in evidence-based policy advocacy for different audiences;
- Training content relevant to each audience, delivery techniques and training duration.

The rapid assessment can be conducted through focus group discussions with both policymakers and evidence-based CSOs. Policymakers give their reflections on the research used in policy development and practice, and factors, including those within CSOs, making them reject or underutilise evidence. CSOs reflect on difficulties encountered communicating research evidence to policymakers.

Remember: Use the monitoring and evaluation and knowledge management tools/frameworks to draw lessons on competences and performance in implementing policy influence strategy.

## 11.2 Audience for Training on Evidence-based Policy Advocacy

Training audiences can be grouped or identified according to the role they play in policy process (see Figure 11.1 for audience analysis). The following audiences can be identified:

- Research agenda setters: These may include individuals in evidence-based CSOs, responsible for planning and monitoring as well as implementing research and other programmatic interventions. They frequently interact with the market (may include policymakers, implementers, communities/individuals using services/information). Through interaction, they gain familiarity with issues and knowledge/evidence gaps, etc.
- Research proposal designers: These are mainly researchers and field officers who write research proposals as well as carrying out the research.
- Advocacy and sensitisation officers: This group plays the role of raising awareness among different groups in the society concerned on various research and policy issues.

- Other stakeholders (supporting groups): This may include media, churches/religious groups, schools and universities, social movements and advocacy groups, trade unions, NGOs and INGOs responsible for lobbying for change on various policy issues. These organisations can facilitate the implementation of various policies.

The training audience analysis presented in Figure 11.1 is only a suggestion and should be customised according the needs of the user. It would be useful for CSOs to conduct training needs assessments to identify actual training needs of different audiences.

## Figure 11.1: Training audience analysis

| Role in policy research | Role in policy development and practice | Relevant content in bridging research and policy | Training delivery methods | Training duration | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Researchers/ field officers in CSOs | Produce research: develop proposals to fill knowledge gaps or gain new knowledge based on future needs; conduct research and disseminate findings (ESRF, REPOA, ERB researchers) | Provide evidence relevant to policy through consultations and presentation of findings | ▪ Problem tree analysis<br>▪ Policy planning cycle<br>▪ Mapping of political context<br>▪ Research tools<br>▪ Links – research teams | 3 days | Lectures, case studies |
| Advocacy officers, CSO chief executives, think tank or evidence-based CSO policymakers (governing boards) | Research dissemination/ communication | Organise policy advocacy campaigns; promote organisation policy advocacy work | ▪ Mapping of political context (problem analysis; stakeholder analysis)<br>▪ Communication tools<br>▪ Developing policy advocacy strategy<br>▪ Monitoring and evaluation | 2 days | Lectures, case studies to apply tools |
| Programme officers | Monitor performance of policy-specific programmatic interventions (TGNP performance, directors of programmes) | Monitor/evaluate knowledge/ research/evidence use; monitor impact of policy change; feed into research agenda | ▪ Mapping of political context/problem analysis<br>▪ Policy influence and practice | 2 days | Lectures, case studies to apply tools |
| Awareness raising/ sensitisation officers | Sensitise on various policy research issues | Raise awareness of various targeted groups | Communication tools | 1 day | Lectures, case studies to apply tools |
| Stakeholders (supporting groups) | Lobby for change; facilitate process of policy research as campaign targets | Facilitate process of policy implementation | ▪ Role of CSOs in influencing the policy process<br>▪ Policy influence tools | 2 days | Lectures, case studies |

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# ANNEX

Annex 1: Group Photo: Training of Trainers on Evidence-Based Policy Advocacy in East Africa.