Lobbying and steps in planning an advocacy campaign

Lobbying & Advocacy

- What is Lobbying?
The organised attempt of members of the public to influence legislators on a certain issue

- What is Advocacy?
To publicly support or recommend a cause or an issue

NGO lobbying: why and how

- Why lobby? - because it can bring about policy changes that improve peoples' lives.
- Lobbying is the process of trying to influence policymakers in favor of a specific cause or point of view. Lobbying includes a call to action.
- How? Using personal contacts, public pressure, or political action to persuade legislators to vote in a particular manner.

Who do we lobby?

- European Commission - Role in policy formulation and drafting legislation.
- European Parliament - accessible, the 'people's representatives', key role in legislation.
- European Council - Policy and position tracking in Brussels, lobby at the national level.
- Other actors - think tanks and academics, NGOs, trade associations, UN agencies, trade unions, local and regional authorities, media, embassies.
Roles of the NGO sector

Monitor - what is happening in the institutions? What are the new policy trends, legal proposals?
Analyse - what could this mean for your member organisations or target group? What actions are needed - passive monitoring or active lobbying?
Inform and raise awareness - explain the background of the issue, basic elements of the proposal, the timeframe for action
Engage - encourage debate, exchange of ideas, brainstorm on what should be the goals of lobbying
Consult - gather viewpoints from communities and target groups - particularly those affected by the policy proposal
Challenge - the policy-makers and other stakeholders to address your concerns or provide evidence and arguments for their positions
Empower - provide the tools for NGOs to act, eg draft letters, opportunities to sign-up, attend meetings with policy-makers.
Represent - bringing forward the diversity of voices of civil society, public interest, visibility through the media
Follow-up - keep up the momentum, follow the policy through to implementation, evaluation and review

Limitations of NGO lobbying

• Access - little access to the most senior policy-makers and exclusive relationships
• Money - unequal resources with business interests who can mobilise significant funds and people
• Professionalism - small staff, often with general policy or information skills rather than specialist qualifications. Often difficulty in accessing scientific expertise to develop an evidence base
• Diversity - the NGO community tends to be very fragmented, difficult to achieve consensus
• Political weight - NGO voices often carry little weight compared to large industry federations

Steps in Advocacy

1. Creating an Advocacy Campaign
2. Educating Policy Makers
3. Organizing the Health/Environment Community
4. Media Strategy

1. Creating An Advocacy Campaign

• Define a health-based message on an environmental issue
• Define the objective of the campaign i.e. policy change desired
• Define the policy or target audience
• Define the campaign partners
• Build a support base – physicians, nurses, public health professionals, health care organisations, patient groups, hospitals, grassroots NGOs, etc.
Example: A Healthier REACH

Policy papers and Publications

- HEAL position paper to EU institutions
- Letters: MEPs, Council of EU Ministers, Commission
- Sick of chemicals
- Breast cancer and environmental factors brochure
- Young people’s chemical investigation toolkit for schools and homes
- Supporter of WWF Family Biomonitoring survey

2. Educating Policy Makers

- Briefing paper on policy issue from a health perspective
- Talking points for health professionals and general public at specific events of political opportunity
- Setting up Individual meetings with EU MEPs, Commission officials, national civil servants

Example: A Healthier REACH

- Health-based messages:
  - More than 90% chemicals on market have not been tested for basic safety and health information.
  - Developing babies and children susceptibilities are not taken into account in current testing protocols
- Policy target:
  - Adoption REACH legislation with stringent testing requirements for all chemicals and definition of vulnerable groups – EU institutions
- Key Target Audience:
  - Health professionals, scientists, women, young people, public
- Campaign Partners:
  - European networks of environmental NGOs, doctors’, women’s groups, patient groups, youth networks

3. Organizing Health and Environment Community

- Joint NGO intelligence sharing and activities

Targeting the health community

- Medical Resolutions and/or Organisational Policy Statements
- Sessions at Conferences
- Organising Health Leaders as Spokespeople
- Sign-on letters for leading health organisations
Example: A Healthier REACH

- **Policy Statements** – European Committee of Standing Doctors (ECSD-2 million doctors); European Women’s Lobby, International Society of Doctors, Healthcare without Harm
- **Sessions** at CPME’s annual meeting;
- **Press conferences and interviews**
- **Paris Appeal Statement** and sign-on **Model letters** at crucial stages of REACH negotiation for members to use

Young people’s investigation into chemical and recommendations

- 4 schools (Armenia, France, Russia, UK)
- Extensive media coverage
- Expert panel (industry, WHO, Commission, NGOs, Doctors)

- Recommendations to EP and Council of Ministers on REACH
- Recommendations to EEHC (52 countries) on CEHAPE, RPGIV

Things to Remember

- Policy change is incremental
- Achieving a short term goal is just as important as reaching the ultimate goal
- Celebrate your successes – no matter how small!
  *Frederick Douglass: “Power concedes nothing without demand”*

Health & Environment Alliance

28 Boulevard Charlemagne
B-1000 Brussels Belgium

Tel: + 32 2 234 3640 (general)
[www.env-health.org](http://www.env-health.org)

Thank you for your attention!