



ADVOCACY DEFINITIONS

The dictionary definition of advocacy talks of speaking or pleading on behalf of another person or group. It could be in search of justice. E.g. To achieve some social justice, political right, economic opportunity for the marginalised.

Other connotations:

- To bring about change;
- Proposing;
- Recommending.

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MSiS definition:

Advocacy is a process aimed at promoting a particular cause by achieving specific policy changes. It involves a set of organised and planned actions aimed at influencing decision making processes, building support, or creating a favourable climate for introducing, changing, enforcing a law, policy, programme or a budget.

For MS advocacy is a strategy used to achieve the overall aim of poverty eradication and a more fair distribution of resources by means of ensuring inclusion of marginalised people in decision making processes.

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Can we now try and agree on a joint definition of advocacy from these ideas:

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Advocacy should not be an end in itself, but rather a means to a just end.

ADVOCACY STRATEGIES

An advocacy strategy should ideally comprise:

- A clear definition of the problem you wish to address (remember our problem tree?);
- The objectives (long-term objectives to be achieved in order to influence policy and solve the problem);
- Tactics including how alliances/networks will be built; research conducted; resources mobilised and used; messages will be developed and communicated; etc;
- How progress will be assessed.

GOOD PRACTICE IN ADVOCACY

Representation and local participation:

It is always a good idea to involve as many stakeholders as possible

Capacity:

Building the capacity of individuals and communities to represent themselves and defend their rights in future should be along-term objective

Root causes of the problem:

Advocacy should focus on the root causes of a problem.

GOOD PRACTICE IN ADVOCACY

Legitimacy:

Legitimacy of advocacy may rest on the support of the majority but not all the time.

Relationships with policy makers:

Ideally, advocacy would be more effective when done in an atmosphere of mutual respect

GOOD PRACTICE IN ADVOCACY

- To be effective, advocacy needs to:
- Empower those who have less conventional economic, social, or political power
- Resist unequal power relations (like patriarchy) at every level
- Bridge micro-level activism and macro-level policy initiatives

GOOD PRACTICE IN ADVOCACY

Remember, as advocates, we are mainly concerned with:

Who decides

What is decided

How decisions are made

How decisions are enforced, implemented, and evaluated