TECH3501-18 Lecture 005 – Community Advocacy Movements

1   What is Advocacy

- Competing needs of diverse populations and ever shrinking resources available to support these needs often serve as the impetus for the initiation of advocacy efforts to improve community wellbeing and solidarity.
- However, perceptions of what constitutes a community differ, as do approaches to advocacy itself.

There are five key questions:

1. What is advocacy?
2. What is meant by community?
3. What are the different approaches to community advocacy?
4. How are priorities established in the face of competing advocacy goals?
5. How can community advocacy efforts be evaluated?
6. What challenges may be encountered in advocating for community sustainability?

- Each of these issues could serve as the basis for a lecture on that subject alone.
- This discussion is not meant to be comprehensive test of these issues but is intended to highlight key foundational issues.
- Advocacy efforts are those that are conducted by individuals, though they are interlinked with the advocacy efforts of different communities, however those communities may be defined and characterised.

1.1   Defining Advocacy

"Advocacy is the act of "taking a position on an issue, and initiating actions in a deliberate attempt to influence

private and public policy choices" (Loue, 2006, p. 458).

- Advocacy entails action by a community around issues related to social wellbeing, in whatever way that community is defined or formed.
- Communities can be formed from a variety of circumstances.
- Communities can be distinguished by the circumstance in which they are formed, when an appropriate set of circumstances is present for community formation to occur.
- These circumstances include the size and type of area, the composition of the community, access to community workers who can assist the group, and the position of the local media toward community debate.
- The first step in identifying this process is the identification by residents of a sense of shared values.
- Perceptions, then, may be as important as locality in forming a sense of community.
- As an example, residents of a particular local community might work together to advocate against the construction of a manufacturing plant that they believe will result in the release of toxic substances in the air, causing a diminution in air quality and the endangerment of the residents' health.
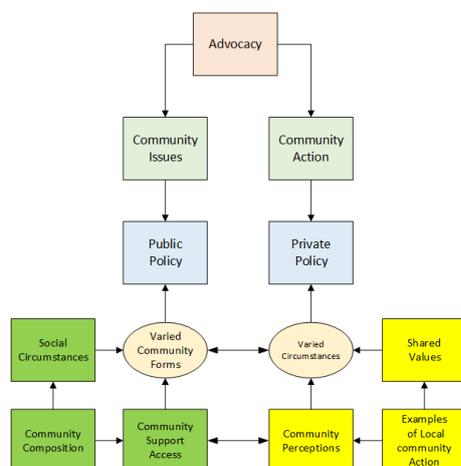
1.2   Community Advocates Roles

Chegg Internships: "Advocates passionately argue their point against the heat of governmental op-pression and in the face of apathy. Community Advocates use that same passion to inform citizens about environmental, animal, and human conditions in an effort to motivate them into action. As a Community Advocate, you typically lobby for special interest groups. That means you're the liaison between organizations and the public. Such groups might include environmentalists working to save a specific species of tree, Animal Rights Activists who abhor euthanasia, or human-interest groups fighting to change labor laws. Few jobs allow you to show your team spirit like that of Community Ad-vocate. After all, it's rewarding to fight for what you feel is right. And that fight can take on a lot of different faces. For example, you might meet with a Newspaper Reporter to share facts about water pollution in the city's river. Or, you might put together a rally that brings attention to the special needs of a native plant species. Your goal is to inform the public about your cause. That might be done one citizen at a time, through phone calls and mailings, or en masse at community gatherings. This job allows you to flex your creativity muscles as you find ways to raise money, get people in-volved, motivate action, and build awareness" https://www.chegg.com/career-center/explore/com-munity-advocate.

Community Advocates: Our Mission: To provide individuals and families with advocacy and services to meet their basic needs so they may live in dignity http://communityadvocates.net/why/mission/

Domestic Violence Evidence Project: The role of the advocate is to make the community more re-sponsive to women's needs, and this involves active and pro-active work in the community. CAP is delivered by trained, supervised paraprofessionals who work as advocates with participating women and their children to help them obtain needed community resources and social support, often after the women leave a shelter-based program https://www.dvevidenceproject.org/wp-content/up-loads/CommunityAdvocacyProjectProfile.pdf.

1.3   Community Advocate Role Profiles

1.3.1   Care Home Advocate

Your day-to-day duties could include:

- making sure residents are treated fairly and with dignity
- finding and explaining information
- helping residents explore their options and make informed choices
- making sure residents have access to their care plan
- helping residents to speak for themselves or speaking on their behalf
- helping to negotiate with others involved in decisions
- going with residents to meetings to provide moral support, or attending meetings on their behalf
- working with care home staff and other agencies

You'll give support on many issues, like:

- choice of accommodation
- care home closure
- discontentment with the service
- exploitation or abuse (physical, psychological, financial or sexual)
- financial matters
- power of attorney
- disputes or difficulties with family members

https://nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk/job-profiles/care-home-advocate

1.3.2   Coram Voice Advocate

All Coram Voice staff are expected to work in line with our brand, values and management principles, in particular by:

- Building and maintaining meaningful, supportive, mutually empowering relationships with and between colleagues, partners, and children and young people.
- Creating and supporting a friendly and trusting working environment, working flexibly and supporting each other in times of high workload or when life gets difficult.
- Accepting personal responsibility for our work and being accountable for delivering results against those responsibilities.
- Recognising that we all have a role to play in all aspects of Coram Voice's success, in particular in supporting fundraising, storytelling, and involving children and young people in shaping the future of Coram Voice.

Main focus for the post:

- Provide advocacy to children and young people through individual community casework and our outreach advocacy project with homeless young people.
- Providing support to the national Coram Voice advocacy helpline as required by the needs of the service.

Key Responsibilities:

- Provide individual casework to children and young people:
- Undertake advocacy casework, in line with Coram Voice practice guidelines, with
- specific young people allocated as ongoing cases, one off interventions, visiting advocacy or as part of advocacy outreach project with homeless young people.
- Ensure that children and young people working with Coram Voice are informed of and understand their rights.
- Liaise and negotiate with other agencies concerning specific cases and on general issues as required.
- Take responsibility for maintaining sound records in line with Coram Voice's recording guidelines and which can be used in supervision.
- Complete financial records for recharging agencies for Coram Voice services.
- Undertake specific tasks related to the development of the advocacy service and consistent with the role of a Coram Voice advocate.
- To contribute to your personal supervision with your manager and take shared responsibility for your personal development and learning.
- Participate in the provision of advocacy support on the national Coram Voice helpline on as required by the needs of the service:
- Support the helpline service to respond to any helpline enquiries, including providing direct advocacy support, referring callers to the appropriate service, or offering advice to young people and professionals.

http://www.coramvoice.org.uk/sites/default/files/Advocate%20(Community)%20JD%20(September%202014).pdf

1.3.3   Community Advocate: Job Outlook & Career Info

Community advocates are knowledgeable about their causes and may have degrees in fields related to social issues and organizations, such as political science, business, non-profit organization management, urban studies, or sociology. Community advocacy positions include public interest advocates, lobbyists, and community activists. Read further to learn more about pursuing jobs in this field. Community advocacy involves providing information and serving as a liaison between a community and public agencies and government. Community

advocates are activists for social issues who organize others and raise funds to effectively lobby for causes that affect all of society or smaller constituencies. Community advocates typically work for lobbies, think tanks, and human rights, animal rights, and environmental organizations.

Educational Requirements: For most grassroots community organizations, a community advocate does not necessarily need any formal education, just relevant knowledge about the cause. Volunteer work with an organization can lead to paid work as a community advocate. For work with an organized lobby, think tank or for more organized and well-funded interest organizations, paid advocates typically have a bachelor's or master's in a related field, such as non-profit organization management, business management, environmental science, political science, or sociology, according to the College Board, www.collegeboard.com.

Required Skills: Community advocates must be in tune with current events and policies that might affect their constituencies. Effective community advocacy requires energy and the communication and personal skills to inspire and motivate others to action. The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), www.bls.gov, states that the day-to-day running of smaller organizations also requires community advocates to have a diversity of skills in finance, marketing and technical office knowledge. http://study.com/articles/Community_Advocate_Job_Outlook_and_Information_About_Starting_a_Career_as_a_Community_Advocate.html

1.3.4   MENTAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION OF SAN FRANCISCO

PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITIES: The Community Advocate is responsible for community organizing and advocacy involving individuals with mental health conditions within MHASF programs, the San Francisco County mental health system, supportive housing sites, and other community based programs. The Community Advocate provides leadership in facilitating community-based MHASF trainings, support groups, and workshops with an emphasis on mentoring and training program participants across MHASF community programs.

POSITION RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Represent MHASF at public hearings about issues affecting people with mental health conditions, including budget hearings with the Board of Supervisors, meetings of the Mental Health Board, Police Commission, and other local committees.
- Organize and train individuals with mental health conditions to speak at public hearings and participate on policy committees.
- Coordinate outreach, advocacy and education activities for relevant policy/advocacy issues.
- Facilitate the weekly Support Group for Hoarding and Cluttering with MHASF as needed.
- Organize MHASF consumer advocates via phone, in-person and internet and other communication tools to participate in MHASF activities and events.
- Provide leadership, mentoring, and advanced training for SOLVE (Sharing Our Lives, Voices and Experiences) Speakers Bureau with MHASF.
- Provide drop-in assistance and support for System Navigators with Community Behavioral Health Services (CBHS) on an as-needed basis.
- Assist with outreach and presentations for the PREP (Prevention and Recovery of Early Psychosis) Program with MHASF
- Serve as an agency lead for MHASF Information and Referral Line and provide relevant, current resources for the community.

- Track outcomes including people served and provide a monthly report of accomplishments to Community Programs Manager Responsibilities should include WRAP and other self-help groups, peer-support.
- Other duties as assigned by Community Programs Manager. http://www.mentalhealthsf.org/documents/Community%20Advocate_Job%20Description.pdf

1.3.5   Advocacy Job Description

Passion is an overused word in these times. Yet it is fundamental when it comes to a position of advocacy. Advocacy involves arguing for a particular idea or supporting a cause on behalf of a person or institution. Organizations that participate in advocacy work hire people who are passionate about the organizational cause and give them the opportunity, tools, skills and knowledge to realize the shared vision. There are various positions within these organizations, but it is the advocacy officers who are directly involved in formulating and implementing the organizational policy and strategies. An advocacy officer job description indicates the objective, the nature and level of the job, key functional and relational responsibilities and candidate requirements.

Purpose: Each advocacy organization has a specific cause, and its officers share a passion towards realizing it. Typically, the purpose of the position is stated in the job description. An advocacy officer demonstrates commitment to the cause either through previous job experiences or any other activities related to the cause. For example, a person with experience in organizing and participating in book drives would be a good fit for an organization advocating for the promotion of literacy.

Responsibilities: The advocacy officer helps implement the organization's policies and strategies, so he should be aware of the job's scope and requirements as well as the expected outcomes. The advocacy officer devises ways of reaching those who could use the organization's assistance and offering the help needed. For example, an advocate against child abuse could organize a legal aid clinic to create awareness about child abuse. In offering that service, the advocate could locate a child in need of Child Protection Services.

Relationships: Advocacy work requires a capacity to build and maintain effective relationships both within and outside the organization. Advocacy officers represent their clients to people and organizations that can remedy the situation. For example, an advocacy officer could organize a meeting with local elected representatives and philanthropic organizations to present the plight of battered women living in the community and push for the establishment of additional safe houses in the area. Externally, the officer coordinates the project with the partners on behalf of the organization. Internally, the officer collaborates with finance and procurement to implement advocacy initiatives. An advocacy officer is accountable to the program director, and they work together to ensure that the initiatives they implement have positive and measurable outcomes.

Jobholder Requirements: Although a shared passion and vision is the fundamental requirement for an advocacy officer to work in a specific organization, there are other necessary attributes for this kind of work. Advocacy officers need training and experience so that they have knowledge of the issues they represent in the

course of their work. They must possess personal attributes such as integrity, focus, diligence and ability to communicate effectively and persuade others towards their point of view.

https://careertrend.com/advocacy-job-description-16825.html

1.3.6   COMMUNITY ADVOCATE ADVOCACY

Advocacy is a political process by an individual or group which aims to influence public-policy and resource allocation decisions within political, economic, and social systems and institutions. Advocacy can include many activities that a person or organization undertakes including media campaigns, public speaking, commissioning and publishing research or polls or the filing of an amicus brief. Lobbying (often by lobby groups) is a form of advocacy where a direct approach is made to legislators on an issue which plays a significant role in modern politics. Research is beginning to explore how advocacy groups use social media to facilitate civic engagement and collective action.

Forms of advocacy: There are several forms of advocacy, which each represent a different approach in the way change is brought into society. One of the most popular forms is social justice advocacy. Although it is true, the initial definition does not encompass the notions of power relations, people's participation and a vision of a just society as promoted by social justice advocates. For them, advocacy represents the series of actions taken and issues highlighted to change the "what is" into a "what should be", considering that this "what should be" is a more decent and a more just society. Those actions, which vary with the political, economic and social environment in which they are conducted, have several points in common. They:

- Question the way policy is administered
- Participate in the agenda setting as they raise significant issues
- Target political systems "because those systems are not responding to people's needs"
- Are inclusive and engaging
- Propose policy solutions
- Open up space for public argumentation.

Some of the other forms of advocacy include:

- **Budget advocacy:** Budget advocacy is another aspect of advocacy that ensures proactive engagement of Civil Society Organizations with the government budget to make the government more accountable to the people and promote transparency.
- Budget advocacy also enables citizens and social action groups to compel the government to be more alert to the needs and aspirations of people in general and the deprived sections of the community.
- **Bureaucratic advocacy:** people considered "experts" have more chance to succeed at presenting their issues to decision-makers. They use bureaucratic advocacy to influence the agenda, however at a slower pace.
- **Express versus issue advocacy:** these two types of advocacy when grouped together usually refers to a debate in the United States whether a group is expressly making their desire known that voters should cast ballots in a particular way, or whether a group has a long-term issue that isn't campaign and election season specific.
- **Health advocacy:** Health advocacy supports and promotes patient's health care rights as well as enhance community health and policy initiatives that focus on the availability, safety and quality of care.
- **Ideological advocacy:** in this approach, groups fight, sometimes during protests, to advance their ideas in the decision-making circles.

- **Interest-group advocacy:** lobbying is the main tool used by interests groups doing mass advocacy. It is a form of action that does not always succeed at influencing political decision-makers as it requires resources and organisation to be effective.
- **Legislative advocacy:** legislative advocacy is the "reliance on the state or federal legislative process" as part of a strategy to create change.
- **Mass advocacy:** is any type of action taken by large groups (petitions, demonstrations, etc.)
- **Media advocacy:** is "the strategic use of the mass media as a resource to advance a social or public policy initiative" (Jernigan and Wright, 1996.) In Canada for example, the Manitoba Public Insurance campaigns illustrate how media advocacy was used to fight alcohol and tobacco-related health issues. We can also consider the role of health advocacy and the media in "the enactment of municipal smoking bylaws in Canada between 1970 and 1995." http://www.peprimer.com/community-advocate.html

1.3.7   COMMUNITY ADVOCATE ADVOCACY

Community development brings people together. This type of work requires selfless individuals who are passionate about assisting others. As a community development worker you will help communities to bring about social change and improve the quality of life in their local area. You might work with individuals, families and whole communities to empower them to: identify their assets, needs, opportunities, rights and responsibilities; plan what they want to achieve and take appropriate action; develop activities and services to generate aspiration and confidence.

As a community development worker you'll act as the link between communities and a range of other local authority and voluntary sector providers, such as the police, social workers and teachers. You'll frequently be involved in addressing inequality. Projects often target communities perceived to be culturally, economically or geographically disadvantaged.

Responsibilities: Community development work seeks to actively engage communities in making sense of the issues which affect their lives, setting goals for improvement and responding to problems and needs through empowerment and active participation. A good deal of the work is project based, which means you will usually have a specific geographical community or social group on which to focus.

Tasks often involve:
- identifying community skills, assets, issues and needs
- ensuring that local people have their say
- developing new resources in dialogue with the community and evaluating existing programmes
- building links with other groups and agencies
- helping to raise public awareness on issues relevant to the community
- preparing reports and policies
- raising and managing funds
- developing and implementing strategies
- liaising with interested groups and individuals to set up new services
- mediating in matters of conflict
- recruiting and training paid and voluntary staff
- planning, attending and coordinating meetings and events
- overseeing the management of a limited budget

- encouraging participation in activities
- challenging inappropriate behaviour
- general administrative duties.

Community work can be generic or specialised. Generic community work takes place in a particular geographical area, focusing on working with the community to identify their needs and issues, and formulating strategies to address those issues. The setting is either urban or rural, with rural community development work increasingly attracting attention. Specialised community work focuses on either specific groups within a region (such as the homeless, the long-term unemployed, families with young children or ethnic minorities) or on particular concerns such as: mental health, public transport, tackling drug abuse. https://www.prospects.ac.uk/job-profiles/community-development-worker

1.4   Community Media Advocacy Roles

Role	Motivation	Action
The Activist	Promotes social change	Campaigning & political action
The Steward	Ensures continuity	Support for institutions & guiding social change by degree
The Representative	Encompasses all views	Speaking on behalf of others
The Collaborator	Ensures active participation	Getting people working together
The Cipher	Uses established & accumulated knowledge	Relating a pre-determined message
The Consumer	Uses & incorporates what is at hand	Combines and uses media products at hand
The Inspector	Ensures things are ready to work	Checks that work is undertaken at appropriate standards
Devotees	Plays a role in the existing social order	Follows figureheads and leaders

1.5   MBTI Roles

MBTI Role		Disposition	Action	Social Role
Artisan	Operator Entertainer Playmate Liberator Negotiator	Present – Hedonistic Future – Optimistic Past – Cynical Place – Here Time - Now	Harmonic Tactical Artcraft Artistic	**Promoter** **Crafter** **Composer** **Performer**
Guardian	Administrator Conservator Helpmate Socialiser Stabiliser	Present – Stoical Future – Pessimistic Past – Fatalistic Place – Gateways Time - Yesterday	Associative Logistical Commerce & Material Dependable	**Supervisor** **Inspector** **Provider** **Protector**
Rational	Coordinator Engineer Mindmate Individuator Visionary	Present – Pragmatic Future – Sceptical Past – Relativistic Place – Intersections Time - Intervals	Deductive Strategic Sciences & Systems Ingenious	**Field-Marshall** **Mastermind** **Inventor** **Architect**
Idealist	Mentor Advocate Soulmate Harmoniser Catalyst	Present – Altruistic Future – Credulous Past – Mystical Place – Pathways Time - Tomorrow	Inductive Diplomatic Humanities Empathetic	**Teacher** **Councillor** **Champion** **Healer**

2   Defining Community

2.1   Communities of Interest

- This can be explained as an interest community, being comprised of groups of individuals who are associated with each other because of common interests rather than common geographical area.
- Greenpeace is a good example of an interest community.
- Greenpeace is a non-profit organisation that developed to advocate and campaign against environmental degradation in its various forms.
- Its membership includes people in at least 40 different countries who are associated with each other because of their environmental concerns.
- Some writers might dispute the characterisation of such a group as community and refer to it, instead, as an association because its members are connected only by virtue of a common interest.

2.2   Communities and Publics

Some researchers favour a more "public" definition of community.

Fowler has identified three types of community:

1. Communities of ideas
2. Communities of crisis
3. Communities of memory.

- Within the health context, a community of ideas is exemplified by advocacy groups that focus on a particular goal or issue, such as women's health or abortion.

- Advocates for increased attention to HIV care and research could be considered a community of crisis, particularly during the earlier years of the epidemic.
- African-Americans in the USA may be bound together as a community of memory because of a shared legacy of slavery and the Tuskegee syphilis study.

2.3   Delineated Characteristics

Public health utilises yet other approaches to determining who and what constitutes community.

Community is often delineated by characteristics such as

- urban v rural,
- inner city v suburban area,
- sexual orientation or
- sex, socioeconomic status or
- educational level, and
- immigration status.

> "In one study, investigators asked African Americans in Durham, North Carolina, gay men in San Francisco, California, injection drug users in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and HIV vaccine researchers in various parts of the USA to indicate what community meant.8 The investigators then identified common themes that appeared in all four groups. Common themes included shared social ties and common perspectives, and participation in joint action across geographical locations or settings. There were also differences, however, in how each group perceived community. The gay men in San Francisco emphasised first, a shared history and perspective, and second, a sense of identity with the location; the African American men in Durham and the injection drug users in Philadelphia emphasised location, followed by joint action and social ties. Because of this variation in the experience of community across settings, the authors of the study called for the use of multiple models of collaboration in public health research and programmes" (Loue, 2006, p. 459).

- Community advocacy efforts can be implemented on a group, local, national, or transnational basis.
- The level at which advocacy is conducted is often determined by a number of factors, including the scope of the issue, the short term and/or long-term nature of the issue, and the availability of resources.
- Many issues are amenable to, but do not necessarily require, advocacy efforts at multiple levels.
- As an example, consider the situation of an HIV infected person who does not have access to recommended drugs because of their high cost.
- They can choose to advocate at an individual level for their own interests only, by attempting to convince the relevant pharmaceutical company to provide the drugs to them at a reduced cost.
- Alternatively, the person can advocate with and through one or more communities, such as communities with common interests or particular geographical communities.
- The organisation known as ACT-UP, for instance, was comprised of individuals concerned about HIV related research and care.
- This organisation mounted advocacy efforts at the local, national, and international levels to bring pressure to bear on governments and pharmaceutical companies to increase and facilitate access to needed drugs.
- In Brazil, activists brought pressure on the federal government there to intervene with the pharmaceutical companies to reduce the costs of needed drugs.
- The government of Brazil itself acted as an advocate in the international community when, in response to pharmaceutical manufacturers' refusal to reduce its profit margin and make AIDS drugs more accessible, it invoked a rule of the World Trade Organisation that permits member nations to break patents to combat health crises.

3   Approaches to Advocacy

- "Grassroots" or "bottom-up" approaches to advocacy are based on the identification of needs and goals by community members themselves.

- The concept of community organising is premised on the idea of empowerment, which is "a process of collective reflection and action in which previously isolated individuals become protagonists in shaping society according to their shared interests."
- Advocacy efforts that have used a bottom-up approach include efforts by like-minded individuals to establish rape crisis centres and shelters for battered women and the establishment of needle exchange programmes to reduce or prevent HIV transmission.
- In contrast, top-down models emphasise the identification of needs or goals by experts outside of the community or by only the community leaders.
- These advocates may be professional staff of non-profit organisations, such as Greenpeace, or national or international professional health organisations.
- Organising is critical to the success of advocacy efforts, whether they are conducted from a bottom-up or top-down approach.
- For instance, a non-profit or non-governmental organisation that is spearheading efforts to improve health related services in a particular locale or to prohibit smoking must organise, at a minimum, its staff and constituents to further these goals.

3.1   Community Organising

- Community organising has been defined as "the process of organizing people around problems or issues that are larger than group members' own immediate concerns."
- As such, it is relevant to bottom-up advocacy efforts.
- Minkler defined it as "efforts by which groups sharing a common interest are assisted in identifying their specific needs and goals, mobilizing resources within their communities, and in other ways taking action leading to the achievement of the goals they have set collectively."
- Community readiness is a prerequisite for mobilisation for a specific goal.
- The stronger the community's sense of identity, cohesion, and connectedness, the more likely it is that the community is ready to mobilise to address a specific issue.

> "Organising efforts using a bottom-up approach may rely on indigenous community organisers, that is, community leaders who are able to influence and represent the larger constituency of the community. Other mechanisms used in bottom-up advocacy efforts include reliance on small groups, often called the locus of change because they help to create a group identity and a sense of purpose, and town hall meetings, which are used to inform the relevant community and to consider a variety of solutions." (Loue).

> Last week, I stood with thousands of other Chicagoans in a darkened room in the city's McCormick Place convention center, feeling solemn and uncertain as President Obama bade farewell to the nation. Urging Americans to resist cynicism, Obama called on the country to instead turn toward political actions big and small. "If something needs fixing, then lace up your shoes and do some organizing."

3.2   Obama & Community Organising

"This choice of words was a clear nod to the president's much-discussed origin story as a community organizer. But as he looks beyond the White House and toward his legacy, Obama would do well to listen to some community organizers in his very own back yard. On the South Side of Chicago, residents are demanding that the forthcoming Obama Presidential Centre enter into a community benefits agreement, ensuring that the library and museum will strengthen and support those who call the surrounding area home, rather than displacing them." https://www.washingtonpost.com/posteverything/wp/2017/01/19/one-way-for-obama-to-secure-his-legacy-make-sure-his-library-helps-the-south-side/?utm_term=.7cb6a0bb8ed5

3.3   Cyclical Processes

- Organising and mobilising a community is oftentimes a cyclical process that comprises assessment, research, action, and reflection.
- As an example, an advocacy group may find that there are multiple issues to be tackled and that each of these issues falls within its mission or vision.
- Because each issue demands an allocation of time and resources, it would be impossible to tackle all of them simultaneously with the same degree of attention and intensity.
- One option open to the organisation is to survey its membership about which issues or activities the members feel are most critical.
- For instance, Greenpeace periodically surveys its membership to ascertain membership views on the importance of various issues.
- Alternatively, an organisation may choose to conduct a needs assessment and, from the information gathered through this assessment, prioritise the needs to be addressed, and the activities to be pursued.
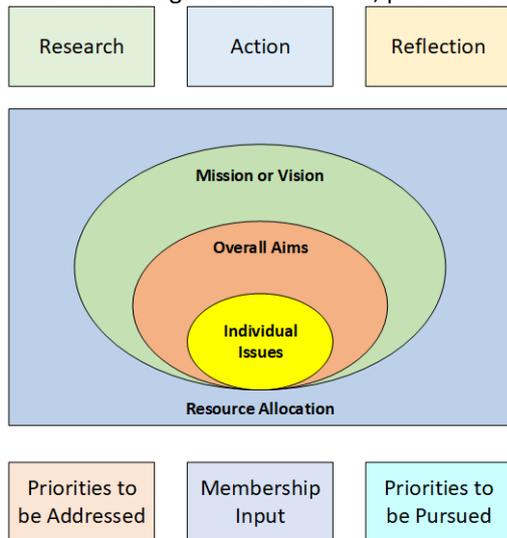
3.4 Community Needs Assessments

Assessment is the process by which members identify and define the critical issues that affect their community.

> Although "needs assessment" has been variously defined, it is frequently viewed as a systematic process that is "designed to determine the current status and unmet needs—sometimes, both the present and future needs—of a defined population group or geographic area with regard to a specified program or subject area."

This process is often founded upon research:

- Which is the examination of causes and correlates of issues identified in the assessment phase.
- The nature of the issue, including any barriers to access and/or limitations of current policies and how the allocation of community resources relates to it.
- Political influences, how organizations or other players exercise social power around it.
- And solutions.

3.5 Needs Assessment Credibility

A community needs assessment that is both valid and credible is characterised by:

1. A multidisciplinary team that includes individuals with expertise in community assessment procedures, knowledge about strategies relevant to the issue under study, and members of the population to be affected.
2. Broad agreement on the objectives focus, and scope of the needs assessment.
3. A study design that uses both primary and secondary data effectively.
4. A realistic study design, time frame, and allocation of resources.
5. A process for regular review and input by community representatives.

6. A plan for the utilisation of the findings.

3.6 Defining Need
This raises yet another issue: How do we define "need"?

- Witkin and Altschuld have defined need as the difference between "what is" and "what should be." (Witkin & Altschuld, 1995).
- Other researchers have defined need as "a gap—between the real and ideal conditions—that is both acknowledged by community values and potentially amenable to change."
- These authors define values as "ideas about what is good, right, and desirable."
- Values are central to judgment and to behaviour.
- Using the MBTI types, how do different people define need?

3.7 Assessment Process – Research Question
- Before embarking on this process, however, it is critical that the community to be assessed be clearly defined. Geographical, health, social, and/or demographic characteristics may provide the basis for this decision.
- The research question that the needs assessment is to answer must then be clearly defined.
- These two elements will provide the basis for the design of the needs assessment process.

3.8 Pre-Assessment
- During the first phase of the needs assessment process, the pre-assessment, those conducting the assessment will conduct all preliminary planning and background research activities.
- This requires the identification of the data to be collected, the sources of the data, the methods for collecting and analysing the data, and the use of the data after its collection and analysis.
- The pre-assessment phase provides those conducting the assessment with an opportunity to consider such key issues as the cost of conducting the assessment.
- Any special needs of the target population that may have an impact on the methods to be used to collect the data, such as literacy levels or primary language; and the timeline for completion of the assessment.

3.9 Collection of Data & Analysis
- The assessment phase is the second phase of the needs assessment process.
- The focus of this stage is the collection of data and its analysis.
- The methods used for data collection should permit triangulation, defined as the use of different, independent approaches to address research questions.
- Data collection strategies may include, for instance, survey instruments, structured interviews, and secondary data from existing databases.
- Triangulation strengthens the basis for conclusions to be drawn from the study.

3.10 Post-Assessment
- The post-assessment phase is often referred to as an action phase because it requires that the results of the data analysis be put into action.
- This phase is used to determine how the information gathered through the needs assessment process can best be put to use.

One example of the use of a needs assessment process by community health advocates is the needs assessment that is required of communities receiving funds by the federal government under the Ryan White Health Act in the USA.

Each year, communities that receive these funds are required to conduct a needs assessment to determine the needs of HIV infected and affected individuals within their jurisdiction.

These findings are then supposed to be used in setting priorities for the community's expenditure of dollars received under this legislation. Non-profit organisations and community based groups often participate in the process of needs assessment and then advocate for additional funding for their constituents.

4   Advocacy Strategies

- Advocacy requires action, which requires that the social power of the organisations(s) be exercised through public events that are intended and formulated to demonstrate that power.
- Multiple strategies through which that power can be exercised and demonstrated include advocacy through media, through courts, through legislative bodies, and through regulatory processes.
- Greenpeace is an excellent example of how these strategies can be used in concert with each other.
- In its mission statement, Greenpeace declares: "We use research, lobbying, and quiet diplomacy to pursue our goals, as well as high-profile, non-violent conflict to raise the level and quality of public debate."

4.1   Advocating Through the Media

Media advocacy, one of the most common advocacy strategies used to advocate on health-related issues, requires the identification of issues and concerns related to the community wellbeing, an emphasis on the broader context of those concerns, the maintenance of media attention to those concerns, and the provision of "entertainment" to the audience hearing of those concerns.

Examples of successful media advocacy are the use of the media by:

- Treatment Action Campaign in South Africa to raise public awareness regarding the lack of access to adequate care for HIV infected people in that country.
- ACT-UP to focus attention on the inadequacy of HIV related research in the USA and the lack of available treatment worldwide.
- Greenpeace to focus attention on various forms of environmental degradation.
- Dangerous Promises campaign in the USA to protest and reform the use by alcohol advertisers of messages that promote violence against women.

Each of these media campaigns was undertaken to increase public awareness, to enlist public sentiment to support a desired change, and to pressure the target of the campaign to modify its actions in a certain direction.

The issues that provide the focus of the media advocacy must be appropriately framed using sound bites, which are brief, quotable statements; visual images; and social math, which explains statistical data while placing it in a relevant context.

Various strategies can be used to prepare for contact with the media including:

- The development of a Fact Sheet, that briefly conveys the message to be made.
- A Source List, or roster of people who are available to speak competently on the issue to be discussed.
- Talking Points, which is a listing of the main messages to be conveyed.

- A Question and Answer Sheet, which addresses in question and answer format the most commonly raised issues associated with the matter to be discussed.
- A Press List, comprised of all media outlets in a specific geographical area.
- Press releases, meaning a written pitch for a particular issue, should be released to all media contact.
- The press release consists of no more than one page and includes the name and contact information of the media contact person on a particular issue.
- Other strategies that can be used to engage the media include letters to the editors of newspapers and journals, op-ed columns, interviews with reporters, the staging of media events, paid advertising, and public service announcements.

4.2 Using the Courts
- The courts system provides yet another avenue for advocacy efforts.
- The process of filing a lawsuit differs across countries.
- The system in use in the USA is used as an example here because it may be relevant in an international, as well as national, context, as exemplified by the following situation.

4.3 Legislative and Regulatory Advocacy
- Regulatory and legislative advocacy are strategies that are often used by organisations seeking to have their voices heard.
- Although the specific procedures vary depending upon the legal jurisdiction, the strategies are common across countries.
- As an example, in Australia, the Coalition on Food Advertising to Children is seeking more stringent protection of children from food advertising.
- In Ireland, the Broadcasting Commission of Ireland is seeking consultation from interested entities in the development of an advertising code that will provide additional protections for children.
- In the USA, the National Association of Social Workers has been engaging in regulatory and legislative advocacy in an attempt to establish parity for mental health care and to promote child welfare.

4.4 Using Coalitions
- Regardless of which strategies are ultimately used, the development of a coalition may be critical to the success of the advocacy effort.
- "Coalitions are groups of groups with a shared goal and some awareness that 'united we stand, divided we fall'".
- Accordingly, coalitions may consist of groups of community members, groups of organisations, or both.
- Groups participating in a coalition must a shared vision and mission, or intentionality, that is clear to all of the participants and that is directly related to their goals and objectives.
- Organisations participating in the coalitions must have the structure or organisational capacity that will support such efforts, that is, the staff, volunteers, task forces, membership, and leadership, as well as a clear allocation of roles and responsibilities.
- Technical assistance, such as consultation, training, and support for advocacy efforts, may be necessary to enable organisations to build and participate in coalitions.

5 Policy implications

Although many health advocates may not confront such obstacles, it is clear that successful community advocacy requires persistence, dedication, and a long-term vision and investment of energy and monies to effectuate change.

6 Evaluating Advocacy Efforts
- A formative evaluation, also known as formative research, is conducted at the beginning of a programme and focuses on research that must be done to develop a programme or intervention.

- The focus of a process evaluation is to examine the procedures and tasks involved in implementing an effort or programme.
- In contrast, an outcome evaluation focuses on an examination of the value of the programme or effort and whether short term objectives have been achieved.
- An impact evaluation focuses on an examination of whether long term change has resulted from the programme or effort.
- This is the most comprehensive type of evaluation effort.
- The data that are used in an evaluation may be qualitative, resulting from "nonnumerical observations collected systematically through established social science methods," or quantitative, meaning "numeric variables which are either discrete or continuous."

As an example, consider the efforts of ACCEPT in Romania. An evaluation of its strategies and programmes might be structured as follows. A process evaluation could assess the extent to which the organisation has been successful in enlisting the support of other organisations and in forming coalitions to pursue its goals. Short term objectives that could be evaluated in the context of an outcome evaluation could include the passage of new legislation in Romania to reduce discrimination against homosexuals and lesbians. Longer term objectives, to be assessed in the context of an impact evaluation, might involve an examination of the impact of the reform legislation, such as a reduction in the number of arrests and prosecutions of gays and lesbians for sexual activity, a reduction in the number of complaints against the police departments for anti-gay harassment, and the adoption of a more favourable media perspective on the legal reforms.

7   Challenges in Advocating for Wellbeing

Community health advocates may encounter significant obstacles in attempting to effectuate their goals.

One of the major challenges of community health advocacy is finding a way to engage the public in a specific issue.

Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD) in the USA has been notably successful in engaging the media, the public, and legislators in its campaigns to eliminate plea bargaining for drunken driving offences, institute mandatory jail sentences for drunk driving, reclassify alcohol related injuries and death accidents to felonies (major crimes), institute "dram shop" laws holding proprietors of restaurants and bars liable for accidents resulting from serving alcohol to excess, and increase the minimum legal drinking age to 21.

MADD's successes are attributable to a number of factors.

MADD came into being as a non-profit organisation (equivalent to a non-governmental organisation) in August 1980, through the efforts of Candy Lightner, who had lost her 13 year old daughter as the result of a car accident caused by a drunken driver.

At the time of the accident, the driver was on probation for previous incidents of driving while under the influence of alcohol.

Accordingly, MADD used this history from its inception to portray itself as the voice of the victim: the individually harmed victim, who survived an accident at the hands of a drunken driver; the bereaved victim, who had lost a loved one as the result of an individual's drunken driving; and the general community activist, who believed that community involvement was critical to the resolution of social problems and the restoration of justice.

Like MADD, other health advocacy efforts, such as Victims of Child Abuse Laws (VOCAL) in Minnesota in the USA and the International Campaign to Ban Landmines, have successfully used their own personal and professional experiences to persuade others of their moral virtue and the need for policy change.

The timing of MADD's efforts was also critical to its success; MADD's continual emphasis on individual responsibility for one's behaviour and its consequences was consistent with the then prevailing policies and rhetoric of the Reagan administration and the New Right.

Similarly, efforts by the Romanian organisation ACCEPT to reform Romania's laws pertaining to homosexuality, to reduce discrimination against gays and lesbians, and to increase their physical safety may ultimately prove to be successful because the effort coincides with Romanian governmental efforts to gain acceptance into the European Union, which requires greater tolerance of homosexuality as a condition of admission.

- In addition to difficulties that may be encountered in garnering understanding and support for a particular position, community health advocates may face additional barriers and attacks on a systemic level.
- The difficulties encountered by Brazil exemplify the types of obstacles that may confront advocates in the political and legal domains.
- As an example, Brazil was forced to defend against a complaint filed against it by the USA, which claimed that Brazil's efforts to make antiretroviral drugs more widely available to HIV infected people in that country through its patent laws discriminated against US imports of antiretroviral drugs.
- The World Trade Organisation ultimately commissioned a legal dispute panel in an attempt to resolve the grievance.
- Bangladesh also faced political efforts by the USA to halt advocacy efforts in Bangladesh for cheaper essential drugs.
- Attacks may be more direct and personal, however. Gonoshasthaya Kendra, or the People's Health Centre, in Bangladesh was established to train health care workers and to provide care in rural Bangladesh.
- The centre includes a university, a hospital, and a generic drug manufacturing factory.
- For a number of years, the centre's pharmaceutical products were boycotted by the medical profession in Bangladesh.
- In addition, arsonists attacked the factory, injured 84 workers, and attacked the personal residences of the senior managers and workers.

8   Summary

Community advocacy and illustrations of community advocacy by various groups, organisations, and coalitions in an international context.

Important processes and strategies have been identified, as well as potential barriers.

Although many community advocates may not confront such obstacles, it is clear that successful community advocacy requires persistence, dedication, and a long-term vision and investment of energy and monies to effectuate change.

9   References

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