African Health Research Forum Fellowship Program

Leadership Development Learning Modules

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Advocacy and Resource Mobilisation

Advocacy is a process by which we aim to bring about positive change by speaking out. Change may be sought in policies, in practices and in attitudes. Advocacy is integral to health research – both in supporting research findings and in supporting the national research system as a whole.

There are two key ideas to keep in mind as you work through this module:

- ❖ As leaders in African health research, the AfHRF fellows are knowledgeable experts with important contributions to make to advocacy.

- ❖ Advocacy must support the development of sustainable national structures for health research.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. To explore a framework for outlining an advocacy plan and the methods to support such a plan.

2. To consider advocacy as it relates to health research as well as the resources and tools available.

3. To understand the role and importance of advocacy coalitions and the contribution of research to such coalitions.

4. To become familiar with some guides to fund-raising.

KEY MESSAGES

- In advocacy, we must ask ourselves: why are we doing this? What are we going to do? Who is our audience? And who are we working with?

- Advocacy coalitions are an important mechanism to support advocacy efforts as it brings together the strength of individuals and organisations into a collaborative effort. Disadvantages and advantages must be weighed in deciding whether an advocacy coalition is useful.

- Advocating for health research should include a focus on developing national mechanisms for funding and support of research.

- As leaders in African health research, the AfHRF fellows are knowledgeable experts – your expertise and knowledge is vital to different advocacy efforts throughout Africa. It is important that you consider how to contribute this knowledge to advocacy coalitions.

- Advocacy in African health research must go beyond disease focused arguments and highlight health system issues. It requires that we argue for increased funding for research and national health research system development. We must advocate for national funding structures and mechanisms for health research – not simply external donor funding – in order to create sustainable national structures to support research.

DEFINING SOME TERMS

Advocacy has been defined in many ways—here are some examples:

- Advocacy is an action directed at changing the policies, positions or programs of any type of institution.

- Advocacy is speaking up, drawing a community's attention to an important issue, and directing decision makers toward a solution.

- Advocacy is putting a problem on the agenda, providing a solution to that problem and building support for acting on both the problem and solution.

- Advocacy consists of different strategies aimed at influencing decision-making at the organizational, local, provincial, national and international levels.

- Advocacy strategies can include lobbying, social marketing, information, education and communication (IEC), community organizing, or many other tactics.

- Advocacy is the process of people participating in decision-making processes which affect their lives.

From: Sharma R (1997). An introduction to advocacy: training guide. Washington, DC, Support for Analysis and Research in Africa (SARA).

TOPIC 1: A framework for thinking about advocacy

Why advocate?

   We need to think about why we plan to advocate. Generally, advocacy is used when there is an important situation which needs attention and the solution to the situation will only come about by the involvement of multiple actors and stakeholders.

   In considering why advocacy is important we need ask questions such as:
   - What will advocacy add to the process?
   - Will advocacy engage the appropriate stakeholders?

Advocacy About What?

   We must think more specifically as to what we aim to do as an advocate. Are we aiming for a change in policy? Or the creation of a new policy? Do we want a change in practice – a change in a program? Is it increased investment by government/donor/agency in a particular area that we seek? Or are we interested in changing the level of awareness and understanding about an issue in order to change behaviour?

   The central point is to be clear about your objectives and the elements which will make the biggest impact on your issue. Moreover, it is vital that the knowledge and evidence you use in advocating is based on credible and reliable evidence.

   > Your advocacy objective is **what** you want to change, **who** will make the change, by **how much** and **by when**. Generally, the time frame for an advocacy objective will be 1-3 years. An objective is an incremental and realistic step toward a larger goal or your vision; it is not a general goal (e.g. to increase family planning take-up among couples). Rather, the policy advocacy objective must focus on a specific action that an institution can take. An objective should be *specific* and *measurable*.
   >
   > Sharma 1997

Advocacy to Whom?

   There are a number of different audiences for advocacy efforts. To decide which audience or audiences to target through advocacy, one must carefully examine the advocacy objectives. Advocacy audiences include: Decision makers; Donors; Media; Non-governmental Organisations and Civil Society Organisations; Health Practitioners; Corporations and Industry; and the General Public.

Advocacy with Whom?

   Individuals and organizations often join together in coalitions, networks and alliances in order to increase the strength of their advocacy effort. It is important to consider the benefits and trade-offs of joining with others in advocacy work. To learn more about coalitions and networks see AfHRF Module 4 : Coalition and Network Building as well at Topic 2 in this module.

TOPIC 2: Advocacy – the question of how

Stakeholder Mapping

Given the objectives and the audience a stakeholder mapping is a useful process to decide on the appropriate advocacy strategies.

For example, when working to capture the attention of decision makers and policy makers studies have shown that[1]:

- personal contact with policy staff was more effective than distributing printed material
- printed reports should be short and should be written from the perspective of policy-makers, addressing the questions that need answering
- the style of presentation should be clear and compelling, rather than careful and hedging.

In relation to health practitioners, it has been found that advocacy and research transfer strategies which incorporate the following are the most effective[2]:

- educational outreach visits
- reminders (such as computerized reminders to prompt behaviour change)
- interactive educational meetings

Building Advocacy Coalitions

An advocacy coalition can be defined as: *a group of organizations working together in a coordinated fashion toward a common advocacy goal.* The assumption is that, by creating or joining an advocacy coalition, a specific advocacy objective can be achieved more effectively.[3] Research and knowledge have important contributions to make to advocacy coalitions.

However, in considering an advocacy coalition the advantages and disadvantages must be weighed. Advantages may include: coalitions enlarge the base of support; they provide a method to pool resources and share the workload; they may provide better financial stability to the effort; finally, they may increase the credibility of the campaign. However, disadvantages may include: the requirement for compromise on positions and issues; the unequal power distribution among all coalition members; the work of the coalition may pull away from members other work; and the sustainability of the coalition may affect the long term advocacy goals.

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[1] Granados A et al. (1997). EUR-ASSESS project subgroup report on dissemination and impact. International Journal of Technology Assessment in Health Care, 13(2):220-286.

[2] Grimshaw J et al. (2001). Changing provider behaviour: an overview of systematic reviews of interventions. *Medical Care*, 39 (Supplement 2):II-2-II-45.

[3] AHPSR, COHRED, GFHR, INCLEN Trust. 2004. Module III - Promoting the use of knowledge in policy and practice: Unit 3 – Advocacy – a new skill for the research community. Collaborative Training Program - Health Research for Policy, Action and Practice, Resource Modules. Available at: http://www.alliance-hpsr.org/jahia/Jahia/pid/207

TOPIC 3: Advocacy for health research

When controlling for income, studies have shown that major health improvements globally may be linked to the advancement of knowledge and its ability to develop powerful interventions as well as guide behaviour. *The acquisition and use of health research and development or its products becomes, then, an essential function of a country's health system*.[4] The Disease Control Priorities Project argues that if gains in knowledge prove even partially as important for future health improvements as they have in the past century then investments in health research and development will continue to have high payoffs in health status and economic productivity. Thus knowledge will continue to function as a driver of good health.

Recently, Pang and others put forward the 15th grand challenge for global public health relating to the use of knowledge to strengthen health systems.[5] The challenge they set forth asks how we can better apply what is known in order to bridge the gap between knowing and doing. Turning knowledge into action requires the translation of knowledge into useful interventions as well as the translation of knowledge into health decision-making and action.[6] Moreover, it requires a supportive national infrastructure to fund research and knowledge sharing, manage existing knowledge and build the capacity of researchers, policy makers and practitioners in order to bridge the gap. Bridging the gap is vital to ensure that cost-effective, equitable and high-quality interventions replace those which are ineffective or inefficient and thus help to strengthen health systems.

EXERCISE 1

Given the need to foster and advocate a national health research system including methods to fund and support research, consider how you would approach health research as an issue for advocacy. Using Topics 1 and 2 consider these questions:

1. Why is advocacy important in strengthening national health research?
2. Is there a particular issue or area within national health research upon which you would focus? (eg. Funding structures/policies for use of research in policy making/a content area such as Malaria or TB)
3. Who would you target in this planned advocacy and how?
4. Who would you work with and how would you partner with them?
5. What are some of the strategies which would be most effective with the audience you identified in Question 4? Why would they be most effective?
6. If you created an advocacy coalition, which key players would be included? What would each member bring to the coalition? What would be the key challenges in working with such a coalition?

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[4] Jamison DT. 2006. Investing in Health – Chapter 1. IN: Jamison DT, JG Breman, AR Measham et al. (eds) 2006. Disease Control Priorities in developing countries, 2nd edition. New York: Oxford University Press, 2006.
[5] Pang et al. 2006. A 15th grand challenge for global public health. The Lancet 367:284-286
[6] Pang et al. 2004. From Bangkok to Mexico: towards a framework for turning knowledge into action to improve health systems. Bulletin of the World Health Organisation 82(10):720-721

TOPIC 4: Obtaining finances for health research - a guide

There are a number of resources available to explore in order to resource and support health research as well as advocacy.

Writing for Change
International Development Research Centre
This resource teaches the key skills needed to write effectively for both scientific publication and advocacy. Using practical exercises and examples, the authors have created a tool which will build capacity in writing and promoting action through writing.

>   Available at: http://www.idrc.ca/IMAGES/books/WFC_English/WFC_English/
>   In French at: http://www.idrc.ca/IMAGES/books//WFC_French//WFC_French/
>   In Spanish at: http://www.idrc.ca/IMAGES/books/WFC_Spanish/WFC_Spanish/

Proposals that Make a Difference
FAHAMU
This tool was developed for NGOs originally as a training tool to effective proposal writing and development. The tool is written from both sides of the proposal world: grant writing and grant reviewing.

>   The CD-ROM is available from the FAHAMU website:
>   http://www.fahamu.org/proposals.php

Learning for Change
FAHAMU
This is a series of eight courses provided in conjunction with the University of Oxford. Two in particular which may be of interest are:
  ❖ Fundraising and Resource Mobilisation
  ❖ Using the Internet for Research and Advocacy

>   Available at: http://www.fahamu.org/courses.php

Funding Road Map
The Canadian Coalition for Global Health Research
This roadmap provides detail on funding streams and mechanisms within Canada – which could be explored through partnership with Canadian researchers and organizations. The map describes research funding, project funding and training opportunities in global health.

>   Available at:
>   http://www.ccghr.ca/default.cfm?content=funding_roadmap&lang=e&subnav=r
>   oadmap

>   In French at:
>   http://www.ccghr.ca/default.cfm?lang=f&content=funding_roadmap&subnav=ro
>   admap

ILLUSTRATIVE STORIES FROM AFRICA

From Abuja to Accra
Advocating for Health Research in Africa

Knowledge acts as a driver of good health – we know this – yet knowledge for health and development requires the engagement and investment of African countries in health research.

"The timing is now right for African countries most affected by diseases of poverty, and other developing countries, to assert a greater interest in the international health research agenda as it applies to their development and, through both national and international investment, to increase their stakeholdership in shaping and undertaking research in this area."

With this in mind, in June 2006 a High Level Meeting on Health Research by Ministers from Africa as well as other Developing Countries was convened in Accra, Ghana. This meeting was preceded by a High Level Meeting on Health Research by African Ministers in Abuja, Nigeria in March 2006.

- The Abuja Meeting had the objectives of preparing the African perspective on health research for the Accra meeting. The participants and audience at this meeting were primarily government ministers, decision makers and policy makers.

- The Accra meeting aimed to bring a wider international perspective on health research together with the specific ideas, strategies and perspectives on African health research developed at the Abuja meeting.

The overall intent of the entire process – as with other High Level Meetings – was to draw attention to the importance of health research for development and to work toward a process by which developing countries are able to participate in the international research agenda setting process.

The particular structure of this set of meetings, with a preparatory meeting in Abuja, fostered discussion among African leaders and the development of an African position and cohesive perspective on health research. The process allowed the participation of different groups advocating for health research. Decision-makers and policy makers participated in the Ministerial sessions, knowledge experts and researchers participated in technical meetings which flanked the Abuja meeting.

The central advocates in this process have been the Federal Ministry of Health, Nigeria and the Ministry of Health Ghana; represented by the Honourable Professor Eiytayo Lambo Federal Minister of Health Nigeria and the Honorable Major Courage Quashigah, Minister of Health Ghana.

To read more, visit: http://www.hlmresearchdev.org/

LEARNING MODULE MINI-ASSIGNMENT

Together with your Fellowship Team, write an 'op ed' or short piece for a local newspaper or a 'policy brief'. Focus your piece on the reasons why government should invest in health research.

There are several areas within government investment in health research on which you can focus; examples include: the need for a national health research fund; the need for a national meeting on health research; the need for a coordinating body for health research nationally.

As you plan and prepare the piece, you may want to consider these questions:

- Who are you aiming to convince with the piece? Politicians? The general public? NGOs? Donors?

- What would your audience be most interested in? What is the 'hook' of your argument?

- How will you ground your piece in current evidence and knowledge?

- What methods will you use after your publication in order to maintain the momentum generated by the publication?

ANNOTATED READINGS

Brugha R, Varvasovszky Z. 2000. Stakeholder analysis: a review. Health Policy and Planning, 15(3):239-246

- ⋄ This paper reviews the origins and uses of stakeholder analysis, as described in the policy, health care management and development literature. Stakeholder analysis can be used to generate knowledge about the relevant actors so as to understand their behaviour, intentions, interrelations, agendas, interests, and the influence or resources they have brought — or could bring — to bear on decision-making processes.

Harrison, D. 2001. Chapter 3: Health Research: An Essential Tool for Achieving Development through Equity. IN: Neufeld V, Johnson N (eds). Forging Links for Health Research. International Development Research Centre.

- ⋄ This chapter reviews recent thinking about health, development, and research. In particular, it considers the application of knowledge as central to global development. Harrison states: "People who used to talk about "established market economies" are now talking about "knowledge-based economies" — a change that goes beyond semantics. The use of knowledge is now regarded as the dominant factor of production in rich countries, surpassing even physical capital…In this context, research (as the basis for knowledge production) assumes even greater importance than envisaged by the Commission in 1990. It is more than just a strategic tool for effecting improvements in health; it is now the driving force behind all development."

Sharma R (1997). An introduction to advocacy: training guide. Washington, DC, Support for Analysis and Research in Africa (SARA).

- ⋄ This training guide was prepared using the experience derived from an analysis of several USAID projects in Africa. Among the intended users of this guide are "researchers interested in promoting their findings". The guide identifies nine basic elements of advocacy, devoting a chapter to each element. The tools in the guide include exercises (for individuals and groups), case-studies, definitions and examples. Available at: http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PNABZ919.pdf

TOOLS AND RESOURCES

1. Health Research: Powerful Advocate for Health and Development based on Equity – A COHRED Issues Paper.

   This paper seeks to better equip those who promote and advocate health and development based on equity. It describes how health research can be a powerful instrument to reach that goal. The paper proposes three ways to make research effective, namely to put countries first, work for equity in health, and link research to action for development. The annex of the Document provides a

self-assessment questionnaire meant to help determine whether country and donor investments in health research are being used effectively. It is meant to assist in reflecting on the important aspects of a health research strategy, and to develop concrete plans for building on strengths and addressing weaknesses.

COHRED. 2000. Health Research: Powerful Advocate for Health and Development based on Equity. COHRED Issues Paper. COHRED Document 2000.2, March 2000. Available at: http://cohred.org/cohred/RenderDocument.action?DocumentId=2627&CategoryId=2423

2. Collaborative Training Program Module: Advocacy – a new skill for the research community.

This module provides a view of advocacy in the context of interaction between those involved in the production (generation) of health research and those who use it, considering that both have a shared desire to improve health situations. It provides an introduction to advocacy challenges and strategies in this context, and gives linkages and references for further study.

AHPSR, COHRED, GFHR, INCLEN Trust. 2004. Module III - Promoting the use of knowledge in policy and practice: Unit 3 – Advocacy – a new skill for the research community. Collaborative Training Program - Health Research for Policy, Action and Practice, Resource Modules. Available at: http://www.alliance-hpsr.org/jahia/Jahia/pid/207

3. International HIV/AIDS Alliance : NGO Support Toolkit.

This toolkit was designed to assist NGOs in key areas such as strategic planning, monitoring and evaluation, and institutional change. Within their material on institutional change, the Alliance has put together a number of resources related to advocacy, including:
   ◦ Advocacy: Building Skills for NGO leaders
   ◦ Monitoring and Evaluating Advocacy
   ◦ Getting the Message Right
   ◦ Participative Advocacy

Available at: http://www.aidsalliance.org/sw17212.asp

4. World Health Organisation: Roll Back Malaria Advocacy Guide.

This guide discusses advocacy in relation to the Roll Back Malaria campaign. It presents the current knowledge and evidence of malaria and its treatment and then provides information and strategies on planning your message, engaging the media and mobilising others.

Available at:
http://rbm.who.int/cmc_upload/0/000/012/558/advocacy_report.pdf

5. Proposal Writing Toolkits

These series of tool kits present strategies and methods for proposal writing and preparing funding proposals.

Proposal Writing and Fundraising Toolkit
Global Development Network
http://www.gdnet.org/middle.php?oid=363

Proposal Writing Short Course
The Foundation Center
http://foundationcenter.org/getstarted/tutorials/shortcourse/index.html
Also available in French and Spanish.

Proposal Budgeting Basics
The Foundation Center
http://foundationcenter.org/getstarted/tutorials/prop_budgt/index.html
Also available in French and Spanish.

What did you think of the module?

Evaluation and Feedback

Please send us your comments on this module as well as suggestions and ideas.

Comments can be sent to:

- Mutuma Mugambi (AfHRF co-director): mugambi@africaonline.co.ke
- Vic Neufeld (AfHRF co-director): neufeld@mcmaster.ca