Tools for Policy Impact:
A Handbook for Researchers

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1. Background

Civil society organisations are increasingly recognising the need to influence policy and decision-making processes more effectively, whether that be to represent the needs of their interest groups, or to ensure that new policies are based on sound research and evidence. This is not least true for think tank bodies. The number of think tanks worldwide has expanded rapidly over the last two decades as government becomes more receptive to evidence-based policy solutions and seeks new solutions in rapidly changing political environments. Think tank-like organisations continue to spring up all across the world, as off-shoots of university departments, programme evaluation and policy divisions of NGOs, or independent consultancies. What they all have in common is a wish to capture the political imagination; they aim to use their *insight* to have political *impact*. This handbook addresses various factors that need to be considered in this process, and provides a comprehensive selection of tools that can be used when attempting to turn research into policy influence. This work will be developed further within the RAPID programme at ODI.

1.1 Bridging research and policy: The RAPID programme

The Overseas Development Institute, as part of its Research and Policy in Development (RAPID) programme, has been looking at the links between research and policy for several years. It is now beginning a process of identifying, developing, distributing and delivering tools, resources and training support that can help research providers access the policy process. This handbook presents work in progress on tools for policy impact, specifically geared towards the needs of researchers.

Overall, the RAPID programme aims to improve the use of research and evidence in development policy and practice through research, advice and debate. The programme has four main themes:

- The use of evidence in policy identification, development and implementation;
- Improving communication and information systems for development agencies;
- How better knowledge management can enhance the impact of development agencies;
- Promotion and capacity building for evidence-based policy.

Further information is available on the RAPID website (www.odi.org.uk/rapid).

1.2 Target audience

The handbook is particularly targeted at civil society organisations, or the parts of them, whose activities involve gathering evidence, doing research, learning lessons or advising on strategy for social, environmental and economic development in the North and South. We could call them evidence-based development civil society organisations, but refer to them as think tanks as a shorthand.

This group might include organisations more used to interest-group campaigning and advocacy (e.g. for the rights of landless labourers), but who have a rich source of knowledge on the issue that they wish to communicate to policy in a constructive and co-operative influencing style – in contrast to more confrontational strategies. The group might equally include research institutes and university departments who have a large body of research but have difficulty packaging it for policy-makers. All these organisations have important insight yet many of them are not

experienced in policy influencing skills, and do not have access to tools, resources or training materials to help them reach this goal.

2. Why is this handbook important?

2.1 The role of CSOs in policy processes: enlarging the democratic space

The changing nature of the international development context has led to an increasing emphasis on the crucial – and as yet not fully utilised – role of civil society organisations (CSOs) in poverty reduction policy. Experience has shown that when CSOs are able to assemble and communicate information effectively, there is a significant and pro-poor impact on policy. The role of civil society is at the moment especially relevant to the large-scale development efforts around democratisation, where strong CSOs are among the 'drivers' for democratic change, and PRSPs, where CSOs can potentially play a vital part in the planning process – and in the immediate response phase.

2.2 The role of CSOs in the South

Although there is widespread agreement that the policy role of CSOs is a key issue within development today, one of the emerging problems is the question of how to enable CSOs to play this role; it will not happen automatically. ODI's research and experience so far suggests that CSOs in the South will be more able to engage with the policy processes of their government and of international institutions if they have a good understanding of how policy processes work; they have the capacity to generate high-quality relevant research or have access to such research e.g. through research/practitioner networks; they are able to access and participate in Southern and Northern policy networks; and they are able to communicate their concerns in an effective and credible manner.

This list, with its focus on Southern CSOs, reflects the changing role of Northern development and research institutions in the current context. Development institutions today need to focus not just on service provision and technical skills, but also on the way knowledge is distributed and used – especially in capacity building efforts. Northern CSOs and institutions have a new role to play in supporting and strengthening the capacity of Southern CSOs to engage with national and global decision-making. As DFID's Research Policy Paper points out:

> 'The evidence suggests that the capacity of developing countries to generate, acquire, assimilate and utilise knowledge will form a crucial part of their strategies to reduce poverty' (Surr et al 2002).

The ability to manage knowledge about development effectively is not only relevant to CSOs in the South. Northern development NGOs are increasingly called on to do analytical work based on evidence from the South, and to add value to policy debates both nationally and internationally. Yet experience indicates that NGO programme managers and policy officers are under perennial time and funds pressure to move quickly from concept to implementation, with less space than they would wish for undertaking comprehensive research to strengthen their evidence or undertaking analysis on how to influence policy effectively.

2.3 The particular role of think tanks

The growth of think tanks

Think tanks are becoming an increasingly marked feature of the CSO institutional landscape. There has been a veritable proliferation of these bodies since the 1970s. Two thirds of all the think

tanks that exist today were established after 1970 and over half were established since 1980. In regions such as Africa, Eastern Europe, Central Asia and parts of Southeast Asia, think tanks are a more recent phenomenon, with most of the institutions being created in just the last 10 years. Today there are more than 4,000 think tanks around the world, in almost every country that has more than a few million inhabitants and at least a modicum of intellectual freedom (McGann 2001).

The remarkable growth of think tanks has been propelled by several different forces, including an increased demand for information and analysis, the increased recognition of the importance of civil society in promoting democracy, improved communications technologies, and the globalisation of think tank funding – especially from the advanced industrial countries to support the development of civil society organisations in the developing and transitional economies (McGann 2001, Stone 2000b).

Perhaps because of the recent rise of these organizations, the literature is relatively sparse (Abelson 2002a).

> 'Policy research institutes and think tanks are a neglected phenomenon in the social science literature. Yet, think tanks are emerging in such large numbers around the world that questions need to be asked regarding the reasons for their emergence and international spread, the ways in which they seek to influence policy-makers, and how they interact in global society…The lack of attention to think tanks illuminates the biases of social scientists as much as it reflects the late development and characteristics of these organisations.' (Stone 2000a)

Much of the literature and analysis is American in origin. The term itself originated in the US, and the US environment has proved highly conducive to the growth and diversification of this type of institution. The US political system, coupled with the availability of generous funding streams through foundations, has allowed a wide range of American think tanks to evolve over the last few decades.

> 'With a government based on separate branches sharing power, a party system in which members of Congress are free to vote as they wish, and a growing number of presidential candidates trying to develop new ideas, [American] think tanks have multiple opportunities to shape public opinion and public policy' (Abelson 2002a).

The problem of definition

Abelson treats think tanks as:

> 'Non-profit, non-partisan (which does not mean non-ideological), research-oriented institutes among whose primary objectives is to influence public opinion and public policy.' (Abelson 2002b).

Stone emphasises the difference between think tanks and civil society more generally:

> 'The term 'think tank' is used here to mean independent (and usually private) policy research institutes containing people involved in studying a particular policy area or a broad range of policy issues, actively seeking to educate or advise policy makers and the public through a number of channels. This paper avoids identifying think tanks as a sub-category of nongovernmental organisation (NGO). Instead, the broader term 'non-state actor' has been adopted. In many cases think tanks are quasi-governmental or quasi-academic and lack the independence and connections to civil society usually associated with NGOs.' (Stone 2000b)

> '…think tanks are found at the intersection of academia and politics, and they often seek to make connection between ideas and policy. Think tanks have one thing in common: the individuals in them attempt to make academic theories and scientific paradigms policy-relevant.' (Stone 2000b)

Given the difficulty of definition, many scholars have instead resigned themselves to identifying major waves or periods of think tank growth – again, particularly in the US.

Four generations of think tanks

The first major generation of think tanks was foreign policy research institutes. In the US, these began to emerge in the early twentieth century, largely as a result of the desire of leading philanthropists and intellectuals to create institutions where scholars and leaders from the public and private sectors could congregate to discuss and debate world issues.

> 'These and other think tanks created during the first decades of the twentieth century were committed to applying their scientific expertise to a host of policy issues. Functioning, in the words of Brookings scholar Kent Weaver, as "universities without students." Although scholars from these institutions occasionally provided advice to policy makers when they were first established, their primary goal was not to directly influence policy decisions, but to help educate and inform policy makers and the public about the potential consequences of pursuing a range of foreign policy options. In part, the willingness of policy research-oriented think tanks to remain detached from the political process stemmed from their commitment to preserving their intellectual and institutional independence, something many contemporary think tanks have been prepared to sacrifice.' (Abelson 2002b).

The second major generation of think tanks, in the aftermath of World War II, functioned as government research contractors, and responded to the need for independent advice. These were policy research institutions largely funded by government departments and agencies, whose research was intended to address specific concerns of policy makers.

The third major generation was the rise of the advocacy think tanks. No other type of think tank has generated more media exposure in the last three decades.

> 'Combining policy research with aggressive marketing techniques, a function they share in common with many interest groups, advocacy-oriented think tanks have fundamentally altered the nature and role of the think tank community. As the US think tank industry has become more competitive, most think tanks have come to realise the importance of capturing the attention of the public and the minds of policy makers.' (Abelson 2002b).

The most recent type of think tank to emerge in the foreign policymaking community is what some have referred to as 'legacy-based.' Legacy-based think tanks are think tanks created by former presidents intent on leaving a lasting legacy on foreign and domestic policy. They produce a wide range of publications, hold seminars and workshops, and conduct research in a number of policy areas (Abelson 2002b).

The unique influencing position of think tanks in the policy environment

Think tanks occupy a particular niche within civil society, and face their own particular challenges when it comes to policy influence. The private sector and powerful interest groups have been adept at lobbying for centuries. The lobbying and public affairs professions are also well developed. Similarly, a recent surge of resource kits and training programmes have been produced for campaign and activist groups. There are well developed bodies of knowledge on communications, media relations and public relations. While all of these are, in general, helpful for think tanks, none of them are geared specifically towards think tank needs.

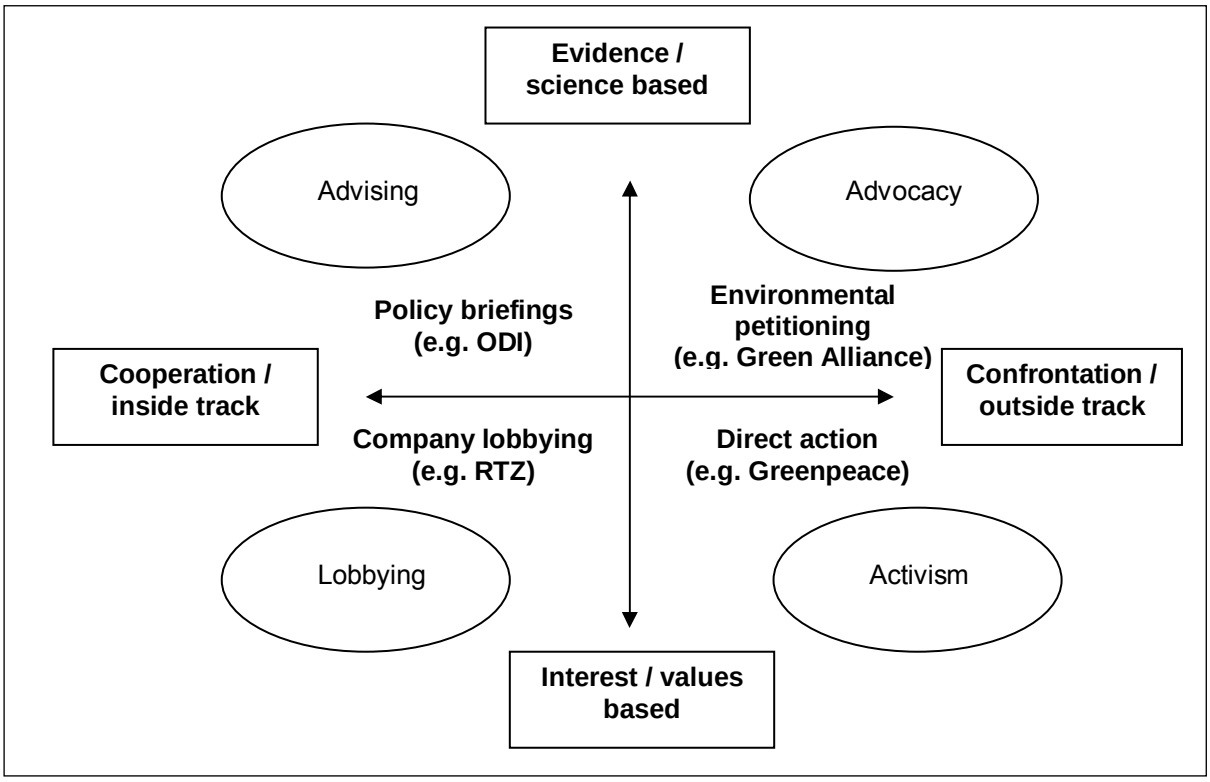
The style of high-profile, confrontational strategies of activists and public campaigners, although often backed up by sound research and evidence, does not suit the think tank that often prefers to work collaboratively with policy makers to feed through new ideas and lead 'from the front',

creatively and constructively. Equally the more subtle co-operative approaches of corporate lobbyists and coalition builders are not relevant to think tanks who are concerned less by private gain and more by public good. The think tank's practice of advocacy is a gentle art which is proactive, but not so much that it conflicts or manipulates. Advocacy for intellectuals does not compromise scientific independence or objective opinion, yet it goes out and sells its ideas and does not sit in its ivory towers. This is a difficult balance to maintain. Seeing all sides of an argument means there can be too little conviction to package and promote any one idea. Too little objectivity, and credibility is quickly lost.

Therefore, only some of the influencing techniques and approaches in use are directly appropriate to think tank work, yet many can be adapted to improve think tank impact. Two important dimensions to consider in this respect include the balance between confrontation and cooperation, and rational evidence versus value or interest-based argument, as presented in Figure 1. These create four categories of policy influence strategy, which could be typologised as: advising, advocacy, lobbying and activism.

Confrontation is usually the method of advocacy and activism strategies. It seeks to obtain change via pressure and seeks to point out problems rather than offer solutions. It works from the outside, rather than gaining an inside track in policy communities. Cooperation – the practice favoured by advising and lobbying – aims to build constructive, working relations with policy makers in order to develop solutions to complex problems. Both are effective and important ways of bringing about policy change. Both the carrot and the stick will create movement, and both are usually present in most forms of change. But it is difficult for one organisation to do both and, on the whole, think tanks usually lean away from confrontation and towards cooperation.

Figure 1: Tools and organisations on the cooperation/evidence axes



The reason for this relates to the second axis: rational evidence versus value or interest-based argument. Think tanks tend to operate by proposing change based on research. Their causes tend to be rooted in academic inquiry, and their credibility lies in the objective and scientific approach. As a result, researchers within think tanks can often see all sides of an argument, and don't like to push any one view for fear of being viewed as dogmatic.

James (2000) also draws up a third axis of relevance to think tanks, namely the axis that runs from the direct approach of lobbying government to adopt a particular policy on the one hand, and the indirect approach of seeking to change the framework and content of public debate on a question on the other hand, or simply alerting public and expert opinion to the issue, thereby changing policy makers' frame of reference.

> 'in essence think tanks have a clear strategic idea of what they want from government: they want to change its mind. The rest is tactical…' (James 2000).

The means through which they can influence policy are limited, however. First, they can rarely elicit and mobilise the support of members of the public or of interest groups in the way that an advocacy organisation can, because the think tank then risks becoming too political and populist, and too identified with a single issue. Second, think tanks often try to avoid being confrontational, as opposed to activist and campaigning organisations, because this would jeopardise its image of constructive and collaborative problem-solving. Third, a think tank rarely has the financial independence that would enable it to carry the kinds of lobbying and (advertising) campaigning that large companies, interest group bodies or political parties can engage in.

2.4 The role of evidence in international development: working towards pro-poor policy

Various theoretical approaches have attempted to provide answers to the questions of how policy is made and to what extent research and evidence is incorporated into the policy process. The traditional question on this topic was based on the model of a linear and rational progression, and could be phrased: 'How can research be transported from the research to the policy sphere?' Now, however, the shortcomings of the linear model are widely recognised, and the question that is asked instead concerns research uptake pathways: 'Why are some of the ideas that circulate in the research/policy networks picked up and acted on, while others are ignored and disappear?' Or, to phrase it from the perspective of those engaged in research: 'How can we market our ideas so that they are noticed? What do we have to do to influence policy in a pro-poor and evidence-based direction?'

The 'context, evidence, links' framework

ODI's framework for analysing research-policy linkages acknowledges that the answer to these questions seems to lie in a combination of several determining influences, which can broadly be divided into three areas: (i) The political *context*; (ii) The *evidence*, and how it is communicated, and (iii) The *links* between the actors involved (Crewe and Young 2002).

Context: *politics and institutions*

The research/policy link is shaped by the political context. In some cases the political strategies and power relations are obvious, and are tied to the specific institutional pressures that policymakers face. The degree of political contestation is important. In most cases the wider political context also plays a part – for example, the end of the Cold War was a contextual factor that strongly influenced shifts in policy thinking within international development.

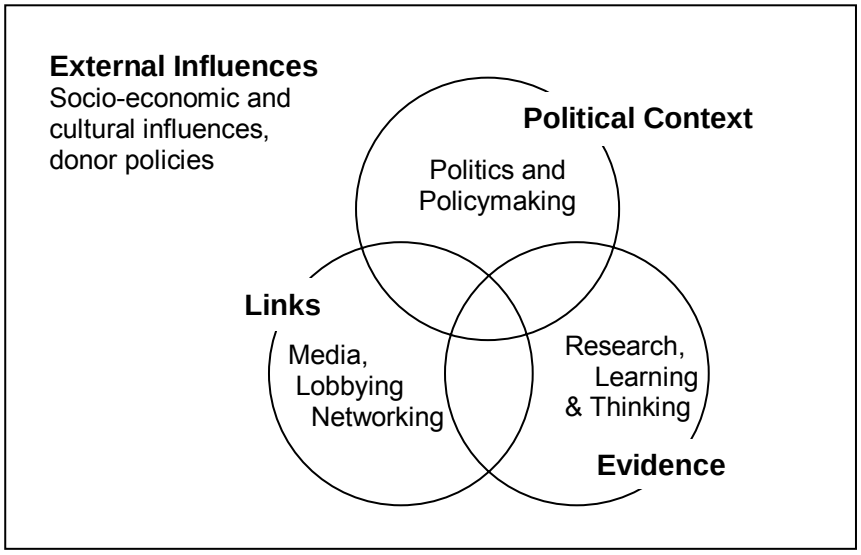
Evidence: *credibility and communication*

The degree of attention paid to circulating ideas is also determined by the way that those ideas are presented. There are many academic fields that provide interesting contributions in this regard, including the literature on interpersonal communication, advocacy and marketing communication, media communication and information technology, and knowledge management and research relevance. Whether or not a circulating idea is able to elicit an engaged response from actors depends on a range of factors, such as the perceived credibility of the source, the way the idea is communicated, the language used, the layout, and the timing.

Links: *influence and legitimacy*

The research/policy link is played out in the interface between the surrounding (political) structure and the actors involved: networks, organisations/institutions, and individuals. Actors may interact through official policy working groups, or through loose networks of likeminded people who are interested in sharing ideas. The links between them may be formal or informal.

Figure 2: The 'context, evidence, links' framework



3. Structure and objectives

3.1 Adapting the 'context, evidence, links' model into an operational planning framework

The RAPID framework was designed as a theoretical model, geared towards highlighting to the researcher the different factors that are important in the policy process. However, it also lends itself well to a project planning framework. Evidence from ODI's work so far provides preliminary recommendations in four areas, which are laid out in Table 1.

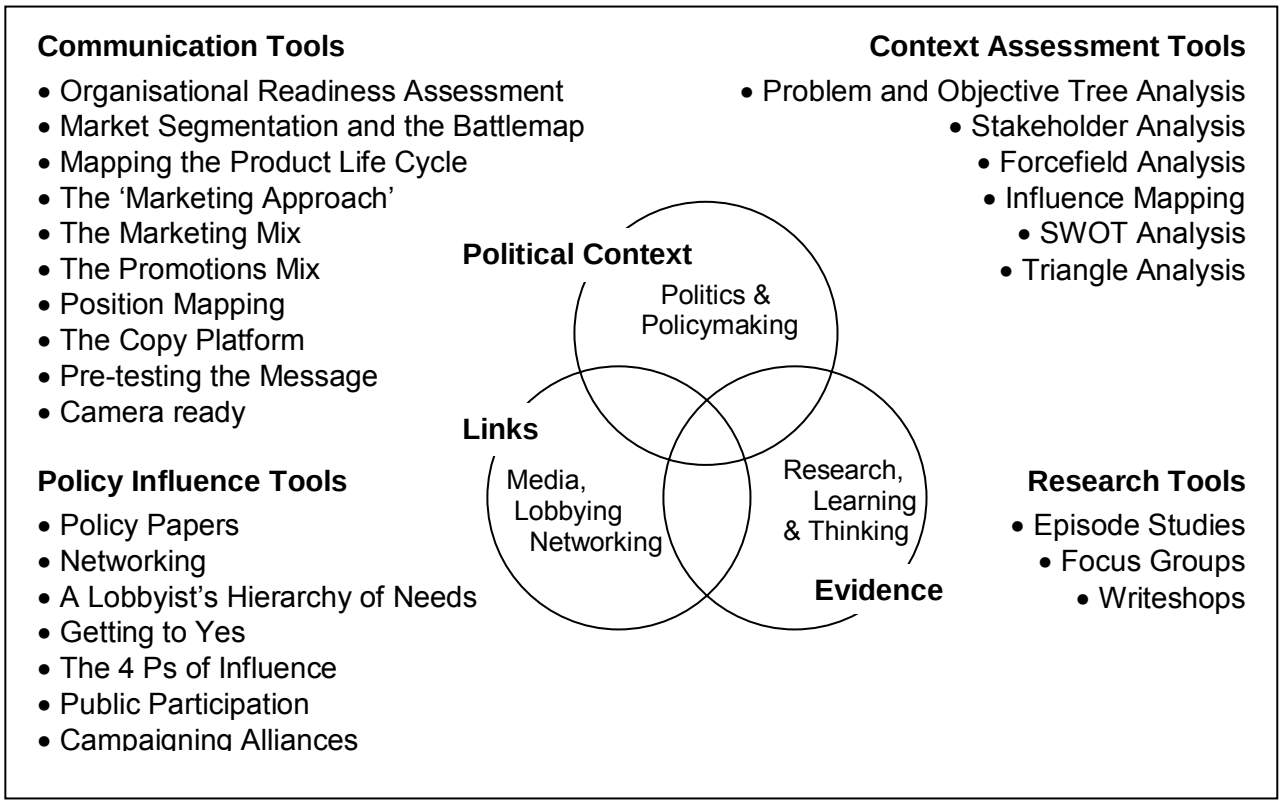
Table 1: How to influence policy and practice

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

3.2 Overview of the tools

The tools that are included in this handout have been presented with the 'context, evidence, links' framework in mind. Tools related to research come first, thereafter context assessment tools and communication tools, and finally, we round off with policy influence tools. An overview is provided in Figure 3. This overview is not meant to be all-inclusive; there are several other tools available – for example within the communications field or knowledge management field – that would complement the policy influencing tools presented here (see e.g. the RAPID website, www.odi.org.uk/rapid, for an overview of these fields).

Figure 3: Overview of the tools



Turning research into policy influence: Tool sheets

Episode Studies

Introduction

Episode studies are an excellent way of investigating the influence of research on policy. Episode studies refer to a study that focuses on a clear policy change and tracks back to assess what impact research had among the variety of issues that led to the policy change. They could be focusing on a single episode or comparative episodes.

Many studies of research impact start from a particular piece of research as the starting point and then follows the various impacts of this forwards over time. This can be useful (see tools on Research Utilization and Bibliometric Techniques), but tracking forward probably overemphasizes the importance of research vis a vis other factors. The crucial advantage of using an episode or tracer study is that the process of working backwards in time gives a more realistic view of the broad range of factors – other than research – that influence policy.

Detailed Outline of Process

The first step is to identify a clear policy change.

The next step is to identify your key Research Questions related to the issue – generally regarding what influenced policy change and what was the relative role of research. This process could draw on the RAPID framework.

Each episode study will need to construct an historical narrative leading up to the observed policy change in question. This involves creating a timeline of key policy decisions and practices, along with important documents and events, and identifying key actors.

The next step is to explore how and why those policy decisions and practices took place, and to assess the relative role of research in that process by drawing on the framework. In the RAPID episode studies, this was done through a variety of methods:

- review of the literature;
- interviews with key actors;
- capturing the authors' own experience; and
- discussions at workshops.

Since policy processes are complex, multi-layered and change over time, it is difficult to identify the key factors that caused policy to change (or not) and isolate the impact of research. The standard challenges of unconscious selection of informants are common to case studies. There is a certain risk that actors may 're-write history' after a time lapse of a few years, and in the light of the perceived failure or success of the policy in question.

It is important to seek the views of a wide range of informed stakeholders. It is also important that the process of preparing an episode study is iterative; key facts and / or inconsistencies need to be cross-checked with key informants.

A Good Example

The PRSP Initiative: Multilateral Policy Change and the Relative Role of Research

In September 1999, the World Bank and IMF adopted a new approach to aid – the Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSP) initiative. A PRSP is a document that sets out an analysis of poverty in a country and defines the national strategy on how the government is going to reduce it. They are important because preparation of a PRSP by low income countries are an eligibility criteria for debt relief and concessional lending from the World Bank and IMF. How did the idea of the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) come to be adopted? What was the role of research in this process – both 'academic research' in general and the 'applied policy research' within the World Bank and IMF? This episode study traces the emergence of the PRSP initiative and the various factors, including the role and relative influence of research, that contributed to this far-reaching policy shift. (http://www.odi.org.uk/RAPID/Publications/RAPID_WP_216.htm)

Further Information

RAPID has applied the approach to four case studies of policy change. The case studies were developed separately by their authors, but the same basic process was followed in each case and there were regular meetings to report and discuss the findings.

- Young, J. Kajume, J. Wanyama, J. (2003) Animal Health Care in Kenya: The Road to Community-Based Animal Health Service Delivery, *ODI Working Paper* 214. http://www.odi.org.uk/RAPID/Publications/RAPID_WP_214.htm
- Christiansen, K with Hovland, I (2003) The PRSP Initiative: Multilateral Policy Change and the Relative Role of Research, *ODI Working Paper* 216. http://www.odi.org.uk/RAPID/Publications/RAPID_WP_216.htm
- Buchanan-Smith, M. (2003) How the Sphere Project Came into Being: A Case Study of Policy-making in the Humanitarian Aid Sector and the Relative Influence of Research, *ODI Working Paper* 215. http://www.odi.org.uk/RAPID/Publications/RAPID_WP_215.htm
- Solesbury, W. (2003) Sustainable Livelihoods: A Case Study of the Evolution of DFID Policy, *ODI Working Paper* 217. http://www.odi.org.uk/RAPID/Publications/RAPID_WP_217.htm

Focus Group Discussion

Introduction

A focus group discussion (FGD) is a good way to gather together people from similar backgrounds or experiences to discuss a specific topic of interest. The group of participants is guided by a moderator (or group facilitator) who introduces topics for discussion and helps the group to participate in a lively and natural discussion amongst themselves.

The strength of FGD relies on allowing the participants to agree or disagree with each other so that it provides an insight into how a group thinks about an issue, about the range of opinion and ideas, and the inconsistencies and variation that exists in a particular community in terms of beliefs and their experiences and practices.

FGDs can be used to explore the meanings of survey findings that cannot be explained statistically, the range of opinions/views on a topic of interest and to collect a wide variety of local terminology. In bridging research and policy, FGD can be useful in providing an insight into different opinions among different parties involved in the change process, thus enabling the process to be managed more smoothly. It is also a good method to employ prior to designing questionnaires.

Detailed Outline of Process

FGD sessions need to be prepared carefully through identifying the main objective(s) of the meeting, developing key questions, developing an agenda, and planning how to record the session.

The next step is to identify and invite suitable discussion participants; the ideal number is between six and eight.

The crucial element of FGD is the facilitation. Some important points to bear in mind in facilitating FGDs are to ensure even participation, careful wording of the key questions, maintaining a neutral attitude and appearance, and summarising the session to reflect the opinions evenly and fairly.

A detailed report should be prepared after the session is finished. Any observations during the session should be noted and included in the report.

FGDs can be also done online. This is particularly useful for overcoming the barrier of distance. While discussion is constrained, the written format can help with reporting on the discussion.

Further Information

A simple and useful starting point, with a basic description of the use and methodology of FGD for project evaluation purposes, can be seen at:
http://www.ucc.ie/hfrg/projects/respect/urmethods/focus.htm

Textbooks for conducting FGD are available, such as:

- Krueger, R.A. (1988) Focus Groups: A practical guide for applied research. Sage, UK.
- Morgan, D.L. (1988) Focus Group as qualitative research. Sage, UK.
- Stewart, D.W. and Shamdasani, P.N. (1990) Focus Groups: Theory and Practices. Sage, UK.

There are a number of sites that provide detailed step-by-step guides on how to conduct FGD for research and education purposes. These include:

- http://www.soc.surrey.ac.uk/sru/SRU19.html
- http://www.mapnp.org/library/evaluatn/focusgrp.htm
- http://www.scu.edu.au/schools/gcm/ar/arp/focus.html
- http://www.unu.edu/unupress /food2/UIN03E/uin03e03.htm
- http://edf5481-01.fa02.fsu.edu/Guide6.html

For a guide to focus group applications in marketing and social science see:

- http://www4.nau.edu/cee/ci_doc/current/resources/5_Kleiber.pdf

The Planning Cycle: What, Who, How?

Introduction

Policy influence is a project in its own right. Careful planning and review is at the heart of managing and implementing it successfully. And all good influence planning has three simple stages at its core: Planning calls for considered identification of objectives, careful analysis of the policy audience and targeted promotion of the evidence-based message. The first step is identifying how policy would change in response to the evidence – what is the policy change objective and message? The second step is working to identify who could influence these changes – who is the policy audience? The third step is packaging and delivering the message – how do we want to promote? Constant review is important, and this 'what, who, how' becomes a cycle that iterates until the objective is achieved.

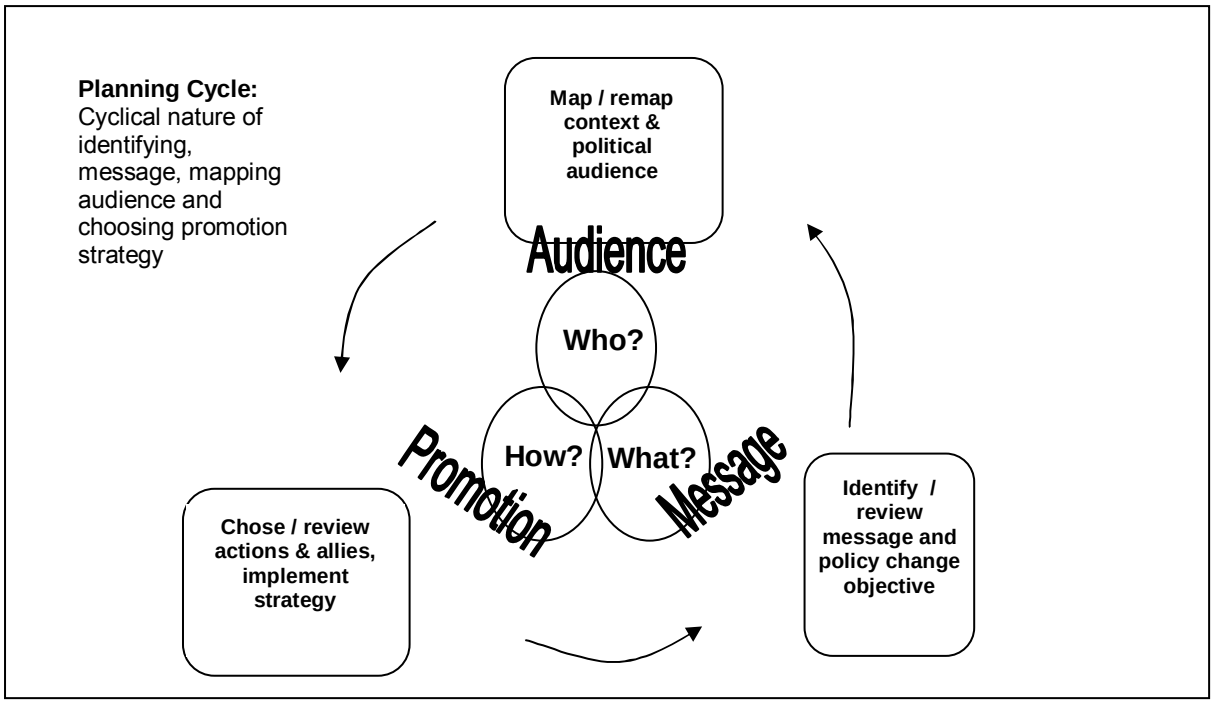
Detailed Outline of the Process

Think of three basic steps in planning and implementing a policy influencing strategy or 'project'.

1. First, consider what evidence you are working with and the **message** it communicates**. What** is the story that you are trying to tell or communicate? If successful, what are the implications for policy change? This is the policy objective and message.
2. Second consider the **audience** you are targeting. **Who**, in government and among opinion leaders, do you need to tell the message to and whose decisions do you need to influence. Where are the supporters, entry points and policy hooks and opportunities you can hang your proposals on in a timely and focused manner? Where are your detractors?
3. Third, consider the how to **promote** the message to the audience. **How** can the information best be delivered? How should the message be packaged? Who should deliver it and in what context? What alliances can you develop, mobilise or organise? When is the best time to promote it?

As the policy influence project progresses objectives, messages, target audiences and promotion strategies should continue to be reviewed, assessed and if possible improved.

Figure 4: The planning cycle



Force Field Analysis

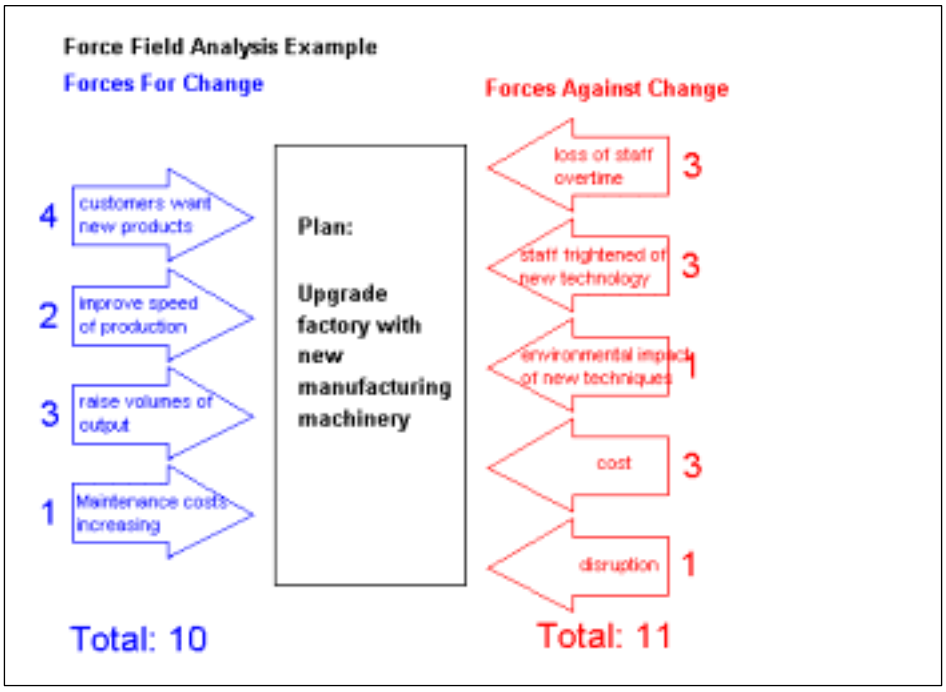
Introduction

Force Field Analysis was developed by Lewin (1951) and is widely used to inform decision-making, particularly in planning and implementing change management programmes in organisations. It is a powerful method for gaining a comprehensive overview of the different forces acting on a potential policy issue, and for assessing their source and strength.

Detailed Outline of the Process

Force Field Analysis is best carried out in small group of about 6-8 people using flip chart paper or overhead transparency so that everyone can see what's going on. The first step is to agree the area of change to be discussed. This might be written as a desired policy goal or objective. All the forces in support of the change are then listed in a column to the left (driving the change forward) while all forces working against the change are listed in a column to the right (holding it back). The driving and restraining forces should be sorted around common themes and should then be scored according to their 'magnitude' ranging from 1 (weak) to 5 (strong). The score may well not balance on either side. The resulting table might look like the following:

Figure 5: Force field analysis



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

Throughout the process rich discussion, debate and dialogue should emerge. This is an important part of the exercise and key issues should be allowed time. Findings and ideas may well come up to do with concerns, problems, symptoms and solutions. It's useful to record these and review where there is a consensus on an action or a way forward. In policy influencing the aim is to find ways to reduce the restraining forces and to capitalise on the driving forces.

Force Field Analysis is natural follow-on from Problem Tree Analysis which can often help to identify objectives for policy change. A useful next step on from Force Field Analysis is Stakeholder Analysis in which the specific stakeholders for and against a change are identified, together with their power, influence and interests.

A Good Example

Force field analysis has been used in diverse fields ranging from participatory rural appraisal and social research to strategic planning and organisational change. As part of a DFID sponsored participatory poverty profiling in Bolangir, a drought prone district in Western Orissa, India, a team of facilitators from PRAXIS used various participatory tools to conduct a study of the poverty profile of the district. Seasonal migration poses a serious problem with the rural poor and a Force Field Analysis was conducted with a group of villagers to study the factors leading to migration. Drought and lack of land emerged as the most important factors contributing to migration. Among the forces inhibiting migration were emotional attachment to the village and excessive work during migration. The information generated from the FFA has been useful in that it has led to designing a livelihood project, to be implemented by the Government of Orissa, supported by DFID, India.

Further Information

The case study above comes from: PLA Notes (1999), Issue 36, pp.17-23. IIED, London, at: www.worldbank.org/participation/PRSP/plna/plan_03604.pdf

Another case details the use of force field analysis in a school situation to assess the potential to change from teacher-centered methods of working to greater pupil participation in planning. See: www.crossroad.to/Quotes/brainwashing/force-field.htm

For original literature of force field analysis see: Lewin K. (1951) 'Field Theory in Social Science', Harper and Row, New York.

Simple step-by-step guides to carrying out force field analysis are available at:

- www.mindtools.com/forcefld.html for examples of the use of force field analysis in management
- www.psywww.com/mtsite/forcefld.html for examples of the use of force field analysis in psychology
- For a brief overview see www.mycoted.com/creativity/techniques/forcefieldanal.php

Examples of the application of force field analysis in different areas are available below:

- Change management: www.accel-team.com/techniques/force_field_analysis.html
- Health (MSH and UNICEF): http://erc.msh.org/quality/example/example5.cfm

For computer software to conduct force field analysis see:
http://www.skymark.com/resources/tools/force_field_diagram.asp

Problem Tree Analysis

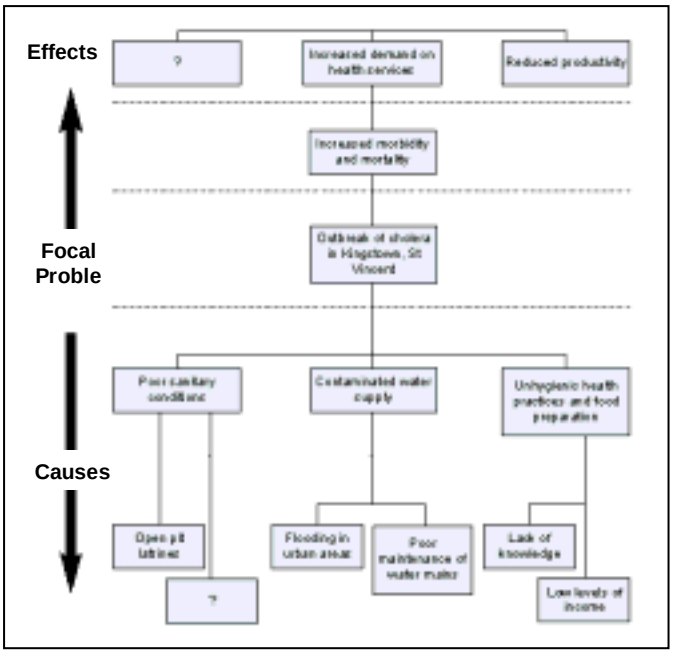
Introduction

Problem Tree Analysis is central to many forms of project planning and is well developed among development agencies. Problem Tree Analysis (also called Situational Analysis or just Problem Analysis) helps to find solutions by mapping out the anatomy of cause and effect around an issue in a similar way to a Mind Map, but with more structure. This brings several advantages:

- The problem can 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 solutions.
- It identifies the constituent issues and arguments, and can help establish who and what are the political actors and processes 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;
- Present issues – rather than apparent, future or past issues – are dealt with and identified;
- The process of analysis often helps build a shared sense of understanding, purpose and action.

Detailed Outline of the Process

Figure 6: Problem tree analysis



Problem Tree Analysis is best carried out in a small focus group of about 6-8 people using flip chart paper or an overhead transparency. It's important that factors can be added as the conversation progresses. The first step is to discuss and agree the problem or issue to be analysed. Don't worry if it seems like a broad topic because the problem tree will help break it down. The problem or issue is written in the centre of the flip chart and becomes the 'trunk' of the tree. This becomes the 'focal problem'. The wording doesn't need to be exact as the roots and branches will further define it, but it should describe an actual issue there everyone feels passionately about.

Next the group identify the causes of the focal problem – these become the roots – and then identify the consequences – which become the branches. These causes and consequences can be created on post-its or cards, perhaps individually or in pairs, so that they can be arranged in a cause-and-effect logic.

The heart of the exercise is the discussion, debate and dialogue that is generated as factors are arranged and re-arranged, often forming sub-dividing roots and branches (like a Mind Map). Take time to allow people to explain their feelings and reasoning and record related ideas and points that come up on separate flip chart paper under title such as: solutions, concerns and decisions.

Discussion questions might include:

- Does this represent the reality? Are the economic, political and socio-cultural dimensions to the problem considered?
- Which causes and consequences are getting better, which are getting worse and which are staying the same?
- What are the most serious consequences? Which are of most concern? What criteria are important to us in thinking about a way forward?
- Which causes are easiest / most difficult to address? What possible solutions or options might there be? Where could a policy change help address a cause or consequence, or create a solution?
- What decisions have we made, and what actions have we agreed?

The problem tree is closely linked to the Objectives Tree, another key tool in the project planners repertoire, and well used by development agencies. The problem tree can be converted into an objectives tree by rephrasing each of the problems into positive desirable outcomes – as if the problem 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 then feed into a Force Field Analysis which provides a useful next step.

A Good Example

As part of designing an HIV/AIDS activity in Kenya, a DFID design team needed to have a deeper understanding of various issues and constraints related to the epidemic. Before moving to a large logframe workshop the team decided to conduct focus group interviews with potential target groups and service providers. Through the focus groups the team gained a much deeper understanding of HIV/AIDS-related problems, constraints and opportunities. At the same time, participants in the groups learned much about common problems they themselves were facing and their possible solutions. Counselling and testing groups discovered they all faced a critical issue about how to protect the confidentiality of HIV-positive clients. Through the discussion they were able to exchange ideas of how to achieve this. Some had a policy focus and helped understand where changes in government practise and legislation could help. These issues were brought into the logframe workshop, where they were integrated in the design through an activity output dealing with improved counselling and testing services.

Further Information

There are many references to problem analysis in toolkits, particularly from development agencies. These include a detailed description in DFID's Social Development toolkit (from which the diagram and example are taken) and CERTI's (Complex Emergency Response and Transition Initiative) crisis and transition toolkit

www.dfid.gov.uk/FOI/tools/chapter_03.htm
www.certi.org/publications/Manuals/rap-16-section3.htm

Stakeholder Analysis

Introduction

A stakeholder is a person who has something to gain or lose through the outcomes of a planning process or project. In many circles these are called interest groups and they can have a powerful bearing on the outcomes of political processes. It is often beneficial for research projects to identify and analyse the needs and concerns of different stakeholders particularly when these projects aim to influence policy.

In bridging research and policy, stakeholder analysis can be used to identify all parties engaged in conducting the research, those who make or implement policy, and the intermediaries between them. It can help define a way to engage stakeholders so that the impact of research on policy can be maximised.

It can also be used later in the research, when results are available and the team may want to use the evidence to create policy impact. Then it can be a useful tool to consider who needs to know about the research, what their positions and interests are and how the research should be presented and framed to appeal to them. In this way it becomes an essential tool for assessing different interest groups around a policy issue or debate, and their ability to influence the final outcome.

Detailed Outline of the Process

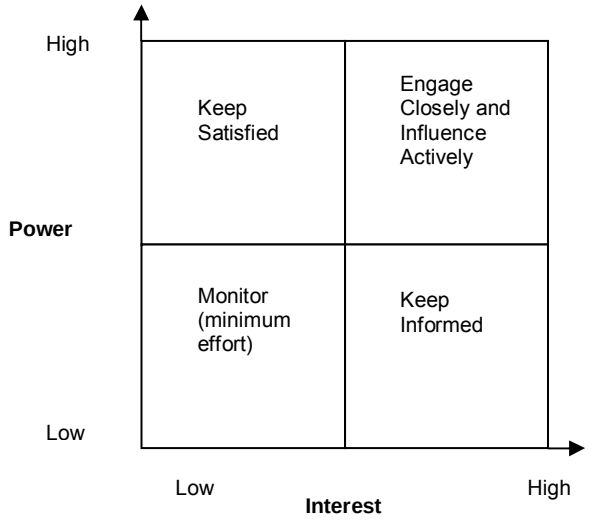
The first step is to clarify the research or policy change objective being discussed (for this Problem Tree Analysis or Objectives Analysis might help). Next, identify all the stakeholders or interest groups associated with this objective, project, problem or issue. A small group of about 6-8 people, with a varied perspective on the problem, should be enough to create a good brainstorming session. Stakeholders can be organisations, groups, departments, structures, networks or individuals, but the list needs to be pretty exhaustive to ensure nobody is left out. The following grid may help organise the brainstorm, or provide a structure for feedback to plenary if you are working in break-out groups:

Table 2: Stakeholder analysis

Private sector Stakeholders	Public sector Stakeholders	Civil society stakeholders
• Corporations and businesses • Business associations • Professional bodies • Individual business leader • Financial institutions	• Ministers and advisors (executive) • Civil servants and departments (bureaucracy) • Elected representatives (legislature) • Courts (judiciary) • Political parties • Local government/ councils • Military • Quangos and commissions • International bodies (World Bank, UN)	• Media • Churches / religions • Schools and Universities • Social movements and advocacy groups • Trade unions • National NGOs • International NGOs

Then, using the grid below, organise the stakeholders in different matrices according to their interest and power. 'Interest' measures to what degree they are likely to be affected by the research project or policy change, and what degree of interest or concern they have in or about it. 'Power' measures the influence they have over the project or policy, and to what degree they can help achieve, or block, the desired change.

Figure 7: Stakeholder analysis



Stakeholders with high power, and interests aligned with the project, are the people or organisations it is important to fully engage and bring on board. If trying to create policy change, these people are the targets of any campaign. At the very top of the 'power' list will be the 'decision-makers', usually members of the government. Beneath these are people whose opinion matters – the 'opinion leaders'. This creates a pyramid sometimes known as an Influence Map.

Stakeholders with high interest but low power need to be kept informed but, if organised, they may form the basis of an interest group or coalition which can lobby for change. Those with high power but low interest should be kept satisfied and ideally brought around as patrons or supporters for the proposed policy change.

If time and resources permit, further analysis can be carried out which explores in more detail 1) the nature of the power and its position and 2) the interests that give it that position. This helps the project to better understand why people take certain stands and how they can be bought around. This analysis is developed further in Influence Mapping.

The final step is to develop a strategy for how best to engage different stakeholders in a project, how to 'frame' or present the message or information so it is useful to them, and how to maintain a relationship with them. Identify who will make each contact and how, what message they will communicate and how they will follow-up.

A Good Example

A good journal article (which includes two case studies from business) can be found at: www.stsc.hill.af.mil/crosstalk/2000/12/smith.html

Further Information

DFID has produced various guidance notes on how to do stakeholder analysis which can be found at: www.dfid.gov.uk/FOI/tools/chapter_02.htm or www.eurofic.org/gb/stake1.htm For a basic simple step by step guide, see: www.scu.edu.au/schools/gcm/ar/arp/stake.html and for a template see www.scenarioplus.org.uk/stakeholders/stakeholders_template.doc. For material specifically adapted for campaigning see resources at www.thepressuregroup.com.

Influence Mapping

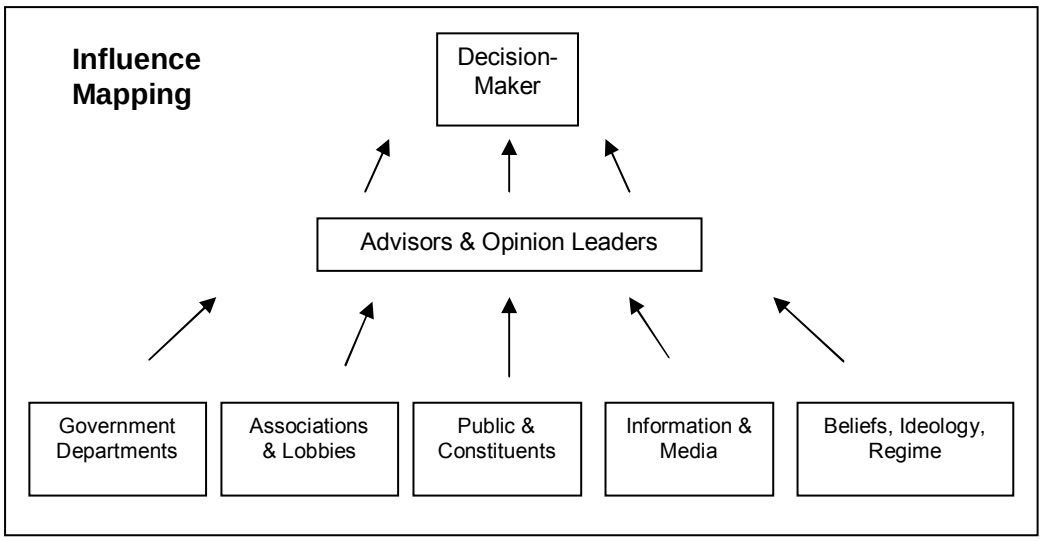
Introduction

Influence Mapping identifies the individuals and groups with the power to effect a key decision. It further investigates the position and motives of each player and the best channels through which to communicate with them. The approach is also known as Stakeholder Influence Mapping, Power Mapping or the Arena of Influence. In the business sector it is similar to the Market Segmentation which analyses the structure of the market and details consumer interests and behaviours. By its careful application, think tanks can tune their messages and arguments to different audiences, and better understand how to channel their efforts.

Detailed Outline of the Process

Influence Mapping builds naturally on Stakeholder Analysis (and, to a degree, has similarities with the drivers or influences identified in Force Field Analysis). Be clear over the policy issue or change being analysed and single out those in high positions of power. First 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. Remember, absolute power is a myth. Every executive depends on a group of advisors or with whom they cannot operate. They are accountable to, a wide group of interest groups, constituencies and lobbies. Further they may be influenced by the nature of the information and research they receive, how it is reported in the media, the political regime, not to mention their own beliefs and ideologies. It is often helpful to map the information as a pyramid of actors and influences:

Figure 8: Influence mapping



The construction of this interest map or 'pyramid' brings about rich discussion. The distance from the bottom represents how influential the factor is and, critically, the route by which this influence reaches the decision-maker. It's worth trying to detail the key individuals and institutions that carry the influence – whether they be specific people, newspapers, churches or so forth. This allows the group to analyse possible Influence Channels – entry points to effect change.

Once key channels have been identified the group should analyse their position on the topic, their key motives and their accessibility. Are they a supporter, an ally or an uncommitted 'fence sitter'? Sometimes they can have a different status on different issues. What are their interests and motives for a particular position on the issue? What is their agenda, either stated or implicit? What

drives them to take this position, and what constraints do they face that might make it difficult for them to move from this position. This may be ideological or personal (e.g. a belief in the primacy of the market), it could be cultural or social (e.g. the belief that alcohol is bad and should not be legal), it might be financial (e.g. for monetary gain) or it may be political, based on the views of their interest groups, supporters, patrons and voters, the constituents who give them their position of power. Finally assesses how easy it will be to gain access and present the evidence or case.

A Good Example

The British Parliament is a good example of a government body that actually has very little actual control over the decisions that are made, but has a high degree of influence over Ministers (the main decision makers) through debates, questions, select committees or high status and well-connected individuals. A think tank can therefore justify targeting parliament in order to influence the appropriate Minister, because the influence will be carried through the influence pyramid to the decision-maker. On some issues, and at certain points in the policy process, Parliament does have real decision-making power. Their influence channels might be public opinion (particularly in their constituency) or media editorials. A think tank might then decide to focus its energies on informing the media or the public.

DFID's policy processes during the making of the 1997 White Paper on Poverty and International Development illustrate these key influences at work. Clare Short, Gordon Brown, Tony Blair and the writer David Batt were highly influential. Within DFID, economists were the most influential of the DFID advisers. The OECD/DAC had a major influence through the International Development Targets. The very low influence of poor people remained, and developing country governments were less influential than those in developed countries. Public opinion in the UK remained much less influential than commercial interests. Some key moments were noted in the period, such as Clare Short recognising the need to 'ride the dragon' of economic growth. Economists were strong in the years before the first White Paper – then shrunk into the background only to return centre-stage with the second White Paper's emphasis on well- channelled growth.

Further Information

- Stakeholder Influence Mapping: IIED Forest and Land Use Programme 'Power Tools' Tools for working on policies and institutions1, Series number: 5 www.iied.org/docs/flu/Tool5mapping.pdf and www.iied.org/forestry/tools/index.html
- New Weave of Power, people and Politics: The Action Guide for Advocacy and Citizen Participation, World Neighbours, 2002 (Chapter 12) www.justassociates.org/ActionGuide.htm
- The Lobbying and Advocacy Handbook for Nonprofits: Shaping Public Policy at the State and Local Level, Amherst H Wilder Foundation, by Marcia Avner (2002) www.wilder.org
- The Campaigning Handbook, Directory of Social Change by Mark Lattimer (2000), Chapter 16, p353. www.dsc.org.uk

SWOT Analysis

Introduction

SWOT analysis is a classic strategic planning tool. Using a framework of internal strengths and weaknesses and external opportunities and threats, it provides a simple way to assess how a strategy can best be implemented. The tool helps planners be realistic about what they can achieve, and where they should focus.

Detailed Outline of the Process

The SWOT framework – a two-by-two matrix – is best completed in a group with key members of the team or organisation present. First it's important to be clear what the policy change objective is, and what team or organisation the analysis is being carried out on. Once these are clarified and agreed, begin with a brainstorm of ideas, and then hone them down and clarify them afterwards in discussion.

An assessment of *internal capacity* helps identify where the project or organisation is now: the existing resources that can be used immediately and current problems that won't go away. It can help identify where new resources, skills or allies will be needed. When thinking of strengths it's useful to think of real examples of success to ground and clarify the conversation. Typical focus questions to help think through these issues might include:

Figure 9: SWOT analysis

- What type of policy influence does our organisation / project currently do best? Where have we had the most success?
- What types of policy influencing skills and capacities do we have?
- In what areas have our staff used them most effectively?
- Who are our strongest allies in policy influence?
- When have they worked with us to create policy impact?
- What do staff consider to be our main strengths and weaknesses? Why is this? What opinions do others outside the organisation hold?

An assessment of the *external environment* tends to focus on what is going on outside the organisation, or areas which are not yet affecting the strategy but could do – either positively or negatively.

The grid above summarises some of the subject areas that might need considering under both internal and external factors. These can be used as topic headings if working in small break-out groups (a good idea if your group is larger than about eight).

Back in plenary it is often useful to rate or rank the most important strengths and weaknesses (perhaps with symbols: ++, + and 0). In a larger group participants might like to assign their own scores, perhaps by assigning sticky dots. The results can then be discussed and debated.

It is important to keep an eye on possible actions or solutions that emerge and round up with an action-oriented discussion. How can our group build on strengths to further our aim and strategy? What can be included in the strategy to minimise our weakness? And so on.

The SWOT analysis is a versatile tool that can be returned to at many different stages of a project; to structure a review or provide a warm-up discussion before forward planning. It can be applied broadly, or a small sub-component of the strategy can be singled out for detailed analysis. The SWOT often forms a useful complement to a stakeholder analysis. Both are good precursors to Force Field Analysis and Influence Mapping.

A Good Example

The example below shows a possible analysis for a small, start-up NGO considering how to use its new research study to influence government.

Box 1: Example of SWOT analysis for small NGO

Strengths:
- We are able to follow-up on this research as the current small amount of work means we have plenty of time;
- Our lead researcher has strong reputation within the policy community;
- Our organisation's director has good links to the Ministry.

Weaknesses:
- Our organisation has little reputation in other parts of government;
- We have a small staff with a shallow skills base in many areas;
- We are vulnerable to vital staff being sick, leaving, etc.

Opportunities:
- We are working on a topical issue,
- The government claims to want to listen to the voice of local NGOs,
- Other NGOs from our region will support us.

Threats:
- Will the report be too politically sensitive and threaten funding from sponsors?
- There is a pool of counter-evidence that could be used to discredit our research and therefore our organisation.

The NGO might therefore decide, amongst other things, to target the report to specific patrons in the one ministry, use their lead researcher to bring credibility to the findings and work on building up a regional coalition on the issue.

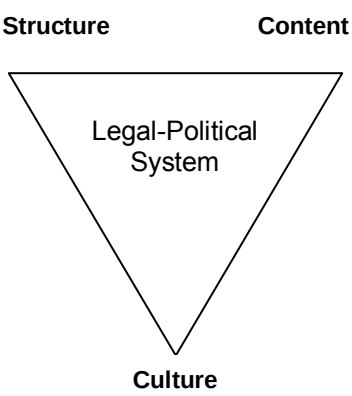
Further Information

- A New Weave of Power, People and Politics. The Action Guide for Advocacy and Citizen Particpation. Lisa VeneKlasen with Valerie Miller, World Neighbours 2002. www.justassociates.org/ActionGuide.htm
- The Marketing Teacher provides online tools for those involved in marketing and managing. Their resources include a SWOT anlaysis. (www.marketingteacher.com/Lessons/lesson_swot.htm)
- Useful introductions to the SWOT can also be found at www.mindtools.com/swot.html and www.tutor2u.net/business/strategy/SWOT_analysis.htm

Triangle Analysis

Triangle Analysis a further technique for both analysing and finding answers to a problem, structured around structure, content and culture in the policy system. First, it can be used to analyse how a combination of policies, institutions, and social values and behaviour contribute to or perpetuate a problem (issue). Second, the framework can be used to map and clarify strategy options to address each of the three dimensions.

Box 2: Triangle analysis



Source: Adapted from New Weave (2002:170) and Schuler (1986) Empowerment and the Law.

Content refers to written laws, policies and budgets relevant to a specific issue. For example, if there is no law to criminalise domestic violence, one part of a solution may be introducing a law. Also, even if a law or policy exist, unless there is funding and institutional mechanisms for enforcement, it will not be effective.

Structure refers to state and non-state mechanisms for implementing a law or policy. This would include, for example, the police, the courts, hospitals, credit unions, ministries, and agricultural and health care programs. Structure can refer to institutions and programmes run by government, NGOs or businesses at the local, national and international levels.

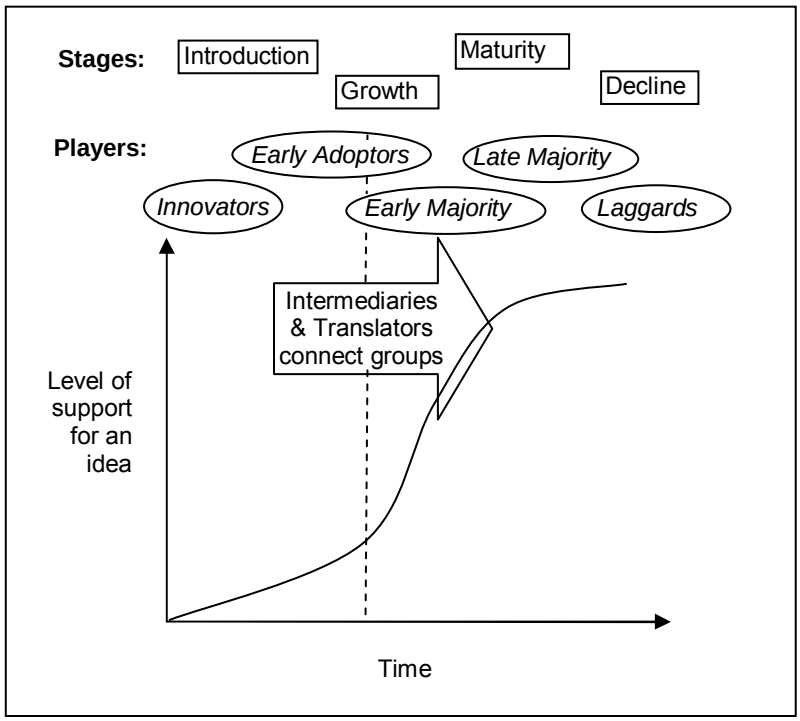
Culture refers to the values and behaviour that shape how people deal with and understand an issue. Values and behaviour are influenced, among other things, by religion, custom, class, gender, ethnicity and age. Lack of information about laws and policies is part of the cultural dimension. Similarly, when people have internalized a sense of worthlessness or, conversely, entitlement, this shapes their attitudes about and degree of benefit from laws and policies.

Mapping the Product Life Cycle (Diffusion of Innovation Theory)

To understand the role of the change agent leaders (the Mavens, Connectors and Sales-people) in the process we can draw further insight from what sociologists call Diffusion Theory. Much of the thinking in this was based on understanding how agricultural technological innovations diffused through rural communities [see Diffusion of Innovations, Everett Rogers, New York Free Press 1995]. The Innovators and Early Adopters are part of the visionaries, the minority, who will experiment and take up an innovation or latch onto a new idea. Usually they are highly entrepreneurial, want large scale change, are prepared to take risks and work within small, flexible business units. The Early Majority, on the other hand, are more risk adverse and may be constrained within large scale complex systems. They want improvement but are pragmatists and will tend towards incremental change. The Late Majority are the sceptical mass who wait to see what other big players have done before taking something on. Finally they the Laggards adopt.

This model of innovation diffusion translates closely to the Product Life Cycle (Fig 10). During Introduction take up is invariably slow; the eccentric Innovators and Early Adoptors may act quickly but are only a small part of society. The level of support will often rise to a third of the population before the idea gain significant support among the Early Majority. Once this happens the numbers of converts rises exponentially and Growth occurs as it sweeps through the Late Majority until saturation point in the audience or market is approached – Maturity – and take-up slows, with the adoption by the Laggards. Finally, and importantly, Decline almost always occurs, unless the product or ideas is substantially re-invented and re-presented. Ideas and products only have a limited time-span. (The rise and fall of products has serious implications for strategy and product mix. These stages, and the products that occupy each stages, are further explored in the Boston Box, see below).

Figure 10: The product life cycle and role of key people in adoption and spread



Gladwell, building on the work of Geoffrey Moore in Crossing the Chasm (HarperCollins 1991) believes that it is the connectors, mavens and salespeople (his 'Law of the Few') that translate and adapt ideas so that the more conservative majority can understand them. They act as intermediaries between the new ideas and the wide-spread social change.

The 'Marketing Approach'

The focus so far has been firmly on getting the right message, about the right idea, to the right people, at the time and place. Those familiar with marketing theory will recognise a similar type of language. The emphasis if firmly on understanding the state of the market audience, those to be targeted with a social change message or policy innovation, and developing the innovation or message so that it is fills their needs.

Modern marketing, strategy and business administration techniques have revolutionised business in the developing world, and they are well on the way to revolutionising politics too. The most successful campaigns and influencing strategies have a firm grip of modern marketing strategies, and the most successful think tanks understand well that the clear analysis and prioritisation of product, customer and promotion are just as central to selling an idea to a politician as they are to selling a trainer to a child.

The Marketing Revolution

Some think tank may be uncomfortable with such language, after all they may be more concerned by social justice, academic rigour, and getting their message across. Lattimer points out that this was the way companies acted too, once upon a time:

> 'Company salespeople in the first half of the century were encouraged to think of themselves in much the same way. They travelled around the country spreading the message, finding as many converts as possible for their product or brand. Quiet simply a market for the product didn't exist. But by the fifties, even as the culture of 'salesmanship' reached it height, a new approach was rapidly gaining adherents. Competitive pressures had forced managers to look more carefully at what consumers really needed or wanted. And to try and develop products that met those needs. In doing so they stood the role of missionary on it head. From now on the voice of the audience was to come first. This was the marketing concept: innovation driven by the needs of the consumers, rather than the convenience of the producers...It was much easier to sell people a product they thought they needed than to push on them something they didn't want. (p349)'

The implications of this marketing revolution are to put the analysis of the needs and wants of the customer firmly in the driving seat. It is a conceptual leap to realise that a think tank is also producing, marketing and selling something to a customer. If the leap can be made a wide range of analysis and strategic tools exist to help the think tank.

So what is marketing? At its heart marketing is about meeting the needs and wants of customers. It's a business-wide function, not something that operates alone from other business activities. It's about understanding customers and finding ways to provide products or services which customers demand. There are many different definitions of marketing. These include:

- The all-embracing function that links the business with customer needs and wants in order to get the right product to the right place at the right time
- The achievement of corporate goals through meeting and exceeding customer needs better than the competition
- The management process that identifies, anticipates and supplies customer requirements efficiently and profitably

All of these could equally well be applied to a good communications and influencing strategy of a think tank in which the market is the policy community or audience, who 'buy' the convincing range of messages and ideas from the think tank.

Marketing Functions and the Think Tank

The table below illustrates some of the main functions associated with marketing. After thoroughly researching the market, the next step is product development. At this stage, think tanks develop the content of the research, evidence and innovation on the issues they are working on. Distribution and promotion follows (with networking, negotiating, publicising and campaigning all being important, as well as the style of selling). Pricing and sales functions are less obvious, but no less important. Pricing is the act of deciding how controversial or confrontational to make the message or demand. It equates to the political cost or price and how easy it will be for a government to accept it. Most think tanks try to produce ideas that have very low political costs, or at least as much political reward as cost. 'Sales' – usually outside of the marketing sphere – is the end point in a business. For a think tank, this is the point at which a case is made or won. This is almost always followed by the parties sitting around the table to discuss exactly how a new policy or programme will be implemented.

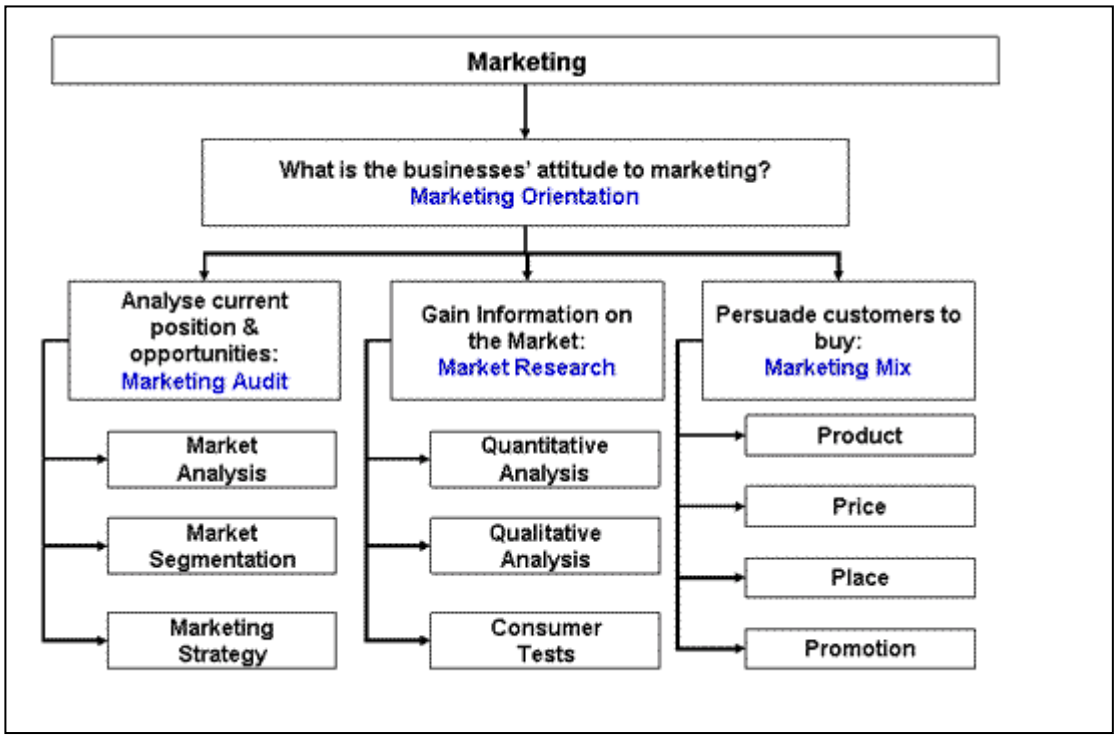
Table 3: Business and think tank functions compared

Business Function	Activities	Think tank Function
Identifying customer/consumer needs and wants, and competition	**Marketing research**	Understanding needs and wants of the policy community, and conflicting messages
Developing products to meet customer/consumer needs and wants	**Production research and development**	Researching and developing messages presented so relevant and timely to policy community
Deciding on the value of the product to customers	**Pricing**	Deciding how high to set the political cost of the message – confrontational and revolutionary or incremental
Making the product available to customers at the right time and place	**Distribution**	Making the message available to the audience at the right time and place
Informing customers/consumers of the existence of the product and persuading them to buy it	**Promotion**	Informing the audience of the message and winning them over to it.

As any lobbying firm will tell you, many companies have also evolved hybrid sections of their marketing departments to deal specifically with developing and 'selling' messages to the specialist interest groups and policy communities. The 'public relations' department is geared towards shareholders, the media and the public at large, and often stretches to include message not directly aimed at creating sales. The 'public affairs' department tends to be geared directly towards policy circuits, and will aim to ensure a conducive policy environment (regulations, taxes etc) for their core product.

Figure 11 gives an overview of the core marketing processes of market audit (analysing and segmenting the market and developing a strategy), market research (canvassing opinions and testing products) and marketing mix (where the unique combination of product, price, place and promotion strategy are decided). Similar ideas are followed in many of the next sections and the avid marketer should take advantage of some of the excellent tools and resources available that, with some adaptation, provide a useful input to planning for the think tank issue influencing process.

Figure 11: Overview of core marketing processes



Resources

www.marketingteacher.org
www.mindmap.org
www.tutor2u.com
www.mycoted.com

Organisational Readiness Assessment

The first challenge in many research-based organisations is creating a culture-shift away from low-impact supply-led information provision to strategic, audience-led influencing messages. The Amherst H. Wilder Foundation's handbooks on Lobbying and Advocacy for Non-profit Organisations recognises this and provides a series of worksheets and tools designed to assess readiness and commitment to take on public policy issues (see boxes below). It reviews existing champions and initiatives, helps focus goals and begins the planning process. A series of six meetings is outlined to kick-start the planning process and create a workplan.

Box 3: Public influence readiness assessment for your organisation

There are two parts to this assessment. **Part A** looks at the substance of your organisation's public policy objectives. **Part B** looks at your organisation's current capacity to do the work.

Part A: Public Policy Objectives

- List your public policy issues: in the context of our mission, goals, and existing work what issues can be furthered by engaging in public policy and legislation debate?
- List existing programs, services, research, outreach, lobbying and advocacy work where experience and expertise has been demonstrated in these issues you most want to influence.
- Identify which parts of government your core issues decided and debated. Further identify core arenas for influence which can shape policy decisions.
- List the desired policy changes you want, specifically with respect to laws, budgets, ordinances etc.
- Decide whether you will be proactively proposing new policy change, or reactively responding another group's efforts.

Part B: Organisational Capacity for Public Policy Work

1. List the organisational champions of public policy work and measure the depth of the organisation's commitment to public policy change.
2. Commit to developing a public policy plan.
3. List who's been designated to do what and when, with respect to co-ordinate the planning process, clearing with the board, clarifying staff roles, creating a rapid response team, forming an advisory committee
4. Clarify the systems in place to educate, inform, and mobilise members, partners and constituencies.
5. Review understanding of legislative processes and structures.
6. List resources that will be committed to policy influence work.
7. Clarify media preparedness. Are you camera ready?
8. If you are a not-for-profit organisation, clarify rules with respect to lobbying in your country.

Six Meetings to Action

Once a discussion has been launched, approval given to start a planning process and a planning team selected, the Handbook suggests that six meetings should cover the main requirements to create a policy influence plan for the organisation, as follows:

1. Prepare the planning team and articulate visions and goals.
2. Establish criteria for which issues to take up, and decide on the issues.
3. Decide on target arenas of influence to work on.
4. Choose strategies and tactics to achieve these and design organisational infrastructure (staff commitments, resource allocations etc).
5. Create the workplan, with specific actions, targets and dates.
6. Present the workplan to the whole organisation.

Source: Adapted from Avner 2002 Chapter One and Worksheet 1, p58-66

Further support on organisational structure, staff roles, finance, information systems, training and using advisory committees is given in Wilder Ch 3, p86-91, worksheet 13, IV and worksheet 14, p219-222.

Market Segmentation and the Battlemap

To get a product or service to the right person or company, a marketer would firstly **segment** the market, then **target** a single segment or series of segments, and finally **position** within the segment(s).

Segmentation is essentially the identification of subsets of buyers within a market who share similar needs and who demonstrate similar buyer behaviour. The world is made up from billions of buyers with their own sets of needs and behaviour. Segmentation aims to match groups of purchasers with the same set of needs and buyer behaviour. Such a group is known as a 'segment'.

Segmentation is a form of critical evaluation rather than a prescribed process or system, and hence no two markets are defined and segmented in the same way. However there are a number of underpinning criteria that assist us with segmentation:

- Is the segment viable? Can we make a profit from it?
- Is the segment accessible? How easy is it for us to get into the segment?
- Is the segment measurable? Can we obtain realistic data to consider its potential?

The ‘Segmentation Matrix Business Battlemap’ is a useful segmentation tool. The various products are then plotted on a matrix against market segment. The result is a 'battlemap' (William A Cohen, 1986). This is developed for policy processes in the influence map.

The Marketing Mix

The marketing mix is probably the most famous phrase in marketing and was coined by Neil H. Borden in his article *'The Concept of the Marketing Mix'* in 1965. The elements are the marketing 'tactics', also known as the 'four Ps':

- Product
- Price
- Place
- Promotion

Figure 12: The marketing mix

Some commentators increase the mix to the 'five Ps', to include:

- People

Others will increase the mix to 'seven Ps', to include:

- Physical evidence (such as uniforms, facilities, or livery), and
- Process (i.e. the whole customer experience e.g. a visit to Disney World).

The concept is simple. All cakes contain eggs, milk, flour, and sugar however you can alter the final cake by altering the amounts of mix elements contained in it. It is the same with the marketing mix. The offer you make to your audience can be altered by varying the mix elements.

In the think tank world of policy influence the concept is still useful and particularly so when considering the promotional strategy. In planning the message, we have considered the product (the content of the message, or the issue), the physical evidence (the credentials to back up the message, or the research) and the price (how politically controversial the message will be, or the position). In planning for the policy audience, we considered the people (the policy audience we are communicating with).

We have adapted the marketing mix for influencing in the table below. In developing an influencing strategy one needs to consider the usefulness, credibility and political cost of the message; which decision-maker at what place and time it will be targeted at; and with what support, promotional package and ongoing relationships management it will be delivered.

Table 4: The influencing mix

Message that is…	**Targeted at…**	**Delivered by…**
Useful in … • the issues it addresses • it relevance to current situation • the piece of legislation, policy or programme it relates to • the change is proposes • how the change could be achieved	**Policy decision makers** especially • Opinion Leaders • PM, Ministers and advisors (executive) • Civil servants and departments (bureaucracy) • Elected representatives (legislature)	Right mix of **promotional** channels: • Media (trade press, editorials, opinion pieces, academic journals) • Advertising, Mail-shots • Annual reports and publications • Books, Briefing papers • Events, Speeches • Personal communication • Direct actions (e.g. stunts, marches)
Credible through • Research and innovation • Applied practical policy problem solving • Piloting and evaluation • Use in other country or sector • Recommendation or endorsement	In the right **place**: • Informal social events, (e.g. luncheons and clubs) • Meetings and representations • Commissioned work • Consultations • Conferences	**Supported** by partnership or coalition with • Broader public (e.g. petition, march) • Interest group (e.g. poor, sick) • Influence group (e.g. scientists, economists, business leaders) • Sector organisations, unions • Committees, Taskgroup • Editors or • Experts
Politically Costed • Fit in with policy needs and agenda	**Timed** for windows of opportunity… • Formation of Legislation • Laying down of the law • Upholding of human rights and conventions • Formulating policy units and strategy • Ministerial speeches • Electing political representatives; • Consulting with stakeholders • Other windows of opportunity and relevance	With good **relationship** management… • Ongoing trust • Openness • Respect • Mutual listening and understanding

The Promotions Mix

In the commercial world 'promotions mix' tends to include seven modes of promotion: personal selling, sales promotion (which covers money-off promotions, competitions, free accessories, coupons, buy-one-get-one-free), public relations (the deliberate, planned and sustained effort to establish and maintain mutual understanding between an organisation and its publics), direct mail, trade exhibitions, advertising and sponsorship.

Promotions can be plotted along an axis of confrontation vs collaboration; this time set against involvement of the public. Thus direct actions

1. At one of end of the spectrum are protesting and activism strategies. These include direct action.
2. Public education and mobilisation tends to involve getting large numbers of people to write, petition, march, join or otherwise show their support for a cause.
3. Litigation is a particular (in fact the original) form of rights-based advocacy
4. Persuasion, lobbying often involving high-level networking are classic arts in policy influence and usually sit under the public affairs departments of larger companies.
5. Action-research and model programmes, often with a strong evaluation function to learn lessons, is a key way to show that a proposed new approach or policy change can work.
6. Coalition, constituency and campaigning / influencing network building is a core ways to increase impact.
7. Public relations and communications (sometimes including advertising and marketing) and publications.
8. The media is key way of communicating, including high-brow editorials or opinion pieces in broadsheets or trade press, or papers in academic journals.
9. Citizen engagement, consultation, participation and consensus in decision-making and policy delivery.

It's important to consider these forms of promotions in relation to the Policy Strategy Quadrant (Figure 1, in the introduction) which emphasises the degree of confrontation / collaboration and the degree of interest vs evidence base. Thus different organisation may choose the same overall methods, but may use them in very different ways, with different language. The table below illustrates what these differences might look like in practice.

Table 5: The promotions mix

Area of action	Advising organisation chooses…	Activist organistion chooses…
Communication and publications	Policy briefings	Maildrops
Media	Opinion leaders in broadsheets, trade-press	Coverage of publicity stunts in tabloids
Collaboration	Partnerships	Campaign coalitions
Lobbying	Private clubs	Petitions

Positioning and Position Mapping

Positioning is undoubtedly one of the simplest and most useful tools to marketers. After segmenting a market and then targeting a consumer, the product is positioned within that market. Products or services are 'mapped' together on a 'positioning map'. This allows them to be compared and contrasted in relation to each other. Marketers decide upon a competitive position which enables them to distinguish their own products from the offerings of their competition.

The marketer would draw out the map and decide upon a label for each axis. They could be political cost (variable 1) and ease of implementation (variable 2).The individual products are then mapped out next to each other. Any gaps could be regarded as possible areas for new products.

Trout and Ries suggest a six-step question framework for successful positioning:

1. What position do you currently own?
2. What position do you want to own?
3. Whom you have to defeat to own the position you want.
4. Do you have the resources to do it?
5. Can you persist until you get there?
6. Are your tactics supporting the positioning objective you set?

Benefit and Competition

The three core elements of positioning – how a think tank issue is positioned in relation to the other competing position and messages – are Target, Benefit and Competition. The target is the part of the audience who will be interested, the benefit is why they will be interested, and the competition refers to the why this benefit-target combination is unique compared to competing messages. For this reason,

> 'it's a useful discipline to compose just one sentence which welds together the three elements that position your own offer, even if you are unlikely use it verbatim in actual advertisement [or message].' (Lattimer p93)

For instance, a research project in Malawi might summarise its position as: 'Reducing subsidies on fertiliser is now the only way (competition) in which the agricultural ministry (target) can release much needed fund for investment in irrigation (benefit).'

The Copy Platform

Turning the message into actual copy – whether this is to be used in the recommendations of a briefing paper, a press release, a publicity campaign, or as sound-bite at breakfast with a minister – is another set of skills. The assumption is that there is limited time and space to get a message across and this creates three golden rules (Lattimer p96):

- Simplicity – concentrate on just one message or image,
- Repetition – recall improves with repetition of an idea presented in different ways,
- Corporate identity – visual characteristics such as logo, typography and colour scheme should be as uniform across a message as possible.

Once a message's position is clarified and simplified, the '**copy platform**' provides the vehicle for bringing it alive. This might be a story, a joke or an analogy that will appeal to the target audience.

> 'Think tanks promote ideas and simplify policy analysis through the use of metaphor and the creation of symbols' (Stone 1996:136)

The textbook copy-righter's formula suggests following the AIDA rule:

- **A** Attract **attention** of the target
- **I** Raise the **interest** in the message or evidence
- **D** Encourage a feeling of **desire**
- **A** Prompt **action** and present a solution

The copy platform is another way of considering how to **frame** or package a message (New Weave p235-238). This involves:

- Translating the story or evidence into larger social and political problems
- Assigning primary responsibility for the problem
- Presenting a clear solution
- Spelling out proposals
- Developing images that highlight the values behind the position

Pre-testing Your Message

There are three ways to do this: polls, focus groups and the brother-in-law test.

The cheapest and easiest way to test the message is to find one person who represents the target audiences and talk to them. Ideally this should be someone who can give you frank feedback, possibly a family member (Robert Bray in Sin Works uses his **brother-in-law**).

Focus Groups are more expensive and several need to be done, with different parts of the target population, as one focus group can provide skewed results. They do have the advantage that researchers can facilitate the groups themselves if need be.

Many politicians rely on **polls** to check their statements and policies, to develop images, political positions and sound-bites. A typical poll costs £10,000s but there are websites which offer poll data on a number of issues.

Resources

US-focused include:

www.gallup.com
www.people-press.org
www.pollingreport.com
www.pipa.org
www.ropercenter.uconn.edu

Also further resources at:

www.casuecommunciations.com

Camera Ready: Using the Media

The Wilder Manual summarises the steps you need to have gone through to be 'camera ready'. The checklist is useful when reflecting on how to be camera ready and how to build up a rapid response team who can respond to relevant media opportunities.

Box 4: Media ready checklist

Organisational Assessment:
- Does your organisation have a media strategy?
- Is the media plan discussed as part of the overall influencing plan?
- Do you revise the media plan on a regular basis as your influence campaign evolves?

Organisational Infrastructure:
- Do you have a staff person who is responsible for carrying out the media plan and coordinating all the media efforts in your organisation?
- Do you have a planning calendar of key political events?
- Has your organisation identified its primary, formal spokespersons?
- Do your spokespersons need media training and preparation?
- Have your board and staff prepared a plan for 'rapid response' to an opportunity or a crisis that presents itself with little warning?
- Is the chain of decision making for media statements clearly designated and understood by everyone within the organization?
- Does your public policy budget have a media component?

Media Systems:
- Are your media lists up-to-date, complete with names of editors, reporters, or producers for all media outlets you plan to use?
- Do you know deadlines, work hours, and preferred communications modes for key people who work on your public policy issues?
- Do your lists distinguish types of coverage: news, feature, editorial, columns, calendars?
- Do you have a clipping file for all relevant media coverage and for a complete record of coverage of your organisation's work?
- Are you in regular contact with the editor and reporters you have designated as key contacts?

Is your information media ready?
- Do you have accurate, concise, interesting information about your organisation—its mission, history, programmes, and services?
- Have you shaped a clear message and talking points for the policy issue you plan to raise?
- Have you held introductory meetings with members of the press who are likely to cover your organisation and issues?
- Do you maintain an information base that is a valuable resource to the press, including a portfolio of data and stories, and a list of staff or others who are willing to talk to the press?

Building capacity and opportunity to use the media means building relationships with those who work in media, namely journalists. You are a resource for them just as much as they can be a resource for you. Box 5 explains how that relationship can be built and maintained.

Box 5: Tips on becoming a resource for journalists

- Be available. Give reporters, especially at news services where they work odd ours, home and mobiles numbers and tell them it's OK to call
- Seek journalists at meetings etc and give them your business card
- Be ready to be quoted. Having to call back once the quote has been cleared while reduce the chance of the quote being used.
- Know the issues. Read and comment intelligently on developments relating to your cause.
- Don't always assume journalists have received the information you have about topical events or relevant news releases.
- Avoid rhetoric and ideological arguments; most journalists have heard all this before.
- Know your facts; never pass on information unless you know it's true.
- Know where to find information or contacts fast and therefore gain a reputation as a good source.

Source: Salzmann, Ch 5, p67

Getting into the papers requires more than just having good relations. You can't always hope that friendly journalists will find your issue news-worthy (often it won't be). The key is timing and linking your findings and message with breaking news. Jump on opportunities to publicize your message when your issue is already in the news because then you don't need to persuade them it is news-worthy. You just need to offer them a story or photo opportunity that illustrates a new or local perspective, dramatises a point of view, or advances the debate somehow. Acting fast is key, usually a day after the news has broken. Key 'news hooks' might include: a public hearing, court decision, passage of a bill, a natural disaster, a major speech, a nomination, a national holiday, a crime, or an anniversary.

If an issue becomes a major story then the paper may run an editorial on it. These carry the most weight in policy circles and are a good way to bring issues onto the agenda, or state a position in an evolving agenda. Box 6 describes ways to get your views into the editorial

Box 6: Tips for getting an editorial

- Familiarise yourself with the position of the newspaper
- Identify the right person on the editorial team and get their email address
- Explain your position in a short email and ask whether and how they would like to receive information (email, phone, meeting)
- If you don't receive a response in a couple of days, call. Persistence pays.
- If you are accepted it's likely you'll go into the office to discuss the issues
- Conduct a trial session first, practise difficult questions, and further familiarise yourself with the editorial position
- Don't expect more than half an hour, and make sure anyone you take can explain their views simply
- Ask what they need from you
- Bring written material, even if you've emailed them in advance. Don't show videos.
- Send a follow-up email offering further information
- Offer to submit an opinion editorial if they do not adopt your position

Source: Salzmann, Ch 22, p168

Publications, new projects, and high profile meetings or visits are probably the most likely reason a think tank might try to make the news outside of an issue already being in the news. There is protocol on writing press releases, but publications themselves can also be made more newsworthy. Box 7 describes some methods for how.

Box 7: Tips for making a report or press release more newsworthy

- Develop a short 3-10 page executive summary
- Put the summary on your website and include the link in any press release
- In a press release cover just a few main facts or statistics, most new stories are not long
- Use clear graphs and tables, and short paragraphs,
- Connect the report to a news hook
- If possible show a change in data from the previous year
- Crate quirky titles for trends of findings
- If affiliated to an academic institution, release on their headed paper and use their media office for press contacts
- Make numbers more meaningful by making comparisons or breaking them down into familiar units
- Consider publishing a short summary of the report as a guest opinion editorial for a news paper.

Source: Salzmann

Writeshops

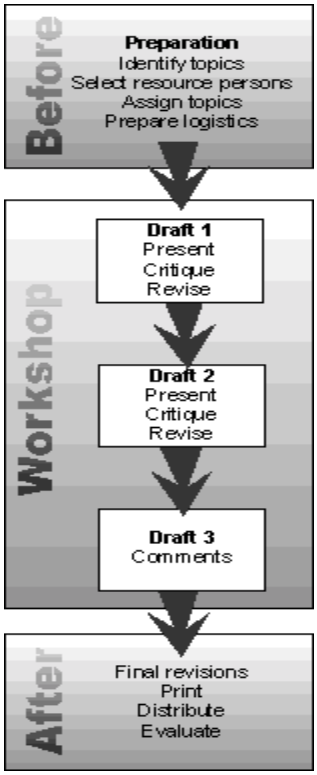
Introduction

A writeshop is a very intensive process aimed at bringing together a range of relevant stakeholders – along with desktop publishing specialists – to produce a publication in a very short time.

Writeshops are an excellent way of bringing together different groups (scientists, extension personnel, NGO staff, policymakers, farmers) with different perspectives on the subject. Written materials can be produced in a very short time by people who do not have the time to write extensively. With suitable preparation, it is possible to produce material ready for the printer within a few days of the end of the writeshop itself. The process enables comments and revisions from other participants (analogous to the peer review in conferences). Writeshops are not useful for lengthy literature reviews or the presentation of detailed information.

The subject area must be divided into topics and assigned to individual participants. Several authors can contribute to each section of the material.

Figure 13: Writeshops



Detailed Outline of Process

Preparation

Before the writeshop, a steering committee lists potential topics and invites resource persons to develop first drafts on each topic, using guidelines provided. These participants bring the drafts and various reference materials with them to the writeshop.

Draft 1

During the writeshop itself, each participant presents their draft paper, using overhead transparencies of each page. Copies of each draft are also given to all the other participants, who critique the draft and suggest revisions. After the presentation, an editor helps the author revise the draft. An artist can draw illustrations to accompany the text. The edited draft and artwork are then desktop-published to produce a second draft. Meanwhile, other participants also present papers they have prepared. Each, in turn, works with the team of editors and artists to revise and illustrate the materials.

Draft 2

Each participant then presents their revised second draft to the group, also using transparencies. Again, the audience critiques the work and suggests revisions. After the presentation, the editor (and artist) again help revise the paper and develop a third draft.

Draft 3

Towards the end of the writeshop, the third draft is made available to participants for final comments and revisions.

Finalising

The final version can be completed, printed and distributed soon after the writeshop.

A Good Example

The International Institute of Rural Reconstruction (IIRR) in the Philippines has produced around 20 information materials on various topics relating to agriculture, the environment and health. The writeshop process was pioneered at IIRR.

The GDN Bridging Research and Policy in 2004 and 2005 will finance a series of regional 'write-shops', bringing together researchers, policymakers, NGOs and the media to discuss and synthesise experience from various case studies and commissioned research. The main outputs will include synthesized and edited regional case studies, and the participants' conclusions about factors which strengthened or weakened their impact on regional policies.

Further Information

For a good overview and range of examples see:

www.mamud.com/writeshop.htm

For examples of materials produced using writeshops methodology see:

www.iirr.org/AR2002/publications.htm

4X Policy Entrepreneurs

A self-assessment questionnaire for researchers

Life and the literature point to four broad styles of policy entrepreneur: story-tellers, networkers, engineers and fixers. The description of these four models of policy entrepreneurship has been developed by Simon Maxwell at ODI, in order to help researchers identify what kind of policy entrepreneurs they are, so that they can capitalise on their strengths, develop their weaknesses and improve the impact of research on policy.

Story-tellers

Scheherazade was a consummate storyteller. She offered to marry a sultan who had been so aggrieved by his wife's betrayal that he had taken to marrying a different woman every day and having her murdered the following morning. Scheherazade managed to survive by telling him the most wonderful stories, which she spun out for so long that she succeeded in bearing him several children and living to a happy old age. There is a literature about the importance of telling stories in changing policy. Roe developed the idea of development narratives. He argued that one of the principal ways that practitioners, bureaucrats and policy-makers articulate and make sense of complex realities is through simplified stories or scenarios. Much of the literature on this topic demonstrates that narratives can be profoundly misleading and that 'counter-narratives' develop but there is no doubt that they are incredibly powerful. It is not difficult to think of powerful narratives which have informed policy: 'getting the prices right', structural adjustment, the Washington Consensus, the Post-Washington Consensus, debt-relief as the answer to poverty-reduction. These are powerful stories which help us to get over to policy-makers what the problem is and what the solution might be. Successful policy entrepreneurs need to be good story tellers.

Networkers

Policy-making 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. President Lyndon Johnson talked about being inside the tent 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. Malcolm Gladwell provides a great example of a networker in his book 'The Tipping Point' in his story of Paul Revere, riding out in 1775 in America to raise the militia against the British. He describes the fact that on that night, two people set out. One was Paul Revere, and the other was William Dawes. In all the villages that Paul Revere went to, the militia turned out and defeated the British. In the villages that William Dawes went to, no-one turned out to fight. Why is that? The answer is that Paul Revere was networked and William Dawes was not. Paul Revere was a well-known pewtersmith and silversmith, who sat on all the committees, was well-connected, knew people and had their trust. William Dawes did not. Researchers who are good networkers are likely to have more policy influence that those who are not.

Engineers

The third model comes from the literature about 'street-level bureaucracy' and is informed by this phrase: 'policy is what policy does'. There can be a significant implementation gap between what politicians and policy-makers think that they are doing and what actually happens on the ground. Researchers need to work not just with the senior level policy-makers, but also with the 'street-level bureaucrats'. Who better to represent that way of working than Isambard Kingdom Brunel. Unfortunately, the best story about him is apocryphal, but it illustrates the point well. Brunel was very much engaged in the debate about whether paddle wheels or screw propellers were more efficient and powerful for moving boats. In order to test that theory, the (sadly apocryphal) story is

that he built one of each, tied them together and put them in the Bristol Channel to see which would tug the hardest. The story captures the idea of being engaged on the ground and not just sitting in a laboratory. Researchers need to become practically involved in testing their ideas if they expect policy makers to heed their recommendations.

Fixers

The fourth and final model of the policy entrepreneur in our field is the 'fixer'. The examples could include Rasputin and Machiavelli. This model is about understanding the policy and political process, knowing when to make your pitch and to whom. The literature on organisation and management provides much evidence and advice about this approach. Charles Handy, in 'Understanding Organisations' (1976) said that if you want to change anything, you need first of all to think about your source of power. Handy identifies these sources of power as: physical power, resource power, position power, expert power, personal power and negative power. As researchers, our 'expert' power is often very powerful. If you are able to look a Minister in the eye and tell them that by applying the principles of game theory to a problem, the solution becomes obvious, they will normally crumble and do what you say.

What are you?

Most people use all these styles at different times, and it is not necessary to be adept at every style. However, if you over-use or under-use any one of the four styles, you might consider whether you should re-balance your activities – or perhaps find a partner within your team who can complement your skills. Simon Maxwell has developed a policy entrepreneurship questionnaire, available from www.odi.org.uk, which you can fill out to assess which entrepreneurship methods you are over- or under-using.

Boston Box

Introduction

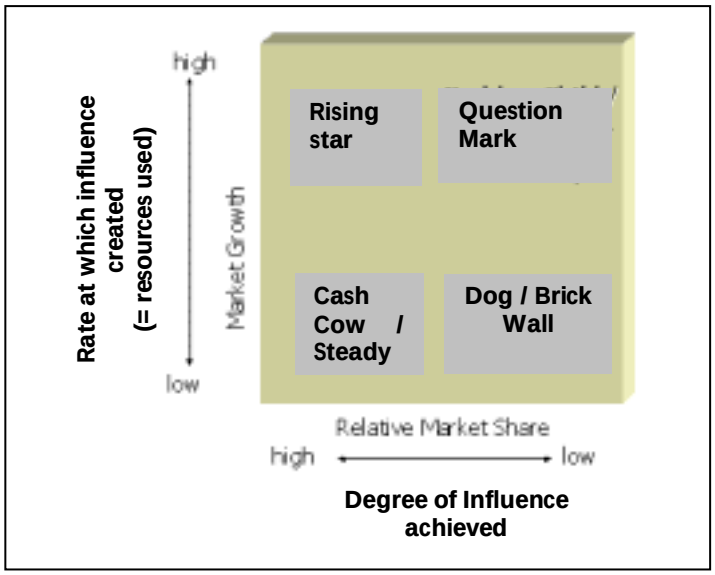
The Boston Box (or Boston Consulting Group Growth-Share Matrix, as it is formally known) is a classic tool of strategic planning and was developed in the early 1970s by Bruce Henderson. The business version of the matrix analyses different products according to their rate of market growth and achieved market share, usually by looking at sales figures. In its adaptation to policy influence the product market share (along the top) becomes the degree of influence generated by a new idea or research, while the market growth (along the side) is the rate at which this influence is being gained, and the (usually proportional) rate at which resources are being consumed.

Many organisations will have more than one influencing project on at time and they may need to consider how to share scarce resources between them, how to assess the potential of an influencing project and what to do when a project has reached the natural end of its life. This is particularly important when credibility and profile – central to any influencing project – are just as scarce as money and time. The Boston Box provides a framework for assessing the life-cycle of a project and allocating resources among different projects and campaigns.

Detailed Outline of the Process

The analysis is best carried out in a group that includes those who resources and manage the organisation's research projects. The first step is to clearly distinguish the different issues being promoted – perhaps there several messages from one research project, or many different research projects all with one message. The next step is to understand the four-stage 'Product Life-Cycle' and identify the position in the cycle of each of the current research and policy influence 'products' or messages.

Figure 14: Boston Box



Source: Adapted from the BCG Growth-Share Matrix

There are four likely stages (represented by the four quadrants of the matrix above):

1. If it is a new issue or project, the amounts of influence created is low to start with, but the campaign is resource intensive and the outcome is unknown. This is a '**question mark**' or '**problem child**'.
2. If the profile among the policy audience has started to grow, and the degree of influence on the up, the project become a '**rising star**'. However, resourcing is likely to be heavy and the organisation may have to stake their reputation and credibility on the issue.
3. If things are fairly advanced and most of the policy audience is convinced, and the expense of communicating, networking and publishing around the issue has slowed, then the issue becomes the **steady ship** because the momentum has been created and progress is sure and almost irreversible. The campaign or issue has essentially been 'won'. (In sales and marketing terminology this is called the **cash cow** stage).
4. If the product or issue has had its hay-day, and the audience or market is looking for the next big idea, then it is likely the influence of the project has dropped. There is no shift in attitude among the policy audience and although it may not consume much in the way of resources, it does tie up staff and capacity. This is called the **brick wall** (or the **dog** in the commercial version)**.**

Is there a project that never grew out of the question mark because it was never properly resourced? Can a project with high audience influence really justify its very high cost? Are there projects that have been around a long time and become dogs? What are the costs of benefits of keeping them on, or not re-launching them? Even the best idea or message can lose its punch, but re-branding and re-packaging can often help, as the example below shows.

A Good Example

Following an exhilarating period of 'star' growth in the early 1970s, the centre party in British politics reached the 'steady ship' in the mid-1970s but was quickly followed by a 'brick wall' in the late 1970s as the party vote declined. At this point the product was re-invented: the 1981 launch of the all new Social Democratic Party saw a 'question mark' quickly rise like a phoenix from the ashes through the 'star' stage to reach the 'steady ship' again. In order to continue growing in influence an influencing group must innovate.

Further Information

- The Boston Box is described in some detail at: www.quickmba.com/strategioes/models/bcg and the www.themanager.org/models/bostonbox.html
- The Campaigning Handbook by Mark Lattimer (www.dsc.org.uk) describes how the Boston Box can be adapted to campaigning
- Further refinement of the Boston Box ideas are addressed by the GE / McKinsey Matrix, which considers market share and growth rate to be only two of many factors that determine an idea or innovation's strength.

Policy Papers

With the policy audience in mind the LGI / Urban Institute have developed a series of guidelines of writing effective policy briefs. Many of the lessons are applicable to developing report summaries, seminar content or web-copy on issues. A policy paper is defined as a problem-oriented, value-driven communication tool designed to aid decision making. Whether targeting other policy specialists or decision-makers, the purpose of the policy paper is:

> 'to provide a comprehensive and persuasive argument justifying the policy recommendations presented in the paper and therefore, to act as a decision-making tool and a call to action for the target audience.'

Box 8: Purpose of a policy paper

A good policy paper should:

- define and detail an urgent policy issue within the current policy framework which needs to be addressed;
- outline the possible ways (policy alternatives) in which this issue can be addressed;
- provide an evaluation of the probable outcomes of these options based on an outlined framework of analysis and the evidence from the current policy framework;
- choose a preferred alternative (policy recommendation) and providing a strong argument to establish why your choice is the best possible policy option.

Sources: Writing Effective Public Policy Papers, A Guide for Policy Advisers in Central and Eastern Europe Eóin Young and Lisa Quinn

The policy paper is considerably different from a traditional academic paper, in that the findings of the research must be applied to the issue in question and used to argue for a specific set of recommendations to address the problem. In fact, Bardach (1996) points out that one of the most common errors that policy paper writers make is to try to include all the data and knowledge produced in the research process. The omission of all counter-posing perspectives, as one might see in an academic essay, is a central dilemma for the evolution of think tanks.

Central to any policy paper the paper is the problem-solution relationship and the writer needs to find a balance between two competing factors:

- the need to provide a comprehensive problem description and discussion of the available policy options within the current policy framework, which may also include the results of the writer's primary research, so that the outlined position seems credible and allows for informed evaluation;
- and the need to present this in a way that only the relevant knowledge and data necessary as evidence to support the argument is included.

This does however present a dilemma:

> 'The idea of the policy paper as a value-driven argument rather than a piece of cold objectivity is another major difference between the policy paper and traditional academic papers. In your paper, there is a necessity to recommend practical solutions for real-world problems to a broad and highly politicized audience. While based on rigorous analysis, there is therefore an evident need for you as the policy specialist to take a position on what you feel would produce the best possible outcome to the problem discussed. Hence, the normative aspect of your decision-making and evaluative process is also a key element of the policy paper. In conclusion…?

> (*Sources*: Writing Effective Public Policy Papers, A Guide for Policy Advisers in Central and Eastern Europe Eóin Young and Lisa Quinn)'

This is an issue that is core to how think tanks operate, and how they position themselves between academia and campaigning or lobbying, as discussed in the introduction.

Networking

Networking is the way in which research results and ideas are communicated not in publications or media, but through human and institutional relationships. It is evident that different types of people play different roles in the diffusion of ideas; as policy entrepreneurs, change agents, leaders, or as a variety of connectors, translators, salespersons, mavens or networkers.

Stone (2000 Networking) identifies four modes and techniques through which policy research institutes engage with one another and with policymakers, business, and civil society: person-to-person, organisational, research and virtual networks (Box 9).

Box 9: Four modes of networking

Person-to-person networking should not be underestimated. It is an important foundation upon which more substantial interactions are often built. Individual exchanges via email as well meetings and 'after-hours' discussions at think tank and other conferences help to build personal relationships. These relationships are essential to effective communication and fruitful research collaboration. This kind of networking could be said to create 'invisible colleges' of policy researchers.

'*Organisational networking'* is the public face of many think tanks. For example, the network style of the International Center for Economic Growth (ICEG) – which has offices in San Francisco, Nairobi, Quezon City, Budapest, and Cairo – is to act as a 'clearing house' for the work produced by hundreds of think tanks it counts as its 'member institutes' in 117 countries. It claims that its website is 'the place to go to find out what is being researched and written around the world by leading policy research institutes,' especially those with an interest in the market economy (www.iceg.org). Its electronic newsletter provides a medium through which institutes are kept abreast of policy research of other institutes.

Another network style is what might be called the '*research network think tank*.' Instead of operating with a full-time, salaried, in-house research staff, some successful think tanks are small organizations that operate through a dispersed network of researchers. For example, the Centre for Economic Policy Research (CEPR), based in London, operates through a network of economists throughout Europe and North America with whom it contracts to produce policy studies. This has the advantage of drawing in a wider range of expertise to an organization and of reducing the salary and overhead costs of maintaining an in-house research capacity. A further feature is the transnationalisation of think tanks. Think tanks have moved offshore and established branch offices. For example, a few American institutes – such as the Heritage Foundation, the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace and Urban Institute – opened offices in Moscow after the collapse of the Soviet Union to 'export' democracy and market reforms.

An additional and more contemporary networking style is that of '*virtual networks*.' Developments in information technology have meant that virtual networks of think tanks can be sustained. OneWorld. (www.oneworld.org) provides easy access to numerous think tanks on the Web. Similarly, the four-week email discussion group convened by the GDN (www.gdnet.org/bonn/) facilitated considerable exchange between research institutes and the wider community of development researchers and practitioners in 37 countries.

Source: Stone (2000) Networking

A Lobbyist's Hierarchies of Need

Many organisations may find the association between lobbying and campaigning deters them from getting the most out of dealings with government. However, much useful lobbying is simply about building relationships with decision-makers and allowing information to flow. Politico describes these levels in a hierarchy of needs: Need to Know, Need to Inform and Need to Negotiate (Box 10) and emphasise that real lobbying only occurs at the third level of negotiation.

Box 10: Hierarchy of lobbying needs

Need to Know is the most important requirement of an organisation and most basic level of government engagement. It can be satisfied by passive monitoring (making sure they know of everything that has happened) or through early warning (making sure they know in advance of likely policy planning or actions that could affect their interests).

Need to Inform involves the organisation building relationships of trust with government officials so that they become willing to use the organisations as a source of the information for making representative policies. It requires knowing, and being known, by the relevant decision-makers who formulate, consider, scrutinise, amend and endorse policies.

Need to Negotiate is a higher level of engagement and relationship still. It involves making representations to the components of the power structure where there is a need to change policy. The bulk of government-related issues are resolved through negotiation backed up by well assembled submissions, though it might also be necessary to ally outside influences, such as the media or public opinion.

Source: Politico p 5-6

Creating noise or being quiet

Many lobbyists emphasise that the effectiveness of lobbying is usually in inverse relation to the amount of noise generated. The most successful players (Politico p7):

- Understand their targets needs, concerns and sensitivities and assemble their arguments accordingly (developing their approach as if developing a product for the market);
- Understand the route map of the system, how it works and where decisions are really made;
- Swim with the tide, wherever possible;
- Work early while policy is still malleable;
- Understand the need to show and prove a constituency of interest.

Other tips for effective lobbying are given in Box 11 and focus on the importance of planning and preparing, building good relations and handling the outcomes of lobbying.

Box 11: Top tips for lobbyists

Planning and Preparing

- Golden rules for drafting a lobbying plan: WHAT is the case, WHO makes the decisions, WHEN do we deal with our targets, HOW do we deal with them, WHY is every action objectively necessary?
- In much lobbying the objective is unrealistic – ask yourself: can we make this a yes-able proposition?
- Always think 'why should you want to know me, deal with this, read this'? Put yourself in their shoes.
- Do less but do it better – most lobbying is done to too many people in not enough depth.
- Every pound spent on research is worth ten spent on lobbying: source every statement or fact, anticipate the arguments against you and deal with them there and then. Do not sweep unconvincing data under the carpet.
- Some basic parliamentary monitoring is useful but high quality intelligence is more important (i.e. actively obtaining views on policy formulation, feedback on representations, attitudes towards you / your organisation)

Building relations

- Make sure there is a point to any contact programme – the system only has so much patience.
- If dealing with government on a day-to-day basis, assess the right level of seniority of official to build up your relationship with
- Use directories, consultants or informants to help identify officials with interests similar to yours
- In 90% of UK and 70% of EU cases parliament changes nothing – you must square your case with officials and Ministers first. Only a few cases are genuinely political.

Winning and losing

- Never crow about your victories
- Do not surprise the system, brief official before you meet Ministers, brief front bench researcher before meeting opposition spokesmen and advise officials before any announcement relevant to them,
- Never get NO on the record, better to withdraw and fight again
- It's never won until its won, there are many case when issues changed at the last minute,

Source: Adapted from Politico, pp312-316

Getting to Yes

The Harvard Negotiating Project has spent many years understanding such human needs in order develop clearer guidelines for those wishing to reach agreement without giving in. They believe that as more attention is devoted to positions, less attention is devoted to meeting the underlying concerns of the parties. In positional bargaining you try to improve the chance of a favourable settlement to you by starting with extreme views and stubbornly holding on to them. It becomes a contest of will with negotiators asserting what they will and won't do. Being nice is also no answer. If you are too concerned about keeping relationships sweet and play a soft game, you run the risk of reaching an agreement that does not serve your needs, especially if the other side plays a hard game. The alternative, proposed in 'Getting to Yes' involves:

- Separating the people from the problem,
- Focusing on interests, not positions,
- Inventing options for mutual gain, and
- Insisting on using objective criteria.

The first point responds to the fact that human beings have emotions. Participants should see themselves as working side by side, attacking the problem, but not each other – there is no reason why they should not empathise with each other's predicament. Taking positions, however, makes things worse, as people's ego become attached to positions. The second point reflects the fact that compromising between positions is not likely to produce an agreement which will effectively take care of the human needs and interests that led people to adopt those positions.

Trying to come up with a solution that successfully fulfils both party's needs and interests requires a creative approach which can often be inhibited by having a lot at stake and being under pressure. It is best to set aside time to lay out options for mutual gain, without any pressure to agree on them. Finally, to ensure that no one party blocks proceeding by being irrational or stubborn, it's important to insist on objective criteria.

Winning people over to your idea

The principles above emphasise managing human emotion separately from the practical problem and highlight the human need to feel heard, understood, respected and valued. Dale Carnegie similarly summarises 12 general and widely relevant principles in the classic 'How to win friends and influence people':

Box 12: 12 principles to win people to your way of thinking

1. The only way to get the best out of an argument is to avoid it.
2. Show respect for the other person's opinions. Never say: 'you're wrong'.
3. If you are wrong, admit it quickly and emphatically
4. Begin in a friendly way.
5. Get the other person saying 'yes, yes' immediately.
6. Let the other person do a great deal of talking.
7. Let the other person feel that the idea is his or hers.
8. Try honestly to see things from the other person's point of view.
9. Be sympathetic with the other person's ideas and desires.
10. Appeal to the nobler motives.
11. Dramatise your ideas.
12. Throw down a challenge.

Source: Carnegie p196-7 (1953)

The 4 Ps of Being Influential

While these principles of persuasiveness should determine the style of communication, the type of person making the case is also important. Wilder calls these the 'the four Ps': passion, position, power and persuasiveness:

- *Passion:* The person must care deeply about the problem, and be convinced of the value of the new idea;
- *Position:* They should have access to key people;
- *Power:* They should ideally have status and influence, across parties,
- *Persuasiveness:* They should have the credibility to be taken seriously and make the case convincingly.

These skills are essential to behind the scenes lobbying, but are also very important in more open processes of public engagement, which we move to next.

Engaging Public Participation

Most think tanks will at some point want to engage in a public consultation or engagement process. The International Association for Public Participation provides a set of core values which it feels such processes should benchmark themselves.

Box 13: IAP2 core values of public participation

The public participation process should:

- Include the promise that the public's contribution will influence the decision
- Communicate the interests and meets the needs of all participants
- Seek out and facilitates the involvement of those potentially affected
- Involve participants in defining how they participate
- Provide participants with the information they need to participate in a meaningful way
- Communicate to participants how their input affected the decision

Source: International Association for Public Participation (Meaningful Participation p16)

Resources

- InterAct: www.interactweb.org.uk and InterAct Networks: www.interactnetworks.co.uk
- David Wilcox's website: www.partnerships.org.uk and www.makingthenetwork.org
- Brock K, A Cornwall and J Gaventa: Power Knowledge and Political Spaces in the Framing of Poverty Policy (2001) Draft report
- IDS: Making Change Happen: Advocacy and Citizen Participation, Dec 2000

Campaigning Alliances: Pros and Cons

Coalitions and alliances are also difficult to form and sustain and can suffer from unrealistic expectations on how much they will agree. Pros and cons for building such partnerships are given in the table below.

Table 6: Pros and cons of campaigning alliances

Advantages	Disadvantages
• Generates more resources • Increases credibility and overall visibility • Provides safety in numbers • Broadens support base • Creates opportunities for new leaders • Creates opportunities for learning • Broadens scope of each member's work • Contributes to strength of civil society	• Distracts from other work • Generates an uneven workload between stronger and weaker members • Requires compromise • Causes tensions due to imbalances of power • Limits individual organisational visibility • Poses risks to reputation

Source: New Weave, Ch17, p312

Tips for establishing campaigning coalitions include (New Weave Ch 17):

- Be clear about the issue people are coming together to create change on
- Develop membership criteria and mechanism for including new members
- Resolve what the coalition will do and not do
- Select a steering committee if the group is large
- Establish a task-force to plan and co-ordinate different activities
- Assess progress periodically and make changes if needed
- Develop a code of conduct to ensure mutual respect and responsibility

Bibliography

For documents and resources not listed in the bibliography, please refer to the 'Resources' table below.

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Stone D (2000b) *Think Tank Transnationalisation and Non-Profit Analysis, Advice and Advocacy.* Global Society, Vol. 14, No. 2.

Surr, M. et al (2002) 'Research for Poverty Reduction: DFID Research Policy Paper', UK Department for International Development (DFID), London.

Resources: Organisations and Websites

(Work in progress. Please contact RAPID with corrections or suggested additions.)

Organisation (or author)	Title of resource, publication or tool /type Author (date) Reference or source	Comments, annotations
Academy for Educational Development	An introduction to advocacy – Training guide. Sharma R R www.aed.org/LeadershipandDemocracy/insleadpublead.cfm	A useful guide specifically geared towards Southern Africa
Advocacy Institute **(with Oxfam America)** **Kumarian Press**	Advocacy for Social Justice: A Global Action and Reflection Guide. David Cohen, Rosa de la Vega and Gabrielle Watson (2001) www.oxfamamerica.org/advocacy_guide/ http://www.oxfamamerica.org/advocacy_guide/directory_search/form.php http://www.oxfamamerica.org/advocacy_guide/publication_search/form.php	Extensive advocacy resources for nonprofits. Also key portal to resources through Advocacy Guide site. This key publication from Oxfam America and the Advocacy Institute provides sections reflecting on advocacy, developing core skills and case studies of successful advocacy from around the world.
Aidsmap	Advocacy Toolkit, including Advocacy in Action Cards www.aidsmap.com/en/docs/D0320EC1-06AE-4102-A65B-8CB20220BEB4.asp#d02b1449-2369-4e28-b57b-d816f288b042	A very thorough, fully downloadable manual on everything from planning, analysing the audience, developing messages and working with the media
Amherst H Wilder Foundation	The Lobbying and Advocacy Handbook for Nonprofits: Shaping Public Policy at the State and Local Level Marcia Avner (2002) www.wilder.org www.wilder.org/pubs/workshts/pubs_worksheets1.html?261lah	The Wilder Research Center, part of the Amherst H. Wilder Foundation in St. Paul, has one of the largest nonprofit applied research and evaluation teams in the United States dedicated solely to the human service field. At the Center's site you can view and/or purchase many of its reports and publications. US charitable foundation publishing a wide range of guidebooks. This handbook provides tools and worksheet downloads if you have purchased the manual.

Amnesty International	Campaigning Manual 1997 http://web.amnesty.org/pages/campaigning-manual-eng	A very thorough manual, fully downloadable, with good sections on planning, techniques, lobbying and evaluation
Benton Foundation	Strategic Communications in the Digital Age (2001) http://www.benton.org/publibrary/toolkits/stratcommtool.html	Best practices and lessons learned by nonprofits about the impact, successes, failures and struggles in using strategic communications. This toolkit catalogues valuable lessons and models for peer learning and reference purposes.
Campaign Strategy	Tips and Tools Chris Rose www.Campaignstrategy.org	A series of free tips and resources from a leading campaign consultant, including 12 basic guidelines, how to turn a failed campaign around, developing messages, analysing the forces of change and testing a strategy.
CARE	Advocacy Tools and Guidelines – Promoting Policy Change Sprechmann, Sofia and Emily Pelton, 2001 www.careusa.org/getinvolved/advocacy/tools.asp	Very comprehensive general manual on advocacy planning and implementation
Chapter 2	Resources pages http://www.chapter2.org.za/resources.php	Chapter 2 is a project of the Institute for Democracy in South Africa to support the voice of civil society organisations.
Common Purpose 'Just Do Something'	www.justdosomething.net/xsp/xsc.asp?uri=/home/zone/toolkit	Basic toolkit for citizens who want to start their own campaign
Communications Initiative	Drumbeat newsletter Comm for Dev e-group http://www.comminit.com/ http://www.comminit.com/drum_beat.html http://www.comminit.com/commfordevnews.html	The Communication Initiative provides a forum for ideas, stories and actions for effective communication of international development issues.
Corporate Watch	www.geocities.com/RainForest/canopy/2065/index.html	Article on how to set-up your own campaign (reproduced from Spring 1999, Issue 8)
Cultural Dynamics, Strategy and Marketing	Values Modes Chris Rose www.cultdyn.co.uk/VMPages/index.html http://www.tochrisrose.free-online.co.uk/maslow_campaign.doc	A framework based on Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, for understanding how different actors are motivated towards change.

DEMOS	Network Logic; Who governs in an interconnected world? Including: Helen McCarthy, Paul Miller, Paul Skidmore 2004 http://www.demos.co.uk/networklogic_pdf_media_public.aspx	Relevant chapters on: 03 – Towards a theory of government – Karen Stephenson 06 – Networks, knowledge and innovation – David H Hargreaves 17 – Afterword: why networks matter – Manuel Castells
DFID, Social Development Division	Communications and Development: a practical guide Burke, Adam (1999) http://62.189.42.51/DFIDstage/Pubs/files/c_d.pdf	Practical guide to use of communications media in development programmes (written with DFID programmes in mind). Why communication is important? Guide to implement development communication programmes. Guide to using specific media (including drama (theatre and video), television, radio, ICTs (including internet, email), advocacy, public relations and networks.
Directory of Social Change	www.dsc.org.uk/acatalog/catalogbody.html	Publishers of several useful manuals for NGOs.
EAGER (Equity and Growth through Economic Research)	www.eagerproject.com www.eagerproject.com/evaluation.PDF	A USAID research project with special emphasis on producing policy change. Mid-term report from 1999 available for download.
EDIAIS (Enterprise Development Impact Assessment Information Service), DFID	'What Do We Do With The Information': From Practical Conclusions To Influencing Change Thinking it through: using diagrams for assessment design and information analysis' Linda Mayoux http://www.enterprise-impact.org.uk/index.shtml http://www.enterprise-impact.org.uk/informationresources/toolbox/thinkingitthrough.shtml	Explores the use of diagrams such as trees and flow diagrams, cognitive mapping, Venn diagrams and network diagrams which provide a useful aid to think though information and knowledge gaps.
Eldis	Resource Guide on Influencing Policy http://www.eldis.org/policy/index.htm	A short guide to current resources in the Eldis database related to policy influence.
EU/UNFPA Initiative for Reproductive Health in Asia	Dealing with media: a practical guide van Kampen, J.(2002) http://www.asia-initiative.org/pdfs/media_guide.pdf	A basic guide outlining reasons and methods for Southern NGOs to engage with the media.

Fahamu / IDRC	Writing for change; Manual on effective writing skills Barker, A.; Manji, F.; IDRC; Fahamu / Fahamu , 2002 http://www.fahamu.org/WFCEng/index.html	An excellent guide to effective writing, aimed at researchers, campaigners, scientists, fundraisers, project managers, social activists and people who train writers. It includes practical examples and exercises.
Feminist Utopia	www.amazoncastle.com/feminism/feminism.htm	A comprehensive, feminist-oriented, series of resources and links for activists.
Fenton Communications for Packard Foundation	Now Hear This – The Nine Laws of Successful Advocacy Communications www.fenton.com/resources/nht_report.asp	Free report summarising views of 25 "leading figures" in campaigns and communications. Nine steps take an organisation from planning, through audience analysis through to budgeting and capacity to deliver.
Frameworks Institute	Strategic Frame Analysis www.frameworksinstitute.org/strategicanalysis/index.shtml	Strategic Frame Analysis tools explore how the public think about a particular social or political issue. What is the public discourse on the issue? And how is this discourse influenced by the way media frames that issue? How do these public and private frames affect public choices? How can an issue be reframed to evoke a different way of thinking, one that illuminates a broader range of alternative policy choices?
Friends of the Earth Scotland	www.foe-scotland.org.uk/pubs/pubs_index.html	A comprehensive series of handbooks on campaigning for the environment, including one on dealing with 'science' and scientists. Gives an example of what campaign plans and support can look like.
The Futures Groups Inc	www.tfgi.com	Managed the USAID funded POLICY project from 1995–2000, focused on reproductive health. See entry under Policy Project.
GDN Global **Development Network, Washington**	GDN Toolkit: Disseminating Research Online http://www.gdnet.org/online_services/toolkits/disseminating_research_online/	Provides broad tips and practical suggestions for communicating academic research using the internet. It draws on best practice for web strategies from the information and commercial worlds, especially selected to help the successful electronic dissemination of your research.
Gladwell.com	The Tipping Point Malcolm Gladwell (2000), www.gladwell.com/books2.html#excerpts	A popular book about how big ideas spread and behaviour is changed.
GRIPP (Getting Research into Practice and Policy)	GRIPP Resources www.gripp-resources.org	This web site is a resource for researchers to help them change policy by directly accessing and communicating with policy makers. The sometimes basic guidance and resource links are split into: Development of the research question, Communication strategies, Utilisation of research, findings, Evaluation of research findings, Facilitating factors.

IDeA Improvement and Development Agency	Futures Thinking guide sheets www.idea.gov.uk/knowledge Guidance on enhancing public participation in local government www.idea.gov.uk/knowledge > then search for odpm_locgov_pdf_023830	Series of guide sheets introducing future-basing, creativity tools, scenario planning and systematic inventive thinking. All these tools can help an organisation think creatively about future policy options and solutions. The 'Guidance' document concentrates on public participation that is deliberately stimulated by local authorities and has a good set of links to further resources
IDRC (International Development Research Centre)	Cases, Concepts and Connections: The Influence of Research on Public Policy http://web.idrc.ca/en/ev-26606-201-1-DO_TOPIC.html	Useful discussion on practical frameworks for understanding research policy linkages. Also an interesting short paper (2003) by Carol Weiss, of Harvard University, summarising the findings.
IDS (Institute of Development Studies)	Participation Resource Centre www.ids.ac.uk/ids/particip/information/index.html	The Participation Group at the IDS is a specialist research and resource centre for practitioners in participation and engagement in development.
IGC (Institute for Global Communications)	Advocacy Tips for Nonprofits Michael Stein www.igc.apc.org/html/advocacy.html	IGC offers these links to the following online resources as part of our commitment to helping nonprofits working on advocacy campaigns get the most out of the Internet today. There is also find a section on general support resources for nonprofits online, focusing on using email effectively, online fundraising, working with Application Service Providers, and doing outreach online.
IIED (International Institute for Environment and Development)	Power Tools – Tools for Working on Policies and Institutions. James Mayers www.iied.org/forestry/tools	A series of tools on power analysis, based on forestry experience, including: Stakeholder Power Analysis, Conceptualising Policies and Institutions, Stakeholder Influence Mapping The Pyramid
Interact Networks	www.interactweb.org.uk/welcome.htm www.interactnetworks.co.uk	A series of resources and case studies about participation and community engagement in policy decisions.
International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF).	Advocacy guide for sexual and reproductive health and rights www.ippf.org/pubs/advocacyguide/	Useful advocacy guide

INTRAC (The International NGO Training and Research Centre)	Advocacy and Policy Influencing www.intrac.org/Intrac/INTRACTraining_en.html Rick James What Makes Cso Coalitions Effective? Lessons From Malawi (OPS No.38)	Training in advocacy and policy influencing. Also has publications on CSO coalition building.
IPAS / University of Toronto	Handbook for advocacy in the African human rights system: Advancing reproductive and sexual health http://www.ipas.org/english/publications/international_health_policies.asp http://www.ipas.org/publications/en/handbook_advocacy_african_ch1-6.pdf	This handbook was created to familiarise advocates with the regional human rights system and its treaty body, The African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights, created to promote and protect sexual and reproductive health.
John McNutt Graduate School of Social **Work, Boston College** **University of Massachusetts**	Electronic Advocacy John McNutt www.geocities.com/john_g_mcnutt/electron.htm	Overview of internet-based campaigning and advocacy methods
Johns Hopkins University	"A" frame for advocacy www.jhuccp.org/pr/advocacy Marketing Lori Gerstley, Michal Bucko http://www.jhu.edu/~ccss/pubs/books/ http://www.jhu.edu/~tsp/publicat.htm	A short overview of the advocacy process from analysis, strategy, mobilisation, action, evaluation to continuity Nonprofits produce much that is of value – not just products and services, but also ideas and innovations. Their marketing strategies, while similar to those used by for-profit companies, must relay the mission of the organisation and the values that shape its activities. This handbook addresses these issues.
Joseph Rowntree Foundation and David Wilcox	The Guide to Effective Participation D Wilcox (1994) www.partnerships.org.uk/guide/index.htm	A comprehensive guide to participation and engagement, available online as a download.

Just Associates	'New Weave': VeneKlasen, L and Miller, V (2002) New Weave of Power, People and Politics: The Action Guide for Advocacy and citizen Participation, World Neighbours. -and- Making Change Happen: Advocacy and Citizen Particpation www.justassociates.org/index.htm www.justassociates.org/ActionGuide.htm www.justassociates.org/MakingChangeReport.pdf www.justassociates.org/PoliticsofKnowledgeinAdvocacy.doc http://www.justassociates.org/TipsforPlanningAdvocacy.doc http://www.justassociates.org/toolsforanalyzingpower.doc	An excellent guide, geared for smaller, advocacy NGOs in developing countries, with many tools, diagrams and frameworks. Three chapters available as free download. Also publish associated report from Nov 2001 conference, and provide online tools in Politics of Knowledge in Advocacy, Tips for Planning Advocacy, and Tools for Analyzing Power
Kogan Page	Marketing Communications P R Smith, and Taylor www.kogan-page.co.uk/smithtaylor/contents.htm	A accessible and useful text on marketing strategy
LGI (Local Government and Public Sector Reform initiative) and Urban institute	Managing Think Tanks: Practical Guidance for Maturing Organizations 2002 http://lgi.osi.hu/ http://lgi.osi.hu/publications/default.asp?id=121	A very thorough handbook for think tank managers with a chapter on communications.
LGI (Local Government and Public Sector Reform initiative)	Writing Effective Public Policy Papers: A Guide To Policy Advisers in Central and Eastern Europe Eyin Young, Lisa Quinn (2002) http://lgi.osi.hu/ http://lgi.osi.hu/publications/default.asp?id=112	Practical guide specifically geared to think tanks
Logolink	Learning Initiative on Citizen Participation and Local Government http://www.ids.ac.uk/logolink/resources/index.htm	LogoLink is a global network of practitioners from civil society organisations, research institutions and governments working to deepen democracy through greater citizen participation in local governance. Many reports available plus links to regional resource centres.

Marketing Teacher	Marketing Teacher Learning Tools http://www.marketingteacher.com/index.html	A very useful source of basic marketing strategy tools. Its free 'lessons store' includes such staples as the Boston and Ansoff matrices. You can also sign up to a free newletter.
Michigan State University	Michigan Public Policy Handbook: A Lobbying Guide for 501(c)(3) Nonprofits http://www.mnaonline.org/pdf/PublicPolicyHandbookTEXT.pdf	Free download, with good advice mostly geared to US NGOs
Mind Tools	Mind Tools http://www.mindtools.com/index.html	Lists many management and planning decision-making tools such as force field analysis, SWOT and the Boston Box under headings of Practical Creativity, Problem Solving, Decision Making, Project Planning and Management, Communication Skills.
Mycoted	Creativity Techniques http://www.mycoted.com/creativity/techniques/index.php	A huge resource of over 100 tools used to think and plan more creatively for solutions to problems. Many can be adapted to policy conundrums.
Oneworld Net	Green Media Tools Shed http://www.greenmediatoolshed.org/toolstour/index.html	The Guide contains the examples of successful activism strategies and a small but growing collection of campaign manuals, handbooks, and planning tools targeted at civil society in developing world. Target group is researchers and practitioners, particularly those in the South.
Open Sky Press	www.openskypress.org/	Lots of links to online resources for activists – training, ideas and handbooks
Oxfam America	Networking for Policy Change: An Advocacy Training Manual www.oxfamamerica.org/advocacy_guide/	Publishes advocacy training manuals with (and see) Oxfam America. Covers building networks, analysing the policy process and managing a campaign.
Oxfam UK	www.oxfam.org.uk	Oxfam's PRS advocacy guide.
Policy Project	www.policyproject.com http://www.cedpa.org/publications/index.html	USAID funded project to influence the policy environment in 50 countries around reproductive health. Produced *Networking for Policy Change: An Advocacy Training Manual* available from CEDPA.
Protest Net	Activists' Handbook http://protest.net/activists_handbook/	Available online, with tips on coalitions and media
Radio Advertising Bureau	www.rab.co.uk/	A site with comprehensive information about communicating by radio.
Rainforest Action Network	Activist Toolbox – Campaign Strategy 101 www.ran.org/action/toolbox/campaign_strategy.html	A useful summary of the importance of, and steps in, planning a policy influence campaign.

Save the Children fund	'Closing the Circle' From measuring policy change to assessing policies in practice Development Dialogue Team www.savethechildren.org.uk/development	A review of learning on how to evaluate the impact of advocacy work, including looking at longer term organisational learning and capacity outcomes as well as short term policy change goals.
Semiotics	Semiotics for Beginners Daniel Chandler http://www.aber.ac.uk/media/Documents/S4B/semiotic.html www.semiotic.co.uk/home	These resources provide background on the (sophisticated) art of 'semiotics': discovering the underlying messages contained in images and text.
Stanford University – Robert Horn **Co-Intelligence Institute**	Knowledge Mapping http://www.stanford.edu/~rhorn/ (for an overview, see http://www.stanford.edu/~rhorn/a/recent/spchKnwldgPACKARD.pdf).	Knowledge mapping (=issue mapping) offers a resource for deliberation about issues or problems. It allows groups to lay out what they collectively know, visually clarifying relationships among the relevant factors, actors, sectors, etc., involved with the problem being deliberated.
Tutor2U	Tutor 2U www.tutor2u.net http://www.tutor2u.net/revision_notes_marketing.asp http://www.tutor2u.net/revision_notes_strategy.asp	Free resources and detailed sections on strategy and also marketing.
University College London (UCL), Development Planning Unit (DPU)	Participation, relationships and dynamic change: new thinking on evaluating the work of international networks Methods for the evaluation and monitoring of networks Church, M.; Bitel, M.; Armstrong, K.; Fernando, P.; Gould, H.; Joss, S.; Marwaha-Diedrich, M.; de la Torre, A.; Vouhé, C (2003) http://www.ucl.ac.uk/dpu/publications/working%20papers%20pdf/WP121.pdf	Looks at how to make monitoring and evaluation real and useful for networks. This is accompanied by an analysis of what a network means, what it means to work in a networked way, what holds a network together and what facilitates its functioning.
University of Warwick	Capturing the Political Imagination; Think Tanks and the Policy Process Stone, Diane (1996)	Now ten years old, but still a good introduction to think tanks and the policy process.
Urban Institute (Centre on Nonprofits and Philanthropy)	Research Initiative on Nonprofit Advocacy www.urban.org/advocacyresearch/index.html	Background paper and series of seminars, plus some very comprehensive bibliographies on coalitions and the law regarding nonprofit advocacy.

USAID, Washington	Making a Difference to Policies and Programs: A Guide for Researchers Porter, RW and S Prysor-Jones (1997) http://sara.aed.org/publications/cross_cutting/policy_programs/html/eng_intro.htm	Short guide for researchers who aim to have an impact on policy and programme decisions. It is intended for researchers attached to government services and researchers located in academic institutions, as well as researchers working as consultants in the private sector.
Virtual Activist 2.0	Virtual Activist Training Course Audrie Krause, Michael Stein,Judi Clark, Theresa Chen, Jasmine Li, Josh Dimon, Jennifer Kanouse, and Jill Herschman www.netaction.org/training/	An online training course to help nonprofits to make the most of the Internet for advocacy, activism and campaigning. It covers email, mailing lists, advocacy, membership development and fundraising.
WEDC, Water, Engineering and Development Centre, **Loughborough University**	Spreading the Word Saywell, D and A Cotton (1999) www.lboro.ac.uk/departments/cv/wedc/publications/snstw/snstw.pdf Dissemination pathways and indicators of impacts on development: a review of the literature WEDC (2000) www.lboro.ac.uk/departments/cv/wedc/projects/stw/lr6.pdf	Practical guidelines for research dissemination strategies
World Bank	Strategic Communication for Development Projects: A Toolkit for Task Team Leaders Cecilia Cabañero-Verzosa www.worldbank.org/developmentcommunications/Publications/toolkit-web_jan2004.pdf	Toolkit for implementation of communications activities in population, health and nutrition projects. It reviews the basic principles of communication for behaviour change.