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ADVOCATE BETTER, FAIRLY AND DIFFERENTLY:

A capacity building module

Navigating contextual turbidity for meaningful climate action
in the time of the pandemic

Asia Climate Change Consortium

ADVOCATE BETTER, FAIRLY AND DIFFERENTLY:

Navigating contextual turbidity towards meaningful climate action in the time of the pandemic

Climate change will drastically change the way by which human beings will survive and thrive if hazards threatening exposed and vulnerable humans and natural, physical, economic, social, cultural assets remain unaddressed.   The urgency for climate action was apparent and commitment for determined interventions were required of all stakeholders before COP 26 in 2020. The advocacy pathways were clear for those who wanted to engage.   Then, COVID 19 came.

In Asia, COVID 19 led to required physical distancing, further marginalization in various spheres of policy advocacy engagement, and exclusion and social disconnection.   Those who lack knowledge in and access to and skills in the use of connectivity technologies and those with resource constraints are particularly disadvantaged.

However, the challenges in advocacy at the time of the pandemic have their own opportunities. Cyberspace is a navigable space—and relatively accessible. Navigating that cyberspace online is a skill that can be learned. Moreover, substantial financial resources may not be necessary for engagement engage as no travel or in situ meetings will be required in most contexts. Meaningful collaboration, dialogues, engagement are still possible where there is compliance to health protocols.

This document aims to build capacities for BETTER, FAIR, and DIFFERENT ways of doing climate change advocacy in the time of the pandemic:

- BETTER in the sense that advocacy interventions are effective and efficient.
- FAIR because it gives space for those who are most affected to articulate their aspirations and claim spaces where their voices should be heard.
- DIFFERENT because the climate change advocacy context and platforms have changed.

Module 1. Climate Change Advocacy

Objective: At the end of this module, the participants are able to

1. Explain what climate change advocacy for climate action means;
2. Articulate what climate change policy advocacy is all about

Time Frame: 30 minutes

Methodology:

1. When dealing with participants
   1.1 who are well connected to the internet: Using applications such as mentimeter, ask participants what advocacy means for them and use the application to get responses from participants. Alternatives to the mentimeter include slido, kahoots, prezi, aha slides among others.
   1.2 Who are challenged by internet connection and by hardware and software limitations but your are allowed to meet them face to face:
       1.2.1 Strictly follow health protocols especially on physical distancing, wearing of facemask and face shield, hand washing;
       1.2.2 In a focused group discussion set up, ask participants what advocacy means for them using meta cards that can be posted on a wall or the floor;
2. Allow participants to briefly explain their responses
3. Discuss the what advocacy and climate change advocacy is to them using visual aids whether online or in face-to-face mode
4. As participants what they think is most needed in their respective contexts: behavior, practice, or policy change on climate change?

Core Messages

1. Advocacy is defined as an act or a process of getting support for something you believe in. Advocacy covers a range of activities that is normally organized in a process, supported by a clear Theory of Change, to meet desired outcomes;

   1.1 The desired outcome can come in the form of behavior change at the individual level;
   1.2 Change can also come in the form of practice change at the institutional or organizational level. This change can happen at the planning, implementation, monitoring, evaluation, learning initiatives.
   1.3 Lastly, the change can happen in policies through policy reform or formulation.

2. Getting support for an advocacy agenda, can be done through various means: campaigns, influencing decision-making processes, dialogues, participatory action researches, joint action, among many other measures.

3. Climate change advocacy, then, can be an initiative or a group of initiatives aimed at bringing support to climate change-related actions. If this will be put in the context of the Paris agreement, these will be either behavior, practice, or policy change aimed at

    3.1 Keeping temperature increase at below 2°C or 1.5°C and below through mitigation (reduction of historical and/or current greenhouse gas emissions);

    3.2 adaptation (transformations necessary to survive and thrive in the face of near and future climate risks);

    3.3 averting loss and damage (through risk management and resilience measures in the face of current hazards resulting from historical emissions and enhanced by human-induced changes in the climate system;

    3.4 making technologies, that facilitate mitigation, adaptation, risk management, and resilience, accessible to all stakeholders;

    3.5 securing climate financial especially for the most at risk and the most vulnerable.

4. Climate change policy advocacy, unlike behavior and practice advocacy, is specifically targeted at achieving support for policy formulation and reform on matters related to mitigation, adaptation, risk management and resilience, technology transfer, and climate finance that can curb rising temperature, enable survival and sustainable development in the face of climate change -related hazards.

Module 2. Challenges and Opportunities in Climate Change Advocacy in the time of Pandemic: What is it about?

Objective: At the end of this module, the participants are able to identify

1. the challenges to climate change advocacy during and post pandemic;
2. The opportunities to climate change advocacy during and post pandemic

Time frame: 30 minutes

Methodology

1. Ask participants to share their most challenging advocacy experience during the pandemic and why in 1 sentence. Give an example.
    1.1 Use online applications where possible;
    1.2 Where opportunities for face-to-face meeting are possible, first ensure compliance to health protocols.   Using paper, participants will be requested to write their answers and pin them on a wall and lay them down on the ground. Those who are unable to write can share their answers verbally.
2. Process the answers and share the result of the capacity assessment done with ACCC.
3. Ask participants what, they think, is the difference from what has been shared by ACCC and by their experiences?
4. Ask the participants what is their most important realization from the session

Core Messages

Covid19-impacted Policy Advocacy Work: there are specific areas of policy advocacy work that are vulnerable to COVID 19 contexts. Below are some examples from those engaged with ACCC:

Most affected	Moderately affected
Movement building	Accessing collecting information on climate vulnerability, hazards, impacts to support decision-making
Campaigns	Other types of policy research
Meetings for planning	Other types of netwrking
Dialogues with stakeholders	Community organizing
	Implementation of programmes and projects
	Climate negotiations (national and international)
	Lobbying with decision makers

	Monitoring and evaluating activities and meetings

Factors affecting capacity to do policy advocacy

1. Health protocols affecting face-to-face meetings
2. Government regulation on travel
3. Inadequacy in bridging capital (In advocacy, this refers to the capacity of persons to link with individuals and institutions that can support their cause or agenda)
4. Diminished funding support
5. Lack of capacity to innovate

In as much as there are challenges to climate change advocacy, there are also opportunities available

Challenges	Opportunities
Using digital platforms	Navigating cyberspace is a skill that can be learned; Climate youth groups who are more adept at navigating digital plat forms
Partnering with scientific institutions	Bridging capital within the existing movement Future Earth's emphasis on transdisciplinary research and action
Preparing policy papers	Opportunities for joint reflection and action
Partnering with climate finance institutions	Bridging capital within the existing movement Inclusion as part of the Strategy Paper of financial institutions
Lobbying with decision makers Reaching out to decision-makers	Online accessibility of decision makers
Inclusivity in advocacy	Platforms and portals for inclusion opened up by some institutions
Movement building online	Access to online platforms for solidarity
Networking	Access to online platforms for solidarity Bridging capital
Community organizing	Network with community-managed in-situ organizations Resources to support capacity building on use of online platforms Knowledge and skills to comply with health protocols
Online visibility	Access to online platforms Climate youth groups who are more adept at navigating digital plat forms
Partnering with support groups	Bridging capital Accessibility of support groups online
Accessing funding	

Module 3. Advocating Differently

At the end of the activity, the participants will be able to

1. Articulate options on how to advocate in the midst of COVID 19 challenges
2. Share on concrete advocacy innovations

Time Frame 1 hour and 30 minutes

Methodology

1.

Core Message

1. We need to accept the fact the we are at a "new normal" in this phase of global change.
    1.1 characterized by multiple intertwined crises (rising inequalities, biodiversity loss, climate change, COVID 19 that revealed interlocked vulnerabilities according to IIED[i]
    1.2 transformations in the period of climate and COVID19 risks: sectoral interactions (health, food, energy, water); temporal interactions (GhG emissions, emissions behavior change, frequency of extreme events, disaster impacts); spatial interactions; multiple response options interactions (e.g. airconditioning and urban greening addressing heat deaths arising from heat waves resulting from rising GhG emissions) according to Simpson, et. al, 2020[ii]
    1.3 COVID 19 lessons for climate emergency: high momentum trends, irreversible changes, social and spatial inequality, weakening of international solidarity, and more expensive to cure than to prevent according to Manazedo and Manning (2020)[iii]

2. We need to do our advocacy on climate change differently not because we just want to be different. We need to change the way of doing things as a way of adapting to the new normal.

3. Adapt to the new normal

    Learning from PATH, a health advocacy organization, we adapted some lessons in their advocacy reflections applied some lessons on working differently

    3.1 Be sensitive and responsive to change: first assess policy and service-delivery. In the context of climate change advocacy, also analyze stage implementation of climate change commitments. Find novel and creative ways of communicating those policy and practice gaps. You can also identify specific behavior gaps that people can relate with.
    3.2 Focus on the end goal: in climate change advocacy, we focus on the targets of Paris Agreement. The work cannot be hampered by COVID 19. Thus, urgent climate action must remain in the policy and practice agenda.
    3.3 Examine partnerships and identify effective and efficient communicators and influencers, while setting aside organizational egos. In climate change advocacy, we can always revisit

the strengths as well as weaknesses of our alliances and see who amongst us can deliver messages and be the best influences for a specific area of climate work.

3.4 Do not lose community voices while implementing strategies virtually (we will explain this further in the subsequent modules)

3.5 Rethink approaches to accountability: While holding duty-bearers accountable, change in approaches will be required. We have to entertain new ways of ensuring accountability and explore a range of options from campaigns to dialogues and collaboration that inform decision-making.

3.6 Mindfulness: We focus on the urgency of the climate emergency but we should not lose sight of the health and safety of all those engaged in the advocacy. After all, climate change advocacy is about ensure survival and sustainable development of lives and natural, physical, human, social, environment, cultural, economic assets.

4. The need for innovations (innovation pathways adapted from Besseant and Tidd, 2018)[iv]

4.1 'Product innovation' – ideas on changes in the things (products/services) which an organisation offers (in advocacy tools and methods)

    4.1.1 digital platforms

    4.1.2 shift to networks on cyberspace

    4.1.3 revisiting and innovating on culturally-sensitive indigenous ways of doing advocacy

4.2 'Process innovation' – ideas on changes in the ways in which products and services are created or delivered (in how we deliver advocacy)

    4.2.1 online

    4.2.2 increased use of social media and arts

    4.2.3 fact to face but with application of COVID 19 health protocols

    4.2.4 new forms of mobility (navigating cyberspace; learning to navigate cyber roads and highways)

    4.2.5 Online movement building, lobbying, campaigning

    4.2.6 Sensitivity to gender roles of various stakeholders as we do online advocacy

4.3 'Position innovation' – ideas on changes in the context in which the products/services are framed and communicated (in the way we position our advocacy in the context of COVID 19)

    4.3.1 Advocate for climate action in the context of green recovery

    4.3.2 Positioning faith in climate and COVID risk contexts

    4.3.3 Challenging new modes of inequality and inequity of access in the time of the pandemic and climate risks

4.4 'Paradigm innovation' – changes in the underlying mental models which shape what the organisation does (changes in our frameworks of analysis)

    4.4.1 Reflecting on what climate just is and how it can be operationalized in the context of green recovery

    4.4.2 New modes of doing advocacy: trans-disciplinary approaches

Module 4. Advocating Better

At the end of the activity, the participants will be able to

1.   Illustrate how climate change advocacy can be done better using specific examples

Time Frame 1 hour and 30 minutes

Methodology

1.   Using the same or similar online or face-to-face modalities, ask participants to share what they did to make the advocacy actions more effective and efficient;
2.   A brief Q and A follows among participants.
3.   A discussion on the core messages follows.

Core Messages

1.   The innovations presented in the previous module may not be all novel. Nonetheless, advocating better demands that, even as we utilize existing approaches and tools, we find ways by which these advocacy modalities can be used efficiently and effectively.

2.   Some insights from ACCC members who continued to advocate during the pandemic:

2.1 Observance of health protocols (Climate Watch Thailand): in the past, health protocols were not really observed in face-to-face meetings. COVID 19 taught us that face-t0-face engagements with community partners are still possible where organizations are prepared to comply with the health guidance provided by the World Health Organization and health specialists.

2.2 Evidence-based advocacy (ACCC and IPCC scientists): COVID 19 led many scientific institutions to be more open to engagement with other stakeholders. This is also supported by the preference of Future Earth for trans-disciplinary approaches. Thus, there is an opportunity for various stakeholders to establish concrete evidence on how climate stressors influence humans and other assets that lead to negative impacts which duty-bearers need to address. ACCC developed better understanding and appreciation of the science of climate change and its impacts with the help of IPCC scientists.

2.3 Change Agility (Green ID, Living Laudato Si, BRAC, Aksyon Klima Pilipinas): As the world tries to make sense of the intertwined crises, those are more agile and able to adapt quickly will have greater chances of surviving advocacy challenges. For instance, those who were more prepared were quicker at shifting their advocacy via digital platforms. As a result they were very able to communicate their and their partners opinions on potential behavior, practice, or policy change decision making processes during the period of the pandemic.

They were able to engage with national decision-makers on the formulation and submission of the Nationally-Determined Contributions, other UNFCCC negotiations stakeholders, and enabling other stakeholders such as faith-based organizations to mobilize stronger climate change action amongst their constituents and relevant duty-bearers.

2.4 Work towards sustainability of policy advocacy outcomes (NGO Forum Cambodia and Aksyon Klima): Aim to mainstream climate change action in government budget so that climate action is guaranteed even beyond the life of advocacy actions.

3. Lessons from other advocacy initiatives
On advocating effectively during the pandemic[v] :

3.1 Maximizing online platforms minimizes carbon footprint;
3.2 Pushing for more interactive online platforms especially during high level events;
3.3 Groundswell: facilitate a bottom-up, evidence-based advocacy modalities that use creative approaches with higher frequency and resonance to build constituencies
3.4 Attention to communication pathways directly connecting to target decision-makers or stakeholders especially during virtual lobby at the period of negotiations.
3.5 Humanizing digital communications

Note: Examples are discussed in the following link https://www.devex.com/news/opinion-how-to-advocate-effectively-in-the-age-of-covid-19-96812

On better digital advocacy:[vi]

3.6 What is the target outcome of the advocacy action?
3.7 Identify specific target audience
3.8 Identify a specific social channel that meets capacities, interests, accessibility of target audience
3.9 Content that captures attention is important
3.10 Monitor reach and adapt strategies and approaches where needed

Module 5. Advocating Fairer

At the end of the activity, the participants will be able to

1.   Illustrate how climate change advocacy can be done in more fair and manner using specific examples

Time Frame 1 hour and 30 minutes

Methodology

1.   Using the same or similar online or face-to-face modalities, ask participants to share what they can do to ensure that climate change advocacy actions are done in the spirit of climate justice;
4.   A brief Q and A follows among participants.
5.   A discussion on the core messages follows.

Core Messages

1.   Climate justice demands that climate actions are responsive to the needs of those most affected by climate impacts arising from historical, current, and even future emissions;

2.   Those who are most affected by current hazards and those most vulnerable to current, near/mid/far future climate change hazards must be given a voice in advocacy platforms.

3.   Some insights from ACCC members who continued to advocate during the pandemic:

   3.1 Endeavor to build capacities amongst community and grassroot organizations to participate in digital platforms (Climate Watch Thailand): Never underestimate capacities of the most vulnerable to learn how to engage in cyberspace and other digital platforms
   3.2 Consider that, in the new normal, those engaged in advocacy work are also multi-tasking. So be considerate of their gender roles when scheduling meetings and advocacy-related activities (AKSI Indonesia)
   3.3 Moreover, never underestimate capacities of non-academics and non-scientists to understand climate science (Coastal Cities at Risk Ph, Aksyon Klima, Community Crafts and Arts; ACT Alliance Asia Pacific, CORDEX-SEA): Trans-disciplinary modalities of engagement have helped scientists communicate climate change science and climate risks and resilience better to non-scientists. Other stakeholders have also learned how to communicate their questions and concerns better to scientists. Together, they have built a practice of evidence-based advocacy in climate change.
   3.4 When doing advocacy for specific sectors (e.g fisheries or agriculture), work through the value chain to include and address practical and strategic needs per sector.
   3.5 The new normal has created new forms of marginalization. This includes far lesser opportunities for interaction with major decision-makers and negotiators in climate change especially in online platforms where other stakeholders can only view but not interact during a webinar or a for a. Asset the people's right to participate in the formulation of climate

policies and action (Aksyon Klima, NGO Forum Cambodia, Climate Watch Thaila, Living Laudato Si, Green ID, ACT Alliance Asia Pacific)

3.6 Part of being fair is being kind to each other, supporting each other through the challenges, impediments as well as opportunities in climate change advocacy (ACCC). Movement building will demand of us to scaffold and empower each other.

[i] https://www.iied.org/green-recovery-covid-19-not-without-climate-nature-development-solutions

[ii] Nicholas P. Simpson, Katharine J. Mach, Andrew Constable, Jeremy Hess, Ryan Hogarth, Mark Howden, Judy Lawrence, Robert J. Lempert, Veruska Muccione, Brendan Mackey, Mark G. New, Brian O'Neill, Friederike Otto, Hans-O. Pörtner, Andy Reisinger, Debra Roberts, Daniela N. Schmidt, Sonia Seneviratne, Steven Strongin, Maarten van Aalst, Edmond Totin, Christopher H. Trisos,, A framework for complex climate change risk assessment, One Earth, Volume 4, Issue 4, 2021,
https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2590332221001792

[iii] Rubén D. Manzanedo, Peter Manning, COVID-19: Lessons for the climate change emergency, Science of The Total Environment, Volume 742, 2020, 140563, ISSN 0048-9697,
https://doi.org/10.1016/j.scitotenv.2020.140563.

[iv] Joe Tidd and John Bessant, 2018, Managing Innovation: Integrating Technological, Market and Organizational Change, 6th Edition, https://www.wiley.com/en-us/Managing+Innovation%3A+Integrating+Technological%2C+Market+and+Organizational+Change%2C+6th+Edition-p-9781119379454

[v] Donna Bowater, Opinion: How to advocate effectively in the age of COVID-19, 23 March 2020,
https://www.devex.com/news/opinion-how-to-advocate-effectively-in-the-age-of-covid-19-96812

[vi] Digital Advocacy: The good, the bad and the UGLY, 23 January 2018, https://medium.com/pollicy/digital-advocacy-the-good-the-bad-and-the-ugly-f861791030c9