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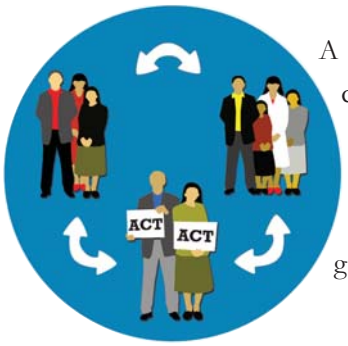
Introduction



A coalition is a group of people or organizations working together to pursue a single goal. In coalitions, all members make a long-term commitment to share responsibilities and resources. Whenever possible, our organization should seek to build or join a coalition to strengthen the impact of our advocacy. The purpose of this book, the fourth in our Advocacy Expert Series, is to explore methods of creating and sustaining coalitions that will assist us in advancing the goals of our advocacy campaign.

NOTE

What is a Coalition?
Coalitions are groups of people or organizations working together to pursue a single goal. In coalitions, all members make a long-term commitment to share responsibilities and resources.

What is an Alliance?
Alliances are based on short-term relationships between people or organizations to achieve narrowly focused objectives. Limits on time and responsibilities make alliances less demanding than coalitions on their members.

What is a Network?
Networks are people or organizations with similar interests or concerns who share information and ideas. Each person or organization remains independent.

Why should our NGO form a Coalition?

Coalitions allow us to share information, ideas, and resources with other organizations as well as distribute the risks and responsibilities of our advocacy campaign among members. In addition, coalitions offer us:

- Safety
- Increased access to decision makers and other contacts
- Improved credibility and visibility
- An opportunity to broaden public support
- A chance to strengthen civil society

Different NGOs have different areas expertise, different resources, and attract different stakeholders. Building a diverse coalition with a variety of NGOs will increase our chances for success and prove to decision makers that there is broad social support for our desired policy change. Decision makers are also more likely to pay attention to coalitions–a coalition of several NGOs working together can advocate more effectively than one.

Creating a Successful Coalition

Successful coalitions are built on trust, respect, and a commitment to working together. In order for a coalition to remain strong, participating organizations must respect each other and the decisions made by the coalition leadership. All successful coalitions share:

1. Clear coalition structure
2. Diverse membership and broad outreach
3. Skilled and diverse leadership
4. Reliable system of communication and conflict resolution
5. Trusting relationships among members

NOTE

There are two ways of getting involved in a coalition: **Join one** or **build one ourselves**. Before building a new coalition to advance our advocacy campaign, check to see if one already exists.

1 Clear coalition structure

A coalition requires more time, energy, and commitment from members than a network or alliance. Sometimes members must sacrifice their own interests to promote the interests of the coalition. One of the most important first steps in building a coalition is creating a **clear structure**. A clear structure helps members understand how the coalition will work, minimizes conflicts, and establishes order. When forming our coalition here are some things to consider:

COALITION CHECKLIST

☑ **MEMBERSHIP** **Which other organizations do we want to work with? What are the criteria for joining our coalition?**

A large, diverse group of participating organizations will expand our coalition's knowledge, skills, and resources but may be difficult to manage. A small group will be easier to manage but may not have the same level of impact or influence. In both situations, our coalition should have a clear statement of principles that defines our purpose, mission, goals, and benefits of membership.

Advocacy in
CAMBODIA

The Gender Project is a coalition of organizations created by NGO Forum to address important gender-related issues in Cambodia. Over the course of their advocacy work, the coalition helped local government officials improve their ability to resolve gender related conflicts as well as encourage political parties to share their gender policies with the public.

☐ **COMMITMENT** **What expectations do we have of coalition members? Where, when, and how often does the coalition meet?**

Our coalition must meet frequently enough to keep all members informed, involved, and motivated. The coalition must also create reasonable expectations of work and responsibilities among members. In addition to a statement of principles, our coalition should have written policies regarding behavior and obligations of members that are consistent and fair. All members should respect these policies and participate to the best of their ability.

☐ **DECISION MAKING** **How will the decision making process work?**

The coalition's decision making process must be built on the principles of equality and democracy. This must include opportunities for group discussion, procedures for conflict resolution, methods for delegating tasks, and a scheduled rotation of leadership responsibilities.

☐ **COMMUNICATION** **How will members communicate with each other?**

We must establish a system of communication that allows members to exchange information and ideas quickly and efficiently. All members must commit to attending regular meetings and events. Records of all meeting agendas, minutes, decisions made and actions taken should be organized and available to members. The coalition should also select a spokesperson and create a communication plan for crisis situations.

Creating a Coalition Plan

Once we have completed our coalition checklist, we can prepare a **Coalition Plan**. This plan will list our coalition's advocacy goal and all of the members of our coalition, their areas of expertise, resources, and responsibilities.

SAMPLE COALITION PLAN

Goal: Adoption and implementation of a Domestic Violence Law within 5 years.

NAME OF MEMBER	REPRESENTATIVE(S) NAME, TITLE, AND CONTACT	AREA OF EXPERTISE	RESOURCES	PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY
The Cambodian Committee of Women (CAMBOW)	Seng Sophal, Program Director	Women's rights'	Network of women's rights' NGOs Research and statistics Fulltime staff Funding Monitoring and evaluation	Draft and review law Lobby Ministry of Women's Affairs Create Government Relations Plan
Women's Media Center	Mrs. Sue Franklin, Country Representative	Media	TV and radio production facilities Expertise and contacts with media	Produce and broadcast TV and Radio spots Create Media plan Develop media messages
Cambodia Association of Doctors & Medical Schools	Dr. Heng Sam Ath, CAD Director	Health	Medical expertise for lobbying Care provider	Lobby Ministry of Health Conduct Domestic Violence classes at schools Provide expert witnesses at trial
Phnom Penh football league	Coach Heap Makgal	Sports	Volunteers Different target audience	Fundraising at games Public appearances to support campaign Education of football players

NOTE

Good coalitions look **beyond** natural allies and typical supporters to find new partners.

Despite our best efforts to make our coalition diverse and balanced, we may forget to include members with specific skills and resources relevant to our advocacy campaign. Developing a coalition plan will help us address these weaknesses early in our coalition building process.

Leadership and Followship

With all of skills, time, and resources needed to reach our advocacy goal, it would be impossible for one person to succeed working alone. Our coalition needs **leaders** and **followers.**

LEADERS

Leaders are equally concerned with completing tasks and motivating people. Leaders respond to the changing needs and priorities of their organization. Good leaders change their leadership style depending on personalities and circumstances. **Good leaders are also good followers.**

FOLLOWERS

Followers must understand the priorities of the coalition but remain flexible enough to adapt to changing needs. Followers should also have a high level personal integrity, respect for the leaders, and be comfortable taking responsibility for their own actions.

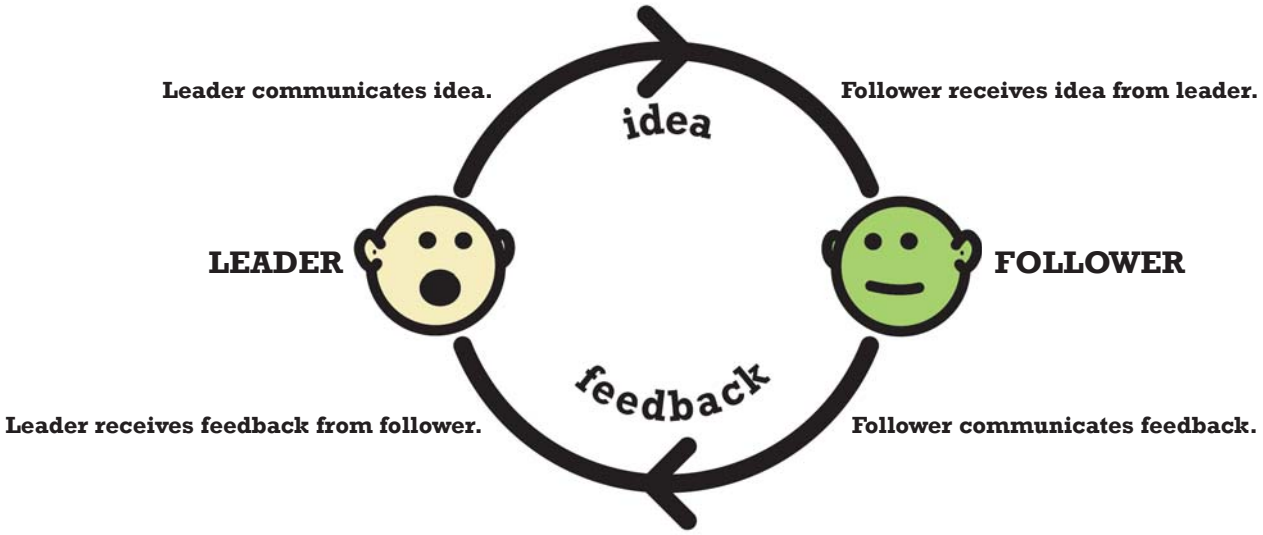
Leaders and Followers are Active Listeners

Good leaders and followers are also excellent listeners. They respect the ideas and opinions of others even when they do not agree. Most importantly, leaders and followers are comfortable giving and receiving feedback.

NOTE

No matter what our job title, **we are followers more often than we are leaders.** We are always accountable to others: supervisors, donors, stakeholders, or the public.

ACTIVE LISTENING LOOP



A good leader creates an environment where everyone, both leaders and followers, enjoys working, problem-solving, and accomplishing goals

together.

Leadership Styles

Leaders consider the skills and experience of followers and use the following four leadership styles to help accomplish tasks.

DIRECT | **COACH** | **SUPPORT** | **DELEGATE**

A **direct** leadership style works best when:

- The task must be completed quickly and only the leader knows what needs to be done and how to do it.
- Followers lack experience or expertise.

EXAMPLE:
A new employee with no experience should not be given a task to do without direction, training and supervision.

DIRECT | **COACH** | **SUPPORT** | **DELEGATE**

A **coach** encourages followers to think for themselves but still maintains overall control. This leadership style works best when:

- Followers have excelled under a direct leadership style.
- Followers are eager to work independently but still require periodic supervision.

EXAMPLE:
Some people need coaching from leaders or more experienced colleagues before they feel comfortable working independently.

DIRECT **COACH** **SUPPORT** **DELEGATE**

When leaders **support** independent actions and problem solving, followers gain confidence and experience. This leadership works best when:

- Followers have demonstrated their competence and expertise in the past.
- Followers are comfortable thinking for themselves.

EXAMPLE:
An NGO employee managing a provincial office makes decisions independently but needs long-term support and guidance from the NGO headquarters to be successful.

DIRECT **COACH** **SUPPORT** **DELEGATE**

By distributing problem-solving and decision-making authority to followers, leaders are helping followers become leaders themselves. This leadership style works best when:

- Followers are mature, experienced, and motivated to perform the delegated task.
- Followers are able to analyze a problem, determine what needs to be done, and execute the task.

EXAMPLE:
The president of a large company does not have the time to run the company alone. They must delegate work and responsibilities to experienced staff and managers.

Managing Conflict

Conflict is natural and unavoidable. People's unique experiences lead to differing opinions and perspectives. Due to their size and complexity, coalitions often have difficulty managing conflict. They sometimes suffer from unrealistic expectations such as the idea that members who share a common cause will agree on everything. Successful coalitions plan for conflict and understand when to work through differences and when to agree to disagree. There are four steps to effectively managing conflict in a coalition:

1 Identify the problem

When we encounter conflict in our coalition, we must first determine its root causes. If the conflict is not being expressed directly, we need to create opportunities to discuss the issue openly. Failure to identify the problem thoroughly can lead to further conflict and ultimately damage our coalition.

NOTE

Coalitions often fail because a member feels insulted, ignored, or unappreciated. **Rotate leadership responsibilities** to create a sense of ownership among members. Share credit for successes equally.

2 Discover mutual interests

In many cases, conflict occurs when individual coalition members believe that their concerns are not heard or respected. We need to ensure that all coalition members, regardless of their size, power, contributions, or authority are given equal opportunity to express themselves. Despite contradictory positions on various issues, members may be surprised to discover mutual interests that can help generate mutual goals and options for resolving conflict.

3 Generate Options

After identifying areas of mutual interest, we can generate options for resolving the conflict. Some members may feel strongly about their position on the issue and demand that the coalition take their recommended action. Others may disagree with the proposed solution but do not feel strongly enough to oppose it. Exploring all of the possible solutions to a problem may take time.

4 Build Consensus

Building consensus means creating agreement between coalition members. It is achieved through actively listening, working through differences, finding areas of compromise, and convincing individual members that this solution is in the best interest of the coalition.

Interests

Our interests are our hopes, needs, fears, and concerns.

Position

Our position is our preferred solution to a problem

Having Effective Meetings

Hosting regular meetings is one of the best ways to keep coalition members informed, involved, and inspired. It is during meetings where issues are discussed and decisions made. All effective meetings have a **chairperson**, a **minute taker**, and an **agenda.** To help us make difficult or complex decisions, we can use the skills of a **facilitator.**

CHAIRPERSON

The **chairperson** is the person in charge of the meeting. They ensure that all participants respect the rules of meeting and follow the agenda. As the leader of the meeting, the chairperson should model the principles of active listening by respecting the contributions of all members.

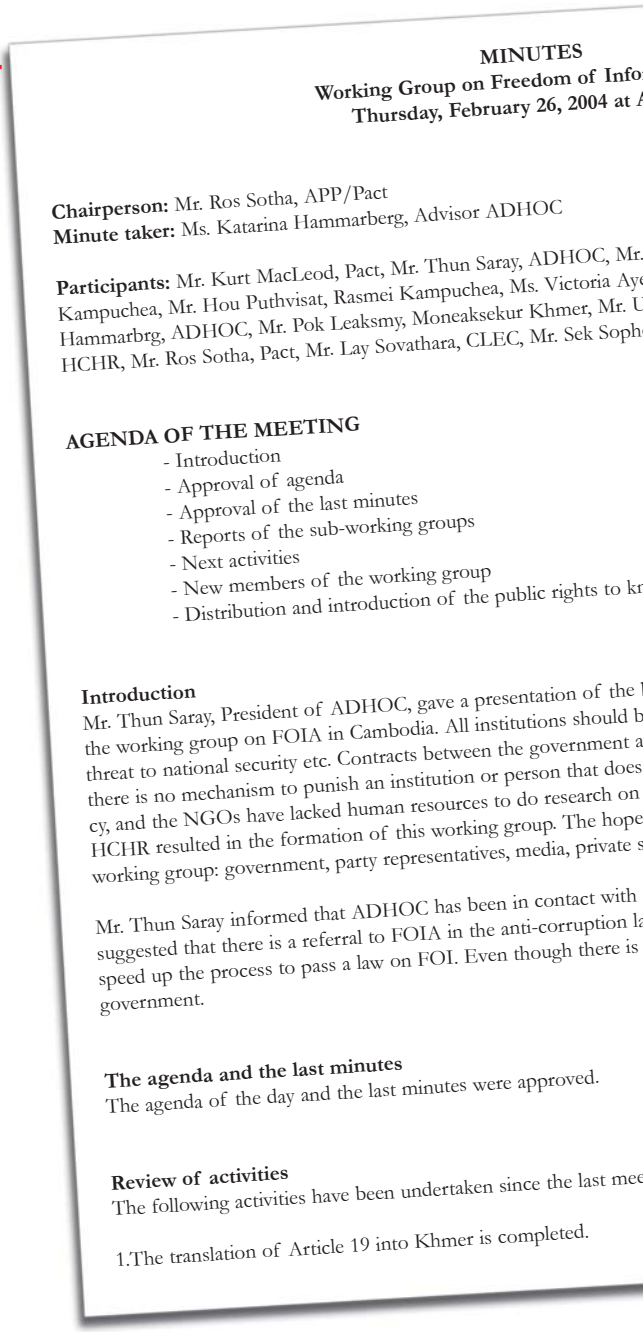
MINUTE TAKER

The **minute taker** records attendance, topics discussed, and decisions made during a meeting. Successful meetings always begin with a review and approval of the minutes from the previous meeting.

AGENDA

An **agenda** is a schedule for the meeting that states the main topics to be discussed. The agenda should be distributed to all members before the meeting and include the following:

- Meeting start and end time.
- Meeting location.
- Topic headings (no more than 5) with a short paragraph about each.
- Set a time limit for each agenda item. **Respect it!**
- Indicate which participants are expected to lead discuss about each topic.



MINUTES
Working Group on Freedom of Info
Thursday, February 26, 2004 at A

Chairperson: Mr. Ros Sotha, APP/Pact
Minute taker: Ms. Katarina Hammarberg, Advisor ADHOC

Participants: Mr. Kurt MacLeod, Pact, Mr. Thun Saray, ADHOC, Mr.
Kampuchea, Mr. Hou Puthvisat, Rasmei Kampuchea, Ms. Victoria Ay
Hammarbrg, ADHOC, Mr. Pok Leaksmy, Moneaksekur Khmer, Mr. U
HCHR, Mr. Ros Sotha, Pact, Mr. Lay Sovathara, CLEC, Mr. Sek Soph

AGENDA OF THE MEETING
- Introduction
- Approval of agenda
- Approval of the last minutes
- Reports of the sub-working groups
- Next activities
- New members of the working group
- Distribution and introduction of the public rights to kn

Introduction
Mr. Thun Saray, President of ADHOC, gave a presentation of the
the working group on FOIA in Cambodia. All institutions should b
threat to national security etc. Contracts between the government a
there is no mechanism to punish an institution or person that does
cy, and the NGOs have lacked human resources to do research on
HCHR resulted in the formation of this working group. The hope
working group: government, party representatives, media, private s

Mr. Thun Saray informed that ADHOC has been in contact with
suggested that there is a referral to FOIA in the anti-corruption la
speed up the process to pass a law on FOI. Even though there is
government.

The agenda and the last minutes
The agenda of the day and the last minutes were approved.

Review of activities
The following activities have been undertaken since the last mee

1.The translation of Article 19 into Khmer is completed.

NOTE

Facilitators act as impartial mediators to help us build consensus. Facilitators also help us:
- Define the decision that needs to be made
- Guide the coalition through the stages of reaching an agreement
- Focus discussion and draw conclusions
- Ensure that everyone has a chance to express themselves

Making Decisions

Making decisions as a group is one of the most important skills of working in a coalition. If members of your coalition feel ignored during the decision making process they are less likely stay involved and motivated. Any decision making method should encourage participation and equality.

The two major types of decision making processes are **voting** and **consensus**.

VOTING

Members create and choose from a list of priorities. The priority with the most votes will be implemented.

CONSENSUS

Members work together to reach an unanimous agreement.

Though consensus may take more time than voting, a decision that every member supports will be easier to implement. We can create consensus by actively listening to the ideas and opinions of our coalition members and integrating their thoughts into a decision that is **acceptable to everyone**.

Creating Priorities

Creating priorities means weighing the advantages, disadvantages, and potential consequences of each proposed solution to a problem. The solutions with the fewest disadvantages and most favorable consequences are the ones our coalition should implement.

MEETING CHECKLIST

Here are some tips to keep in mind for our next coalition meeting:

Before the Meeting

- ☑ **Select Chairperson.**
- ☐ **Select appropriate location and time for meeting.**
- ☐ **Prepare agenda and minutes from previous meeting and distribute to all members.**
- ☐ **Invite all members and follow up to confirm attendance.**

During the Meeting

- ☐ **Start on time and end early.**
- ☐ **Follow the agenda.**
- ☐ **Encourage group discussion but keep the conversation focused on the topic.**
- ☐ **Keep minutes of the meeting for future reference and record keeping.**
- ☐ **Be a role model by listening, showing interest, appreciation and confidence in members. Admit mistakes.**
- ☐ **Summarize agreements reached and end the meeting on a unifying or positive note.**
- ☐ **Put unfinished business on the agenda for the next meeting.**

After the Meeting

- ☐ **Write up and distribute minutes within 3 days.**
- ☐ **Follow-up on decisions made during the meeting. Ensure that all members understand and carry-out their responsibilities.**
- ☐ **Give recognition and appreciation to excellent and timely progress.**

Evaluating the Coalition

Over time, coalitions change in response to members' shifting priorities or political conditions. Every six months, we should evaluate our coalition and decide what changes are needed to keep the coalition healthy and effective. Here are some sample questions to ask the coalition during our evaluation:

What is the most difficult part of maintaining the coalition?

What are the benefits of joining the coalition?

What can we do differently?

What are the most and least successful methods of communicating with the media, the public, government decision makers, beneficiaries, and other coalition members?

How is our coalition bringing attention to the issue and building support for our advocacy goal?

Are there any unresolved conflicts in the coalition?

How can any unresolved conflicts be addressed and resolved?

Advocacy in

CAMBODIA

In May 2004, the eighteen member coalition COSECAM (Coalition to Address Sexual Exploitation of Children in Cambodia) organized an eight-day tour throughout Cambodia to draw attention to the exploitation of children. Activities included theater acts, seminars, parades, workshops, and panel discussions.

PHOTO: Cosecam buses travel to Sisophon on National Road 5.

Conclusion

A well-organized, diverse coalition is an incredibly effective advocacy tool. Sharing information, ideas, and resources not only makes advocacy work easier but also improves the likelihood of success. Hopefully, the skills and techniques you have learned in this book will help you build and maintain healthy coalitions that will persuade people in power to implement our advocacy goals.

In our next book, "**Advocacy through Legal Services**", we will learn about the legal system and explore various legal strategies that will help advance the goals of our advocacy campaign.

Tactics of advocates around the world

ADVOCATE

Formal Statements

Public Speeches
Letters of opposition or support
Declarations by organizations and institutions
Signed public statements
Declarations of indictment and intention
Group or mass petitions

Communications with a Wider Audience

Slogans, caricatures, and symbols
Banners, posters, and displayed communications
Leaflets, pamphlets, and books
Newspapers and journals
Records, radio, and television
Skywriting and earthwriting

Group Representations

Deputations
Mock awards
Group lobbying
Picketing
Mock elections

Symbolic Public Acts

Displays of flags and symbolic colors
Wearing of symbols
Prayer and worship
Delivering symbolic objects
Protest disrobings
Destruction of own property
Symbolic lights
Displays of portraits
Paint as protest
New signs and names
Symbolic sounds
Symbolic reclamations
Rude gestures

Drama and Music

Humorous skits and pranks
Performances of plays and music
Singing

Processions

Marches
Parades
Religious processions
Pilgrimages
Motorcades

Honoring the Dead

Political mourning
Mock funerals
Demonstrative funerals
Homage at burial places

Public Assemblies

Assemblies of protest or support
Protest meetings
Camouflaged meetings of protest
Teach-ins

Withdrawal and Renunciation

Walk-outs
Silence
Renouncing honors
Turning one's back

SOCIAL NON-COOPERATION

Ostracism of Persons

Social boycott
Selective social boycott

Noncooperation with Social Events, Customs, and Institutions

Suspension of social and sports activities
Boycott of social affairs
Student strike
Social disobedience
Withdrawal from social institutions

Withdrawal from the Social System

Stay-at-home
Total personal noncooperation
Protest emigration (hijrat)

ECONOMIC NON-COOPERATION: Economic

Actions by Consumers

Consumers' boycott
Non-consumption of boycotted goods
Policy of austerity
Rent withholding
Refusal to rent
National consumers boycott
International consumers boycott

Action by Workers and Producers

Workmen's boycott
Producers' boycott

ECONOMIC NON-COOPERATION: The Strike

Agricultural Strikes

Peasant strike
Farm Workers strike

Strikes by Special Groups

Refusal of impressed labor
Prisoners strike
Craft strike
Professional strike

Ordinary Industrial Strikes

Establishment strike
Industry strike
Sympathetic strike

Restricted Strikes

Detailed strike
Bumper strike
Slowdown strike
Working-to-rule strike
Reporting "sick" (sick-in)
Strike by resignation
Limited strike
Selective strike

Multi-Industry Strikes

Generalized strike
General strike

Combination of Strikes and Economic Closures

City Wide Strike
Economic shutdown

POLITICAL NON-COOPERATION

Rejection of Authority

Withholding or withdrawal of allegiance
Refusal of public support
Literature and speeches advocating resistance

Citizens' Noncooperation with Government

Boycott of legislative bodies
Boycott of elections
Boycott of government employment and positions
Boycott of government departments, agencies, and other bodies
Withdrawal from government educational institutions
Boycott of government-supported organizations
Refusal of assistance to enforcement agents
Removal of own signs and placemarks
Refusal to dissolve existing institutions

Citizens' Alternatives to Obedience

Reluctant and slow compliance
Non-obedience in absence of direct supervision
Popular non-obedience
Disguised disobedience
Refusal of an assemblage or meeting to disperse
Sitdown
Noncooperation with conscription and deportation
Hiding, escape, and false identities
Civil disobedience of "illegitimate" laws

International Governmental Action

Changes in diplomatic and other representations
Delay and cancellation of diplomatic events
Withholding of diplomatic recognition
Severance of diplomatic relations
Withdrawal from international organizations
Refusal of membership in international bodies
Expulsion from international organizations

NONVIOLENT INTERVENTION

Psychological Intervention

Self-exposure to the elements
The Fast
Reverse trial
Nonviolent harassment

Physical Intervention

Sit-in
Stand-in
Ride-in
Wade-in
Pray-in
Nonviolent obstruction

Social Intervention

Establishing new social patterns
Speak-in
Theater
Alternative social institutions
Alternative communication system

Economic Intervention

Reverse strike
Stay-in strike
Defiance of blockades
Preclusive purchasing
Dumping
Alternative markets
Alternative transportation systems
Alternative economic institutions

Political Intervention

Overloading of administrative systems
Disclosing identities of secret agents
Seeking imprisonment
Civil disobedience of "neutral" laws
Dual sovereignty and parallel government

Adapted from Gene Sharp, The Politics of Nonviolent Action, Vol. 2: The Methods of Nonviolent Action (Boston: Porter Sargent Publishers, 1973).

Glossary

Autocratic

A person with unlimited power or authority who makes decisions for everyone.

Alliance

An association of people, groups, organizations, or nations based on short-term relationships to achieve narrowly focused objectives.

Consensus

An opinion or decision reached by a group.

Credibility

The quality of being believable or trustworthy.

Delegate

To entrust or transfer power, authority, or responsibility to another person or group.

Position

A preferred solution to a problem

Network

A group of people or organizations with similar interests or concerns who share information and ideas.

Resources

For more information on these topics:

Advocacy for Immunization:
Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunizations (2001)

UNESCO/APC Multimedia Training Kit
Search for Common Ground
http://www.itrainonline.org/

ACT UP: Civil Disobedience Training
http://www.actupny.org

Mind Tools
http://www.mindtools.com

Good Practice Participate
Office for the Community & Voluntary Sector
http://www.goodpracticeparticipate.govt.nz

New Product Development Solutions
http://www.npd-solutions.com

Advocacy Tools and Guidelines: Promoting Policy Change
Sofia Sprechman and Emily Pelton, CARE (2001)
http://www.careusa.org/getinvolved/advocacy/tools.asp