CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION
Purpose of this toolkit 3
What is at stake? 4
Fundamentals of the UNFCCC 6

CARRYING OUT CLIMATE JUSTICE ADVOCACY 11
Defining Advocacy 11
Advocacy Planning 14
Spaces for engaging climate justice issues 16

PUTTING THE PLAN INTO ACTION 19
Building evidence and influencing policy 19
Media and communications 21
Public campaigning 24

References 25
A. Purpose of this toolkit

Communities in the Global South have long been struggling with the realities of climate change, and as a result, have been taking measures into their own hands. Local organizations from the Global South play a key role not just in raising awareness of the threats posed and the ongoing damage caused by climate change, but more importantly in proposing alternative rights-based solutions. To ensure that these solutions are supported and scaled up, they need the tools, knowledge, and access to policy spaces. At the minimum, they must be allowed to operate without facing repression from state and big corporate interests.

This advocacy toolkit was developed to address capacity development, advocacy and campaigning needs of grassroots and frontline communities struggling with the impacts of climate change. It is applicable for local organizations to use as a resource for building a structured approach for sustained advocacy and campaigning on climate justice issues. The tools described in this publication are particularly relevant to local organizations, but will also be valuable to anyone expanding their understanding of global climate governance, rights-based approach to climate change response and how this approach can be applied in practice. Specifically, this toolkit aims to:

1. Provide a critical framework to understand climate justice and related concepts by:
   a. Outlining what is at stake in current climate discussions
   b. Presenting a basic mapping of global climate governance
   c. Introducing the UNFCCC and why it is important to engage such spaces

2. Develop the capacity of frontline communities and local organizations to advocate for climate justice by:
   a. Defining the meaning of advocacy work
   b. Identifying spaces where civil society and local organizations can take part in
   c. Helping organizations plan their own advocacy

3. Offer tools that can help communities and peoples' organizations carry out sustained advocacy and campaign work by:
   a. Highlighting the value of evidence building
   b. Sharing tips on effective media communications
   c. Offering creative ways to conduct public campaigns

This toolkit provides resources, guidelines and examples for local community organizations to produce their context-specific tools for action and prepare and launch campaigns tailored to their respective audiences.
B. What is at stake?

The convergence of the COVID-19 pandemic and the climate crisis exacerbated ecological deterioration and health issues while at the same time exposing systemic weaknesses in the current capitalist and extractive model of development. The economic crisis that was accelerated since then has put development targets on hold and many of the gains reversed. Developing economies struggle with weak economic growth, rising inflation, major supply chain disruptions and unsustainable levels of debt. These multiple challenges sidetracked much needed financing to help communities mitigate risks and adapt to climate change impacts.

At the same time, energy-related carbon emissions rose by 6% in 2021, reaching its highest level ever and completely wiping out pandemic-related reductions. To avoid the worst impacts of climate change, global emissions must peak before 2025 and decline by more than 40% by 2030. However, current efforts to curb emissions and adapt are not enough to tackle the speed and scale of climate impacts. Current voluntary national commitments (Nationally Determined Contributions – NDCs) for example, are set to result in a 14% increase in greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions over the next decade. And yet, strategies employed by governments and multilateral institutions, even the textbook definition of alignment with the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, still rely on NDCs as a benchmark for emissions reduction targets. At this current rate, the world is way off track from its goal of keeping average temperature rise below 1.5 degrees Celsius (1.5°C).

As the world approaches the 1.5°C warming threshold, extreme weather events are happening more frequently and with greater severity particularly in countries of the Global South. Since the formation of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in the early 1990s, vulnerable nations have been calling on developed countries to provide financial assistance that can help them address loss and damage. While the UNFCCC has not precisely defined loss and damage, it is generally understood as the destructive impacts from both extreme weather events like cyclones, droughts and heatwaves, and slow-onset changes such as sea level rise, desertification, glacial retreat, land degradation, ocean acidification and salinisation. Loss and damage refers to climate change impacts that cannot be avoided by current mitigation measures (avoiding and reducing GHG emissions) or adaptation (adjusting to current and future climate change impacts). In some cases, damages may permanently alter communities; for example, rising seas encroaching on low-lying lands, or drought shrinking freshwater resources and turning once-productive farmland into barren land.

Apart from the direct effects of extreme weather events, climate change has also led to deaths through its induced effects on public health, as stronger heatwaves, air pollution and other climate disasters exacerbate existing health risks. Pakistan, for instance, had to deal with a second wave of catastrophe from rising cases of malaria, cholera, dengue and malnutrition after a massive flood damaged homes and water supply systems in June of 2022, leaving 750,000 people without access to safe housing.

Box 1. The Problem with NDCs

Since the signing of the Paris Agreement on Climate Change in 2015, countries have pledged to contribute their fair share to combat climate change through Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs). NDCs set out country mitigation and adaptation targets every five years to keep global warming in check.

However, the 2022 United Nations Environment Programme’s (UNEP) Emissions Gap Report shows that under current government pledges, NDCs are largely insufficient to tackle global warming. Instead, current NDC-based emissions trajectories will lead to at least 2.8°C warming by the end of the century. Some of the biggest sources of climate finance including OECD countries and International Financial Institutions (IFIs) in this context are using NDCs as their benchmark for aligning their investments and bilateral aid with the Paris Agreement – a grave mistake that will set the world in a path away from the agreed 1.5°C warming threshold.

Source: UNEP Emissions Gap Report 2022

Loss and damage is causing significant harm to developing nations amid inadequate international financing. Addressing loss and damage should therefore be collectively viewed as a matter of justice and be done on the basis of responsibility. If developed nations do not pledge to implement emissions reduction commitments and deliver critical finance for adaptation, climate change will continue to cause massive economic and non-economic loss and damage. This will drive poor nations into deeper poverty, limiting their fiscal capacity to provide resources and social services necessary to protect affected communities from climate change impacts.

Loss and damage remains one of the top priorities for least developed countries (LDCs). Developed economies are urged to show support for vulnerable nations not just by committing to fair and ambitious emissions reduction targets, but also to new and additional finance. The international community has yet to reach consensus on its definition and scope of loss and damage. Its ambiguous character can be attributed partly to developed countries’ continuing denial of loss and damage action and accountability as compensation for their economic activities that drive climate change.

Table 1. Recent examples of loss and damage from extreme weather events

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Estimated Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Devastating floods, Pakistan (2022) – Torrential monsoon rains triggered the most severe flooding in Pakistan’s recent history leaving thousands of homes damaged or destroyed and almost 10 million children in need of immediate, life-saving support; thousands of homes damaged or destroyed.</td>
<td>Flood damages and economic losses are estimated at over USD30 billion and reconstruction needs over USD16 billion according to recent World Bank estimates.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hurricane Maria, Dominica (2017) – resulted in 65 deaths; 80% of the population affected.</td>
<td>Total damages amounting to USD931 million and losses of USD382 million, amounting to 226% of the country’s GDP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drought in South Africa (2015-2017) – Cape Town declared as a disaster area after the worst drought in almost a century</td>
<td>Western Cape agricultural sector estimated to have lost USD432 million and 30,000 jobs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cyclone Pam, Vanuatu (2015) – 11 deaths, 65,000 displaced</td>
<td>Total costs were USD449 million, equivalent to 64% of GDP</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: IBON International (2022) with updates from the author
C. Fundamentals of the UNFCCC

The UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) is an intergovernmental treaty developed to address the climate crisis. It entered into force in 1994 and is guided by the goal of stabilizing GHG emissions “at a level that would prevent dangerous anthropogenic interference with the climate system.” The framework of the Convention is structured so that countries with the biggest historical responsibility for causing climate change – namely developed countries – have the lead responsibility in tackling climate change and providing finance to support the journey of developing countries to achieve economic growth without high GHG-based economies.

At the time of its creation, Parties to the UNFCCC and its Agreements (the countries that are part of the Convention), were divided into Annex 1 (industrialized and economies in transition) and non-Annex 1 (developing) countries. This structure was created to ensure that developing countries would still be able to pursue economic development and progress, without being penalized for the GHG emissions expected to occur as part of their economic growth.\(^3\) Over the years, various other country groupings have emerged based on common interests and geographical proximity among others.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group of 77 plus China (G77+ China)</th>
<th>The G77 group is one of the largest intergovernmental groupings in the United Nations composed of 134 developing economies from the global South plus China.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>African Group of Negotiators (AGN)</td>
<td>The AGN was established at COP1 in Berlin, Germany in 1995 as an alliance of African member states that represent the interests of the region in the international climate change negotiations. All 54 African countries are members of the group.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Least Developed Countries (LDCs)</td>
<td>The LDC group are 46 nations that are especially vulnerable to climate change but have done the least to cause the problem. The LDC group works together at the intergovernmental negotiations under the UNFCCC.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Climate Vulnerable Forum (CVF)</td>
<td>The CVF is an international forum of countries highly vulnerable to a warming planet. The Forum serves as a South-South cooperation platform for 58 participating governments to deal with global climate change challenges.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS)</td>
<td>AOSIS is an inter-governmental group of 39 low-lying coastal and small island countries. It was established in 1990 ahead of COP2 in Stockholm, Sweden. These island countries are particularly vulnerable to sea-level rise, coastal erosion and saltwater intrusion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent Alliance of Latin America and the Caribbean (AILAC)</td>
<td>The AILAC is a group of 8 Latin American and Caribbean countries launched at the COP18 in Doha, Qatar in 2012. It is seen to take a more conciliatory approach towards developed economies relative to ALBA.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Coalition for Rainforest Nations and the Alliance for the Peoples of our America (ALBA)</td>
<td>The ALBA is a coalition of 10 member states in Latin America and the Caribbean united by their common vision of Bolivarian regional solidarity that explicitly rejects US-led neoliberal policies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>European Union (EU)</td>
<td>The EU group consists of all 27 EU member states that agree on common negotiating positions. The country that holds the EU Presidency (rotates every six months) speaks for the group.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environmental Integrity Group (EIG)</td>
<td>The EIG was formed in 2000 comprising Mexico, Liechtenstein, Monaco, the Republic of Korea, Switzerland and Georgia.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Umbrella Group (UG)</td>
<td>The Umbrella Group is a coalition of countries which formed following the adoption of the Kyoto Protocol. The UG is made up of Australia, Canada, Iceland, Israel, Japan, New Zealand, Kazakhstan, Norway, Ukraine and the United States.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arab Group</td>
<td>The Arab Group is comprised of 22 member states in the region namely Algeria, Bahrain, Comoros, Djibouti, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Mauritania, Oman, Palestine, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, Sudan, Syria, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates, and Yemen.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: UNFCCC Party Groupings

---

Several other groups also work together in the climate change process, including countries from the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), a group of countries of Central Asia, Caucasus, Albania and Moldova (CACAM), the Cartagena Dialogue, the BASIC Group (Brazil, South Africa, China India), and the Like-Minded Group, among others.\(^5\)

Despite being referred to generally as “the COP” or the Conference of Parties, the UN climate conferences are composed of three meetings wherein decision-making happens:

1. Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Convention (COP).
2. Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Kyoto Protocol (CMP)\(^6\)
3. Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Paris Agreement (CMA)\(^7\)

All these meetings produce outcome documents or decisions commonly decided among Parties. The Paris Agreement is the current unifying global agreement on climate action for countries to implement. As such, the two most significant permanent conference meetings for decision-making are the COP and the CMA. In addition to these two, other inter-governmental bodies such as the Major Economies Forum on Energy & Climate, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) as well as the G8 and G20 meetings also influence decision-making at the global scale (see Figure 1).

**Box 2. The Kyoto Protocol and the Paris Agreement**

The Kyoto Protocol operationalizes the UNFCCC by committing industrialized economies in transition to limit and reduce greenhouse gases in accordance with individual targets. It is based on the annex-based structure of the UNFCCC placing heavier burden on developed countries under the principle of “common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities.” It was adopted by Parties of the UNFCCC in 1997 but only took force in February 2005.

The Paris Agreement on Climate Change is the legally binding international treaty on climate change adopted by 196 Parties at COP21 in Paris in 2015 and entered into force in 2016. It aims to limit global warming preferably to 1.5°C compared to pre-industrial levels.

*Source: UNFCCC*

---

\(^5\) UNFCCC (n.d.). Party Groupings. Retrieved from:

\(^6\) UNFCCC (n.d.). What is the Kyoto Protocol? Retrieved from:

\(^7\) UNFCCC (n.d.). What is the Paris Agreement? Retrieved from:
Box 3. Underfunded Global Climate Funds – the GCF and the AF

The Green Climate Fund (GCF) is setup to be the world’s largest climate fund mandated to support developing countries in achieving their respective NDCs. It was established in 2010 under the auspices of the UNFCCC as the centerpiece of efforts to raise climate finance. The Fund has set a goal of raising $100 billion a year by 2020 but as of July 31, 2020 only a total of USD10.3 billion has been pledged and only USD8.31 billion confirmed. The GCF has been criticized for being ineffective in reaching the world’s most climate-vulnerable countries who need the financing the most.

The Adaptation Fund (AF) was established in 2001 to finance concrete adaptation projects and programmes in developing countries that are Parties to the Kyoto Protocol. It is financed by a share of proceeds from the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) among other sources of funding. As of 2020, the Fund’s total financial contributions received since its establishment totaled to approximately USD1.05 billion.

Source: Carbon Brief, 2022; Climate Funds Update; GCF, 2020; UNFCCC
The sources of financing for climate mitigation and adaptation measures are also as varied – with 51% (USD321 billion) coming from public sources such as the World Bank and other Development Finance Institutions (DFIs) which account for 68% of total public financing in 2019/2020. Private climate investments currently account for USD310 billion mainly coming from corporations and commercial banks (see Figure 2). At the country level, climate change commitments are largely implemented by national governments through environmental ministries that conduct projects and initiatives based on their respective NDCs and Long-Term Strategies for mitigation and adaptation. The level of stakeholder engagement in national climate change processes varies according to openness to public consultation despite the UNFCCC itself highlighting the need for multi-stakeholder engagement. The UNFCCC Guidelines on National Adaptation Plans (NAPs), for example, identifies non-Party actors and key stakeholders (including CSOs) as contributors to the process at all levels from preparation, implementation, to monitoring and evaluation.

Figure 2. Landscape of Climate Finance in 2019/2020
At the global level, CSOs can engage the UNFCCC through the annual COP meetings (see Table 3). Below are key opportunities for CSO engagement before, during and after COP.

### Table 3. General CSO Engagement Opportunities at COP

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ahead of a COP</th>
<th>During a COP</th>
<th>After a COP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Register to be an accredited observer entity to attend UNFCCC sessions</td>
<td>• Take part in parallel CSO-organized summits and related events</td>
<td>• Share media briefings/advisories with local and national journalists to highlight issues and outcomes of a COP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Attend subsidiary, specialized, thematic body sessions (e.g., Standing Committee on Finance) as an observer</td>
<td>• Organize advocacy meetings with national negotiators to share your messaging</td>
<td>• Organize advocacy meetings with national representatives and follow-up dialogues with relevant officials</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Organize advocacy meetings with the Minister in charge of UNFCCC issues during national parliamentary sessions</td>
<td>• Hold press conferences whenever necessary</td>
<td>• Organize advocacy meetings with national representatives and follow-up dialogues with relevant officials</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Join demonstrations to develop and deliver messaging that takes into account the needs of local communities and embodies environmental and social struggles</td>
<td>• Provide snapshots of the negotiations via social media channels</td>
<td>• Join demonstrations to develop and deliver messaging that takes into account the needs of local communities and embodies environmental and social struggles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Organize outreach sessions with the public, your members, local community etc. to inform them about the importance of COP</td>
<td>• Join demonstrations to develop and deliver messaging that takes into account the needs of local communities and embodies environmental and social struggles</td>
<td>• Organize online and/or in-person side events</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Engage in public consultations</td>
<td>• Organize online and/or in-person side events</td>
<td>• Organize online and/or in-person side events</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Eurodad with modifications by the author*
Climate justice as an advocacy target is a comprehensive demand that requires a broad strategy to achieve. It cuts across a wide array of sectoral interests and concerns and therefore implies a holistic approach to engagement in order to make a significant impact or change. In this context, carrying out climate justice advocacy entails addressing and amplifying demands at the level of communities and maximizing spaces in policy-making bodies at local, regional and international levels.

Key to delivering effective advocacy work on climate justice is contextualizing recommendations on issues related to people’s struggles and putting forward policy options and demands that people could rally behind. The main objective is to concretely show how community concerns are addressed with the framework of demanding for climate justice.

A. Defining advocacy

Advocacy can be defined as the act or process of pleading for a cause. It involves persuading people to take action through several means such as recommending or supporting policy reforms or challenging or defending ideas. It involves taking a position on a certain issue and using various organized strategies and tactics to achieve a public policy goal.

In this context, effective advocacy becomes critical to any organization that seeks to bring about targeted change by asserting people’s sovereignty or by influencing institutions, political leaders and global policymakers to achieve a shift in behavior, policy or attitude that will benefit particular groups of people, or all people.
At its core, advocacy is more than just lobbying – it also includes mass actions and demonstrations that aim to keep public pressure going for policymakers at different levels of governance. For example, at the national level, advocacy may focus on engaging lawmaking and regulatory bodies such as 1) the legislative, 2) the executive, 3) other subsidiary agencies, and 4) the judiciary. At the global level, international and intergovernmental bodies exist in the form of the United Nations and other mechanisms of international cooperation and development that include climate change issues. However, these spaces have varying levels of openness to participation of civil society organizations. Nevertheless, these spaces are still crucial not just in shaping the opinion of the international community but also in enforcing international consensus.

In order to deliver effective advocacy, it is important to understand the barriers to change and develop creative strategies on how to overcome them. This implies advocacy taking many forms. Most advocacy work falls into one or more of the five approaches shown below:

**Figure 3. Five Choices of Advocacy Approach**

- **Coercive Pressure** (strikes, boycotts, and direct actions)
- **Support Building** (from the public and influential stakeholders)
- **Collaboration** (working directly with policymakers)
- **Direct Persuasion** (evidence-based policy work, dialogues)
- **Litigations** (relying on judicial institutions for change)

For the purpose of this toolkit, we shall use the first interpretation referring to advocacy as a broader term that encompasses a number of strategies including public campaigning and lobbying just to name a few examples.
A combination of any of these five approaches can make up an advocacy plan. Within these broad approaches, variations and strategic choices can be made by advocates and campaigners. Not every approach would be appropriate in every country with different cultural context or the degree of contradiction between development actors or between local community organizations and the state or institutions. In this context, advocacy choices would also have to consider risks and determine which approach or combination of approaches would be best suited for the concrete situation.

Carrying out advocacy work by combining these various approaches allows organizations and advocates to create an environment conducive to the attainment of their goals. In the process, a successful advocacy initiative can provide crucial support for social movements and local organizations. Advocacy work is necessary especially in the context of climate justice issues as it provides a mechanism for the involvement and participation of frontline communities in the process of change. At the same time, advocacy work can also be considered a means of asserting spaces through which communities can be heard and allowed to express their views and opinions.

Southern Peoples’ Action on COP 26 (SPAC26) contingent at the People’s Climate March in Glasgow.
B. Advocacy planning

An advocacy plan is a framework which outlines the policies and practices that the organization seeks to change, and how that change can be achieved. The following basic elements need to be put together to create a proper advocacy plan:

1. **Identify the problem, its effects and its root causes** – The first step in undertaking advocacy work involves correctly identifying the problem or development challenge that affects the community or the planet at large. This includes conducting research on how the problem arose and the extent of its repercussions. It is also worth noting that not all issues can be addressed completely through advocacy, but advocacy efforts can lead to changes in certain laws or policies. Advocacy issues are usually identified collectively by the organization/community through meetings and focus group discussions. During these discussions, several aspects of a problem may arise. Below are tips in choosing which issues to prioritize:

   a. Use a problem-tree analysis. A problem tree analysis is a useful tool to help find solutions to a problem by mapping out the anatomy of cause and effect around an issue. By using this method of identifying the problem, organizations can easily break down the issue into manageable and definable parts and enable clearer prioritization of factors.

   b. After doing the problem tree analysis, choose which of the causes identified can be addressed through advocacy by considering the following questions:
      - How does this issue relate to climate justice?
      - Is this the most relevant climate justice issue to your organization or community?
      - Will working on this issue promote climate justice?
        - Will it address the organization/community’s needs?
        - Will it protect the organization/community’s rights?
        - Will it help strengthen the organization/community?
        - Will it develop new leaders and alliances?
2. **Establish measurable objectives** – Once the problem and its root causes are clear, it becomes easier to offer a solution which will form the objectives of the advocacy plan. When formulating objectives, make sure that they are SMART (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, and Time-bound). Activities need to contribute to the achievement of the objectives. In order to carry out the activities, resources and key persons responsible for implementation must be identified alongside clear timelines.

3. **Identify stakeholders and target groups** – Identifying stakeholders is another crucial aspect of advocacy planning. It involves determining the level of influence and level of interest each relevant actor has towards a specific objective or issue. This process is best done through a collective internal discussion by using the stakeholder analysis framework (see Figure 5) as a guide. Mapping stakeholders this way allows organizations to be strategic not just in choosing which stakeholders can make the most impact, but also in allocating how much resources are needed to effectively reach out to a particular target group.

4. **Define messaging** - Meanwhile, advocacy messages must be formulated according to the results of the research and analysis of what must be done to solve the problem. Often, these are called demands or key asks. There can be general messages, and there are messages that can be formulated specifically for each target stakeholder. For example, messages for government offices in a land dispute will often involve asking policymakers to promote or repeal a certain law, while messages for fellow community members affected by the same policy will center on taking action to pressure policymakers.

5. **Determine activities to help meet the objectives** – At this stage of the planning process, several factors can guide an organization's choice of activities. The nature of work of any organization can provide the broader limits of the types of activities that can be done with utmost effectiveness. For example, local organizations who may not have high capacity to do direct lobbying can foster partnerships with other organizations who specialize in that line of work.

6. **Decide on the necessary resources to complete each activity** – Identifying the needed resources to deliver the work, including material and financial ones, is as important as setting its objectives. Without a clear idea of how much time, organizational effort, and resources a particular activity will cost, it will be doubly difficult to meet expected objectives. Deciding on how much resources each activity will take is also important in managing any organization's finite resource and capacities.

7. **Establish a timeline and person responsible for each activity** – The next step to advocacy planning is to determine a deadline for each activity. Deadlines can be as specific to the day but can also be flexible depending on its objectives and timing in the broader context of the organization's external environment. For example, a local community organization who seeks to make their demands heard widely and publicly can choose dates of interest (i.e., World Hunger Day, Earth Day, etc.) to hold their activities and mass demonstrations. In addition, choosing which person within the organization is responsible for delivering on certain activities is a helpful practice of accountability and ensures each activity is allocated with sufficient human resource capacity.

8. **Evaluate whether objectives have been met** – It is important to constantly assess and evaluate the effectiveness of each activity. Regular evaluations can happen every quarter, monthly or sometimes even on a daily basis depending on how much and how fast the external situation is changing. Extracting lessons and ways to improve from previous activities is an effective method of avoiding the same mistakes in future plans, and of becoming more efficient at delivering on organizational objectives.
C. Spaces for engaging climate justice issues

Civil society and communities can engage climate justice issues through different levels and spaces, depending on the angle and focus issues organizations wish to pursue. National-level engagement will vary from country to country, but regional, global, and other engagement spaces can be seen in Figure 6.

Figure 6. Space for engaging climate justice issues

Source: UNFCCC Regional Centres and Networks
Global spaces:

- **UNFCCC.** The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) is a near-universal intergovernmental body with 198 countries that ratified the convention and agreed to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to prevent dangerous human-induced climate impacts. As such, this remains the most important space for advocacy work on climate justice issues. See Table 3 for ways civil society can engage the UNFCCC and the COP.

- **HLPF.** The High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF) provides recommendations on how to integrate climate goals with larger sustainable development goals. In doing so, the HLPF is mandated to ensure continuous efforts to support countries at danger of falling behind in their transition to low-emission, climate-resilient development, guided by the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

- **OECD.** The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) is an international organization composed of 38 member countries founded in 1961 to stimulate economic progress and world trade. The OECD, as a collective of industrialized and rich countries, also plays an important role in setting the agenda of climate change and therefore plays a critical role in climate change discussions.

- **International Finance Institutions.** As international financial institutions that channel loans, these institutions wield significant influence on what type of projects get funded and which policies get promoted. CSOs may have openings to dialogue with IMF and WB officials mainly through the Civil Society Policy Forum that happens alongside the Spring and Annual Meetings.

Regional spaces:

**Asia and the Pacific:**

- **Asian Development Bank (ADB).** The ADB is a regional development bank in Asia established in 1996 and is headquartered in the Philippines. As such, its investments across the region play a huge role in climate finance.

- **APEC Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC).** The APEC is an inter-governmental forum of 21 member economies within the Pacific Rim and is meant to promote free trade agreements in the region. It undertakes research in climate prediction, analysis, and climate change application areas through the APEC Climate Center.

- **Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).** ASEAN is the political and economic regional grouping of 10 Southeast Asian Nations. It facilitates regional integration in the economic, political, security, military, educational and sociocultural pillars.

- **United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UN ESCAP).** The UN ESCAP serves as the UN's regional hub in the region promoting cooperation among its 53 member States and 9 associate members.

**Africa:**

- **African Development Bank (AfDB).** The AfDB is a regional development finance institution headquartered in Abidjan, Ivory Coast. It serves as a financial provider to African governments and private companies investing in the region.

- **United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA).** UNECA was established in 1958 and is based in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. It is one of five UN regional hubs and serves the African region on various issues including climate change and finance.

**Europe:**

- **European Union (EU).** The EU is a political and economic union of 27 member states in Europe. The EU and its member states are the largest provider of public climate finance in the world and therefore plays a critical role in climate change discussions.

- **UN Economic Commission for Europe, Environmental Division (UNECE).** The UN ECE is one of five regional commissions under the UN Economic Council. It serves the broader European region and was established to promote economic cooperation and integration in the region.

**Latin America and the Caribbean:**

- **Inter-American Development Bank (IDB).** The IDB was established in 1959 and is headquartered in Washington, DC in the United States. The IDB is the main source of sustainable development financing, including climate finance in Latin America and the Caribbean.

- **United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (UN ECLAC).** The UN ECLAC is the dedicated UN unit in the LAC region which is headquartered in Santiago, Chile.
National Spaces:

- **National climate change processes** – Climate change spaces at the national level usually take the form of engagement with environmental ministries and domestic climate policy bodies. Stakeholder consultations in the review of NDCs and Long-Term Strategies is one of the usual spaces organizations can engage with. Parliaments and legislative branches are also avenues that organizations can pursue by pushing for the enactment of domestic laws on climate change mitigation and adaptation among others.

The spaces discussed in this section are non-exhaustive and aim to provide a general picture of engagement opportunities at different levels and based on the varying roles of each process or institution.

Identifying target spaces for engagement is crucial in forming strategies to influence climate discussions. These spaces have inherent advantages and limitations (many of which are dominated by the global North) that also have to be recognised. Despite these restrictions, it does not mean efforts for advocacy work in these arenas are useless. Instead, campaigners and advocates can think of more appropriate and creative strategies to maximize opportunities for influencing.

IBON International spearheads a side event on rights-based climate action at COP27
Climate justice advocates must use all available tools to gather support for our cause and build a broad base of supporters who will help transform our collective vision into reality. We may use a variety of methods to effectively advocate for climate justice. This section looks at how communities and peoples' organizations can engage in long-term advocacy and campaigning through influencing policy making spaces, using basic communication principles, and leading mass campaigns.

A. Building evidence and influencing policy

Persuading decision-makers to shift policy, laws or implementation – be it through direct lobbying or public pressure – requires evidence building through research. Research is the systematic investigation of a particular topic to discover facts, collect information and construct arguments that support a specific advocacy demand or recommendation.

Research can take various methods – from qualitative approaches, social investigation, statistical analysis, among others – depending on the kind of information needed to reinforce advocacy work. For instance, local organizations can conduct their own research by using the following tools:

- **Interviews.** Interviews are an important research tool to obtain stories and first-hand accounts from communities or from figures of authority.

It is a valuable mode of information gathering and evidence-building which can be done through informal or conversational dialogues or using a structured interview guide to help organize ideas cohesively. Various studies depend on interview information from participants or project-affected peoples and often provides insights that cannot be gained through secondary research.

- **Surveys.** A survey is a research approach used to collect data from a predefined set of respondents to get information and insights on a specific issue or topic. In the context of climate justice advocacy, surveys can be useful in demonstrating how much the general public is in support of or against a particular government policy on climate change. The results of a survey can be used to persuade decision-making bodies and institutions to shift policy in response to a generalized representation of public opinion.

- **Case Studies.** Case studies involve an in-depth investigation of one person, group, place or event that can provide a multi-faceted body of evidence to convince policymakers to take a particular stand on an issue or enact a particular shift in policy. Case studies often focus on individual human stories and identify community impacts and challenges.
• **Desk Research.** Desk research or sometimes called secondary research is best used to complement direct response methods of data gathering. Policy briefers or statements that are well supported with facts can only be possible through desk research and works by collating publicly available information.

• **Advocacy/Action Letter.** One way to influence policy and elicit a formal response from decision-makers is by writing an advocacy or action letter. Effective advocacy letters can articulate complex issues in simple ways and present evidence as well as actionable recommendations for its intended targets. As a medium of communication, advocacy letters can serve as an effective means for follow-up, persuasion, reporting and sharing experiences all of which are essential in advocacy work. Below is a sample advocacy letter template which local organizations can use to support their advocacy (see Figure 7).

• **Dialogues.** A crucial step in the pursuit of changing policy or behaviors is establishing dialogues with decision-makers. Dialogues are best organized on a regular basis (i.e., monthly or quarterly) and with clear agenda points for discussion. Regular dialogues can be considered as a gradual process of persuading people who are in positions of power to take action on particular demands set out by the community among others.

---

**Figure 7. Sample Advocacy Letter Template**

April XX, 20XX

[NAME OF TARGET POLICYMAKER]

[OFFICE AND OFFICE ADDRESS]

Dear [NAME OF TARGET POLICYMAKER],

Greetings of peace!

We write to express concern regarding [GENERAL PROBLEM STATEMENT]. Specifically, we raise attention to the following issues:

[SPECIFIC ISSUE 1]

[SPECIFIC ISSUE 2]

[SPECIFIC ISSUE 3]

In this context, we seek the following demands and recommendations:

[DEMAND/RECOMMENDATION 1]

[DEMAND/RECOMMENDATION 2]

[DEMAND/RECOMMENDATION 3]

We wish to set up a meeting with you so we can discuss further these issues and recommendations in person. We look forward to your positive response.

Sincerely,

[NAME OF AUTHOR/ORGANIZATION]

[SUPPORTING ORGANIZATIONS – Optional]
B. Media and communications

The media is an important communication channel to reach the general public as well as a target audience. Media institutions have a social responsibility to provide effective information services and deliver facts to a wider audience that most organizations cannot reach through their own means. As such, the media becomes a critical aspect of advocacy work as it expands the audience base and can help in expressing an organization's messages in such a way that would be easily understandable by the public.

a. Media outreach. Media outreach is the process of increasing an issue or an organization's public exposure by building relations with journalists, editors, and other practitioners in traditional and digital media to communicate demands and key messages. Doing media outreach heavily complements advocacy objectives by amplifying the message and helping shift public opinion. Below are steps in doing media outreach:

- **Create a media list** – Reaching out to the media starts by creating a media list that identifies media outlets that the target audience prefers or often uses.
- **Gather contact information** – Once the media list is done, the next step is to gather contact information of journalists and editors working in the institutions identified in the media list. Local organizations can also reach out to journalists directly via social media or a publicly available email address to establish relations.
- **Define media outreach goals** – It is important to define specific goals for the media outreach campaign. For instance, a measurable time-bound media outreach plan could include reaching out to at least 15 journalists and targeting to get at least two or three responses within a period of 1-2 weeks. This is an effective goal-setting example because it sets a realistic expectation and establishes a timeframe to meet the goal.
- **Compose the pitch** – A media pitch is an invitation to journalists to publish a story. Composing a pitch before sending it to the media is an important preparatory step to ensure stories are published. Effective media pitches have a strong point of view of who the target audience is and offer concise, relevant content that compels readers (see Figure 8).
- **Execute the plan** – The final step of an effective media outreach plan is to execute the campaign. Organizations can submit their pitches to relevant and targeted content producers and track progress by creating a monitoring spreadsheet.

We are intent on pushing for our demands, but there is also frustration because for the last two years, we have seen closing civic space sa COP meetings....
It's very important for civil society and developing countries to be there at the table because they are the ones in the frontlines of the climate crisis.

**IVAN ENRILE OF IBON INTERNATIONAL**
The Green Report, November 1, 2022

Philippine-based news agency Rappler interviewed IBON International Climate Justice Program Lead Ivan Enrile.
b. **Press Release.** Another tool local organizations can use to amplify their demands is by drafting their own press release. A press release is an official statement issued to members of the news media with the aim of providing information, taking a position, or responding to/on a specific problem, or making a public announcement. Below are some of the essential elements of a press release:

- **Headline** – The headline or title of a press release gives an immediate idea of what the release is about. Headline is a very important part of the press release and should grab reader's attention and compel readers to keep reading.

- **Summary** – This section of the press release summarizes the Five W’s (Who, What, When, Where, and Why) to provide journalists a concise content outline.

- **Dateline** – The dateline is typically found on the first line of the body of a press release, separated from the first sentence by an en dash split by spaces. The dateline should include the whole date as well as the city name in all uppercase. For example: DHAKA, 20 MARCH 2022 – First sentence of copy.

- **Body** – The body text is the primary component of the press release that contains all the relevant information in a succinct manner. Most press releases include statements from organizational spokespersons that journalists might refer to in their news articles.

- **Boilerplate** – The boilerplate contains information about the organization and what it undertakes. An “About us” line usually separates the boilerplates from the body portion.

- **End or close** – For press releases sent to print news outlets, the final symbol should be ###, which signals the end of the formal statement. This way, no extra text is inadvertently released as part of the press release.

**Figure 8. Sample Media Pitch**

Subject line: Why the PH government must stop all ongoing and planned reclamation projects in Manila Bay

Hi [FIRST NAME]

A total of 46 planned reclamation projects in Manila Bay is set to impact more than 32,000 hectares of fishing waters affecting Filipino fisherfolk’s lives and livelihoods. Two of the reclamation projects have already obtained environmental certificates leading to the destruction of at least 600 mangrove trees (a natural barrier to flooding and sea level rise) in Bulacan and the landfilling of fishponds in Cavite.

We are demanding the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) to stand alongside fisherfolks and coastal residents in our fight against reclamation projects in Manila Bay. Specifically, we ask the PH government to:

- Thoroughly investigate the environmental and social damage caused by reclamation projects including the destruction of mussel farms and stationary fish traps in Navotas City
- Stop all planned and ongoing reclamation projects in Manila Bay
- Provide immediate aid to affected fishing communities and coastal residents

Please let us know if you would be interested in discussing any of these points for an article or if you would be interested in an interview with us at a time of your convenience.

Best regards,
PAMALAKAYA
c. **Social media.** There are a wide range of social media platforms from social network sites to sites designed purely for photo and video sharing. These platforms are constantly evolving and new platforms emerge daily. Here are some of the main types of social media platforms that local organizations can use to maximize their social media presence:

- **Social Networking Sites** – A social networking site allows users (including organizations) to create their own profiles or pages and cultivate a social network of friends and followers. Users may communicate by sharing ideas, activities and events through updates and photos. With over one billion active users, Facebook is the most popular social network site globally, but there are also other sites that cater to regional or personal interests like Tencent Qzone in China or Orkut in Latin America. Twitter is another example of a social networking site with global popularity and is otherwise known as a microblogging site.

- **Blogs** – A blog, short for web log, is an online communication platform through which bloggers can regularly share stories, photos, videos or links. Organizations can also set up their blog and can even function within an official organizational website. Blogs are valuable tools for advocacy because they allow organizations to easily expand beyond their traditional communication mediums and networks, and curate a content-rich platform for followers. Organizations can share meaningful stories from the field through the personal voice of staff members, volunteers or frontline communities. Some of the most popular blogging platforms include Wordpress, Movable Type, Blogger, Tumblr, Squarespace and Typepad.

- **Photo and Video Sharing Sites** – Photo and video sharing sites have become increasingly popular with the proliferation of smartphones. The sites host user-generated, audio-visual content that users can upload to their profiles. The most popular video sharing site is Youtube followed by Vimeo. Popular photo sharing platforms include Flickr, Instagram and Pinterest each catering to a different niche and demographic.

IBON International Climate Justice Program uses its Facebook Page to engage the public, share updates and event details, and disseminate information and education materials such as videos, infographics and publications.
C. Public campaigning

Public campaigning involves communicating to the general public at large. The process of public campaigning aims to generate and/or mobilize support for an advocacy demand or solution being offered to address an issue or problem affecting peoples or groups of peoples. Public campaigning can be done through various means, including but not limited to the following:

a. **Public forums** – Organizing public forums – whether online or in-person – is one of the most effective ways of raising awareness to an advocacy issue. Public forums can take the form of an expert panel speaking on a particular topic and allows participants/attendees to ask questions or suggest alternative solutions.

b. **Mass demonstrations** – A mass protest or demonstration refers to an action by a group or collection of groups gathering in an event to take part in or show opposition to a particular issue or advocacy demand. Mass protests are an important aspect of putting public pressure on governments and policymakers and is considered an effective means of shifting public opinion.

c. **Online campaigning** – Online campaigning, also known as digital advocacy, is the use of technology to create, promote and mobilize support for a particular cause or advocacy demand. Some examples of digital advocacy forms are discussed below:

   i. **Online petitions** – One form of online campaigning and digital advocacy is gathering support for a petition. A petition is a request for government representatives or legislators to take action or support a cause or advocacy demand. Signatures are collected from the supporters or from the people affected, strengthening their voice. Change.org is the most popular platform for petition campaigns wherein users can set up signatures or support initiatives and reach millions of people immediately.

   ii. **Interactive exhibits** – Another type of awareness-raising through digital advocacy is the use of digital exhibits wherein organizations can showcase works of art or images of frontline communities that raise awareness on the plight of affected peoples. It is a creative and useful means of making an organization’s demands known to the wider public.

   iii. **Online protests** – Due to the pandemic, citizens in many parts of the globe turned to online platforms such as social media to condemn government policies and treatment of marginalized communities and groups of people. Twitter storms for example, or the flooding of the Twitter timeline with hashtags and tweets about a pressing issue have gained traction as an effective method of raising awareness and can often pressure authorities to pay attention to or respond to people’s concerns and public outrage.
References


CLIMATE JUSTICE ADVOCACY TOOLKIT:
A Guide for Local Organizations

Copyright © IBON International Foundation 2022
ISBN: 978-971-9657-23-1

IBON International holds the rights to this publication. The publication may be cited in parts as long as IBON International is properly acknowledged as the source and IBON International is furnished with copies of the final work where the quotation or citation appears.

IBON International is a service institution with an international character and scope of work. It engages in capacity development for human rights and democracy around the world. It strengthens links between local campaigns and advocacies to international initiatives and brings development issues from the international arena in a way that people’s organizations and social movements can engage with at.

IBON International initiates and implements international programs, develops and hosts international networks, initiates and participates in international advocacy campaigns and establishes regional and country offices where necessary and appropriate.

Published by:
IBON International Foundation Inc.
3rd Floor, IBON Center
114 Timog Avenue, Quezon City
1103 Philippines
Telefax: +632 9276981
Telephone: +632 9277060 to 61 local 203 and 207
Email: international@iboninternational.org
Website: www.iboninternational.org

This publication has been produced with the financial contribution of medico international. The views herein shall not necessarily be taken to reflect the official opinion of medico international.

Layout and Cover Design: Andrew Zarate