



Lobbying Techniques and the Southern African Experience

*Presented by Yvonne Chibiya
Human Rights and Development Trust of Southern
Africa (HURIDETSA)*



Format of Presentation

- ❑ Defining what is lobbying and advocacy.
- ❑ Techniques and strategies (practical steps).
- ❑ Defining the role of CSO's in lobbying/monitoring criminal justice systems – Southern African Experience



What is lobbying and advocacy?

- There is a tendency to use these terms interchangeably though they have very different meanings and involve different processes.
 - **Advocacy** especially in the context of CSO's is when they seek to affect some aspect of society and bring about positive change; whether it relates to behavior change, rules, government laws and policies etc



Advocacy means any activity intended to raise public consciousness among decision-makers and the general public about an issue or a disadvantaged group, with a view to bring about changes in policy and improvements in their situation. (Black, 2002, p.11)

Lobbying on the other hand involves the strategies that are employed by CSO's to influence legislation and the relevant reforms.



Techniques and Strategies for effective lobbying

- 3 Main questions that should be considered before embarking on any advocacy/lobby effort;
 1. What is the capacity to engage in advocacy/lobbying?
 2. What is the external environment like?
 3. When all is put together, what is achievable?



- **Coalition building** – This works well especially when the lobby is around issues of common interest. It provides a platform for collaborative approach and united voice in lobbying. Coalitions can either be formalized or operate as loose networks/partnerships but working towards a common goal. Each approach has its advantages and disadvantages and is arguable but the ultimate should be to have a common position on issues.



- **Public Engagement** – Stakeholder inclusion is a cardinal aspect to ensure buy-in and support for any lobby effort.
- **Stakeholder dialogues** – Provides an opportunity for constructive debate and dialogue on policy issues.



- **Roundtables with policy makers** –

This provides direct access to policymakers/legislators, giving an opportunity for direct submissions to decision makers. It is however important to highlight that support and buy in at that level may prove as a challenge especially in the case where there is a poor relationship between government and civil society.

- **Question arises therefore, on the how?**

One of the starting points is to take advantage of the legislature and interface with the relevant parliamentary portfolio committees . E.g. Portfolio committees on Defence/home affairs; portfolio committees on human rights etc. CSO's can periodically make submissions before these committees on issues of concern; findings of research carried out; presentation of monitoring/shadow reports.



- **Evidence based empirical research**

Civil society must continuously carry out empirical research on emerging trends and ensure that they disseminate findings of the research. It is also imperative that the findings of the studies conducted are presented to the target groups and further engaged to ensure implementation of the recommendations.



- **Shadow reporting on states obligations**

Most of countries, are states parties to international human rights treaties/conventions; anti-corruption instruments and they have an obligation to domesticate the provisions of these instruments into their own national laws. States parties are also required to prepare reports on their performance in respect of implementing and domestication of the provisions of these treaties.



Most of the treaties make provision for the engagement of civil society and hence one role that CSO's can play is that of monitoring the compliance and producing shadow reports on performance of their respective governments in a bid to provide an independent position/view as well as highlight gaps in respect to domestication of human rights obligations.

- **Training and capacity building**

CSO's as part of a lobby effort should also extend their efforts towards training and capacity development, especially in the area of human rights. Most of the times, failure or ineffectiveness by our governments/government institutions is due to lack of capacity (both human and technical) and CSO's can play their role to bridge this gap.



Southern African Experience

- Lobby for the adoption and implementation of anti-corruption initiatives;
 - roundtables with MoJ's
 - Engagement with SADC Legal Sector
 - Funding and technical support
- Support to SADC through training and capacity development (SAFAC);
- Support to Inter-Ministerial Committees on State Party Reporting;
- Support to CSO's on shadow reporting;
- Submissions to the relevant treaty bodies;