

ADVOCACY AND LOBBYING WORKSHOP FOR CINDI MEMBERS
7TH AUGUST 2008

SHOULD CINDI HAVE AN ADVOCACY OFFICE?

Prepared by Mangani Katundu

BACKGROUND

The Child Advocacy Project is coming to an end at the end of March 2009. The Advocacy Officer of CAP has often represented both CINDI and CAP in National, Provincial and Local Forums; and therefore CAP and CINDI's absence will be felt in these advocacy circles. Furthermore CINDI Network Member's input on important matters affecting children may be compromised. In this vein, CAP wanted to inform CINDI members about advocacy - what it entails and what would be lacking if CINDI was absent in this area.

PROCESS

The workshop was facilitated by Rekha Nathoo (CAP Project Manager) and was framed by presentations by Sanja Bornman (Alliance for Children's Entitlement to Social Security) on cooperative governance structures like SANAC, the role of civil society in these structures and the wellbeing of children; and Mangani Katundu on CAP's experience in advocacy and lobbying. These presentations are available on the CINDI website.

After the presentations, participants broke into working groups to discuss the way forward for CINDI.

SUMMARY OF PRESENTATIONS – available on the CINDI website

This section summarises presentations made by Sanja Bornman and Mangani Katundu

1. Sanja Bornman from ACCESS

Sanja informed the participants that there are many cooperative governance structures at national, provincial and local levels and it is important for civil society to play an active role in them because:

- a. Children's issues cut across sectors and levels of governance. Participating in these forums allows civil society to have access to, meet with and present challenges to different departments and organisations at the same time. This facilitates networking and further engagements.
- b. A coordinated response ensures that less children fall through the service net. Often civil society organisations are sent from one department to the next when government responsibilities to resolve problems affecting their clients are blurred. Having the departments in the same room often resolves matters quicker and cost effectively.
- c. Some structures are mandated to inform government policy and practice eg. SANAC. Advocacy with regard to government policies involves lobbying. These forums act as direct input points in informing government policy and implementation.
- d. Government often only works with designated issue driven coordinating bodies. These bodies are useful in getting a grasp of which departments are responsible for what service delivery. This then enables civil society organisations to direct their demands appropriately.
- e. Structures may be gatekeepers to resources eg. Global Fund and training opportunities. Failure to participate in some structures may sometimes mean that organisations are ignorant of funding and training opportunities within these structures.

In closing, Sanja encouraged participants to be part of these forums.

2. Presentation by Mangani Katundu

- a. Mangani presented on the different areas in the Children's Sector that need advocacy. He explained that Advocacy is action for change. It involves putting a problem on the agenda and providing possible solutions to that problem. It also involves building support for the solution and for the action necessary to implement the preferred solution.
- b. He said that advocacy performs three main functions - educative, awareness raising and persuasive.
- c. Based on the context of the organisation and the work that they do, advocacy is often an essential component.

- d. In his opinion CINDI has to be involved in advocacy. CINDI is a large network and it needs to use its position to influence the development of good policies, service delivery and needs to be engaged at national, provincial and local levels.
- e. Mangani then presented the work that the CAP Advocacy Office had achieved over the past two years He indicated that when CAP comes to an end in March 2009, CINDI's participation in advocacy and lobbying work could be negatively affected if no advocacy office existed within the organisation. He therefore recommended the creation of an Advocacy Office within CINDI.

SUMMARY OF GROUP DISCUSSIONS

The groups were tasked to answer the following questions. The answers from the groups are given below each question. The writer has tried to keep to the words of the participants, changing only where there is a need to make the thinking of the participants clear to the reader.

1. Does CINDI need an advocacy office?

Answer: It was a unanimous **Yes** from the participants.

2. What roles would you expect the office to play? (Why should CINDI have an Advocacy Office?)

- a. The office could provide information and updates on advocacy.
- b. The office would be an information access point on child rights and government services.
- c. The Advocacy Officer would have a strong advocacy voice around common issues
- d. To take up issues form the communities to the service delivery and implementation planning arenas.
- e. To facilitate consultation and submissions on new polices and legislation.
- f. Make sure government polices are implemented.
- g. To ensure that the Network advocates around problems in service delivery on children's rights.
- h. The office would be a link to advocacy for CBOs and NGOs who do not have resources it do it by themselves.
- i. To enable the Network have capacity to conduct research.
- j. CINDI has been around for the past 10yrs and has many members. This is of strategic importance in influencing government. CINDI has influence and credibility.
- k. CINDI has a clear agenda ie the rights of children affected by HIV/AIDS. It will be easy to find consensus around advocacy areas.
- l. This will enable the Network to have a dedicated office providing knowledge, skills and concern around various issues.
- m. The office would have a component on training to capacitate CINDI members in advocacy.
- n. To make possible constant engagement with elected officials, at local, provincial and national levels.

3. Where the office should be situated/placed?

There were three options to consider on this question. These were

- Absorb it internally
- Hire someone for the position
- Have another organisation house the office

Answer: Participants felt that it has to be situated in the CNO. This will make the office accountable to the Network as a whole and not to a single member organisation. Being placed within a member of CINDI would limit the advocacy work

4. How would the Network contribute to the agenda of the office?

Answer:

- Through the Network meetings where contentious issues will be identified and filtered (eg in the clusters)
- Clusters will develop priorities to form the advocacy agenda
- Members can bring matters directly to the CNO
- The Network Members should feed the office information
- Feedback from office to network and to clusters
- CINDI has the infrastructure for this to happen
- Strategic planning meetings/forums should include advocacy agenda setting as a component of their deliberations

- Taking on advocacy issues with advocacy coalition partners at national level
- Regular review of national issues
- Ensure distribution of correct information
- Research
- Skills development regarding to how to do your own advocacy to enable members to participate effectively.

5. How could we deal with contentious advocacy matters as a Network?

In the advocacy that CAP has done, there haven't been any contentious issues and in future, the cluster filter would build consensus around contentious issues.