



ACTIF Newsletter

AFRICAN COTTON & TEXTILE INDUSTRIES FEDERATION

JANUARY 2010

EMBRACING ADVOCACY SKILLS FOR EFFECTIVE PUBLIC PRIVATE DIALOGUE

By Mr. Joseph Nyagari, IS Manager, ACTIF

Why is advocacy important? That was the question that 3 ACTIF staff members sought to answer during a 2 days workshop in Nairobi (on 8th and 9th December) courtesy of the Business Advocacy Fund supported by the Danish Government. The Executive Director of ACTIF, Mr. Rajeev Arora led the ACTIF team which included the Administrative Manager, Mrs. Claire Momoh and the Information Systems Manager, Mr. Joseph Nyagari.

The workshop had a mission to achieve five main objectives namely: To develop capability to undertake and to support the research necessary to engage effectively in advocacy; To undertake, and develop their capability to carry out, advocacy activities; To monitor and evaluate actions by government which impact on the enabling environment; To create better public understanding of the role of Business Membership Organization's



ED of ACTIF, Mr. Rajeev during a group discussion

(BMO's) in advocating a better business climate; and To support the development and implementation of strategies and services designed to build long term sustainability.

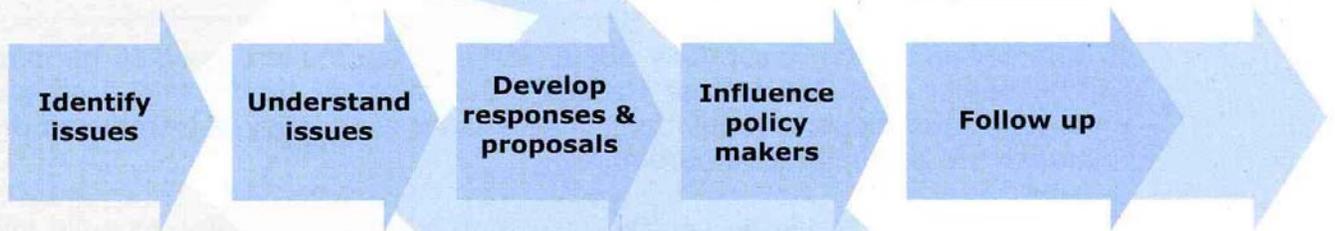
A total of 10 participants took part in the intensive training that was carried out by Mr. Clive Davis, the Fund Manager for the Business Advocacy Fund. Besides ACTIF the other participants were drawn from different sec-

tors including: the Kenya Private Sector Alliance; The Betting Control and Licensing Board; the young entrepreneurs association and the Kenya Livestock Producers Association;

Business advocacy is defined as the process of influencing the development and implementation of public policies that affect the business sector. BMO's are often subjected to numerous policies by the governing authorities some of which impact negatively on the business environment. This is especially so when policy changes are announced on short notice. With good advocacy skills, BMO's stand a better chance to influence not only the existing policies but also the future ones. The participants enjoyed the mode of training that was used which included power point presentations, case studies, group discussions, and practical demonstrations.

ADVOCACY - A FIVE STEP APPROACH

Figure 1: Steps in the advocacy process



Source: Irwin Grayson Associates

IDENTIFYING THE ISSUES is a critical step that needs to be accomplished first in an advocacy process. A lot of energy and resources can easily be wasted pursuing the wrong or unclear issues. The issues may arise from the businesses, from the government or from other stakeholders such as consumers, employees, NGO's, etc. One way of iden-

tifying the issues is by asking members informally when they come for meetings or formally through surveys. At times it is necessary to put in time and effort to identify and prioritise the issues before proceeding to the next step. **UNDERSTANDING THE ISSUES** follows as the second step in the process. This may require some bit of research in order to

comprehend the full implications at hand. This might include, for example, as- ...CTD in Pg 4

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SPECIAL REPORT: GAINING COMPETENCY IN ADVOCACY - Extracted from the presentation by Mr. Clive Davis, Business Advocacy Fund

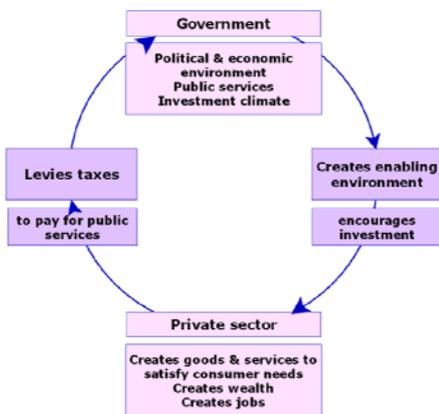
The enabling environment

Business Membership Organizations require an enabling environment in order to function effectively. But what does it mean to have an enabling environment? This could be having favorable Legislative & regulatory framework; Business friendly Government policies and a macro-economy; Access to financial facilities; Protection of intellectual property rights; Availability of skilled labour; Existence of commercial justice and contract enforcement; Presence of good Infrastructure (power, water, telecoms, roads etc); favorable Land ownership policies and mechanisms to check Corruption.

The virtuous cycle

The Private Sector cannot exist without the Government. However the relationship between the two parties is usually in form of a virtuous cycle involving a complex set of events that reinforces itself through a feedback loop as illustrated in the diagram below:

Regulations are a form of government intervention which usually translates to costs to the businesses as well as benefits the society. However if this regulations are left unchecked, the end result is competing pressures from business, consumers, employees, environmentalists and ultimately Financial as



well as Administrative burdens.

Regulatory reform

In order to maintain a virtuous cycle and perhaps prevent turning it into a vicious cycle, regulatory reform is necessary. This involves having less new regulations; Improving the existing regulation to be in tandem with fair practices, Providing guidance for compliance issues in order to avoid ambiguity or costly bureaucratic measures, Promoting a culture of inspectors as 'coaches' and not as 'cops' for mutual benefit.

Role of Advocacy

The role of Advocacy cannot be understated in order to achieve regulatory reform. This involves the BMO's actions of influencing, or attempting to influence, the way that Governing bodies think about, and acts on particular issues. Private sector advocacy describes attempts by the private sector to influence public policy in an effort to improve the business environment. Private Public dialogue, therefore, is a Pre-requisite for effective advocacy to be achieved. This implies that regular contact be maintained in order to promote mutual understanding, Build confidence and Provide ready means of communication.

Public Relations and Communication

According to Wikipedia, Public relations is the art and science of managing communication between an organization and its key constituents to build, manage and sustain its positive reputation. Effective advocacy requires that one communicates a message in a convincing manner. Effective communication results in higher achievement of the goals. This involves being able to translate campaign objectives into a communication plan; having the necessary skills to implement a communication plan; Understanding principles of good communication; being able to write concise and effective policy proposals, reports and presentations; understanding how and when to use the media and finally being aware of the importance of demonstrating success by carrying out an evaluation. Public relations, therefore, involves handling some specialist areas which include issue

PICTORIAL



Participants of the advocacy training along with the facilitator, Mr. Clive Davis (Top left)



Group work activity during the advocacy training



One of the participants making a presentation at the training

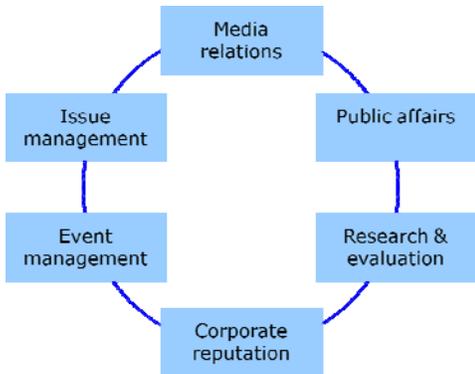


FILE PICTURE: Chairman of ACTIF, Mr. Jaswinder Bedi acknowledging greetings from Mrs. Hillary Clinton, US Secretary of State during the AGOA workshop held in Kenya in 2009. Mr. Bedi was also a key presenter at the workshop.



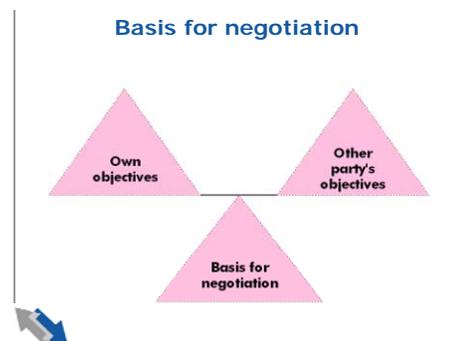
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management; reputation management; crisis management, grass root PR and others as illustrated in the diagram below:

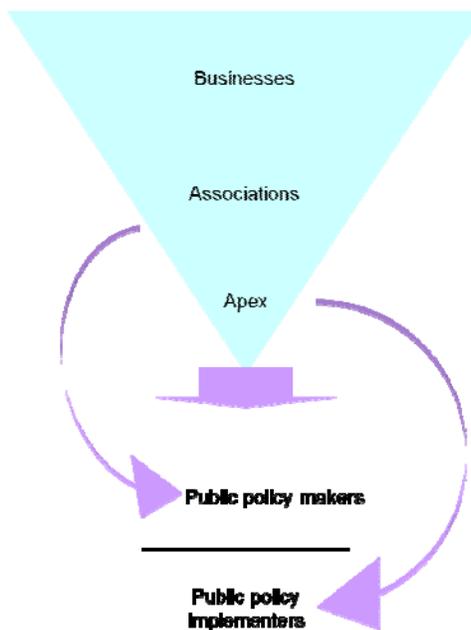


Influencing skills

Influencing is an important part of Advocacy. To influence, according to dictionary.com, may be defined as the capacity or power of persons or things to be a compelling force on or produce effects on the actions, behavior, opinions of others. Negotiating and Influencing are closely related. Negotiation often implies a buyer / seller relationship which provides room for compromise and agreement, after having generally agreed facts. Influencing, on the other hand, is amorphous in nature and may involve some disputes over the facts. In the case of Private sector advocacy, the aim may be to persuade a Ministry or Agency or Municipal Authority to repeal an existing regulatory requirement, or to implement a proposal for a new regulation in such a way that it is less burdensome or to enforce an existing regulation to stop something that the public agency is allowing to happen such as corruption.



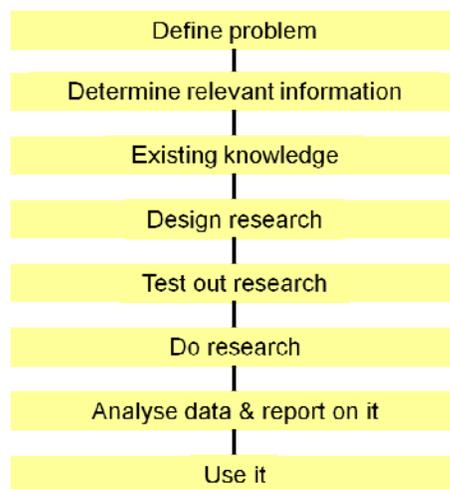
Exerting influence



Research for Advocacy

In order to make a compelling case for changing public policy, or even just changing the way that a public policy is implemented, requires that there is excellent evidence to support the argument. Research is, therefore, vital to ensure that: one has the full understanding of why the issue is a problem to business; to comprehend the scale and impact of the issue; to understand the issue and rationale for the public policy or regulation that you would like to change; to ascertain the harm that the public policy is intended to avoid and the associated risk; to establish of changing the public policy to businesses and other stakeholders; to be able to frame the issue in a clear and appealing language to the target audience and finally to be able communicate the issue in such a way

that encourages coalitions to form. Sometimes, it may be necessary to engage consultants to conduct the research. A professional approach will ensure that the problem is well defined, all interested parties are identified; A summary of the existing facts is compiled; the missing gaps; presentation of the statistics is done properly; Well thought out and presentable responses are prepared and also to ensure that a formal policy proposal is prepared. Below is an illustration of the steps involved in conducting primary research:



The Business Advocacy Fund supports business member organizations (BMOs) to engage in private public dialogue and to advocate an improved business environment in Kenya. For more information on their services visit: www.businessadvocacy.org (The Business Advocacy Fund, PO Box 24735 - Nairobi 00502, +254 20 445 3789, +254 20 445 3790)

Stages in surveys





OTHER NEWS AND UPDATES

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY

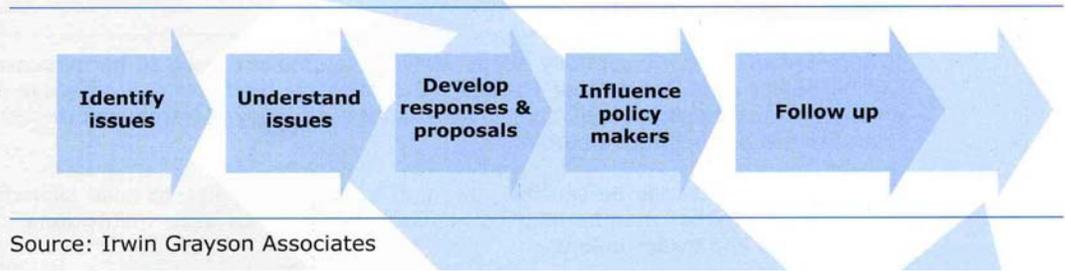
Effective from 1st January 2010, all goods being traded across East Africa are now duty free following the expiry of the 5 year transition period of the customs union. The five year transitional period was aimed at addressing economic development imbalances...

REVAMP OF THE ACTIF WEBSITE

ACTIF is in the process of merging its corporate website (www.actifafrica.com) and the trading website (www.cottonafrica.com) into a single website. The new website will include some improved features...

ADVOCACY - A FIVE STEP APPROACH

Figure 1: Steps in the advocacy process



Source: Irwin Grayson Associates

..From Pg 1

sessing the regulatory cost such as the cost of a licence or levy and compliance costs such as the administrative cost of compliance. In the case of an existing regulation, it may be wise to consider the potential implications if it didn't exist. On the other hand, for new regulations, it will be helpful; to think about the unintended consequences. DEVELOPING RESPONSES AND PROPOSALS is the next and most difficult step. This is because preparing policy proposals requires one to build on evidence so as to give substance and weight to the underlying issues. The issues may sometimes seem obvious to the affected parties but it will be a big mistake to assume the same case for other stakeholders. Proposals should just not be acceptable but also positively desired by your members and ideally by the wider private sector in order to achieve consensus. It is also important to ensure that the proposals do not disadvantage other businesses as they may also resort to lobbying against you. Proposals must also not be anti-competitive in nature as is the case when one seeks to ban imports in order to give advantage to local providers.

The fourth stage is INFLUENCING POLICY MAKERS. It is very important to consider which policy makers need to be influenced. More often than not it includes the Senior Civil Servants or Ministers. However this may not be the case in instances where the real objective is to seek the enforcement of existing regulation, or to ensure that policy is introduced in such a way as to minimize the administrative burden. For some issues, it may be necessary as well as add to ones credibility, to build alliances with others including business membership organizations, professional institutions, civil society organizations, professional institutions, civil society organizations and trade unions. FOLLOW UP is the final stage of the advocacy process. Once the policy makers get to agree to the proposals, there may be a need to make several efforts to follow up and monitor the progress. If perhaps, the agreement requires new legislation, then one will have little choice but to keep up the pressure until it goes through the process. This may involve dealing with several concerned parties such as parliamentary committees, Ministers or Senior civil servants. If, on the other hand, the agreement

required changes to the way a regulation was implemented, then there will be a need to follow up with the relevant department or Agency to ensure that they do what is necessary.

A Happy New Year! FROM ACTIF

UPCOMING EVENTS:

CAPACITY BUILDING WORKSHOPS FOR THE REGIONAL TRADE ASSOCIATION MEMBERS:

Table with 2 columns: MEMBER and MONTH. Rows include Mozambique (28th Jan 2010), Egypt (February 2010), Ghana (February 2010), Nigeria (February 2010), Swaziland (10th March 2010), and South Africa (10th March 2010).

(The specific dates for the other Countries will be confirmed later):

Technical Committee Meeting in Zimbabwe planned for March 2010.

ACTIF Annual General Meeting and official launch of ACTIF planned for April 2010

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