



# GDNET-TrustAfrica Policy Workshop

## Kampala, 7-8 June 2011

## SESSION 1 DEVELOPING AN INFLUENCE PLAN

### Implications of planning

- A plan is useful for:
  - ✓ Put actions in order
  - ✓ To act more proactive and strategically
  - ✓ Make synergies and find opportunities with other projects or programmes
- Compromise a certain degree of commitment of resources and members from our team to participate in the influence actions
- **Consensus** about **objectives, priorities, responsibilities** and expected **results**.
- Inter organizational **coordination**: consistency and coherency in the communication with different actors
- It is basic for the **decision making process** and **evaluation**

### Challenges of planning

- **Organizational culture** as starting point
- **Organizational viability**: resources and decision making process
- **Flexibility**, action and **adaptation capacity**
- **You cannot plan everything**: there are changes in the context, ad hoc opportunities, crisis, etc
- **Changes** in other programmes from the organization
- External actors (stakeholders) **own agenda**

#### Tips to build action-oriented SWOTs:

- *Conduct a SWOT session jointly with most active members of the network and its leaders in order to ensure that you capture a more inclusive view.*
- *Think about your own network and answer the questions in the last column in order to detect which are your own strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. Prioritise those that are most important according to its relationship to the network's current goals.*
- *Repeat the SWOT analysis every 6 months or every year to have a clear picture of the intended or non-intended evolution of the network.*
- *Apply the SWOT to specific network goals: which are the most relevant opportunities regarding selecting the issues to do research? Which are the most relevant weaknesses related to implementing a new communications strategy?*

## Important questions

1. What do we understand for policy influence?
2. In what do we want to influence specifically?
3. Understanding interdependence, who should we work with?
4. What is our proposal?
5. How are we going to do it?
6. What do we need to do it?
7. How do we adapt and adjust to the situation?
8. When and how are we going to evaluate our work?

## Basic structure of the influence plan

1. Influence definition
2. Objectives
3. Audiences and alliances
4. Proposal
5. Strategies
6. Actions
7. Resources
8. Schedule
9. Monitoring
10. Evaluation

## Types of policy objectives

*Discursive changes:* These refer to changes in the labels or narratives of policy actors. They reflect a new or improved understanding of a subject -- even if it does not imply an effective change of policy or practice.

*Procedural changes:* These refer to changes in the way certain processes are undertaken. For example, the incorporation of consultations to otherwise closed processes, or small changes in the way that national policies are implemented in the field.

*Content changes:* These refer to changes in the content of policies including strategy papers, legislation and budgets. These are formal changes in the policy framework.

*Attitudinal changes:* These refer to changes in the way policy actors think about a given issue. This might be an important change to target in the event that key stakeholders have high influence but lack interest in a policy area or are not necessarily aligned with the policy objectives of the programme.

*Behavioural changes:* These refer to more durable changes in the way that policy actors behave (act or relate to others) as a consequence of formal and informal changes in discourse, process and content.





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## SESSION 2 CIPPEC's INFLUENCE EXPERIENCE

**CIPPEC** (Centre for the Implementation of Public Policies Promoting Equity and Growth) is a private, non-profit organization that strives to create a more just, democratic, and efficient State in Argentina to improve the quality of life for all Argentine citizens.

CIPPEC is focused on helping to solve some of the country's greatest challenges: deterioration of education and public health; scarce access to justice; weak political institutions; corruption; and fiscal insolvency.

We believe that only an active civil society and a more just, responsible, effective, and transparent State will create an Argentina that not only can be integrated into the world but also addresses the needs of its citizens, enabling all Argentines to develop to their full potential.

In CIPPEC's ten years experience we learned that communication strategy is fundamental to improve our influence capacity. So we have been investing funds and time to develop the best communication program we can. Today this team is composed by a director, a media coordinator, an editor and a politician's contact person.

Every year CIPPEC produces an annual strategy that guides the work from each program and also includes the institutional areas such as communication. This last strategy analyzes the different audiences we will be in contact with and what kind of products we will develop to deliver the main messages from our research. So the communication strategy needs to be design accordingly to the other programs strategy. This requires coordination and consensus between the research programs, communication area and the executive direction.

### **CIPPEC's communication strategy is divided into 5 programs:**

1. **Institutional Communication program:** it is related to the kind of public image we want to develop or reinforce from CIPPEC in our different audiences. To do so we use different tools according to the audiences. For instance, regarding our general contacts and donors once a month we send them a newsletter with our last projects advances and some interesting interviews to people related to the topics we are working on
2. **Media program:** we believe the media is a key actor in Argentines public policy process. They can help us include a topic on the public agenda and also can contribute to build a public image from CIPPEC. We keep a registry from our appearances in the press by monitoring the media, we write opinion articles as well as we send important conclusions from research and also data to the journalists

3. **Web program:** in this virtual platform that we keep updated we upload all our publications, promote the last events we organize and invite our different audiences to visit us to know us better and have more information about we are doing. One important lesson we learned about our institutional web site is that is important to self manage it. This gives us the opportunity to control de times and updates what gives an extra to our web
4. **Politician's program:** As politicians and their advisors are our main “clients” we have special attention on them. This audience in Argentina requires a “special” treatment that could be consider informal. We have one person in charge of contacts, having coffee and regular meetings with them, hearing what they need and what they think about the policies that are in discussion
5. **Publications program:** Also for politicians and advisors but we have to add journalists and academia we produce several and different publications along the year. All policy briefs (with recommendations or analysis), handbooks, books, articles and directories are reviewed by our own editor. This person has a formal view of these tools and cares about format and contains. This process is a must in our research process as none of the mentioned products could be printed without the editor's approval

**Throw the experience (mostly because of making mistakes) we learned the following:**

- ✓ **Invest on communication** increases visibility and contributes to empower the *think tank* and its members. In house relations with the press allow a deep monitoring of the published and a close contact with journalists.
- ✓ **Limit and separate the deliveries to journalists:** remember that not every project or research is interesting for the media.
- ✓ **Make the journalist work easier:** with clear and short documents, an idea for a chart that illustrate data or stories that “soft” hard information. Besides, remember the newspaper timing.
- ✓ **Give exclusives:** journalist value less the press releases as they are shared with other colleagues. Balance the exclusives.
- ✓ **Transform messages into news:** information will have impact if it is unusual or new, affects a lot of people o reveals something that powerful people want to keep under the table.
- ✓ **Work the communication with researchers:** their work logic is very different from the journalist's ones. That is why researchers should understand that the media need clear, brief and innovative information.

