

Developing effective strategies & communication tools for policy advocacy

A workshop for RRPP Researchers on the Policy Bridging Initiative, Development Stream

October 1-3, 2015 – Petrovac, Montenegro

Facilitators: Eóin Young & Vladimir Pavlovic,
International Centre for Policy Advocacy

www.icpolicyadvocacy.org

This workshop has been developed to help researchers and advocates to see the value of engaging in evidence-informed policy advocacy, learn to effectively engage policy processes and further to understand that in effective advocacy we need to engage our target audiences over time in order to build ownership of the ideas that come from our positions, values and supporting evidence. For researchers, it helps to see beyond an information transfer perspective on advocacy to one based on constructive engagement.

This workshop has been developed and delivered as part of multiple policy research fellowship programmes targeting those doing policy research in environments where advocacy is particularly challenging. For those on the Policy Bridging Initiative, the workshop builds on the insights developed in all the previous stages of the development stream and is intended to help you deliver on the policy change aims of your projects.

GOAL AND FOCUS OF THE WORKSHOP

The workshop aims:

to build the strategic capacity of participants to design a targeted and policy-relevant advocacy campaign in order to achieve their desired policy objectives.

Specifically, during the workshop participants will:

- Analyse the role of research evidence in the policy environment and decision-making processes
- Gain insight into the nature of policy communities and the roles of different actors in the discussion
- Analyse the nature of advocacy in the policy environment
- Choose a suitable role for you/your organisation as an advocate
- Gain understanding of the ideas behind and approach to using the Advocacy Planning Framework (APF)
- Build insight into the nature of persuasive policy messages
- Consider how to approach an advocacy discussion within the existing narratives of your issue

- Gain an understanding of the policy brief as communication tool to support your advocacy activities
- Become familiar with the APF as a practical tool
- Begin to make real plans to push for your advocacy idea using the APF
- Get feedback your initial advocacy plans from your peers and trainers

MAIN RESOURCE

The conceptual foundations of the workshop draw heavily on 82 separate successful cases where research influenced policy decision making in transition and developing countries, which in turn informed the development of our policy advocacy manual:

Young, Eoin & Lisa Quinn (2012) *Making Research Evidence Matter: A Guide to Policy Advocacy in Transition Countries*. Budapest: Open Society Foundations. Available on line: http://www.icpolicyadvocacy.org/sites/icpa/files/downloads/policy_advocacy_guidebook_-_making_research_evidence_matter_-_young_and_quinn_2012_0.pdf

WORKSHOP CONTENT

The workshop consists of three days of training (October 1-3, 12 x 90mins). The 3 main components of the workshop are:

Day 1 – Thursday, October 1st – **Advocacy Day**

1. *Building a framework for advocacy planning*

The purpose of this element of the workshop is to build insight into a conceptual and practical framework for planning policy advocacy campaigns and reflect on aspects of the planned advocacy campaign. There are five main elements of the day:

	<i>Element</i>	<i>Focus</i>
<i>Advocacy - Building a framework for advocacy planning</i>		
1	Defining policy advocacy	To get everyone on the same page, build a shared language and to introduce our core understanding of effective advocacy, we begin with definitions.
2	Roles of different actors in the advocacy process	Next we focus on understanding the position and approaches of different actors, from watchdogs to think tanks to activists, as it is a key starting point to position yourself in the advocacy process.
3	Mapping our own roles in the advocacy process	We next focus on participants sharing their previous experience of advocacy and mapping out the roles they normally play in advocacy processes.
4	Introduction to the Advocacy Planning Framework	The core planning tool that comes from our manual is the Advocacy Planning Framework. Introducing the tool also is an opportunity to map out the challenges of the policy advocacy process.
5	Developing effective advocacy messages	At the core of the advocacy process is the idea that its not only about what <i>you</i> want to say but more importantly that you are trying to engage and convince your target audiences. We finish the day on this note with a practical case based example.

Day 2 – Friday, October 2nd – Briefs Day**2. The policy brief as a key advocacy communication tool**

Going further into idea of policy advocacy as a process of persuasive communication, the nature of the policy brief as a communication tool used in support of an advocacy campaign will be examined in this part of the workshop. There are 5 main elements of the day:

	<i>Element</i>	<i>Rationale/Focus</i>
Briefs - The policy brief as a key advocacy communication tool		
1	Targeting policy communities & competing policy narratives	We will start day 2 by looking at the challenge of bringing your advocacy position to a discussion driven by competing narratives/frames and power dynamics. We will develop this element by doing an initial stakeholder analysis for the proposed advocacy project.
2	Skim read sample briefs	We will begin the section by doing a skim reading exercise on the 2 policy brief samples we will use though the section.
3	The focus and purpose of a policy brief	We will then get participants to reflect on the process of moving from a developed study to a draft brief and based on their reflections consolidate the discussion around the purpose and focus of a policy brief in a advocacy campaign.
4	Putting together and using the policy brief as an advocacy tool.	Going more in-depth into the policy brief, we will analyse two sample briefs to understand further how to put together a policy brief that will be an effective advocacy communication tool. We will close by considering the approach to advocacy using a policy brief. The idea is to look at the advocacy process from the perspective of the communication tool and link back to the APF.
5	Reflection on your policy brief.	We will close the element by getting individuals to reflect on plans for the policy brief that they will produce for the RRPP project.

Day 3 – Saturday, October 3rd – Planning Lab**3. Developing on your advocacy plan**

In this element of the workshop, we will turn it over to you and facilitate the group to start working on applying some of the perspectives learned in the first two days of the workshop to your own policy advocacy work. During this day, we will do the following:

	Element	Rationale/Focus
3 – Plan – Developing on your advocacy plan		
1.	Working individually or in your team on an initial advocacy plan	Start by getting practical and asking you to make initial plans for your own RRPP policy advocacy project using the Advocacy Planning Framework.
2.	Peer feedback on your design	We will then group you by topics and/or countries and allow you to share your advocacy concerns and get input with from your peers
3.	Tutorials with trainers	In addition, you will have a chance to talk through and discuss your plans with one of the trainers.

POLICY BRIDGING INITIATIVE - DEVELOPMENT STREAM

This workshop is the seventh event/stage in the Policy Bridging Initiative¹ for those on the Development Stream². In addition, other RRPP researchers who have answered an open call, but are not on the Development Stream of PBI will also participate. For all participants, there is an opportunity to attend the workshop and also, to get written and Skype feedback on your draft policy study. So the stages for the feedback process following the workshop is as follows:

1. Submit your draft policy brief (*to Ana*)
2. Receive written feedback on your brief from ICPA
3. Schedule and do a Skype call with ICPA to discuss the feedback

Ana will talk to each team attending the workshop and agree submission times which fit with your project timeline. Some teams have already agreed submission times for their draft briefs with the ICPA team

WORKSHOP METHODOLOGY

This workshop is practical and interactive in nature and draws heavily on real case studies of policy advocacy and policy briefs to build the required insight. The success of the workshop will depend on active involvement of participants in providing constructive insight and feedback to peers. In seeking to maximise these opportunities, the main aspects of the methodological approach adopted in the workshop are:

- A learner-centred, interactive environment;
- Learning by doing;
- Pair and small group work to facilitate peer interaction;
- Analysis of real advocacy case studies, policy briefs and communication tools;
- Role of participant as informed and responsible adult learners and the trainer as facilitator.

¹ <http://www.icpolicyadvocacy.org/programmes/researcher-apprenticeship/pbi>

² <http://www.icpolicyadvocacy.org/programmes/researcher-apprenticeship/pbi/development>

TIMETABLE FOR TRAINING DAYS

The training workshop will be run over 3 days, Thursday, October 1st to Saturday, October 3rd. The daily workshop timetable of four 90-minute sessions is as follows:

Daily workshop timetable	
09.30 – 11.00	Session 1
11.00 – 11.30	Coffee break
11.30 – 13.00	Session 2
13.00 – 14.00	Lunch
14.00 – 15.30	Session 3
15.30 – 16.00	Coffee break
16.00 – 17.30	Session 4

INTERNATIONAL CENTRE FOR POLICY ADVOCACY

The International Centre for Policy Advocacy (ICPA) is an independent NGO *dedicated to bringing more voices, expertise and evidence into policy decision-making and promoting an enabling environment where policy decisions are grounded in the public interest*. Established in 2012, ICPA is built around a team of capacity developers that have worked together for 13 years, having initially developed within the Local Government Initiative, Open Society Foundations for a decade. The core of our work focuses on the following elements:

- building comprehensive capacity and confidence of researchers and advocates to engage and persist in evidence-informed policy advocacy;
- developing and widely sharing practical policy resources and toolkits to support the work of policy practitioners;
- setting standards and norms for engagement by policy communities of practice in evidence-informed policymaking;
- documenting and sharing lessons learned from cases where evidence has influenced policy decision making in challenging environments;
- creating and strengthening the interface between policy communities of practice engaged in the functions of research, analysis, advocacy and policy development.

In our 13 years of existence, and delivered more than 400 workshops for approximately 5000 participants in multiple languages. In our work, we try to combine learning in workshops with mentoring in the application of new skills and in this manner, we have supported 15 policy fellowship programmes. Our guidebooks on policy writing and advocacy are widely used to build capacity and set standards. In these years, we have worked with over 60 partners including Open Society Foundations, Swiss Development Agency, Norwegian Institute of International Affairs, European Fund for the Balkans, Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, OSCE, UNDP, UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, Central European University, Maastricht University, and Internews.

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WORKSHOP FACILITATORS

- *Eóin Young, Programme Director, International Centre for Policy Advocacy.*
- *Vladimir Pavlovic, Trainer, International Centre for Policy Advocacy.*

Eóin Young (young@icpolicyadvocacy.org) is co-founder and Programme Director in the International Centre for Policy Advocacy (ICPA). He has worked as a trainer and mentor in supporting the development of policy research, writing and advocacy capacity in the NGO and governmental sectors mainly in East, Central and Southeast Europe for over a decade. Before founding ICPA in 2012, he previously worked under the Local Government and Public Service Reform Initiative (LGI) of the Open Society Foundations and is co-author of the manuals “Writing effective public policy papers” (LGI/2002)³ and “Making research evidence matter: a guide to policy advocacy in transition countries” (Open Society Foundations/2012)⁴. He has a multidisciplinary background in Mechanical Engineering, a postgraduate degree in Applied Linguistics and is a big fan of MOOCs – having recently studied data analysis, negotiation, songwriting and behavioral economics.

Vladimir M. Pavlovic (vladimir@icpolicyadvocacy.org) is Centre Coordinator of Center for European Integration within the Belgrade Open School (www.bos.rs/cei) and Trainer in the International Center for Policy Advocacy (ICPA) (www.icpolicyadvocacy.org). He has worked as a trainer and mentor for public authorities at all levels and civil society organisations in supporting the development of policy papers, development of policy advocacy campaigns in Serbia and Western Balkans region since 2004. Vladimir was guest lecturer at the Faculty of political Sciences, University of Belgrade until 2010. His area of interests are Policy making process in the EU and EU Law. He is member of the EU training team in the Standing Conference of Towns and Municipalities, Association of Serbian Local Authorities. Vladimir is also certified trainer for negotiation and mediation (certificate issued by Carr, Swanson & Randolph LLC).

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http://www.icpolicyadvocacy.org/sites/icpa/files/downloads/writing_effective_public_policy_papers_young_quinn.pdf

⁴ http://www.icpolicyadvocacy.org/sites/icpa/files/downloads/policy_advocacy_guidebook_-_making_research_evidence_matter_-_young_and_quinn_2012_0.pdf