



Section 2

# Capacity Building

FOREIGN DOMESTIC WORKER CAMPAIGN TOOLKIT

## Section 2

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|     |                          |    |
|-----|--------------------------|----|
| 2.1 | Interventions            | 1  |
| 2.2 | Policy Advocacy          | 9  |
| 2.3 | Utilising Media          | 11 |
| 2.4 | Partnerships in Campaign | 14 |
| 2.5 | Monitoring & Evaluation  | 17 |

# 2.1 Interventions

## FOREIGN DOMESTIC WORKERS THROUGH PARTICIPATORY ACTION RESEARCH (PAR)

### What is PAR?

There are three main characteristics of PAR:

**PARTICIPATION:** many affected individuals and groups participate. This will include foreign domestic workers, their support groups (NGOs, CBOs), research institutes, government officials, multi-lateral agencies.

**ACTION:** it is an active process, involving activities to define the problems, and active interventions to address the problems.

**RESEARCH:** the activities, the discussions, the information is documented so that it can be used by other communities and can be used for advocacy for policy level changes.

The participation, action and research are inter-linked and form a cycle in which information is generated, which is used to create interventions, which are used to create more in-depth information which can further fine-tune or expand the interventions.

### 2.1.1 Step One

#### 1. How to start?

PAR can be done in either the country of origin when domestic workers return to their home country or in the country of destination, where they are working.

In some instances PAR may be the start of the formation of a community group but most often it will be an activity done by a group that is already established, whether it be a foreign domestic workers association or union, or a support group (NGO, CBO, or research institute). Since PAR represents a long-term cycle of interventions, the group needs to have some stability, experience and ability to implement the interventions that result from the action research.

Foreign domestic workers associations or support groups reach out to other domestic workers through a variety of methods. The groups need flexibility to do this, since the working

conditions of many foreign domestic workers are so restrictive that the women have very little free time or mobility.

They may develop contacts with foreign domestic workers through their networks, through arranging events or distributing brochures at regular meeting places of domestic workers (the park, religious institutions, shopping malls) or at places where domestic workers have to visit (embassies, markets, employment offices, immigration offices). They can run live phone-in community radio programs for foreign domestic workers, or hotlines, or drop-in centres. It is important to be offering information or activities or services which foreign domestic workers need and want.

#### 2. Getting Started

The domestic workers association or support group might want to invite experienced PAR practitioners to run a series of workshops with a

selected group of interested domestic workers or support workers to teach PAR techniques. If possible, make an agreement with the PAR practitioners so they can be called on throughout the process to assist with developing some of the data collected into research papers. The agreement should clearly state the right of the domestic workers association or support group to decide how, where and when the information is used and to be accredited for the information.

### 3. Prioritising the Issues

The foreign domestic workers association or support group will first need to prioritise the issues of concern for domestic workers in their area.

This can be done by:

a) using a SPIDER DIAGRAM.

An issue is written in the centre of the white board, and the group connects that issue to other connected issues from their experience.

For example, the centre word might be :  
DOMESTIC WORK

Members of the group might suggest, that loneliness, sexual harassment, no paid leave, etc are written around DOMESTIC WORK..

Members of the group may then write other words connected to these words. So someone might write; rape next to sexual harassment. Someone might write; depression next to loneliness and so on.

After the spider diagram is completed, the group discusses which issues seem to have created the most other words, and why. Which issues seem to affect most domestic workers, which have the most serious negative impact?

b) SOCIAL NETWORKS

Place a sheet of paper on the floor in the middle of the room with the word 'DOMES-

TIC WORKERS' on it. Give each person several coloured sheets of paper. Then ask them to write on each sheet a person/position that she has contact with or would like to have contact with.

(Use a colour code: red for good relationship, purple for bad relationship, and blue for would like a relationship). Then ask them to place their pieces of paper on the floor around the word "DOMESTIC WORKERS'. They can arrange them according to the amount of contact. The words might be: employer, employer's children, recruiter, driver, family, embassy etc. Then the group can discuss: how do the purple contacts negatively affect our lives? Which have serious consequences on our lives? Why would we like contacts with the blues? and why do we not have that contact? What would change if we had this contact?

In both exercises, the facilitator can request to tape the discussions and someone in the group should keep a record of the words written and the discussions held.

These same activities can then be held with other groups of foreign domestic workers. The records of all the activities can be compared, and a list compiled of the most frequently recurring topics, and the topics which women expressed had most negative impact on their lives. These can then be grouped/clustered and short-listed. If possible, the short-list should be discussed with each of the groups that participated to select one major topic to develop interventions to address. If this is not possible, due to the limitations on time, just one group should make that selection.

The list might look something like this.

- Long working hours
- Sexual harassment
- No privacy
- No friends
- Discrimination
- Police harassment
- No paid time off

When this list is clustered it will look like this:

- Working conditions
- Social exclusion
- Sexual and gender based violence

To make the decision on which topic to choose, the group might want to consider not only its

impact on women’s lives, but also what opportunities or threats there are to tackling such an issue. Each of the above issues can be analysed in the framework below to assess which offers the most opportunities for a successful intervention.

| Working conditions | Opportunities  | Threats   |
|--------------------|--|---|
| Political          | Migrants contributing to economic growth and prosperity of country | Pressure to keep wages low to please business class     |
| Social             | Women’s unions advocating for working rights in informal sector    | Local domestic workers feel migrants bring down the pay |
| Legal              | Registration of migrants   | No legal recognition of domestic work                   |

#### 4. In-depth information and deeper understanding about priority number one

In this step, the foreign domestic workers association or support group will try to get more in-depth information and understanding about the issue they have prioritised. They need this information in order to be able to design appropriate interventions.

Assuming that the group has decided that the most common, serious issue to tackle is the working conditions, and although there are challenges there are also some opportunities to implement interventions which aim to improve the working conditions. But first the group decides that they need some ‘evidence’ about the current working conditions, they need ‘proof’ that the working conditions are below standard.

### 2.1.2 Step Two: Data Collection

There are different ways to collect this ‘evidence’ or ‘proof’. Below are a few examples, but if the group has sought the help of PAR practitioners for training, they should be supplied with a large number of techniques.

If the priority issue is very extensive, the group may want to divide it into sections and run a series of focus group discussions. For example, in our scenario, several focus group discussions could be held on:

#### A FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS

Foreign domestic workers can be brought together to hold discussions on the priority issue. The domestic workers association or support group will prepare a list of questions to be used as a guide for the discussions. The focus group will not be a question and answer session but a discussion.

- Hours of work/rest/paid leave/public holidays/maternity leave
- Type of work/job description/scope of work
- Safety at work (including safety from sexual harassment in the workplace)
- Wages/deductions/methods of payment/security bonds/recruiting fees

If the group agrees, the session can be recorded, but it is also important to have a note-taker. The facilitator should try to make the discussion as interactive and participatory and enjoyable as possible.

Because much of the information being shared may be quite depressing, you will need to leave some time at the end of the session to “switch the mood”. You can take one of the ‘smaller’ issues brought up during the discussions and ask the group what they can do about it.

For example, the group has said during the discussion on working hours, that when they complain to the Labour Protection Office, they cannot remember the exact number of hours worked and are therefore compensated for less than they really worked. In this scenario, the group could decide to keep a diary of their work, noting down every day the hours of work and the work performed.

Leaving the group with a positive action, however small, will be important to ensuring that the group remains committed to the process. Then at the very end of the session, the group can do a fun activity or a relaxing activity for the domestic workers to leave not only feeling positive but also happy and relaxed.

Focus Group Discussions can be held in the office, in religious institutions, in the park, in a noodle stall, wherever the domestic workers can get to and feel safe and relaxed to talk. The discussion should not go on too long, as many domestic workers have only limited free time.

Where it is not possible, for foreign domestic workers to come together, the questions can be asked individually. Usually it is possible to meet a domestic worker for lunch together or a short chat at the market. However this is of course highly unsatisfactory, since the domestic worker will not benefit from being part of a group and being part of the process.

#### **B IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWS**

Focus group discussions can reach many foreign domestic workers and create a sense of solidarity and fun. They can be an empowering experience while at the same time generating important information. However, it may also be useful to devise another longer, more in-depth set of questions to ask a small number of individual foreign domestic workers.

#### **C SPIDER DIAGRAMS/SOCIAL NETWORKS**

The two activities described earlier (spider diagram and social networks) using the topic working conditions as the focal issue.

### **2.1.3 Step Three: Analysis**

Once data has been collected, the foreign domestic workers associations or support groups will need to start analysing it. This can be done by using the same tools as were used in data collection i.e. spider diagrams, social networks or Venn diagrams. All the information from the focus group discussions and in-depth interviews is read and the issues are sorted. These issues

are then drawn on the Venn Diagram. Large circles denote numbers of respondents, the larger the circle the more common the issue. The proximity to the original, green circle denotes the seriousness of the issue. The closer to the green circle the more serious the issue.

## A VENN DIAGRAMS FOR ANALYSING INFORMATION

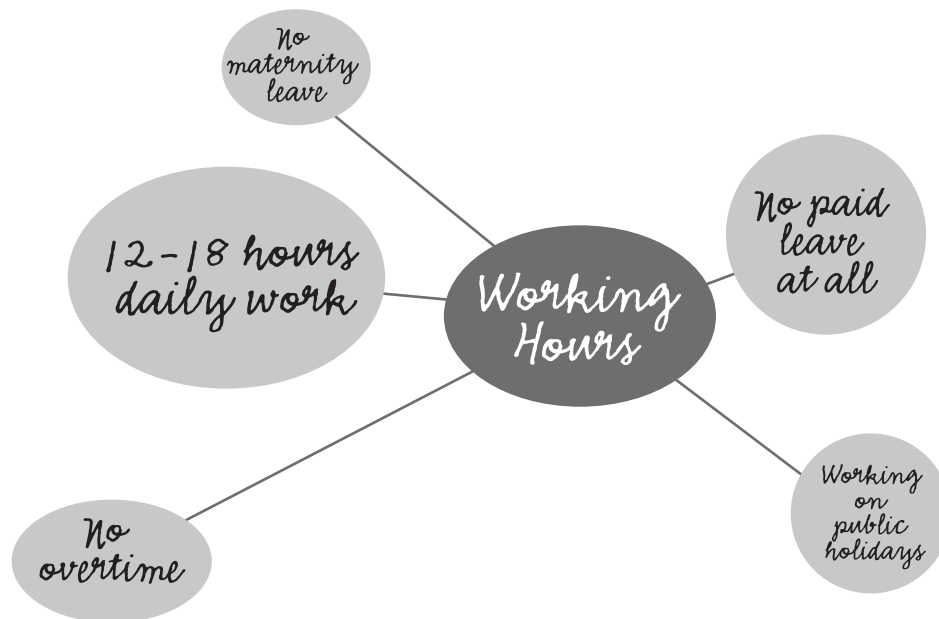


Fig 1: Example of a Venn Diagram

In this example, the issue of greatest concern was that a group of domestic workers had no paid leave at all (it is closest to the green circle)

But the issue which was most common was the long daily working hours. It was also an issue of particular concern (it is the next closest circle and is the largest circle).

Other issues of concern to some of domestic workers were that they had no overtime pay and they had to work on public holidays.

Another issue but of less concern to less people was that there was no maternity leave (this is both the smallest circle indicating that it affected less women and is furthest away from the circle indicating that it was not of immediate concern).

## B COLOURED LISTS FOR ANALYSING INFORMATION

The information could also be analysed by writing up the various issues that have emerged in a list on a piece of paper. Then coloured stickers are placed on the issues.

For example: One red sticker for each person who suffered the same difficulty, and blue stickers to denote the extent of the negative impact of the issue on the lives of the foreign domestic workers.

For example, if the issue of discussion had been safety at work, the list may look like this:

- Cleaning windows in high rise apartments (20 red stickers, 15 blue stickers)
- Sexual touching by the employer (12 red stickers, 15 blue stickers)
- Beatings (9 red stickers, 10 blue stickers)
- Allergies to detergents (8 red stickers, 5 blue stickers)
- Repetitive strain injury (7 red stickers, 3 blue stickers)
- Bathing ferocious dog (1 red sticker, 1 blue sticker)

- Electric shocks (2 red stickers, 2 blue stickers)

In some cases, not all women will experience the difficulty, but they will express their concern that this is a violation that must be stopped in the realm of domestic work. In others, many women may experience the violation, but feel that it does not need immediate attention). So in this scenario, there are two major issues to be addressed:

- Cleaning windows in high-rise apartments and
- Sexual and physical harassment and violence in the workplace

When the information has been analysed in this way, the group can check back with a larger group of foreign domestic workers to verify the findings. The findings can also be discussed with other concerned groups, local domestic workers associations, NGOs, CBOs and research institutes.

## 2.1.4 Step Four: Action

Once the group feels that the information they have collected and analysed truly represents the current most immediate needs of foreign domestic workers, they may want to call a Strategy Planning meeting of selected interested parties, including foreign domestic workers, local domestic workers, NGOs, women's groups, labour groups etc.

At this meeting, they can present their findings from the data collection and outline the major issues of concern. The meeting can help to draw up a plan of action.

In this scenario the major emerging issues are:

- No paid leave at all
- Excessively long working hours
- Cleaning windows in high rise apartments
- Sexual and physical harassment and violence in the workplace.

Although the issues are diverse, they might all be considered of immediate concern to domestic workers. Different interventions can be designed to address them however an overall strategy should be devised which provides a framework for all the various interventions.

The Strategy can be devised by asking questions:

- Why can such violations occur?
- What are the underlying reasons for the violations?

The answers to these questions will provide a larger framework and direction to the interventions.

### Examples of Different Interventions from Our Scenario:

#### CLEANING WINDOWS IN HIGH RISE APARTMENTS:

A practical issue which can be addressed immediately:

- preparing and distributing safety information in the language of the migrant workers (see resource kit for example from Singapore)



#### WORKING HOURS:

More structural issue, rooted in the business of migration and workers rights might require a multi-pronged, multi-level, long-term intervention.

- The data collected can be used as evidence of the violations of rights, laws and international standards. It can be presented to embassies, Ministries, UN agencies. It can be fed into shadow reports for CEDAW.
- An awareness raising campaign might be started to catch the attention and mobilise other members of civil society: “Pay us to play...one day off a week!” .... “Pay us to rave....not to slave!”
- Domestic workers could hold public events at festivities, could spread the information through their networks, through community radio and other media.
- Employers who give regular paid days off could be mobilised to support the campaign.

#### SEXUAL AND PHYSICAL VIOLENCE:

- Where there are strong, active women’s groups in the country, who are already campaigning on Violence Against Women, or Sexual and gender based violence, the meeting may decide to join those campaigns and ask for trainings and support from the groups already active on the issue, rather than taking the lead themselves.

Thus different plans of action, different interventions can be formulated for different issues but they all need to fall within a general strategy.

The meeting or groups will also have to devise a plan for financing the activities and mobilise funding resources. Interested donors can be involved in the meeting.

### 2.1.5 Step Five (or back on the cycle starting again at Step Two):

#### **MAR... More Action Research**

Once the proposed interventions are started, they will need to be monitored. The methods used above for Action Research can be used again to monitor and evaluate the impact. The foreign domestic workers associations and support groups will need to monitor for expected, unexpected, positive and negative impacts of the interventions. Focus group discussions, spider diagrams, social network, Venn diagrams, coloured lists can all be used to evaluate the programs.

The diagrams and activities should reflect some changes.

Where “no paid leave” was the focus of the discussion:

- there might be links now to the Department of Employment who might be requesting consultations to draw up standardised contracts.
- Or there may links to violence. Some domestic workers who wanted to join the campaign may find that they were beaten by their employers to stop them taking part.

Where ‘sexual and physical violence’ was the focus of the discussion:

- There might now be substantial links with local women’s groups and a great increase in access to services in cases of sexual violence.

### 2.1.6 Step Six (or back to Step Three): Analysis

Again, this information needs to be documented and analysed. The same techniques can be used as in Step Three. By this time, there

should be a strong network of foreign domestic workers that the information can be verified with.

### 2.1.7 Step Seven (or back to Step Four): Action

The next stages of the interventions should be guided by this data, improvements and adjustments can be made according to the analysis.

The newly collected data can also be used as further evidence to lobby government officials, employers and other concerned parties.

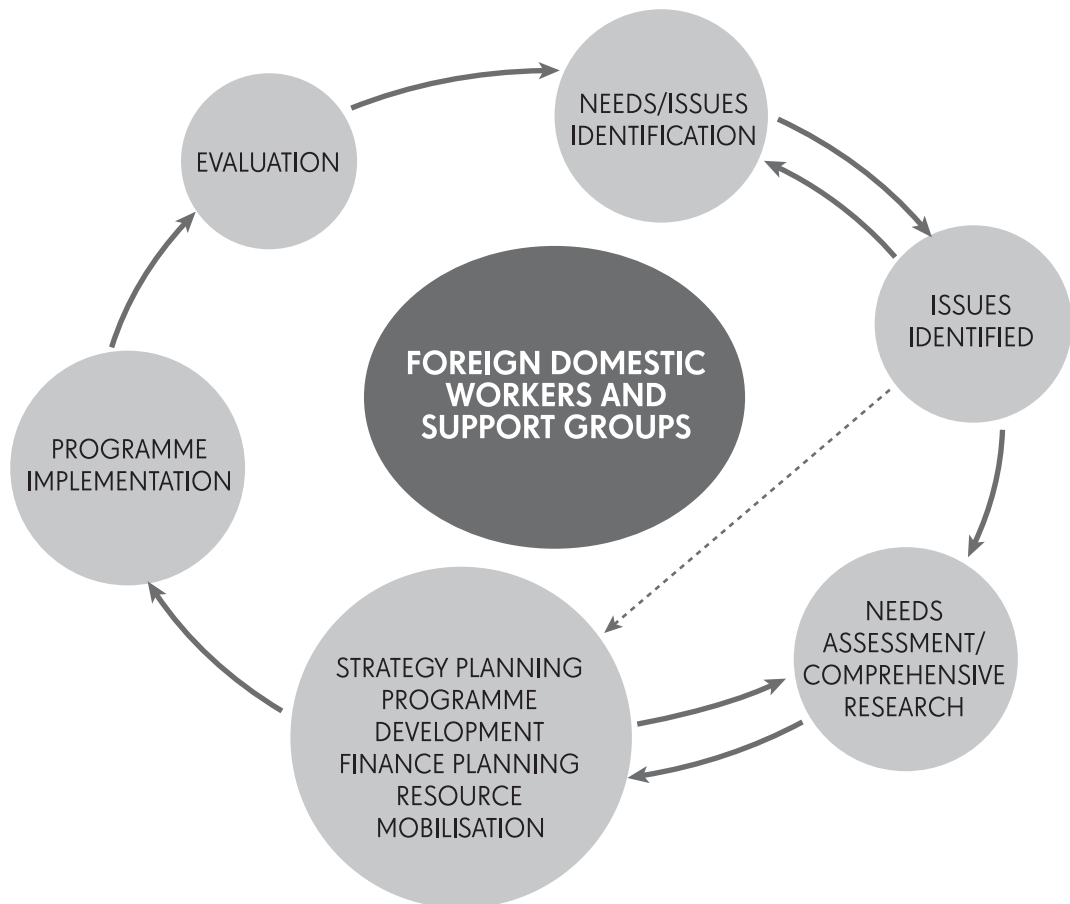


Figure 2: The Participatory Action Research Cycle

# 2.2 Policy Advocacy

## 2.2.1 What Is Policy Advocacy?

Policy advocacy is a process, a strategy, a tool and programme to create public awareness and support and to influence decision makers for change through policies, legal reforms and mechanisms and ensure accountability of the state and other stakeholders in respecting, protecting and promoting the human rights of people and communities.

Policy advocacy cannot be seen as a separate program or project. It must be an integral part of the overall program, strategy and interventions for change. It must be conceptualised

and developed in the context of the realities experienced by the community whose rights are violated.

In the context of the reality of foreign domestic workers, policy advocacy must have data and evidence of the situations and experiences of domestic workers. It must address the root causes of the human rights violations, recognize the absence of policies, laws, regulatory measures and mechanisms and the accountability of governments, employers, recruiting agents and other stakeholders..

## 2.2.2 Some Fundamental Principles in Policy Advocacy for Foreign Domestic Workers

1. **DOMESTIC WORKERS ARE PART OF THE STRATEGY, PROGRAMME AND ACTION.** The involvement of foreign domestic workers in policy advocacy is a principle that cannot be compromised. Some say it is difficult because domestic workers cannot be reached and remain inaccessible. Without the participation of the foreign domestic workers, policy advocacy will be weak and will tend to wither away. The empowerment process of the community is lost and thus has little value to the change. It must be recognised that any policy or legal changes can only be effective if the affected community is able to use the laws and mechanisms to assert their rights.
2. **POLICY ADVOCACY MUST HAVE A GENDERED APPROACH AND DIMENSION.** Domestic workers are the main migrants in the feminisation of migration bearing the brunt of the economic and social disadvantages of gender based occupational segregation the most. Besides, the domestic worker works and lives in a patriarchal system and family as an institution with its norms, values and forms of control. This situation creates various forms of vulnerability like sexual abuse and rape – she is an alien with no kinship ties, isolated and denied an identity.
3. **ADVOCACY NEEDS TO ADDRESS ALL STAGES OF MIGRATION.** Migration is a process that begins at the country of origin and moves to host country and then comes full circle when the domestic worker returns home. Thus the advocacy strategy has to be developed at the pre-departure, post arrival and reintegration stages.
4. **ADVOCACY MUST HAVE AN INTERNATIONAL DIMENSION.** Migration is global in character. The response must also be international in its perspective, programme and advocacy. The rights as defined and enshrined in the various international instruments and covenants are universal and indivisible. There are also established international mechanisms to bring about the

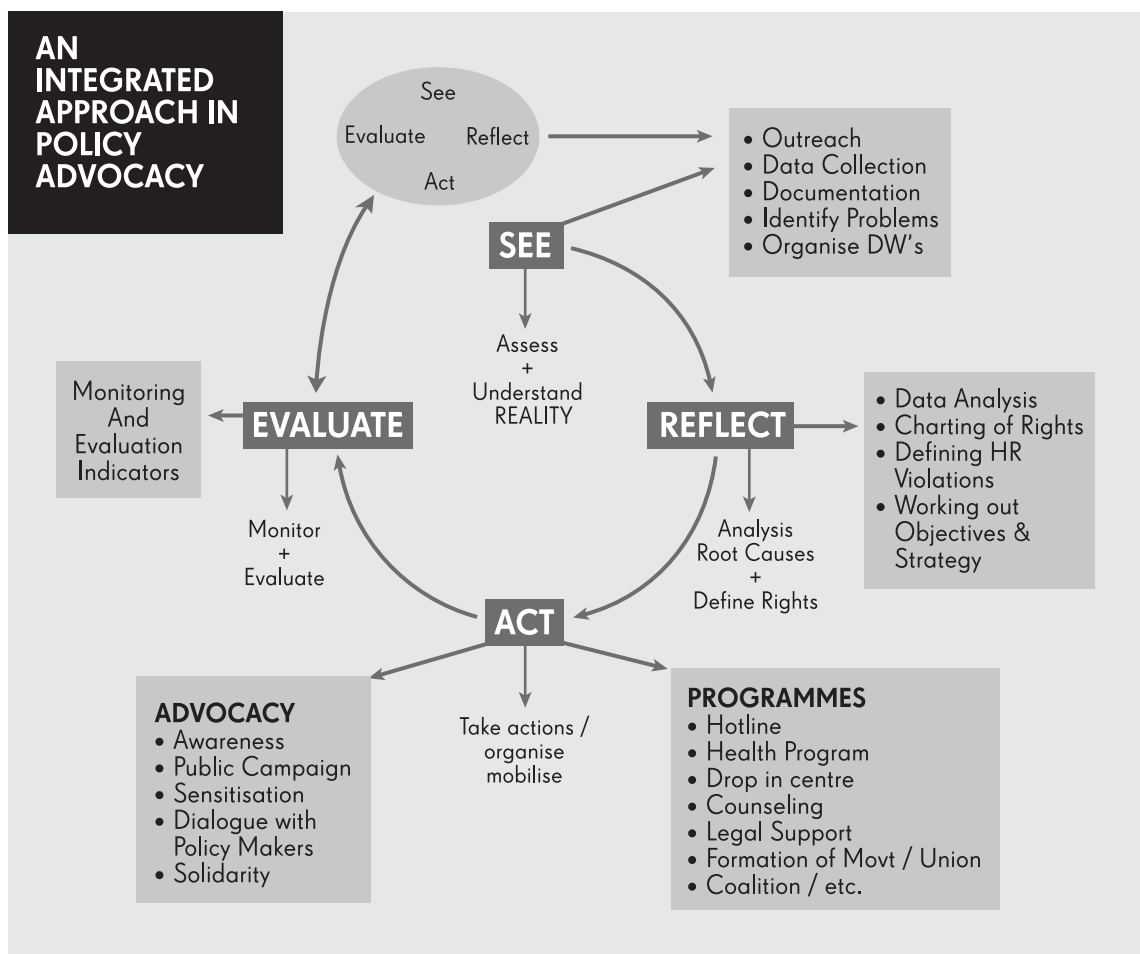
accountability of governments in protecting domestic workers. Further, given the nascent stage of development of the definition of domestic work and labor standards pertaining to the same, it is imperative that the advocacy related to the same is at the global level.

5. THERE HAS TO BE INVOLVEMENT OF THE VARIETY OF STAKEHOLDERS.

In the area of foreign domestic work, many stakeholders are involved. They range

from the families of the domestic workers to recruiting agents, sending and receiving country governments, trade unions, employers, embassies, various government agencies and many more. Thus the advocacy program has to be very well strategised and planned so that the different stakeholders are addressed with a holistic programme.

6. ADVOCACY AS AN INTEGRATED PART OF A PROGRAM



### 2.2.3 The Gender Dimension in Policy Advocacy

Before any advocacy strategy and program is developed, the organisation needs to have a strong gender analysis and perspective on domestic workers. This analysis will define the vulnerabilities of domestic workers as women

and the patriarchal system of their work situation and the inherent power relations that increases the violations of domestic workers as women.

# 2.3 Utilising Media

## A CONSTANT COMPANION IN THE CAMPAIGN

### 2.3.1 Media and the Non-Governmental Organisations

The Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and Community Based Organisations (CBOs) that are actively involved in helping the vulnerable sections of the society must realize the importance to establish a proactive public relations program to help bring about positive recognition of the organisation's work. Generally, NGOs are for the most part devoted to raising funds and implementing projects, often losing sight of the value of a concerted public relations effort. By allocating a small amount of resources and some staff time for public relations, the work of these organisations can have greater results.

Several media options are available for this purpose:

- Mass media which includes electronic media such as radio and television. It also includes print media, like newspapers and magazines.
- Community media which include non-profit electronic media, such as community radio stations, and print media like newsletters, magazines and newspapers.
- Quick message media such as badges, stickers, banners, billboards, graffiti, posters, T-shirts and caps, symbols and e-mail.
- More substantial organisational media, such as newsletters and pamphlets.

Media must be recognised as an important tool to:

- Inform. You may want to inform people about:
  - o an event (like an annual general meeting, a benefit concert)
  - o a situation (like a disaster caused by floods)
  - o an issue (the impact a factory's pollution is having on the community living near it and on the earth's resources).
- Educate. You may want to educate people about something. For example, what globalisation is and how it is affecting people in poor countries. Or about how you get tuberculosis (TB) and how you treat it.
- Mobilise and organise. You may want to mobilise and organise people around a cause, like a boycott of payment for a service that a community is not happy with.
- Recruit. You may, for example, want to recruit more members into your organisation and use media to encourage workers to become members of your trade union.
- Promote. You may want to promote your organisation so that people know why you exist and what you do.
- Raise funds. You may want to produce information about your organisation to get funding and sponsorship.

## 2.3.2 Advocacy through the Media

Media advocacy uses strategies and techniques drawn from public relations, advertising, journalism and grassroots lobbying. Through these techniques NGOs can actively enter the public forum and be influential in framing and presenting their concerns and points of view. Strategic planning is necessary for any organisation that wants to utilise media coverage to help further its agenda.

### Five DOs & DON'Ts of Media Advocacy

#### DOs

1. Rapport building with the media actors
2. Provision of accurate and timely information
3. Use of reader's friendly language in press releases /conferences
4. Involvement of media in organisation's activities to get a complete picture
5. Train staff to deal with the media

A central part of an organised public relations effort is of course a media distribution list. News media entries on the database should have the media organisation name, concerned reporter's name, office address, telephone and fax numbers and an E-mail address. The database should be updated at least twice a year to save costs of mailing to incorrect addresses.

#### DON'Ts

1. Don't confuse press relations with marketing and fundraising.
2. Always avoid personnel projection
3. Don't try to make personnel relations with the media actors
4. Don't provide inaccurate information
5. Never give video interviews on sensitive cases and don't show the victim without his/her consent

## 2.3.3 Media Campaigns

- Media campaigns can be launched in newspapers, radio and television through paid advertisements, newspaper articles, letters to the editor, interviews, by supplying information to journalists, organising press conferences or events which will attract the media.
- Invite journalists to our workshops and send them literature about our organisations. Try to make them aware of the fact that problems faced by foreign domestic workers are an issue which needs immediate and serious attention.
- Keep newspaper clippings of articles on problems faced by migrant women and human rights and make a list of the names of reporters on television and radio who are interested in these issues.
- Develop good working relations with editors. Editors usually voice opinions on social and political changes and we may be able to influence their opinions.
- When approaching the media, we need to prepare a short summary of the information that we want them to publicise, convince them of the authenticity of the case and highlight the most important issues. We need to bring attention to what we are doing and what we want others to do.
- Try to get on the front page, the editorial and the international pages. Issues related to foreign domestic workers usually get reported in the women's page and are perceived as less important news. Try to change this pattern.

## Preparing Foreign Domestic Workers for Media

The types of activities are two-fold. The first involves working with the media company. The second involves working with the foreign domestic worker.

### Media Company

- Set guidelines with the media outfit and ensure that such guidelines are followed.

### Foreign Domestic Worker

Preparation of the foreign domestic worker who will face the media includes that,

- She is well informed about the issues that will be discussed and is able to articulate her knowledge clearly to an audience.
- The richness of her experiences are bolstered through capacity building to enable her to go beyond their personal concerns and be able to represent the issues faced by other domestic workers who are not yet able to face the media.

*ACHIEVE Inc, Philippines*

- Remember that printed media might cover our stories but the message can be distorted and written from the perspective of the writer. Live interviews in radio and television are good as our message goes out as we said it.
- Interviews with abused foreign domestic workers should preferably only take place with journalists who are allies. We must accompany the women for the interview. Have a practice interview and rehearsal before we go. We must make conditions of the interview clear, regarding the use of the women's name or picture, topics to be discussed and questions which can be asked.

## 2.4 Partnerships in Campaign

The struggle of the Foreign Domestic Workers in Hong Kong for a fair/living wage, working hours and other working conditions is a clear example for sustained struggle and a major step forward in establishing coalitions, taking

support from trade unions and in networking with other migrant service organisations. Partnership in campaigns can be achieved only through systematic networking and building alliances and coalitions.

### 2.4.1 The story of Foreign Domestic Workers as individual Migrant Workers from different sending countries to Coalition of Migrants Rights (CMR)

In February 1999, in the backdrop of the financial crisis in Asia, the minimum wage of FDW's was cut by 5%. In 2000 the government attempted to remove maternity protection for domestic workers, making it legal for employers to terminate pregnant FDW's. This was defeated by intense protests from migrants and local advocates and complaints by Coalition for Migrants Rights (CMR) to relevant UN bodies about the violation of Article 11 (2) of the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of discrimination against women (CEDAW) and other ILO/UN Standards.

In November 2001, the government Employers' Association and their supporters in the Legislative Council proposed a new HKD500 cut - which would have reduced FDW minimum wages to 1991 levels. The proposal was eventually defeated in February 2002, when the government announced that the FDW minimum wages would be maintained at current levels. This victory was due to the combined and sustained anti-wage cut campaign by migrant and local grassroots groups, NGO's, and joint public opposition by sending country governments. In August 2002, the government proposed to impose a new HK 400 tax (levy) on hiring of FMDW's in Hong Kong. Then in September, the government revived the proposal to cut (HKD400, the minimum wage of FMDW's in 2003.

Migrant groups and advocates, together with local DW's unions, labour groups and sending governments revived their protests and opposition to the new wage cut proposal. Various petitions dialogues and street protests were organised. Sending governments, especially the Philippines threatened to stop sending Filipino DW's to Hong Kong if a wage cut was imposed.

In November 2002, migrant unions under CMR invoking the right of the trade unions to directly lodge complaints to the ILO under the labour body's "Article 34 Procedure" sent a formal letter protesting the proposed wage cut.

On 22nd February 2003, the Asian Migrant Coordinating Body (AMCB) joined forces with the Jesus Is Lord (JIL) Church to spearhead an 8000 strong anti-wage cut demonstration. This repeats a strategy employed in the first successful anti-wage cut 'autumn campaign' in November 1998, when CMR, local women, labour groups, research institutions and advocates staged a 6000 strong anti-wage cut rally and candle light protest, the biggest at that time. Those 1998 protests successfully stopped a 35% wage cut attempt by the government.

A few days later on 25th February, the government announced a HKD400 (11%) reduction in FDW's minimum wages (from HKD 3670 to HKD 3270) with effect from 1st April 2003. Worse, a new HKD 9600 tax (levy) on employ-



ers of FMDW's, similar to those practiced in Malaysia and Singapore, was also to be imposed, with effect from 1 October 2003. This drew widespread condemnation from migrants and advocates and criticism from the media.

These twin setbacks contrasted sharply with the previously three successful FDW campaigns (1999 wage cut, 2000 removed the maternity protection and 2001 wage cut). In the past decade the Asian Domestic Workers Union (ADWU) pioneered the push for FDW unionisation, self-representation and consultation/negotiation channels. These advocacies were picked up and stepped up from 1998 by CMR (of which ADWU and two other migrant unions are members) with the support of Hong Kong Confederation of Trade Unions (HKCTU). In 2001, CMR elevated the issue of the attempted removal of maternity protection to the ILO, UN Special Rapporteur on Migrants international forums.

Each year, the Hong Kong government reviews the minimum allowable wage (MAW) for foreign domestic workers (FDWs), the majority of whom are from the Philippines, Indonesia and Thailand. FDWs' already meager wages are among the first to be targeted by the government during periods of economic slump. The government first attempted to cut the MAW in 1998, and succeeded in 1999 to impose the first-ever cut (5%) on the MAW, bringing it down to HK\$3,670/month. In February 2003, the government imposed a second wage cut, further bringing wages down by 11% (HK\$400). It was not until May 2005 that the Labour Department announced an increase for FDWs; this, however, was only a mere HK\$50 per month, or 1.5% adjustment. CMR members find this increase grossly insufficient, and call on the government to bring the MAW back to at least HK\$3,670/month.

## 2.4.2 A Campaign will lead to an Alliance, an Alliance would lead to Coalition and a Coalition would lead to a Movement.

**A Movement is broad based and issue oriented.** It includes several stakeholders, volunteers and supporters. Its sustainability is longer because the issue (Foreign Domestic Workers) gets focused on organisations, individuals and alliances. The support base is strengthened through sharpening and focusing on the issue (Foreign Domestic Workers) Actions and Programs will be centering on the issue.

**Networking** refers to both formal and informal communications between individuals and agencies working on related issues. Working on the issues of Foreign Domestic Workers (FDW's) our potential network can include organisations and networks who are working on issues such as trafficking organised labour, violence against women etc. It can also include other service providers, government officials, journalists, health care agencies, trade unions and other civil society groups.

Networking is critical in assisting women who are preparing to return home or those who are planning to leave the country as foreign domestic worker and those who are planning to return. Through networks one can identify medical, legal and service organisations. One can provide information about conditions in different countries.

Networking can be developed and maintained by staying in regular contact with people interested in the core issue namely Foreign Domestic Workers. It will assist in dealing with particular cases such as with an embassy, or immigration office on the repatriation of a domestic worker or with another NGO to assist her on arrival.

Building a network of concerned organisations is the first step to a sustainable effort in providing assistance in foreign domestic workers. Developing such networks is also one of the first successful campaign strategies.

**Coalition building:** coalition means building up of a network between existing organisations where the organisations become members of a coalition, either temporarily for the duration of the campaign or for a larger period. Though the coalition works together on a concern each organisation has its own background, strengths and weaknesses. There will always be differences and it is important to allow open discussion in agreeing on a common point of action:

In some cases a coalition of people or organisations doing advocacy work can achieve more together than individually. However, coalitions take time and energy to develop and maintain because they involve building trusting relationships with other people and keeping people constantly informed and involved. Many advocates find this part of their work the most difficult and yet the most rewarding, both professionally and personally.

Coalitions can be short term or long term, and formal or informal. For example, in the short term they can take advantage of gatherings such as meetings, conferences and workshops to promote an issue and gather signatures for petitions. Alternatively campaigns and actions can be undertaken over several years.

Forming a coalition with allies to undertake advocacy work is not the same as being part of a network, but networks can also be useful to share information between organisations.

Examples of possible allies to form coalitions for campaigns include:

- Foreign Domestic workers themselves who are faced with/facing problems, such as a FDW found HIV Positive who is deported or a domestic who underwent sexual abuse etc.
- Other AIDS service organisations (ASOs), community-based organisations (CBOs), nongovernmental organisations (NGOs), including human rights and health organisations, other components of civil society (supportive unions, religious institutions or leaders, community leaders)
- Business people
- Supportive or sympathetic journalists
- Supportive local/national government officials who can lobby from inside
- Allies in other parts of the country, or other countries – counterpart organisations who could push from outside
- There is sometimes overlap between allies and 'indirect targets', i.e., indirect targets may be sympathetic to our advocacy objective and may also have influence over influential people, but need some initial influencing to persuade them to support change that needs to be made.

# 2.5 Monitoring & Evaluation

## MEASURING PROGRESS TOWARDS ACHIEVEMENT OF OBJECTIVES

Indicators are required to monitor progress and evaluate the impact of the programme and its accompanying activities. They are a means of measuring how the organisation is performing and what effect it is having. The indicators will make it possible to detect the success or failure in a more scientific way than making mere assumptions. The choice of indicators itself provides a discipline to plan the advocacy in such a manner that the objectives are achievable.

The monitoring and evaluative indicators have to be worked out earlier. While monitoring indicators are easier to keep track of, it is indeed difficult to measure advocacy achievements. It is possible however, to set specific targets for the programme objectives. For example, if visibility of the issue is important, the targets could include a media monitoring exercise to see how many times the issue was mentioned, the number of cases and stories of the situation of domestic workers that appeared and whether there was response from popular or important or prominent people like Ministers, celebrities, religious leaders etc. Such an exercise will provide an indication of a process of attitudinal change.

Changes in social attitudes take a long time and happen slowly. Therefore it can be valuable to compare systematically every year or so whatever pointers are used to gauge public attitudes and detect the change.

Consistent data about employer's attitudes or public perceptions have to be monitored and collected over time and at different periods. The new information will give an indication of changes if any and thus make it possible to assess the impact of the program.

While it is very important to assess systematically whether the advocacy programme is efficient and effective, there is also a need to identify the impact it has on objectives and on the other programmes as it is an integrated approach. Therefore monitoring the progress requires setting quantifiable and time-bound objectives together with process indicators and expected outcome.

These mechanisms have to be put in place while in the planning stage to be effective monitoring systems.

## Resources:

1. Black Maggie, A Handbook on Advocacy, Child Domestic Workers: Finding a Voice, Anti-Slavery International 2002
2. 'Advocacy in Action' a Tool Kit to Support NGOs and CBOs Responding to HIV/AIDS (CD), International HIV/AIDS Alliance and ICASO
3. [http://www.unicef.org/magic/resources/civics\\_producing\\_your\\_own\\_media.pdf](http://www.unicef.org/magic/resources/civics_producing_your_own_media.pdf)
4. 'Human Rights in Practice: a guide to assist trafficked women and children' published by GAATW, Bangkok, 1999
5. 'Advocacy in Action' a tool kit to support NGO's and CBO's responding to HIV/AIDS (CD) brought out by International HIV/AIDS Alliance and ICASO.
6. 'Asian Migrant Yearbook 2002-2003' published by Asian Migrant Centre and Migrant Forum in Asia



This Campaign Toolkit is an outcome of the Regional Summit on Foreign Migrant Domestic Workers held from 26-28 August 2002 in Colombo, Sri Lanka. Organised by CARAM Asia with the support of UN agencies, regional and migrant organisations, the objective of the summit was to assess the status of Foreign Domestic Workers and identify emerging concerns with the aim to protect and realise their rights including health rights. The summit culminated in the adoption of the Colombo Declaration which is the framework used to develop the Campaign Toolkit.

This Campaign Toolkit is a resource to build capacity of target groups like foreign domestic workers, government, teachers, researchers, NGOs, recruitment agencies and other stakeholders like employers in the area of protecting and promoting the rights of foreign domestic workers. It is also a resource for foreign domestic worker's groups and support groups for the implementation of a regional campaign to be launched in 2008.

The Campaign Toolkit is divided into four major parts using a knowledge-based approach and the tools necessary to support and enhance the upcoming regional campaign.

- 1 The Issues and Concerns
- 2 The Capacity Building
- 3 The Rights and Policies
- 4 The Action Tools section

CARAM Asia, an open and dynamic regional network, was set up in 1997 to address special interventions for mobile populations at all stages of migration to reduce their vulnerabilities to HIV and improve health outcomes.

It's mission is:

- To empower migrants, their families and communities throughout the migration process and build capacities of CBOs/NGOs working for the promotion and protection of migrant health rights including reproductive and sexual health and rights.
- To utilise Participatory Action Research to ensure inclusion of migrant voices and perspectives on HIV vulnerabilities, migrant health status and potential policy prescriptions for effective national and regional advocacy.
- To use the rights based approach in promoting and protecting migrant health through interventions to reduce HIV vulnerability and improve social determinants of health throughout the migration process.

For more information on CARAM Asia and partners, please visit: [www.caramasia.org](http://www.caramasia.org)

