



Strengthening your Advocacy and Community Organizing

Welcome to the webinar!

Everyone is using computer speakers for audio

Please use the chat box to post questions/comments

If you are experiencing technical problems please email Ryan Carter: rcarter@rivernetwork.org

Please don't forget to fill out the post-webinar survey so we can improve!



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Strengthening your Advocacy and Community Organizing



Capacity Building and Assessment

March 16, 2017

Sue Hoechstetter, Wyatt Closs

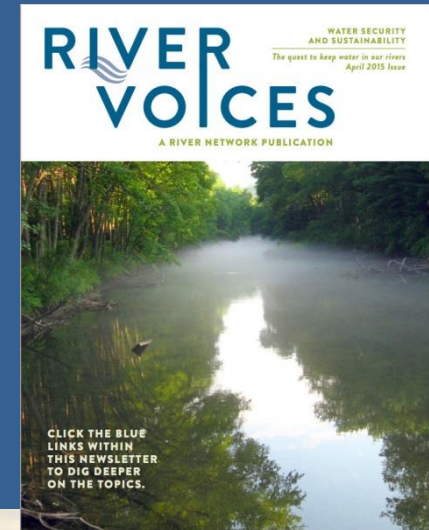
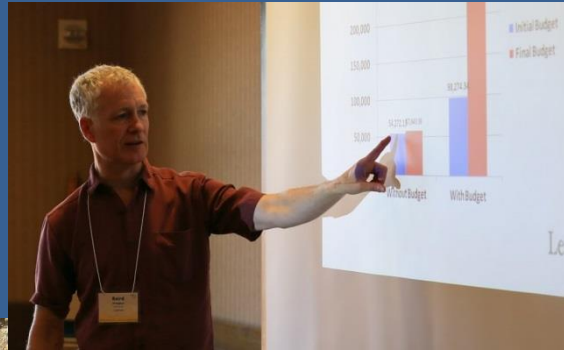
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River Network empowers and unites people and communities to protect and restore rivers and other waters that sustain all life. We envision a future of clean and ample water for people and nature, where local caretakers are well-equipped, effective and courageous champions for our rivers





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An initiative of Alliance for Justice

Oakland

**WEST
COAST**

Los Angeles

TEXAS
Dallas

EAST COAST
Washington, DC



Changing Political Landscape

- New President
- New Congress
- New Cabinet
- Supreme Court Vacancy
- New Governors & State Legislatures
- Mayors Elections in 2017





Objective

*Learn How Capacity Tools Help
Assess and Strengthen Advocacy &
Community Organizing*



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Webinar Overview

- Same Page
- Survey Results
- Talking to Funders
- Tools to Assess Strengths & Gaps
 - Advocacy Tools
 - Community Organizing Tool
- Resources



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Same Page



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Advocacy Avenues

- Administrative
- Legislative
- Ballot Measures, Referenda & Initiatives
- Electoral
- Litigation

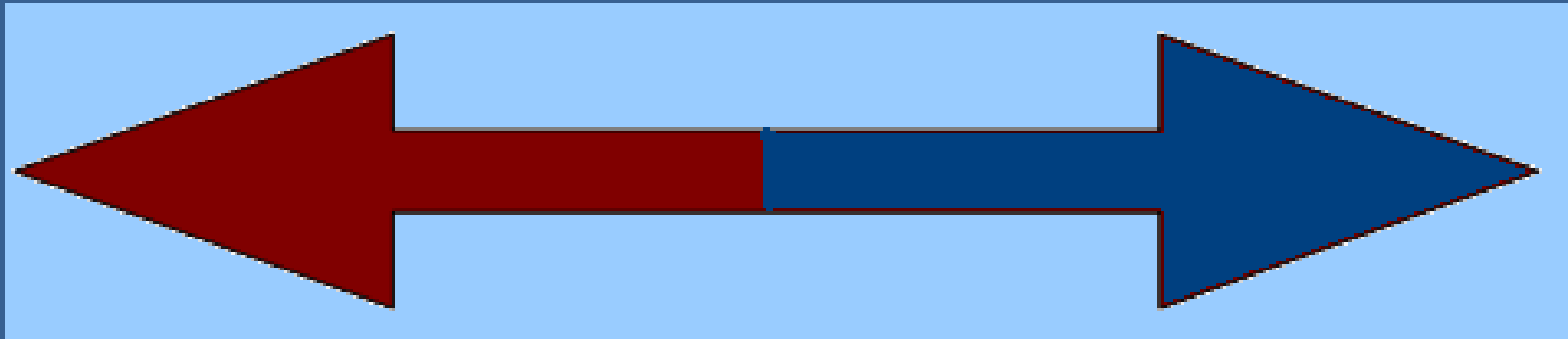




Advocacy Activities



Continuum for Organizing & Advocacy



Mainly
Policy

Policy,
Some
Power

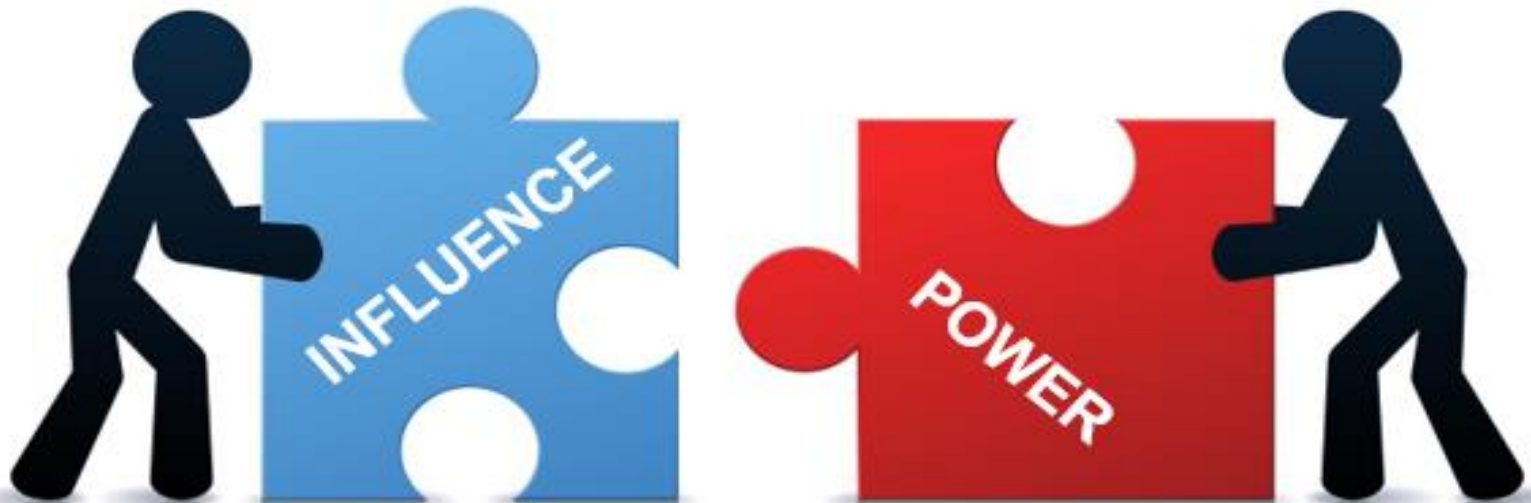
Policy
& Power

Power,
Some
Policy

Mainly
Power



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**Advocacy & Organizing
Need Each Other**

Nonprofit Capacity

Can you Sustain the Journey?

Skills, Resources, Knowledge, Practices

Readiness to Act

Not Effectiveness of Campaigns



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Capacity and the Readiness to Act





Bolder Advocacy Capacity Tools for Organizational Assessment



International Advocacy Capacity Tool

PowerCheck



Community Organizing Capacity Assessment Tool

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Survey Results/ Talking to Funders



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Survey Results: Top Areas To Strengthen

1. Messaging
 1. Plans, Strategies, and Adaptability
 3. Funding Advocacy
 4. Media Relations
 5. Influencing Decision-makers
5. Field Operations





Talking to Funders

- Organization leaders understand advocacy
- Advocacy value to foundation mission
- Flexibility of law
 - Can support groups that lobby
 - General operating support
- Capacity building funding
- Examples of peers' support for advocacy
- Ongoing relationship



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Advocacy for Foundation Mission

\$150,000 in grants from the George Gund Foundation for Advocacy



Coalition on Homelessness and Housing in Ohio obtained \$50,000,000 per year for low income housing



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Foundations Can Support Advocacy

Make Lobbying Grants

Public or community foundations can fund lobbying directly to nonprofits

General Support Grants

Public and private foundations fund grantees that advocate through general support

Specific Project Grants

Private foundations can fund non-lobbying portions of advocacy projects

Fund Electoral Activities

Advocacy includes nonpartisan electoral activities.



Funding Capacity Building

Building Capacity:

“Supporting the development of the staff, infrastructure... is one way to enable long-term change. Providing core [general]support over an extended period of time enables advocacy groups to build toward more effective efforts in the future or to seek new, like minded groups .”



The Atlantic Philanthropies, *Atlantic Reports, Investing in Change*



Advocacy Capacity Tools



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Advocacy Capacity Tool (ACT!)

Share 2

The most effective advocacy work happens when groups and coalitions know where they stand and can leverage their organizational strengths to work for social change. With the free Advocacy Capacity Tool (ACT!), nonprofits can benchmark their advocacy skills, identify specific gaps and opportunities in their advocacy strategies, and efficiently focus resources to get the best results. The tool can also be used in evaluations.



NEW: ACT!Quick has arrived!

[ACT Data & Analysis: The First 280 Advocacy Capacity Tool Users](#) – These findings offer a snapshot of what nonprofit staff and directors say they need to become better advocates, as well as what their current advocacy strengths and gaps are.

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One Size Does Not Fit All Organizations!



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Advocacy Capacity Tool Sections

- I. Advocacy Goals, Plans & Strategies
- II. Conducting Advocacy
- III. Advocacy Avenues
- IV. Organizational Operations to Sustain Advocacy

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Advocacy Capacity Tool Indicators

I. Advocacy Goals, Plans & Strategies

Preparation

Agenda

Plans, Strategies &
Adaptability



S1.3 Advocacy Capacity Tools - Plans, Strategies, and Adaptability

Introduces the importance of developing a flexible plan to carry out the written agenda

Very
Strong/
Always

Moderately
Strong/
Usually

Somewhat
Strong/
Sometimes

Not Strong/
Rarely/
Never

The organization analyzes what it will take to accomplish each written agenda item, including who has the power to make decisions in legislative, administrative, electoral, litigation, and other areas.

The organization develops a plan for how it will strategically advance each written agenda item. The plan identifies appropriate targets, tactics, major activities, and expected results.

The organization monitors internal and external changes in the policy environment and adapts its strategies as needed.

The organization has a plan for assessing advocacy capacity and for strengthening its capacity as needed.

S1.3 Plans, Strategies, and Adaptability: Advanced (Optional)

The organization plans to test new, improved strategies and tactics, such as new methods of communication or of mobilizing networks.

Advocacy Capacity Tool Indicators

II. Conducting Advocacy

Research & Analysis

Field Operation

Advocacy Partners & Coalitions

Messaging

Media Relations

Influencing Decision Makers



S2.2 Advocacy Capacity Tool - Field Operation

Assesses how the organization communicates with, educates and engages its network and the public.

Very
Strong/
Always

Moderately
Strong/
Usually

Somewhat
Strong/
Sometimes

Not
Strong/
Rarely/
Never

Rely
on Partners

The organization has a network or various networks of individuals and organizations that it can activate to advocate or collaborate on key policy issues.

The organization communicates with its network on the status of advocacy efforts, opportunities to engage, messages and results.

The organization identifies segments of the public to educate about its agenda.

The organization conducts phone banks, informational mailings, online communications and/or canvassing to educate and mobilize their network and gain public support.

S2.2 Field Operation: Advanced (Optional)

The organization implements a plan to expand the size and diversity of its network.

The organization works to expand the issue knowledge and advocacy skills of those in its network.

The organization activates segments of the public to influence decision makers in support of organizational priorities.



Advocacy Capacity Tool Indicators

III. Advocacy Avenues

Administrative

Legislative

Ballot Measures,
Referenda & Initiatives

Electoral

Litigation



Advocacy Capacity Tool Indicators

IV. Organizational Operations to Sustain Advocacy



Organizational Commitment

Funding Advocacy

Decision-Making Structure & Process

Fiscal Management & Sustainability



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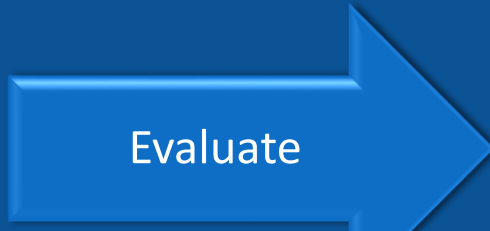
Capacity Tools for Organizational Assessment

How Can They Be Used?



IACT!

PowerCheck



PowerCheck



AFJ ON ADVOCACY

HOW AFJ CAN HELP

NAVIGATE THE RULES

TOOLS FOR EFFECTIVE ADVOCACY

Share

Tools for Effective Advocacy

Evaluating Advocacy

Toolkits

- > Establishing Your Organization
 - > Immigration Advocacy
 - > California Advocacy Resources
 - > Ballot Measures
 - > Reproductive Rights & Justice Toolkit
- Advocacy Capacity Tool
- > Frequently Asked Questions
 - > Terminology

PowerCheck

A Tool for Assessing Community Organizing Capacity

Does your organization have what it takes to accomplish your community organizing goals? AFJ's free self-assessment tool can help.

PowerCheck helps groups measure their capacity to effectively engage in community organizing. It's useful for a range of organizations—whether big or small groups fighting to resolve problems and empower communities, or a coalition of groups working together, or a foundation looking for ways to support its grantees.

This free online tool contains a series of questions designed to gauge whether groups are working in ways that can empower the communities involved, bring about solutions, and help sustain the organization. The tool generates immediate results. Results for multiple groups can be aggregated to view combined strength.



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PowerCheck Capacity Sections



I. Pre-Organizing: Goals, Power Analysis, Planning

II. Empowerment/Constituent Leadership

III. Organizing for Change

IV. Community Consensus Building

V. Organizational Operations/Infrastructure



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PowerCheck Section I

Pre-Organizing: Goals, Power Analysis, Planning

- Commitment to Organizing
- Power Analysis
- Planning and Evaluation



PowerCheck Section II

Empowerment/Constituent Leadership



Constituent Leadership Development
Participatory Process
Political Consciousness & Empowerment





PowerCheck Indicator 2.1

Constituent Leadership Development

From the tool itself--

2.1 Constituent Leadership Development
Assess the extent to which constituents understand community organizing and to which the organization emphasizes leadership development.

	Very Strong / Always	Moderately Strong / Usually	Somewhat Strong / Sometimes	Not Strong / Rarely / Never
Organization has a defined process for developing constituent leadership along a progressive path which incrementally builds skills.	<input type="radio"/>			
Constituent leadership represents the diversity of the community and is concentrated in those who are most directly impacted by the issues being addressed.	<input type="radio"/>			

Organization has a defined process for developing constituent leadership along a progressive path that incrementally builds skills



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PowerCheck Section III

Organizing for Change Pt. 1

Campaign Strategy

Activating Stakeholders

Coalition
Building/Partnering

Messaging

Media Relations



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PowerCheck Section III



Influencing
Decision-Makers

Change Avenues
Action

Negotiation and
Follow-Through

PowerCheck Section IV

Community Consensus Building



- Asset Mapping and Stakeholder Engagement
- Community Planning
- Community Plan Adoption
- Implementation and Re-visioning



PowerCheck Section V

Organizational Operations/Infrastructure

- Community Connectedness
- Organizational Staff and Board Resources
- Organization/ Constituent Communications
- Fiscal Management and Sustainability
- Funding Community Organizing





Bolder Advocacy Tools

☐ *Advocacy Capacity Tool (ACT)*

www.bolderadvocacy.org/act

☐ *ACT! Quick*

www.bolderadvocacy.org/actquick

☐ *PowerCheck for community organizing*

www.bolderadvocacy.org/powercheck

☐ *Resources for Evaluating Community Organizing (RECO)*

www.bolderadvocacy.org/reco



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Bolder Advocacy Resources

- ❑ *Report: ACT Data & Analysis: The First 280 Users of the Advocacy Capacity*
- ❑ *Advocacy Readiness Series: Working with Grantees to Build and Measure Advocacy Capacity*
- ❑ *Capacity/Evaluation Training and Technical Assistance*

advocacy@afj.org or 1-866-NP-LOBBY



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River Network Membership

Join a community that shares your passion and provides a vital resource and sounding board for all of your professional questions!

Benefits For All Your Needs

Online Education Programs for Professional Development

- 30% off webinars and access to online publications

Access Best Practices & Networking

- 25% off River Rally conference registration & get access to scholarships!

Save Even More Money!

- Discounts with Promotive.com, insurance providers, & access to grant funding



River Rally 2017

Join us in the largest gathering of freshwater advocate and share your experiences, celebrate your successes and build important professional relationships!

Where?: Grand Rapids, Michigan, Amway Grand Plaza Hotel

When?: May 8-11, 2017

Agenda and registration details:

<https://www.rivernetwork.org/events-learning/river-rally/about/>

Note: April 7th is when Early Bird registration ends and April 30th is the deadline to become a member and be eligible for discounts.



Evaluation

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<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/rnwebinareval>



Questions?



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Recording of this presentation will be available
online

Thank You!



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