

Advocacy Strategy

Nairobi, April 2011

The purpose of this paper is to set out the reasons for engaging in advocacy, the role of Communion members and of the Alliance, and options for a global campaign, with options for local actions.

1. Introduction –

Advocacy – a voice for the voiceless

Advocacy is a complicated word for an activity that is at the heart of one of the five Anglican marks of mission – seeking to transform the unjust structures of the world. It is speaking out about the injustices we see around us and giving a voice to the voiceless: those people who are at the receiving end of those unjust structures, but who are powerless and unable to change their situation. Churches often talk of this as the ‘prophetic voice’. The issue is how we make sure that our voice is heard, and what we ask for.

The Anglican Communion can help transform the unjust structures of the world through advocacy by:

- Speaking out to those in authority who make the decisions, using the access that we have in many countries around the world. The Archbishop of Canterbury regularly speaks out about global injustices and is a respected voice in national and international government circles. Through our Primates, bishops and other church leaders and members, the Communion’s access to those in authority gives us a particular opportunity and responsibility to be a voice for the voiceless. There are many ways in which we can make more effective use of our opportunities.
- Speaking out to support people in other parts of the Communion who are struggling against oppression and injustice. Some of us can speak out freely. For others the penalties for criticising injustice are severe, whether speaking out about religious persecution or oppression of minorities or the poor.
- Speaking out to influence public opinion and create more awareness of injustices, for example the work being undertaken on gender-based violence. The Anglican Communion is the third biggest grouping of Christian churches in the world - we can speak with a loud voice.

Discussion point: What are other ways that we can seek the transformation of unjust social structures through advocacy.

Many of us act as advocates every day without thinking about it: we take friends or relatives to hospital and advocate for the kind of treatment they want when they’re too sick to speak for themselves, we speak to a school about a family we know that is in hardship so their children can get support, or we go to an NGO or local authority to get food or other supplies

for people whose homes have been flooded. Working through the Alliance we can scale up our role as advocates, co-ordinate it and make it more effective.

2. Who we speak to

For advocacy to be effective, we need to make sure that our voices are heard. If we're trying to change local decisions, that means being heard by the local authorities, if we want to change public opinion, we need to reach the wider community, sometimes via the media. We also need to make sure that our case is strong and well-presented. There has to be a clear "Ask" in our advocacy.

As a Communion we could identify four tiers at which we either already work, or could potentially work:

2.1. Speaking out locally

To influence local decision-makers and communities, churches can and do speak out about local injustices. The target for this work may be a local authority or commissioner or speaking to a local community through local media to influence public opinion. For example, in Peshawar, Pakistan, the church was involved at diocesan and local level in speaking out about the position of flood affectees to get resources, speaking to local NGOs and the local Office for the Co-ordination of Humanitarian Affairs. It has also spoken out about the anti-blasphemy laws.

2.2. Speaking out nationally

At national level, in many countries our churches and agencies have access to decision-makers in Government, business and civil society, and have the ability to be heard. For example, in Burundi, the church has met with the national office of the UK Department for International Development to speak out about the decision of the UK Government to cease funding for development programmes in Burundi. In Kenya, the church influenced national government and opinion to promote reconciliation after the post-election violence.

2.3. Speaking out regionally

Increasingly in our globalised world, decisions and policies are taken at supra-national levels, especially on migration, trade, finance and security, which have profound impact on the lives of people at local level. Many of the intergovernmental organisations operating at regional level can be hard to access and influence. For example the European Union provided over 13.5 **billion** Euros for development between 200 and 2007 – yet they rarely came under the same scrutiny or pressure from developing countries as did more easily accessible donors such as DFID or OXFAM. The EU also makes trade policy for countries across the EU, so can have a profound impact on the access that developing countries have to markets. In Africa, Anglican Provinces work together regionally on conflict resolution in relation to the Lord's Resistance Army in East and Central Africa, and can be a voice at the AU, or SADC.

2.4. Speaking out globally

Globalisation also has consequences for how we tackle the unjust structures of society. Increasingly the injustices experienced by one community are caused, in part at least, by what people do elsewhere in the world. The church in Hong Kong has a strong track record of working on migration and people trafficking: many of the people trafficked end up working in the UK. Some communities in the Solomon Islands are threatened by climate change to which developed countries are the biggest contributors. Or there are diaspora communities scattered around the world of people who have fled from countries affected by conflict.

In addition we have seen how new technology has made it possible for people concerned about injustices to join forces around the world, for example to press for an end to poverty. So increasingly advocacy means speaking out at global level. Many churches and NGOs are already doing this. We have some experience as Anglicans, through our offices at the UN in New York and Geneva; the Archbishop of Sudan and Archbishop of Canterbury advocating with governments and the UN for the peace process in Sudan; collaborative work through the Anglican networks; Anglican women from around the world working together at the UN Commission on the Status of Women. Through the Alliance we can work together to build capacity and coordinate effectively to make sure that as Anglicans our voice is heard.

Discussion point: What experience have you had in speaking to local, national and international governments or agencies about the needs of your community.

3. How we speak out as Anglicans – the role of the Alliance

The Anglican Alliance has a specific mandate for advocacy, and it's a particularly important part of our role. In line with the approach taken in other areas, the Alliance will fulfil its mandate through empowering Anglican churches and agencies to speak out for the communities they serve. So the Alliance will:

- Provide capacity-building where requested, with workshops, toolkits, advice and support.
- Help co-ordinate work across the Communion: where there are similar concerns in different regions and provinces so that there is sharing of messages and expertise.
- Facilitate advocacy, providing assistance in setting up meetings or lobbies, and attending them where possible.

In addition the Alliance participants can work together at a global level to:

- Develop global advocacy around agreed Alliance priorities so that as a global Communion, we can work together and achieve some practical goals.

- Provide opportunities, by linking with other NGO and faith-based organisations to ensure that as the Anglican Communion we can add our voice to those calling for change in the world.
- Advocate directly for national and international governments to accept and respect the voice of faith-based organisations, and especially the Anglican Communion.
- Develop a network of advocacy champions – people in the Communion who are willing to speak out in support of our communities and against injustice.

Decision point: Are there other ways in which you think the Alliance should be fulfilling its mandate for advocacy.

4. Global Advocacy

4.1. G20 2011

For the first strand of global advocacy by the Alliance, it is proposed that we focus on economic empowerment. This is the Alliance’s first development theme, as chosen by CAPA. It is also the subject for the G20 this autumn – the biggest global gathering of decision-takers in the richest countries of the world. This has also been an important forum for making the case for a more just and equitable world. There are Anglican churches in 11 of the G20 nations, so there are many opportunities for access. The G20 in November this year is being hosted by the French in Cannes.

The expected outcomes for the G20 are:

- Ensuring global economic recovery
- Framework for strong, sustainable, and balanced global growth
- Strengthening the international financial regulatory system
- Modernizing the international financial institutions
- Global financial safety net
- Development issues

The priorities of the French presidency of the G20 are:

- Coordinating economic policies and reducing global macroeconomic imbalances
- Strengthening financial regulation
- Reforming the International Monetary System
- Combating commodity price volatility
- Improving global governance
- Working on behalf of development

There would be few better ways to seek to transform the unjust structures of the world than to make the economic structures more equitable. So it will be important to ensure that the leaders of the richest nations of the world hear clearly the voice of the poorest, and also consider how to tilt the balance of economic power in their favour. Some of our colleagues are doing likewise:

- ActionAid UK, is focusing on hunger, aid flows and accountability, and the financial transfer tax.
- Christian Aid UK is working to "End Tax Haven Secrecy".
- CAFOD, the UK Catholic humanitarian aid agency, is focusing on economic justice, the development agenda, trade, and designing economic strategies around the needs of poor people.
- CCFD, the French Catholic development agency, is working on ending tax havens and tax avoidance, the international financial transfer tax, limiting agriculture price volatility, and promoting food security.

The Anglican Communion can, working through the Alliance, make a start in making our voice heard with some simple messages, such as:

- Access to finance for poor people, and protecting poor people from debt. This would include support for micro-finance and credit unions – and also with sound regulation to protect poor people from bad debt. It was bad credit sold to poor people in the US that triggered the world economic crisis.
- Ensuring poor people can get cheap, good quality food. The G20 has set as a priority combating commodity price volatility – this includes agricultural produce.
- Action for development – ensuring that plans to improve the G20's strategy, to link it with the UN's, and reform the IMF are informed by the views of people in developing countries, and especially by the communities served by the Anglican Communion.

These messages can be developed through the Alliance, explained to the wider public to raise awareness and support, and pressed with national governments, regional inter-governmental agencies and globally. They will be consistent with the voices coming from our colleagues in other faith-based organisations and NGOs, and will add to the pressure on the G20 to ensure that the work of the international institutions better meets the needs of the developing world.

Decision point: Which of the above points would you like to see the Alliance develop globally – or are there others.

4.2. **Local advocacy**

The global messages and themes on economic empowerment can also be developed at local level. The priorities of the global south can be impressed on G20 governments in both north and south: local churches can be advocates. Concerns around food security, and access to finance can also be pressed at very local level.

Decision point: Should options be developed for local advocacy around the global theme of economic empowerment?

4.3. G20 2012

In 2012 the G20 will be in Mexico. Some of our partners in other faith-based organisations and NGOs are already asking the Mexican Government to include Climate Change on its agenda. This is an important issue also for many communities across the Communion – from the Solomon Islands whose existence is threatened by the rising seawater to pastoral communities in Kenya who are suffering from severe and unpredictable climatic change.

Decision point: Do you want to support the moves to have climate change on the 2012 G20 agenda?

5. Summary and decision points

The Alliance has a clear and important mandate for advocacy – a term that covers the mission to be a voice for the voiceless against injustice. This will primarily be exercised by capacity building and support for Alliance participants across the world. The Alliance will also develop global advocacy to support the main development theme of economic empowerment working with our colleagues in other faith-based organisations and NGOs.