

**TEPPCON CONFERENCE,
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PROMOTING AND PROPAGATING
ADVOCACY ISSUES OF THE CHURCH –
THE ROLE OF TEPPCON.

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Introduction: Understanding the Context and Relevance

- Role of the Church/Faith-based organizations in Africa and Ghana is indisputable and enormous.
- Church/FBOs recognized in recent global development agendas: AU Agenda 2063, Addis Ababa Action Agenda of FFD3, UN 2030 Agenda (SDGs), UNDP Guidelines etc.
- National Policy Discourses: GBA, NGDC, MoF Partnership proposal etc
- Opportunity of TEPPCON as strategic voice of Church in Northern Ghana.
- Church/FBOs is reference point/source of information for many citizens.

Introduction: Definition of Terms

Understanding Advocacy:

- A deliberate process of influencing those who make decisions.
- Advocacy is used to influence the choices and actions of those who make laws and regulations and those who distribute resources.
- It involves delivering messages that are intended to influence thoughts, perspectives and actions of leaders, politicians, policy makers and others in authority.
- Advocacy is about policy change in 3 areas: creating policies where non exist, refining harmful or ineffective policies, ensuring good policies are followed, implemented and enforced.

Definition of Terms Contd

Understanding Policy Influence:

- Public policy is a deliberate/purposive cause of action or inaction of those in authority.
- Policy Influence is pursued by:
 - i. Mapping of relevant policies, laws, programmes and international conventions for the particular cause.
 - ii. Making demands for the implementation of existing policies, laws, conventions that support the cause.
 - iii. Proposing policy alternatives to those that are harmful/ineffective.
 - iv. Monitor implementation of relevant policies, laws and programmes.
 - v. Making representation to relevant Policy Bodies at Local, National, Regional and International levels

Definition of Terms Contd.

Understanding Evidenced Based Policy Making:

- Every Policy is made based on a body of Opinion or Evidence. These are underpinned by ideas, values, perspectives, & ethics
- Policies based on Opinion tend to be arbitrary, subjective and coercive.
- Evidence based policy making is an approach which 'helps people make well informed decisions about policies, programmes and projects by putting the best available evidence at the heart of policy development and implementation' (Davies, 1999).

Definition of Terms Contd

Evidence-based Policy making is important in a number of ways:

- Ability to recognize policy issues; especially those hidden from policy-makers.
- Inform design and choice of policy
- Help monitor policy implementation using objective data, indicators, check-list etc.
- Ability to evaluate policy impact – change effect of the policy.

Fundamentals of Advocacy: Elements and Dimensions

- Legitimacy: Who are you, who do you represent etc.
- Credibility: Can you be trusted, believed, etc
- Accountability: Do you have feedback mechanisms to those you represent or speak for; does your institution or network have standards, values, systems that are credible.
- Power: What resources, numbers, alliances do you have.

Fundamentals of Advocacy Contd.

- **Monitoring:** Do you have good knowledge and understanding of the policy making process, protocol (rules of procedure) of the target institution, policy spaces and arenas.
- **Sensitization:** Capacity to empower, build capacity of your principals, allies, collaborators etc.
- **Build Networks/Alliances:** Be sure you are not working alone!
- **Information:** Mechanisms for timely, effective and consistent communication.

Mechanisms for Strengthening Advocacy Capacity

Strengthening Advocacy Capacity should necessarily take into consideration the fundamentals of Advocacy discussed earlier. Key mechanisms would include the following:

- i. Effective Structures
- ii. Ability to provide evidence in support of any policy proposition: research capacity, case studies.
- iii. Civic Agency: Mechanisms for reaching out, empowering, sensitizing civic groups to take direct action
- iv. Effective Communication approaches and tools: tweeter, Skype, email, facebook, website etc

Strengthening Advocacy Capacity Contd.

- v. Presence and Visibility: physical, participation, feedback, exposition/articulation etc
- vi. Mobilization and Convening Power: cocktail discussions, caucusing with other Liaisons etc
- vii. Networks and Linkages: Other units of the Church – JPCs, Caritas, Lawyers Guild are reached through exchange, internships, briefs/updates.
- viii. Effective input through policy reviews/briefs.

Conclusion

We need to remain in awareness about:

- Renewed global consciousness of redefining development and its purpose.
- Ghana's determination to change its own narrative about development and her role in the comity of nations.
- The wind of change blowing on the Church which is bringing both freshness and anxiety – Pontificate of Pope Francis; Safeguarding issues.
- Increasing recognition and demand on FBOs to be more responsive to emerging challenges and threats to human survival; especially those at the fringes of society and human security.

These awareness should underpin our actions both internally and externally. Will the Church contain the new wine (energies, zeal and ideas) in old bottles (structures, systems and mindset)? The choice is ours to make!

THANK YOU

- *Lets Keep Pushing the boundaries of Achievement! TEPPCON has a critical role in understanding the signs of the time!*