



Advocacy, lobbying and alliances/networking building

Ask any civil society organization what their greatest priority is, and they will answer that it is to get their important message through to the decision makers, to the people in power, to the people who vote for the topics on the international agenda for the coming period. No matter how strong the objectives of your organisation, if you don't have the equipment to get your message across to a wider (and powerful) audience, the objectives will probably never be achieved.

Diaspora organisations often lack the skills, insights and experiences to construct strategic alliances with potential partners and stakeholders and to get their voices heard in places of relevance. This disadvantage prevents diaspora's access to decision making and negotiation tables such that they remain outside established development cooperation circles. The consequence is that their message and the group of the people they represent is not taken into account.

Advocacy and lobbying is a profession that can be effectively exercised by well-trained activists. Mastering the use of advocacy and lobbying instruments can effectively help diaspora to advance the issues they are concerned with be it development, peace-building, negative images of migrants in host countries or gaining attention to the projects they are implementing in their countries of origin which are aimed at improving the livelihoods of marginalised groups in society. Diaspora organisations can also use advocacy and lobbying instruments to increase their profile, visibility and influence within development cooperation circles both in the host and home countries. Moreover, they can employ advocacy and lobbying tools to increase their voices in development cooperation debates at different policy levels. Finally, diaspora organisations can use advocacy and lobbying tools to build strategic partnerships and alliances with like-minded organisations/stakeholders in order to leverage support in promoting a common agenda.

Yet, despite all these above noted advantages, diaspora organisations hardly use advocacy and lobbying instruments in order to advance their interests both in the host and home countries. This is due to the lack of knowledge and sufficient capacity in this area.

This **5 – 9 September 2016** training will offer advocacy and lobbying training tailored to specific needs of targeted diaspora organizations. It is expected that, gaining sufficient knowledge in advocacy, lobbying and alliances building will greatly increase the capacity and influence of the diaspora so they can position themselves as indispensable change agents for the development of their countries of origin.

To be considered for the training please share your CV by making contact with Connie Formson, c.formson@diaspora-centre.org, no later than **8 August 2016**.