Advocacy and Policy Advocacy

Valeria Betancourt
Gayatri Khandhadai
APC

This session is oriented to discuss perspectives of what advocacy, policy, policy advocacy are and why advocacy and policy advocacy around internet issues are important. It also aims to share experiences of engagement in advocacy.

Plan for the session

First part

What is advocacy?

What is policy advocacy?

Broad approaches to advocacy

What has been our experiences with policy advocacy? (Discussion)

Spaces for global, national, regional advocacy

Second part

Why should we engage in advocacy?

Applying approaches to policy advocacy

Stakeholders for advocacy

What do you need to engage in policy advocacy?

Sleeping giants - defund disinformation

What is advocacy

- "... the active support of an idea or cause expressed through **strategies and methods** that **influence** the **opinions and decisions** of people and organisations." (Buckley, 2018). Advocacy tries to '**convince**', influence (through evidence, arguments, strategies and methods).

- "... an **organized attempt to change** policy, practice, and/or attitudes **by presenting evidence and arguments** for how and why change should happen." (OSF). It seeks to generate an expected change.

Domains of change

- Perceptions
- Behavior
- Practices
- Narratives
- Engagement
- Decisions

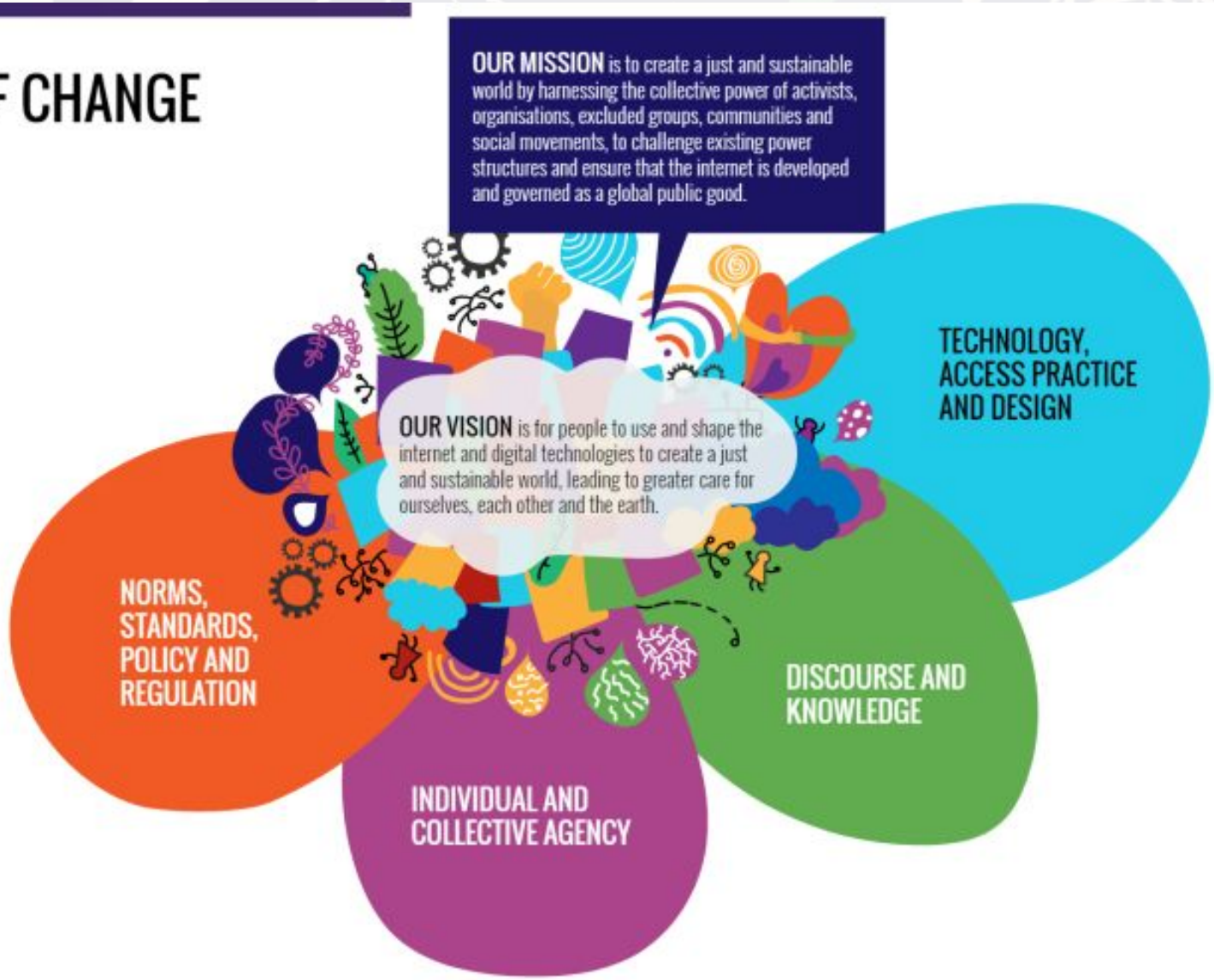
Individually, collectively, institutionally

APC THEORY OF CHANGE

OUR MISSION is to create a just and sustainable world by harnessing the collective power of activists, organisations, excluded groups, communities and social movements, to challenge existing power structures and ensure that the internet is developed and governed as a global public good.

OUR VALUES, WE BELIEVE IN:

- the interwoven and public nature of knowledge
- the co-constitutive relationship between technology and social justice
- the universality of rights
- the interdependence of humanity, each other and the earth
- collective power of networks and movements
- the importance of understanding and challenging structures and systems of oppression that intersect and reinforce each other



What is policy advocacy

In APC's experience

- Encompasses a spectrum of actions and activities oriented to influencing policy and decision making processes.
- Primary domains or areas of influence include legislation and regulation.
- It also includes influencing the different phases of policy development.
- It aims to influence decision-makers in the area of internet policies to reinforce the exercise of human rights, strengthen democracy, enable sustainable development, and attain social justice.
- Policy advocacy work links to other strategies, including capacity building, relationship building, forming networks and movements, and building knowledge, analysis, and evidence.

Approaches to advocacy

Human rights based approach

Social justice approach

Feminist approach

The **human rights based approach** is a conceptual framework that seeks to operationalise the obligations of governmental and non-governmental stakeholders to respect, protect and guarantee rights at all levels.

The **human rights based approach** to policy, and to policy advocacy, refers to the systematic and deliberate integration of human rights as both means and objective in policy development. It also relates to how this is operationalised.

“Social justice is broadly understood as relating to ideas of fairness, equity, and inclusion.

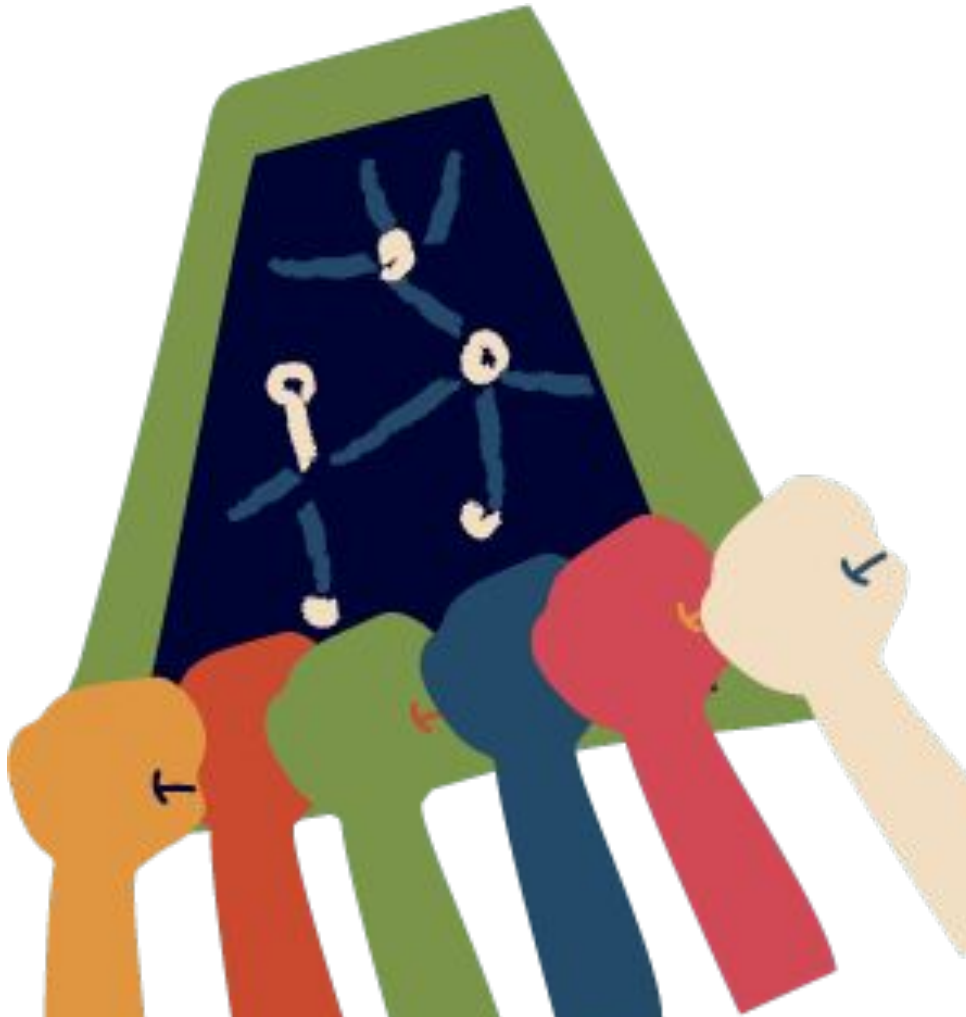
A **social justice approach** recognises the impact of power relations at both societal and individual levels as well as the way that certain structural features of societies create inequities in the distribution of resources and opportunities for decision-making. In addition, a social justice approach seeks different ways to make people’s situations more equitable.” (The Education Hub)

The **feminist approach** surfaces women's rights and sexual rights issues, and privileging concerns around gender, sexuality, gender in our work related to internet rights, policy and cultures.

It keeps in view the hierarchies of ethnicity, caste, race, ability, gender expression, sexuality etc., that exist within the middle- and low-income countries as well as structural forms of inequality, marginalisation and exclusion that exist elsewhere too. (APC)

Based on what you have heard and on your own experience, share your views and understanding of policy and policy advocacy.

How the different approaches come into play?



United Nations General Assembly

Human Rights Council and UPR

UN Special Mandates and Specialised Commissions

National Ministries and Legislative bodies

Global, national and regional Internet Governance Forums

Global Network Initiative

Freedom Online Coalition

Regional human rights bodies

Regulatory institutions

RightsCon and Stockholm Internet Forum

Why engage in Policy Advocacy?

Why not! and what can we tangibly expect?

- Policies legitimise regulation and restrictions
- They represent values
- Harder to undo policies than to shape them
- Far reaching impacts
- Critical to the democratisation and inclusivity of the internet

Applying a human rights based approach

What are rights?

1. People centric
2. HR standards as normative basis
3. Power relations
4. Rights holders and duty bearers

Questions to ask

- Why was this law or policy enacted?
- Who does it impact?
- What rights are regulated, limited and protected?
- How are the responsibilities of the duty bearer being discharged?
- Who was consulted in the development of the policy?
- Are there alternatives that can be more rights respecting?

Multistakeholderism

Identifying and understanding the actors

Stakeholders

Power

What kind of power does the stakeholder or target have?

Influence

What kind of influence can the stakeholder or target have on the issue?

Position

What is the target's position in relation to the issues covered by the policy?

Knowledge

Does the target understand and have sufficient knowledge about the issues covered in the policy?

Access

What do we need to be able to access the target or stakeholder?

Does the approach change?

Local

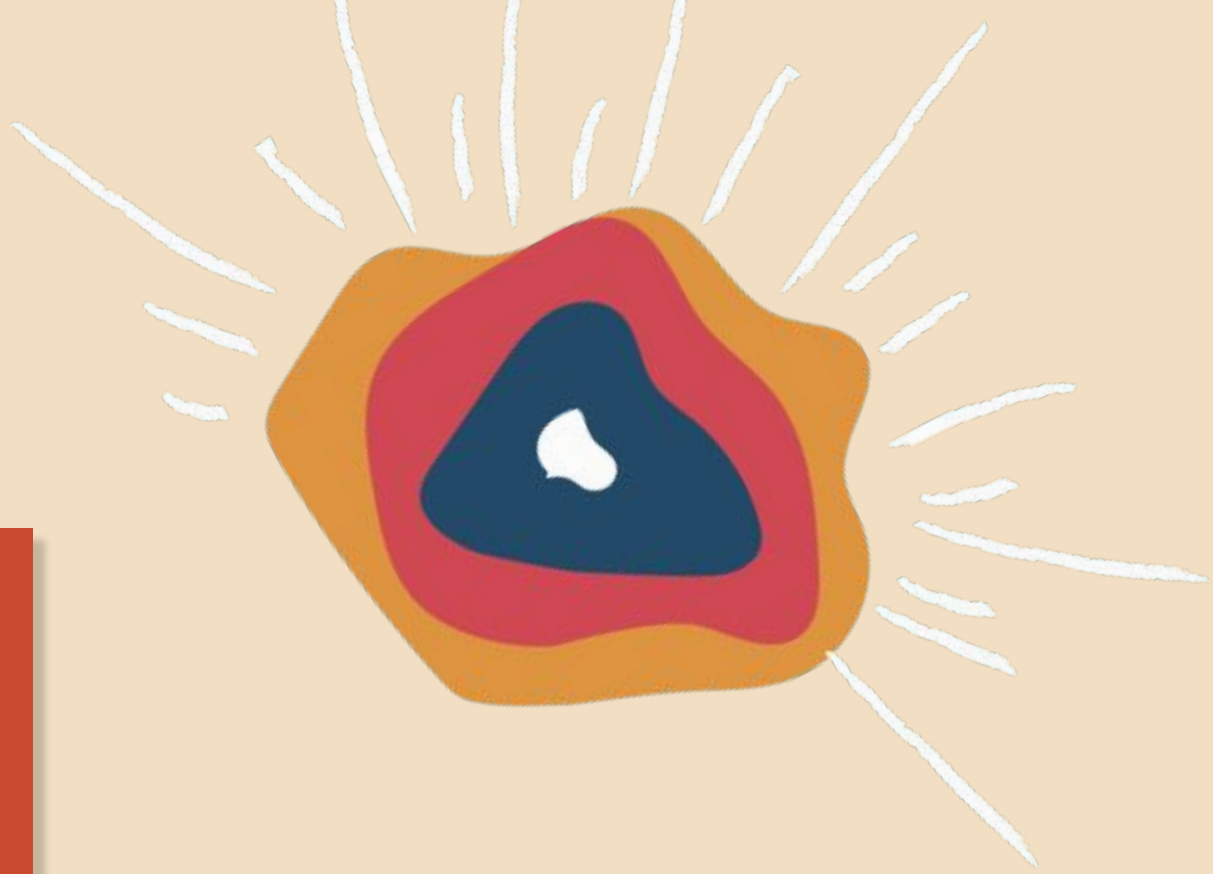
National

Regional

International

What do we need?

For effective engagement with and on policy



Tempering expectations

Policy change takes time. A lot of time.

- Clarity of purpose and voice
- Human and financial resources
- Network of support
- Body of knowledge
- Sustained attention and willingness to listen

Thank you

And wishing you the very best with the fight for change!

gayatri@apc.org

valeriab@apc.org