STAN’ UP! TALK UP!

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AN INTRODUCTION TO
ADVOCACY FOR JAMAICAN COMMUNITIES
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Stan’ Up! Talk Up! Guidebook was created by the Jamaica Environment Trust (JET) with funding from the Inter-American Foundation (IAF) under the project ‘Strengthening the capacity of Jamaican communities to protect their environmental rights’ 2013-2016.

JET is a non-profit, non-governmental membership organization operating in the island of Jamaica. Formed in 1991, we are a registered charity under Jamaican law and our main focus is environmental education and advocacy. Our vision is: Jamaicans are knowledgeable and concerned about the environment and this is reflected in their lifestyles and behaviour, environmental issues are given high priority and are an integral part of national development objectives, and natural areas are valued, protected and properly managed.

IAF is an independent US government agency created by Congress in 1969 to channel development assistance directly to the organized poor in Latin America and the Caribbean. The IAF has carried out its mandate by responding with grant support for the most creative ideas for self-help received from grassroots groups and non-governmental organizations. It also encourages partnerships among community organizations, business and local government directed at improving the quality of life for poor people and strengthening democratic practices.

Every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of this material which will be under frequent review. We invite input, corrections and suggestions for improvement.

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Advocacy is a tool used to correct an unfair situation. It usually involves trying to get the government, businesses or groups of people to fix circumstances that are harming communities or people. Advocacy means speaking up for something you believe in. But advocacy is not just complaining - advocacy aims to get a result. While advocacy does give information, it is not the same thing as education because it supports one particular point of view or goal. A good advocacy campaign organizes other people to support the goal. Advocacy is one strategy that can be used to address a problem, but it is not the only one. It is not necessarily confrontational either, but will result in discussion and maybe even disagreement. Since advocacy means you are challenging something or someone, it does take courage.

Here are two examples of how an advocacy campaign can be used.

Your community, Pleasanton, is affected by a mining operation. Dust is making your family sick and the mining trucks operate all night so no one can sleep. You have been to see the company but there has been no improvement. Some of your friends work for the mining company and they are upset with you. They tell you that you are putting their jobs in danger. Your friends want you to be quiet, but your children are sick, and it is getting harder and harder to pay the medical bills. What can you do? You can organize an advocacy campaign to get the company to wet the roads more frequently and stop operating trucks after 6 pm.
Here’s another example. Your community, Riverway, can only be reached by a bridge, but it was washed out by flooding in the last heavy rains. For one year, you have had to pay a lot of money to a taxi driver to take your agricultural produce to market via a much longer route. You have talked to your Member of Parliament but the bridge has still not been fixed. What can you do? You can organize an advocacy campaign to get the bridge fixed.

This guidebook is a simple guide for communities on how to conduct an advocacy campaign.
A good advocacy campaign goes through the following steps:

**What is the problem? Does everybody think there is a problem or do some people disagree?**

In our example of the dust from Pleasanton’s mining company, the people who work for the mining company might not think there is a problem. The people operating the trucks late at night might be getting paid well for it, and they might not think it is a problem. In the example of the Riverway bridge, the taxi driver might be grateful for the extra fares.

**What is the solution?**

Sometimes people agree there is a problem, but they do not agree on the solution. In the mining company example, some people might think the solution is more wetting of the roads, while others want compensation to help pay their doctor's bills. Some people might want the trucks to stop running at 6 pm, while others may think the cutoff time should be 8 pm. Talk with each other and see if you can agree on one or more solutions.
Set your mission

Think about your overall mission. What do you want in the long run? Pleasanton might want a better quality of life for local people, including cleaner air and quieter nights. The Riverway community might want better access to markets or schools. This is the big picture, and it is something you might have to keep working to achieve for a long time. It should be something that you are for (Example: A better quality of life for the people of Pleasanton), instead of something you are against (Example: Close the mining company).

What is our slogan?

An advocacy campaign needs a short, catchy, memorable slogan that people will use to identify your campaign. Spend some time thinking about this. The slogan could be related to your mission, or to a particular goal. Examples: Clean Air for Pleasanton. Quiet Nights for Pleasanton. Restore Riverway’s Bridge.
Set your goals

A goal is an objective that will take you to your mission. **What** is it that you want? An easy way to think about goals is to use the acronym SMART:

- **Specific** More wetting for dusty roads
- **Measurable** At least three times per day
- **Achievable** The mining company used to do this, we know they can
- **Relevant** Less dust will mean less illness, better quality of life
- **Time-bound** Within three months

Who are our allies? Who will help us?

The more people who agree with your cause, the better. But not everyone has to agree. Do you have a strong community association? Perhaps they will help. You can look for allies in many different places – people, institutions (churches, schools, service clubs, sports clubs), businesses. You can try to get support from people at events like fun days, church trips, fairs or dances. It is good to look for leaders both inside and outside the community who will support your cause. If you can get a well known person or a celebrity, to support you, that can be very useful.

Who will work against us?

After you make a list of those who will support you, think about who is going to oppose your campaign. In our example of the community affected by mining operations, it might be the mining company itself. Other people could oppose you as well – the truck drivers, even the operator of a cook shop who is getting good business from people who work at the mining company. In the bridge example, the taxi drivers might oppose the plan to get the bridge fixed.

Talk about **why** people or institutions might oppose your campaign. It is important to understand their reasons.
because perhaps you can reassure them. For example, the people who work at the mining company might be afraid that your campaign will close down the mine and they will be out of work. If you tell them that your objective is just to get more wetting of the roads, they might support that. If you show the taxi drivers that more and more farmers are going out of business and soon there will be no goods going to market, maybe they will support you.

**Who can fix our problem? Who can be an agent of change?**

Decide who can fix the problem. Be specific. “The government” is too broad. So is “the company.” Try to figure out which individual, or individuals, can actually fix your problem. Once you have a list of those people – it should not be a long list – think about what might cause those people to act. Everyone likes to be associated with success, so you might be able to get people to act if they think they will be congratulated for it.

**What are our timelines? When do we want action?**

Ask yourselves what is a realistic timeframe for the action you want to be achieved.

An advocacy campaign asks:

- **What** do we want?
- **Who** will help?
- **Who** will oppose?
- **How** will we get support?
- **When** do we want action by?

**Is it important that other people in the wider society know about your campaign?**

Sometimes an advocacy campaign becomes necessary because you have tried other things and they have not worked. You should try all the easier actions first, like talking with the person or company who is causing the problem, writing them a letter, contacting the government or your Member of Parliament. If you feel you have tried everything, then it is probably time that more people know about your issue. But there are risks in bringing your issue to public attention.
How do I bring the issue to the wider public? What are the risks?

The best way of bringing attention to your issue is using the media, but you should carefully plan this step. Media attention can be very positive but it can also show your issue in a bad light. Suppose you decide to block the road and ask the media to cover the event. Just as the cameras arrive, one of the people blocking the road starts to curse and the media puts that on TV. Suddenly your whole campaign is called into question by that one person. No one has any sympathy for your cause. Or suppose someone says something that is not true on TV. Again, that will cause people to ask whether or not you are telling the truth. You have to be ready before you decide to use the media.

In the Jamaican context, sometimes we don’t like it when people speak out. We may even call them “informers”. People may be afraid that there will be action taken against them if they speak out – they could lose their jobs or they may even fear for their safety. The best way to guard against those risks is to join with others – there is safety in numbers. Even if people are criticizing you, make sure you continue to talk about the issue – this is called “staying on message”. Don’t let the discussion get personal.

If you really are worried about your safety, tell someone you trust – your pastor, a senior police officer, a teacher, an attorney, a reporter. Make your fears public.

WORKING WITH THE MEDIA

Advocacy often takes place in public – on TV, on the radio, in the newspapers, at public meetings and on social media. Working with the media can be challenging. Here are some tips to help you.
How do you get ready?

Using the media to tell your story is all about building relationships, so you have to get to know the people involved. Start by making a list of all the media programmes that people you know watch, listen to or read – radio, TV, newspapers. Be specific – don’t write down RJR, write down the name of the programme, the host and the time the show is aired. For example, Beyond the Headlines with Dionne Jackson Miller is broadcast at 5 pm on weekdays. Another example: Irie FM, Running African with Andrea Williams Green, is on Sundays at 6 am. For newspapers, get to know the names of reporters. Is there one person who often writes about your issue? Write his or her name down. There are many different types of media in Jamaica now, and you cannot always cover all of them; you have to choose the ones that best suit your message and will be heard, seen or read by those you want to reach.

Who do you want to reach?

Different people listen to or watch different types of programmes. People read different newspapers or other types of printed material, like school or church newsletters. Who is it you want to reach? Do you want to reach people in your community so they will join your campaign? Do you want to reach people who live in other mining communities having the same problem to get them to join your campaign? Do you want to reach decision makers in Kingston? When you have decided who you want to reach, then choose which types of media and which specific programmes or reporters you will start working with.

Understand the issue

When you talk to the media, you will need to be comfortable with the subject. You don’t need to know everything – it is fine to say that you don’t know, in answer to a question from a journalist. The more you know, the better prepared you will be, and the more comfortable you will become speaking in public. So in our mining example, work with your group to find out what are the health problems caused by too much dust. Who do they most affect? How can they be fixed? See if you can find out what the regulations for mining companies are in other parts of the world. Don’t exaggerate and don’t make anything up. Your credibility is important. Just be honest and speak from the heart.
How do you build relationships with media people?

Television and radio hosts are often too busy to talk to the public. But all TV and radio shows have producers. The job of a producer is to plan programmes, tell the host what the issues are, find guests who can speak on the issue, and in the case of TV, get film footage of what is going on. When you have chosen the types of media you want to use, get to know the producers. Just call up the radio or television station and ask to speak with the producer of whichever show you have settled on. You will need to know what you are going to say before you do this – in other words, develop your pitch beforehand.

Develop your pitch

The producer of a TV or radio show has a high stress job. They have to produce new ideas and content very frequently, sometimes daily, but at least weekly. They are often busy and don’t have time to talk for long. Develop a short pitch that will interest them and help them to do their job better. Here is an example of a good pitch:

Hello Arlene, this is Linton Smith from the community of Pleasanton, just outside May Pen. I’m calling to ask if you would be interested in doing a programme on what is happening to our community due to a mining company that is nearby. The problems are dust and trucks operating late into the night. No one can sleep at night and our children are getting sick from the dust. Our community association is ready to speak with you, and we can take you on a tour.

What does a journalist or producer want?

- Interesting and newsworthy content for their show
- People to interview on air who are easy to reach and reliable
- Good images (if they are on TV)

If you can give a journalist or producer those things, they will be happy to cover your story.

Start building a media list

As soon as you make contact with a media person, write down their name and contact information. It is best this is done electronically, because then it is easy to send out e-mails. But if you don’t have access to a computer, a paper list can be done. List
the name of the host, the producer and in the case of print, the reporter. You have to keep the list updated, as media professionals often move on to other jobs. If there is a new producer, you have to build a relationship with the new person.

**Tips for building good media relationships**

- **Answer your phone.** Sometimes journalists have a hard time getting in touch with people. If you are easy to reach, they will be grateful and want to help when you need them.

- **Go on the record.** Journalists want to interview people who will take a position “on the record.” That means what you have said can be written or spoken on TV or radio, or in the newspapers. Be willing to speak on the record.

- **Be reliable.** If you have a scheduled interview, be ready for it, answer your phone right away, be in a quiet place, with good signal if you are on a cell phone.

- **Be accurate and fair.** Don’t say anything that is not true or insulting to another person. This can result in a lawsuit against you and the media house.

- **Keep in touch.** Don’t just call the journalist when you want something from them. Congratulate them on a programme or story they did, even if it is not on your issue. Keep in touch with them.

**Use talk radio**

There are many talk shows in Jamaica. Find out which talks shows your target audience listens to and organize for the people who support you to call them. Set a SMART goal – for example, three calls per day on our issue for the next month.

**A STORY COVERED BY ONE TYPE OF MEDIA HAS A GOOD CHANCE OF BEING PICKED UP BY OTHER TYPES OF MEDIA.** Radio producers read the newspapers for story ideas. Reporters watch TV news and shows for their stories.
What about press releases?

Sometimes you might want to send out a press release to your media list. A press release is a written or recorded message to members of the media, for the purpose of bringing something that is newsworthy to their attention. A press release has certain elements – **WHO** is sending it, **WHAT** is the issue, **WHERE** is it happening, **WHEN** is it happening, **WHY** is it happening. A press release should outline the issue and include quotes from individuals, as well as give some background information for a reporter or producer. It should also have a few names with contact information at the end, so if a journalist wants to conduct a longer interview, they know who to call. An eye-catching headline is very important. An example of a simple press release is given at the back of this guidebook.

You can also call a press conference

A press conference is a meeting to inform the media of something important, and give them a chance to ask questions. You will need a room with electricity because they will bring cameras, lights and recording equipment. You might need a microphone or public address equipment. One or two people from the community should speak to the journalists and outline the issue. This should take no longer than half an hour. Choose the best speakers, and make sure they stick to the point. If you have pictures or film, project them onto a wall or screen. Three or four people from the community can then answer questions. You should choose all the people who are going to speak at the press conference carefully – they should be calm and knowledgeable about the issue. Calling a press conference is risky, because if something more newsworthy than your issue happens, only a few journalists might turn up, and you would have gone to a lot of trouble for not much result. You should not have a press conference unless you have something very important to say. Always be ready for the question: what are you going to do next?

Media tours

You can also invite the media to tour the area and see what the problem is. This can be very effective because it nearly always results in good interviews with community members and good pictures or film. The organization of a media tour is much the same as for a press conference, except you will be moving around. Often the media teams like to go in their own vehicles, but you will need a vehicle for your team. The tour should not be longer than an hour. It is good if the tour ends up at a place, like
a community centre or school, where questions can be answered. As with the press conference, choose who will speak carefully.

Where to get resources

Sometimes money is needed. If a reporter or TV journalist or talk show host covers your story, there is no cost. But suppose you want to put an advertisement in a newspaper or on radio or TV. Those can be very expensive. Suppose you need a room for a meeting or a press conference. Go back to your list of allies and see if there is anyone there who will help with resources. Consider small events like car washes, or bake sales, or raffles. Don’t do anything that will risk losing money, though – keep it small and simple.

Some tips on how to capture public attention

• Use pictures, songs or video. People respond much more readily to visuals than to words.

• Use humour. We all like to laugh. Think of cartoons – they can make a very strong point in a funny way.

• Use stories. People are moved by stories told by other people. Perhaps a mother could talk about how sick her daughter has been from the dust, or how her son missed his exam after a sleepless night because of the trucks.

• Use someone everyone knows who likes to talk about your issue, like an entertainer or an athlete.

• Make it clear that many people care about the issue.

Some notes on social media

Social media (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Tumblr etc) are all free ways to get your message to the public. But there are dangers – there are millions of people on social media and it is easy for your message to be lost. Very often people set up a Facebook page or a Twitter account, but after a short time, they get tired of posting to it. If you do decide to use social media for your message, then you must commit to posting very regularly.
OTHER ADVOCACY TOOLS

Petitions

Petitions can be useful, if you are able to get a lot of signatures. An online petition is easy to set up, but there are many petitions on the internet, and it is hard to get yours to stand out. **The most effective petition is one which is collected by hand by volunteers and then delivered to a government official with the media present.**

Letter writing campaigns

Letter writing campaigns can be either done on paper, or sent via e-mail. If you can get many people to write a paper letter and mail or deliver it to a company or government office, those letters will get attention. You might be asked in a media interview whether you have written to the company or government department, and it is always good to be able to say “yes”. It is even better to be able to say that many people from your community wrote to the company, Member of Parliament, or whoever you have identified as being able to fix the problem.

Printed materials – posters, flyers, postcards

If you are able to raise funding, you can consider producing printed materials like posters, flyers, postcards or bumper stickers. The first thing you should think about is who you are trying to reach with these materials. For the community of Riverway, maybe bumper stickers would be good if all the taxi drivers agree to put them on their cars. For Pleasanton, maybe a postcard with an image of a child trying to go to school in a cloud of dust could be handed out at a meeting. You must know what you are going to do with the materi-
als before you produce them. Remember that many printed materials will end up as garbage, so before you create them, make sure they are necessary and useful.

Audio-visual materials

Short films or videos are very effective in getting a message out. It is relatively easy to take films with cell phones and upload them to YouTube. You can then use the link to the YouTube videos in your other communications, like press releases. You can show short films at a press conference or meeting. You can also use short films as a way to involve others – you could ask students and young people to make short videos of the impacts of the dust in Pleasanton, or the length of time a farmer must wait for a taxi in Riverway. Videos like this should be short and simple.

Civil protest

The most confrontational type of advocacy is civil protest. There are different kinds of civil protest – demonstrations, marches, sit ins, teach ins, picket lines and so on. In Jamaica, often civil protest takes the form of blocking roads. Organizing a civil protest is probably the riskiest of all advocacy activities. Perhaps no one will come and then it will seem that your campaign has no support. Or the opposite could happen – a lot of people might come, and a big crowd could get angry and damage property, or even hurt people.

Under Jamaican law, if you want to conduct a march or demonstration, you need permission from the Police. Also, you cannot march close to, or demonstrate in front of, various public buildings like Jamaica House, Gordon House, or a hospital.

If you decide to organize civil protest, make sure it is peaceful. If it becomes violent, you will lose support for your campaign. There should be a few community leaders who can lead protestors in songs and chants. If you can organize community members to play musical instruments – drums are very good – and sing, that gives a very positive feeling to the protest.

Most protests have signs or placards, or else people who see you protesting will not know what your protest is about. Encourage people to make their own signs. A demonstration that has all the signs looking the same does not seem genuine. People should be free to write what they want to on their sign. Your campaign can have some signs that say whatever your slogan is. You should also take blank cardboard, cartridge paper or poster board and coloured markers to the protest so that people can make their own signs on the spot.
Choose the location of the protest carefully. Do you want it to be close to the problem? Do you want it to be as close as possible to a government agency, or to the company? Do you want it to be somewhere that has cultural or historic meaning, like a park or church ground?

Invite the media. You want as many people as possible to know about your protest.

Ask young people to take photographs or videos so that you will have images to give to anyone who is interested.

Try to make your protest a fun, positive and uplifting event.

Select a few people to talk to the Police, when they show up. They should be polite and respectful, but also firm that the community has a right to peaceful assembly. If there is an elder in your community who everyone knows and respects, he or she would be a good person to talk to the Police.
Clean up after your civil protest. You will lose support if you leave the place dirty. Have your leaders bring some big garbage bags with them and encourage everyone to use them.

Final tips

• Keep a record of your campaign. Start a scrapbook. Include photographs, newspaper clippings, copies of letters etc. If anyone asks what you have done, you can show them.

• Sometimes there are small victories along the way. Make sure you celebrate them. Maybe you have been trying to get a meeting with the company CEO for a long time and your campaign has made that happen. Take a moment to congratulate everyone and feel good about it.

• Remember change takes time so don’t get discouraged. Stick to your campaign and motivate each other.

“It’s not by story alone that successful advocates urge others to take action. Advocating with our personal stories takes a specific kind of preparation. It requires practice with elements of persuasion, public speaking, media interview skills and storytelling—not to mention healthy does of fortitude and commitment.”

John Capecci and Timothy Cage

“Be the change that you wish to see in the world.”

Mahatma Gandhi
## SAMPLE ADVOCACY PLAN

### Pleasanton community

**Overall mission:** A cleaner, quieter Pleasanton

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<th>Goal 1</th>
<th>Allies</th>
<th>Opposition</th>
<th>Agents of change</th>
<th>Resources needed</th>
<th>Strategies</th>
<th>Action Steps</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>More wetting for roads – 3 times per day</td>
<td>School Principal</td>
<td>Mining company</td>
<td>Safety and health manager at the mining company</td>
<td>Community meeting space</td>
<td>Educate community about effects of dust on health</td>
<td>Hold community meetings, 3 by year end</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Pastor</td>
<td>Truckers</td>
<td></td>
<td>Snacks</td>
<td>Get pictures of dust on the news</td>
<td>Invite doctor to talk about dust, 1st meeting</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Nurse at health clinic</td>
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<td>Ask school principal to run a photo competition of the dust problem, 2nd meeting</td>
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<td></td>
<td>People with water trucks</td>
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<td>Send photos to journalist, By end October</td>
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**STAN’ UP! TALK UP!**
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Pleasanton, Clarendon, Jamaica
Tuesday, August 17th, 2015

HEADLINE: ‘OUR CHILDREN ARE SICK!’ School Principal says mining company responsible

WHO: Pleasanton All Age School Principal, Albert Andrews, led a group of community members

WHERE: to the Annual General Meeting of the Rocky Mines Company at their head office in Garden View

WHEN: yesterday.

WHAT: With support from Pleasanton’s health clinic staff, the small group handed a petition HAPPPENED signed by over 1,000 residents of this small, farming community to Rocky Mines Company’s CEO, Bert Miller.

WHY; QUOTE: “Attendance at school is down and the numbers of children having to go to the health clinic with asthma and sinusitis is increasing every week,” said Principal Andrews. “We believe the cause is the dust from trucks driving on unpaved roads to the mining operation.”

BACKGROUND: Rocky Mines Company began operation in Pleasanton in 2014, having bought the mine previously owned by Tropical Ore. “Tropical Ore had a good relationship with the community,” said Nurse Angel Braham from the health clinic, “and there was a vibrant liaison committee. We would like to see that reactivated.”

BACKGROUND: According to the Public Science Bureau, dust in the air, often called particles or particulate matter, does increase the incidence of respiratory ailments, particularly in children and the elderly.

WHAT THE COMMUNITY WANTS

CONTACT: Mr. Albert Andrews, Principal
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Cell: 555-8125

Miss Angel Braham
Pleasanton Health Clinic
Work: 555-9853
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Pleasanton, Clarendon, Jamaica
Tuesday, August 17th, 2015

‘OUR CHILDREN ARE SICK!’ School Principal says mining company responsible

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“Attendance at school is down and the numbers of children having to go to the health clinic with asthma and sinusitis is increasing every week,” said Principal Andrews. “We believe the cause is the dust from trucks driving on unpaved roads to the mining operation.”

Rocky Mines Company began operation in Pleasanton in 2014, having bought the mine previously owned by Tropical Ore. “Tropical Ore had a good relationship with the community,” said Nurse Angel Braham from the health clinic, “and there was a vibrant liaison committee. We would like to see that reactivated.”

According to the Public Science Bureau, dust in the air, often called particles or particulate matter, does increase the incidence of respiratory ailments, particularly in children and the elderly.

The community is calling on Rocky Mines to start wetting the roads immediately, at least three times daily.

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