

Coordinating Stakeholder Engagement to Improve the Effectiveness of Advocacy **Facilitators- Halle Goldstein and Terry Mazany**

Overview

Climate change poses serious consequences for our communities, economy, health, environment, and safety. Solutions require the interplay of technological solutions and human behavior. Effective advocacy requires collaboration among diverse stakeholders, and collaboration requires coordination.

And yet, there is typically a problem with how we solve complex challenges. Diverse perspectives, assumptions, and values within stakeholder groups can hinder collaborative efforts. Because climate change solutions often require years of hard work, we know that we must create an atmosphere of trust in our collaborative efforts within the region to adapt to and mitigate climate change effects.

Advocacy begins with community organizing. The organizing process can be aligned with six key practices that form the playbook for international social labs working around the globe as part of the Gigatonne Challenge to reduce CO₂ emissions:

1. Because progress moves at the speed of trust, our first requirement is to build trust.
2. Meaningful data and information are the glue that hold a collaborative effort together;
3. The coalition, itself must commit to a powerful, holistic regional goal;
4. A backbone organization is needed to coordinate aligned action;
5. Donors and foundations are encouraged to fund bandwidth for collaboration;
6. And the structure of collaboration makes the work turn-over proof.

In this session, we will discuss scenarios and strategies on improving the effectiveness of advocacy and engaging stakeholders.

Background Materials and Useful Links

- Model Ordinance Toolkit- <https://fl.audubon.org/news/model-ordinance-toolkit>
- World Wildlife Fund – <https://www.worldwildlife.org/initiatives/climate>
- Yale Study: Climate in your region- <https://climatecommunication.yale.edu/visualizations-data/factsheets/>
- The Gigatonne Challenge – <https://gigatonne.co/> organizing local communities across the globe for massive impact.
- Adaptation Planning Stakeholder Outreach & Engagement (created by DEP, NOAA, and Florida Coastal Management Program)- https://floridadep.gov/sites/default/files/CRI_Adaptation_Planning_Stakeholder_Outreach_and_Engagement%3B_2017.pdf

Discussion Questions

1. To what extent are your local decision makers involved and what have you found to be successful to prioritize commitments to address climate change, mitigation, and resiliency?

2. What are inspiring examples of solutions that help inspire others when addressing climate/resiliency action and advocacy?
3. How do we engage diverse stakeholders to take action? What are our priority audiences within our region?

Potential Strategies List

1. **Story Telling**- Use a diversity of outreach and advocacy approaches. Include story telling. Incorporate the efforts of individuals who may not be experts. You don't have to be an expert to communicate concern.
2. **Education**- Use community-based education efforts.
3. **Rural Leadership**- Pursue a "trusted voices" approach to providing information in rural communities. Work with those who are helping those communities address pressing needs.
4. **Business Leadership**- Engage business leaders who have recognized and prioritized climate threats and solutions in their business strategies. Work with chambers of commerce and other business associations to increase outreach and education.
5. **The Florida Association of Counties**- has educational programs for commissioners and staff. Include climate change among those.
6. **Local Government Action and Climate Action Planning**- Making people aware of the issue doesn't mean they want to be the ones to deal with it. Focus on those best positioned to act locally: city and county government. We need them to develop a climate action plan. We need a constituency to support the development of action plans. We should focus on year-round folks as the most invested in the community but seek support from all who care about our region. Reach out to them in the places they already gather.
7. **Community Input**- Go to communities to ask what their concerns and solutions are.
8. **Community Action Planning**- Demand action plans with community participation in developing those plans
9. **Community Awareness**- Reaching out to continue bringing more individuals, organizations, and communities "to the table"
10. **Person to Person, Family to Family** – find others in your neighborhood who are taking action as a family, unit those families and form block clubs for climate action.