

Annex IV: Potential Advocacy Tools

The Network of HRAW NGOs may use a range of potential advocacy tools to further its goals at the EU level. Here is a range of such tools listed as some examples that could be considered, only to provide ideas and food for thought as a basis for developing its strategy and action plan.

1. Awareness-building

- working with EU networks to raise their awareness and help them understand the issues faced by NMS NGOs;
- developing position papers in response to the ongoing consultation process by the EU ,
- building and nurturing relations with decision-makers (attending and arranging meetings),
- playing a leading role in pushing this agenda;
- convene events and a major conference for the key stakeholders.

2. Public advocacy tools

1. Annual Report

The Network could compile and present an annual report in Brussels that details the work and challenges the HRAW NGOs in the NMS have confronted during the past year. This is a classic profile-raising tool; it also serves as proof that NGOs can cooperate with each other. This would have to be timed with the introduction of the Network in Brussels.

2. Speech in the Parliament

The Network could write a speech and send it to all caucus leaders of the European Parliament at an opportune time. The caucus leaders will be asked to deliver the speech in Parliament to drive the attention to the importance of HRAW NGOs. This would require intensive consultations and work with the MEPs involved.

3. Big Four study

The Project may order a study or a survey from one of the Big Four accounting companies (PriceWaterhouseCoopers, KPMG, Deloitte and Ernst & Young) on how much money a national government would need to address e.g., xenophobia and corruption, compared with how much money could be saved if HRAW NGOs were involved.

This tool would need to be financed separately. The content of the report should support the opinions of the HRAW NGOs and the advocacy project.

4. A “face” for the Network

The advocacy project could benefit from a “public face” who will represent the project and the ideas behind it. This can be a well-known and respected person from one of the NMS whose work and personality will attract the attention of journalists and decision makers. It does not have to be someone whose background is in NGOs or human rights. He/she may be a former politician or an artist e.g., Czech film director Jiří Menzel.

Naturally, this “face” will not be involved in all activities, but would rather be used as an ambassador on the issue.

3. Public Relations tools

1. Generating news

The Network could develop effective, creative news releases that will grab the attention of media outlets that cater to the target groups. This ensures focused media coverage. Items mentioned in the “Tools of Attraction” section (“Cow parade”-like activity, European Citizen’s Initiative) can generate news by themselves.

2. Media relations

The Network will prepare a tailor-made press list containing contact information for all important journalists and editors in the national and regional press, as well as magazines and electronic media. This includes contacting reporters to ensure their presence at press conferences, organizing interviews, and preparing press releases.

3. Media monitoring

The Network could collect and evaluate all print, online and broadcast media articles that result from our news-placement activities. Evaluating the media’s response to each individual step helps us generate news more effectively in the future.

Published articles and reports can be used as a tool to support our arguments on both the NMS and EU levels. They will make it impossible to deny that these issues are vital to people in the EU.

4. Organizing media events

The Network can organize media and other events, from press conferences to company dinners to one-on-one meetings. Such events are important to support our PA tools because they are good venues for discussion and persuasion.

4. Tools of Attraction

“Tools of Attraction” are designed to let both decision makers and the public know that a problem exists and can be solved through cooperation with HRAW NGOs.

1. Facebook/Twitter

The concept behind the advocacy project must have a presence in “new media”. News items, issues, press releases, and developments should be followed up on Facebook or Twitter, where documents, plans, photos, schedules or results can be published as well.

The overall project doesn’t need its own homepage because it is more effective to create homepages related to the individual directions themselves. Facebook and the Twitter offer the advocacy project’s board and its backers the opportunity to communicate individually and in a well-organized way.

The project’s Facebook page can be linked to the Facebook activity of MEPs who deal with human-rights matters. For example, Heidi Hautala, the head of Parliament’s human rights sub-committee, answered questions on the EU’s annual human rights report on her Facebook page: (http://www.europarl.europa.eu/eplive/expert/photo/20100602PHT75482/pict_20100602PHT75482.jpg).

2. Homepages on corruption/stereotypes

Interactive, user-focused internet homepages could be created, one about stereotypes and one about corruption.

Corruption: The site would demonstrate the practice of corruption through a game or some other tangible method. It can be set up in an interactive way: One example is the Chevron Oil game (<http://www.willyoujoinus.com/energyville/>) or the McDonald’s game (<http://www.mcvideogame.com/game-eng.html>).

Stereotypes: The site would be about the discriminatory decisions people make in their daily routines. Users would take a test, and the result would show the degree to which they view the world in terms of stereotypes.

3. “Cow Parade”-like project

The advocacy needs to grab the attention of the public as well as politicians. The public can be best reached through a visual element that will stick in their minds. One such method would be based on the “cow parade” phenomenon, where artists paint plastic cows and place them in the streets of a European city for a few weeks. This allows people to “participate” in an issue in an eventless, day-to-day manner.

The Network can ask artists to come up with a visual concept that will draw attention to the advocacy project’s themes of corruption and xenophobia.

4. European Citizens’ Initiative

The European Citizens’ Initiative is one of the main innovations of the Treaty of Lisbon aimed at increasing direct democracy in the European Union. The Initiative makes it possible for one million EU citizens from a significant number of member states to make the European Commission take action on an issue that is important to them (e. g. ending corruption).

"Not less than one million citizens who are nationals of a significant number of Member States may take the initiative of inviting the European Commission, within the framework of its powers, to submit any appropriate proposal on matters where citizens consider that a legal act of the Union is required for the purpose of implementing the Treaties." (Treaty of Lisbon Article 8 B 4.)

5. NGO Audit

A HRAW NGO outside the EU will be asked to audit the tasks, the conditions and the achievements of HRAW NGOs in the NMS, as well as the EU's human rights performance. This document would be an objective assessment of the situation that the Network could use in its professional arguments.

6. Xenophobia Tour

A film screening would be held in NMS to show the different faces of the xenophobia in Europe. The audience could take part in conversations with experts and celebrities after watching the films.

7. "Save the NGOs" - Provocative T-Shirt in the European Parliament

The Network makes T-Shirts and ask some MEPs (e.g. GUE/NGL; non-attached members) to help call attention to the HRAW NGOs financial troubles by wearing them in the European Parliament for a day. The action's primary aim is to raise awareness among MEPs, but the photos of the event would circulate on the Internet and in newspapers as well.

8. Pictogram composition on corruption in Brussels

Pictograms should appear on the streets and bus stops of Brussels showing the negative effects of corruption in member states. The message would be clear: The EU needs to support HRAW NGOs to limit corruption and raise the level of democracy.

9. Float

Giant floats simultaneously appear in 10 different NMS capitals to get the public's attention. Meanwhile, activists hand out leaflets to the passers-by to draw attention to the issues confronting HRAW NGOs.