



## STEPS IN A CAMPAIGN

These steps are intended to help people move together in a non-hierarchical, inclusive process to a deeper understanding of effective nonviolent strategies.

### **Name and Describe the problem**

*"Not everything that is faced can be changed, but nothing can be changed until it is faced."*  
*James Baldwin (8/2/24 – 12/1/87) African-American novelist, essayist, playwright, poet, and social critic.*

Are we clear how we collectively name and describe the problem? Are there different assumptions, different descriptions, and therefore different messages and goals? How does this relate to our organizational mission?

### **Analyze why the problem exists**

- \* Do we understand the context and the root causes of the problem? (Problem Tree <<http://www.wri-irg.org/node/23350>> and Pillars of Power <<http://www.wri-irg.org/node/23351>> exercises are helpful)
- \* Who benefits and who suffers from it and how?
- \* Who has the power to create change?
- \* What are the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats? (SWOT analysis)
- \* How does a commitment to nonviolent social change affect our analysis?

### **Create a vision of what you want, with clear goals**

What is the long term change you hope to see? What are the steps that can get you to that vision?

- \* Is the goal realistic, can it be achieved in a certain period of time?
- \* Is the goal measurable; will we know when we have achieved it?
- \* Is the goal relevant to people's lives; will they be moved to participate?
- \* Will people feel empowered to continue towards the long term vision when the goal is reached?

## STEPS TO REACH THE GOALS:

**The first 4 are the process of base building and empowerment:**

**Research and information gathering:** What do we know, what do we need to know? Who can gather the information we need? Who can guide us and provide sources? Research can also include finding out how others think about the issue. Who would we include in our participatory research?

**Education (how to educate ourselves and the community):** How do we develop good educational materials, considering the different constituencies and allies we want to reach? What educational processes should we use (i.e. written materials, popular education, street theatre/skits etc.)? Do we need different materials for different constituencies? How are we using the media to raise awareness?

**Allies:** Who are our allies; who might become allies or supporters if we communicate with them more? (Use the Spectrum of Allies exercise <http://www.wri-irg.org/node/23368>.) How do we build cooperative relationships with groups and individuals we need to work with to better reach our goals?

**Training:** Do we need training to learn the skills we need to develop strategy and organize? (such as group process, strategic planning, media work, nonviolent direct action) What kind of training is needed to grow our group and to empower people to participate? Is the training available to everyone? Do we need/want to train with allies? Is there an agreed upon nonviolent discipline? If so, how is that included in training?

**The next 4 are tactics:** *A tactic is a specific action which contributes to the implementation of the strategy (events, activities).*

**Negotiation:** Who do we present our demands to and how? Have we identified who we need to negotiate with? How will we communicate with them? Who should do that? Are our demands achievable?

**Constructive Work/Alternative Institutions:** A key element of social change, it is designed to meet the needs of a population either in the short term or long term. An alternative institution may be a temporary alternative to meet a specific need (especially during a boycott or strike, or until a need is met, such as Freedom Schools), constructive work includes permanent projects such as community land trusts. While we are saying "No" to injustice, can we build the "Yes" to what we want?

**Legislation, Electoral or Committee Action:** What bodies do we need to put pressure on to reach our goal? How do we put pressure on them? How will people participate in that?

**Demonstrations:** How can we best demonstrate our concerns? Have we considered the many methods of nonviolent action?

(See "Forms of Nonviolent Action" <http://www.wri-irg.org/node/23299> and 198 Methods of Action [www.aeinstein.org](http://www.aeinstein.org)) Are we clear about the objectives of the demonstration and how they will help us reach our goals? How will we involve our allies and the public? Will our actions make sense to the local community? What does it mean that the issue can no longer be ignored? A matrix

[https://www.warresisters.org/sites/default/files/resources/matrix\\_exercise.pdf](https://www.warresisters.org/sites/default/files/resources/matrix_exercise.pdf) or cross spectrum exercise <http://www.wri-irg.org/node/23374> can help decide on what action to take.

In his Letter from a Birmingham Jail, Martin Luther King Jr. wrote, 'You may well ask, "Why direct action? Why sit-ins, marches, etc.? Isn't negotiation a better path?" You are exactly right in your call for negotiation. Indeed, this is the purpose of direct action. **Nonviolent direct action seeks to create such a crisis and establish such tension that a community that has constantly refused to negotiate is forced to confront the issue. It seeks so to dramatise the issue that it can no longer be ignored.**"

(Use as an exercise to explore nonviolent direct action. <http://www.wri-irg.org/node/23353>)

**When we reach our goal, we need make sure we pay attention to:**

**Reconciliation:** Have we been working for a win-win situation rather than a win-loose? What role can Restorative Justice play in reconciliation?

**Celebration/Evaluation:** When we reach our goals, it is important to recognize what we have done. Collective evaluation is vital, this is not just the role of a few. If key organizers are tired or burnt out, they may not be able to see what is being achieved. In addition to reaching the goal, or not reaching all, what have we gained or lost? How do we celebrate our work with the community?

These resources are excerpted from the Handbook for Nonviolent Campaigns, first and second editions. <http://www.wri-irg.org/pubs/NonviolenceHandbook>

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