

Strategies and opportunities for working with parliamentarians

Thursday 11:15-12:30

Facilitators: Portia Stratton, Mimidoo Achakpa, Khaled Yamout

- Engage parliamentarians from governing party
- Engage constituency parliamentarians
- Identify key parliamentarians to take your issue ie: past interests
- Link to humanitarian issues
- Timing – choose carefully when to engage with them/look at parliamentary calendar to assess when best to engage
- Different levels of parliamentarians, assess which is the best way to engage with them
- Engage those parliamentarians that are in positions of power within their party
- Need to understand how they perceive the issue
- Make them feel connected to the issue
- Understand the procedure in your country
- Know who to target/identify level of concern
- Get your supporters to constantly raise the issue
 - Questions
 - Motions
 - Debates
- Communicate with them regularly but your briefings must be succinct/to the point
- Choose parliamentarians that are respected/when they speak people will take notice
- Try to link up your issue with other issues so it's relevant to them
- Establishing what civil society can do in the parliament
- You can have formal and informal relations, and you can get different information based on these different relationships
- Freedom of information – mechanism to obtain info that is relevant for lobbying
- MPs have constituency offices, so if you cannot reach them where they meet, track them down (using their aides) to track them down in their constituency
- Give them leading roles and make them feel important, and make them feel like they are representatives of the people
- Briefing materials: make them short, just use the key points to summarise your issue

Opportunities:

- Organise activities regionally, parliamentary events with info/movies
- Working with MPs from countries who have signed and ratified, so that when they meet with other countries they can encourage them/do universalisation work

- Email distribution list mpwork@stopclustermunitions.org and parliamentarians@stopclustermunitions.org. Good to use this to share ideas and information
- Attract MPs to participate in EIF celebrations on 1 August
- Regionally target letter actions and all campaigners target one country and involve your parliamentarians
- Select a date, perhaps in between EIF and 1MSP – get a slogan for this. Make it about MPs, only about MPs. Have a day where every MP gets involved, this would be a worldwide action
- Identify one or two and invite them to the 1MSP, get them to the field visit that is going to happen at the 1MSP. This would be good for the implementation process
- Ensure that their aides get all the correspondences, this is the key to getting in touch with them, sometimes they even act on behalf of them