



**BOLDER ADVOCACY**

*An initiative of Alliance for Justice*

# Taking Stock and Assessing Our Advocacy Readiness

Contra Costa County  
Family Economic Security Partnership



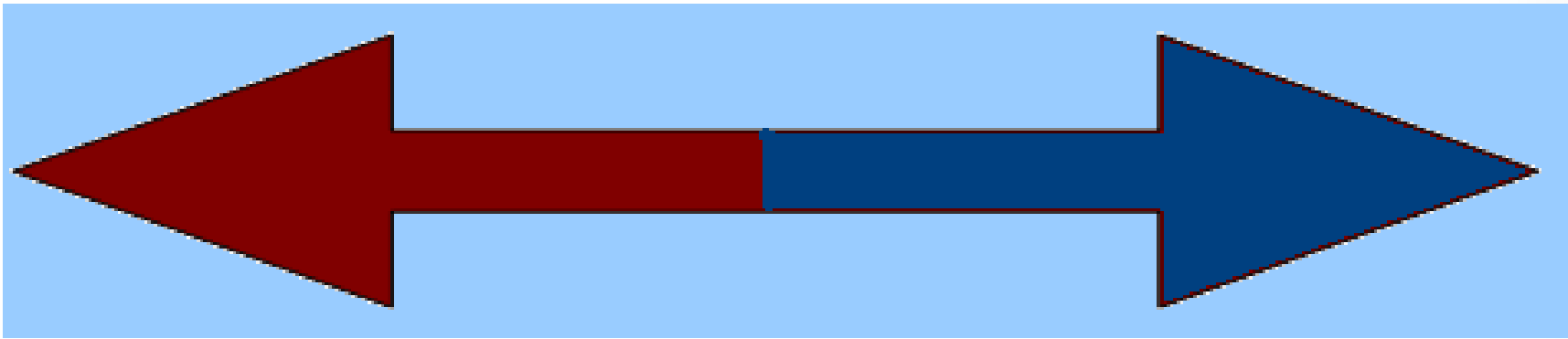
July 28, 2016  
Sue Hoechstetter, Sara Matlin

# Advocacy Avenues

- Administrative
- Legislative
- Ballot Measures, Referenda & Initiatives
- Electoral
- Litigation



# Continuum for Organizing & Advocacy



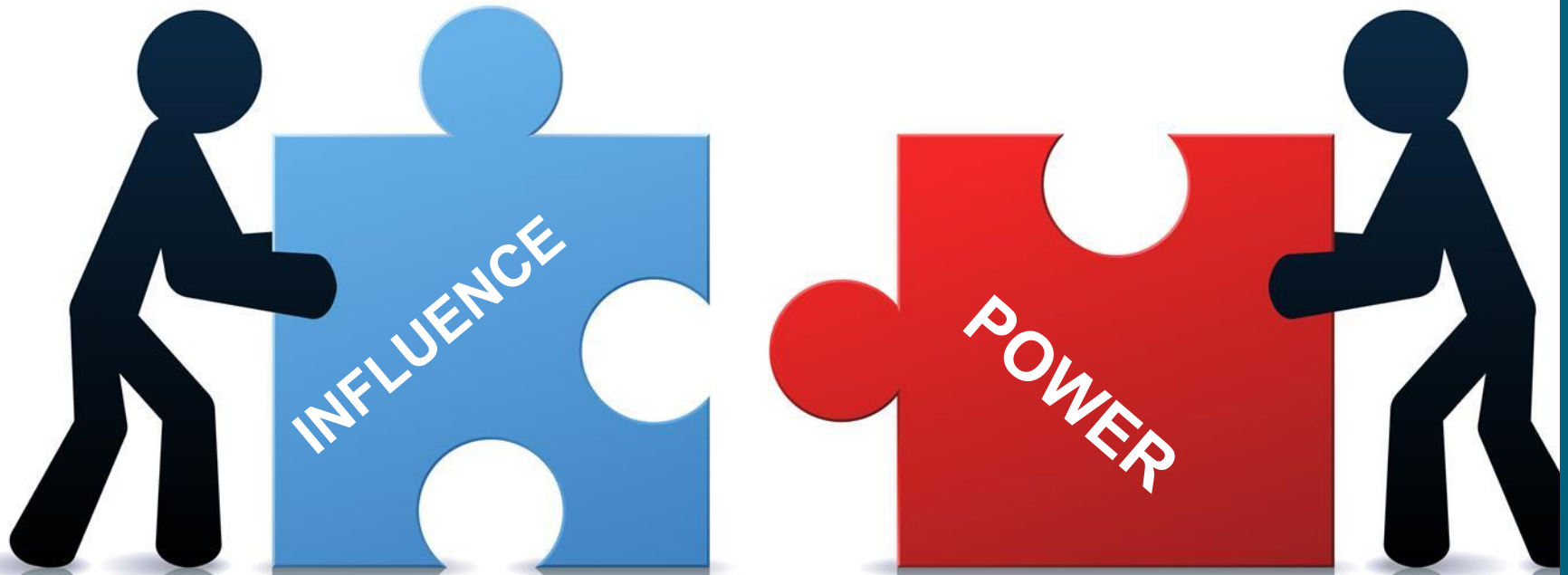
Mainly  
Policy

Policy,  
Some  
Power

Policy  
& Power

Power,  
Some  
Policy

Mainly  
Power



**Advocacy & Organizing Need  
Each Other**

# Nonprofit Capacity

**Skills**

**Resources**

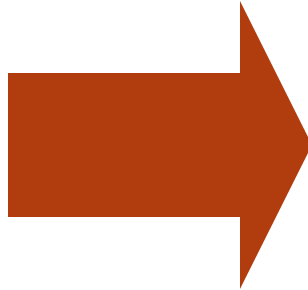
**Knowledge**

**Practices**

***Readiness for  
Effectiveness***



# Capacity (Readiness to Act)





# Advocacy Activities

# Capacity Assessment



# Capacity Assessment Uses

- Build Strong Organizations
- Identify Organizational Strengths/Gaps
- Know Role to Play
- When to Partner
- Include in Evaluation
- Common Understanding



**One Size Does Not Fit All Organizations!**

# Bolder Advocacy Capacity Tools for Organizational Assessment



# ACT! Quick

ADVOCACY CAPACITY TOOL

[bolderadvocacy.org/actquick](http://bolderadvocacy.org/actquick)

The screenshot shows a web browser window displaying the ACT! Quick page on the Bolder Advocacy website. The browser's address bar shows the URL [bolderadvocacy.org/tools-for-effective-advocacy/evaluating-advocacy/act-quick](http://bolderadvocacy.org/tools-for-effective-advocacy/evaluating-advocacy/act-quick). The website header includes navigation links for Home, Blog, About, Contact, and AFJ.org, along with social media icons for Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube. The main content area features the ACT! Quick logo and a description of the tool as a short version of the Alliance for Justice's Advocacy Capacity Tool (ACT). It highlights that the tool provides a quick diagnosis of an organization's advocacy skills and identifies areas for strengthening. A prominent call to action states, "For the electronic version of ACT! Quick and automatic results, click [here](#)." Below this, it offers a PDF version and frequently asked questions, with a link to request a PDF. A sidebar on the right contains sections for "STAY INFORMED" (with a "Sign Up" link), "ASK AN EXPERT" (with a "Ask a Question" link), and a "Need Help Finding Something?" button.

ACT! Quick

ACT! Quick is a short version of the Alliance for Justice's [Advocacy Capacity Tool \(ACT\)](#) and is designed to provide a quick diagnosis of the strengths and gaps in organizations' advocacy skills, knowledge, and practices, and identify areas for strengthening. We recommend taking the electronic version of ACT! Quick so you can automatically access results and delve deeper into one or more of the 18 advocacy capacity areas.

For the electronic version of ACT! Quick and automatic results, click [here](#).

To request a PDF of ACT! Quick and Frequently Asked Questions, [click here](#).

[Click here for Frequently Asked Questions](#) (already included in the PDF version) covering the following information:

- Purpose of ACT! Quick
- When to Use ACT! Quick Instead of the Full ACT

STAY INFORMED

For the latest in nonprofit and foundation news, available resources and upcoming workshops, sign up for our advocacy digest.

[Sign Up](#)

ASK AN EXPERT

Give us a ring or send us a note - our coaches are here to answer your questions on advocacy.

[Ask a Question](#)

Need Help Finding Something?

# ACT Quick Survey and Discussion



- ❑ Fill Out Survey & Areas to Strengthen
- ❑ If Done, Discuss w/Table

## Questions:

- Which questions were difficult to answer? Why?
- Is your organization already engaging in these practices, or would you like them to?

# Advocacy Capacity Tool Sections



[www.bolderadvocacy.org/act](http://www.bolderadvocacy.org/act)

# ACT 18 Capacities (Indicators)

## I Advocacy Goals, Plans & Strategies

1. Preparation
2. Agenda
3. Plans, Strategies & Adaptability

## II Conducting Advocacy

4. Research & Analysis
5. Field Operation
6. Advocacy Partners & Coalitions
7. Messaging
8. Media Relations
9. Influencing Decision-Makers

## III Advocacy Avenues

10. Administrative
11. Legislative
12. Ballot Measures, Referenda & Initiatives
13. Electoral
14. Litigation

## IV Organizational Operations to Sustain Advocacy

15. Organizational Commitment
16. Funding Advocacy
17. Decision-Making Structure & Process
18. Fiscal Management & Sustainability

# Advocacy Capacity Tool Sample

## II Conducting Change -- Influencing Decision-Makers

<b>S2.6 Influencing Decision-Makers</b>	Very Strong/ Always	Moderately Strong/ Usually	Somewhat Strong/ Sometimes	Not Strong/ Rarely/ Never	Rely on Partners
Assess the extent to which the organization builds influential relationships with targeted decision-makers.					
The organization monitors the actions of decision-makers related to the organization's agenda.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The organization builds working relationships with decision-makers by providing information.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The organization consistently nurtures relationships with decision-makers throughout the year.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The organization deliberately builds relationships with elected officials without regard to political affiliations.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>S2.6 Influencing Decision-Makers: Advanced (Optional)</b>					
The organization identifies and builds relationships with influential individuals and groups who can persuade decision-makers.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



# How ACT is Being Used

- ❑ Deepen Advocacy Understanding
- ❑ Identify Strengths and Weaknesses;  
Where to Build
- ❑ Roadmap for New Advocacy Work
- ❑ Determine Role in Campaigns
- ❑ Improve Collaboration
- ❑ Plan and Evaluate



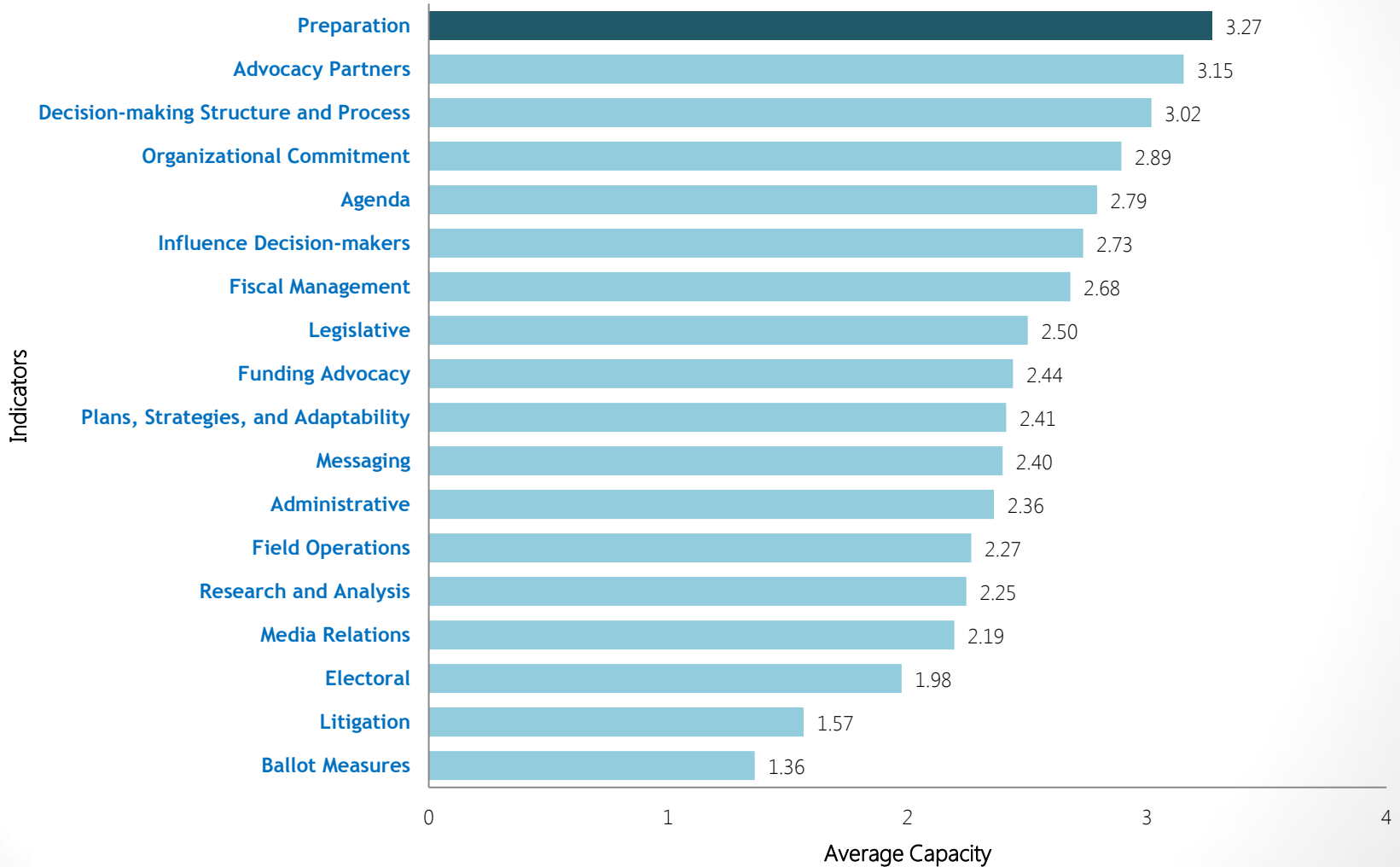
# ACT Survey

- ❑ Fill Out 1 Capacity w/Measures
- ❑ If Done, Discuss w/Table

## Questions:

- What did you get out of this?
- Who in your organization should take it?
- What should you do to help your organization get the most out of using ACT?

# AVERAGE ACT SCORES - 2015



# Moving Forward

# Moving Forward

- Review ACT! Quick Areas to Strengthen,  
Any Changes?
- What 2 things will you do to move forward?
- Discuss w/Table
- Whole Group: Choices

# Resources

# Bolder Advocacy Tools



- ❑ *Advocacy Capacity Tool (ACT)*

[www.bolderadvocacy.org/act](http://www.bolderadvocacy.org/act)

- ❑ *ACT! Quick*

[www.bolderadvocacy.org/actquick](http://www.bolderadvocacy.org/actquick)

- ❑ *International Advocacy Capacity Tool (IACT)*

[www.bolderadvocacy.org/iact](http://www.bolderadvocacy.org/iact)

- ❑ *PowerCheck for community organizing*

[www.bolderadvocacy/powercheck](http://www.bolderadvocacy/powercheck)

- ❑ *Resources for Evaluating Community Organizing (RECO)*

[www.bolderadvocacy/reco](http://www.bolderadvocacy/reco)

# More Bolder Advocacy Resources

- ❑ *Report: ACT Data & Analysis: The First 280 Users of the Advocacy Capacity*

[www.bolderadvocacy.org/act-data-analysis-the-first-280-users-of-the-advocacy-capacity-tool](http://www.bolderadvocacy.org/act-data-analysis-the-first-280-users-of-the-advocacy-capacity-tool)

- ❑ *Advocacy Readiness Series: Working with Grantees to Build and Measure Advocacy Capacity*

<http://bolderadvocacy.org/tools-for-effective-advocacy/advocacy-readiness-series>

- ❑ *Capacity/Evaluation Training and Technical Assistance*

[advocacy@afj.org](mailto:advocacy@afj.org) or 1-866-NP-LOBBY



# Technical Assistance

Email: [advocacy@afj.org](mailto:advocacy@afj.org)

Telephone: 866-NP-LOBBY (866-675-6229)



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