

## **Build a Grassroots Community Network**

Why focus on networking? There is an Ethiopian proverb that sums it up pretty well: "When spider webs unite, they can tie up a lion." By working with community groups and key local officials, we can leverage political clout for our campaigns and build the profile of our work in your own cities and towns.

### **Step One**

Identify local organizations, groups of activists, officials and influential members of your community that you can contact. Here are some suggestions to jump start you thinking:

*Community Organizations:* Community Programs, HIV/AIDS Organizations, Neighborhood Associations, Poverty Organizations, Health Care Centers / Organizations, Microcredit Organizations, Women's Centers / Organizations, Youth Organizations, Religious Groups and Organizations, Universities and Schools.

*Political Contacts:* City/State/Province Workers, Local Elected Officials, Political Party Representatives, Political Activists and Groups.

*Just Folks:* Relatives, Neighbors, Friends, Members of Your Religious Group, Acquaintances, Co-workers.

### **Step Two**

Develop a timeline, plan, and a support system for networking and coalition building. Determine who among your allies will call each target and by what day.

### **Step Three**

Have a clear idea of different types of activities or projects to discuss with the organizations and individuals you are calling. There are different levels of involvement that you should offer:

*Basic Level* Sign on as an endorser or agree to attend coalition meetings.

*Intermediate Level:* Cosponsor a community event to raise awareness or speak at press conference

*Advanced Level:* Send out action alerts to entire mailing list, use staff time to build resources (grassroots network, money) or mobilize influential board members to use political access to raise the issues.

#### **Step Four**

Pick up the phone and do it!

Source: [RESULTS Educational Fund's Activist Milestones](#)