Category: Obligation to Make Environmental Information Public

Sub-Category: Education and Awareness-Raising

**Name of Good Practice: Center for Victims of Torture’s New Tactics in Human Rights Programme**

Key Words: Advocacy, Awareness Raising, Capacity Building, Environmental Human Rights Defenders, Network, Support

Implementing Actors: Civil Society Organisation: Center for Victims of Torture

Location: Global

Description: The Center for Victims of Torture (CVT) launched its New Tactics in Human Rights Programme in 1999, with the aim of helping human rights defenders work more effectively so they can achieve their goals and better address human rights violations around the world. According to CVT, the New Tactics Programme began when it “recognized how complex the systems are that allow torture and other human rights abuses to persist. In order to address such challenging human rights violations, CVT and others would need to be strategic and use a broad range of tactics and collaborations.”

New Tactics has concentrated its work in three main areas: creating and sharing information and materials; training and mentoring; and building an online community. Under the first area, New Tactics published a toolkit that includes a collection of 80 stories of successful tactics used for human rights work. According to CVT, “the stories come from all over the world and range from prevention tactics to intervention tactics, restorative tactics to those that building human rights cultures and institutions.” For example, the book outlines three categories of physical protection tactics, including tactics that prevent harm through physical presence; that get critical information into the hands of people who can prevent abuse; and that anticipate abuse and create obstacles to stop it.

The New Tactics website also allows users to explore examples of tactics used throughout the world from an online database, including those specifically relating to the environment. Examples of tactics relating to the environment include: an online scorecard to share information about environmental hazards: the mapping of environmental violations in order to educate the general public about the problem of toxic industrial waste and to pressure the government to institute policies to remedy the problem; and an online searchable database of traditional ecological knowledge to prevent private companies from unlawfully patenting that knowledge. The New Tactics programme includes an online conversation site that serves as an open forum for human rights defenders to discuss their experiences advancing a human rights strategy and implementing a particular tactic.

Further Information: New Tactics website: <http://www.newtactics.org/>; the toolkit is available at: <https://www.newtactics.org/node/253>; the database of tactics from around the world can be found at: <http://www.newtactics.org/tactics>.