

Section I

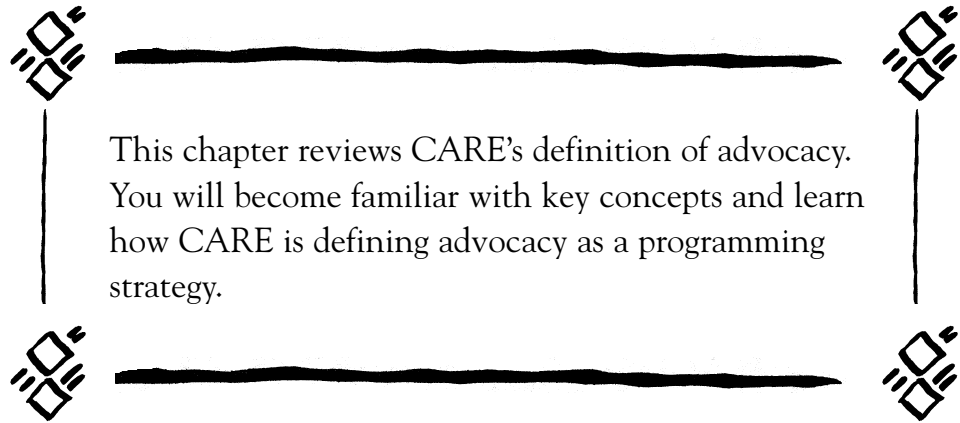


INTRODUCTION

WHAT IS ADVOCACY?
WHY ADVOCATE?
BUILDING A FOUNDATION.

This section describes what advocacy is, and why it is a programming approach worth considering, especially when policies are at the root of the problems you hope to solve. It also suggests steps you can take to prepare yourself to be an effective advocate, even before you decide on the policies you want to change.

Chapter 1 WHAT IS ADVOCACY?



WHAT IS ADVOCACY?

First and foremost, advocacy is a strategy that is used around the world by non-governmental organizations (NGOs), activists, and even policy makers themselves, to influence policies. Advocacy is about creation or reform of policies, but also about effective implementation and enforcement of policies. A policy is a plan, course of action, or set of regulations adopted by government, business or an institution, designed to influence and determine decisions or procedures. Advocacy is a means to an end, another way to address the problems that we aim to solve through other programming strategies.

At a workshop with staff from more than 20 countries, the following working definition was developed:¹

ADVOCACY is the deliberate process of influencing those who make policy decisions.

ADVOCACY is the deliberate process of influencing those who make policy decisions. CARE’s use of advocacy will always:

- Improve the livelihood of significant numbers of people.
- Target policy makers and implementers at levels above the household.
- Be rooted in CARE’s field experience and core values.

ADVOCACY is a strategy that CARE uses to complement our efforts to:

- Strengthen capacity for self-help.
- Deliver relief in emergencies.
- Address discrimination in all of its forms.

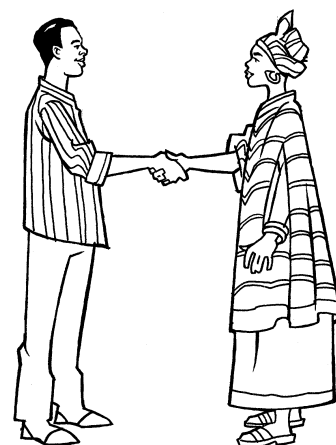
¹The definition was proposed by a group of 40 CARE staff that participated in the Global Workshop on Country Office Advocacy in Sussex, October 18-22, 1999.

There are several key ideas in this definition:

First, advocacy is about **influencing** those who make policy decisions. Many people start with a preconception that advocacy is about “being confrontational” and “shouting at the government.” One of the most important messages of this chapter, however, is that advocacy does not have to be confrontational. There is a wide range of advocacy approaches to choose from, e.g. a public vs. a private approach, engagement vs. confrontation, and working alone or in coalition with others. We will review each of these approaches in subsequent chapters.

Second, advocacy is a **deliberate** process, involving intentional actions. Therefore, before implementing advocacy strategies it must be clear who you are trying to influence and what policy you wish to change.

Third, **policy makers** can encompass many types of decision makers. CARE’s approach to advocacy is to focus on policy makers above the household level, and to improve the livelihood of significant numbers of people. At the same time, advocacy is not restricted to those policy makers who work for the government. There are policy makers who work for the private sector, and who wield enormous influence over poor communities. It is important to keep in mind that **policy makers are always human beings**, not institutions. Advocacy is used to influence the choices and actions of those who make laws and regulations, and those who distribute resources and make other decisions that affect the well-being of many people.



Examples of CARE programs that used advocacy strategies:

In **NICARAGUA**, CARE advocated with national ministries to ban the importation and use of pesticides which have proven harmful to the health of farmers.

In the **PHILIPPINES**, CARE joined a national coalition of NGOs and worked at the national and local levels to promote basic rights and access to services for urban street vendors.

In **ECUADOR**, CARE persuaded the Ministry of the Environment to reform forestry laws and also promoted land ownership by indigenous and Afro-Ecuadorian ethnic groups, enabling them to manage their own natural resources and commercialize forest products.

In **SUDAN**, CARE is working closely with several other international NGOs to highlight the tremendous humanitarian costs of the civil war and to convince international policy makers to address its root causes.

In **CAMBODIA**, CARE and other international NGOs succeeded in persuading the Ministry of Health to change reproductive health policies that banned the use of permanent contraceptives, a policy that contributed to high fertility rates.

Advocacy involves delivering messages that are intended to influence the actions of policy makers. CARE audiences typically include multilateral institutions (e.g. the United Nations or the World Bank), governments and bilateral donors (e.g. the French government or USAID), and governments at the local, regional, or national level. Advocacy can be direct, like asking a policy maker in person to take action, or indirect, such as trying to influence public opinion through the media. There is a wide range of advocacy activities that CARE can use to influence policy makers, ranging from providing information, to working in coalitions, to mobilizing constituencies, to using the media.

While advocacy is a relatively new strategy for CARE, it is a well-established method in other NGOs. Many of CARE's local and international partners rely on advocacy in their work and may have good advocacy ideas and skills to share with you. Indeed, advocacy is one area where CARE may often have much to learn from local NGOs.

WHAT ADVOCACY IS NOT

The kind of advocacy that we are discussing in this manual relates to influencing the decisions of policy makers. When we talk about advocacy, we generally do not mean:

Extension work. Encouraging households to change their agricultural or health practices is an important programming strategy used in many CARE programs. However, extension work is designed to influence individual decisions made at the household level, not the behavior or decisions of policy makers that affect many households at once.

Information, Education, and Communication. Advocacy is not about launching a public campaign to change specific practices – such as social marketing encouraging people to use condoms. Rather, an advocacy campaign is intended to change public opinion about a policy issue. For example, an HIV/AIDS advocacy campaign might promote more funding for HIV/AIDS programs or more humane government policies toward people living with AIDS.

Informing the government about CARE. While becoming an effective advocate requires you to establish your credibility with policy makers, advocacy is not just about informing the government about CARE's programs. In advocacy, information sharing is used as a deliberate strategy to influence specific decisions of policy makers. Still, building good relationships with policy makers is an important way to lay the foundation for advocacy.

Raising public awareness about CARE and its programs. Often, CARE disseminates information through the media to raise our profile or visibility. The same techniques can be used for advocacy, but the purposes are different. In advocacy, we use the media to deliver policy messages, to encourage people to take a certain view on an issue and, hopefully, to communicate their views with policy makers. (While promoting CARE's image is not the goal of advocacy, advocacy messages can have the beneficial effect of raising public awareness about CARE and its work.)

Fund-raising. The primary purpose of advocacy is not to increase CARE's budget. Some advocacy may involve asking policy makers to allocate more resources for relief and development priorities, and sometimes this may benefit CARE. More often, however, it involves trying to influence a governmental agenda, corporate behavior, a specific public policy, or the implementation of a policy.

Chapter 2

WHY ADVOCATE?



This chapter discusses reasons for including advocacy in CARE's programs. It explains the benefits of trying to address policy causes of problems that impact the lives of many people.



WHY ADVOCATE?



Our vision and mission acknowledge that innovative solutions will be needed for ending poverty, and that influencing policy decisions should be part of our efforts to achieve lasting change. Advocacy can be a powerful tool. It complements our work via direct service delivery, capacity building, and technical assistance to support tangible improvements in the lives of poor households and communities, to redress discrimination, and to prevent needless deaths and suffering.

Traditionally, CARE programs seek to influence the knowledge, attitudes and, ultimately, behaviors of individuals and households at the community level. CARE and its partners have, for example, successfully increased the use of contraceptives and environmentally friendly agricultural techniques, thereby helping to improve the quality of people's lives. Our "traditional" programs have focused on **households' responsibility** for livelihood insecurity. Yet, we can dramatically expand the impact of our programs if we also take into account that **policy makers greatly influence the livelihoods of the poor through their decisions and actions.**

A more holistic approach recognizes that various actors in the private and public arenas contribute to livelihood insecurity or violations of human rights, and that significant impact can only be achieved through changes in the policies and actions of powerful institutions, as well as individuals and households. Advocacy is therefore a logical extension of our work.

Until recently, CARE identified policy causes in its analyses but assumed that changing policies was beyond the scope of our programs. By including advocacy in our programming we are setting aside some of our old assumptions.

Rather than taking policies as givens, advocacy attempts to change policies.

The key point is that, as key stakeholders who bear responsibility for the needs and rights of the communities we serve, it is appropriate to target the actions of policy makers. This new dimension of CARE's approach is aimed at broadening the scope of our analysis and devising interventions with more substantial impact.

By including advocacy strategies in our programs, we recognize that:

- ◆ Causes of poverty and discrimination stem both from decisions at the household level **and** from decisions made within community leadership structures, national legislatures, international organizations, and powerful institutions.
- ◆ Only a wide-range of program strategies targeted at multiple causes or "entry points," including policy causes, will lead to the desired impact – reducing poverty.

CARE's programming principles emphasize that our work should address significant problems and result in fundamental change: our impact should be broad and improve the lives of a large number of people. Since advocacy aims to change policies, it has the potential to reach a large number of households and to widen the scope of our impact.

Advocacy does not intend to replace other program strategies, it rather expands the menu of effective strategies available to CARE country offices. Sometimes it will be an appropriate strategy, other times it will not. This will depend on whether policies and their enforcement were identified as an important cause of a problem. A wider range of strategies will help us to increase the depth and breadth of our impact on poverty.

Advocacy strategies will enable CARE to:

- ◆ Influence policy makers as a means of addressing policy root causes of poverty and discrimination.
- ◆ Contribute more effectively to reducing poverty and preventing deaths and suffering by using a wider range of interventions.
- ◆ Reach a large segment of the population and broaden the scope of our impact.

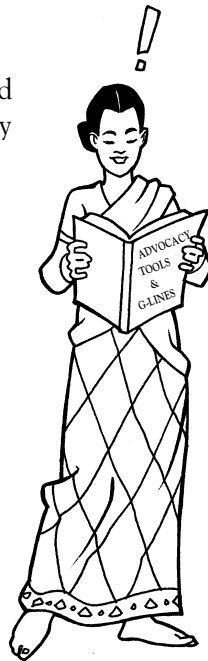
Advocacy, household livelihood security and rights-based approaches

Advocacy can be useful within both the household livelihood security (HLS) framework and a rights-based approach. Holistic analyses, such as recommended and promoted through HLS, can help identify key causes of livelihood insecurity, including the policy dimensions of poverty. When such analysis points at policies as key contributing factors to poverty, CARE staff should consider

advocacy for influencing policy makers and achieving policy change. The ability of households to access and use resources is the cornerstone of the HLS approach. Advocacy is a strategy that can give households improved access and control of local resources.

Using a rights-based approach, we can pay closer attention to political, social, and economic discrimination, and power relationships between households and authority structures. A key feature that distinguishes rights-based from needs-based programming is that rights imply responsibilities and duties. All human beings have inherent rights and responsibilities to others. A rights-based approach therefore tries to determine who is responsible for human suffering and the denial of human rights.

When policy makers are not fulfilling their human responsibilities to others, advocacy can be used to hold them accountable. For example, advocacy is a strategy that can be used to expand and protect the rights of minorities and marginalized groups. When policies foster discrimination or citizens do not fulfill their obligations to each other, advocacy can be used to suggest concrete solutions to policy makers.



Advocacy can be a means of convincing policy makers to fulfill their human responsibilities to others.

Chapter 3

**BEFORE YOU BEGIN:
BUILDING FOUNDATIONS**

This chapter identifies 1) some key considerations you can make before deciding whether to engage in advocacy and 2) steps you can take to lay the foundations for advocacy before planning an initiative. This chapter is particularly important for senior managers and coordinators who manage programs involving more than one technical area.



If you have read this far in the manual, you may already have in mind a programmatic area where you would like to begin using advocacy – what we refer to as a **policy theme**. Or maybe you are starting to consider advocacy as a programming approach, without having anything specific in mind yet. Either way, several steps can ensure that the policy theme and advocacy strategies you choose have minimum risk and maximum potential for success.

You should not think of these steps as a “recipe,” nor do you need to do all of them before you get started. Think of them rather as a list of options, each of which will put you further ahead once you are ready to begin advocating.

1. Gathering policy and political information
2. Assessing risk
3. Building strategic relationships
4. Establishing your credibility as an advocate
5. Linking advocacy to country office priorities
6. Maintaining focus

These steps should increase your chances for success in several ways. First, they will give you more ideas about where to go for advice, how to find partners, and how important decisions are made. Second, they will help you understand and minimize risks. Third, they will increase the likelihood that your ideas fit well with community priorities. In general, the information you gather and the relationships you build may increase the number of strategic choices you have and can pay significant dividends during the implementation phase.

A POLICY THEME is the programmatic area or sector that is the focus of your advocacy strategy.

For example,
Forestry
Reproductive health
HIV/AIDS
Urban poverty
Disaster response
Ethnic conflict

Gathering policy and political information

Before you begin any advocacy initiative, it is crucial to understand how key institutions work and to identify decision makers for the sectors you are interested in. You also need to find out who can help you influence those decision makers. The more you can determine how policies influence outcomes and distinguish between rhetoric and meaningful actions, the better.

Conducting research and interviews are useful in learning about underlying policies. You can also gather information informally, through friends, colleagues, and publicly available resources. This paves the way for conducting a *policy analysis* and choosing a *policy issue*, which are discussed in **CHAPTERS 4 AND 5**, respectively.



In 2001, CARE International launched an advocacy initiative related to the Habitat Agenda, an agreement made at the Istanbul ‘City Summit’ between 177 countries for improving human settlements, in particular those in towns and cities. Under the leadership and guidance of CARE UK, six different country offices hired researchers to gather information, frame issues, and monitor how policy makers at the national and international level are honoring specific commitments made in Istanbul. Research methods included desktop research, structured interviews, and the gathering of oral testimonies.

Assessing risk

The more you understand the *political environment* you are working in, the more easily you can assess risk, and the less likely you are to make a mistake that will cause harm to CARE, its partners, those who CARE serves, or anyone else. **CHAPTER 10** of this manual describes several different ways to minimize risks associated with your advocacy initiative.

The *Do No Harm* framework used by many NGOs, including CARE, can be useful for advocacy. A benefit-harms approach encourages staff to think about the external environment and the overall impact of projects, and to take practical steps to minimize unintended harms. For example, this approach emphasizes the importance of

analyzing issues that have been sources of division within communities (“dividers”), and those issues that have helped to build community (“connectors”). This is particularly important when advocacy is your strategy of choice.

You do not need to become an expert in politics, but you are more likely to succeed, and less likely to expose yourself and others to risk, if you can answer the following questions:

- ◆ What are the key political debates, and who represents each side?
- ◆ Which issues (or people) have sparked political violence or community conflict in the past?
- ◆ Which issues (or people) have succeeded in reaching across ethnic, social, or political boundaries?
- ◆ How is power exercised within the political system?
- ◆ Which groups in politics or government are respected and which are disrespected or feared?
- ◆ How do the policies you are concerned with relate to controversial topics?
- ◆ What are accepted forms of political dialogue and proper protocol for approaching policy makers?

Also, before initiating advocacy, it is vital that you understand the policy concerns of the affected communities and whether there are appropriate advocacy roles you can play. As with other types of programming, the more your policy objectives emerge from participatory program design, the better. Above all, you should be sure that your involvement in advocacy would be welcomed, rather than resented, and will not put others at additional risk.

Building strategic relationships

In many country offices, CARE staff spend significant time and energy building relationships with government officials and other policy makers through the course of their regular work. Such relationships often cover a range of topics, i.e. contract management, operational questions related to service delivery, and how to work together more effectively in programming activities. It is easy to add another dimension related to policy dialogue and advocacy. Answering the questions below will help lay the foundation for such advocacy relationships:

- ◆ Who are the key policy makers within key sectors? Are any major staff transitions planned that will affect who is in charge?
- ◆ Are any major policy reviews planned or underway? If so, will NGO input be sought? Could CARE play a role?
- ◆ Who do policy makers turn to for policy advice? What sources of information do they trust most?
- ◆ Do policy makers lack information for making good policy decisions? Can CARE or its partners help?

Separate from policy makers, it is also important to form strategic relationships with allies who share your policy interests. NGO networks and coalitions provide excellent opportunities to discuss advocacy initiatives already underway and to find partners in advocacy. Ideas for building and working in coalitions are explored further in **CHAPTERS 5 AND 9**.

Establishing your credibility as an advocate

When you are recognized as an expert, or a respected spokesperson on behalf of others, your arguments will tend to carry more weight in advocacy and you will find it easier to prevail in policy debates.

A resounding lesson learned from case studies is that CARE advocacy efforts are strongest when grounded in our field work. Advocacy requires that you have credibility both with **policy makers** and with the **community** affected by your proposed policies. Your knowledge from the field is a critical starting point for advocacy, and paves the way for your credibility in advocacy. Roles that CARE can play in advocacy are discussed further in **CHAPTER 6**.

Three examples demonstrate the point. In **Nicaragua**, CARE's involvement in collecting and analyzing data on pesticide poisonings laid a crucial foundation for subsequent advocacy work. CARE's long history and commitment to **Sudan** positioned the organization to analyze the root causes of a famine in the central region of the country, and to begin influencing international actors by sharing its first-hand knowledge. Building on its experience in HIV/AIDS, CARE **Thailand** worked closely with other Thai organizations, successfully advocating to improve access to care for people with HIV/AIDS, and to reduce discrimination and the social stigma associated with the disease.

CREDIBILITY CHECKLIST

- ✓ Can you, or your colleagues, legitimately speak on behalf of those affected by the issues?
- ✓ Are you, or your colleagues, known and respected by the policy makers involved in the issue?
- ✓ Do you, or your colleagues, have information or expertise that is relevant to the issues?
- ✓ Will the policy makers involved be interested in your opinion or that of your colleagues?
- ✓ Are there people within the country office who can effectively lead an advocacy initiative on the issues you are considering?
- ✓ Are you, or your colleagues, perceived as objective and trustworthy, or politically biased?

CREDIBILITY means that other people trust and value what you have to say.

Credibility alone should not determine whether you engage in advocacy. However, if you have serious doubts about your credibility as an advocate, you should either consider working on different issues or find ways to build up your credibility before you begin to interact with the public or key policy makers.

CARE Nepal's years of experience working in remote and inaccessible parts of the country led the government to ask CARE to help develop a "national remote areas strategy." CARE Nepal says, "We do not see our role as leading the process, but rather facilitating and supporting the process being led by the government and providing the information they need."

Linking advocacy to country office priorities

Within CARE, advocacy will almost always be an outgrowth of other programming priorities. Without that link, advocacy can interfere with other work, and staff will lack the credibility they need to influence decision makers. When a country office decides to focus its programming on specific sectors or regions, these priorities should inform and guide its work in the policy arena. If a top priority is girls' education, for example, it makes sense to advocate on behalf of education policy themes, where CARE will have a useful perspective to offer. **CHAPTER 7** discusses how to prepare plans for advocacy initiatives within the context of familiar structures such as logframes.

Undertaking an advocacy initiative is almost always a team effort. It is quite important to have strong internal consensus before devising policy and developing strategies for advocacy. Country office management needs to support advocacy efforts, especially when relationships with high-level decision makers are involved that could impact other programming priorities. In addition, it is important to discuss and debate advocacy positions internally before facing skeptical policy makers or others outside CARE. Finally, a consensus approach will help ensure that advocacy supports, and does not detract from, other programming priorities.

Maintaining focus

In advocacy, consistency and focus usually pay off. You may begin by identifying various policy themes you want to tackle, but ultimately, it is important to narrow these down. At the country director's level, it is best to choose one or two areas to work on at a time, so that messages to senior policy makers are clear and not overlapping or contradictory.

At the program level, there may be many policy issues that tie into project objectives. Still, you are more likely to succeed in advocacy if you focus on a limited number of policy issues at a time, than if you develop a long list of policy priorities. Tempting as it may be, there is a real danger of spreading yourself too thin, and not developing the depth of expertise to advocate effectively in any one area. You also risk returning to policy makers too often, appearing to be asking for too much. In **CHAPTER 5**, several criteria are provided to help you choose the best option among specific issues you may be considering.

<p align="center">CHAPTER 3 WORKSHEET BUILDING A FOUNDATION FOR ADVOCACY</p>		
Steps you can take	Questions to explore	Your notes...
GATHERING POLICY AND POLITICAL INFORMATION		
Analyze policies and political institutions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What do you know about policies in your sectors of interest? • Who are the key policy makers and where do they work? 	
Understand the political environment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the connectors and dividers? • How are leaders chosen? • Who are respected or powerful groups in politics? 	
Understand community concerns.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are key community policy concerns? • Is there a place for CARE or its partners in advocacy? 	
ASSESSING RISK		
Make informed judgments.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are you considering any themes that pose risks of violence? • Will you be perceived as biased or partisan? • Are you in touch with political trends? • Have you identified unacceptable risks in advance? • Have you used knowledge from other programming to inform your advocacy? 	
BUILDING STRATEGIC RELATIONSHIPS		
Establish connections with policy makers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who's in charge? • Where do policy makers go for advice? 	
Network with other organizations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who is doing effective advocacy? • Who are possible advocacy partners? • How can you build on relationships formed through other programs? 	
ESTABLISHING YOUR CREDIBILITY AS AN ADVOCATE		
Build up expertise to establish credibility with policy makers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do you, or your partners, have valuable information to share? • Are you acknowledged as a trusted source of information? 	
Build up relations with communities to establish credibility with the public.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can you, or your partners, legitimately speak on behalf of a community? • Are you the most effective spokesperson for the people involved? 	
LINKING ADVOCACY TO COUNTRY OFFICE PRIORITIES		
Make connections between policy issues and other work of the organization.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How could your policy work relate to other projects and existing staff expertise? • Is there internal support for advocacy? • Are there staff who can advocate effectively? 	
MAINTAINING FOCUS		
Develop a short list of policy priorities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What does the list of criteria (in Chapter 5) suggest are the most promising priorities? 	

Section II



PLANNING AN ADVOCACY INITIATIVE

ANALYZING POLICIES AND DEVELOPING AN ADVOCACY STRATEGY.

Chapters 4 through 7 describe four essential steps for planning advocacy initiatives:

- Analyzing policies
- Outlining an advocacy strategy
- Finalizing an advocacy strategy
- Framing a plan

These are the basic building blocks you will need to get started. Important things to consider as you are doing your planning are: who you are trying to influence, what their interests are, and how you can be a legitimate and effective advocate on behalf of your cause. As you gather the information you need, think about different roles you can play in advocacy and how you can build on your expertise from other programs to craft an effective strategy.

PLANNING AN ADVOCACY INITIATIVE

STEP 1

Analyzing policies

- 1a Identify a policy issue
- 1b Identify key actors and institutions
- 1c Analyze the policy environment
- 1d Summarize policy findings
- 1e Identify options for policy change

STEP 2

Outlining an advocacy strategy

- 2a Select a policy issue
- 2b Select target audiences
- 2c Set a policy goal
- 2d Identify allies and opponents

STEP 3

Finalizing an advocacy strategy

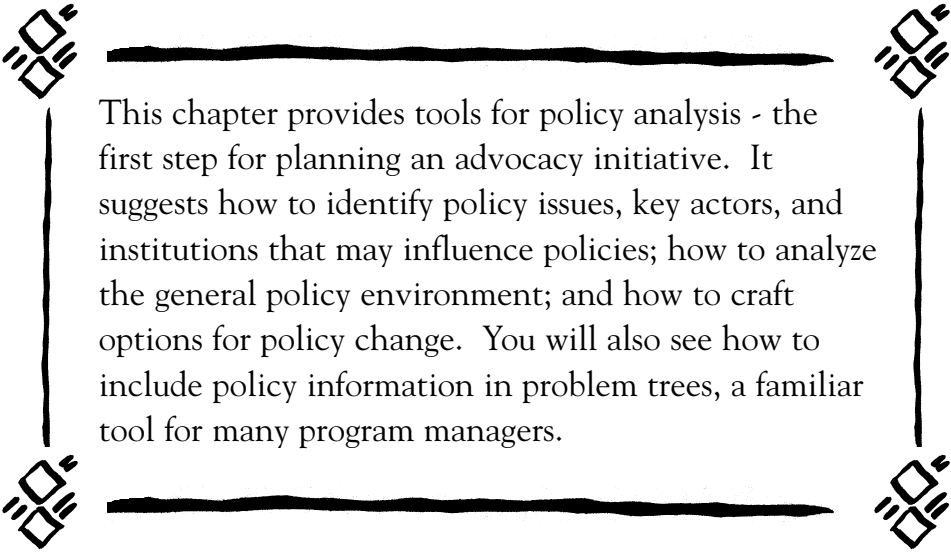
- 3a Select roles
- 3b Identify key messages
- 3c Define advocacy activities

STEP 4

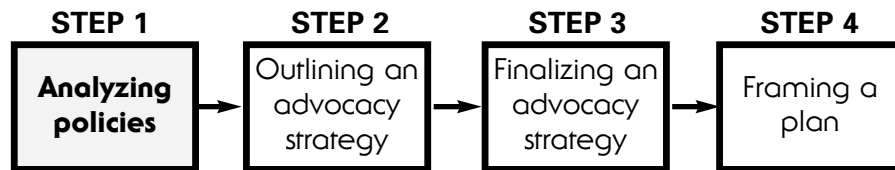
Framing a plan

- 4a Set a timeline
- 4b Prepare a budget
- 4c Prepare a logframe
- 4d Plan for monitoring and evaluation

Chapter 4 ANALYZING POLICIES



This chapter provides tools for policy analysis - the first step for planning an advocacy initiative. It suggests how to identify policy issues, key actors, and institutions that may influence policies; how to analyze the general policy environment; and how to craft options for policy change. You will also see how to include policy information in problem trees, a familiar tool for many program managers.



Addressing problems requires in-depth knowledge about their underlying causes. The better your knowledge about problems and their causes, the easier it is to design solutions with high potential impact. Good solutions can only be found when problems are well understood.

Once you have chosen an advocacy theme or programmatic issue you want to examine further, you can use **policy analysis** to help identify the underlying **policy causes** of poverty and discrimination. This will help you choose a focus for your advocacy initiative.

This section describes one way to conduct a **policy analysis**, which can help ensure you have all the information you need to devise an effective advocacy strategy. **Policy analysis** examines plans and regulations set by governments, business or other institutions, and how these policies (or a lack of policies) affect specific groups. It analyzes the dynamics within **civil society**. Policy analysis will provide the inputs you need for a problem analysis when you are designing an advocacy project. At the end of this chapter, we discuss how to include policy information in problem trees.

WHAT CONSTITUTES POLICY?

A plan, course of action, or set of regulations adopted by government, businesses or other institutions designed to influence and determine decisions or procedures.

Though it is best when advocacy initiatives are well planned, sometimes opportunities for advocacy arise quickly and there is little time for preparation. A policy maker may say, for example, that she is coming to visit your project soon. Or you may be invited to participate in a media interview, or come to an important meeting to brief several policy makers. These opportunities for advocacy may not lend themselves to extensive policy research and analysis, or some of the other ideas described in the manual, nevertheless they can be an important part of a program manager's daily work.

In some cases, the policy information you need is already available, so a formal analysis is not needed. Other times, you will need to do some research. In most cases, it is best to use both kinds of information sources when developing an advocacy strategy. A policy analysis has three main elements: 1) the policy causes, 2) key actors that influence policies and their interests, and 3) the policy environment.

You will not always have the time or resources to take all policy analysis steps before you begin advocating. The most important point is that the more thoroughly you analyze policy actors, issues, and the environment in advance, the more likely you will to succeed in advocacy. Even if you decide not to engage in advocacy, policy analysis will help you to reflect on the context in which you are working and understand how the policy environment may influence the outcome of your projects. Policy analysis should be an integral part of your analysis and work, even if you are not planning an advocacy initiative.

KEY ELEMENTS OF A POLICY ANALYSIS

Policy analysis provides a basis for choosing appropriate advocacy strategies. Policy analysis includes:

- ◆ Identifying policy causes of poverty and discrimination, or *policy issues*.
- ◆ Identifying key actors and institutions that make decisions about policies, as well as those who can influence policy makers.
- ◆ Analyzing the distribution of political power among key actors.
- ◆ Understanding formal and informal policy making processes.
- ◆ Understanding the social and political context.

Policy analyses are often presented in the form of a report, but you can also gather information for your policy analysis and organize it in other ways, such as matrices, as shown in this section.

CIVIL SOCIETY is the range of institutions and organizations that connect people to government and the private sector. A strong civil society means ensuring a dynamic and beneficial relationship between government, business and the non-profit sectors that contributes to the well-being of individual citizens.

4.1 Identify policy issues

Policy causes are typically referred to as *policy issues* by advocacy organizations and policy makers. *Policy issues may include the absence of a policy, an adverse or inadequate policy, or the improper enforcement of a policy.* For example, the designer of a girls’ education program who seeks to identify policy issues might examine the following questions:

QUESTION	ANSWER	POLICY ISSUE DERIVES FROM...	MAIN FOCUS OF ADVOCACY STRATEGY
Do policies promote the education of girls?	NO	Absence of adequate education policies	Establishing policies
Do policies hinder the education of girls?	YES	Adverse policies to girls’ education	Changing policies
Are policies that promote the education of girls properly implemented?	NO	No enforcement of policies that promote the education of girls	Enforcing policies

Sometimes the policy issues can be identified easily based on field experience and observation. Other times, it may require in-depth research about laws, regulations and government plans concerning, for example, girls’ education. In some cases a review of documents may not be sufficient, and it will be necessary to interview representatives from governments, businesses or other institutions to find out about programs, plans and regulations that make up the policy in question.

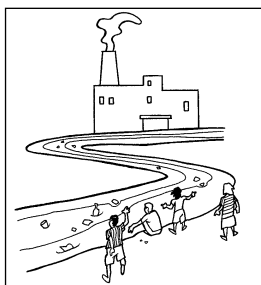
It is important to always relate your policy issue to the people affected by the problem. A policy analysis should point out the **problem** (what?), **specific policy causes of the problem** (why?), and the **people affected by the problem** (who and where?).

Identifying policy issues also includes a deeper analysis of how a policy emerged or has failed to emerge. It is important to find out when and under which circumstances the policy was approved or blocked; who proposed, supported or opposed it, as well as the history of any previous attempts to change the policy.

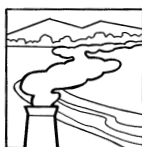
Here is an example from CARE Cambodia’s 1995 reproductive health policy analysis:

In advocacy, when you discuss problems or policies that you hope to change, the convention is to refer to them as **POLICY ISSUES**.

1. What is the problem?	High fertility rates in Cambodia due to low use of modern contraception.
2. Who does it affect? Where?	<p>Women of reproductive age, particularly from rural areas.</p> <p>Nation-wide, only 13% of women use contraceptive methods.</p> <p>Women 30 years and older desire to limit the size of their families and desire to use permanent methods (sterilization).</p>
<p>3. SUPPORTIVE POLICIES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ What policies support the use of contraception? ■ When was this policy enacted? What factors led to the development of these policies? 	<p>The National Policy issued by the Ministry of Health stipulates that birth spacing services should be provided to promote maternal and child health and that couples should have unrestricted access to these services.</p> <p>The National Policy was approved in 1995, after fifteen years of pro-natalist policies. During the 1980s, the government promoted population growth and the use of contraception was banned. By the early 1990s, there was ample evidence to demonstrate that women wanted to limit the size of their families. Assistance from international organizations led to the approval of the new policy.</p>
<p>4. RESTRICTIVE POLICIES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ What policies restrict the use of contraception? ■ How long have these policies been in place? What factors led to their development? 	<p>Ministry of Health policies oppose the use of permanent contraceptive methods (i.e. female and male sterilization).</p> <p>The 1995 Ministry of Health Policy recommends birth spacing as a means to improve the health of women and children, without slowing population growth. This policy is a result of the loss of population during the Khmer Rouge regime.</p>
<p>5. POLICY ENFORCEMENT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Which programs promote supportive policies? ■ Which programs promote restrictive policies? 	<p>The Ministry of Health's National Birth Spacing Program provides affordable access to reversible methods (i.e. pill, injection, condom and IUD) in public health facilities, including rural health centers.</p> <p>Regulations are enforced. The Ministry of Health prohibits public and private health facilities to provide sterilization services.</p>



The Macondo example will be used throughout this manual. It will show you, step by step, how to plan an advocacy initiative. The example shows how you can develop your strategy based on the information you gather at the policy analysis step. When devising a strategy, try to account for the fact that opportunities for advocacy often arise quickly and unexpectedly.



MACONDO EXAMPLE: A POLICY ANALYSIS MATRIX FOR WATER POLLUTION

<p>1. What is the problem?</p>	<p>High infant and child mortality in Macondo due to high prevalence of diarrhea.</p>
<p>2. Who does it affect? Where?</p>	<p>Children younger than five from remote rural areas. Children drink contaminated water from rivers.</p>
<p>3. SUPPORTIVE POLICIES Do any policies exist for ensuring the quality of water?</p>	<p>There are no policies that regulate what private companies are allowed to dispose in rivers. Policies have been proposed and discussed by several administrations, but none have been approved. Environmental policies are not viewed as a priority by the current administration. There are also no programs or significant government funds to build water systems for rural and poor communities.</p>
<p>4. RESTRICTIVE POLICIES Do any policies adversely affect the quality of water?</p>	<p>There are no policies that adversely affect the quality of water. The main policy cause is <u>lack</u> of policies, i.e. no regulations for ensuring safe water sources and no programs to promote safe water in rural and remote communities.</p>
<p>5. POLICY ENFORCEMENT Which programs promote or restrict access to safe water?</p>	<p>Since there are no policies in place, policy enforcement is not an issue.</p>

4.2 *Identify key actors and institutions*

Once you have identified a policy issue, it is important to describe the actors that make critical decisions about these policies. Actors can be either individuals or groups. A policy analysis should identify the actual individuals who make direct policy decisions, and those who can influence direct decision makers. It is important to determine whether actors support or oppose specific policies, as well as their degree of influence, their resources, and their interests in an issue. ***Identifying policy makers and analyzing their interests is an important prerequisite to developing an advocacy strategy.*** The more information you have about the actors that may influence and affect policy change, the easier it is to devise an advocacy strategy.

Identifying policy makers and analyzing their interests is an important prerequisite to developing an advocacy strategy.

The table on page 22 shows a “policy map,” which can be a useful tool for classifying actors according to their roles, degree of influence, support, and interest in specific policy issues. Though policy makers will make final decisions on policy, other actors can greatly influence their choices.

MACONDO EXAMPLE: POLICY MAPPING



Actor	Environmental policy decisions formally controlled	Activities that affect policies	Degree of influence on policies	Degree of support for regulating private companies	Motivating interests	Resources
Minister of the environment, Mr. Ran	a. Proposes environmental policies b. Allocates and controls Ministry resources	a. Translates policy into programs. b. Negotiates with foreign donors. c. Delivers public speeches. d. Discusses issues with the president.	High	Moderate support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strong ties to the legal community. Has mentioned the environment in speeches. 	High status authority, low economic resources, medium information.
Minister's advisor, Dr. Fodar	None	Provides advice to Minister.	High	Unknown	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mainly an agriculture expert. Has been a children's advocate. 	Minister trusts advisor's judgment, high status within administration.
Leaders from LDP political party	Few: minority in parliament	Give or withhold political support to government.	Low	Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Opposed industry interests on other environmental issues. 	Medium authority.
Most powerful business leaders, Ms. Galo and Mr. Amart	None	Threaten to withhold support for government. Promote policies that favor business interests.	High	Strongly oppose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Both have actively opposed environment laws in politics. 	High economic resources.
Environmental organizations: GREEN and SVD	None	a. Issue press releases to the media. b. Raise awareness among the public about the consequences of environmental pollution.	Medium	Strongly support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Both have strong support in Macondo. Some political connections to legislature. 	Low economic resources, high information, and legitimacy with the public.
Macondo's community representatives	None	May be mobilized when informed about how private companies affect quality of water and health of children.	Low to medium	Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Environmental organizations have a coalition based in Macondo. 	Low information and economic resources.
World Bank	None	Gives loans and grants for environmental projects.	High	Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Industrial pollution is part of this year's global agenda. 	High economic resources, medium authority.

4.3 Analyze the policy environment

Analysis of the policy environment is critical for subsequent planning of an advocacy initiative. Typically, an analysis of the policy environment will focus on the questions included in the box below. Answers to these questions will suggest whether the policy environment – in this example, related to education policy – is ripe for change. A policy analysis helps you assess whether policy change is likely to be successful or not.

- ◆ Can people participate in policy decisions about education issues? Do channels exist for people to participate in these decisions?
- ◆ Where are key decisions on education policy made and who controls such decisions?
- ◆ Are education issues widely discussed? Is this a topic of interest for the general public? Has news regarding education policies recently been featured in the media?
- ◆ Is education a priority for the current government? Does the government plan to make any changes to existing regulations? What education policies were approved or rejected in recent years?

Prior to deciding on an advocacy strategy, it is useful to analyze the distribution of power between policy makers and those who are affected by their decisions. The level of political openness in your country or region towards, for example, public dialogue on educational policies will affect your choices for advocacy strategies. It is important to know the rules, restrictions, and conditions under which you have to operate. Typically, societies that are more democratic provide more political space to NGOs for influencing policy. More open political systems normally pose less risk to national or local groups participating in political life. These groups have more options to choose from when trying to develop advocacy strategies and influence policy makers. And in some cases, the policy environment may be open to dialogue with NGOs on some issues (say, education policies), but not others (say, family planning policies).

Information about formal and informal policy making processes is critical for deciding on an advocacy strategy. Without a sound knowledge of how policy decisions are made and who controls such decisions, both formally and informally, it is not possible to advocate for a policy change.

The analysis of the policy environment should also include information gauging the extent to which a policy issue is publicly discussed. Such information will later help you to decide on appropriate roles (see **CHAPTER 6**). Advocating for a popular and widely discussed issue will require a different strategy than advocating for an issue which only few people know about, or which does not arouse general interest.

Finally, the overall political and social climate may also influence your choice for an advocacy strategy, and it is therefore important to account for factors such as upcoming elections, government's support from different sectors in society, and recent policy changes in your analysis.

Where can I get information for a policy analysis?

Potential sources of policy information are government ministries, corporations, donors, UN agencies, the World Bank, universities and NGOs. Newspapers and other periodicals are often good sources of information, although it is important to know about the reliability of the publications you use, and whether they have any kind of political bias that might affect their accuracy. You can also obtain useful information by studying texts of speeches made by public officials.

Sometimes the information you may want is easily available. When your issue is complex, or unfamiliar, you can consider getting help from someone more familiar with the policy issue. Examples of activities to obtain information for a policy analysis include:

- ◆ Reading the local newspaper for a week to learn what different interest groups are saying about land tenure reform.
- ◆ Contacting the office of public information of the Ministry of Agriculture to get the names of commissioners who oversee pesticide policy.
- ◆ Searching the World Wide Web for names of organizations that promote girls' education in your region and identifying their agendas.
- ◆ Obtaining a copy of the national law governing reproductive health rights for women.
- ◆ Contacting a university professor to ask questions about how environmental laws are written and enforced.

POLICY ANALYSIS: A CASE STUDY FOR DISCUSSION

**CARE PHILIPPINES:
IDENTIFYING POLICY ROOT CAUSES OF STREET VENDORS' VULNERABILITY.**

An assessment conducted by CARE Philippines in 1998 revealed that street vendors comprised the largest part of the informal sector, contributing extensively to the national economy by providing accessible goods and services to consumers, and incomes for a large portion of the population. The sector had grown rapidly, and about one out of every five households secured their livelihood from the informal sector. However, adverse government policies contributed to an insecure environment for street vendors and affected their capacity to procure household income: (a) street vending was technically illegal, (b) vendors were not licensed, taxed, or regulated, and (c) local government ordinances were not favorable to street vendors. In addition, the established business sector felt threatened by street vendors and feared that any government support for vendors would result in the loss of income.

Major problems for street vendors were lack of security of tenure in their workplaces, constant harassment from the police and local authorities, and lack of access to credit, legal services, and social security. A series of laws had been passed in the national legislature to ensure security in the workplace for registered vendors. To be meaningful, however, rules and regulations would have to be written, approved and implemented by authorities.

The analysis also revealed the presence of strong, interconnected civil society organizations. They arose during the Marcos regime, when clandestine involvement was the only way to express resistance. When the regime was toppled in 1986, civil society organizations became visible means of working toward a more pluralistic democracy. Some street vendors had formed such organizations.

In 1998, USAID issued a request for application for a proposal to broaden participation of disadvantaged groups in formulating and implementing of public policies. The idea was to bring new groups of people into a policy dialogue with the government and promote the involvement of civil society in the democratic process. CARE applied and joined forces with Filipino NGOs representing street vendors.

Adapted and summarized from "A tool in local hands: advocacy for street vendor rights" by Joseph Stuckey, Policy and Advocacy Unit, CARE USA, 1999.

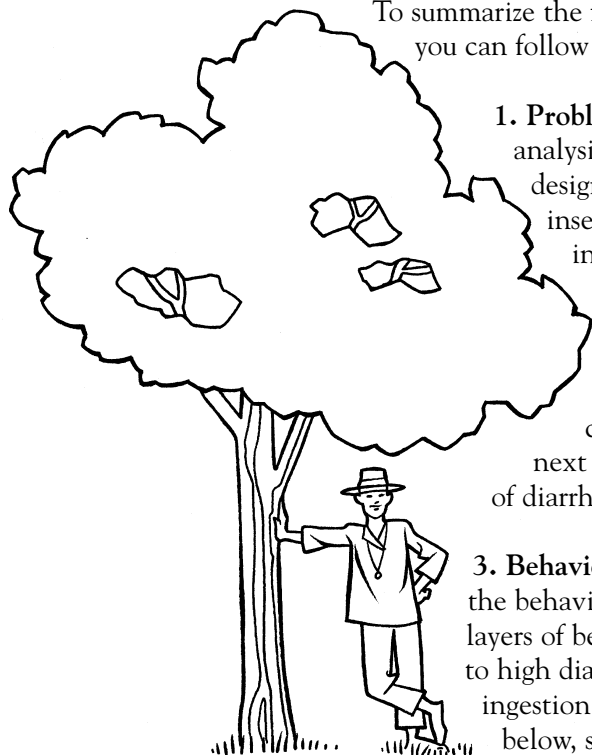
QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION:

- ◆ What problem has been identified? Who does it affect? Where?
- ◆ What policies support street vendors? Do government programs promote these policies?
- ◆ What policies restrict the rights and livelihoods of street vendors?
- ◆ Which actors may influence policy decisions? What interests do they have?
- ◆ Can organizations and communities participate in decisions that affect their lives?
- ◆ What are the strengths of this analysis? What is missing?

4.4 Summarize policy findings

Problem tree analysis is a useful technique for synthesizing and visualizing the results of analyses, including policy analyses. You can use a problem tree to represent and help you to analyze links between key actors and their institutions.

To summarize the findings in a problem tree analysis including policy causes, you can follow these steps:

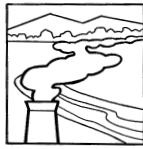


1. Problem identification: Depending on the purpose of the analysis (i.e., a long-range strategic plan, program, or project design) the problem can be more general (poverty or livelihood insecurity or a violation of human rights) or specific (low income, poor educational attainment, high mortality rates, etc.). Problem statements should specify who is affected by the problem.

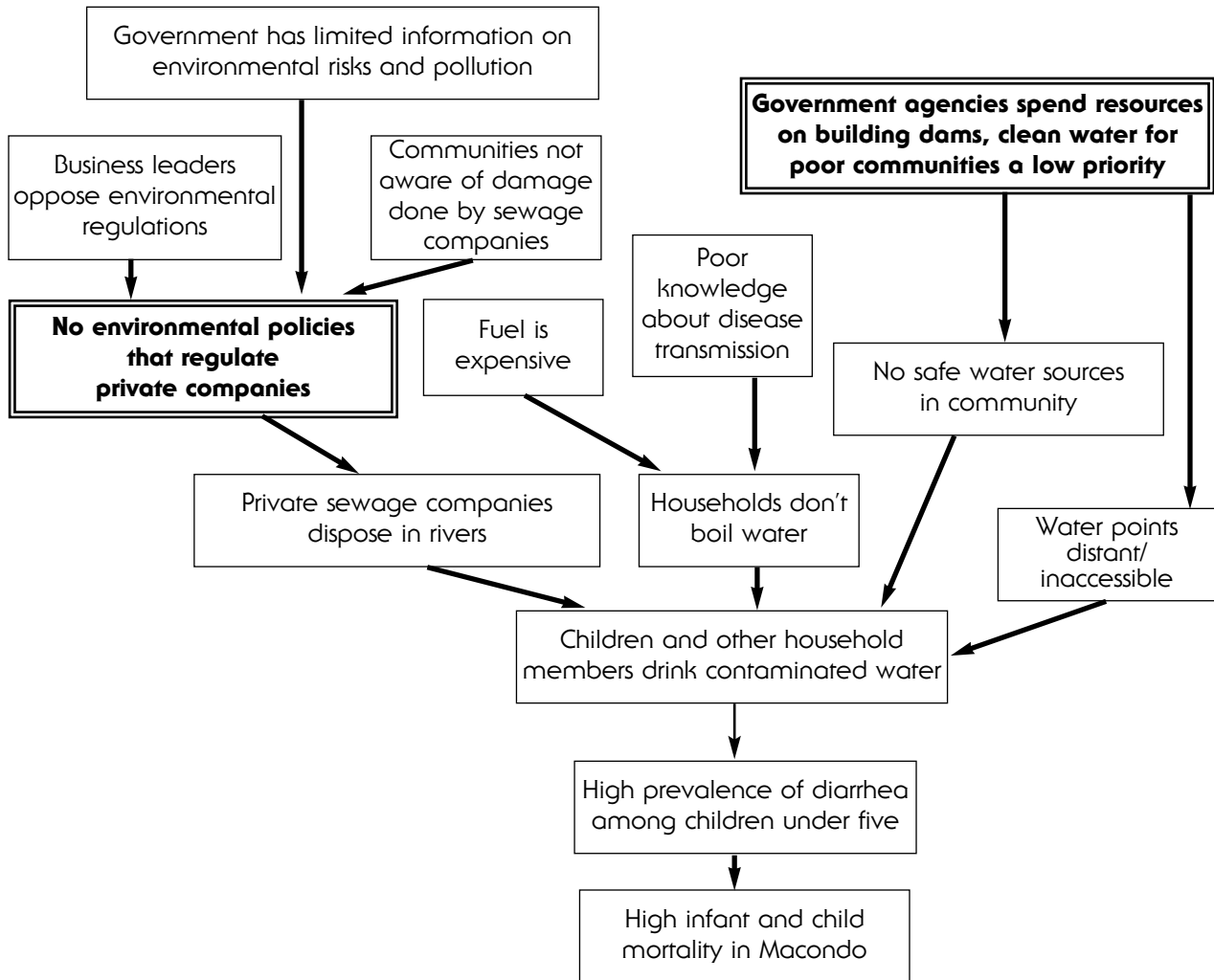
2. Direct causes: The analysis identifies the most direct causes of the problem. As shown in the example on the next page, a direct cause of infant mortality is high prevalence of diarrhea.

3. Behavioral causes: For each direct cause, problem trees identify the behaviors that lead to these causes. Often there are several layers of behavioral causes. For example, a practice that contributes to high diarrhea prevalence among children younger than five is the ingestion of contaminated water. In the problem analysis shown below, several actors affect the quality of water through their practices: households do not boil water, sewage companies discharge in rivers, government water and sanitation ministry spends resources on building dams, etc. ***The actions of policy makers should be reflected in problem trees if they are part of the problem.***

4. Causes that lead to behaviors: Why do households, policy makers and private business owners behave in a certain way? Knowledge, attitudes, beliefs, preferences, interests, and other causes explain the identified behaviors. For CARE, it is of key importance to understand the factors that affect behaviors since our programs address the causes that lead to these practices.



MACONDO EXAMPLE: PROBLEM TREE ANALYSIS



CHAPTER 4

The problem tree analysis above includes these *policy causes* of high infant and child mortality:

- 1) No environmental policies regulate the operations of the private sector.
- 2) Policy makers allocate resources for the construction of dams instead of water systems for poor communities.

It is important to understand why policies are lacking in order to devise advocacy strategies. If the main problem is opposition to environmental regulations by business leaders, this would lead to one kind of strategy; low community awareness of the damage done by the companies would lead to another. These causes, or policy issues, are influenced by specific policy makers. Note that this information can be extracted from the type of policy map presented in section 4.2.

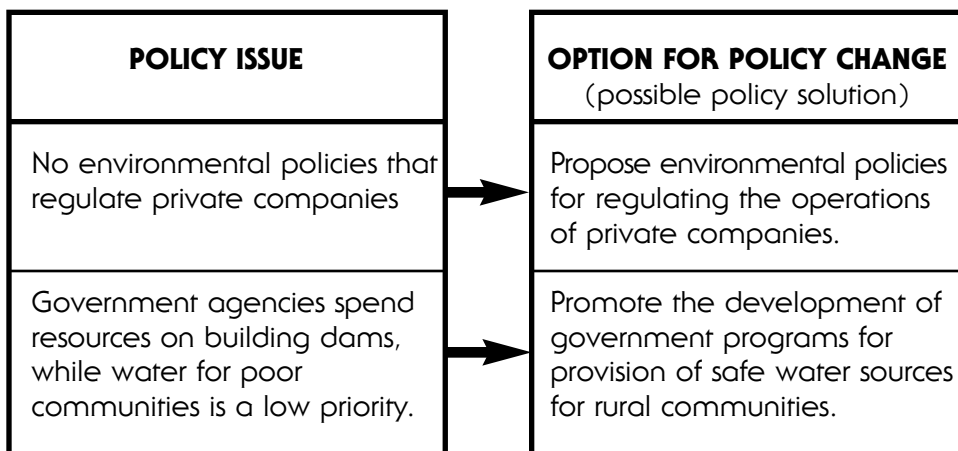
4.5 Identify options for policy change

A policy analysis should help you identify options for policy change and determine the relative impact they may have on the problem. At the policy analysis stage, you don't have to choose between issues, but rather identify which changes would yield the desired result.

In order to identify options clearly, it is useful to list all policy issues and describe what changes would have to take place to have an impact on the problem you have identified. If the analysis includes strong causal links between policy issues and the problem, then a change in any of the identified issues should yield an impact on the problem that you want to solve.



MACONDO EXAMPLE: IDENTIFYING POLICY SOLUTIONS



After this, you should start to consider the best options for policy change. Your goal is to rank these ideas in order of preference. Your analysis should consider such factors as:

- ◆ Which of the policy solutions is likely to have the largest and most lasting impact on the problem?
- ◆ What will happen if nothing is done regarding these policy issues?
- ◆ Which policy solutions are readily achievable and which are likely to be expensive and/or time consuming?
- ◆ Which policy solutions are likely to garner significant support or, alternatively, face significant opposition?

- ◆ Are some of the policy solutions riskier than others? Can such risks be mitigated?
- ◆ Who should take the lead on bringing the policy solution to the attention of policy makers?
- ◆ Which policy solutions is CARE and its current or potential partners in the best position to achieve?

At this stage, you will also have to decide if you will address a policy issue through advocacy or not. As a result of your policy analysis, you may decide that the time is not ripe for policy change. Or you may decide the cost of not pursuing an advocacy strategy is greater than the cost of pursuing one. Here are a few cost-benefit considerations you can make before deciding to proceed with an advocacy initiative, regardless of the issue:

- ◆ Is it possible that advocacy will cause you, your partners, or project participants to face major risks, such as violence, loss of credibility in the community, or being asked to leave the country?
- ◆ Is the timing right to become involved in a political debate? Could your involvement make the problem worse?
- ◆ Are there clear solutions to the problem that involve different programmatic approaches that are likely less expensive or more practical than advocacy?
- ◆ Does the problem require immediate action that an advocacy strategy would take too long to address?

This is a complex decision. In the next chapter, we will discuss criteria for selecting among different policy issues. These criteria also can be helpful to consider when you are assessing the costs and benefits of advocacy versus other programmatic approaches.

CHAPTER 4 WORKSHEET ANALYZING POLICIES

Steps you can take	Questions to explore	Your notes...
Identify policy issues.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ What is the problem you are concerned about? Who does it affect? ◆ What are the main policy issues in relation to the identified problem: absence of a policy, an adverse or inadequate policy, or the improper enforcement of a policy? 	
Identify key actors and institutions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Who makes direct decisions about the policy issues you identified? ◆ Who can influence the decisions of policy makers? ◆ Are policy makers and those who can influence them interested in the issues? What resources do they have? What position and opinions do they have in relation to the policy issues you are considering? 	
Analyze the policy environment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Can people participate in policy decisions about the identified issues? What sort of channels exist for them to participate? ◆ Where are key decisions on these policies made and who controls such decisions? ◆ Are the identified policy issues widely discussed? Is this a topic of interest for the general public? Has news regarding these policy issues recently been featured in the media? ◆ Is the policy a priority for the current government? Does the government plan to make any changes to existing regulations? What related policies were approved or rejected in the last few years? ◆ What changes may occur in the political arena? Are elections coming up? How could they affect the issues you have identified? 	
Summarize policy findings.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ What are the direct causes of the problem you identified? ◆ What policy maker actions led to the problem? Why have policy makers taken these positions? 	
Identify options for policy change.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ What policy changes would yield the desired results, that is, would have a positive impact on the problem? ◆ What are your best options for policy change? ◆ What will happen if nothing is done regarding these policy issues? ◆ Which policy solutions are likely to attract significant support or, alternatively, face significant opposition? ◆ Who should take the lead on bringing the policy solution to the attention of policy makers? 	