

# Introduction

## What is an advocacy toolkit?

This *Advocacy Toolkit* consists of a series of 16 sections. The sections in Part A explore advocacy's links with development. Part B looks at the biblical basis for advocacy. The sections in Part C provide tools to show how to plan an advocacy intervention to address a particular problem.

### Why has it been written?

The Toolkit reflects Tearfund's latest thinking on advocacy, to help Tearfund partners and other organisations become more involved in advocacy work. The aim is to help them to see the relevance of advocacy for their work, and to equip them with skills and confidence for any subsequent advocacy involvement.

It builds on Tearfund's *Advocacy Study Pack* (June 1999), adding more experience from Tearfund, its partners and from advocacy training events. This Toolkit is now Tearfund's main advocacy training resource.

There are three main reasons for writing this Toolkit when advocacy resources already exist:

- This Toolkit includes a significant section on advocacy, the mission of the church and the example of Jesus. Few other resources look at the spiritual nature of development and advocacy.
- It is aimed at local communities as well as local churches and NGOs working with these communities. Many other resources are aimed at national or international NGOs and deal with advocacy at a much higher level. However, the principles and guidance given in the Toolkit can also be developed for national and international advocacy.
- There is a strong emphasis on the need to link advocacy with other development work, which is sometimes missing in other resources.

### How can the Toolkit be used?

The Toolkit is designed to be used by an organisation, a community or any group of people considering an advocacy intervention. The 16 sections are in a logical order for groups that are completely new to advocacy. Each section is self-contained so groups can use whichever sections are most appropriate to their current needs. However, it would be wise to cover everything in Parts A and B before tackling the advocacy planning in Part C. Each section contains 1–6 exercises. A section could take anything from 30 minutes to a whole day, depending on the detail required by the group. Parts A and B have been written as an interactive training manual. Part C is an advocacy guide to be worked through for real advocacy planning, although it does also have some optional training exercises.

No external facilitator is needed, but a facilitator from the group is required. The facilitator should take time to read the Toolkit thoroughly, understand the theory, and be confident with it. Groups may choose to use an external facilitator at certain key stages.

The Toolkit can be used as a five day intensive training workshop, with the aim of achieving a skeleton advocacy strategy at the end.

It can also be used as a series of shorter training sessions at key points, with time in between to carry out further work. Key points may include:

- at the start
- before Part B
- before Part C
- after the planning process
- twelve months after the start of any advocacy work

Alternatively, the Toolkit can be used in a study group meeting once a week or month for half a day or an evening, studying one section at a time.

The whole process of learning and putting into practice could take anything from three months to two years, depending on factors such as the type of problem, type of group, and previous experience.

**Layout** The sections are laid out in the following way:

**DESCRIPTION** What the section hopes to achieve.

**OBJECTIVES** What participants will learn if they go through the whole section.

**LINKS** with other sections in the Toolkit.

**EXERCISES** to help to achieve the learning objectives. The exercises include the key points that a facilitator should try to draw out during the exercise. Suggested methods that can be used for the exercises are listed.

**HANDOUTS** to give to participants to explain some of the theory further. It is important that the handouts are used after the participants have worked through exercises for themselves.

**EXTRA MATERIAL** which is not suitable for a handout, but will help the facilitator to plan the session better.

**CASE STUDIES** given throughout the Toolkit, but concentrated in certain sections. The main Tearfund partner case studies are in SECTIONS A2, A3, A5 and A6. The main biblical case studies are in SECTIONS B2 and B3.

**Important points to note**

Many Tearfund partners are already involved in advocacy activities, but may not call it advocacy or may be doing it in an unplanned way. The Toolkit aims to help them become more systematic and effective in their advocacy work.

The Toolkit offers Tearfund's perspective on issues such as development, power, theology and advocacy planning. Although these are carefully thought through and based on experience, it is vital for partners to come to their own understanding of the issues within their particular context.

Advocacy is not necessarily confrontational and a lot of effective advocacy is in fact collaborative.

Advocacy is an integral part of development work. The most effective advocacy is likely to flow from existing development project work.

Advocacy requires a particular way of thinking that always asks 'why?' until the root cause of the problem has been identified. It is needed because project work does not necessarily address the cause of the problem. However, advocacy should not replace other development work because it does not usually meet people's immediate needs. It also may not bring the community transformation that is at the heart of Christian development.

### **Basics of advocacy**

Advocacy is about influencing people, policies, structures and systems in order to bring about change. It is about influencing those in power to act in more equitable ways.

Advocacy can be done directly by those affected by injustice or on their behalf, or by a combination of both. Anyone can undertake advocacy work – it does not need to be left to professionals or experts.

Advocacy work includes many different activities such as lobbying, mobilisation, education, research, prayer and networking. It can be undertaken alone, with a group of people or as part of a network. It can be spontaneous or carefully planned, a one-off intervention or an ongoing process.

It is part of the mission of the church to undertake advocacy through speaking out against injustice, defending the cause of the poor, holding those in power to account, and empowering people to speak out for themselves. Its ultimate aim is in bringing and demonstrating the good news of the coming of the Kingdom of God.

### **Benefits of advocacy**

The aim of advocacy is often the same as for other development work: to alleviate poverty and suffering, fight oppression, challenge injustice or support long-term sustainable development. However, development work is often not enough, because it does not tackle the root or deeper causes of the problem. Advocacy is therefore needed as it:

- tackles root causes of poverty and injustice and brings long-term change
- sees people as agents of change in their own communities
- can help to generate more resources for other development work
- can change power structures and systems of injustice.

**Challenges of advocacy**

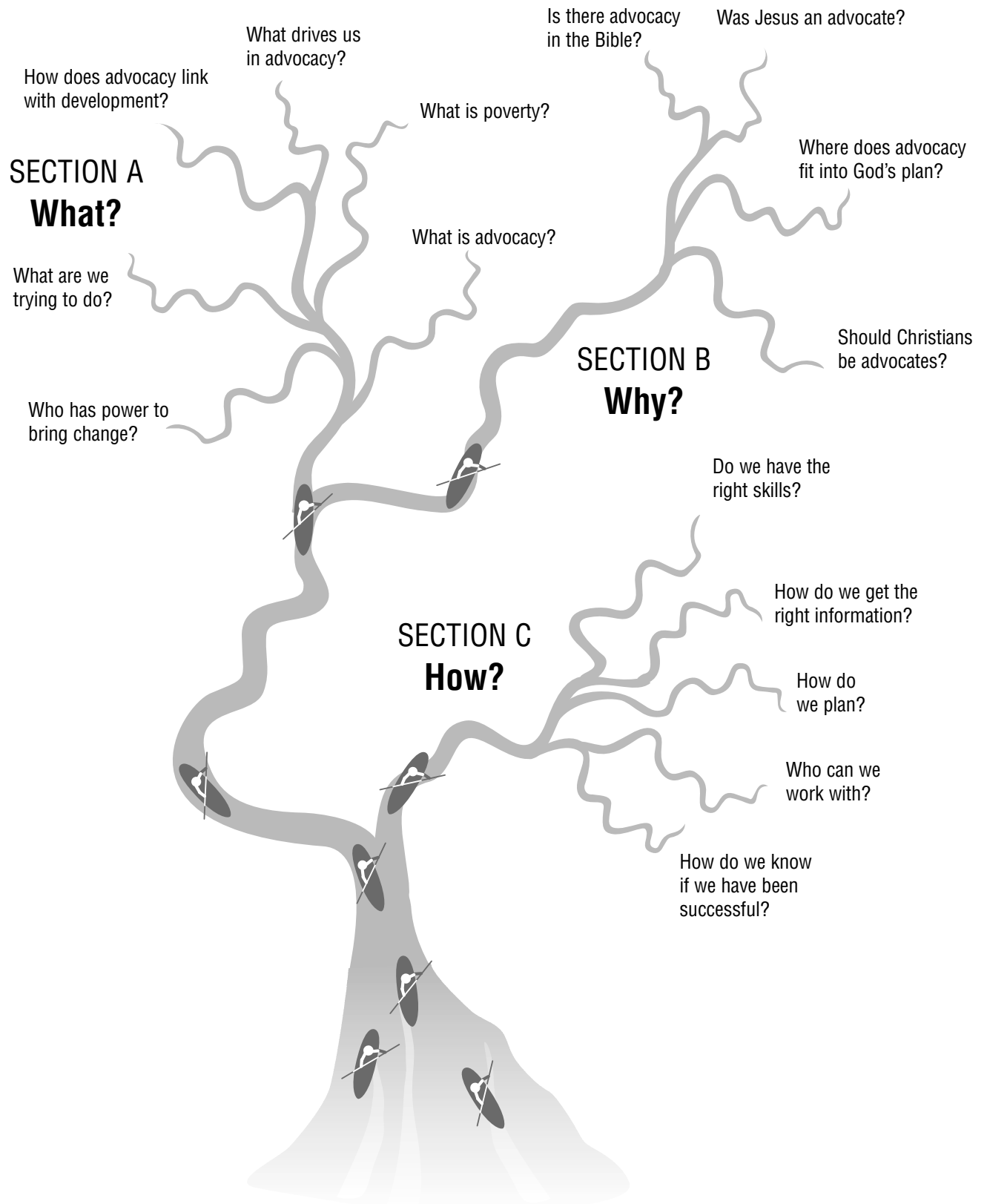
Advocacy brings challenges as well as benefits. These challenges need to be addressed carefully. They include:

- the temptation to corrupt or compromise due to involvement with power structures
- diversion of resources and energy from other development activities
- further disempowering groups by speaking for them, without consultation or agreement
- threat of loss of property, job, or personal safety.

If advocacy is done in a respectful way, serving others in humility and carefully thinking through all activities, most of the challenges can be overcome. Then the benefits will far outweigh any potential negative effects. However, it is still good to be aware of these challenges at the start, to be able to make a realistic assessment of what advocacy actions you might take.

## Main questions addressed in this Toolkit

The diagram of a river below shows the main questions addressed in this Toolkit.



## Explanation of exercise methods

Below is an explanation of the methods that are commonly used for the exercises in the Toolkit. Appropriate methods are listed at the start of each exercise.

**AGREE / DISAGREE** A statement is read out and people have to move to a place along a line to indicate how strongly they agree or disagree.

**BIBLE STUDIES OR CASE STUDIES** Examples from the Bible, experiences of participants or written stories are used to draw out key learning points.

**BUZZ GROUPS** Participants turn to the people next to them and discuss an issue quickly. A few participants then usually give a summary of their discussion to the whole group.

**DOTS** Small sticky dots are used by participants to vote for their preferred option. For example, cards with different definitions of advocacy written on them are placed on the wall. Participants stick the dots on the cards that they agree with or prefer. This method ensures that everyone participates and makes decisions themselves.

**DRAWING** Participants draw a picture or diagram to help them to express honestly what they are thinking and then to explain it to others.

**FLASH CARDS AND POST-IT NOTES** Flash cards are pieces of card, approximately 10x20cm. Post-it notes are smaller and have sticky gum on the back. Participants use them to quickly write down words or phrases, which are usually then stuck on the wall or placed on the floor for further discussion. This method ensures that everyone participates and helps people express their own reactions to issues.

**GALLERY WALK** Pieces of work are placed on the wall for all participants to see. Participants ask questions to those who wrote or drew them.

**GRADING** A selection of objects or documents are placed in order according to certain criteria, such as usefulness.

**PLENARY DISCUSSION** A discussion of the issues by the whole group.

**ROLE PLAY** Participants are given an exercise to do, in which they act out a role. After the role play it is important to discuss properly what was seen, both with the audience and those who took part in the role play. This helps participants to root theory in practice.

**SMALL-GROUP DISCUSSION** Groups of up to eight participants spend time in a structured discussion and may present back to the plenary in a formal way.

# Glossary

This glossary explains the meaning of difficult words according to the way that they are used in this Toolkit.

<b>ad hoc</b>	in response to a particular situation
<b>bias</b>	having a view in favour or against
<b>brainstorm</b>	to state whatever immediately comes to mind about an issue
<b>clarify</b>	to explain something clearly or in more detail
<b>coalition</b>	a partnership between two or more groups
<b>coercion</b>	the use of force to make people do things they do not want to do
<b>collaborative</b>	working together to achieve something
<b>compromise</b>	to make an agreement where each side accepts less than they wanted
<b>confrontational</b>	an aggressive approach
<b>consistency</b>	keeping the same standards or repeating a task in the same way
<b>debrief</b>	to look back over a process when it has ended
<b>discredit</b>	to try to show where someone else's opinion or actions are wrong
<b>discriminate</b>	to treat one group worse than others
<b>divert</b>	to change the direction
<b>duplication</b>	when two people or organisations do exactly the same work
<b>empathise</b>	to understand someone else's feelings
<b>integral</b>	an important part of something
<b>integrated</b>	to be part of something
<b>integrity</b>	having high moral values or professional standards
<b>inter-personal</b>	relationships between people

<b>lobby</b>	to try to influence policy through direct contact with policy-makers
<b>mandate</b>	a command from an authority
<b>manifestation</b>	something that is shown as a result of an act
<b>matrix</b>	a table or grid
<b>nomadic</b>	moving from place to place as a way of life
<b>ostracise</b>	to exclude someone from a group or society
<b>participatory</b>	an activity in which many people take part
<b>petition</b>	written request signed by many people to demand something from an authority
<b>plenary</b>	the whole group
<b>prejudice</b>	having a negative attitude
<b>pygmy</b>	an ethnic group of people of unusually small size
<b>rebuked</b>	told someone off
<b>reconciliation</b>	repairing a broken relationship
<b>redemption</b>	forgiveness of sins by the death and rising from the dead of Jesus Christ
<b>redundant</b>	no longer needed
<b>reluctant</b>	being unwilling to do something
<b>slumlord</b>	an owner of housing in a slum
<b>solidarity</b>	acting together and supporting each other
<b>spontaneous</b>	doing something in an unplanned way
<b>stewardship</b>	having responsibility for something or someone
<b>subjective</b>	based on someone's opinion or feelings, rather than facts
<b>systematic</b>	carried out in an organised way
<b>template</b>	something that can be used as a guide and filled in with relevant information