

Action

Description This section will help you to put your advocacy strategy into action by showing you the range of options open to you.

You may use all of the options in a particular advocacy initiative, but you may only use one. It is vital that all activities are co-ordinated and that they do not contradict each other.

Learning objectives

By the end of the section, participants will:

- know the key points to include in an advocacy ‘position’ or ‘policy’
- understand the functions and uses of networks
- be able to plan for a lobbying meeting
- be aware of options for raising awareness
- have ideas about how to mobilise people for action
- be able to write a press release and prepare for a radio interview.

Links This links to SECTION A5 (Understanding politics and power), SECTION C3.4 (Planning – stakeholder analysis) and SECTION C3.5 (Planning – choosing your methods).

Tools and exercises

This section contains some useful tools for advocacy options and presents a series of tips to help you to take action. It is split into six categories:

- 4.1 Deciding your position (TOOL 26)
- 4.2 Networking (TOOL 27)
- 4.3 Lobbying (TOOLS 28–30)
- 4.4 Education and raising awareness
- 4.5 Mobilising (TOOLS 31–32)
- 4.6 Working with the media (TOOLS 33–34)

4.1 Deciding your position



Aim To understand the usefulness of having a position and how to develop one.

A *position* is a statement of what an organisation, group or person believes about a particular issue and how they think this should be acted upon. It is often also called a *policy*.

Positions or policies come in various forms:

- **internal** (such as a personnel policy within an organisation) and **external** (a group's beliefs on external issues such as AIDS and what others need to do, such as the government needing to invest more money in healthcare)
- **formal** (usually written and agreed by everyone, such as a letter to government, organisation's mission statement) or **informal** (often in a conversation: 'we have not discussed it in detail but we are not happy with the situation')
- **proactive / long-term** (such as views on land redistribution in a local area) or **reactive / emergency** (such as a quick response because someone has been put in prison)
- **with others** or **alone**
- **short** (2–4 sided briefing paper, presenting the main points) or **long** (policy or research paper giving detailed arguments and recommendations, often accompanied by a letter highlighting the main points).

Positions serve many useful purposes:

CLARIFY THINKING ON A PARTICULAR ISSUE It is often only when things are written down that the position becomes clear.

ACCURATE REPRESENTATION Being able to give a position to other groups such as the media and policy-makers will help you to be accurately represented and understood by them.

CONSISTENCY OF VOICE to ensure that all spokespeople within the group give the same messages.

CONSISTENCY WITH OTHER POSITIONS to ensure that your position is consistent with your position on other issues.

CLARIFY DIFFERENCES to help you to identify the main areas of disagreement you have with other people's positions and therefore clarify the main areas for advocacy work.

Key points

- Positions should be kept as brief as possible (2–4 pages) and to the point.
- Focus on what you can offer, such as new or unique evidence that you might have.

- Make sure information is relevant and up-to-date.
- Build arguments around what you believe to be the weak points of the policy-makers.
- Policy-makers need to know they can work with you, so ensure that the tone of the position shows that you are willing to co-operate.
- Write clear recommendations that can be implemented.
- Write joint position statements as part of a network if you think it will bring more chance of success, although be aware that these can take a long time to agree.
- Ensure that your position accurately reflects the views of those you claim to represent.
- Use headed note-paper if possible and get others to check for grammar and spelling mistakes – poor presentation can discourage people from reading it.



TOOL 26

Main components of a position or policy

Although positions appear in many different forms and serve many different purposes, they are likely to include some or all of the components below.

INTRODUCTION Name of organisation, what your main activities are, what your basis for existence is, who you represent.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY (if the position paper is long). Brief outline of your history of involvement, of the issues and why you are concerned.

EFFECTS AND EVIDENCE What are the current and potential future effects of the issue on those you represent? Include any primary or secondary research you have. If you have detailed information, add an appendix to the document and refer to it here.

CAUSES AND RESPONSIBILITY Which groups or individuals have caused the current situation and are responsible for it? What events have contributed towards it? Why have particular actions been wrong, according to law, morality, etc?

SOLUTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS What needs to be done to address the problem? Who is responsible for doing this? What is already happening to address the issue and who is doing this? What is good or bad about the current proposals and actions and what needs to change about them? What specific recommendations do you have? Make sure these are SMART. What arguments will be used against your proposals and how can you respond to these?

APPENDICES Include any detailed information that you have referred to in the main document.

Positions can be sent or given to policy makers in one of three main forms:

- a short position paper (2–4 sides, handed over at a visit or sent with an accompanying letter highlighting one or two key points, or the recommendations)
- a longer briefing document (handed over at a visit or sent with an accompanying letter highlighting the main points)

- a letter written for a specific policy-maker, which includes the main points from a position paper. This acts as a stand-alone document, but offer to provide more details if required.

The approach that you choose will depend on how much information you want to include, how well you know the policy-maker, the amount of time you have available to write letters, etc.

Exercise

Participants attempt to write their own position statement, based on this template and referring to the example given over the page. Do you agree with Tearfund's approach? What was the hardest part in developing a position?

4.2 Networking



Aim To understand who you should co-operate with and the best way of doing it.

Networking is about making contact with people and organisations for the purposes of sharing information and possibly working together for greater effectiveness. This can be done informally, such as through individual relationships or sending information that might be of interest, or it can be done more formally through joining or forming a network.

Networking has many advantages, as well as risks:

The advantages and risks of networking

Advantages

- source of useful information and analysis and pool of skills and resources
- safety net for emergencies – members of a network less likely to be targeted than individuals working alone
- strength in numbers means it is more difficult for policy-makers to ignore demands – therefore more likely to bring change
- avoids duplication and saves time and work

Risks

- can be time-consuming to speak to others
- competition between groups in seeking credit for 'success'
- not everybody will be open about plans and views – and some could just take and not give
- disagreement about who should join the network

Extract from a position paper

Submission on Climate Change to International Conference on Freshwater December 2001

Droughts and flooding set to increase

Approximately 1.7 billion of the world's population currently lives in countries that are water-stressed, and it is estimated that by 2025, this number could increase to 5 billion. Climate change increases the risk of drought and is therefore likely to compound existing and future water pressures and intensify competition for water resources. There is also increased risk of flooding brought about by climate change and it is estimated that by 2025 over half of all people living in developing countries will be 'highly vulnerable' to floods and storms.

The effect of floods and droughts on developing countries

The effects of water-related disasters will be worst for people living in many developing countries. Floods and droughts threaten life, property and eco-systems. Sea-level rise, storm surges and flooding will cause migration, with consequences for infrastructure further in-land. If official predictions over sea-level rise are fulfilled, flooding in Bangladesh will create millions of 'ecological refugees'. Floods and droughts will also impact human health, as water availability and quality deteriorates; sanitation systems, storm-water drainage and sewage disposal are disrupted; and disease is spread among displaced communities. Economic and political tensions will increase as water supplies are affected.

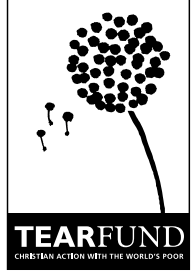
Recommendations

If development is to be sustainable, the continuous threat of climate change must be taken into account in all development initiatives with vulnerable countries. Tearfund urges a much greater emphasis by OECD countries on preparing vulnerable communities for floods and droughts through the following actions:

- Incorporate climate risk into water management. Climatic risks should be included in the design and implementation of international development initiatives, including water resource management.
- Raise the profile of disaster preparedness and mitigation. Preparedness for, and mitigation of droughts and flooding should become an integral and larger part of donor governments' responses to the developing world.
- Increase funding for disaster preparedness and mitigation. Developing countries, particularly the least developed, do not have the financial resources to cope with the consequences of drought and flooding. Donor governments should allocate sufficient funding for disaster preparedness and mitigation programmes. The UK government should increase its official development assistance to 0.7% of GNP, and allocate at least 5% of this to disaster preparedness and mitigation.
- Participatory approach. Plans for management of floods and drought should be developed with local communities, agencies and governments in order to make use of local knowledge and develop appropriate and sustainable systems.
- Build capacity. Issues of economic crisis, poverty and unemployment in many developing nations mean that flood and drought preparedness and mitigation are often low priority. Donor governments should place a greater emphasis on building the capacity of communities and governments in flood prone and water-stressed countries to prepare for and respond to floods and droughts.

Example policy letter
to Tony Blair after
the September 11
attacks in the US

The Rt Hon Tony Blair MP, Prime Minister
10 Downing Street
London
SW1A 2AA



19 September 2001

Dear Prime Minister

None of us has been unaffected by the emotion and impact caused by the horror of last Tuesday's events. At this time of devastating tragedy and international crisis I therefore want to assure you of the prayerful support of Tearfund and its supporters as you face a welter of significant and complex decisions.

Last week we wrote to supporters, encouraging them to remember the bereaved and the suffering in the United States and their friends and families across the world, and to pray for wisdom for world leaders who have to respond to this rapidly changing situation – when the desire for retaliation and revenge competes with the values of democracy and justice.

As an organisation we support relief and development work in dozens of countries around the world. In particular we have been deeply involved with and concerned about the humanitarian crisis that existed in Afghanistan even before last Tuesday. Indeed a few weeks ago Tearfund launched an appeal to its supporters on behalf of the people of Afghanistan, recognising the devastating impact of poverty, war and drought that has seen five million brought to the edge of starvation, and the displacement of hundreds of thousands of desperately needy people. Now, even the threat of military action, real or assumed, has further deepened the humanitarian crisis in Afghanistan and many of the surrounding countries.

We therefore wish to express the strongest possible concern that all action that is proposed will carefully assess – and fully take into account – the humanitarian implications, both short and long term. Our concern includes the expatriate personnel whose trial on charges of promoting Christianity was interrupted last week. It includes their Afghan colleagues, also in prison. It extends to the thousands already moving towards the Afghan borders, and those too weak or unable to move. It includes those who have already crossed the borders into neighbouring countries. It would be a further awful tragedy if inappropriate action led to thousands more victims. We also believe it would make it even harder to combat terrorism.

It is in this context that we would urge you to continue to do all you can to ensure that the response to this outrage is measured and proportionate, designed to bring the perpetrators to justice, based on evidence properly gathered and clearly presented. We believe that measures to combat terrorism should seek to maximise the levels of international agreement, make full use of diplomacy, be within the bounds of international law and clearly distinguish between the innocent and the guilty.

It is also in this context that we would plead that the urgent need for humanitarian aid in Afghanistan and the surrounding countries is not forgotten. Speedy and co-ordinated international action is already required to meet this challenge, as the threat of catastrophe increases daily.

As you travel to the USA, and encounter the human dimensions of this tragedy while discussing further the weightiest possible matters of policy, let me once again assure you of our prayerful support.

Yours sincerely

Doug Balfour
General Director, Tearfund



TOOL 27

Questions to help you decide who to network with

If you are thinking of networking with other groups to help you in your advocacy work, it is useful to ask the following questions:

WHO SHARES YOUR VALUES? Your natural allies may be those who have similar vision and values. It is a good idea to approach them first. However, do not ignore other groups because their values are not exactly the same as yours. You will need to work with many different groups. Ensure that you are clear about the nature of co-operation.

WHO IS ALREADY WORKING ON THE ISSUE? Learn from those with more experience and see whether you are trying to achieve the same results and are willing to co-operate. If they support your position, keep a good relationship.

WHO CAN PROVIDE SOMETHING THAT YOU NEED? Eg: information, experience in media relations, influence with decision-makers or an active membership that will campaign. Decide what you need from them and be clear about what you are asking them for.

WHO WOULD CO-OPERATE WITH YOU? Understand what they are trying to achieve and be clear about what you can offer them in terms of skills, access to groups, research etc.

WHO HAS THE CAPACITY TO ACT? All collaborators need to be clear about what they promise to do, and fulfil their promises.

WOULD THINGS BE WORSE IF YOU DID NOT WORK TOGETHER? Would lack of co-operation reduce your combined impact and chances of achieving your goals and objectives?

4.3 Lobbying



Aim To show the most effective ways to directly influence decision-makers.

The ultimate aim of much of our advocacy work is to influence decision-makers, whether they are the local mayor, government officials, business leaders, church leaders, Members of Parliament, trade unions or other groups.

There are a number of possible approaches, including:

- writing a letter or sending a position paper
- making a phone-call
- arranging a visit or a meeting
- participating in a public meeting or conference
- taking the opportunities that arise, such as a chance meeting
- using the courts.

Types of lobbying

There are many different types of lobbying, some of which may require specialist expertise and others that anyone can do. We outlined four of the approaches below:

POLICY CHANGE This is the most common lobbying activity, which is aimed at all types of decision-makers (government, business, churches) who have policies and practices that affect communities. With good preparation and good evidence, anyone can be effective at bringing about a change in the way these groups act.

CHANGING LEGISLATION This type of lobbying activity aims at political representatives who are involved in making and passing laws. They may be members of a national parliament or assembly, or a regional or local decision-making body. This lobbying is technical and involves suggesting specific amendments to existing laws, content for new laws or arguing to maintain laws that others are seeking to abolish. Anyone can get involved in this lobbying, but it is good to gain support from someone more experienced first. It is important to know what you can influence at each stage of the legislation, so that you do not try to make changes too late or raise points that are too detailed before they are relevant.

USING THE COURTS This is a more specific approach, which usually requires experienced lawyers. This involves trying to ensure that legislation is correctly implemented, rather than changing legislation. It may also involve defending individuals or groups that are not in a position to defend themselves, such as where land is illegally taken. The process can be time consuming and expensive, but if the actions are clearly illegal and the court implements the rule of law, then success is likely.

HUMAN RIGHTS Human rights are a set of rights that have been agreed at international level. They are based on the understanding that everyone has equal worth and that everyone has a responsibility to treat others with dignity and respect. Many countries have adopted them into their national laws, which means that these specific rights can be defended and enforced through the courts.

- The advantage of using human rights to bring about change is that they are clearly stated and understood, they are accepted in many countries worldwide, and they can help to empower people and give them dignity and self worth. Many of the rights are closely connected with Biblical principles of human value and justice although the language used may be different from the language many Christians would use.
- However, there are some drawbacks to a human rights approach to development. Some argue that human rights do not take sufficient account of cultural differences. Governments are sometimes unable to enforce human rights. There are certain applications of rights that many Christians would oppose, such as the freedom to choose, if it leads to abortion on demand.
- Defending human rights is one way of working for justice. It involves using the various human rights agreements to protect people's rights in a court of law, whether this is a national, regional or international court. It can be considered as an option in advocacy work.

Meetings are the most common arenas for lobbying decision-makers. Below, we guide you through some key considerations before, during and after meetings.

The aim of meetings varies, including to:

- build relationships
- listen and collect information
- share information and educate
- persuade others, such as to change policy or practice, seek funding or work collectively towards a solution. This will include suggesting specific proposals for action.

Whatever the reasons for the meeting, you need to be clear about why you are having or attending a meeting and what you hope to achieve from it. You need to be ready to use both formal and informal meetings to your maximum benefit.



TOOL 28

Making the most of a meeting

The following guidelines are for when you are arranging a formal meeting, where you know there will be specific time for you to raise your concerns. Many of the points are also relevant for more informal meetings or to prepare you to lobby if an unexpected opportunity arises.

Consider the following:

Before the meeting

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- Who called the meeting and why?
- What previous contact has anyone had? Was anything promised (from either side)? Has it been delivered? Is there continuing contact?
- Who will represent the policy-makers at the meeting and what are their roles? What are their interests, background and views? Are there any disagreements or power struggles between them?
- How do you think the policy-makers view you? Why have they agreed to see you? What power or influence do they recognise that you have?
- What information can you find out beforehand so that you are prepared?
- Allow plenty of time to get to the meeting so that you are not late.

RESULT

- What do you hope to achieve from the meeting? What will you ask them to do?
- Consider what they may want to gain from the meeting and how you can provide it.

ROLES AND APPROACH

- Who will attend the meeting on behalf of your organisation or network? Who will present your information or argument? Who will take notes?
- Decide a rough plan of attack and responses to possible questions.
- Know your main points well.

During the meeting**INTRODUCTIONS**

- Make sure that everyone in the room is introduced, and give a brief background to each organisation represented if this is a first meeting. Summarise what happened in previous meetings if appropriate.
- Clarify why you are meeting and agree how to proceed.

APPROACH AND MANNER

- Be relaxed, polite and friendly.
- Maintain a positive atmosphere and listen actively. Do not accuse and respond honestly to any concerns raised.

CLARITY

- Have a clear achievable goal. State your case precisely. Ask for clarity if necessary.

TACTICS

- Focus on your most important concerns first and leave smaller issues until the end.
- Keep discussion on track.
- Know what issues you are willing to compromise on and what you are not.
- Plan for different kinds of responses.
- Summarise progress at various points.

NETWORKS OR LARGER GROUPS

- Find out beforehand if other people with different perspectives are going to be lobbying in the meeting and agree how to proceed. If you argue among yourselves you will reduce your chance of success.
- Ensure that the chairperson does not allow one person to dominate the meeting.

FOLLOW-UP

- Clarify what has been agreed.
- Be willing to do some work for the policy-maker.
- Say that you will contact the policy-maker soon, and agree to meet again if appropriate.

After the meeting**DEBRIEF**

- Did you achieve your objectives?
- Did you think they were telling the truth – were they hiding something?
- Are they keen to work with you?
- Did you discover new information?
- What are you going to do next?

REPORT

- Write a quick report of the meeting.
- Pass it to everyone who came with you.
- Pass it to relevant people in your organisation.

FOLLOW-UP

- Send a brief letter thanking the policy-maker for seeing you, summarising the main points and reminding them of their promises and what you have promised.
- After a while, contact them again to see if they have done what they promised.

Role play

You are part of a community which is concerned about the operations of a chemical factory 1km upstream. This factory has been operating for four years and during the past three months the community has been experiencing problems. Large areas of land have been fenced off, blocking the main route to take cattle to other pastures further up the valley. When clothes are washed in the river they get stained and there is more illness in the village, probably due to water pollution. There is also a constant stream of traffic through your village that has disrupted the animals and is a danger to the children playing near the roads. You have discussed the issues as a community and decided that the situation needs to be addressed and that you need to discuss it with the factory owners. This will be your first meeting with the factory owner, although you had minimal contact with factory staff five years previously when two members came to speak briefly to the village committee about the plans to build the factory. How do you approach the meeting? What are you trying to achieve?



TOOL 29

Lobbying guidelines

It is useful to develop lobbying guidelines to ensure that your lobbying agrees with your principles and values. The following guidelines were initially written for Tearfund staff who come into contact with policy makers – mainly politicians and civil servants. The guidelines aim to ensure that lobbying upholds key Tearfund values, maintains Tearfund’s credibility and avoids the risks of poor internal communication.

Develop your own guidelines, reflecting the principles and values of your own organisation.

Some suggested guidelines for lobbying

KEY PRINCIPLES	ACTION
Respect	Staff should show respect. They can criticise actions and policies but should not make personal attacks on individual policy makers.
Truthfulness	Staff should accurately represent their own position and that of others, providing evidence for any claims they make.
Confidentiality	Staff should not reveal confidential information offered by a policy-maker to a third party without their permission.
Integrity	Staff should ensure that any issues that they have asked decision-makers to address, should also be addressed internally.
Consistency of positions / policies	Staff should not claim policy status for their views where no policy exists. Each should refer to their line manager in case of doubt.
Appropriate contacts	Staff should register all intended meetings with policy makers with their line manager. Where there is cause for doubt about the appropriateness of a meeting, the line manager will decide whether it should proceed.
Co-ordination	Staff should register all such meetings with the Public Policy Team, along with any significant feedback and copies of significant correspondence, so that the Public Policy Team can co-ordinate contacts and brief staff where necessary.



TOOL 30

Negotiating skills

Good negotiating skills enable you to ensure that others understand the point you are making and help you to persuade others to take your suggested course of action. Bad habits in negotiating can quickly alienate those you are speaking to and undermine your message.

Helpful and unhelpful approaches to negotiating

Helpful

WIN-WIN Seek solutions that will be beneficial to both parties. Be willing to compromise on some areas, but be very clear about what you will not negotiate. Try to think of what you can offer so that the other party is satisfied.

ASK QUESTIONS so that you can identify areas where you may both benefit. This also helps you to avoid a spiral of attacking and defending.

SEEK PERMISSION This puts you in control without having to battle to speak. 'I would like to suggest that...' or 'could I ask...?'

TEST AND SUMMARISE Ensure that everyone has understood and interpreted things in the same way and agrees on action points. This helps build trust and avoids confusion and relationship breakdown later on.

EXPLAIN YOUR MOTIVES to the other parties so that they are clear why you are proposing a particular course of action. Do not leave them guessing about hidden agendas.

BE SENSITIVE to a change in mood, to unexpected revelations or reactions, to defensive responses, to boredom or lack of interest – and change your approach accordingly.

KNOW WHEN TO STOP Be aware of how far you can push a particular line of questioning, and be prepared to meet again later on if necessary.

LISTEN AND ENGAGE Listen to concerns and try and respond to them. Let them speak first if necessary.

Unhelpful

EMOTIVE APPROACH Using subjective or emotive words adds nothing to your case but simply accuses the other side of being unfair or unreasonable.

DEFEND/ATTACK SPIRALS If you do not listen to the other point of view and simply defend your own position, an argument can result and it is harder to persuade others.

LISTING arguments, reasons and information to strengthen the proposal can annoy the listener and make them forget the main points.

COUNTER-PROPOSALS If you counter every suggestion by the other party with one of your own, it will become harder to persuade them.

ANGER Shouting at someone could discredit your message, and suggest that you have weak arguments.

RIDICULE/DISRESPECT This will cause the other person to close up and they may even close the meeting early.

INTERRUPTIONS This can annoy the person speaking, and others, who will think you are not listening, and they may do the same to you.

MAKING IT PERSONAL This can lead to people being offended and insulted and does not necessarily address the problem.

4.4 Education and raising awareness



Aim To show methods available for education and raising awareness.

Education and raising awareness are activities that are central to any development activity in order to empower people to act on new information and understanding. For advocacy, awareness can be raised in a number of ways. For example, an outsider might work with a community to help them understand the causes of their poverty and enable them to see how they can make a difference.

It is important to understand how adults learn in order to think about the most appropriate and effective ways of awareness raising for advocacy. As the box below shows, what needs to be avoided is an outsider approaching a community, telling them what the problems are and exactly what to do to solve them – see SECTION C1 (Issue identification) for a suitable role play.

Not teaching,
but learning

People remember...

20% of what they hear, 40% of what they hear and see, 80% of what they discover for themselves.

Education and activities to raise awareness should therefore stress learning more than teaching.

Where possible, those trying to educate or raise awareness should create a learning situation where people can discover answers for themselves.

- Adults have learned much from life, mostly from others. They should be encouraged to share their own experiences and understanding with each other.
- Adults are interested and learn quickly about things that are relevant to their lives. They should be encouraged to choose topics that are important to them and share in the planning.
- Adults have a sense of personal dignity. They must be treated with respect at all times and not humiliated or laughed at in front of others.
- As adults grow older their powers of observation and reasoning often grow stronger.

Adapted from Training For Transformation Book 1 p129–131

Useful methods for passing on information to those who have an understanding of the issues but do not necessarily know all of the facts are:

- public meetings and rallies
- information leaflets
- radio broadcasts
- newspaper articles
- press releases
- open air films
- slide shows
- newsletters
- community meetings
- posters
- PRA and PLA tools

4.5 Mobilising people for action



Aim To show methods available for mobilising people for action, once they are aware of the issues and convinced of the need for action.

A group that is already involved in an advocacy initiative will often try to raise others' awareness of the issues and mobilise them for action.

There are two types of groups that can be mobilised for action:

- Those who are directly affected by the problem. For example, the poor in Cochabamba, Bolivia took part in demonstrations to protest against water privatisation.
- Those who are concerned for others, such as churches and supporters of environmental groups. For example, Tearfund supporters wrote to the BP oil company to protest against their operations in Sudan because Sudanese people would be under threat if they protested directly.

There are many reasons for mobilising groups of people for action:

- It brings greater pressure to decision-makers through showing there is public concern, a wide range of interested groups, and a high level of awareness and understanding.
- It adds legitimacy to lobbying efforts when the affected community come together to show their concern.
- It can open access to decision-makers if lobbying is not achieving much.
- It is a way of using energy or anger in a positive way that will bring about change.
- It can bring media attention and raise the profile of the issue.

Ação Evangélica (ACEV), Brazil – Pipeline Campaign

Ação Evangélica is a small Pentecostal denomination in Brazil. Amongst their various activities, they drill wells for poor communities and campaign for access to water for everyone.

For seven years they have been campaigning for a pipeline to be run from the Coremas reservoir to the Patos, São Mamede and Santa Luzia region. They arranged regular public meetings with parliamentary representatives, the Secretary of State for Water Resources, Head of the State Water Board, Mayor and Local Councillors. The lobbying was having little success so they organised a march to demand that the government take responsibility for providing access to clean water and build the pipeline.

The politicians thought that few people would take part in the march, but when they saw that crowds were gathering and television cameras had arrived, they quickly joined the march at the front! This ended in a public meeting, led by ACEV, who carefully controlled the party political balance of speakers. They also organised a petition to the State Governor, and paid for adverts on television in favour of the pipeline.

So far, the pipeline has not been built but ACEV will continue to put pressure on the authorities. However, the State Governor has announced on the radio that he will soon be starting work on the pipeline, so ACEV will now find it easier to hold the authorities to account.

AIDS awareness
in Ethiopia

EvaSue, The Evangelical Student Body in Ethiopia, wanted to highlight the spread of AIDS in Ethiopia. They organised a march of 240 students that started from a church in Addis Ababa and marched through the streets, visiting the Tesfa Goh (Association of HIV/AIDS patients) on the way as an act of solidarity. They carried banners and wore t-shirts with 'life is precious: guard it' on the front. They ended the march at the Prime Minister's office, where they delivered a letter and prayed for the nation and HIV/AIDS patients. The letter said that they wanted more co-ordination between NGOs and government in AIDS prevention and care, they wanted the government to increase education about moral values in schools, they wanted more medicines to be imported for AIDS sufferers, free of tax, and that the government should bring in laws to stop job discrimination against those with HIV/AIDS.

The demonstration was covered on television, radio and in various publications. Others in the Christian community are now planning similar action. A Christian radio station based in another country has promised to reinforce the initiative through broadcasting programmes. The Tesfa Goh wants to collaborate with EvaSue in some way.

In December 2001, the government agreed to import medicines free of tax and the Ministry of Education has planned to introduce a forum to discuss changing the educational curriculum of the country. EvaSue will be part of that forum.

Mobilisation is culture-specific, perhaps more so than many of the other advocacy activities. What works in one country, such as a street march, may not work in another place, where a public meeting might be more appropriate. The two examples above offer a few tips to consider when mobilising people for action.



TOOL 31

Principles for mobilising people for action

INCLUDE THOSE WHO ARE AFFECTED BY THE PROBLEM, so they take responsibility for advocating for their own issues.

CLARIFY WHAT YOU ARE TRYING TO ACHIEVE by mobilising people, so that your actions are not confused.

CHOOSE YOUR METHODS CAREFULLY, both according to what will be effective and appropriate, and what people are likely to be willing to do.

HAVE A CLEAR MESSAGE, using slogans if appropriate.

ENCOURAGE EASY ACTIONS so that people will readily become involved and act. Many people doing a basic action such as signing a petition can be more powerful than a few people doing a more complicated action such as writing a complex letter.

MAKE EVENTS FUN, such as holding a carnival or march, because this builds solidarity and support.

AVOID VIOLENCE because this will discredit your message and is unlikely to bring about the change you are looking for.

THINK ABOUT HOW THE MEDIA WILL RESPOND and plan actions that will attract media attention so you can get your message to a wide audience.

WORK WITH YOUR ALLIES to reach the widest group of concerned people possible.

CONSIDER THE POTENTIAL EFFECTS ON YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH DECISION-MAKERS.

If you are in discussions with decision-makers about changes that they can make to their policies or practices, then you need to consider whether mobilisation will increase or decrease your chances of success.



TOOL 32

Methods for mobilising people

There are many methods of mobilising people for action. The methods you choose should depend on factors such as what people are interested in doing and what will have the greatest impact. The table on the following page outlines a number of options, with some of their pros and cons.

4.6 Working with the media

The 'media' includes radio, television, newspapers, magazines and the electronic media such as email and the internet. It is a powerful force that can build awareness and shape public opinion and influence policy decisions. If you use the media well you can enhance your advocacy work and increase your chances of bringing about the change you desire.

Some tips for working with the media:

BE CLEAR ABOUT YOUR AIM Why do you want media coverage? Is it to reach decision-makers or a wider audience? Is it to raise awareness or put pressure for policy change?

STICK TO YOUR MESSAGE What particular message do you want to share? Ensure that this is clear and in line with your messages for lobbying and mobilising people.

REMEMBER THAT YOU ARE DEALING WITH PEOPLE The media is made up of individuals and departments who have a job to do and need a good story.

TARGET KEY PEOPLE To use the media well you need to have good relationships with relevant people who are in sympathy with what you are trying to do.

PUT YOURSELF IN THE SHOES OF THE MEDIA Ask yourself 'Why is this interesting? What will catch people's attention? What is the likely reaction?'

REMEMBER THAT NO NEWS IS UNBIASED Most media have values behind them, whether they are political, religious, poverty focused etc. Make sure you find out what this is before you approach them. You will then have a good understanding of how they may view your issues.

Methods of mobilisation

	COMPONENTS	BENEFITS	DRAWBACKS
Public meetings	<p>People brought together for a debate</p> <p>Decision-makers open to public questioning</p> <p>Everyone invited</p>	<p>Might get good publicity</p> <p>Decision-makers hear views directly</p> <p>Chance for discussion</p>	<p>Time-consuming and expensive to set up</p> <p>Possibility of disruption or confrontation</p>
Vigils, demonstrations and protests	<p>Group of people gathered at a symbolic place to make a visual protest to decision-makers</p>	<p>Can be very visual and powerful</p> <p>Good media coverage</p>	<p>Possible violence</p> <p>Might lose access to decision-makers if confrontational</p>
Supporters meeting decision-makers	<p>Groups of concerned people meet with decision-makers, often their local officials to reinforce the message</p>	<p>Decision-makers hear concerns directly from those affected</p> <p>Builds local support for campaign</p>	<p>Difficult to co-ordinate message</p>
Production of materials (reports, briefings)	<p>Detailed material which shows the facts behind the campaign, usually with policy recommendations</p>	<p>Gives credibility among supporters and decision-makers</p> <p>Educates others</p>	<p>Time-consuming and expensive to produce</p> <p>Danger that they will not be read</p>
Stunts	<p>Unusual actions which draw media attention to your cause, such as street drama</p>	<p>Good media attention</p> <p>Powerful for getting message across to public and decision-makers</p>	<p>Can go wrong and look unprofessional</p> <p>If very controversial, public may be hostile</p>
Newsletters	<p>Regular mailing or information to those who are interested</p>	<p>Keeps people up-to-date</p> <p>Encourages regular and alternative actions</p>	<p>Can be time-consuming and expensive to produce</p>
Postcards and petitions	<p>People sign a sheet of paper or sign or write a message on a postcard to decision-makers</p>	<p>Quick and easy to do</p> <p>Many people likely to act</p> <p>Can be a good starting point for mobilising the public</p>	<p>Impersonal, so possibly ignored by decision-makers</p>
Letters to decision-makers	<p>People write personally to decision-makers</p>	<p>Letters to elected representatives often viewed by policy-makers as measure of public concern</p>	<p>Decision-maker might receive many letters, so difficult to distinguish from other campaigns</p>
Internet campaigning	<p>Signing petitions, sending letters to decision-makers</p>	<p>Easy to set up</p> <p>Flexible and responsive</p> <p>Can get many people involved</p>	<p>Excludes those without internet access</p> <p>May be ignored because impersonal</p>
Exhibitions	<p>Set up in public places to raise awareness</p> <p>Possibly linked with actions or stunts</p>	<p>Photos, video and audio are very visual and people will stop and take notice</p>	<p>Time-consuming</p> <p>Often dependent on the weather</p>
Boycotts	<p>Refusal to buy products from a certain company</p>	<p>Can affect profits and bring pressure for change</p> <p>Good media coverage</p>	<p>If few people participate, it will not be effective</p>



TOOL 33

Media release

This is one of the most common ways of relating to the media and you can use it to draw attention to your concerns. Make sure you answer the following five questions:

- What is happening / has happened?
- Who is doing it / did it or is talking about it?
- Where is it happening / has it happened?
- When is it happening / has it happened?
- Why is it happening / has it happened?

You should also apply the ‘So what?’ question to your media release. This means putting yourselves in the shoes of the reader. This will make sure you have made the issue and implications clear to them. Good photographs can significantly improve the chance of coverage in a newspaper.

Finally, ensure that your facts are correct and once you have sent the media release, contact the person you have sent it to in order to find out whether they will cover your story or want more information.

On the following page is an example of a media release.



TOOL 34

Radio interviews

Radio interviews can be an effective way of delivering your message clearly and quickly, but, if badly done, could also undermine your advocacy work. Interview styles range from simple enquiry to hostile questioning.

Remember that you have the information. You are the expert and you are there to entertain, to inform and educate. Good interviews require good preparation and experience. Experience only comes with practice but you can learn how to prepare.

Ten tips for a radio interview

- Check whether it will be live or recorded and whether you will be the only person interviewed or whether it will be a debate.
- Check the latest information and have the necessary facts written down in front of you.
- Think of difficult questions you might be asked and develop answers.
- Make a list of the three main points you want make – and stick to them!
- Develop some stories or examples to illustrate your points.
- Find out what the first question will be.
- If you are inexperienced or lacking confidence, practise what you want to say with a friend or colleague.
- Develop a conversational style – do not be too complicated or technical.

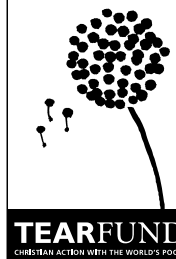
1 The release should be a maximum of 2 sides of A4 paper, and only on one side of each sheet.

2 Use headed note-paper if possible. Write NEWS RELEASE and the date.

Example media release

NEWS RELEASE

Embargoed until 0001 July 5th 2000



Young people call for greater peace efforts in Sudan

4 Make sure the headline is bold so that it gets people's attention

3 Place an embargo on it if you do not want the news to be publicised before a certain date.

5 Include all the basic facts in the first paragraph, by making sure you have answered What? Who? When? Why? How? Where?

6 Use short sentences and paragraphs and avoid jargon.

7 Include a direct quote from the spokesperson and an example or story.

8 Put your contact name and details at the bottom of the release. If you have additional information available, or further statistics, refer to it at the end.

Thousands of young people are sending postcards with a difference from their summer holidays this year – calling on the British Government to exert pressure to end 16 years of war in Sudan, which has claimed nearly two million lives.

The post card campaign is being conducted by Tearfund's Activist network of young supporters. Thousands of young people who attend summer holiday church events such as the Soul Survivor and New Wine festivals are being encouraged to join in by sending postcards to their MPs.

The postcards, which bear photos of children in Sudan, urge MPs to seek assurances from the newly-appointed Foreign Office Minister Peter Hain that the UK Government is committed to supporting a negotiated settlement which will bring a lasting peace in the country.

Angus Murray, Sudan Project Officer at Tearfund, believes that greater diplomatic efforts from Britain and other western governments will be crucial in bringing Sudan's various warring parties closer to a just and lasting peace.

'Other countries in the region and internationally are involved in the Sudan conflict to varying degrees. There are also conflicts within conflicts inside Sudan itself. They include southern groups fighting one another, government and rebel commanders occasionally changing sides, and mini-wars in different regions, including eastern Sudan and the Nuba Mountains.'

Continues Angus: 'In the past a lack of international pressure for peace has left warring factions with too few reasons to end their fighting. We are asking the British Government for a concerted international initiative to help create peace in the region. Tearfund's Christian partners are working at the grassroots to bring about peace.'

Ends

For further information contact Keith Ewing, Tearfund Press Office, on +44 20 8943 7779, or Peter Laverock on +44 020 8943 7901.

Tearfund is an evangelical Christian relief and development agency with 600 projects in more than 80 countries. It is a member of the Disasters Emergency Committee of leading UK aid agencies and was a founder member of the Jubilee 2000 coalition, which campaigned for the cancellation of the unpayable debts of the world's poorest countries.

- Never ignore questions, but steer them towards what you want to say – use the subject of the questions to make the points you want to make.
- Be an expert – remember that you are likely to know more about the issue than the interviewer.

Exercise

Participants prepare a radio interview on a topic of their choice. The facilitator acts as the interviewer and other participants give feedback and learn from the experience.