

A

The *what, where and who* of advocacy

Section A provides an understanding of what advocacy is and what it involves. It considers the different approaches to advocacy that can be taken, the various situations in which advocacy can occur and some of the roles of an advocate.



Facilitator's notes

This section explores a series of questions and answers. A training workshop facilitator must be familiar with this material.

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Training exercises

This section outlines interactive training exercises that can be used with groups, in order to deepen understanding of the issues that have been raised and to practise application of the tools that have been introduced. They are ideal for use in a training workshop.

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SECTION A Facilitator's notes



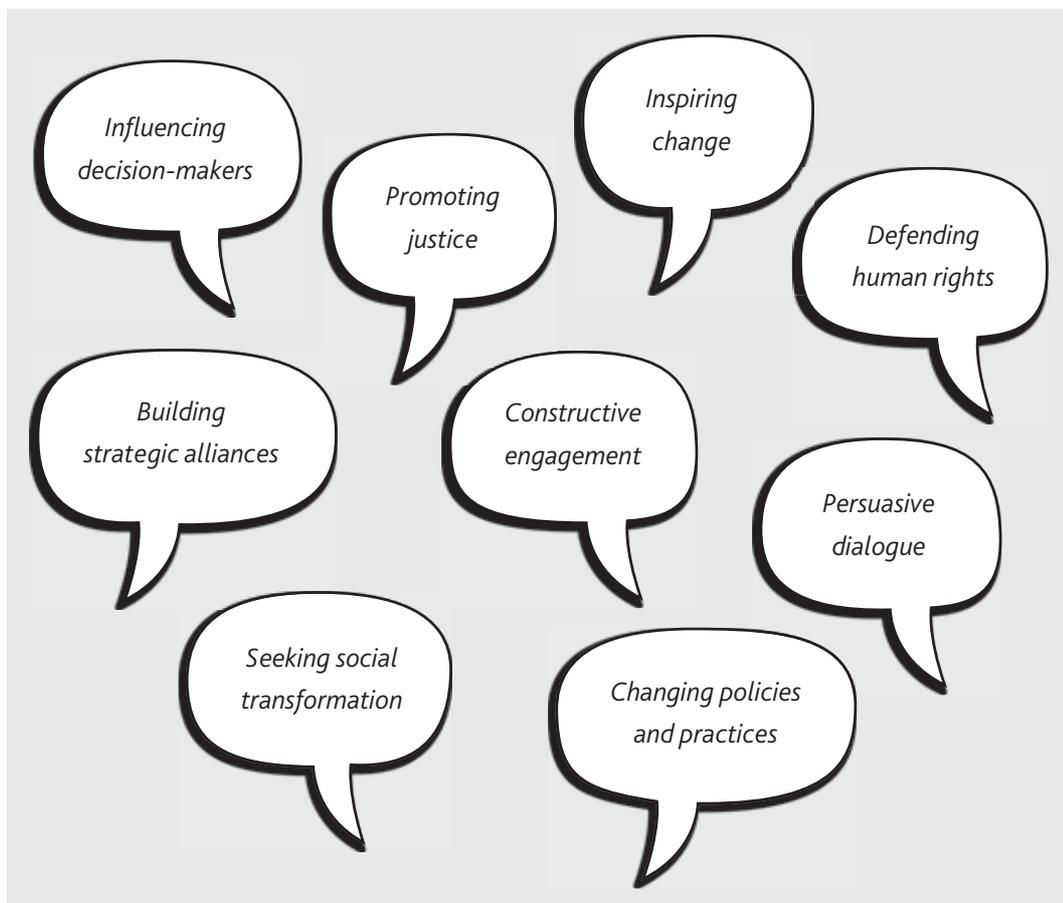
What is advocacy?

The word 'advocacy' has different meanings for different people in different contexts. People understand 'advocacy' in accordance with their experiences, their worldview, their language and their culture. Some people will see advocacy as beneficial, but other people may have had bad experiences and see advocacy as something to avoid. Assuming that another person understands 'advocacy' in the same way as we do can sometimes lead to miscommunication, so it is important to clarify a common understanding.

There is no single correct interpretation of the word 'advocacy'. Tearfund defines 'advocacy' as:

'Influencing the decisions, policies and practices of powerful decision-makers, to address underlying causes of poverty, bring justice and support good development.'

In some contexts it is risky to talk about 'advocacy' and in some languages there is no equivalent word. In these situations, it may be appropriate to find an alternative phrase, which has the same meaning in that particular context. For example:



For more information, see **TOOL 1: Advocacy definitions**.



What is the purpose of advocacy?

Advocacy is never just about raising awareness of an issue, a problem or a situation. It is always about trying to seek change in the policies, practices, systems, structures, decisions and attitudes that cause poverty and injustice, so that they work in favour of people living in poverty.

- Sometimes, there is no law or policy in place, and one needs to be developed. Advocacy here involves asking for a new law or policy.

CASE STUDY

LIBERIA

The Association of Evangelicals of Liberia (AEL), a Tearfund partner, is well known for water and sanitation work. Together with other non-governmental organisations (NGOs), development partners, civil society, United Nations (UN) agencies, the private sector and government ministries, they drafted a national policy framework to ensure that citizens would have access to safe, clean water and improved sanitation facilities, provided for by law. The policy sought for all stakeholders to do the following:

- to establish and strengthen the institutional capacity of the water and sanitation sector
- to ensure equity and prioritised service provision; to develop a monitoring system
- to improve financing mechanisms.

There followed several months of lobbying and asking for the policy framework to be approved but finally the president signed it. This endorsement gave AEL and other actors in the sector a clear action plan, which, with the coordinated response of other actors, resulted in increased efforts to improve water and sanitation facilities for the citizens of Liberia.

- Sometimes, there is a law or policy already in place, but it may be unjust or not work properly, and it needs to be changed. Advocacy here involves asking for the law or policy to be amended and revised.

CASE STUDY

THAILAND

Siam Care, a Tearfund partner, was concerned about the stigma associated with the disclosure of children’s HIV status on vaccination records. The words ‘HIV positive’ were stamped on the front page and the children’s mothers wanted their privacy respected. However, if the books were destroyed, important vaccination, child development and health records would be lost. Siam Care, together with other NGOs, designed a new format for the vaccination books that did not disclose the children’s HIV status. They also organised a seminar for the Ministry of Public Health and presented the problem and the new format they were proposing. The ministry formed a committee (which included NGOs) to look at the issue and the new format was approved.

- Sometimes, there may be a good law or policy in place but it needs to be enforced. Advocacy here involves asking for the law or policy to be implemented.

CASE STUDY

CAMBODIA

Trafficking children between Cambodia and Thailand is big business, even though there are laws in place to protect them. One Tearfund partner, determined to see the laws enforced, took some Cambodian government officials across the border into Thailand to witness the conditions in which trafficked children were living. They worked with communities and churches to raise awareness of the laws against trafficking. They also encouraged the government officials, the border authorities and others to fulfil their responsibilities for upholding the law. Now, when children are at risk of being trafficked, many people know how to enforce the laws. Children themselves know how to get help. Trust has been built between the various officials who are meant to uphold the law. Breaches of the law are occurring less and less frequently.

- Sometimes, there is a good law or policy in place but it is implemented in a way that is unfair or discriminatory. Advocacy here involves asking for better implementation.

CASE STUDY

RWANDA

African Evangelistic Enterprise (Alliance des Eglises Evangéliques – AEE) is a Tearfund partner that works with orphans whose parents have died of AIDS-related illnesses and with child-headed households in Rwanda. AEE's members run various initiatives, including a sewing workshop and a carpentry shop where children are trained and sell their goods. The Rwandan Revenue Authority ordered that these initiatives pay their taxes (which they could not afford to do) or close down. AEE, as a partner in these initiatives, used its size and contacts to arrange a meeting with the Ministry of Social Affairs. At the meeting they explained that those working in the initiatives were either orphans or members of child-headed households and should therefore be exempted from paying taxes, and the ministry agreed.

- Sometimes, there is no law or practice in place, and it is simply an issue of changing attitudes. Advocacy here involves asking for attitudes or practices to be changed.

CASE STUDY

INDIA

The local authorities in Delhi were unwilling to provide services to the city's slum communities for a variety of reasons. Asha, a Tearfund partner, was carrying out community health and development work in the slums. At the time, the slum landlords made all the decisions about what happened in the slums. Often, the needs of the poorest people were ignored. So Asha built relationships with the landlords and showed them that slum development and service provision should be encouraged. They also mobilised women's groups to share their concerns with the local authorities. As a result, many of the groups gained access to water points, sanitation and health services.

- Sometimes, there is a law or policy in place that is adequate, but the government is threatening to change it. Advocacy here is about blocking the threatened changes and maintaining the current law or policy.

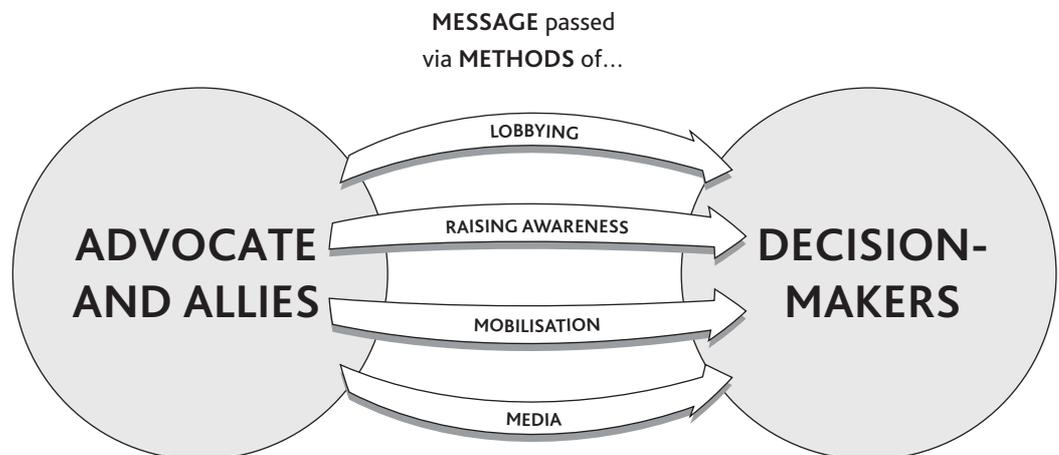


What does advocacy involve?

However we define 'advocacy', it usually involves:

- **INFLUENCING THE POWERFUL** and educating decision-makers about their responsibilities to uphold the rights of poor, vulnerable and oppressed people. It encourages accountability and can adjust power relationships.
- **SPEAKING OUT AND COMMUNICATING** by presenting a clear message, based on good evidence, directed at those who can bring about change.
- **EMPOWERING THOSE WITHOUT POWER** to become their own agents of change. It helps those who feel powerless to see what power they already have. It can strengthen civil society.
- **SEEKING JUSTICE** for those who are poor, vulnerable, oppressed or treated unfairly.
- **AN ORGANISED PROCESS** that is planned and strategic, rather than based on one-off events. It aims towards a desired outcome, but it is also flexible and sometimes unpredictable.
- **ASKING 'WHY?'** until we find the underlying causes of poverty and injustice.
- **BEING INTENTIONAL**, identifying the changes we want to see and the people who can deliver them.
- **A CLEAR PURPOSE** that seeks to alleviate poverty and challenge injustice by changing the systems, structures, policies, decisions, practices and attitudes that cause poverty and injustice.

Advocacy can be about *individual* cases of poverty and injustice – for example, campaigning to release people who have been wrongly imprisoned. It can also be about *structural* issues of poverty and injustice – for example, campaigning to cancel debt or improve the rules of global trade.



The overall objective is to change the particular policies or practices of the decision-makers for the benefit of people who are poor, vulnerable and oppressed.



What are the main approaches to advocacy?

There are three main approaches to advocacy: advocacy *for*, *with* and *by* people who are poor, vulnerable and oppressed. Many advocacy initiatives will use all three approaches at different times.

■ **Advocacy for people**

Advocacy can be done on behalf of communities affected by a situation, by people and organisations not directly affected, including staff and supporters of organisations in developed countries.

This option works in consultation and engagement with the affected communities. It works in situations where affected communities are unable to speak out, perhaps because of fear

or danger. It also works when advocates are advocating to decision-makers who are far removed from the affected communities, perhaps by time or distance, for example when an international non-governmental organisation (INGO) engages with the UN about climate change.

■ **Advocacy with people**

Advocacy can be done in a collaborative way, between communities affected by a situation and those who are not directly affected, including staff and supporters of organisations in developed countries.

This option works when they are both advocating on the same or similar issues, and when there is effective engagement with the affected communities. Otherwise, the danger is that those from outside the affected communities may dominate the advocacy process, particularly if they have more power, money, status or knowledge.

■ **Advocacy by people**

Advocacy can be done by communities directly affected by a situation. If appropriate, those who are not directly affected, including staff and supporters of organisations in developed countries, can provide a role in building capacity and supporting the affected communities to be their own advocates.

This option works when the affected communities are best placed to speak out about a situation. It is generally an empowering and more sustainable approach. If there is any involvement from those outside the affected communities, they have to be careful not to control the process or shape the outcome.

For more information, see **TOOL 2: For, with or by?**

It might be appropriate to use a mixture of the three approaches to advocacy at different times during the advocacy process. Development organisations that support the principles of participation and empowerment should aim to see people living in poverty undertake advocacy themselves and become agents of change in their local area. However, due to risk or lack of skills and knowledge, advocacy for people living in poverty may be the only option at the start.



Where does advocacy take place?

Advocacy can take place at all levels of decision-making: international, regional, national, provincial, district and community. In most cases, it is needed at all levels because decisions made at one level affect people at another level. Decisions at top levels affect those at lower levels, while actions at lower levels can determine policies at higher levels.

FOR EXAMPLE: Climate change is an issue that impacts poor communities at the local level. However, negotiations about climate change take place at the international level. Decisions resulting from those negotiations determine government policies at the national level. Implementation of those policies takes place at the provincial and district level. So, for this issue, advocacy can be undertaken at every level to ensure that the impacts of climate change are addressed. It is important to recognise the interconnections between the levels, even if a community or organisation only undertakes advocacy at one of the levels.

In many places in the world, the church is present at all levels and therefore has a key role to play in speaking out for justice and seeking to bring about change. It has the strategic advantage of local knowledge and relationships, as well as links to regional and national structures.

For more information, see **TOOL 3: Advocacy pyramid.**



Who can do advocacy?

Some people see advocacy as a professional activity, which can only be undertaken by a few people on behalf of the rest of the population. Sometimes, it is associated with lawyers or politicians. It is seen as something that is confrontational, rather than collaborative. But this is an incorrect understanding of advocacy.

Anyone affected by or interested in an issue, a problem or a situation can be an advocate. There is no requirement to have special qualifications.

Advocates take on different roles depending on the context. Some of the roles include representing, accompanying, empowering, mediating, modelling, negotiating, networking, lobbying, mobilising, petitioning and bargaining.

For more information, see **TOOL 4: Roles of an advocate**.



What is good practice in advocacy?

We have already learned that advocacy can be done *for* those affected by a situation, *with* those affected and *by* those affected. Each approach may be valid in certain situations. Whichever approach is taken, there are certain principles of good practice that need to be applied.

- **Accountability**

Accountability in advocacy is about acknowledging and assuming responsibility for advocacy messages, decisions and actions. We are accountable to all those who are interested in and affected by the situation.

- **Legitimacy**

Legitimacy in advocacy is about ensuring that the advocate has authority to advocate. A legitimate advocate is involved in, interested in or affected by the issue, or has a genuine reason for advocating on behalf of someone else.

- **Participation**

Participation in advocacy is about involving all the people interested in, and/or affected by, the issue. It is about consultation and cooperation to make sure that everyone who wants to participate is given opportunities to be included throughout the advocacy process.

- **Representation**

Representation in advocacy is about ensuring that, when advocacy is done on behalf of other people, the views of those people are accurately and fairly taken into account at all stages of the advocacy process. It is about communicating with those affected to ensure that they are happy with advocacy messages, decisions, and actions undertaken on their behalf.

Following these principles helps advocates to avoid the temptation of rushing in and doing advocacy work on behalf of others when they could do it in collaboration with them, or, where possible, enable them to do it themselves.

For more information, please see **TOOL 5: Good practice principles checklist**.



TOOL 1 Advocacy definitions

There are numerous definitions of advocacy. Official definitions are not the only correct ones. Here is Tearfund’s definition, along with some other ones:

Influencing the decisions, policies and practices of powerful decision-makers, to address underlying causes of poverty, bring justice and support good development.
Tearfund

The promotion of a specific message and/or course of action in order to influence or contribute to the development and implementation of public policies which will alleviate the causes and consequences of poverty.
Oxfam GB

The defence and promotion of justice. It involves strategically and publicly confronting the causes of any injustice against the poor; peacefully influencing people with the power to make decisions; and creating, changing or implementing laws, policies, procedures or practices that address certain social injustices. For Peace and Hope, advocacy is based on the biblical mandate for justice.
Peace and Hope, Peru

The process of influencing key decision-makers and opinion-formers (individuals and organisations) for changes to policies and practices that will work in poor people’s favour.
ActionAid

The organised influence of decision-makers.
Viva

Advocacy is the biblical mandate to speak on behalf of the oppressed in society.
Evangelical Fellowship of Zambia

A project, programme or programmatic approach which seeks to address the structural and systematic causes of poverty by changing policies, systems, practices and attitudes that perpetuate inequality and deny human rights.
World Vision International

Speaking out in order to influence policy, decisions, attitudes and the behaviour of those in power on behalf of, and with, poor and marginalised people, in order to achieve positive and lasting social, political and economic change.
United Mission to Nepal



TOOL 2 For, with or by?

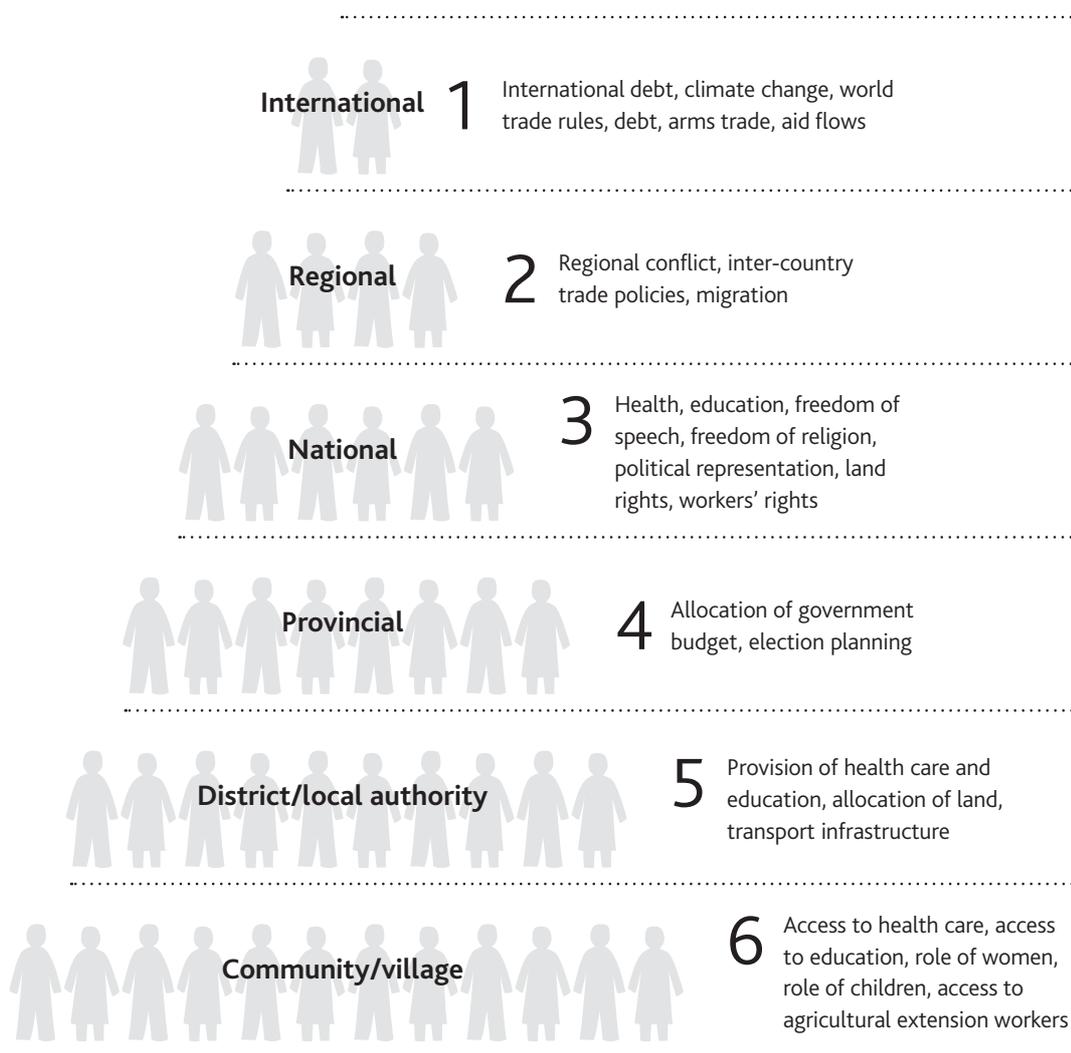
	When to choose this option	Advantages	Disadvantages
<p>Advocacy FOR those affected by a situation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Where there is no respect for the rule of law, democracy and/or human rights, in the context of affected communities. ✓ Where decision-makers are far removed, in time or distance, from affected communities, and legitimacy has been conferred on the advocates by the affected communities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Advocates may have faster access to, and greater potential to influence, decision-makers and other powerful people. + Advocates are likely to be less at risk because they are removed from situations of fear or danger that affected communities may be experiencing. + Advocates have good access to information about the wider context. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Issues are often identified by outsiders. - Affected communities may not be properly consulted during the advocacy process. - A wide range of views may not be sought, and any differences in views may be ignored or not acknowledged. - Advocacy tends to be targeted only at official decision-makers. - Advocates may not increase the capacity of local groups to act.
<p>Advocacy WITH those affected by a situation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Where those who are directly affected and those who are not affected are advocating on the same or similar issues. ✓ Where it is beneficial to all parties for there to be collaboration between them. ✓ When there is a desire to build advocacy capacity and/or increase access to decision-makers for the communities directly affected by the situation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Issues are identified by affected communities. + Shared planning, resources and action. + The advocates not directly affected can organise and mobilise others outside the situation to advocate. + Builds advocacy capacity, abilities and skills of those affected by a situation. + Increases access to decision-makers for people in poor and affected communities. + Encourages collaboration and creates a powerful joint voice to impact the situation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Advocates not directly affected may seek to be in control, dominate the agenda, and abuse power dynamics (including money, status, and knowledge). - Advocates directly affected may end up taking part in frontline activities determined and organised by advocates not directly affected. - Can be slower due to need for agreement between all parties.
<p>Advocacy BY those affected by a situation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ When there is a desire to build advocacy capacity and/or increase access to decision-makers for the advocates directly affected by the situation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Issues are identified by affected communities. + Empowering because people in poor and affected communities are their own agents of change. + Advocates are best placed to judge any compromise positions that may be required. + Advocates may be able to correct the imbalance of existing unjust power structures. + Builds advocacy capacity of those affected by a situation. + Increases awareness of possibilities to do advocacy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Access to resources and information is more limited. - Advocates may lack skills and knowledge at the outset. - May need to have significant outside input at the outset. - Outsiders may try to control the process and/or shape the outcome. - Changes in laws, policies or practices may take longer to achieve. - Potentially greater risks involved for the advocates (particularly in difficult political contexts).



TOOL 3

Advocacy pyramid

The different levels of advocacy



Advocacy takes place at many levels. It varies according to the problem and the types of groups involved. Decisions made at one level affect people at another level. Therefore, advocacy is necessary at all levels for lasting change.

For example, a national government may be spending money on international debt repayments. This means it cannot allocate budget to the provincial government to spend on education. Therefore, the local authority cannot fulfil its role in delivering education for every primary school-age child. In this scenario, advocacy work needs to be aimed at the local authority, provincial, national and international levels. This is because of the links between the issue of primary education for all and the issue of international debt.

People living in poverty suffer the effects of decisions made at higher levels. However, they and their advocates (if not they themselves) can change these decisions by influencing decision-makers at higher levels.

In many countries, the church is present at all levels and is therefore in a strategic position to bring about change. For example, it can connect people living in poverty with people in power.



TOOL 4

Roles of an advocate

An advocate will take different roles depending on the objectives. Some possible roles are shown below:

Possible advocate roles

ROLE	CHARACTERISTIC	
Represent	Speak on behalf of people	
Accompany	Speak with people	
Empower	Enable people to speak for themselves	
Mediate	Facilitate communication between people and decision-makers	
Model	Demonstrate a policy or practice to people or decision-makers	
Negotiate	Confer with a decision-maker to settle something	
Network	Bring people together to speak jointly	
Lobby	Persuade a decision-maker to do something	
Mobilise	Encourage people to take action to influence a decision-maker	
Bargain	Negotiate the settlement of something	

KEY



Advocate



Targets / decision-makers / those in power



Those affected by a situation



TOOL 5

Good practice principles checklist

Accountability

- ✓ Have the advocates acknowledged and assumed responsibility for the advocacy messages and actions?
- ✓ Do the advocates and the affected communities (if different) 'own' the advocacy initiative?
- ✓ Are the advocates accountable to the affected communities for their advocacy messages and actions?
- ✓ Have the advocates ensured that nobody has been marginalised in decision-making during the advocacy process?

Legitimacy

- ✓ Do the advocates have authority to advocate?
- ✓ Are the advocates involved in, interested in or affected by the issue, or do the advocates have a genuine reason for advocating on behalf of someone else?
- ✓ Are the advocates clear about the basis upon which they are entitled to advocate?
- ✓ Are the advocates committed to the issue, and the people involved, for the long term?

Participation

- ✓ Has everyone interested in and affected by the issue been given opportunities to be consulted, included and have their views considered throughout the advocacy process?
- ✓ Are those affected adequately aware of the risks involved?
- ✓ Are the proposed advocacy messages and actions acceptable to those affected?
- ✓ Are those affected being kept informed of progress?
- ✓ Is capacity being built for people interested in and affected by the issue to advocate for themselves?

Representation

When advocacy is done on behalf of other people:

- ✓ Have the advocates been asked by the affected communities (directly or indirectly) to advocate on their behalf?
- ✓ Have the views of the affected communities been accurately and fairly taken into account in the development of advocacy messages and actions?
- ✓ Do the people interested in and affected by the issue have ongoing input into the advocacy process?
- ✓ Are the affected communities happy with the advocacy messages, decisions and actions being undertaken on their behalf?

SECTION A Training exercises



EXERCISE 1 Understanding advocacy

Aim To come to an understanding of advocacy and its basic components

TYPE Group exercise

METHODS Individual reflection, small group discussion and plenary discussion

MATERIAL Sticky notes or blank cards

HANDOUTS TOOL 1: Advocacy definitions
TOOL 2: For, with or by?

- STEPS (VERSION 1)**
1. Give all participants some sticky notes or blank cards.
 2. Using one word or phrase per sticky note or blank card, ask participants to write or draw words or phrases that come to mind when they hear the word 'advocacy'.
 3. Stick the sticky notes or cards on the wall or place them on the floor.
 4. Invite participants to group the ideas in themes.
 5. Lead a plenary discussion around the key themes and draw out a common understanding of 'advocacy' and the main approaches to advocacy.
- STEPS (VERSION 2)**
1. Present participants with TOOL 1: Advocacy definitions and TOOL 2: For, with or by? as handouts.
 2. Ask participants to draw out the key words, phrases, themes, issues or statements. They can do this individually or in small groups.
 3. Invite participants to feed back their findings in plenary.
 4. Lead a plenary discussion around the key themes and draw out a common understanding of 'advocacy'.



EXERCISE 2 Advocacy levels

Aim To show that some advocacy issues can be addressed at multiple levels

TYPE Group exercise

METHODS Brainstorm, plenary discussion, case studies and small group discussion

HANDOUT TOOL 3: Advocacy pyramid

- STEPS**
1. Make one end of the room 'international level' and the other end of the room 'local level'.
 2. Ask participants to stand in a line between the ends of the room, according to where they think advocacy happens.
 3. Select people at key points along the line to explain why they chose to stand there.
 4. Encourage people to share different examples of advocacy they have seen or done at the different levels.
 5. Give out TOOL 3: Advocacy pyramid as a handout. Dispel any misconceptions and explain that advocacy can happen at any and every level.

**EXERCISE 3 Understanding what advocates do**

Aim To show that those involved in advocacy can take on many different roles at different times

TYPE Group exercise

METHODS Brainstorm, plenary discussion, case studies, small group discussion, drawing, role play

MATERIAL Large piece of paper, pens (flipchart stand optional)

HANDOUT TOOL 4: Roles of an advocate

- STEPS**
1. Draw each of the 'roles of an advocate' diagrams from TOOL 4: Roles of an advocate onto a large piece of flipchart paper. (Alternatively, select case studies that demonstrate different roles played by advocates.)
 2. Ask participants to describe what is happening in each picture (or case study, if applicable) and to relate it to examples from their own experience.
 3. Next to each picture (or case study, if applicable), write the characteristics of the role which it represents and also the levels at which this type of advocacy might take place.
 4. Invite participants to add any roles that they think are missing.
 5. Lead a plenary discussion around how the roles operate in practice and give out copies of TOOL 4: Roles of an advocate.
 6. If there is time, invite participants to work in pairs to act out role plays illustrating each role, and encourage any observers to provide feedback.

**EXERCISE 4 Recognising good practice**

Aim To understand why good practice principles are necessary in advocacy

TYPE Group exercise

METHODS Role play, observation, plenary discussion

HANDOUT TOOL 5: Good practice principles checklist

- STEPS**
1. Divide people into two groups with five to eight people in each group. Ask any remaining participants to act as observers.
 2. Identify a leader in each group.
 3. Set each group a fun task that will involve influencing the leader to provide something of benefit to the group, eg asking for cake for everyone every day for the rest of the year, or negotiating an increase in pay or leave, or other benefits.
 4. Take the two leaders aside and explain the following to them:
 - Leader one is to play the role of a controlling leader who must only allow his or her own decisions to be implemented. Leader one does not tolerate others in the group who try to take over or ignore the leader. Even if the leader is unsure of the way forward, he or she needs to be firm and confident.

- Leader two is much more democratic. Leader two asks people for their opinions and encourages all group members to participate. Leader two does not impose his or her own answer and does not mind if people do not reach a solution.
5. Get each group to act out their role play, one at a time.
 6. Encourage group discussion after each role play:
 - What did the observers notice?
 - How did the participants in each group feel?
 - How did the leaders in each group feel?
 - What are the results of each type of leadership?
 - How would this apply in advocacy work?
 7. Draw out what is good practice and what is bad practice, and encourage discussion about how to apply the key principles of good practice.
 8. Distribute **TOOL 5: Good practice principles checklist**.



EXERCISE 5 Good practice in action

Aim To identify when good practice principles should be applied

TYPE Group exercise or individual reflection

METHODS Case studies, small group work, plenary discussion

HANDOUT **TOOL 5: Good practice principles checklist**

- STEPS**
1. Divide participants into small groups or ask them to work alone.
 2. Give out copies of **TOOL 5: Good practice principles checklist**.
 3. Give each group or individual a case study selected from the various case studies scattered throughout the toolkit, or ask them to choose a case study based on their experience. If using case studies from the toolkit, be sure to choose ones that clearly demonstrate one of the following: accountability, legitimacy, participation or representation.
 4. Ask participants to consider their case study, using **TOOL 5: Good practice principles checklist** to identify which good practice principles have been applied. If a good practice principle should have been applied, and has not been, ask them to think about why this happened and what could have been done differently.
 5. Invite feedback from each individual or small group, facilitating a plenary discussion. Draw out the importance of thinking through all the good practice principles and applying them wherever possible. Use **TOOL 5: Good practice principles checklist** as a guide.