

# Advocacy Tools and Guidelines

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## Promoting Policy Change

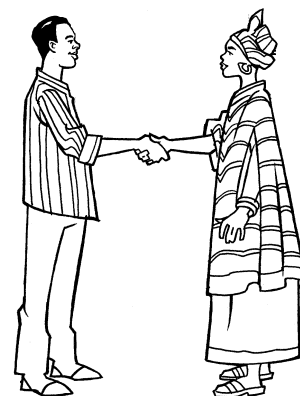
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A Resource Manual for CARE Program Managers



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# Acknowledgments

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**S**everal advocacy training guides have influenced us greatly. We have drawn extensively upon the excellent work of the Washington Office on Latin America and the Academy for Educational Development/Support for Analysis and Research in Africa. (Their guides are listed in our reference list.)

**M**any people helped to produce this manual. Andy Pugh was our editor-in-chief, and provided invaluable direction, ideas, and moral support throughout this project. We could not have done this without him. Jennifer Genung was responsible for coordinating research and production. Publication of this manual would not have occurred without her tireless efforts. Kathie Roberts did an expert job in the graphic design and layout with the help of Valerie Raimonde. A special thank you to Kum Kum Kashiparekh and Patrice Reynolds for sharing their Guatemalan tapestry for the cover design. We are indebted to Kent Kimes, who proofread the manual on very short notice. Finally, we thank Stephen Gallegos for the illustrations in this document.

# Why should I read this manual?

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- You are a project manager for an agriculture and natural resources project that provides training to farmers on handling dangerous pesticides. Many farmers in your region are suffering from pesticide poisoning. They have expressed their concerns to project staff and their desire to do something about this problem. A health survey confirms that pesticide poisoning is widespread – in fact, a national health problem. You would like to find a way for CARE to help farmers to address this problem, not just at the local, but at the national level.
- You are a project manager for a reproductive health project and one of your goals is to raise the contraceptive prevalence rate in the project area. A recent health assessment confirms that the prevalence rate is quite low, but also that women want fewer children. The Ministry of Health does not allow nurses to insert IUDs; only doctors can provide this service. You want the Ministry to reconsider this policy, but don't know where to begin.
- You are an assistant country director overseeing a major emergency operation distributing food to one million people living in drought-affected areas. As the situation improves, the national government announces it will stop providing all food aid within the next four weeks. You urgently need to make the case that this decision is premature.

CARE's programs have traditionally worked at the household and community levels but rarely addressed **policy causes of poverty** and the actions of policy makers. **Advocacy** is a strategy to influence policy makers when they make laws and regulations, distribute resources, and make other decisions that affect peoples' lives. The principal aims of advocacy are to create policies, reform policies, and ensure policies are implemented. **Policy makers** are typically government officials or those with formal political power, but they also can be leaders in the private sector whose decisions and behavior affect communities.

Several advocacy strategies can be used to influence the decisions of policy makers, such as discussing problems directly with them, delivering messages through the media, or strengthening the ability of local organizations to advocate. Advocacy is one more option in a wide range of program strategies for reducing poverty, and appropriate when you want to influence policies that are at the source of poverty and discrimination.

Our vision and mission acknowledge that innovative solutions will be needed for ending poverty, and that influencing policy decisions should be part of our efforts to achieve lasting change. By using advocacy, we are recognizing that root causes of poverty and discrimination stem both from decisions at the household level **and** from decisions made within community leadership structures, national governments, international organizations, and powerful institutions. This approach can help us to make a greater impact on the lives of disadvantaged sectors of the population.

Some CARE programs have already used advocacy strategies to influence policies. These experiences have been very helpful for increasing our understanding about how advocacy can be integrated into CARE's programs, and were extensively used in developing this manual.

These ***Tools and Guidelines*** provide a step by step guide for planning advocacy initiatives, as well as advice for successful implementation. They are intended for country office program managers who wish to include advocacy in their programs. These guidelines will help you to:

- ✓ Learn about advocacy concepts and advocacy vocabulary.
- ✓ Analyze policies that lie at the root of poverty and discrimination.
- ✓ See how advocacy can help you increase your impact.
- ✓ Devise a strategy to achieve your advocacy aims.
- ✓ Acquire essential skills to help you become an effective advocate.

# What is in this manual?

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This manual is a training guide designed to familiarize program managers with key advocacy concepts and techniques. It presents many situations in which CARE would be the primary advocate. However, one of the principal roles CARE can play in advocacy is capacity building. The manual may also be useful to partners or others with whom CARE works in advocacy.

The manual suggests a framework for identifying policy goals, creating a plan of action, and effectively building your case for change. We have presented these concepts to you in a certain sequence. However, you may want to think of these ideas as **building blocks** that can be used as you find you need them. Advocacy rarely unfolds the same way twice and there is an element of unpredictability to advocacy that makes it both a challenging and an exciting approach to solving problems.

Advocacy is essentially all about three things:

- ◆ Creating policies where they are needed when none exist.
- ◆ Reforming harmful or ineffective policies.
- ◆ Ensuring good policies are implemented and enforced.

Together, we refer to these concepts as ***policy change***.

Sometimes, it is not appropriate for CARE to take a direct role in advocacy, but rather to play a supporting role, or to help bring parties together who have shared interests in creating policy change. This manual should also help you to think about what advocacy roles are best for your operating environment, and how to become a credible advocate for change.

Advocacy frequently involves building ***constituencies*** – groups of people and organizations who support a particular policy viewpoint. Since advocacy usually occurs in the public domain, you must be prepared to consider the views of many people, and understand how decisions are made in your particular context. The more you know about the advocacy issue you select, the community where you work, and how political institutions function, the more effective an advocate you can be.

This manual is divided in ten chapters. **CHAPTERS 1** through **3** focus on key concepts, the benefits of advocacy, and preliminary steps.

- CHAPTER 1** reviews CARE's definition of advocacy and answers some frequently asked questions about what advocacy is and is not.
- CHAPTER 2** discusses the benefits of including advocacy in CARE's programs. It explains the importance of considering a wide range of causes for addressing poverty and discrimination, and therefore the need for a wider range of strategies, one of which is advocacy.
- CHAPTER 3** discusses steps that are advisable to take even before you select an advocacy issue and begin planning an initiative. This phase includes establishing credibility, building advocacy capacity, and forming strategic relationships.

**CHAPTERS 4** through **7** describe four essential steps for *planning* advocacy initiatives.

- CHAPTER 4** provides tools for policy analysis, which is usually the first step in planning an advocacy initiative.
- CHAPTER 5** describes the second step for advocacy planning: outlining a strategy. This chapter provides guidance for selecting a policy issue, identifying target audiences, setting a policy goal and identifying allies and opponents.
- CHAPTER 6** describes how to finalize your advocacy strategy. It provides guidance for choosing effective advocacy roles for CARE, identifying key advocacy messages, and defining specific activities for an advocacy initiative.
- CHAPTER 7** focuses on very practical issues for framing an advocacy plan, such as preparing a budget and setting a timeline. It also shows how advocacy goals and strategies can be summarized in a logframe consistent with CARE's project hierarchy (i.e. impact, effects, outputs, activities and input) and provides suggestions for monitoring and evaluating advocacy initiatives.

**CHAPTERS 8** through **10** describe key steps and skills for *implementing* advocacy initiatives. These chapters expand on concepts that are introduced in the planning chapters.

- CHAPTER 8** provides guidance on the central elements of advocacy implementation: developing, delivering and reinforcing messages.
- CHAPTER 9** discusses CARE's role in building the capacity of local organizations to carry out advocacy and building constituencies. This is an important discussion, since CARE's preferred role is to strengthen local capacity. It also suggests strategies for participating effectively in coalitions.
- CHAPTER 10** describes tactics that are essential for conducting successful advocacy campaigns: communicating effectively, using the media, negotiating, and managing risk.





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