

Three approaches to advocacy

APPROACH TO ADVOCACY	ADVOCACY FOR THOSE AFFECTED BY A SITUATION	ADVOCACY WITH THOSE AFFECTED BY A SITUATION	ADVOCACY BY THOSE AFFECTED BY A SITUATION
Advocacy work done by	Professionals, NGOs, church leaders	A mixture of professionals, NGOs and local community groups	Local community, workers
Main objectives for intervention	Change in law, policy or practice	Increased access to decision-making Change in law, policy or practice Build advocacy capacity of those affected by situation	Increase in awareness of advocacy possibilities and capacity to do advocacy
Characteristics	Issues often identified by outsiders Usually targeted at official decision-makers	Issues identified by community Shared planning, resources and action Outside organisers mobilise capacity	Issues identified by community Learning by involvement May have significant outside input at start
Advantages	Quick access to decision-makers Good access to information about wider context	Increase access of poor to decision-makers Advocacy skills and capacity developed	Empowering – poor see themselves as agents of change Sustainable Can correct power imbalance
Disadvantages	Could strengthen existing power structures May not increase the capacity of local groups to act	NGO often in control and sets agenda Slower due to need for agreement between all parties	Access to fewer resources and information Risk of revenge Policy change may take longer

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

Source: *ROOTS 1: Understanding advocacy*, Tearfund 2002, page 24