Advocacy Strategy Development Tools

Problem Tree Process

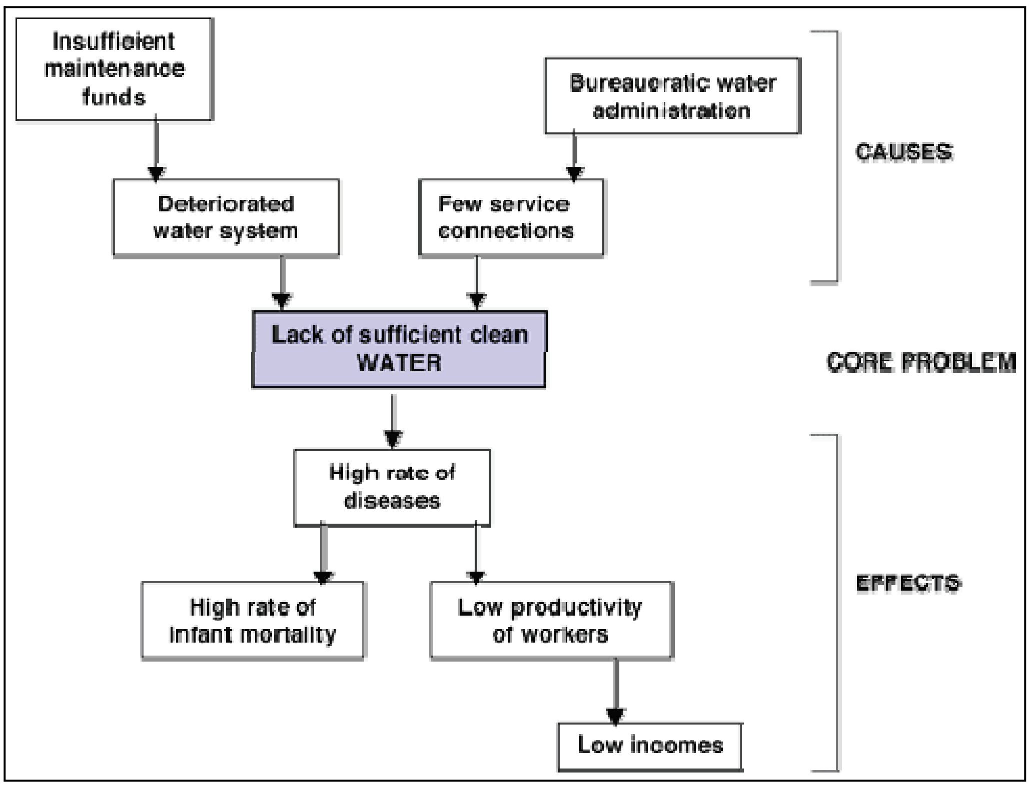
Problem Trees are used to help analyse a situation and **identify a core problem that you want to focus on.** The tree has a trunk (the core problem), roots (the causes of the problem), and branches (the effects).

Step 1: Identify Causes and Effects

To start the tree, generate the causes and effects on Post-it notes and stick them onto a large piece of paper.

Step 2: Determine Hierarchy

The team can then negotiate on the relationships between the cards and how they should be placed.



Step 3: Focus on Your Key Issue/Opportunity

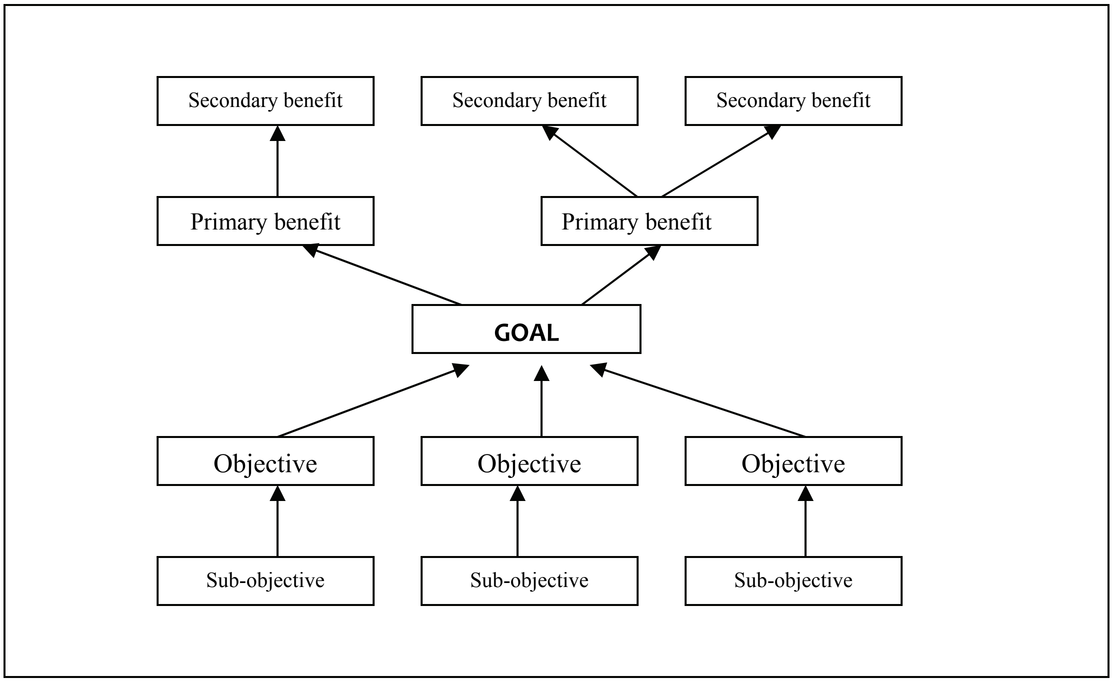
The tree can be re-framed by making one of the causes or effects as the core problem, and re-adjusting the other cards around it. You may want to do this to focus your issue to one that you can better influence or which is of greatest strategic priority. In the example above, you might chose to focus on high infant mortality which is a global Partnership priority for Child Wellbeing.

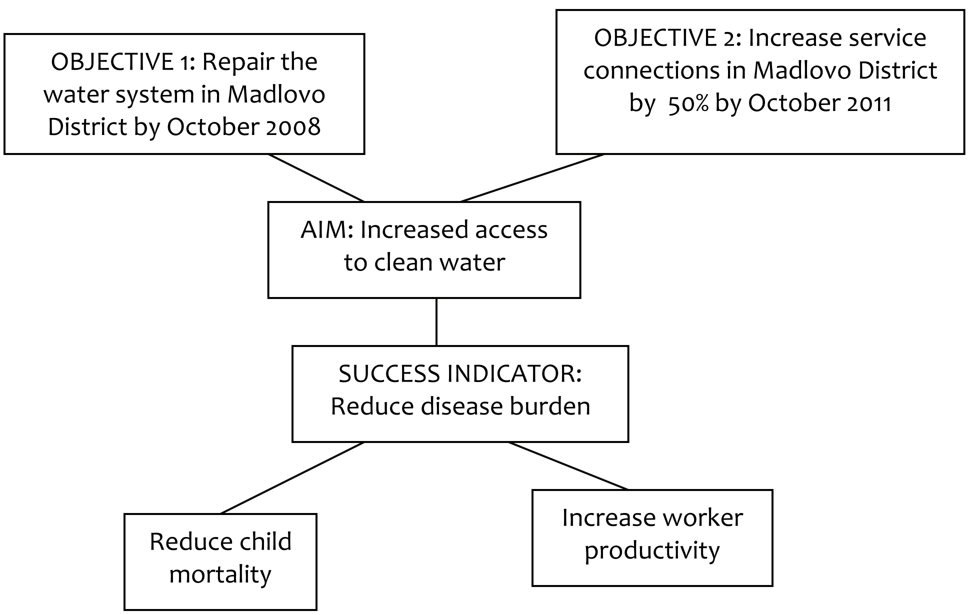
Step 4: Create a Solution Tree to Identify Objectives

You can then use the problem tree to produce a Solution Tree, where the trunk is your main aim, the roots are sub-objectives and the branches are the benefits that will arise from your aim being met.

Working from the Problem Tree, reverse the core problem to create a goal or aim. Similarly convert the 'effects' to 'benefits', and 'causes' to 'objectives'.

Solution Tree



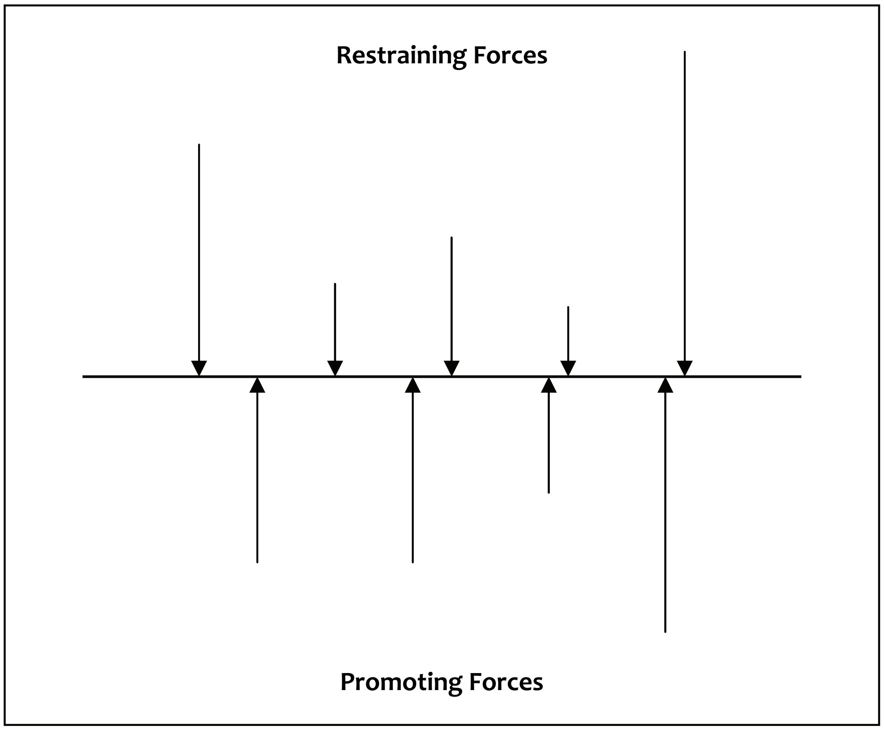


N.B: The objectives do not all have to be advocacy objectives. They can also be objectives that are best met through other types of development intervention. Through WV's programmes we may, for example, be able to demonstrate to government that low cost solutions to water quality are available. The complementary advocacy agenda would be to influence government to scale this up at district or national level. **Using this technique enables you to devise an integrated strategy of projects and advocacy.**

Force-Field Analysis

In order to make our arguments effective, we need to understand the nature and strength of opposing arguments and interests. One tool to do this is the “Force-Field Analysis”.

A force-field analysis is a way of mapping the different promoting and restraining forces that are impacting on a situation or issue. As a visual tool, it is useful in participatory planning processes.



Force-Field Analysis Process

Step 1: Problem location
Position your issue or situation at the centre of the diagram - represented by the horizontal line.

Step 2: Identify Contextual Forces
Identify the forces promoting your desired change or resisting that change. Represent these by the vertical arrows (label each arrow).

Step 3: Assess the Power of the Forces
Adjust the length of each arrow to represent the relative strength of that force (this can be a subjective judgement, but will be more accurate if diverse views are sought and considered in making a judgement).

Step 4: Analyse Your Next Steps
Having mapped out the situation, you can now identify which promoting forces you can try to increase in strength, and which restraining forces you can try to reduce in strength, and thus change the status quo. Some argue that it is better to concentrate on reducing opposition, and thus reduce the tension rather than increase conflict.

Power Mapping Process

A Country (or Context) Power Map is a method of visually representing the power relationships between the main political, private sector, civil society and international actors in a country. It can also be done at regional or provincial level.

Importantly, power mapping can be carried out to assess power relationships and the balance of economic and political power in a national context in relation to a **specific issue**. This involves analysis of the formal decision making processes as well as the less formal activity that takes place at the government level. This will differ radically from context to context.

This mapping process will allow you to identify who the decision makers are, when and how decisions are made, and whether those who make the decisions are the same as those who approve the decisions.

So, we need to consider the context of a particular issue and the chains of power among those who have the ability to make decisions to address the issue, and those who may have influence over those decision makers.

Step 1: Problem location
You can map around a problem or a person or institution where you would like to solve a problem. Identify the abuse of power or the injustice (the cause) that you want to address. Put the problem in the centre of your map.

Step 2: Map major institutions
Brainstorm to Identify key decision-making institutions, bodies or associations that are related to that problem. Who has power over this problem and who, in turn, has power over them? Examples of stakeholders would be: Government (Head of State, Ministers, MPs, advisers), the Legislature, Government Departments/Civil Service, the Judiciary, the army, police, media, local businesses, international businesses, international donors, multi-lateral agencies, land-owners, trade unions, citizens, etc. Write these groups on post it notes and locate them in a circle around your problem.

Step 3: Map individuals associated with the institutions
Put the names of 2-3 individuals who are associated with each of those institutions in a second ring (moving out concentrically) around the problem. These can be people you know or don't know.

Step 4: Map all other associations with these individuals
Think about people connected to these key individuals. The purpose of this is to help identify easier ways to access the individuals or institutions that could help solve the problem, by tapping into existing relationships between people. At this step, you can note any relationships that members in the group have with the people listed and any information you have about them.

Step 5: Determine relational power lines The next step is to step back and conceptually review the networks that the group has mapped out. You can do this by drawing lines connecting people and institutions that have relations to each other. Some people will have many connections while others may not have any.

Power Mapping Process (cont'd)

Step 6: Target priority relationships

Analyze some of the relationships and connections you have identified and make some decisions. One way to do this is to circle the few people that have the most relational power lines drawn to them. Another thing to consider may be a person or institution in the map that doesn't necessarily have many different relational lines running to him/her/it but nonetheless has a few critical ones and seems to hold a lot of influence.

Step 7: Development an engagement plan

The next step is to create some action steps for what to do. Who and what will you target first?

Questions to consider:

- Where and when are decisions made about the issue?
- Does any one actor have a monopoly of power?
- Is civil society strong? Who leads?
- Who influences the main decision maker?
- How strong are external actors (e.g. WB/IMF, foreign investors, foreign governments)?

Policy Timelines/Event Planning

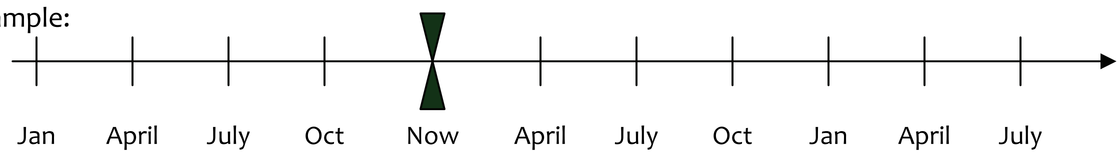
Effective advocacy relies on good timing:

- It is easier to influence decisions when you know when these decisions are being made. If you are too late in your advocacy, it is very hard to overturn a decision that you don't like. If you are too early, then there is a chance that you will exhaust yourself and your arguments forgotten before the issue is discussed by the decision makers.
- Your audiences may be more receptive to your messages when they coincide with others discussing the same issue and the subject is in the media. Global moments like the G8/G20 Meetings or the UN General Assembly can be important opportunities in terms of influencing global policy. At a national level, public and media interest will peak around key moments such as release of budget announcements
- The media tends to cover issues when there is a good "hook" to hang the story on, which is usually a public event or announcement of some sort.

For formal/bureaucratic decision making processes (such as the approval of new legislation or setting government budgets or international summits) there is often a set procedure and timetable for drafting, consultation and decision. It is essential to research this.

One tool to help you plan your advocacy work is to draw up a **Policy Timeline**. This should extend into both the past and the future. By charting past events, you can see how the issue has reached its current state; by charting future events, you can plan your activities to take place at the most effective time.

For example:



Step 1: Chart Official Dates
First put on the chart the official stages in the policy-making process. This could include when debates have taken place or are scheduled in parliament, when consultation periods are to take place, when budgets are agreed, or when an inter-governmental conference on the issue is due (e.g. UNGASS) etc.

Step 2: Add External Events/Moments
Using a different colour or on a different line, plot relevent external events. These might include UN Days, donor consultation meetings, elections, visits of foreign dignitaries, conferences, campaigns of other NGOs, etc.

Step 3: World Vision Overlay
Finally, add in relevent World Vision activities. These might include sterategic planning dates, launches of national/international campaigns, competing activities, holidays of key staff, etc.

Step 5: Analyse Your Results
Now you can identify when the key opportunities for your advocacy work are. The timeline can be a living document, adding in your plans as they are agreed, as well as adding forthcoming external events when they are announced.

Stakeholder Analysis

Stakeholder analysis is a term used by many and has different meanings. Within policy and advocacy circles, a stakeholder is someone who is affected by a decision, or who can affect that decision. When planning policy influencing advocacy work, stakeholder analysis is usually done after the assessment phase where the issue has been decided upon (see Art of Advocacy - Research and Analysis). Stakeholder analysis is used to identify allies and opponents and determine who to focus our engagement on.

Step 1: Brainstorm the Stakeholders

Brainstorm all the stakeholders for the issue, writing their names on post-it notes. The aim here is to be creative and get a long list of stakeholders who may be individuals or groups. If groups, they should not be too general – they should be specific enough that you can assign a reasonably common interest and position to them concerning your issue. For example, "the public" would be too broad a category: depending on the issue you could divide into men and women, or landowners and the landless, etc.

Step 2: Allies or Opponents?

Using the **Allies & Opponents Matrix** ask:

- To what extent does the stakeholder agree or disagree with your position? Give them a rating along the following scale: AA = Very anti; A = Anti; N = Neutral; P = Pro; PP = Very Pro
- How influential, relative to the others, is the stakeholder over the decision? Allocate them a rating along a scale of low, medium or high

Place the post-it note for that stakeholder in the appropriate quadrant of a large flip chart version of the Matrix.

Allies & Opponents Matrix

	Very Pro			*Main Allies*
	Pro			
Attitude of the audience to your position	Neutral			*Key Battleground*
	Anti			
	Very Anti			*Main Opponents*
		Low	Medium	High

Influence of the audience on the issue

Paths of Influence

Another tool that is simple and very effective in helping you determine who to focus your energies on is Paths of Influence.

There are many stakeholders who are influential on the target person, but not all are people that we as an organisation can influence directly (either because they don't know/trust us or they don't believe in our position).

A good way to approach this is to identify who influences that person, the chain or path of influence, and then decide to focus on whichever audience/stakeholder you are able to sway.
For example, the Path of Influence below shows the groups who influence a CEO of a multinational company. The arrows show the direction of influence. The groups with most influence over him/her are those in the boxes immediately below him. Each of these are influenced by other groups.

WV sits within the NGO coalition which is at the very bottom of the rung. However, we are able to influence the media and parliamentarians and the CEO's children who sponsor a WV child. The media is clearly a very influential group, so most of WV's attention might focus on them, but all of linkages toward the target need to be explored.