



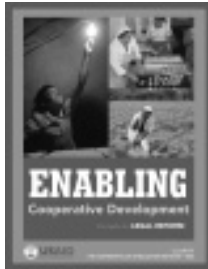
COOPERATIVE ADVOCACY:

A Practical Guide for Advocating
Cooperative Legal and Regulatory Reform



OTHER PUBLICATIONS IN THIS SERIES:

Enabling Cooperative Development: Principles for Legal Reform, Volume 1, 2006



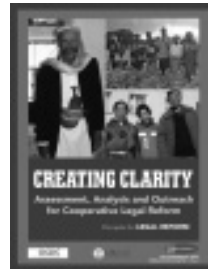
The first report is the product of workshops conducted and research studies performed in different parts of the world over the course of the first year of the CLARITY project. Through this research initiative, CLARITY stakeholders jointly developed a set of nine core principles for cooperative law reform, which are the principles driving the report. The project also produced analytical rubrics for assessing enabling legal environments, along with project profiles describing ongoing legal reform efforts around the world (available in Adobe Acrobat format at the CLARITY website www.clarity.coop).

Applying the CLARITY Principles to the Nicaraguan Cooperative Law, Volume 3, 2009



The third report summarizes a CLARITY workshop whose goal was to provide leaders of Nicaragua's cooperative movement with a set of tools to analyze their country's cooperative law and to start the process of identifying recommendations and changes. Participants used the **CLARITY Scorecard**, a tool for examining the degree to which a country's cooperative law adheres to the CLARITY Principles in order to determine if the law enables or hinders cooperative development. The lessons and tools presented in this report demonstrate the utility of the CLARITY approach and how other national groups of cooperatives can use it to better understand and analyze their situation to help create an enabling legal environment for cooperative development (available in Adobe Acrobat format at the CLARITY website www.clarity.coop).

Creating CLARITY: Assessment, Analysis and Outreach for Cooperative Legal Reform, Volume 2, 2009



The second report summarizes the lessons learned and tools developed by cooperative development organizations in implementing CLARITY projects in conjunction with local partners, highlighting projects conducted in Mongolia, Nicaragua, Mozambique and Yemen. More specifically, it describes key lessons and tools for: 1) assessing the cooperative environment; 2) using CLARITY Principles in legal analysis; and 3) designing CLARITY advocacy and lobbying activities (available in Adobe Acrobat format at the CLARITY website www.clarity.coop).

Note:

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Downloadable copies of this publication, including links to research materials and organizations helping to create enabling legal environments for cooperative development, are available at the CLARITY website www.clarity.coop.

COOPERATIVE ADVOCACY:

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Legal and Regulatory Reform**

November 2013

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PREFACE

The goal of CLARITY is to develop a cooperative-led process for promoting cooperative legal and regulatory reform.

This publication is written for national cooperative organizations and their volunteer cooperative leaders and staff members around the world, who are the main intended audiences for CLARITY, the *Cooperative Law and Regulation Initiative*. The goal of CLARITY is to develop a cooperative-led process for promoting cooperative legal and regulatory reform.

National cooperative organizations (such as federations, apex associations and sector specific cooperative groups) play a valuable role in collectively representing the cooperative sector's interests and perspectives. It is their role, too, to take the lead in engaging with legislative and regulatory bodies when it is necessary to bring about legal reform for cooperatives.

This new report extends the focus of CLARITY's work by addressing in detail the issue of advocacy. It is based on a recognition that national cooperative movements that have identified a need for legislative and regulatory reform may have to convince others – particularly those in positions of power – of the importance of taking these steps. In other words, to achieve appropriate reform may require cooperative organizations to engage in advocacy.

In preparation for this report, the CLARITY project team invited national cooperative organizations around the world to share with us their experiences of advocacy in relation to cooperative legal and regulatory reform. It is clear that, while there is already some practical experience of using advocacy, there is also a perceived need for further skills, particularly in strategic planning of advocacy actions. We hope this report will help meet this need. We look for-

ward to further feedback to help improve future editions of this publication.

There has been much valuable work in the past 10 years around the issue of advocacy in relation to development work and organizing by nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and community organizations, and this report has been able to benefit enormously from these earlier initiatives. Rather than “reinventing the wheel,” we have sought to adapt existing resources for the purposes of cooperative legal reform.

We are grateful to Manuel Mariño, Regional Director of the International Cooperative Alliance for The Americas (ICA-Americas) for giving permission to translate into English and adapt as a framework for this guide, the *Guía para elaborar planes de incidencia (Guide for Preparing Advocacy Plans)*, developed with support of the Swedish Cooperative Centre (SCC). The *Guide* was written by Diana Retana Villalobos as part of the ICA Americas Advocacy Project led by Alberto Mora Portuguese, with additional material and editing by Francia Borowy Sevilla.

The Foundation for Cooperative and Social Development in the Dominican Republic (FUNDESCOOP), working with ICMIF/Americas (the International Cooperative and Mutual Insurance Federation/Regional Association for The Americas), also produced another valuable guide: *Guía de Incidencia Política para Cooperativas* (translated into English as *Political Advocacy Guide for Cooperatives*). The report was authored by Dr. Christopher Baker, with financial support from USAID. We acknowledge with thanks his contribution to the develop-

ment of good practice in advocacy by cooperative organizations.

Another inspiring resource has been the *Advocacy Expert Series* of guides, produced by Pact Cambodia (and later adapted for use by Pact Tanzania,) which are excellent user-friendly introductions to the subject, particularly from a non-expert layperson's perspective. A further valuable resource has been the *Advocacy in Action* toolkit produced by the International HIV/AIDS Alliance. Details of these and other resources are given in Appendix 3.

We have also been able to incorporate the insights that emerged at two seminars in cooperative advocacy organized by CLARITY and held in May 2010 and February 2011. We are grateful to the presenters and participants at these seminars.

CLARITY is a partnership of nine international cooperative development organizations that

are members of the U.S. Overseas Cooperative Development Council (OCDC – see Appendix 4). The CLARITY partners provide technical assistance and resources to local cooperatives in developing countries to help them lift people from poverty through income development, food security and democracy building. We gratefully acknowledge the financial support for this ongoing initiative sponsored by USAID's Cooperative Development Program. The production of this report has been coordinated by Paul Hazen (Executive Director of the Overseas Cooperative Development Council), Dr. Barbara Czachorska-Jones (Chair, OCDC and Director, Management Systems, International Operations at Global Communities) and Edward Potter (Executive Director, ICMIF/Americas), with very valuable contributions from OCDC member organizations. The report has been edited by Andrew Bibby (www.andrewbibby.com).





CHAPTER 1.

ADVOCACY AND THE CLARITY INITIATIVE

The CLARITY Initiative is designed to help cooperative movements understand, analyze and evaluate their legislative and regulatory environments so they can develop strategies for change and reform.

CLARITY, the *Cooperative Law and Regulation Initiative*, has grown from the shared conviction among its founding organizations that in many parts of the world, outmoded cooperative legal systems are barriers to cooperative development. CLARITY focuses on developing a cooperative-led process for cooperative legal reform. It is designed to help national cooperative movements understand their legal and regulatory environments so that they can develop strategies for change. The overarching aim is to enable cooperative business enterprises to become stronger.

CLARITY's view is that cooperative organizations that are well-researched about their cooperative sectors, that have a solid understanding and analysis of current cooperative law, that are able to carefully formulate proposals for change, and can organize and implement an advocacy plan for those changes can greatly improve the chances of success in cooperative legal reform.

This is the fourth publication produced as part of CLARITY. The first chapter provides a review of the CLARITY approach, but we also recommend that the present report is to be read in conjunction with the three previous CLARITY reports:

- *Enabling Cooperative Development: Principles for Legal Reform*
- *Creating CLARITY: Assessment, Analysis and Outreach for Cooperative Legal Reform*
- *Applying the CLARITY Principles to the Nicaraguan Cooperative Law*

These can be downloaded free from the CLARITY website at www.clarity.coop.

This publication provides resources, tools and advice to help during the final stages of effort to promote cooperative legal and regulatory reform – that of *advocacy*.

Advocacy is about taking steps to ensure that an objective you want to achieve can successfully be realized. It has been described as follows: “Advocacy is the activity through which interest groups try to influence society in the process of governmental decision making”.

Another, slightly longer, definition is as follows: “Advocacy is a strategic series of actions designed to influence those who hold governmental, political, economic or private power to implement public policies and practices that benefit those with less political power and fewer economic resources.”¹

We explore in the next chapter of this report what precisely we mean by advocacy in relation to cooperative organizations, and in Chapter 3 we look in detail at the steps to be taken to draw up an effective advocacy strategy. But first perhaps we can ask why is it important for cooperatives to be engaged at all in legal and regulatory reform issues. The International Co-operative Alliance (ICA) addresses this question directly in its 2013 publication *Blueprint for a Co-operative Decade* when it talks of “financial, legal and regulatory infrastructures around the world that are essentially designed for the greater majority of businesses, which are profit-oriented, shareholder-owned businesses, but are inappropriate for co-operatives in certain important respects.” It suggests that few countries have good legislation for cooperatives.

¹ Sources: FUNDESCOOP; Pact Cambodia Book 1. See Appendix 3

One of the ICA's five current strategic goals is to ensure that supportive legal frameworks are in place to help promote cooperative growth: "Assistance must be provided to lawmakers and regulators if the growing enthusiasm for the cooperative form of enterprise is to be translated into the types of supportive legal frameworks that will unleash the cooperative growth from which everyone will benefit." Pursuing this agenda does not mean pleading for special treatment, subsidies or favors: "Co-operatives are no more dependent on government assistance than any other business form. But no business exists in a regulatory vacuum, and business growth always depends on an infrastructure of rules and policies." The ICA's *Blueprint* summarizes exactly the CLARITY project's own approach in this respect.

There is no single off-the-shelf cooperative legal or regulatory framework that can simply be provided by an organization such as the ICA or that can be borrowed from elsewhere. Every country has its own unique historical, political and economic circumstances, and these mean that each country also has to figure out what is best for its own particular situation. Cooperatives have too much at stake to leave this process to others who may not fully understand the cooperative model. If a cooperative movement is involved from the start in discussing and advocating solutions for legal and regulatory frameworks (rather than leaving it, only to legislators, civil servants and lawyers) the resulting law and regulation will better meet its needs.

Cooperative organizations do, however, need to work in partnership with those with the necessary technical and professional expertise. A lawyer who understands cooperative ways of working and who is well informed on international best practice in cooperative law (or, failing that, willing to learn) may be very valuable. Cooperative organizations may also want to engage professionals who can help guide them through the ways that national political processes work. They will need to build strong working relationships with legislators and regulators. Cooperative bodies may also have to reach out to create coalitions with other organizations that will be able to add weight to their efforts.

In the remainder of this chapter, primarily for those who are not familiar with the first three CLARITY publications, we summarize the key CLARITY principles and tools and their relevance to cooperative advocacy.

The CLARITY Cycle

Figure 1 helps explain in visual form the overall approach used by CLARITY to bring about cooperative legal reform, and the position of cooperative advocacy within it. The approach can be described as a series of four sequential steps in a continuous ongoing cycle. This reflects our belief that reform and advocacy are not one-off events but part of a continuous process.



Figure 1: The CLARITY Cycle



Step 1: Assessment of the cooperative environment

The foundation and first step for successful cooperative legal reform within a country lies in thoroughly researching the sector’s current situation, the state of cooperative development and the challenges being faced. A cooperative environment assessment helps national cooperative organizations define and guide their cooperative law reform project. The *Creating CLARITY* publication provides a *Rapid Cooperative Assessment Tool* (p.61-72) to help this process.

This work is also of value later in the process of working for legal and regulatory reform. To achieve credibility, cooperative organizations will need to be able to clearly communicate factual information about the sector and the individual cooperatives they represent to legislators, government officials, the public and the media.

Step 2: Analysis and Evaluation

The second step is to understand, analyze and evaluate existing cooperative law through a comprehensive assessment. CLARITY has

developed several conceptual tools and resources to help identify key issues and potential areas in need of reform. This analysis can help both cooperators and others they may hire for assistance.

As part of the assessment process, CLARITY offers a set of nine Core Principles. These help provide a point of reference to analyze critical issues affecting cooperatives within cooperative law and are based on the International Cooperative Alliance’s Cooperative Principles, which set out the globally recognized guiding principles of all cooperatives (Figure 2 sets out the relationship). The first four CLARITY Core Principles are focused on *internal factors and issues* derived from the first four ICA Cooperative Principles, which focus on the need for cooperative law to protect and promote democratic control of and by members of their cooperatives. The next five CLARITY Core Principles reflect *external factors and issues* that affect cooperatives. The final three ICA Cooperative Principles are necessary for the effective use and implementation of CLARITY processes and tools.

Figure 2: Comparison of the CLARITY Core Principles and ICA Cooperative Principles

ICA Cooperative Principles	Core CLARITY Principles	Applicability
Democratic Member Control	Protect democratic member control: Law must protect the democratic character of cooperatives, vesting control of the organization in its members.	These principles refer to INTERNAL affairs and issues of cooperatives
Autonomy and Independence	Protect autonomy and independence: Cooperatives are private sector businesses. Law must protect the autonomy and independence of cooperatives from government, persons, or entities other than members of the cooperative.	
Open, voluntary membership	Respect voluntary membership: Law must protect the voluntary nature of membership in cooperatives; membership in cooperatives should be determined by each cooperative, not mandated by law or government order.	
Member Economic Participation	Require member economic participation: Law must protect and promote the responsibilities of membership, including the duties to contribute equitably to and democratically control the capital of the cooperative.	
	Promote equitable treatment: Law and regulation should be no less advantageous to cooperatives than to other businesses in the same sector, while promoting and being sensitive to the mutuality of cooperatives. Incorporation, law enforcement, dispute resolution, and licensing of cooperatives should be handled in the same manner as for other businesses.	These principles refer to EXTERNAL affairs and issues of cooperatives.
	Promote access to markets: Sector-specific regulations should provide reasonable accommodations and incentives, where appropriate, that enable cooperative forms of business to operate.	
	Promote a coherent and efficient regulatory framework. The regulatory framework should be simple, predictable and efficient; should minimize bureaucratic delay and obstructions to business operation; and should avoid conflict and duplication of other laws. Regulation with respect to the business of cooperatives should be handled by institutions with the most relevant specialized expertise.	
	Protect due process: Cooperative organizations and their members should be accorded due process of law, including applicable rights to hearings, representation, and impartial appeals for decisions of the state that impact cooperatives or their members.	
	Avoid conflicts of interest: The role of the state in law enforcement, dispute resolution, license, and promotion should be administered in a manner that avoids duplication, undue influence, and minimizes conflicts of interest.	
Education, training and information	CLARITY is implemented through educating, training, and informing cooperatives.	These principles are necessary for the effective use and implementation of the CLARITY Principles, Rubrics and Scorecard.
Cooperation among cooperatives	CLARITY is implemented through cooperation among cooperatives.	
Concern for the community	CLARITY is implemented through their concern for the greater cooperative community, and how their well-being impacts their local communities.	

The CLARITY Core Principles can be used to examine legal and regulatory environments by focusing on specific aspects through CLARITY’s analytical rubrics (matrices). One example, covering issues related to the formation and registration process for new cooperatives, is given in Figure 3. A total of 24 different analytical rubrics are available for help in the analysis process and are described in detail in the first CLARITY publication *Enabling Cooperative Development* (p. 7-17).

Another CLARITY tool is the CLARITY Scorecard (see Figure 4) which provides a framework for analyzing the extent to which cooperative laws fulfill the CLARITY Core Principles. During a CLARITY Scorecard Analysis, which we recommend be conducted by lawyers familiar

with cooperative law, existing cooperative law is subject to a series of 24 questions derived from the CLARITY Rubrics to evaluate its relevance and appropriateness. Each aspect is scored on a scale from 0 to 4, where 0 represents a situation where current law does not comply at all with CLARITY Principles and 4 represents complete compliance. The completed Scorecard provides a global view of the strengths and weaknesses of current cooperative law. The exercise helps cooperative organizations prioritize and reach consensus on the key areas of weakness needing to be addressed. A complete overview of the CLARITY Scorecard, Scorecard Analysis and Process Workshop are available in publications *Creating CLARITY* and *Applying the CLARITY Principles to the Nicaraguan Cooperative Law*.

Figure 3: Example of CLARITY Analytical Rubric

ANALYTICAL RUBRICS		
Formation and Registration of a Cooperative		
Core Principle	Implementation of the Core Principles	Underlying Rationale
Provide coherent and efficient regulatory framework	Time limits/default registration periods. To minimize possibilities for long bureaucratic delays, a time limit may be set for approval of applications for registration. At the end of this time period, the application is presumed to be granted.	In countries where the registration process is cumbersome, not timely or filled with uncertainty, cooperatives frequently organize under nonprofit or general company statutes.
<p>ENABLING EXAMPLE: Philippines Cooperative Code, §16, 1990: “All application for registration shall be finally disposed...within a period of thirty (30) days...; otherwise the application is deemed approved.”</p> <p>DISABLING EXAMPLE: Ghana Cooperative Societies Decree, 1968: Law imposes a six-month probationary period for cooperative registration, but it often stretches for two or more years.</p>		

Figure 4: CLARITY Scorecard example

CLARITY SCORECARD						
CLARITY Principles	Protect democratic member control		Protect autonomy and independence			Respect voluntary membership
General cooperative law indicators						
Questions >	a	b	a	b	c	
1 - Formation and Registration of a Cooperative			1			
2 - Cooperative Supervision			2			
3 - Legal Status and Rights			4			
4 - Membership	3		2			4
5 - Member Governance	4	4				
6 - Officers and Directors			4	4	3	
7 - Board of Directors	4		3			
8 - Capital Accounts	2					
9 - Auditor	2		2			
10 - Dispute Resolution						
11 - Dissolution/Amalgamation/Merger						4
12 - Apex Organizations			4			
Score	18		29			8
Maximum Score	24		40			8
Percentage	75%		73%			100%
Total Possible Score for General Cooperative Legal Indicators	120					
Actual Score	81					
Percentage	68%					

Table 1: Regulatory objectives and their contribution to the overall regulatory framework

	Require member economic participation	Promote equitable treatment	Promote access to markets	Provide coherent and efficient regulatory framework	Protect due process	Avoid conflicts of interest
		a	b			
		1		4		3
		2				2
		3	1			
	4					
				1	1	1
					3	
	4	7		5	4	6
	4	16		8	8	12
	100%	44%		63%	50%	50%

Table 1: Regulatory objectives and their contribution to the overall regulatory framework

Step 3: Proposal and Advocacy Strategy Development

With proposed solutions for cooperative legal reform having emerged from careful analysis and research, cooperative organizations will be in a position of having a clear sense of what they want to achieve. The task now is to try to convince others, especially those who have the power to help bring about the changes desired. This is the point, in other words, at which to lay the groundwork for advocacy.

Step 4: Advocacy Plan Development and Implementation

The fourth stage of the CLARITY Cycle is the time to put your advocacy strategy to use. This

is the moment to bring about the changes you have identified as needed and wanted.

This report is designed to help you at steps 3 and 4 of the CLARITY Cycle. Chapter 4 in particular offers some suggestions for ways in which you can make the implementation of your advocacy approach more effective.

While there are no absolute guarantees for success, with a well-thought out, coordinated and executed advocacy strategy and plan, the chances of achieving what you want in relation to cooperative legal reform are far greater.



Advice from Practitioners

To help link the theoretical with the practical application of advocacy throughout the publication, we have created *Advice from Practitioners* boxes. These reference tips and guidance from cooperative advocates around the world, and are located in the back section of the publication starting on page 67. These resources are identified with the owl icon above.



Tools for Action

We include throughout this report a number of group exercises and activities that you may find useful. These exercises are intended for the principal group of cooperative leaders and members (together, where coalition working is appropriate, with those from partner organizations) who are planning and engaging in the advocacy process. These exercises and activities are identified with the toolbox logo above.





CHAPTER 2.

WHAT IS COOPERATIVE ADVOCACY AND WHY DO IT?

Cooperatives have too much at stake to leave cooperative legal and regulatory reform to others who may not fully understand the cooperative model.

Advocacy is a legitimate and recognized means of participation in the democratic process. It can be done well and can be a highly effective tool in bringing about change. It can also be done badly and unsuccessfully.

What is the difference between advocacy and lobbying? Some languages do not have equivalent terms and national legal systems may define them differently, but for consistency in this publication “advocacy” is used to refer to the broad process of creating awareness and educating those in a position of power or the public about an issue. Lobbying, by contrast, is taken to mean something more specific: to the particular act of advocating for passage of a specific piece of legislation, for example by asking a legislator to vote for or against the legislation. In other words, lobbying is treated as one aspect of the broader work of advocacy.

Advocacy, including lobbying, is an appropriate part of a democratic society. However, sometimes the word “lobbying” may have a negative connotation by association with practices that seek to gain influence unethically, for example through special favors or bribery. The international cooperative movement has clearly established values, principles and ethics that completely preclude this sort of activity, and it is very appropriate to communicate these values in advocacy or lobbying activities undertaken. Cooperative values can build trust and confidence and help bestow legitimacy.

As a first step, it is important to understand what the rules and/or guidelines are in your own country for engaging with the government in advocacy and lobbying activities. Each

country may have different concepts and traditions of advocacy and lobbying as well as legal/regulatory guidelines for such activities. Clearly, there would be consequences if the rules were not adhered to.



Tools for Action:
**Know the rules before
you play the game!**

As a general orientation and advocacy education activity for national cooperative leaders and staff involved in your advocacy project, review and discuss legal definitions and guidelines for advocacy and lobbying in your country, including what may or may not be allowed. Some countries require that you register if you advocate in a formal way or have legislative contacts. Know your local laws, but do not be intimidated by them.

Historically, cooperative organizations have not necessarily given a high priority to advocacy or appreciated the benefits that an advocacy strategy can bring. But the development of a strong and democratic cooperative movement is heavily dependent on whether the legislative and regulatory regimes provided by the state are empowering or disempowering. As previous CLARITY guides have pointed out, legislative and regulatory reform may be an essential facet of building a modern, successful and growing cooperative sector.

Through advocacy, cooperatives can achieve the following:

- They can contribute to the solution of specific problems relating to laws, regulations or public policies;
- They can strengthen the cooperative movement and deepen the cooperative principle of democracy;
- They can give cooperatives a more public presence – and in the process perhaps attract more resources (including new members and/or financial resources);
- They can help policy makers achieve their own goals, to the benefit of their constituents.



To understand where cooperatives are today, it is important to understand their history. The development of a healthy relationship between a national cooperative movement and the state, underpinned by effective advocacy work, is particularly important given the unhappy history in those countries where states once controlled “cooperative” structures in a top-down manner divorced from cooperative principles of member participation and control. This was a feature in some former colonies in Africa and Asia, in former military regimes in Latin America, as well as in centrally planned states, such as the former Soviet

Union. As one International Labour Organization (ILO) report² put it:

“The state, which claimed to control all aspects of cooperative life and to monopolize cooperative support services, never had the capacity to live up to its own expectations. The result is well known:

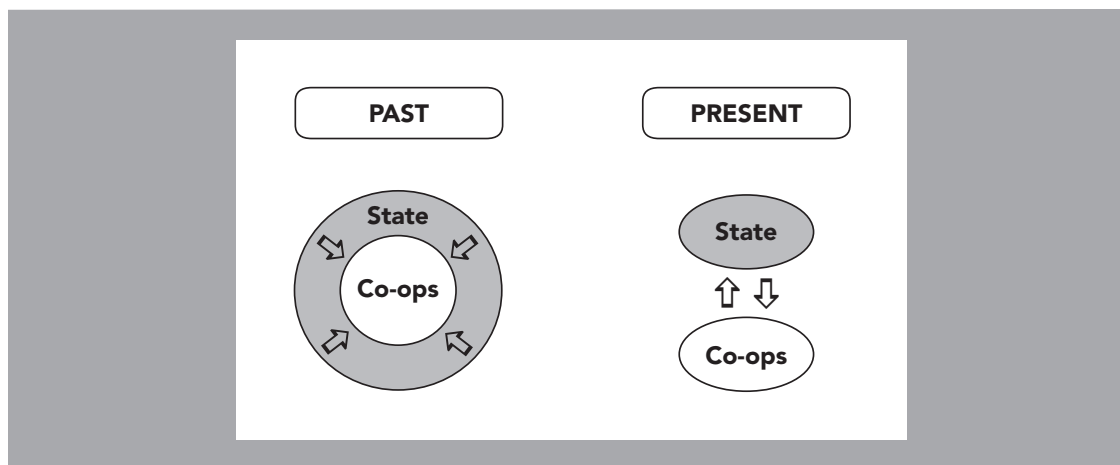
- Members did not participate in cooperative management, thus facilitating inefficiency and irregularities;
- Lack of external audit led to embezzlement of funds, breach of trust and corruption, all which remained largely un-sanctioned;
- Cooperatives became a heavy burden to the state budget without contributing sufficiently to national production;
- Monopolies granted to cooperatives distorted important sectors of national economies; and
- Large numbers of pseudo-cooperatives and “dormant” cooperatives were artificially kept alive because of political reasons and vested interests.”

The determination to rebuild a cooperative movement based on genuine member economic participation and control came to be symbolized internationally by two key initiatives: the revision by the ICA in 1996 of the agreed cooperative values and principles and the adoption by the ILO in 2002 of a new policy guideline *Recommendation 193: Promotion of Cooperatives*. Both the ICA and the ILO initiatives are based on the core definition that a cooperative is “an autonomous association of persons united voluntarily to meet their common economic, social and cultural needs and aspirations through a jointly owned and democratically controlled enterprise.”

The past and present relationship between the state and cooperative movement can be represented in graphical form:

² Participatory Cooperative Development Policy Making – a Manual (COOPREFORM), ILO 1998

Figure 5: State and cooperatives: From domination to partnership



While it is important that cooperatives assert their autonomy from the state, there is a risk perhaps of going to the other extreme and failing to engage at all with state structures. There are also some residual examples of governments that continue to try to control and regulate the cooperative sector in a top-down manner, without consulting adequately with cooperative representative organizations. Advocacy helps to avoid both these dangers.

Cooperative advocacy can have the aim of bringing influence to bear on cooperative legislation, and it can also aim to influence the regulatory frameworks and structures. We therefore can distinguish between two broad categories:

Legislative Advocacy: Legislative advocacy encompasses any advocacy involving legislation and/or the legislative branch of government. Here the targets are likely to be legislators, including politicians and their advisors.

Regulatory Advocacy: Regulatory advocacy focuses on the lead government official and the staff of regulatory agencies regarding rules, regulations and other policies that affect cooperatives.

We shall return later to consider in more detail appropriate strategies for both categories of advocacy.

Advocacy can achieve results. Here are just a few examples:

- In Mozambique, farmer associations and apex organizations developed a three-year plan for cooperative legal reform, which saw parliament successfully pass a new cooperative law. (See page 55)
- In Uruguay, associations of producer cooperatives worked together to develop an advocacy plan to convince the legislature to override the executive veto to an already passed cooperative legislation. Implementing the plan over 10 months, the associations successfully convinced the legislature to override the veto and approve the new producer cooperative legislation. (See page 59)
- In Ecuador, the original draft of the 2008 constitution did not include mention of the role that cooperatives play in the country. The cooperative community worked proactively and ensured that cooperatives were recognized several times in the constitution. This new constitution directly led to new cooperative and credit union laws being passed later.
- In the United Kingdom, credit unions successfully advocated for a significant overhaul of the Credit Unions Act, which was introduced in 2011. This permits British credit unions for the first time to provide services to community groups, businesses and social enterprises and to offer interest on savings deposits instead of only end-of-year dividends on shares.

Advocacy as a strategic activity

It may be appropriate at this stage to repeat one of the definitions of advocacy we included in the last chapter: “Advocacy is a strategic series of actions designed to influence those who hold governmental, political, economic or private power to implement public policies and practices that benefit those with less political power and fewer economic resources.”

As this makes clear, good practice in advocacy is based on taking a strategic approach – or in other words having a clear strategy based on research and planning, rather than adopting an ad-hoc approach and hoping for the best. This report will stress the value of clear strategic planning and implementation of any advocacy action.

This is where the CLARITY Cycle helps. The work of preparing an advocacy strategy, typically through the development of an advocacy plan, follows the stages of identifying the problem that needs to be addressed and researching to make sure that the causes and the effects of the iden-

tified problem are properly understood. When, and only when, this work has been undertaken will it become clear what actions need to be taken to ensure successful advocacy. This is the point to go all out in order to achieve the results you want. An important part of the process is to evaluate what went well – and what perhaps could be improved next time around.

Basic Principles of Advocacy

What makes advocacy successful? First, all cooperative leaders and their national cooperative association staff involved in the advocacy effort need to work together as a team with shared understanding and common framework. To bring everyone involved up to the same level of understanding, advocacy education can begin with an overview of key advocacy concepts.

FUNDESCOOP, the cooperative development organization in the Dominican Republic, suggests a number of basic principles of advocacy:

UNITY	It is essential for groups who want to achieve an effective advocacy goal to act in coordinated manner, as a unified whole, and with a consistent message.
DISCIPLINE	Advocacy requires acting in a disciplined manner. Actions on behalf of the whole must be defined by the management team, not just individual leaders.
CLARITY OF OBJECTIVES	Before setting an advocacy strategy it is necessary to have a very clear definition of specific objectives and outcomes to be pursued through a good strategy.
MASTERY OF SUBJECT MATTER / PREPARATION	The interest groups’ representatives need to master the subject matter on which they will speak, and be prepared with a balanced approach before arguing for certain positions. Misinformation, distorted or misleading information is worse than no information.
ON-GOING ACTIVITIES	Advocacy requires continued action by interest groups and that these are kept well informed so they can anticipate actions that need to be taken to defend or promote their proposals.
ADAPTATION TO ENVIRONMENT	To be effective, advocacy requires that the strategy being used identify and adapt to specific factors, formal and informal, which influence decision making in the branch of government that one wishes to have an effect on.
KNOWING YOUR ADVERSARY AS WELL OR BETTER THAN YOUR ALLY	In the world of political advocacy, those who are not familiar with their opponent may not have the expected success. Knowledge about the actions an opponent will take allows us to anticipate and be better prepared to face them.

CAPABILITY TO DEPLOY EFFECTIVE ADVOCACY MECHANISMS	Before setting an advocacy strategy, it is necessary to have a very clear definition of specific objectives and outcomes to be pursued through a good strategy.
CREDIBILITY AND RELIABILITY	The most important characteristic in advocacy is to have credibility and reliability of decision makers and groups that interact in society. Winning the trust and credibility costs much, but losing it is very easy. To prevent this from happening you must comply with the agreements and commitments made.
KEY ALLIES	Occasionally there are cases where having a single or a few partners can ensure the impact that is being sought. These may be called "key allies." And they may or may not be obvious. For example, the support of a presidential aide may be all one needs to succeed. But equally, the informal support of a classmate of a governmental minister may well have a similar impact if the decision to be taken is made by that ministry.
COALITION	In advocacy, coalitions often determine the success or failure. Therefore, each strategy should identify the groups that can be mobilized to promote what you want to accomplish. We must always remember that today's ally can be tomorrow's enemy and vice versa, today's opponent may be tomorrow's ally.



**Tools for Action:
Reviewing the basics
principles of advocacy**

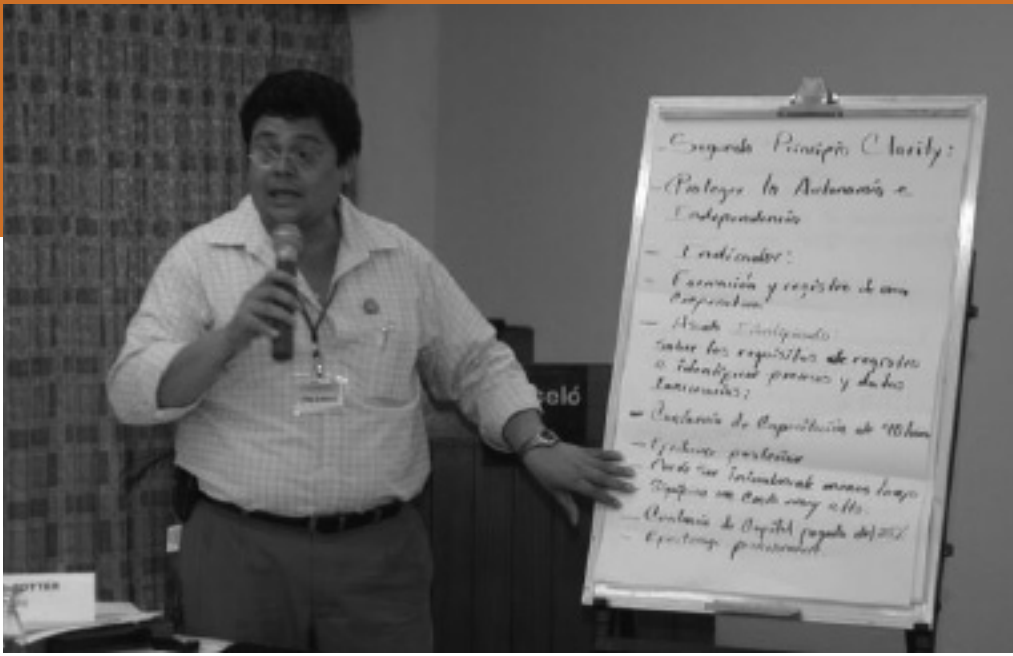
As a general orientation and advocacy education activity for national cooperative leaders and staff members involved in your advocacy project, have a facilitator review and explain each of the *Basic Principles of Advocacy*, giving real-life experiences or examples of how cooperatives have successfully done this in the past. Then lead a discussion on how this relates to your own country's political advocacy environment. Make sure you achieve consensus around these principles – you may have to refer back to them later in your process if there are problems or disagreements.

This report is concerned with successful advocacy. But at this stage we can also turn the question "What makes advocacy successful?"

around and ask the opposite: When is advocacy likely not to succeed? Advocacy may well be ineffective when:

- It has been undertaken by an organization with a poor reputation;
- It is not based on facts;
- It is ill-conceived; it is not clear what it is trying to achieve;
- It is not supported by those people or organizations on whose behalf it is being implemented;
- It is not related to any proposed project for change.

Effective advocacy, therefore, must be well-grounded in facts that can be checked rather than on hearsay or suppositions, be rooted in practical experience, be credible, be carefully prepared and be strategically planned. Those undertaking the advocacy must also demonstrate that they speak for, and are engaging directly with, those whose interests they claim to be promoting.



CHAPTER 3.

DEVELOPING A COOPERATIVE ADVOCACY STRATEGY

A well-thought-out, coordinated and executed advocacy strategy and plan increase the chances of success.

In this chapter, we follow the general framework from the ICA-America's Spanish language *Guide for Preparing Advocacy Plans*, which has been adapted for use by CLARITY in six basic stages. This advocacy strategy and planning methodology has been successfully used in over 70 cooperatives throughout the Americas. For the complete advocacy planning methodology and exercises, see the reference for the *Guide* in Appendix 3.

1. Defining the problems and issues

What precisely is causing problems for the development of cooperatives in your country?

There may be a whole range of things that are problematic. There may be influential individuals in positions of power who don't seem to understand cooperatives. There may be difficulties with the legal framework under which cooperatives operate. There may be a host of practical issues: perhaps it takes months and months to get a new cooperative business formally registered, far longer than it would take for a conventional business to be set up.

There may be a general lack of popular understanding of how cooperatives function as democratically run enterprises. The very name "cooperative" may have acquired negative connotations in the past.

There are always difficulties of some kind to cope with. But the key task is to try to identify the underlying problem – or, sometimes, problems – behind all the various difficulties being faced by your cooperative movement. The first stage in developing an advocacy strategy is to look at

the big picture and to prioritize which problem or problems will be the center of your attention.

The completed CLARITY Scorecard and Analysis provide you with ways to do just this. Cooperative law is often very long, complex and difficult to understand. The Scorecard helps break things down into manageable elements for understanding and analyzing.

Why prioritize? Simply because otherwise you risk dissipating your energies on a myriad of targets. You want to maximize the use of your limited resources in the most effective way.

The act of prioritizing is, in itself, a very valuable one. It will enable you to work as a group to take stock of where you are and where you want to be. It will help build a strong team of people who, collectively, have discussed the issues and are committed to the advocacy strategy being drawn up.

At this early stage in your discussions, you may find it helpful to use or adapt the group resource tools in the boxes on the following pages. These tools are designed to get you talking and debating.



Tools for Action: **Group issue prioritization exercise**

Encourage participants to think as creatively as possible of the various different problems you are facing. You should use the completed CLARITY Scorecard and Analysis as your source of priority issues. At this stage, write down all the sugges-

tions that are made. Do not criticize anyone's contributions at this point.

Then, use the following grid as part of the prioritization process. For each problem identified (column 1), complete the remaining boxes. Discuss why it is a problem (column 2), who is affected and in which ways

(column 3) and what are the causes (column 4). Rank the seriousness of the effects on a scale of 1-5 (5 is the most serious, 1 is the least serious) in column 5. Rank your assessment of the feasibility of solving the problem (1 – low feasibility, 5 – very feasible) in the remaining columns, considering both external factors and your own internal situation.

Problem	Why is it a problem?	Who is affected and how?	Causes	Seriousness of the effect (1 low, 5 high)	Feasibility of solving problem (1 low, 5 high) EXTERNAL	Feasibility of solving problem (1 low, 5 high) INTERNAL

After you have completed this grid, spend some time prioritizing the importance of the problems you have identified. The final three columns should directly help this process, by identifying those problems that are the most serious and those that are the most able to be resolved.

Use the grid below to record the priority problem or priority problems you have identified. (It is advisable not to select more than three problem areas. One priority is probably even better.)

	Priority problems
1	
2	
3	

For an example of a completed Group Issue Prioritization Exercise, see page 59 in *Case Study 3: Defending a New Cooperative Law in Uruguay*



**Tools for Action:
The Problem Tree
exercise**

This exercise provides a visual way of focusing on the priority problem or problems you have identified. You can use the CLARITY Scorecard Analysis' detailed review of the problem and issue to begin to explore this in more depth.

The tree illustrated on the next page can be photocopied and distributed, or you can make your own drawing of a simple tree. Beside the main tree trunk, write

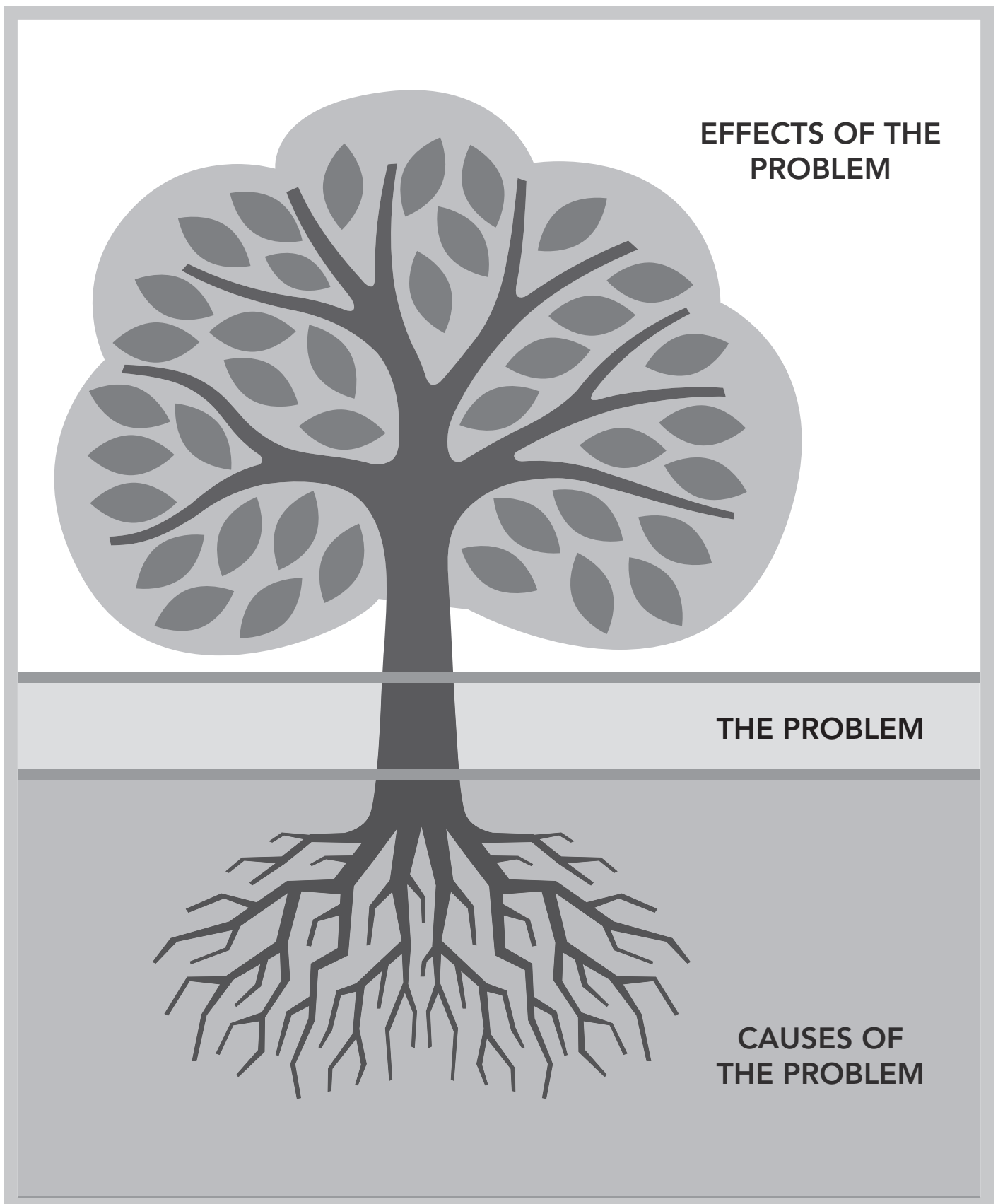
the problem that you want to address. Then discuss the causes or factors that lie at the root of the problem. These can be written at the foot of the tree. (You may find that the problem tree has deeper roots than you think!)

The problem you are exploring will lead to a number of consequences. These can be written in to create the tree's network of branches and leaves.

Undertaking the Problem Tree exercise can help distinguish between a problem's causes and its consequences. It can also help focus attention on the root causes of a problem, rather than the effects, assisting in the process of developing an appropriate advocacy strategy.

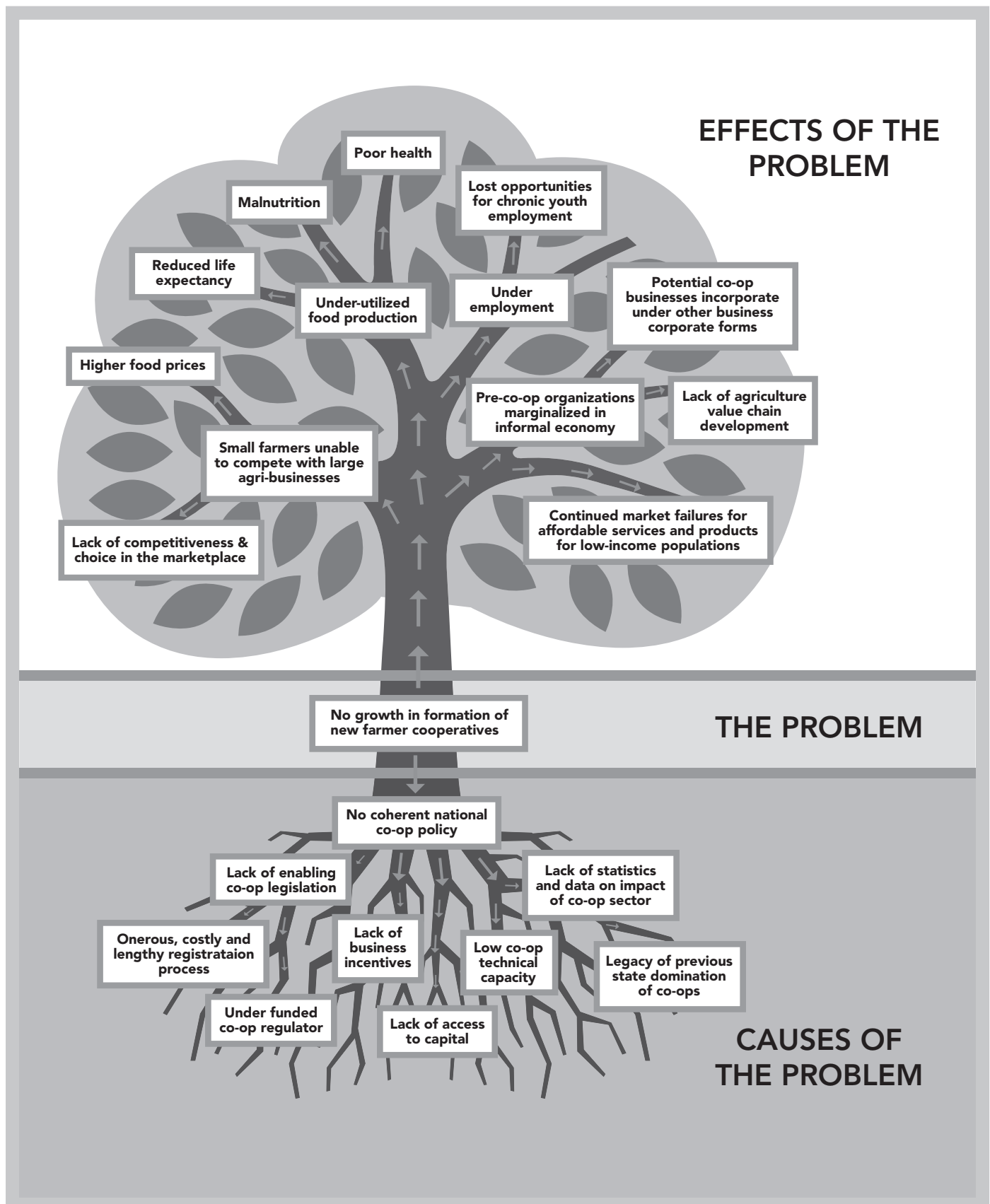


Figure 6: Problem Tree components



Below is an example of how a problem tree may look after the exercise has been undertaken:

Figure 7: Example of a completed Problem Tree





2. Defining the proposed solution

Having identified the priority problem, the next step is to think about the best way that the problem can be overcome.

The discussion you have at this point is central to your whole advocacy campaign. The solution you choose will become key to all the work you subsequently undertake.



Advice from Practitioners: Working for cooperative law reform in Bosnia- Herzegovina

In Bosnia-Herzegovina, existing cooperative laws were seen as a major obstacle to cooperatives. The case study on page 57 tells how the cooperative community used CLARITY Principles and Rubrics to frame discussions around issues important to a variety of groups and viewpoints.

This is the time for research. Is the problem something to do with the cooperative law (the legislation itself) or regulation (the rule created to implement the law) or both? What has been the experience of cooperative movements in other countries similar to your own? What work has been done internationally on reforming cooperative legal and regulatory structures? (We offer some possible pointers later in this report.) Can the CLARITY initiative and its publications help you crystallize your thinking? Is there experience to be gained from other civil society

organizations or nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) that can help you?

This process is often helped by group discussion using the CLARITY Scorecard resources. The exercise below may help you in your thinking and in building consensus.



Tools for Action: Choosing the solution

Have a large piece of paper available. At the top, write: *This is our priority problem.*

Halfway down write: *This is our agreed solution.* If you have more than one priority problem, write them on separate pieces of paper.

This is our priority problem:

This is our agreed solution:

Discuss in small groups and agree to the wording to write under each of these headings. Do not worry if this takes some time. Then come together in one large group, and try to agree on wording that everyone is happy with. With a new large piece of paper, write the final version reflecting this consensus.

Subsequently, as you develop your advocacy strategy, you may want to display this paper prominently – it will be there as a reminder of what you are trying to achieve. We will use it again later in the process.

Framing solutions within cooperative law

Whatever your identified solution(s) may be, it will most likely come down to changes to how current laws are written and/or implemented through regulation. While the task of writing new laws is ultimately done by legislators, lawyers or civil servants, cooperative organizations can help by drafting, proposing and advocating solutions. Ideas may evolve during this period: the *process* is important in ensuring that the end result is the best that can be achieved.

In the past, well-intentioned “model cooperative laws” developed internationally were sometimes copied unchanged into national law without regard to a country’s underlying legal system or its particular historical, cultural and political context. Not surprisingly, these models rarely became effective cooperative law. One size never fits all.

Today the emphasis is on more open, flexible and adaptable approaches using cooperative law guidelines and examples, based on best practices and research. It is sensible to look at other cooperative laws in order to gain ideas. But a simple “copy and paste” approach, where laws written for other countries or contexts are borrowed wholesale, is one that is best avoided.

There are several useful resources available that you and your legal advisers should explore as a part of the process of developing your proposed solutions.

The International Labour Organization’s (ILO) Cooperative Branch has worked in several countries to aid the reforming of cooperative legislation. The ILO published in 2012 the third revised edition of the comprehensive manual *Guidelines for Cooperative Legislation*, written by Dr. Hagen Henry, which centers on the ILO’s internationally agreed Recommendation 193. Details of how to download this publication is given in Appendix 3.

Keep in mind that, since it is politicians who draft and vote on laws, adjustments may be made to address political realities. Also keep in mind

that sweeping legal changes may not immediately be possible; small reforms can be built upon.



Advice from Practitioners 1: Some recent global and regional cooperative law resources

See page 67 for other other global and regional resources that you and your legal advisors should explore as part of developing your proposed solution.



Advice from Practitioners 2: The advocacy approach of the World Council of Credit Unions (WOCCU)

WOCCU’s approach to global, regional and national advocacy as a sector is described on page 68.

The regulatory framework

Laws that are passed by a legislative body generally establish the broad framework or principles of a particular issue, but they do not necessarily get into all the details of how the law is to be implemented or enforced. That is the part played by regulation: the process of developing, monitoring and enforcing legislation. Regula-

tors and regulatory authorities issue guidelines designed to help implement and interpret laws, laying out rules and procedures to follow to be in compliance with the law. Without appropriate regulation, good laws may not be successfully carried out or followed.

Sometimes, therefore, the challenge may not be to advocate for a change in legislation, but rather to push for better application and regulation to implement the existing law.

Regulatory frameworks vary from country to country. While there has been considerable research into cooperative law, there has not been similar in-depth studies conducted into regulation of cooperatives. Some countries have their own national cooperative regulator or agency, while in other countries cooperatives are regulated within a larger ministry or department, such as a Department of Agriculture or Ministry for Social Economy. Credit unions often have their own independent regulator, separate from the cooperative regulator. Some countries have no cooperative regulator at all; cooperatives may be managed separately under a ministry or department or may be engaged in “self-regulation” through a national cooperative organization.

A necessary first step, therefore, is to take time to learn how the regulation-making process and regulatory framework works in your country and where you can obtain information regarding cooperative regulations. It may be appropriate to take advice from professional experts.

There are some important differences between advocacy work with legislators and that undertaken with regulatory authorities. While legislators have to face re-election regularly, regulators are more often civil servants who are in more permanent positions of authority and may thus take a longer view. Regulators tend to be industry specific and to know their area well, so well-presented facts will be necessary for successful advocacy.

Ideally, regulation of cooperatives would be based on mutual respect between the regulator

and the regulated. While this is not always forthcoming from regulators, well-planned regulatory advocacy activities can help build a strong relationship. Some steps to take, on a regular basis, can include the following:

- Monitoring regulation changes in official government publications;
- Submitting comments and letters on proposed rules;
- Participating in public hearings on proposed rules; and
- Face-to-face meetings with cooperative regulators and staff.

Cooperatives sometimes face the double burden of being regulated by both their cooperative regulator and by the regulatory authority for their particular sector or industry – for example, cooperatives in the banking sector (credit unions and saving and credit cooperative organizations (SACCOs), insurance sector, electric and telecommunication sectors, to name a few. For those situations, consider using the CLARITY sector-specific law and regulation rubrics to analyze their legal and regulatory environment. (See CLARITY volume 1. the italicized text in the box refers back to the Clarity Core Principles).



Figure 8: CLARITY Rubrics for sector-specific law and regulation

PARTICIPATION IN A SECTOR: Regulations should not dictate the corporate form that a business operating in a sector should adopt, and should not exclude participation by businesses structured as cooperatives. (*Promoting access to Markets*). Regulatory frameworks should not require high levels of equity reserves (for example in banking and insurance) that have the effect of excluding cooperatives. (*Promoting Equitable Treatment and Promoting access to Markets*). The “principle of proportionality” should apply in regulatory frameworks.

INTERCONNECTION: Right to connect at non-discriminatory rate to public utilities such as electricity, telephone, etc. Regulatory frameworks should allow new entrants to have a right to interconnect to the system of the dominant supplier at regulated, non-discriminatory rates in order to serve customers. (*Promoting Equitable Treatment and Protecting Due Process*)

REGULATORY FRAMEWORK: Regulations should allow standardized reporting forms with quality control measures to enable governments and lenders a way to monitor and benchmark cooperatives. (*Providing a Coherent and Efficient Regulatory Framework*). Regulatory systems should allow cooperatives to set rates adequate to cover the cost of their service provision, rather than imposing arbitrary price controls based on the cost of subsidized or lower-cost suppliers (*Promoting Equitable Treatment*).

ACCESS TO FINANCE: Governments may promote the development of cooperatives by extending loan guarantees or direct government loan finances to lower the cost of accessing credit, as access to external capital is limited in the cooperative model of business. (*Promoting Equitable Treatment*)

TAXATION: Governments should distinguish between member and non-member transactions in cooperatives. Surplus distributed in proportion to a member’s patronage of a cooperative should be exempted from taxation; non-member transactions may be subject to the same income taxes as other corporations. (*Promoting Equitable Treatment*)

COMPETITION/ANTITRUST LAW: Competition or antitrust law prohibitions on joint action between businesses should contain exemptions for cooperatives (*Promote Equitable Treatment*). The practice of agreeing on prices, terms of sale and customers is commonly undertaken by farmers and others operating cooperative marketing associations.



**Advice from Practitioners 3:
Using CLARITY to address
industry-specific issues –
experience from the rural
electricity industry**

See page 68 for details of how the CLARITY Principles for sector-specific law and regulation were used in the context of the rural electricity industry.



**Advice from Practitioners 4:
Advocating for industry-
specific issues – experience
from the information &
communication technology sector**

See page 69 for Communications Cooperative International’s experiences with regard to the information and communication technology sector.

3. Analyzing power and decision making structures

A third stage in the preparation of a cooperative advocacy strategy is to consider who it is that has the power to decide on your proposal for change. This can be done by analyzing power and decision-making structures in your country.

Here are some questions you may want to ask:

- What organization or agency will make the decision?
- What is the formal process for making decisions?
- What are the formal steps in the process?
- What are the informal operations or “backstage” actions in the decision-making process?
- Who are the key people responsible for making decisions at each stage?

If the solution you have identified will require legislative change, this is the time to make sure that you fully understand the procedures in place when new laws are proposed, debated and passed by your legislative assemblies. Legislative processes can sometimes be baffling to outsiders. Sometimes they can even be baffling to legislators themselves! Make sure you are fully informed on how your legislative bodies work.

- Identify who has power to initiate a bill;
- Identify how the legislative agenda is decided;
- Understand the operation of working committees in the legislature;
- Understand the voting methods for different types of law;
- Understand the manner of voting;
- Understand how many legislative members need to be present for a quorum to be met.



You may have to ask for advice in answering some of these questions. As mentioned earlier, you should be prepared to use the services of appropriate legal and professional experts.

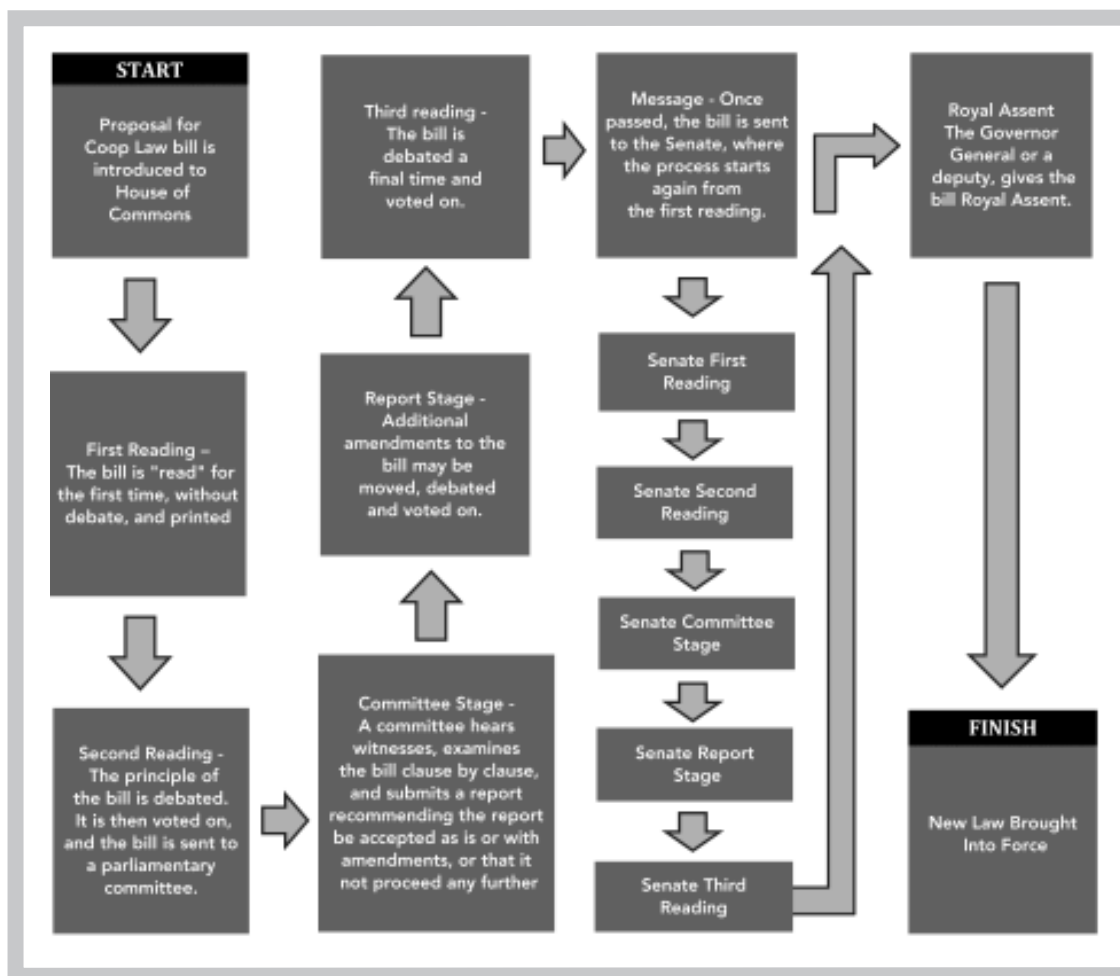
The exercise below is another way to explore this area.



Tools for Action: **Flow chart for legislative change**

Use a large piece of paper. At the top left-hand corner, write in a box, “proposal for new law first put forward.” At the bottom right hand corner write in a box “new law brought into force.” Now create a flow diagram, showing the various stages that a new bill or parliamentary act must pass through to travel from the first to the last boxes. The flow chart will also have to show what happens to proposals that are not successful. You can then see where there are “opportunities” for cooperative advocacy to take place. The example following gives an idea of how your flow chart will look. It shows how a new bill is introduced in the two chambers of the Canadian federal Parliament, the House of Commons and the Senate.

Figure 9: An example from Canada of the process of introducing and debating a new bill



This flow chart helps identify several “pressure points” at which advocacy efforts can be focused. Among those who can be engaged through advocacy are:

- The political parties, particularly during the policymaking process;
- The committees, when they’re working on the nuts-and-bolts of a bill;
- The second chamber;
- Committee staff; and
- Local constituency offices, an ideal opportunity for grassroots activities.

On the flow chart you develop to illustrate the legislative process in your country, identify potential “pressure

point” opportunities for potential advocacy action.

It helps to understand the importance of both formal and informal procedures.

Formal procedures are those set out by a constitution, national laws or institutional regulations.

Informal procedures are the collection of actions and activities that occur in parallel to the formal process, and that may have a strong bearing on whether or not a proposal for change can be successful.

In seeking to meet your objective, you are likely to need to persuade legislators of the validity of your point of view. CLARITY’s second publication *Creating CLARITY* may help, particularly the sections on pages 9-10, 27 and 32.

In this context, it is interesting to note the technique that the cooperative movement in Mongolia used, as part of what has been a long-running and continuing initiative to seek legislative reform. A Working Group to consider reform of cooperative law was established in 2005 and included nine cooperative apex organizations. Subsequently the group was introduced to the CLARITY process and worked with Global Communities (formerly known as CHF International) to advance its objective. Global Communities was able to arrange for Joan Kelly Horn, a CHF volunteer and also a former member of the U.S. Congress, to work with the group.

As part of the group's work in analyzing the power structure in its country, Joan Horn arranged for its members to fill out forms on each legislator. The aim was to find out the interests of each legislator, what businesses they were engaged in, and the extent to which they would be

sympathetic to the cooperative movement's desire for new legislation. As Horn put it at the 2010 CLARITY seminar, "For lobbying to be successful, you have to know: Where is the power? Where is it held? You need to find points of entry."








Advice from Practitioners 5: Legislator Information Form

We include on page 70 a template for a sheet that can be used to record and track information on individual legislators.

Pact Cambodia has suggested that legislators can be divided into five broad categories, with advocacy tactics different for each type. Here is the chart which they drew up to make this point:

Figure 10: Five types of legislators

TYPE	DESCRIPTION	COMMUNICATION STRATEGY
Champion 	Champions are the legislators who believe in our advocacy campaign and actively support it. They will deliver our advocacy messages to other legislators and be visible spokespersons for the campaign.	Provide Champions with reliable information that they can use to convince other legislators to join our cause.
Friend 	Friends are the legislators who support our advocacy campaign but who have not yet participated or contributed very much.	Try to convince Friends to get more involved in our campaign.
Fence Sitter 	Fence sitters are legislators who are uncommitted to either side of our issue.	Fence Sitters are the main targets of our lobbying efforts. We need to use our Friends and Champions to win them over to our side.
Opponent 	Opponents are legislators who will definitely vote against us but do not have time, resources or the desire to work against us.	Try to prevent the Opponents of our advocacy campaign from becoming more active and vocal.
Enemy 	Enemies are the people opposed to our advocacy goal.	We must give clear reasons why other legislators should not join our Enemies .

We are including this chart in the form drawn up by Pact Cambodia, although our own preference would be to use the word 'adversary' rather than 'enemy' in the final box.



For an example of a completed Power Analysis Matrix, see pages 60-61 in Case Study 3: Defending a New Cooperative Law in Uruguay.

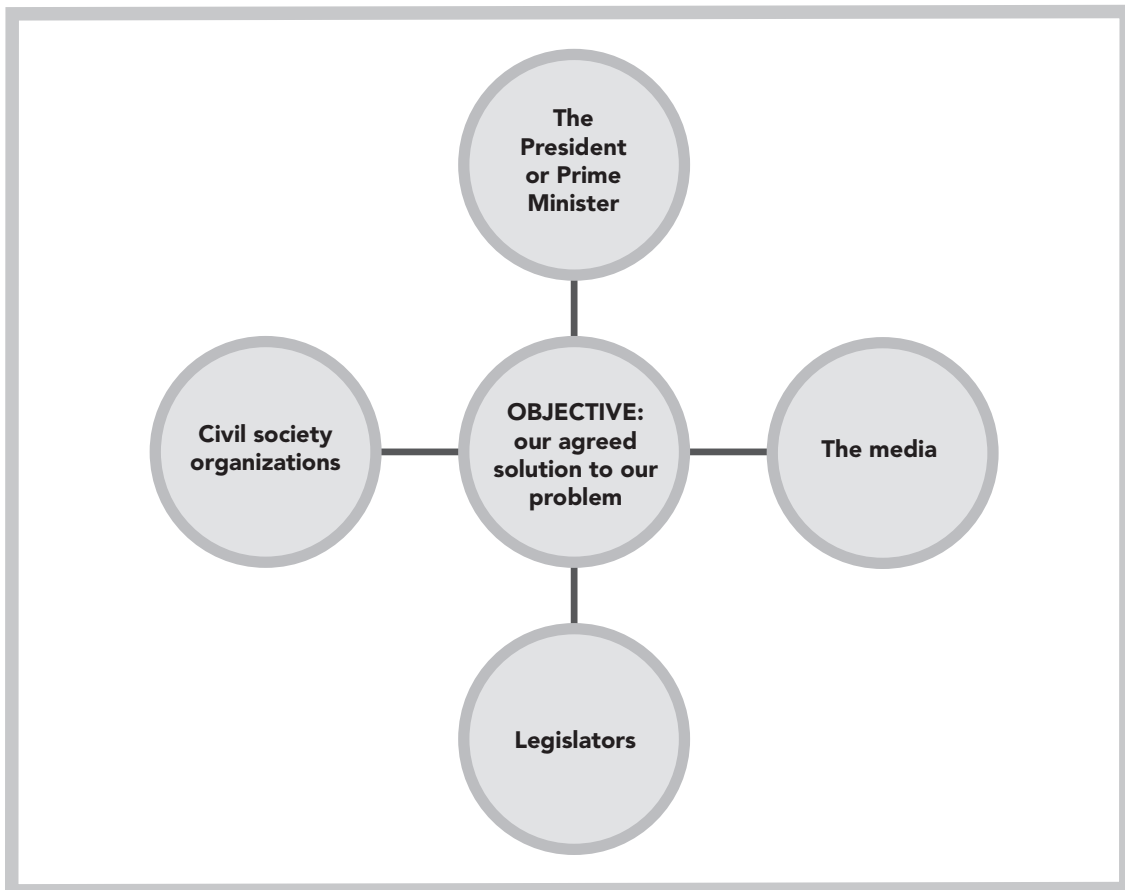
It may be that the most obvious targets for advocacy are not immediately accessible, so it will be necessary to work through others to reach them. For example, it may be better to work to target people who cannot solve the problem directly but who have some ability to influence those who can.



**Tools for Action:
Identifying targets for advocacy work**

In the center of a large piece of paper, draw a circle, and write in it your agreed objective (the solution to your problem). Discuss the organizations and individuals who can help, or hinder, you in realizing this objective. Draw lines out to new circles, each with the name of a potential target. (Some examples have been included below, to give you an idea.)

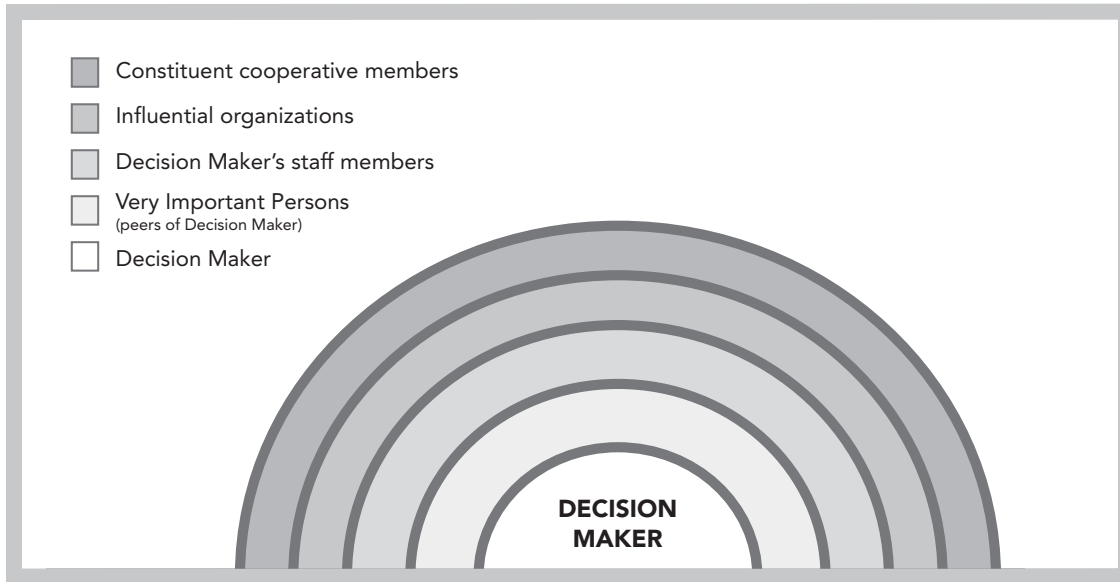
You can put those organizations and individuals you can reach easily closer to your middle circle and those more difficult to reach farther away. And you can identify those where you currently have close links with a thicker line.



If, for example, it will be ultimately important for the decision maker to support the change you are seeking, it is valuable to identify the in-

direct targets who will help you get through to them. You may come up with a diagram a little like Figure 11.

Figure 11: An example of indirect targets to influence a key decision maker



Distinguishing between primary and secondary targets in this way is one step to be taken. It is also necessary to try to identify whether your targets, both primary and secondary, are likely to support your objective or be opponents. Some of your chosen targets may be unreceptive or skeptical of your objectives.



**Tools for Action:
Identifying targets for
advocacy work**

Draw a series of half circles similar to the one above.

Identify the individuals who will have a key role to play in helping you meet your objective successfully. Put their name in the center circle. Now write in the outer circles the names of people who may be able to help you reach them.

4. How can we strengthen our position?

Self-analysis allows you to identify both your own strengths and limitations as an organization. Identifying your weaknesses, in particular, will enable you to decide which steps you can take to try to overcome them.

There are various tools that have been developed to help organizations in this task of self-analysis. One very common technique, often used in the world of business, is to undertake a “SWOT analysis”, using a grid similar to the one below. SWOT analysis looks at an organization’s strengths and weaknesses at the current time, and the future opportunities and threats it is facing.

STRENGTHS	OPPORTUNITIES
WEAKNESSES	THREATS



Tools for Action: Group exercise to undertake a SWOT analysis

Work as a group, and hold a brainstorming session to identify your organization’s current strengths and weaknesses and its potential opportunities and threats. At this stage, write every suggestion received in the relevant box, without comment. (We have of-

ferred a few suggestions below, to give you an idea. These might be the sorts of things relevant for a cooperative apex organization.)

When everybody’s contributions have been recorded, review what has been proposed. Try to reach consensus on the key items to include in the SWOT chart. Below is an example of what a completed SWOT Analysis chart could look like:

<p>STRENGTHS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cooperatives have a long history • Experienced leaders and human resources available • The number of cooperatives is increasing • Cooperatives have diversified in different business areas • Cooperatives and their associations are non-partisan nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) • Youth engagement with cooperatives is increasing 	<p>OPPORTUNITIES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expansion of the cooperative movement • Government interest in supporting enterprise development • New national agricultural policy being implemented • Strengthen long term cooperative sustainability through better legal environment • New cooperative champions elected to legislature
<p>WEAKNESSES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cooperative law is 35 years old • Limited financial resources available • Public and government misconceptions of cooperatives' role • Lack of data about cooperatives available • Lack of access to affordable capital 	<p>THREATS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Private sector lobbying for cooperative business areas • Some legal constraints for some types of cooperatives • Implementation of law and policy is weak • Monopolies in the market and unfair competition

We mentioned earlier in this report that unity is a key aspect of a successful advocacy strategy. Your case will be considerably weaker if there are disagreements and tensions within the cooperative movement.

Developing an advocacy strategy is a very good opportunity to bring together different strands of the cooperative movement in your country that may not necessarily have previously worked closely together. A shared sense of purpose and a common aim can help over-

come any historical misunderstandings or communications problems that may have existed.



Advice from Practitioners 6: Take time to develop skills and processes

See page 72 for further helpful suggestions when developing an advocacy strategy.

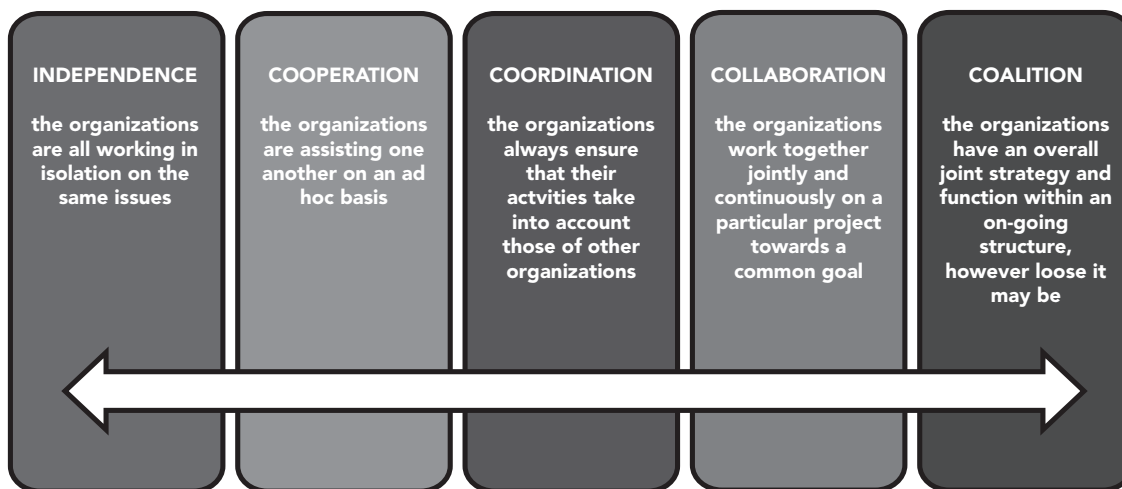
Coalitions

There are also opportunities when planning an advocacy strategy to look beyond the immediate cooperative movement and to build coalitions with others. One popular dictionary defines a coalition as “a temporary alliance of distinct parties, persons, or states for joint action.” In coalitions, partners make a commitment to share responsibilities and resources. Coalitions provide an opportunity to share information and ideas and also to share the risks.

To achieve cooperative legal reform, coalitions may be a necessary part of the process of arriving at consensus, organizing and coordinating advocacy strategy, and collectively influencing the legislature and/or regulatory authorities.

Organizations can bring different levels of commitment to a coalition. The following diagram (taken from *A Guide to Coalition Building* by Janice Forsythe – details in Appendix 3) suggests that levels of participation constitute a continuum.

Figure 12: The Continuum of Joint Action



Coalitions potentially bring both advantages and disadvantages. On the positive side, they can offer:

- The security and safety that can come from being part of a larger group;
- Increased access to decision makers and other contacts;
- Improved credibility and visibility;
- An opportunity to broaden public support;
- A chance to strengthen civil society;
- An opportunity to speak with a stronger, collective voice; and
- Savings by sharing costs of advocacy/lobbying work.

On the other hand, there can be potential challenges in working through coalitions:

- Coordination difficulties;
- Competition over leadership and representation;
- Issues over the ownership of initiatives;
- Different agendas between different organizations; and
- Increased workload, more meetings etc.

If you are proposing to develop an advocacy campaign through a coalition, ensure that all members are clear on their respective roles. Is there a lead person or organization? Who is coordinating spending decisions and what is the

agreed budget? Which named individuals from each organization are lead representatives?

The Advocacy Expert Series of booklets from Pact Cambodia includes a handbook *Building and Maintaining Coalitions*, which looks specifically at appropriate ways of ensuring successful coalitions can be developed for advocacy work. It suggests the following coalition checklist:

- **MEMBERSHIP.** Which other organizations do we want to work with? What are the criteria for joining our coalition?
- **COMMITMENT.** What expectations do we have of coalition members? Where, when and how often does the coalition meet?
- **DECISION MAKING.** How will the decision making process work?
- **COMMUNICATION.** How will members communicate with each other?

The handbook also includes a template for a coalition plan and advice on how to manage and resolve any conflicts that may arise. It offers suggestions on ways to build consensus, which it says can be achieved “through actively listening, working through differences, finding areas of compromise, and convincing individual members that this solution is in the best interest of the coalition.”



Advice from Practitioners 7: Meeting the challenges in coalitions

See page 72 for further helpful suggestions when considering joining forces with other organizations to form a coalition.

5. Turning strategy into action: developing an advocacy plan

It is time to think in detail about the actual advocacy work that you will undertake. This is

the stage to develop a comprehensive advocacy plan, which will enable you to put your strategy into effect.

Your advocacy plan is the document that summarizes what actions you will be taking, who you will be targeting, what resources you will need, and what timeline you will be following.

Before preparing your advocacy plan, review your work so far. Remember the targets (both primary and secondary) which you have identified. Consider how best to reach each target.

Do not necessarily assume that you will have to be confrontational. Sometimes quiet discussion can be very effective. But sometimes you may need to demonstrate through pressure the extent of popular feeling in order to achieve your objective.

Although you may want to involve your legal and professional experts in any meetings or discussions held with those you are trying to influence, it is important that there are direct representatives of the cooperative movement present.

There are various ways in which the advocacy plan can be set out. The core information it contains will typically include the following.

- **Objective:** What outcome do you want to achieve through your advocacy action?
- **Indicator of success:** How will you know that you have succeeded and how will you measure it?
- **Target for advocacy:** Who or what institution (actor) is being targeted for advocacy action?
- **Activities:** What advocacy activities will be carried out?
- **Persons responsible:** Who specifically (names) will carry out the advocacy activities?
- **Time frame:** When does the activity start and when does it end?
- **Resources:** What human and financial resources are needed to carry out the plan successfully – be very specific.

There are a wide range of activities and tools that others have undertaken in advocacy work. Here are just a few ideas. We can group them broadly into categories, although, as you will see, the categories to an extent overlap.

ACTIVITIES	EXAMPLES
Advocating/ lobbying	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Face-to-face meetings • Briefings • Research papers • Preparing draft legislation/ amendments
Mobilization and pressure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grassroots campaigns • Theater/ drama • Petitions • Pamphlets and flyers • Letter writing/emails • Surveys • Litigation (court action)
Education/ sensitization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Newsletters • Meetings • Workshops • Training sessions
Publicity & the media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Press releases • Press conferences • Media briefings • Meetings with selected journalists • Use of social networks • Letters to the editor • Guest columnists



For an example of brainstorming potential solutions, see page 59 in *Case Study 3: Defending a New Cooperative Law in Uruguay*.



Tools for Action: **Preparing an advocacy plan**

Look back over the work you have undertaken so far to develop an advocacy strategy.

Display prominently the large piece of paper that you completed, with the statements *This is our priority problem* and *This is our agreed solution*.

Look again at the diagram showing the targets you have identified for your advocacy work.

These will enable you to get started in undertaking the completion of the detailed advocacy plan.

On a large piece of paper, draw the outline of the table shown on the next page. For each activity, complete a smaller piece of paper, and put it in the relevant place on the table. (This way you will be able to remove or move activities later, as your discussions progress.)

Objective	Indicator of success	Target for advocacy	Activities	Persons responsible	Time frame	Resources needed



For an example of a completed advocacy plan see pages 64-65 in *Case Study 3: Defending a New Cooperative Law in Uruguay*.

Your advocacy plan can be ambitious, but it must also be rooted in reality. One useful test is whether it meets the SMART criteria: that is, whether the proposals are *specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time-based*.

For all your ideas and plans, you will need to figure out what human and financial resources will be required. Ultimately, your budget will most likely influence or limit the advocacy strategies you can choose from. Creating a budget and setting realistic group expectations as to how you will share costs is an important part of this. Fundraising may be necessary as may be sharing costs in an equitable way. You may also be able to find lawyers or other professionals prepared to help you on a pro-bono “without charge” basis. When your advocacy plan is complete, you will have a comprehensive framework of the steps you intend to take to realize your overall objective. It is worth taking from the advocacy plan the information on the time frames you have agreed, to draw up a detailed diary of forthcoming dates and activities. Are there *key steps* along the way that

you can identify, which will ensure that you are remaining on track?

Having developed the strategy and prepared the advocacy plan, all that is left is to put the plan into action.

Except of course that, however good your planning, real life has a habit of intervening. You will have to be prepared to amend and change your plans as the campaign develops. If, for example, a major newspaper unexpectedly runs a feature supporting your position, you will want to take advantage of this – perhaps by immediately getting in touch with key targets and trying to arrange meetings with them. If a senior politician attacks your campaign, again you will want to react as quickly as possible, explaining clearly and succinctly what you are trying to achieve and why you feel this will be beneficial.

Your advocacy plan provides a framework for you to follow, not a rigid set of instructions that must be followed regardless. But when you depart from your agreed plan, you should be consciously aware that this is what you are doing and the reasons for the change of approach.

Finally, think about the timing and sequence of your plan. Depending on your advocacy issue and goal, it may require either a short-term urgent response or a more long-term action. Sometimes you have a choice, other times you do not. Being flexible and adaptable to all situ-

ations greatly enhances the likelihood of long-term advocacy success.

For longer-term advocacy projects, take small steps and produce advocacy plans broken down into shorter time periods (three to six months) while continuing to have the long-term objective in view. Another possibility is to prepare a “BIG PLAN” (setting out the vision) and “SMALL PLAN” (focusing on the immediate operations).

It’s also possible that the need for advocacy will be very pressing, due to external events or circumstances beyond your control. This chapter has suggested that the work of preparing an advocacy strategy follows a number of sequential steps. However, you may find that all the stages we have considered need to be taken more or less simultaneously. This can happen, but in such a situation be careful to ensure that all the stages we have outlined do at least take place. If not, your overall advocacy strategy may well be much weaker than it would otherwise have been.

6. What is working, what isn’t working and why?

We will be offering some thoughts and ideas in the next section of this report for how to make your advocacy activities and actions as effective as possible.

But earlier we suggested that there was a sixth question to address. Throughout both the

strategic planning process and the advocacy implementation period, you should include structured **monitoring and evaluation**. You should set aside time at regular intervals to review your successes and your setbacks.

Why is it good practice to monitor and evaluate? Because at each step of your plan you will want to know whether your work has been **efficient**, whether it has been **effective** and whether it is has had **impact**. Being effective relates to an analysis of the costs (money, people, time, materials, etc.) expended in comparison to the benefits. Being effective means examining whether the activities did what they were supposed to do. Having impact means considering the extent to which long-term and sustained changes have occurred.

Monitoring all phases of the advocacy process is important to determine whether you need to make any changes or corrections along the way. Because things don’t always unfold according to a plan, being open, flexible and agile is important, if not critical, to your success.

The Figure 13 below sets out a checklist of questions that organizations may wish to ask themselves at regular intervals throughout an advocacy campaign. It is based on a more comprehensive list of questions offered in the ICA Americas’ *Guide for Preparing Advocacy Plans*. Remember you’re going to have to customize the questions around your particular advocacy plan, activities, research, etc.



Figure 13: Checklist of monitoring questions during an advocacy campaign

1. The advocacy objective

- Is the advocacy process going smoothly, or have you encountered obstacles? What are these obstacles and how can they be overcome?
- What else can you do to further the ultimate goal? Would achieving your objective be more achievable if new alliances were formed?
- If the objective does not seem achievable, should it be changed? What could be achievable? Can part of the objective be realized by negotiating or by reaching a settlement?
- What should be continued? What should not be continued?

2. Presentation of the message

- Have targets responded positively to the message? If not, what can be done to improve the situation?
- Has the message reached key targets? If not, what can be done to improve the situation?
- Which presentation formats have worked well? Which have been less effective?
- How much media attention have you received? How can you improve relations with the media?
- Were you able to convene the people you expected for press conferences, events, demonstrations, etc.? How could this be improved?

3. Use of research and data

- Have data been presented clearly and persuasively? How might this be improved?
- Have new questions or issues arisen? Is further research needed?
- Have you found any unforeseen allies, undecided or opposing people?
- Have you managed to get the active support of other groups and neutralize the opposition?

4. Power relationships

- Have you found any unforeseen allies, undecided or opposing people?
- Have you managed to get the active support of other groups and neutralize the opposition?

** Figure continues on next page*

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5. Activities plan

- Have you been able to keep to your advocacy plan? What problems have occurred? How can you address these?
- Has the internal approval of the proposal been obtained as proposed? If not, why?
- Has a good analysis of the problem been performed?
- Has the objective of each activity been met?
- Have you the human and financial resources you need to progress the advocacy work? If not, are there ways you could find additional resources?

Organizational questions

- If you are working in a coalition, are relations between coalition partners working well?
- If there are unresolved conflicts in a coalition, how can they be addressed and resolved?
- Are your financial resources, which you are making available for advocacy, being used effectively? Are there adequate financial controls?
- Are you feeling discouraged at an apparent lack of progress? How can you support each other, and get more help? Is your timeframe too optimistic and in need of revision?
- How involved is each member? Do they follow through with their responsibilities?
- Have women participated in decision-making?
- Have women had the chance to handle visible tasks such as public speaking or leading an event?

Formal evaluation is appropriate at the end of an advocacy campaign or initiative. It consists of measuring the extent to which the objective or objectives were achieved. More broadly, it involves considering the wider impact of the advocacy work. Even if the objective was not fully achieved, have there been positive outcomes?

Will there be valuable changes to law or regulations or to the ways they are implemented? Has popular opinion of cooperatives changed? Has media coverage been enhanced? By documenting your lessons learned, you will help your organization be better prepared and ready for the next advocacy campaign.



CHAPTER 4.

MAKING YOUR COOPERATIVE ADVOCACY MORE EFFECTIVE

Cooperative advocacy relies on cooperative members knowing their system best – that is why they need to be involved.

Keeping it simple: effective communication

To convince those you are trying to influence of the value of your proposal, you need to be thoughtful about what and how you communicate to them.

What moves you into action may not necessarily resonate with others. Knowing your target audience is key. Be familiar with the interests and politics of the people you are going to talk to and select messages you think will best fit with them. Good communication requires that advocates also become active listeners.

Advocacy messages should be simple, short, relevant, clear and presented in language that is consistent and chosen for the target audience. If something can be explained in under a minute or with a short “sound bite” it will more likely be remembered, so avoid long or complicated explanations: the details can come later. The most successful advocacy messages inspire people to take action.

A message’s content becomes more powerful when set in the right context, so explain what cooperatives are and their role internationally – many people will not be familiar with the concept. Avoid jargon, acronyms or names of people who policymakers may not know.

Aim to be well prepared. Research and know all the facts related to the issue you are advocating. Know the arguments for and against it and be ready to defend your position. If a question comes up and you’re not sure of the answer, say so – never make up answers as this may damage your credibility. If you can demonstrate that you have knowledge and experience of an issue,

this will help establish you as a reliable source of information and of potential solutions. Ask yourself if your message will build your credibility or call it into question.



Advice from Practitioners 8: Effective advocacy messages and messengers

Suggestions and recommendations for ways to engage cooperative members in advocacy can be found on page 73.

These general principles apply particularly in the case of legislators and senior government officials, who have packed diaries and many demands on their time. Make the most of any opportunity you have to meet them face-to-face. You will have very little time to communicate your position, so prepare carefully in advance.

Have a very clear, simple message you want to put across. Prepare a very short briefing document, which you can leave behind. It should never be more than one page in length and easily readable. It should include a short background description about the problem, providing context and key data relevant to the issue. You may want to include real-life examples of how people have been impacted by the problem to make it “real.” Give your recommended solution to the problem and request the action that you want them to take to address the problem. Make sure to include your contact information (names, telephone numbers, email addresses) so the decision maker can contact you again. Remember

you are but one of many constituent groups that the legislator sees in any day, and while your cause is important, “less is more” when it comes to information you leave behind. Offer to send additional information if the legislator or his/her staff want it at a later point. And finally, immediately after your meeting, remember to follow up with a thank you letter and briefly remind them of your discussion and requested action.

Also remember the importance of developing a good relationship with a legislator’s staff person/personal assistant. They should, of course, be treated with respect and consideration, but remember, too, that as an advisor to the legislator, they may be crucial in helping communicate your arguments and reinforcing your position. They serve as a sounding board for the legislator and can be an important ally in your efforts.



**Advice from Practitioners
9: Helpful hints for
advocating to legislators**

See page 74 for practical tips and advice on how to prepare for and accomplish successful meetings with legislators.



**Advice from Practitioners
10: The “Who-What-When-
Where-Why and How” of
effective advocacy**

communications

Ideas on how to make your advocacy more effective are offered on page 75.

Have a clear sense of what you want as an outcome to your meeting. What do you want them, concretely, to do? Ask when they will be able to decide on your request, and when you should approach them for their answer. At the end of the meeting, summarize the discussion and remind them of what they have offered to do.

One meeting, however successful, is unlikely to be enough. Lots of time and patience may be needed to bring about results. Emails and calls can work too, although avoid becoming a nuisance by being in touch too often.

Remember that legislators are keen for good publicity. Cooperatives are in a strong position to attract politicians to visit them, enabling them to meet and talk with their constituents. Visits accompanied by media representatives and cameras are of course an even better prospect for politicians!



**Advice from Practitioners
11: Engaging members at
the “grassroots” and
“grass-tops” levels**

See page 76 to learn how the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) strategically engages their members to leverage their collective influence with legislators.

In building effective relationships with government, cooperative advocates need to carefully consider which medium to convey their



message to persuade people in power. This can include mobilizing supporters, delivering presentations and speeches, writing papers and working with the media.



Advice from Practitioners 12: Preparing cooperative advocates to interact with government officials

Starting on page 77 we reproduce one of a series of “toolkits” for cooperative advocates produced by the *Ontario Co-operative Association* in Canada. Think how you could develop your own toolkits.

Preparing for advocacy through simulation

Being an effective advocate is a learned skill. It is useful to prepare and train the people who will be actively engaged in the advocacy process. One helpful technique is to arrange a series of simulation exercises. For example, you might want to rehearse a meeting with a senior government official, with one person playing the role of the official. If you are hoping for media attention, roleplay a TV interview with a tough questioner.

If you know who will be the interviewer, you may be able to use YouTube or other online videos to gain a sense of their interviewing technique.

FUNDESCOOP in the Dominican Republic suggests that a simulation has the following characteristics:

- It is a timely activity that attempts to rehearse how to advocate to key actors.
- It attempts to recreate an environment for analysis and discussion about the identified problem.
- It attempts to recreate the approach to key players and key decision-makers.
- It allows us to visualize possible areas of confrontation in the advocacy process.
- It helps to generate ideas on how to manage advocacy in a practical way.
- It helps to eliminate weaknesses in a presentation.
- It is an opportunity to measure the degree of cohesion that the advocacy team has.

Simulations need to be non-threatening so that none of the participants feels vulnerable or under criticism. Beforehand, the objectives of the simulation need to be fully discussed, and adequate evaluation of how the simulation went should take place afterwards. It can help to rerun a simulation, reversing the roles of the actors.

Bringing in an international perspective

There is a real opportunity to benefit in your advocacy work from the fact that the cooperative movement in your country is part of a wider, global movement. Following is some information, which you may be able to use to strengthen your arguments.

For example, you may wish to remind legislators and opinion leaders in your country of the recognition of cooperatives that the United Nations (U.N.) has accorded on numerous occasions. The U.N. has declared the first Saturday in July as

U.N. International Day of Cooperatives, which is celebrated by cooperative movements in many countries (other countries have equivalent events at other times of the year). The U.N. also dedicated 2012 as International Year of Cooperatives.

The U.N. General Assembly has also called on governments “to keep under review the legal and administrative provisions governing the activities of cooperatives with a view to ensuring a supportive environment for cooperatives, so that they can make an appropriate contribution

to the attainment of the goals of national development, including that of meeting the basic human needs of all.” (Resolution A/RES/51/58.)

U.N. Resolution A/RES/51/58

The U.N. says that it values “the important role of cooperatives in social and economic development.” The box below is taken from the UN’s webpage <http://social.un.org/index/Cooperatives.aspx>. Again, you may find this text of use in your advocacy.

Figure 14: Cooperatives in social development

Cooperatives and poverty reduction. Cooperatives, as self-help organizations, contribute to the eradication of poverty through the economic and social progress of their members and employees and by stimulating the economies and enhancing the social fabric of the communities in which they operate.

Cooperatives and employment generation. Cooperatives help to create, improve and protect the income and employment opportunities of their members by pooling the limited individual resources of members to create business enterprises that enable them to participate in production, profit-sharing, cost-saving or risk-taking activities.

Cooperatives and social integration. Cooperatives promote social integration and cohesion in the face of inequalities in social capabilities by empowering and giving voice to the poor, as well as marginalized groups, and by promoting the organization of federations and alliances.

In addition, cooperatives play an important role in an increasingly integrated global economy, as well as in fostering peace building among peoples, communities and nations.

Cooperatives and globalization. Cooperatives work towards fair globalization – one that is fundamentally inclusive, sustainable and people-centered – by creating business entities that promote solidarity among peoples, greater accountability, deeper partnerships and fairer rules and standards that offers equitable opportunities for all.

Cooperatives and post crisis/conflict, reconstruction and reintegration in disaster areas. Cooperatives through their economic model which stresses self-help and mutual aid, promote local economic and social development. Cooperatives also help facilitate social and political reconciliation, and provide access to financial services and spur employment, as exemplified in their valuable role in rehabilitating survivors of the East Asian Tsunami.

ILO Recommendation 193

The UN agency concerned with work and employment is the International Labour Organization, which has taken an active interest in cooperatives since as 1920. The ILO is a tripartite organization, that is to say it is made up of member governments, employers' organizations and workers' organizations who jointly decide policy at the annual International Labour Conference. This means that its decisions, and in particular the ILO Conventions and Recommendations which comprise the body of internationally agreed Labour Standards, have the

weight of having been made by governments and both sides of industry working together.

The most recent formal engagement by the ILO on issues concerning cooperatives is Recommendation 193, *Promoting Cooperatives*, adopted in 2002. This is a very valuable text, which can be of considerable benefit in advocacy work at a national level. Some key parts of the resolution are highlighted in the text below. The ILO has also produced a useful workbook on Recommendation 193, also called *Promoting Cooperatives* (details of the web address in Appendix 3).

Figure 15: Excerpts from ILO Recommendation 193

3. The promotion and strengthening of the identity of cooperatives should be encouraged on the basis of:

(a) cooperative values of self-help, self-responsibility, democracy, equality, equity and solidarity; as well as ethical values of honesty, openness, social responsibility and caring for others; and

(b) cooperative principles as developed by the international cooperative movement... These principles are: voluntary and open membership; democratic member control; member economic participation; autonomy and independence; education, training and information; co-operation among cooperatives; and concern for community.

6. A balanced society necessitates the existence of strong public and private sectors, as well as a strong cooperative, mutual and the other social and non-governmental sector. It is in this context that Governments should provide a supportive policy and legal framework consistent with the nature and function of cooperatives and guided by the cooperative values and principles set out in Paragraph 3, which would:

(a) establish an institutional framework with the purpose of allowing for the registration of cooperatives in as rapid, simple, affordable and efficient a manner as possible;

(b) promote policies aimed at allowing the creation of appropriate reserves, part of which at least could be indivisible, and solidarity funds within cooperatives;

(c) provide for the adoption of measures for the oversight of cooperatives, on terms appropriate to their nature and functions, which respect their autonomy, and are in accordance with national law and practice, and which are no less favourable than those applicable to other forms of enterprise and social organization;

(d) facilitate the membership of cooperatives in cooperative structures responding to the needs of cooperative members; and

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(e) encourage the development of cooperatives as autonomous and self-managed enterprises, particularly in areas where cooperatives have an important role to play or provide services that are not otherwise provided.

10. (1) Member States should adopt specific legislation and regulations in cooperatives, which are guided by the cooperative values and principles set out in Paragraph 3, and revise such legislation and regulations when appropriate.

(2) Governments should consult cooperative organizations, as well as the employers' and workers' organizations concerned, in the formulation and revision of legislation, policies and regulations applicable to cooperatives.

The Group of Eight (G-8) has called for the use of cooperatives for sustainable development, and the Rio Plus 20 conference in June 2012 mandated cooperatives as a means for

ending unemployment and dealing with world hunger. The *Post Millennium Development Goals* report explicitly states that cooperatives can help resolve the financial crisis.





CHAPTER 5.

PARTING POINTS

Cooperative law and regulation are not ends in themselves, but means to a stronger cooperative movement and better cooperative enterprises.

Helping to achieve changes that are needed can be hard work, but it can also be deeply satisfying. The international cooperative movement today is built on the efforts of many thousands of unsung heroes, going back many generations.

Effective advocacy can help bring about the changes you want.

This CLARITY report cannot give you a guaranteed route to cooperative advocacy success. It is meant to be a tool box for you to use and reference to build your own strategy. We hope it will assist in encouraging you to ensure that your advocacy work is well organized and well targeted.

For a cooperative law to be successful in practice, it must first be understood by those for whom it is intended. One important role that all national cooperative organizations can play is in the dissemination of the cooperative law and the regulatory framework to the wider cooperative sector. This can include annotated versions of the official legislation, laypersons' guides or even online resources to explain legal provisions. Government has a role in dissemination and education as well, and it should be a collaborative effort.

Cooperative law and regulation are not ends in themselves, but means to a stronger cooperative movement and to better cooperative enterprises. Cooperatives have too much at stake to leave the process of legal or regulatory revision or reform to others, who may not fully understand the cooperative model or the impact that poorly designed cooperative law or regulation may have. Being involved from the start in dis-

cussing and advocating legal and regulatory solutions means that there will be better understanding within the cooperative movement of the law in the future.

Cooperatives, as democratic member-led organizations, have one big advantage over others when they engage in advocacy: members themselves can be directly involved in the advocacy work. There is the opportunity to make it clear to legislators just how deep the cooperative roots are in your country and just how many people are members of a cooperative. An effective advocacy strategy will try to find a role, no matter how small, that as many cooperative members as possible can play.

As we've suggested, advocacy is not a one-time event but rather an on-going process. It requires contributions from many people, and it also requires patience. Cooperative advocates must be prepared to engage over a long period of time and be ready to repeat the same advocacy actions again and again if necessary. Sometimes it takes time to establish credibility, or for those we are seeking to influence, to understand our message. Sometimes (and this is a feature of democratic life) people in positions of power move on, and it will be necessary to seek to influence a new generation of legislators.

Priorities change over time, too. What was appropriate yesterday may not be relevant today. Cooperative organizations need to constantly scan the horizon to see the coming challenges and opportunities that are emerging, and to assess how laws under preparation may affect them.

Sometimes it can all seem too difficult. Real progress sometimes can seem hard to achieve. But no cooperative organization is alone. It's been estimated by the ICA that as many as one billion people worldwide may be members of one or more cooperative. There is a new sense of purpose, too, in the international cooperative movement. The ICA has pointed out in its 2013 document, *Blueprint for a Co-operative Decade*, that cooperatives are a uniquely democratic way of running enterprises. According to the Blueprint,

this a a historic moment of opportunity for the cooperative movement:

“With political institutions in many nations struggling to keep up with a rapidly changing world, it is essential that citizens become increasingly resourceful, enterprising and cooperative in order to face the inevitable social and environmental challenges we face as a world community. Rarely has the argument in favor of cooperatives looked stronger.”

It's a message to inspire any cooperative advocacy campaign.

APPENDIX I:

CASE STUDIES IN COOPERATIVE ADVOCACY

CASE STUDY 1: Advocating for a new cooperative law in Mozambique

Mozambican cooperatives were a classic example of cooperative development under state socialism, and the term “cooperative” was associated with government control. From 1979 to 1992, the country was wracked by civil war. When it ended, development organizations came to Mozambique to help the country rebuild itself.

One of these organizations was NCBA CLUSA which began promoting groups of farmers working together, like cooperatives, to take advantage of economies of scale to buy and sell in bulk for better prices.

However the legal framework did not permit associations and other groups to market their crops legally through associations. NCBA CLUSA worked with its partners to propose a new decree law for farm associations, which allowed them to register at the local level and market their products. It was passed in 2006 and was a positive first step. However, a new, comprehensive cooperative law was needed for Mozambique.

Mário Jorge de Almeida Matos and Maria José Novoa were directly involved in bringing this new law into being. The drive to get the law passed was, as Novoa said, bottom-up, a true grassroots effort.

The reform group had little or no budget for its advocacy efforts. Working with a very small budget, they brought together four key organizations, each with something different — links to power, connections to thousands of people, private-sector business goodwill — to contribute. The organizers recognized that bringing these groups together would help build common understanding and that to leave any of them out would be a problem.

Throughout the reform process, they worked to ensure inclusion of people and groups from different political parties, different religions, the cities and rural areas, private enterprise and cooperatives.

“Partners came from other economic sectors and the civil society sector,” Novoa said. “We were surprised by how big the movement grew. People were expecting so much, and at times, we wondered if we could deliver.”

One of their first tasks was to create awareness of the need for cooperative law reform. They chose the Swedish study circle method to engage a broad range of citizens. This method, which involves small groups of people meeting multiple times to discuss an issue, has been used to analyze and find solutions to social, political or community problems. There is no teacher, but a facilitator keeps everyone on track.

Through the study circles, they started to disseminate successful cooperative stories from other countries to demonstrate how others — including those with a similar history of colonialism or state socialism — have created an enabling environment for the successful and democratic functioning of cooperatives.

“We would study something, and then share the information with everyone,” Novoa said. “It was very informal. We even left publications in cafés. It was a casual way to push and motivate people.”

Through participative discussions at all levels, the reform group began to formulate and improve the proposal for the new cooperative law. Novoa said the process required absolute



dedication, dialogue and inclusion of all parts of the nation: from civil society to government authorities, from north to south, from supporters to opponents, from all economic sectors, banks, the private sector and political parties.

Finally, with the help of lawyers from Mozambique, Brazil and the Netherlands, the reform group delivered the cooperative law proposal to Parliament. It was approved unanimously in record time.

The situation of the cooperative movement in Mozambique is now very different from its previous status. Recent years have seen the successful development of the apex cooperative trade association, AMPCM (the Association for the Promotion of Modern Cooperatives in Mozambique), which now has 26 full-time members. AMPCM tours the country advocating on behalf of cooperatives. During the U.N. International Year of Cooperatives (IYC) in 2012, the organization hosted a launch event for the ITC which has over 300 participants, including the President of the Mozambican Parliament, Armando Guebuza, who spoke of how cooperatives are vehicles for economic development in the country. AMPCM has secured funding from European donors and is continuing its advocacy efforts in Mozambique.

Source: This case study draws from the presentation made by Mário Jorge de Almeida Matos (board member, Mozambican Association for the Promotion of Modern Cooperativism) and Maria José Novoa (Senior International Associate, NCBA CLUSA, Mozambique) at the CLARITY seminar in May 2010.

CASE STUDY 2: Working for cooperative law reform in Bosnia-Herzegovina

Anyone seeking to reform the country's cooperative laws in Bosnia and Herzegovina faces a formidable array of ministries, divisions of government and high-ranking officials. The country does, however, have a long cooperative tradition. The first farmers' cooperative was established in 1904, and by 1914 there were 207 farmer credit cooperatives and six dairy coops. By 1938, there were 544 cooperatives operating in the country. More recently the picture has been less healthy: in 2010, there were just 543 farmer cooperatives registered and only about half of them were functioning. There is also a considerable difference between established (pre-civil war) cooperatives, many of whom have significant assets, and those established post-war.

Laws regulating cooperatives were felt to be a major source of the problems affecting cooperatives in Bosnia-Herzegovina. For example:

- Laws at different levels contradicted each other and were implemented based on subjective judgment.
- The status of cooperative property was unclear: cooperatives didn't know if they owned their property. This meant that it was impossible to get mortgages or loans or to improve the property.
- Housing cooperative registration was based on a law from the days when Bosnia and Herzegovina was part of Yugoslavia. It took two years for a new cooperative to register and many more for it to become operational.
- There were not sufficient regulations applicable to all cooperatives. Micro-credit organizations issued loans, but had no savings component, while savings and credit cooperatives were "legally illegal."

A cooperative law reform group composed of cooperative leaders came together to try to address some of these issues, particularly those related to cooperative property. Roundtable discussions were held to seek solutions, particularly in relation to the law on agricultural cooperatives.

The passage of a law on agricultural cooperatives in 2008 in the Republic of Srpska region of Bosnia and Herzegovina triggered concern, because it was felt not to encourage cooperative development. There were also anticipated problems in its implementation. CHF International (now Global Communities) was asked to offer advice and expertise.

Working with CHF, the group undertook preliminary research work into the position of cooperatives in the country. Participants also evaluated the strengths, weaknesses and resources of the cooperative movement. Among the strengths identified were that an organizational structure existed, that leaders understood the legal and political situation, and that general knowledge existed of how to resolve problems through legal channels. Perceived weaknesses included the lack of unified opinion among cooperatives, the extremely complicated political situation, and the strong influence exercised on cooperatives by the Ministry for Agriculture through subsidies.

This evaluation was followed by an analysis of the power and decision-making situation and identification of key players.

With these analyses and evaluations undertaken, the law reform group developed a plan of activities and a proposal for a solution of the problem. Their plan called for the engagement of an international legal expert who would be asked to assess the law on agriculture cooperatives in relation to the CLARITY principles, which were seen as a neutral point of reference. The advocacy plan also envisioned the drafting of a letter to the international community, which could be sent on behalf of the Republic Srpska Cooperative Union Assembly.

The draft letter generated heated discussions in the Assembly, with some members concerned that it would be seen as insulting the Ministry of Agriculture. Nevertheless, the Assembly agreed to the letter, which was sent in the summer of 2009. As a result, a meeting was set up between the Office of the High Representative and the EU Commission, which had good results. However, significant challenges remained. Divisions among cooperatives continued, and state seizure of cooperative property has started, with incentives given to “good” cooperatives. Complaints submitted by individual cooperatives to the constitutional court remained unread in drawers. Nevertheless, support from the international community and the CLARITY tools have enabled the law reform group to continue its work.

Source: This case study is based on a presentation made by Vesna Kolar, then working for CHF International (now Global Communities), at the CLARITY seminar, May 2010.



CASE STUDY 3: Defending a new Producer cooperative law in Uruguay

In 2004, producer (worker) cooperatives in Uruguay had faced an urgent situation where new cooperative enabling legislation passed by the Uruguayan legislature had been vetoed by the executive branch of government. Associations of producer cooperatives worked together to develop an advocacy plan to convince the legislature to override the veto. Implementing the plan over a period of 10 months, these cooperatives successfully convinced the legislature.

During the workshop, which developed the successful advocacy strategy and plan, the facilitator divided the attendees into two working groups, who undertook the practical exercises and then compared notes.

The workshop produced this matrix, following an issue prioritization exercise.

Table: Issue Prioritization Analysis

Problem	Why is it a problem?	Who is affected and how?	Causes	Feasibility to solve them				Effects	
				Externally		Internally		Serious	Mild
				High	Low	High	Low		
Veto by the Executive Branch of the new producer cooperative legislation	It marginalizes the producer cooperative sector, which currently is unable to grow and expand	It directly affects producer cooperatives and the entire cooperative sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dogmatic ideological views • Tax collection • Economic interests of private business enterprise groups 	YES		YES		YES	

To tackle the problem, workshop participants identified the following steps they needed to take in order to develop appropriate advocacy:

- Find out which interest groups are affected by the veto by the Executive Branch;
- Obtain information on parliamentary procedure;
- Analyze the arguments used by the Executive Branch for the veto;
- Analyze the pros and cons of overturning the veto;
- Find specific information about the veto;
- Analyze the political aspects of the situation;
- Analyze internally what aspects of the legislation are negotiable and what are essential to be retained;
- Attempt to get all possible points of view;
- Marshall arguments to defend cooperatives, given that the very concept of a cooperative was under attack; and
- Seek technical advice.

The workshop participants undertook a power analysis exercise and produced the following table:

Table: Power Analysis

ACTOR	Role of the actor	Main interest	Weakness	Strength
General Assembly	Positive predisposition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Electoral • Corporate interests • Interests in development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time • Attention 	Previous unanimity
Media	Indifference - except for a dozen programs	Inform	Partially informed and mostly belongs to the private sector	Influences public opinion
Minister of Economy	Opposition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Defense of the traditional private company • Tax revenues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internal divisions • Image • Political weight 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Power of decision • Influence on the ruling party
Senator R.	Pro	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support • Define a policy for the promotion of producer coops 	Elections	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Common background • Good dialogue with representatives of other parties. • Knowledge of the cooperative movement
Communication	It has an impact on public opinion	Economic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economic resources • Lack of clear information • Business and ideological bias 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The interior press of the country • Partner with CORI radio network • Own information service • Some programs and channels 5 and 24 • Some cooperatives are big advertisers

Are in favor of our proposal	Arguments against our proposal	Current relationship with us	Relationship desired	Profile desired with the actor
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The development of formal employment Development of the social economy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unconstitutional Discrimination 	Exists	Positive negotiation	High
Proposal has popular and political support	Prejudice	Low	Be taken as news	High
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is a topic of interest to society Decent and formal employment is a priority Increased tax revenues Business recovery Large number of beneficiaries 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It contradicts the current policy of the government Unconstitutional It favors a particular sector 	None	Recognition of the strength of the movement	Medium
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Decent and formal employment is a priority Increased tax revenues Business recovery Large number of beneficiaries 	None	Good	Permanent, but lacks on-going communication	High
		Weak	Be taken as news	High

It was agreed that the advocacy strategy would be carried out by CUDECOOP (Uruguayan Confederation of Cooperative Enterprises) and FCPU (Federation of Producer Cooperatives of Uruguay) with the support of their members and other cooperative organizations in Uruguay.

The workshop participants completed a questionnaire about their organizations and their management and decision-making mechanisms. The answers are given in the table below.

- Who are the member organizations of the group? **CUDECOOP (Uruguayan Confederation of Cooperative Enterprises) and FCPU (Federation of Producer Cooperatives of Uruguay)**
- Who are the official representatives for decision-making? **Parliament.** Do they have full powers or will have to consult? **Yes.**
- What are the procedures for decision-making? **Information and consultation.**
- How you will communicate with the entire group? **As agreed at coordination meetings.**
- Who makes up the high-level negotiating group? What is negotiable? Who is responsible for press? What are they authorized to say / do or not? **CUDECOOP communication staff, as decided by the negotiating group.**
- How they will handle disagreements and conflict? **Via internal consultation between CUDECOOP and FCPU.**
- How many people are going to be assigned by group? For how long? How they will divide the tasks within the team? **Defined by the board of directors of CUDECOOP.**

The participants also undertook a self-analysis of the capabilities and weaknesses of the organizations. Their answers are given in the table below.

- Are we well-organized and willing to support actions that are part of the plan? **Yes.**
- Are there leaders capable of guiding the process? **Yes.**
- Do we have the technical capacity to identify the key elements that must be included the proposal (especially when it comes to a draft law)? **Yes.**
- Can we gather data and information about the problem? **Yes.**
- Is there a need to adjust the proposal? **Yes, to the extent as necessary in a phased manner.**

The participants next considered the question, “Is our proposal achievable or should we change it?” and concluded: **Yes, it is feasible.** They agreed to responses for another questionnaire, as follows:

- Ability to research policies, programs and official plans. **Yes.**
- Relationships with stakeholders in the public and private sectors. **Reasonably positive.**
- Knowledge of the subject and of data and statistics. **Acceptable.**
- Relations with mass media. **Average.**
- Relations with national and international partners. **Excellent.**
- Credibility, representativeness, legitimacy and convening power. **Excellent.**
- The financial resources available. **Limited.**
- The quality of leadership. **Yes, there is quality leadership.**
- The clarity of vision and mission, levels of consensus. **Excellent.**

Early in the process, participants brainstormed a number of possible advocacy actions.

- Start a campaign within and outside the cooperative movement to achieve maximum support for our proposals.
- Inform the International Cooperative Alliance (ICA), ICA-Americas, and CICOPA (The International Organization of Industrial, Artisanal and Service Producers' Cooperatives) to request statements of support to exert international influence.
- Take advantage of political actors within local associations, inter-cooperative meetings and producer cooperative as a means to create support and pressure for the proposal.
- Request support from the media (specifically the CORI radio network) who has contacted the cooperative sector in the past.
- Request that the national Honorary Commission on Cooperativism offer support.
- Initiate an immediate formal communication process via press conferences, etc.
- Contact and get to know parliamentarians who voted for the law and who understand its technical arguments.
- Initiate a strategy of negotiating with the legislature to win support for our proposal.
- If the law is approved, take into account how the Executive Branch may regulate it.
- Assess the strength of producer cooperatives for a demonstration strategy.
- Prepare a proposal that includes the argument that approximately 300 producer cooperatives with 12,000 cooperative members are impacted.
- Use National Cooperative Movement Month to talk about this problem so that the public knows how politicians stand on this issue.
- Ensure a high level of participation in the case of a demonstration around the International Day of the Cooperative.
- Research producer cooperatives to show how they encourage the formalization of employment, eliminating the Government argument about the reduction of the tax revenues.
- Demonstrate to politicians the importance of the cooperative movement being half of the economically active population.

Table: Advocacy Plan

Strategy	Activities	Results Desired
Lobby	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visit Senator R. • Interview legislators from each caucus 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify our key partners from different sectors • Understand status of the debate • Plan based on coordination
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Convene a press conference • Direct contacts with certain media and people 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transmission of information, generating a positive opinion • Convince the media about real activity of our sector and our contributions to the social economy
Pressure and demonstration	Presence of taxi and bus transportation cooperatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shaping public opinion in our favor • Sensitize society
	Posters with slogan: "Yes to the recovery of enterprise! Yes to dignified work! No to the veto of the law of producer cooperatives"	
	Connect with legislators from the countryside through local cooperative relations	Commitment to vote and be present at the General Assembly of legislators
Information generation	Preparation of a document with our proposal	Share information and receive popular support
	Proposal about unconstitutionality and discrimination	

Date	Responsible for	Participants	Resources
June 17	D.B. and A. F., Managers of CUDECOOP and FCPU	D.B. and A.F.	Yes
June 18 June 17 and 18	N.A. - CUDECOOP - and R.C.- FCPU-	Boards of CUDECOOP and FCPU	Yes
17 and 18 June	FCPU	Transportation cooperatives	Yes
Until 06/27 within the cooperative movement	Legal Advisory Committee of CUDECOOP		
After towards the society in general 30 June			

The text of the first message to be issued was also agreed upon:

Observations regarding actions by the Executive Branch on
the Law on Producer Cooperatives

SERIOUS DAMAGE TO WORKERS COOPERATIVES

With great concern **CUDECOOP (Uruguayan Confederation of Cooperative Enterprises) and FCPU (Federation of Producer Cooperatives of Uruguay)**, have become aware of decisions made by the Executive Branch related to the Worker Cooperatives Law, which had been approved unanimously by both houses in Parliament. This decision constitutes a virtual veto of the approved legislation.

Despite the difficulties of a previously obsolete law, for years CUDECOOP and FCPU have promoted the creation of worker cooperatives across the country. The draft legislation approved in Parliament provides substantial improvement for the advancement of dignified and inclusive solutions to the profound need of employment for vast sectors of the population which are currently excluded.

Against this disagreeable and unjustified measure, supported by more than 600,000 cooperative families throughout the country, assured of having the support of all organized sectors of our society, **the Cooperative Movement, CUDECOOP and FCPU, declare that they will continually campaign to override the veto in the General Assembly.**

We have no doubt that all legislators from all political parties who already supported the draft law on worker cooperatives will remain consistent with their political position taken. We hope they unanimously honor their commitments made in support of the Cooperative Movement.

CUDECOOP - F.C.P.U.

Montevideo, June 15, 2004

The careful work undertaken by Uruguayan producer cooperatives in preparing their advocacy strategy paid off. In 2008, the General Law of Cooperatives of Uruguay, No. 18407 (and in particular articles 99-105 which cover Producer Cooperatives) was unanimously approved by representatives of all political parties in the Uruguay Chamber of Deputies and the Senate.

Source: This case study draws on a report on the work of 26 Uruguayan cooperative leaders who met for two days in June 2004 with facilitator Alberto Mora Portuguese, Project Director at ICA-Americas, to create a successful advocacy strategy based on implementation of the ICA-Americas' Guide for Preparing Advocacy Plans.

APPENDIX 2: ADVICE FROM PRACTITIONERS



Advice from Practitioners 1: Some recent global and regional cooperative law initiatives

Below are a number of useful regional cooperative law resources, aimed at encouraging a more harmonized approach to cooperative law.

Repeating the advice offered earlier, we seek to encourage an open, flexible and adaptable approach to model cooperative laws, and we suggest that it is generally unwise simply to copy laws written for other countries or contexts.

Among the useful cooperative law resources are regional initiatives for harmonized cooperative law:

■ **OHADA Uniform Act on Cooperatives**

After more than 10 years of preparation and negotiations, the 16 member states of OHADA (Organization for the Harmonization in Africa of Business Law) adopted a uniform act on cooperatives in 2010. The Act is directly applicable in the member states. For more information see www.ohadalegis.com.

■ **European Union Council Regulation on the Statute for a European Cooperative Society (SCE)**

In 2003 the European Union (EU) published Regulation 1435/2003 of the Statute for a European Cooperative Society (SCE) after more than 30 years of preparations. The Regulation came into force in 2006 and is directly applicable in the Member States of the EU. Contrary to the OHADA Uniform Act on Cooperatives, it does not regulate national cooperatives, but creates a new type of transborder cooperative membership must come from at least two EU member states. It does not regulate all legal aspects of cooperatives. In a complicated system of cross-references, it refers to national cooperative laws. For more information visit www.europa.eu.

■ **Mercosur Common Cooperative Statute**

Since 2009, the member countries of Mercosur in South America have had a Common Cooperative Statute. Like the EU regulation, it is directly applicable in the member states to facilitate the cross border establishment of cooperatives, and it does not regulate national cooperatives. However, its application requires transformation into national law. So far, this has been done by Uruguay only. For more information visit www.mercosur.coop.

Other relevant resources on framework law include:

■ **Ley Marco para las Cooperativas de América Latina / Framework Law for Cooperatives in Latin America**

The purpose of Cooperative Framework Law is to provide orientation on key guidelines of the cooperative legislation as they derive from jurisprudence, academic studies and the most recognized practice of comparative law. Developed by ICA-Americas, it has no binding force upon legislators, but is a useful tool since it combines proposals for a text of a cooperative law with a succinct commentary on each article. It has had an influential role

in lawmaking processes over the years. For more information, visit the publications section of www.aciamericas.coop.

■ **WOCCU model cooperative law**

The World Council of Credit Unions (WOCCU) has developed a model law on savings and credit cooperatives. Its legal value and effects are comparable to those of the Ley Marco para las Cooperativas de América Latina. Visit www.woccu.org/policyadvocacy/legreg for more information.

In 2009 WOCCU asked credit unions through its annual statistical survey if they were familiar with WOCCU's *Model Law for Credit Unions* and *Model Regulations for Credit Unions*. Of 52 countries that responded, WOCCU learned that 67 percent (35 countries) were familiar with the documents, and of that group, more than one third (37 percent) used the documents to modify legislative and regulatory conditions.



Advice from Practitioners 2: The advocacy approach of the World Council of Credit Unions (WOCCU)

Part of WOCCU's mission is to advocate on behalf of the global credit union system before international organizations and to work with national governments to improve legislation, regulation and supervision. WOCCU operates its advocacy strategies in three arenas: at the international and regional level, at the individual country level, and through research and writing.

- **At international/regional level**, WOCCU works in regional networks. One example is the European Network of Credit Unions, an advocating entity developed by six EU members that speaks with a single voice.
- **At country level**, WOCCU helps ensure that a country's legislative and regulatory framework provides a healthy environment for credit unions. Together with local credit union organizations, WOCCU meets with government agencies.
- **Through research and writing**, WOCCU prepares publications such as the *Model Law*, *Model Regulations* and *Technical Guide*, offers online facilities such as the WOCCU website and bimonthly regulatory e-newsletter, as well as written comments at the request of the national organizations or regulators. One example is the work undertaken for the California Credit Union League which requested research into what credit unions in other countries were doing to raise capital beyond retained earnings. The result of that research was the paper "Alternative Forms of Capital," posted on WOCCU's website.

Source: Based on comments presented by Catherine Ford, Cooperative Development Program Manager, World Council of Credit Unions (WOCCU) during the CLARITY Advocacy Workshop, May 2010.



Advice from Practitioners 3: Using CLARITY to address industry-specific issues – experience from the rural electricity industry

The U.S.-based National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) used the sector-specific parts of CLARITY Rubrics (see page 29) to analyze the legal and regulatory issues and strengthening the arguments for use in advocacy:

Participation in a sector: In the case of the electric power sector, participation by cooperatives enables self-determination, including the incentive to achieve self-regulation. It enables the establishment of secondary-level entities and allows cooperatives maximum flexibility. Participation in the sector also provides adequate support mechanisms.

Interconnection: Cooperatives are able to operate in the public utility grids. There are various implications at the high-voltage (wholesale power) level.

Regulatory framework: Electric cooperatives are fundamentally different from other types of utilities due to their member ownership and governance, and the regulatory framework needs to reflect that. For example, in most U.S. States, cooperatives are allowed by regulators to set their own electricity prices, unlike other utilities.

Access to affordable finance: Government must play a facilitative role, providing direct and indirect support in areas such as this. This may require education or awareness raising of government officials.

Taxation rules must be considered carefully. Because the investment requirements are large, cooperatives need to be able to enter into joint ventures and other corporate solutions without additional tax burdens.

Competition: The economic realities of rural electric cooperatives require that they be free of national retail tariff policies such as mandated subsidies, yet still be eligible to receive affordable wholesale power. Provisions that allow power suppliers to compete to sell electricity to individual customers (known as “retail wheeling”) can unfairly punish rural utilities where industrial and large commercial customers are vital to their financial health. In certain instances they should be exempt from these provisions. The cost of power generally represents two-thirds of typical retail cost. Cooperatives need full latitude for self-supply under a flexible investment selection format.

In general, CLARITY’s broad focus on the basic laws and regulatory systems for cooperatives should be taken into account, together with other sectoral laws and regulations that correspond to the economic sectors where individual cooperatives operate (in NRECA’s case, the electric power and electricity service utilities industry). This can require the often complex challenge of harmonizing two or more sets of systems. For this reason, it is often appropriate to seek, if possible, for the enactment of uniquely defining enabling provisions specifically for cooperatives, either within these laws or as separate laws. This is not always easy. For example, electric cooperatives face a difficult challenge, from an advocacy standpoint, to obtain special allowances and provisions in power sector laws that reflect their unique characteristics as public service utilities.

More details of NRECA’s approach to advocacy is given in *Advice from Practitioners 11*, page 76.

Source: Based on comments by Paul Clark, National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) during the CLARITY Advocacy Workshop, May 2010.



Advice from Practitioners 4: Advocating for industry-specific issues – experience from the information and communication technology sector

Communications Cooperative International (CCI) has worked on information and communication technology (ICT) legislative and regulatory reform in a number of countries, with the aim of ensuring that cooperatives are able to offer internet access, telephone and other communication technology services on a fair and equal footing with other providers.

Key challenges faced by advocates of ICT cooperatives including:

- The ICT sector is complex, highly regulated and capital intensive; weak institutions and comparatively high levels of political and economic risk represent a major obstacle for such forms of enterprise.
- ICT regulatory mechanisms tend to focus on the interests of large commercial companies and high-level sector management. It is not unusual to find that ICT laws and policies do not even contemplate the possibility of small-scale market entrants such as cooperatives and community-based enterprises being service providers.
- Development of community-based and cooperative ICT enterprises depends on enabling legal and regulatory frameworks across multiple sectors – for example, laws and regulations governing ICTs, cooperatives and taxation.
- Consequently, constructive ICT cooperative advocacy requires significant subject matter expertise. This is typically contributed by professionals with an in-depth understanding of:
 - ▶ How the ICT sector is organized, its role in national politics and economics, the prevailing regulatory structure, and the status of/prospects for regulatory reform.
 - ▶ The degree and nature of policy dialogues surrounding ICT access issues, if any, and the strategic dynamics among key ICT industry stakeholders, particularly those with vested interests.
 - ▶ Market failures that lead to significant gaps in access, especially among rural and underserved populations, and the potential role of cooperatives in filling those gaps.

Generally speaking, successful ICT sector advocacy efforts have hinged on:

- Identifying and supporting political leaders and organizations strongly committed to shaping public policy in ways that allow for the establishment of ICT cooperatives and that encourage their financial viability, for example through public-financing instruments and other forms of formal assistance.
- Identifying, organizing and strengthening local “champions” as grassroots advocates through direct technical assistance where desired and/or participation of experts.
- Contemplating advocacy efforts through cooperative-to-cooperative exchange programs, training for regulators and other forms of leadership education.
- Effectively combining a “top-down” strategy of engagement at the national policy level with a “bottom-up” strategy of assisting and empowering local advocates.

Source: Based on comments by Forrest Wilhoit, Communications Cooperative International (CCI) presented during CLARITY Workshop, May 2010.



Advice from Practitioners 5: Legislator Information Form

This form is adapted from that drawn up by Joan Kelly Horn and used to assist the cooperative movement in Mongolia in refining its advocacy tactics.

Use a form like this to build up information on key legislators, their interests and their attitude to the cooperative movement. Keep the details up to date!

Legislator Information Form

1. Name of legislator _____ Political party _____
2. First elected to Parliament (date) _____
3. Occupation before being elected _____
4. District or province he/she represents _____
5. Location of district _____
6. Population (approximate) _____
7. Cooperatives who operate in this district/province. List cooperative names, types and approximate number of members (attach sheet if needed)

8. Committees on which this legislator serves _____

9. Legislative interests of this legislator, bills he/she has introduced, passed

10. Possible concerns of this legislator _____

11. Names(s) of assistants/aides who work for the legislator _____

12. Contact information about legislator and assistant(s): office location

Telephone numbers: _____
E-mail addresses: _____
13. In your opinion, will this legislator support the cooperative law changes?
Yes___ No___ Undecided___ I don't know ___

Source: Joan Kelly Horn, former U.S. Congresswoman and Global Communities volunteer.



Advice from Practitioners 6: Take time to develop skills and processes

When working on advocacy, consider the following:

- Advocacy is a process. It takes time to learn about its elements, develop its components and put them into action.
- Communication and reaching out are powerful tools. But both are a two-way street and require follow up and repeated action.
- Combining advocacy with other cooperative events may result in more effective participation and build interest.
- Coalitions and partnerships need to be built. This requires time and lots of interaction between participants.
- Meetings can be used to build support for legislative action. Reaching a compromise solution is important. Webster's dictionary defines compromise as "to adjust and settle a difference by mutual agreement with concessions on both sides."
- Reach out to young members and use the new technology that attracts them.
- Advocacy costs money and needs to be budgeted for.
- Creating an advocacy environment requires persistence, patience and continuous action.

Source: Based on comments by Joan Kelly Horn, former U.S. Congresswoman, and Barbara Czachor-ska-Jones, Global Communities, presented during the CLARITY Advocacy Workshop in May 2010.



Advice from Practitioners 7: Meeting the challenges in coalitions

Coalition building is among the most potentially challenging aspects of advocacy. Many organizations approach this by considering a number of basic questions:

Before you start:

- *Are the objectives of potential partners similar to yours? Try to define coalition objectives clearly as so to minimize the risk of misunderstanding.*
- *Would the potential partners benefit from participating in this advocacy campaign? If so, describe the benefits in a way that would appeal to all.*
- *What does the partner bring to the table? Does the partner have different or better connections than you have, or more experienced in communicating issues? Do they have access to financial resources that can assist in reaching the goals? Would they bring new supporters who would otherwise not join the coalition?*
- *Does the partner understand the commitment? Developing a clear understanding of the goal, objectives and potential tactics is essential. Potential partners should understand what is expected of them, particularly in terms of the time commitment that may be necessary.*
- *What is the reputation of the potential coalition partner? Would you be comfortable to be associated with them publicly? Consider potential risks to the reputation of your organization.*

Once you decide to proceed with creating a coalition:

- Jointly develop and *write down a brief outline covering the issue(s)*.
- Agree on the *roles and expectations* of each coalition member, as well as timeline and financial resources; define whether and how additional members could be admitted to the coalition.
- Decide who is the *leader or champion within the coalition*.
- Periodically *verify* how it is going and *adapt* your actions, if necessary.
- *Communicate often* with partners in a manner agreed ahead of time. You do not want to undermine their trust by keeping your partners in the dark.

What can organizations do to avoid the main pitfalls when forming a coalition?

- Build coalitions with those who have objectives similar to yours. Develop a one-page outline *covering the issue and the objective* you want to achieve. *Protect your organization*.
- Coalitions can be tricky endeavors, and there's always a risk, which may increase over time.
- You cannot totally control risks, but begin by choosing and researching your partners carefully.
- Give your coalition a name different from that of your organization.
- If there are some questionable partners, focus on what they can accomplish for the coalition.
- Understand that you and your partners will be identified with the issue you are working on together, although there may be other issues on which you may disagree, perhaps profoundly. This can be confusing to the legislators you are trying to persuade.
- Strive to *minimize fragmentation* among organizations. This can be alleviated by a challenging, well-defined purpose. Although there may not be commonality among all the organizations, each one can work on a piece of an initiative.

Source: Based on presentations made during CLARITY Workshops of May 2010 and February 2011 by Rob Nooter, former OCDC Executive Director; Ed Potter, ICMIF/Americas Executive Director; John McKechnie, former Director of Public and Congressional Affairs, National Credit Union Administration (NCUA), and Paul Clark, consultant, NRECA International Ltd.



Advice from Practitioners 8: Effective advocacy messages and messengers

Engaging members in any advocacy activity is of primary importance. The cooperatives that advocate on their own behalf are winners — even if their proposals do not immediately succeed — because they have raised awareness and begun building relationships. “*Do not let anyone else tell your story*,” one advisor said.

How can cooperatives tell their stories effectively and make sure they are heard? Here are some suggestions:

- ***Make it relevant.*** Parliaments and legislatures are political bodies, and legislators must know the connection between the issue you advocate for and the benefits to the public. For example, if you are advocating for more funding for agricultural cooperative programs, you need to explain how that relates to and benefits the voters back home. Be specific.

- **Build relationships.** This may mean talking with legislators without necessarily, at this stage, asking for anything. The example of a group of credit union advocates is a cautionary one: They articulated their case to a legislator very well, but it was their first visit and they were effectively asking the legislator to choose sides, in this case between banks and credit unions. This is a position legislators typically do not like to be in. Having merit on your side is critical, but so is the relationship.
- **Understand your audience.** Use that knowledge to craft your presentation to be as effective as possible.
- **Begin with the basics.** You cannot assume your audience knows a lot about your issue. Focus on just one or two issues. Talk with staff if you cannot get in to see legislators. It gives you more face time and more access.
- **Organize real grassroots involvement.** To be successful, your organization needs to be successful at home with members and the community. Use the right people with the right message. Grassroots advocates can be more effective than professional lobbyists.

Source: These comments are from a presentation of John McKechnie, former Director of Public & Congressional Affairs, National Credit Union Administration (NCUA), at the CLARITY Advocacy Workshop, February 2011.



Advice from Practitioners 9: Helpful hints for advocating to legislators

1. **Be prepared.** Know ahead of time about the legislator you will visit. You will need the same information for telephone calls, letters, e-mails.
2. **Know at least the basic information about the cooperative legislation.** It is not important to know all the details. If asked a question you cannot answer, tell the legislator that you will get back to him/her with the information. **Be sure to follow through with answers.**
3. If at all possible, **bring someone to the meeting who lives in the district/province that this legislator represents.** This person, if able, should take the lead. He/she is the one who can vote for or against this legislator. Emphasize the number and size of cooperatives in the district. Throw out influential names, if there are any known to you.
4. **Give a summary of legislation to legislator and go through basic points to the extent that they allow you the time.** Hopefully an assistant to the legislator will be present; this person may become your best contact in that office. If you have any information about how these changes will help the cooperatives in this district, share it.
5. **Always be polite, listen to all comments and any objections, note any questions.** As above, if you cannot answer right away, say you will check and get back to him/her.
6. **Leave the written summary and your contact information with both the legislator and any staff member or assistant.** Be sure to get contact information for the legislator and staff, including email addresses.
7. Within a few days of your meeting, **follow up with a letter, thanking the legislator** for his or her time and saying you will be in touch with any changes, include answers to any questions that may have come up in your meeting. If you need more time to do this, say so.

8. Remember elected officials are always looking to the next election and counting votes. **The more cooperatives, unions and/or associations in the legislator’s district, the more likely he or she will be concerned about this new legislation.**
9. Also, **remember that legislators are very busy, with a multitude of important issues facing them**, the next election could be contentious and there may be many conflicting issues. Your legislation may not be a high priority.
10. **Be aware that elected officials have many agendas, some evident and some hidden.** You cannot possibly know all of these, but be sensitive to the fact they exist.

Source: Joan Kelly Horn, former U.S. Congresswoman, Global Communities volunteer and participant in CLARITY Advocacy Workshop, May 2010.



Advice from Practitioners 10: The “Who-What-When-Where-Why and How” of effective advocacy communications

How to communicate effectively with legislators and regulators depends on a wide range of factors, which can be summarized as: “who-what-when-where-why and how”. *Who* delivers your message, *when*, and *where* and *how often* becomes as important as the content of the message (the “*what*” and “*why*”) you want to convey.

The following suggestions were offered at a 2011 CLARITY workshop:

WHAT:

- The message that cooperatives are democratic organizations with principles resonates across the political spectrum – it is not a liberal or conservative message.
- Many legislative leaders have an outdated, “frozen” image of cooperatives. The task is to try to “unfreeze” that image and help them think of cooperatives in a different way.
- If you are advocating for a solution, back your points up with figures and examples showing the impact, along with good information on the programs you are implementing.
- Think about the medium you choose to convey your message to government leaders. These may include meetings with policymakers, letters, telephone calls, rallies and marches, public debates, and even involving international stakeholders. Invite legislators to a cooperative – what better way to show what they are all about? Remember they are always looking for ways to meet and talk with constituents.

WHY:

- Understand the consequences of what you are advocating. A former legislator observed “*For every complex problem there is an apparently simple solution that turns out to be wrong. Even one law or change in a law can have huge consequences.*”
- Consider how those opposed to you will react to your proposal and plan accordingly.

WHO:

- Grassroots advocacy is a crucial element of politics. Cooperatives have the best grassroots connections because they are owned by their members at the local level. Members are a

“grassroots army” in waiting. Even a small number of committed cooperative members brought together to advocate on an issue can look like a firestorm of support to legislators. Constituent visits are particularly important to legislators.

- Cooperative advocacy has to rely on cooperative members in a given country knowing their system best – that is why they need to be involved.

HOW:

- Advocates are advised to make sure their message is to the point, direct and honest. “If a constituent lies to us, they are not welcome back,” said one former legislator.
- Letters to legislators are still important, but savvy advocates also must learn to use the Internet and social media. These are new ways of communicating which must be incorporated into advocacy activities.
- Various resources exist and can help on practical issues relating to communicating with legislators. The Congressional Management Foundation has researched current best practice in the U.S., which can be accessed at <http://www.congressfoundation.org/projects/communicating-with-congress>

WHEN

- Communicate often. Do not just call on your legislator when you need something; aim to build a long-term relationship.

WHERE:

- Savvy politicians regularly go back to their districts to touch base with and be seen by their constituents and do not make the capital city their permanent base. Consequently, advocacy can take place not just in the capital but also at their home district office.
- Finally, don't only come with a problem but also provide potential solutions or suggestions. Be flexible.

Source: Based on presentations made by contributors to CLARITY Advocacy Workshop, February, 2011.



Advice from Practitioners 11: Engaging members at the ‘grass-roots’ and ‘grasstops’ levels

The National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) has been working in the United States for nearly fifty years developing and implementing some of the most successful rural electrification programs, resulting in increased agricultural productivity, millions of new jobs in micro and small enterprises, and higher incomes and quality of life for its members. Cooperative advocacy has always been an important part of its organizational model.

Over the years, NRECA has developed its own new blend of advocacy, which focuses on marshaling the organization's 700,000-strong grassroots electric consumers to support NRECA's policy efforts. Advocacy is treated not as a public relations campaign, but as a fundamental part of the cooperative model, integral to the cooperative's business plan.

The NRECA uses grassroots advocates to speak to their legislative representatives, rather than simply leaving it to hired consultants or experts. Using grassroots members in this way has an added benefit of helping them expand their understanding of and commitment to their cooperative.

NRECA's advocacy efforts segment advocacy participants into two groups. Grass 'tops' are activist board members, employees and those engaging with NRECA through coalitions. The grass'roots' advocates are cooperative consumers. Of those contacting their representative in Congress on behalf of NRECA, 24 out of 25 are consumers.

In NRECA's experience, these two groups require different messages and methods:

Grass 'tops':

- The issue must be thoroughly explained to them. Grass'tops are the engine driving the advocacy campaign, so they have to inherently understand the issue. They should be able to speak about 10 minutes on the problem and solution.
- Their ability to describe the advocacy issue in their own words (even if their explanation is not elegant or grammatical) is really important, but this is likely to require coaching.
- If the problem is complex, grass'tops advocates need to know what the required action/solution is.

Grass 'roots':

- The challenge is to find the issue or topic that will motivate grassroots advocates. An advocacy campaign may start with an attack on something people hold dear. The advice is for organizations to act when their grassroots are fired up, rather than letting their energy and engagement dissipate.
- Grassroots advocates need to "own" the problem. They also have to trust the organization that the solution is something that will benefit them.
- Pocketbook concerns are what motivate grassroots advocates. (The basic reason for cooperatives is to improve their members' quality of life.)
- The message must be kept very simple and very clear. For NRECA, the chosen message is *Our energy, our future*. NRECA tracks responses continually to see how the message is performing.
- Grassroots advocates need to be provided with research data to demonstrate to their legislators that what they say is true.

Source: Based on a presentation made by Dena Stoner, former Vice President & Director of Government Relations, National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) at the CLARITY Workshop, February 2011



Advice from Practitioners 12: Preparing cooperative advocates to interact with government officials

The Ontario Co-operative Association (Canada) produces a series of leaflets for its members addressing issues of advocacy, including the one we have included here. You may wish to consider developing your own toolkits, customized to your country's unique circumstances and cooperative advocate needs.

A few points to remember...

Show an interest in their politics by asking: "What challenges are currently important in your riding?" This gives them an opportunity to talk about some of their priorities, as well as find areas of mutual interest.

Be polite and set a positive tone from the very beginning of your conversation – this is important as it may be your MPP's first real encounter with the co-operative sector and you are its representative!

If they look bored or disinterested with what you have to say, **don't harass them**, just let them go.

If they are interested in pursuing the discussion later, get a staffer's name and contact information and **tell them you will follow-up**. Don't leave it up to them to do the following up!

Always leave a **business card** attached to a fact sheet, flyer or pamphlet about your organization.

Take a few notes during, or immediately after the meeting, to use as a reference point in your thank-you letter and in your follow-up summary to On Co-op.

Tools for Effective Lobbying

As a provincial co-operative association, On Co-op is itself a non-partisan organization. However, we recognize that we live in an environment that is highly influenced by government and politics. Consequently, we also recognize the need to **INFORM, INFLUENCE, and EDUCATE** political parties and the government about the co-operative sector.

In a non-partisan way, we lobby the government with respect to issues of concern to us, provide public policy makers with information, and participate in various events organized by the different political parties. However, we can't do it – and shouldn't do it – alone! We require the help of local co-op champions in each riding to support our efforts and build **ONE VOICE** for the co-operative community.

Making the decision to get involved and help lobby the government is the first step. Once you have done this, you need to know how to approach members of government, effectively and efficiently, in order to turn your concerns and issues into action. We created this toolkit to help you achieve this goal.

About the toolkits

These toolkits are guides to help you in lobbying on behalf of the co-op sector, for your own individual lobbying efforts, and as a means to making the process of meeting with MPPs, Ministers and their staff less intimidating and more effective. You can use all or parts of this guide, depending on whether you are attending a sit-down meeting with an MPP at their constituency or Queen's Park office, an all-candidates meeting in your riding, or other political events. Simply adopt our suggestions on the following pages to suit your own issues and needs as necessary.

On Co-op Toolkit for Local Co-op Advocates



Toolkits in This Series

Toolkit #1: Meeting MPPs at their Queen's Park and Constituency Office

Toolkit #2: Attending Events with MPPs and Government Officials

Toolkit #3: Initiating Communication, Relaying Your Key Message & Rallying Support

Note: If you have questions about this guide, or need assistance with a government relations matter, please contact us at On Co-op. We'll be happy to help you in any way we can!

Toolkit #3: Initiating Communication, Relaying your Key Message & Rallying Support



**Build a better Ontario...
Move forward with the Co-op Secretariat.**

Ontario Co-operative Association
#101-450 Speedvale Ave. West
Guelph, ON N1H 7Y6
Phone: 888-745-5521
Fax: 519-763-7239

Initiating Communication, Relaying Your Key Message & Rallying Support

Key Issues to Address:

- The MPP's (and their staff's) familiarity with co-operatives and the co-operative model of business enterprise (i.e. the difference between a co-op and a corporation);
- Their familiarity with the White Paper on Co-operative Development;
- Whether they support the White Paper's key recommendation for the creation of a provincial Co-operative's Secretariat;
- What steps can be taken to help turn the recommendation into a reality.

Initiating Communication:

Based on these key issues, below are some suggestions for initiating communication with your MPP:

"Hi, I'm _____ from _____ <co-op>. We are _____ <briefly describe your co-op> in the area. Are you familiar with our enterprise?"

OR

"Hi... Are you familiar with the co-operative sector?"

If they answer NO, they are not familiar with co-ops...

Relay a few facts, for example:

There are more than 1,300 co-operatives and credit unions in Ontario, with over 1.4 million members and comprising over \$30 billion in annual assets

Ontario's 250+ credit unions and caisses populaires serve 1.6 million residents in over 700 locations employ 6,000 people and contribute over \$37.5 million to the province's GDP...

Some of the well-known co-ops operating in Ontario are Gay Lea Foods, The Co-operators Group, GROWMARK Inc., and Mountain Equipment Co-op...

People in Ontario have been members of co-ops for over 140 years...

Co-ops span a wide range of sectors, including but not limited to, agriculture, housing, health care, elder care, child care, insurance, transportation, communication, natural resources, utilities, retail, aboriginal and rural development...

There are over 10,000 co-ops and credit unions in Canada, with combined assets of \$167 billion and employ over 160,000 people...

Forty-three percent of Canadians belong to at least one co-operative...

Relay a few facts about your particular sector...

If they answer YES, they are familiar with co-ops...

Ask: "Are you familiar with the White Paper on Co-operative Development?"

If they answer NO, they are not familiar with the White Paper...

Give them a brief summary, for example:

It is a policy paper (created by the Ontario Co-operative Association, in conjunction with its francophone equivalent, le Conseil de la coopération de l'Ontario - CCO), launched at Queen's Park in November 2005.

It outlines the co-operative model of business enterprise, gives a background of the sector and highlights several recommendations and initiatives that both government and co-operatives should do to help support the sector in our



One of its key recommendations is the creation of a **provincial Co-operatives Secretariat**, modelled after the federal Co-op Secretariat, whose mandate would be to help foster a public-co-operative partnership, as a means to further our similar socio-economic values and goals.

A resolution, passed in the legislature on December 14, 2006, recommended the development of this Secretariat.

Electronic and hard copies of this paper are available upon request.

If they answer YES, they are familiar with the White Paper...

Ask: "What is your party's position on the creation of a provincial Co-operatives Secretariat?"

If they DON'T support it...

Find out why. Use this opportunity to highlight its importance and benefits for both government and the co-op sector. For example:

Co-ops, like Government, are involved in finding solutions in the areas of affordable housing and day care, health care, agriculture, renewable energy, financial services and community economic development, among others...

With a 140 plus year track record of success, the co-operative represents a business model of enterprise that integrates a financial bottom line with putting people first, while being environmentally and economically sustainable...

A co-operative / public partnership would see the fusion of these shared interests and goals, thereby strengthening the social economy of the province as a whole...

Take this opportunity to ask if they are willing to meet further to discuss the recommendations, and how it would serve a mutually beneficial

If they ask what the Secretariat is for...

Explain it in these simple terms:

Modelled after the federal Co-operatives Secretariat, its mandate would be to represent and further develop Ontario co-operatives; to foster and facilitate interaction between government and co-ops; to educate ministries about the co-op model of business enterprise; to work with the sector and government to develop policies that enhance the overall well-being of the community...

If they mention that FSCO (Financial Services Commission of Ontario) already serves this purpose...

Explain that:

FSCO's mandate is to provide a regulatory role with regards to the 'Co-operative Act'.

As FSCO is an agency of the Ministry of Finance, its focuses are cost-recovery, and serving its financial consumers, leaving the larger non-financial co-op sector entirely un-represented...

The Secretariat would not be a duplicate body within Government, but an entity entirely separate from the regulatory role assumed by FSCO.

If they support a provincial Co-operatives Secretariat...

Try to get a commitment to the cause from them!

Ask: "What steps can we take in order to get this resolution turned into a reality?"

Then, try to get some form of commitment from them to further the cause...

"Will your party commit to the creation of a provincial Co-operatives Secretariat, modelled on the federal version, and based on similar Secretariats in other provinces, such as Quebec and Saskatchewan?"

Once you have established this, THANK THEM for their time, ask for contact information to follow-up in the near future, and leave

APPENDIX 3: USEFUL RESOURCES

Advocacy Expert Series (Pact Cambodia)

1. Advocacy Campaign Management (2004)
2. Building Relationships with Government (2004)
3. Working with the Media (2004)
4. Building and Maintaining Coalitions (2004)
5. Advocacy through Legal Services (2004)
6. Community Mobilization (2006)

Available from <http://www.pactcambodia.org/publications.htm>

Advocacy Expert Series (Pact Tanzania)
Civil Society and Advocacy (2005)

Available from <http://www.policyforum-tz.org/civil-society-and-advocacy-dares-salaam-pact-tanzania-2005-advocacy-expert-series>

Advocacy in Action, International HIV/AIDS Alliance (2002)

Available from <http://www.aidsalliance.org/publicationsdetails.aspx?id=142>

Applying the CLARITY Principles to the Nicaraguan Cooperative Law (CLARITY)(2009)

Available from <http://www.clarity.coop>

Blueprint for a Co-operative Decade, International Co-operative Alliance (2013)

Available at <http://www.ica.coop>

Creating CLARITY, Assessment, Analysis and Outreach for Cooperative Legal Reform (CLARITY) (2009)

Available from <http://www.clarity.coop>

Enabling Cooperative Development (CLARITY)(2006)

Available from <http://www.clarity.coop>

A Guide to Coalition Building (Janice Forsythe, Former Executive Director, Canadian Council on Smoking and Health), (March 15, 1997)

http://www.impactalliance.org/file_download.php?location=S_U&filename=10196830860A_Guide_to_Coalition_Building.doc

Guide for Preparing Advocacy Plans (International Cooperative Alliance for the Americas, available in Spanish.)(2007)

<http://www.aciamericas.coop/-Publicaciones-impresas->

Guidelines for Cooperative Legislation (Hagen Henry, ILO)(2012)

Available from <http://www.ilo.org/global/publications>

Political Advocacy Guide for Cooperatives (FUNDESCOOP, ICMIF/Americas) (2006)

Promoting Cooperatives, A Guide to ILO Recommendation 193 (ILO)(2004)

Available from <http://www.ilo.org/global/publications>

Toolkit for Co-op Advocates (Ontario Cooperative Association)(2011)

Available from http://www.ontario.coop/programs_services/government_relations/advocacy_tools

Some websites of interest:

- <http://www.advocacy.org> (Institute for Sustainable Communities)
- <http://www.afj.org> (Nonprofit Advocacy Project of Alliance for Justice)
- <http://www.allianceforjustice.org> (Alliance for Justice)
- <http://www.clarity.coop> (The Cooperative Legal and Regulatory Initiative)
- <http://www.congressfoundation.org/projects/communicating-with-congress> (Congressional Management Foundation)
- <http://www.impactalliance.org> (Impact Alliance)
- <http://www.ica.coop> (International Cooperative Alliance)
- <http://www.ilo.org> (International Labor Organization)

APPENDIX 4: CLARITY COOPERATIVE DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS



ACDI/VOCA

ACDI/VOCA promotes broad-based economic growth, raises living standards and creates vibrant civil society. Focusing on food security, agribusiness, financial services, enterprise development and community development, ACDI/VOCA provides technical and management assistance that enables organizations, whether enterprises, financial institutions or cooperatives, to manage and finance themselves and succeed in the global economy. <http://www.acdivoca.org/>



Global Communities (formerly CHF International)

Global Communities is an international nonprofit organization that works closely with communities worldwide to bring about sustainable changes to improve the lives and livelihoods of the vulnerable. Working in more than 20 countries around the world, Global Communities' mission is to be a catalyst for long-lasting, positive change in low- and moderate-income communities, helping them improve their social, economic and environmental conditions. www.globalcommunities.org



Communications Cooperative International

CCI is a workers' cooperative dedicated to connecting underserved communities, expanding opportunities and improving lives through the power of information and communication technologies (ICTs). The organization's work ranges from developing and fostering the private, sustainable and local delivery of ICT solutions to promoting favorable policy environments that allow ICT enterprises to thrive. Fundamental to CCI's work are the proper integration and context of ICTs to specific conditions and purposes across sectors, such as education, health and agriculture. CCI's professional staff has managed projects and provided technical assistance and training to governments, businesses and communities in more than 35 countries. www.cci.coop



Cooperative Resources International

With a cooperative pedigree spanning a century, CRI has been transferring knowledge and applying sustainable, scientific management in livestock improvement since 1905. For more than 40 years, CRI has been exporting that technology and know-how through commercial distributors, cooperative alliances and joint ventures, and economic and market development programs in over 70 countries. Whether in mature markets, emerging nation states or developing economies, CRI livestock technologies are modernizing animal husbandry and growing the global food supply by nearly 3 million tons annually — feeding more people with fewer cows and less land. <http://international.crinet.com/development>

 **HealthPartners® HealthPartners**

HealthPartners is an independent, private, member-owned and democratically governed business enterprise in the United States, created with equity financed by members who invest in order to benefit through their patronage. HealthPartners developed a community-owned, health cooperative model to empower vulnerable populations and rural stakeholders to access quality health care in developing countries. The model links community groups, health care providers and Ministry of Health systems to health prevention and treatment with measures of accountability and tools that enable stakeholders to use data to make results-based decisions to improve health outcomes. HealthPartners does not reinsure providers or subsidize costs for cooperative members. The HealthPartners Cooperative model is 100 percent sustainable by local stakeholders who benefit through their cooperative partnerships. <http://www.healthpartners.coop>

**Land O'Lakes, Inc.**

Leveraging 90 years of agribusiness cooperative heritage, Land O'Lakes International Development's business-oriented, integrated approach to agriculture and food systems has improved the quality of life for millions of people since 1981. Through more than 260 programs in 76 developing countries, Land O'Lakes is helping generate economic growth, alleviate poverty, enhance food security and improve health and nutrition around the world. <http://www.idd.landolakes.com>

**National Cooperative Business Association**

The mission of the National Cooperative Business Association is to develop, advance, and protect cooperative enterprise. The mission of NCBA's International Program is to implement an international cooperative development program that seeks to alleviate poverty in developing countries through economic empowerment and assistance creating locally owned and managed, commercially viable enterprises. NCBA, better known as CLUSA, currently is operating 20 projects in 13 countries in Africa, Southeast Asia and Latin America with its nearly 500 staff working in-country and Washington, D.C. <http://www.ncba.coop/ncba-clusa/home>

**NRECA International Ltd.**
Your "Touchstone Energy" Partner **NRECA International, Ltd.**

RECA International is a nonprofit organization that has provided a comprehensive range of rural electrification and utility services in developing countries for nearly 50 years. An affiliate of the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA), NRECA International has developed some of the most successful rural electrification programs in the world, resulting in increased agricultural productivity, millions of new jobs in micro and small enterprises and higher incomes and quality of life for more than 100 million people in over 40 countries. <http://www.nrecainternational.com>



**World
Council
of Credit
Unions**

World Council of Credit Unions

World Council of Credit Unions is the global trade association and development agency for credit unions. WOCCU promotes the sustainable development of credit unions and other financial cooperatives around the world to empower people through access to high-quality and affordable financial services. WOCCU advocates on behalf of the global credit union system and works with national governments to improve legislation and regulation. Its technical assistance programs introduce new tools and technologies to strengthen credit unions' financial performance and to increase their outreach. WOCCU has implemented more than 280 technical-assistance programs in 72 countries. Worldwide, 53,000 credit unions in 100 countries serve 188 million people. <http://www.woccu.org>



US Overseas Cooperative Development Council

U.S. Overseas Cooperative Development Council (OCDC)

The OCDC is a group of nine cooperative development organizations whose focus is to lift people in developing countries from poverty through income development, food security and democracy building. The involvement of U.S. cooperative organizations in overseas activities grew out of the conviction that cooperative techniques, which have helped millions of Americans, could be adapted to help poor and low-income people in developing countries achieve a better way of life. OCDC members are global leaders in cooperative development in Africa, Latin America and Asia and apply their expertise and approaches in a wide range of settings and countries. With multi-year projects in over 70 countries, OCDC members implement the largest portfolio of cooperative development programs in the world. OCDC members have been development partners with the U.S. government for more than 40 years, but receive funding from other sources as well.

NOTES:

