Annex 3: Problem Tree (From CARE's Advocacy Tools and Guidelines Manual)
(Note that this example was created to guide advocacy within a development context, and so
may be less applicable during an emergency situation)

4.4 Summarize policy findings

Problem tree analysis is a useful technique for synthesizing and visualizing the
results of analyses, including policy analyses. You can use a problem tree to
represent and help you to analyze links between key actors and their institutions.

To summarize the findings in a problem tree analysis including policy causes,
you can follow these steps:

1. Problem identification: Depending on the purpose of the
   analysis (i.e., a long-range strategic plan, program, or project
design) the problem can be more general (poverty or livelihood
   insecurity or a violation of human rights) or specific (low
   income, poor educational attainment, high mortality rates,
   etc.). Problem statements should specify who is affected
   by the problem.

2. Direct causes: The analysis identifies the most direct
   causes of the problem. As shown in the example on the
   next page, a direct cause of infant mortality is high prevalence
   of diarrhea.

3. Behavioral causes: For each direct cause, problem trees identify
   the behaviors that lead to these causes. Often there are several
   layers of behavioral causes. For example, a practice that contributes
   to high diarrhea prevalence among children younger than five is the
   ingestion of contaminated water. In the problem analysis shown
   below, several actors affect the quality of water through their
   practices: households do not boil water, sewage companies
   discharge in rivers, government water and sanitation ministry spends
   resources on building dams, etc. The actions of policy makers should be
   reflected in problem trees if they are part of the problem.

4. Causes that lead to behaviors: Why do households, policy makers and
   private business owners behave in a certain way? Knowledge, attitudes, beliefs,
   preferences, interests, and other causes explain the identified behaviors. For
   CARE, it is of key importance to understand the factors that affect behaviors
   since our programs address the causes that lead to these practices.
The problem tree analysis above includes these policy causes of high infant and child mortality:

1) No environmental policies regulate the operations of the private sector.
2) Policy makers allocate resources for the construction of dams instead of water systems for poor communities.

It is important to understand why policies are lacking in order to devise advocacy strategies. If the main problem is opposition to environmental regulations by business leaders, this would lead to one kind of strategy: low community awareness of the damage done by the companies would lead to another. These causes, or policy issues, are influenced by specific policy makers. Note that this information can be extracted from the type of policy map presented in section 4.2.