

## **CARE INTERNATIONAL**

### **GLOBAL ADVOCACY APPROVAL AND SIGN OFF PROCEDURES**

**APRIL 2020** *This document updates the 2014 procedures in the Advocacy Handbook*

#### **WHY APPROVAL and SIGN OFF PROCEDURES?**

Given CARE International's complexity and the sensitivity of many of the issues we deal with, it is important to ensure that our advocacy and communications do not put at risk our staff, partners, program participants or our programming and that we speak with one coherent voice in all our interventions, from local to global levels. Procedures are also meant to help create relevant, responsible, consistent messaging throughout the CARE confederation.

To achieve this, CARE has developed policies and procedures, including sign-off approval protocols available on the [Global Advocacy Hub](#).<sup>i</sup> Sign off procedures must be followed by all parts of the confederation, Country and Regional Offices, Members and Candidates, including Affiliates if they use CARE's name & logo by written agreement (co-branding), as per the CI Code.

Specifically, advocacy and communications materials/positions require approval to ensure:

- it is factually correct and of the highest quality and relevance;
- it protects CARE's name, integrity of its program and safety of its staff, partners and beneficiaries;
- it is in line with CARE's values, mission, brand and CI Code of Conduct;
- it takes into account sensitivities of all parts of the confederation, CI members, regional and country offices;
- it allows us to manage legal and reputational risks;
- it serves its purpose.

#### **WHAT REQUIRES SIGN OFF?**

**To provide some ease in navigating the global advocacy sign off procedures, we've outlined two broad categories that your document might fall under.**

##### **Category 1: No CI sign off required**

There is no need for CI sign off for:

- National issues not related to another CI member and/or not likely to affect other offices or parts of the confederation (e.g. a CI member press release commenting on its own national government policy or a new donation);
- Materials/position/statement has been previously approved & signed off and is clearly not out of date.

##### **Category 2: CI Sign off required:**

Broadly, approval and sign off is needed for:

- Positioning and messaging on new topics affecting a specific country or region or concerning the whole confederation;<sup>ii</sup>

- Issues about or affecting another CI member, Country or Regional Office (e.g. position paper about a specific country's or government's role in a regional conflict or a conflict with a neighbouring country, about a government hosting refugees from another country where CARE works, about a regional entity, etc);
- Anything issued in the name of CARE International that does not fall under Category 1 above;
- Issues related to a country in which CARE has no presence;
- Advocacy targeted at a multi-lateral institution or partner (UN agencies, EU, World Bank etc.) and regional bodies (e.g. East African Community, African Union);
- Emergency response (NOTE: there are simplified sign-off procedures for emergencies. See Annex 3);
- Materials/positions/statements that were previously approved but may be out of date;
- Advocacy work related to global events or issues that CI has agreed to address through coordinated advocacy (e.g. outcome areas) or that are related to the acknowledged specialization of another CI Member (e.g. CARE Denmark on Climate Change);
- A quote from a CARE or partner staff, a program participant or another person likely to impact other members and offices (e.g. a CI Member commenting on another CI Member government policy);
- Changed / revised organizational positions and messaging on existing topics;
- New commitments and/or pledges to be signed on behalf of the CARE confederation.

All advocacy, whether conducted locally, nationally or internationally, has the potential to affect other parts of the organization. It is therefore important for all advocacy initiatives falling under category 2 above to adhere to the sign off procedure. This applies to both public and private messaging; although the risks associated with private messaging (e.g. in bilateral briefings) are lower, it can be assumed that private messaging could become public.

## SHARING INFORMATION WITH CI

Advocacy materials released by a CARE office may be picked up by media or seen by stakeholders around the world. Once advocacy positions/materials are approved, it is important to alert the rest of CI and provide any necessary guidance (e.g. talking points, key messages, and/or Q&A if appropriate) on how to handle inquiries from stakeholders or any additional action required. Please see the [Global Advocacy Hub](#) for the list of advocacy focal points per office and topic.

## ARBITRATION

In case of disagreement regarding advocacy or communications issues or any of the procedures outlined in this document, the CI Secretariat will work across parties to seek a consensus. Contact the CI Secretariat Head of Global Advocacy in such instances.

## APPROVAL PROCESS

The matrix below is a simple guide to the approval process for each situation listed in Category 2, if you are in any doubt about a step please contact the Head of Global Advocacy in CI Secretariat.

If you are developing a new advocacy position, new communication materials and messaging or making new commitments, then **you are responsible** to make sure sign off happens according to these procedures and you will be held accountable by the CI Secretariat for doing so on behalf of the Confederation (and see POST SIGN OFF ACCOUNTABILITY, below). Several people can be jointly responsible for an advocacy initiative, but one person needs to be responsible for ensuring the Advocacy sign off procedures are followed, sign off is obtained and follow up is done.

In each case, we show **which entity you need to get approval from**; this is the person who has the authority to approve the advocacy statement/messages/event etc. and is accountable to CARE's stakeholders. There may be several levels of approvals / several parts of the organization having to sign off, depending on the issue, its scope and impact.

**In cases with impact across the Confederation the CI Secretariat gets approval from the relevant entities.** CI Secretariat point people are CI Head of Global Advocacy and CI Head of Global Communications. It is their responsibility to consult with/obtain approval from the relevant parts of the Confederation (e.g. CIMs/Candidates/Affiliates/Lead Members/ROs and COs/relevant staff in the CI Secretariat, as necessary) in cases where CI Secretariat gets approval on behalf of the Confederation.

In addition, the matrix shows who to consult and who to inform:

**Consulted:** People who need to be consulted and give input before the work can be done and signed-off.

**Informed:** People who need to be kept "in the picture", and updated on progress or decisions, but they do not need to be formally consulted, nor do they contribute directly to a task or decisions.

**NOTE: QUOTES by a staff member or staff from a partner or program participant -** In all advocacy & communications materials all quotes must be approved by any person who is named.

#### **Sign off guidance matrix:**

Please note that more than one row below may apply to a situation and the Person Responsible should use their judgement accordingly, combining the relevant rows.

| Are you responsible for ...  | Then you need to get approval from and/or involve... |                                 |                                     |   |                                     |   |
|--|--|---------------------------------|-------------------------------------|---|-------------------------------------|---|
|  | Country Director(s)                                  | Regional Director(s)            | Lead member(s) <sup>iii</sup>       | CI Secretariat <sup>iv</sup>  | Advocacy Working Group              | CIM and candidate National Directors  |
| Talking about a country where CARE has a CO but it's not sensitive? i.e. announcement of a new project, press release quoting CO Staff, CO factsheet, advocacy around event in CO                    | Get approval   | Inform                          | Get approval (from advocacy lead)   | Inform  | Inform                              | Inform relevant members supporting the CO   |
| Talking about a country where CARE has a CO but it's sensitive?  | Get approval   | Consult                         | Get approval                        | Inform  | Inform                              | Consult if needed (CI Secretariat will arrange consultation)                                    |
| Talking about a topic with a regional or sub-regional dimension?   | Inform   | Get Approval (for CARE USA COs) | Get approval (for non-CARE USA COs) | Inform  | Inform                              | Inform relevant members supporting the region or sub-region and / or with interest on the topic |
| Talking about an issue that is potentially controversial for all of CI?  | n/a  | n/a                             | n/a                                 | Gets Approval   | Consult                             | Consult (CI Secretariat will arrange consultation)  |
| Signing on to / committing to something in the name of CARE International? i.e. signing on to a policy position or joint press release/report as CARE International, not just as your CI Member      | n/a  | n/a                             | n/a                                 | Gets Approval   | Consult if needed <sup>v</sup>      | Consult if needed <sup>vi</sup> (CI Secretariat will arrange consultation)                      |
| Talking about a country where CARE doesn't work?   | n/a  | n/a                             | n/a                                 | Gets Approval   | Inform                              | Consult if needed <sup>vii</sup> (CI Secretariat will arrange consultation)                     |
| Talking about a CI member, candidate, affiliate, or its national operating environment? -i.e. press release or meeting about a CI member's government / policy or a company from a CI member country | n/a  | n/a                             | n/a                                 | Inform  | Inform                              | Get approval from the relevant CI Member  |
| Talking about an issue addressed by CI through a coordinated global advocacy initiative, or by an outcome area lead? -i.e. Climate Change, SRHR, WEE etc.  | n/a  | n/a                             | n/a                                 | Consult if needed<br>Inform in all cases  | Get approval from outcome area lead | Consult the CARE office leading the campaign and outcome area lead                              |
| Targeting a multilateral institution or process, like the UN, EU or World Bank? -i.e. position paper for UNFCCC, letter to members of the UNSC or EU   | n/a  | n/a                             | n/a                                 | Get approval from the Multilateral Relationship Coordinator/relevant CI Sec staff <sup>viii</sup><br><br>Consult if needed; Inform in all cases | Inform                              | Consult if needed <sup>ix</sup> (CI Secretariat will arrange consultation)                      |

## Post sign off accountability

It is important that the office that initiated the advocacy initiative monitors the global response (e.g., media coverage; reaction from stakeholders such as beneficiaries, CSOs, government, donors). A CO, Lead Member or other CI Member may issue subsequent statements to keep CARE's point of view clearly understood or to build on the work already done. Follow-up initiatives should respect the above procedures.

Moreover, if you activated the confederation for advocacy around a certain topic, event or conference, you are responsible for debriefing the confederation about it and any impact in due course (e.g. in the subsequent week in the case of a conference). This is an essential step to ensure that all parts of the organisation can follow-up, are appropriately informed on the outcomes and can adapt their engagement with relevant governments or stakeholders in their respective countries accordingly.

If your initiative involved **making commitments** on behalf of the CARE confederation, after following this sign off procedure for commitments as per the above process, you are also responsible for ensuring that the relevant parts of CARE are fully informed about the commitments and their implications. You will also be responsible for reporting on the implementation of commitments (or ensuring that the responsibility is clearly assigned within the confederation, and if need be PIIRS or the AIIR tool<sup>x</sup> is adjusted to capture the information).

## RESOURCES

The following contacts lists are available on the [Global Advocacy Hub](#).

LIST OF ADVOCACY TOPIC LEADS

LIST OF ADVOCACY FOCAL POINTS PER TOPIC

The expectation of an advocacy focal point is that they will provide CARE's Advocacy community with a **'go-to' person** on a particular CARE office program/Advocacy topic. They do *not* necessarily hold CARE's expertise but provide *access* to it by being **consistently engaged in the relevant conversation** and connected to others both internal and external to CARE, to the benefit of the whole organisation.

HUMANITARIAN ADVOCACY SIGN OFF TABLES PER COUNTRY.

## ENDNOTES

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<sup>i</sup> Approval sign off protocols were initially approved by the CI Board in 2009 and revised in June 2011 by the Executive Committee of CARE International's Board. These were further developed in the 2014 [CARE International Advocacy Handbook](#). *This document updates the 2014 procedures from the Advocacy Handbook*

<sup>ii</sup> A topic may be about a specific situation (e.g. a natural disaster, a conflict, an epidemic, a displacement of population) affecting a specific country or region but it may also be a transversal or critical issue that affects / commits / concerns the whole confederation.

<sup>iii</sup> Lead member point people are Advocacy or Line Manager for advocacy. It is their responsibility to consult with/obtain approval from the relevant Lead Member senior staff, such as Head of Program, Head of Communications, Security Director, Legal Advisor, etc. and regional offices, where these exist.

<sup>iv</sup> CI Secretariat point people are CI Head of Global Advocacy and CI Head of Global Communications. It is their responsibility to consult with/obtain approval from the relevant parts of the Confederation (e.g. CIM/Candidates/Affiliates/Lead Members/ROs and COs/relevant CI Sec staff as necessary) in cases where CI Secretariat gets approval on behalf of the Confederation.

<sup>v</sup> Judgement is to be exercised by the CI Head of Global Advocacy to determine whether NDs need to be consulted or not depending on the scope and impact of commitments we may be preparing to sign on;

<sup>vi</sup> See footnote 4

<sup>vii</sup> See footnote 4

<sup>viii</sup> E.g. CI EU Representative, CI UN Representative in NY, CI UN Representative in Geneva, or relevant CMP Multilateral Relationship Coordinator. If there is no MRC for the multilateral in question, then the CI Secretariat will coordinate getting approval from the relevant CIMs.

<sup>ix</sup> See footnote 4

<sup>x</sup> PIIRS is CARE's Program Information and Impact Reporting System, AIIR is the Advocacy Impact Reporting tool developed to enable reporting on advocacy, linked to PIIRS but with more granularity on advocacy impact.