Characteristics of a Good Briefer

For advocacy efforts focused on decision makers who are busy, often not aware of or interested in the topic, and have little relevant technical background, the following points should be kept in mind when developing *leave-behind* briefers.

- **Briefers should be short.** One page (double-sided) is best, with key information on the front page.
- **Briefers must be focused.** There should be only one or two take-home messages.
- Briefers should be **evidence-based, but non-technical in presentation.**
- **Graphics** that supports or emphasizes the main message (e.g. a chart, quote, or photo) are essential.
- **Technical jargon** should be very limited or avoided completely.
- The information presented must be **relevant to the decision maker** (i.e., the briefer must addresses things he/she influences or is interested in).
- The briefer should be **country-** and, if possible, **state- or district-specific.**
- **Short, crisp sentences** should be used.
- **“White Space” should be utilized,** making the page appealing to the eye and attention-catching.
- Details such as **line spacing, font, and bullets are important.**
- Briefers must be **electronic-friendly.** Make sure that formatting doesn’t get lost in transmission.
- Make your briefers **easy to modify and customize.**
- Be sure your briefer **photocopies cleanly.**
- **Briefers must have clear, actionable “asks.”**
- Provide **references for evidence**—but not so many that it begins to look like an academic report.
- Make the organizational source of the briefer clear through **attribution or inclusion of logo(s).**
- Include a **“for further information” section** along with the name of a person to contact.
- **Proofreading is essential!**

In addition to the briefer, supporting materials may include:

- a factsheet
- supporting research, field reports, or advocacy materials
- examples of successful application of the recommended “asks”