Saving Lives, Protecting Children: Advocacy in Emergencies

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Office of Emergency Programs

Humanitarian Policy Unit

SAVING LIVES, PROTECTING CHILDREN: ADVOCACY IN EMERGENCIES

FRAMEWORK AND TECHNICAL GUIDANCE FOR DISCUSSION AND CONSULTATION*

Office of Emergency Programmes

(UNICEF)

*Included in this document are summary case studies taken from

'Advocacy Case Studies' (UNICEF/EMOPS, 2006)

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<u>**Saving Lives, Protecting Children: Advocacy in Emergencies**</u>
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Executive Summary

The purpose of these guidelines is to provide a conceptual framework as well as lessons learned on the practical application of UNICEF's advocacy mandate in humanitarian contexts. These guidelines are intended as a resource for all UNICEF field staff working in emergencies, including representatives, programme staff and regional staff. They provide a rights-based and field-oriented definition of UNICEF advocacy in emergencies and outline key steps to determining advocacy strategies based on context-specific priorities and concerns. These strategies may be applied to a country programme as a whole, or may be used in individual sectors (e.g. to determine the main advocacy priorities for child health, education, protection or other programmatic areas).

Advocacy aims at protecting and promoting children's rights and is an integral part of UNICEF's mandate. The Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), its Optional Protocols and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), in addition to a variety of other relevant legal and principles to which UNICEF is committed, provides the backbone for such advocacy. The internal organizational imperative for UNICEF to undertake advocacy in emergencies is stated in a number of key organizational policy documents such as UNICEF's Core Commitments for Children in Emergencies (CCCs) as well as the 2006-2009 Medium Term Strategic Plan.

For the purposes of these guidelines, advocacy in emergencies is **defined** as:

Deliberate efforts, based on demonstrated evidence, to persuade decision-makers to adopt

certain policies or actions in order to protect women and children's rights.

Advocacy in emergencies **aims** to promote and protect the rights of all women and children by articulating recommendations for lasting, positive change. Advocacy also aims to communicate the legitimacy and primacy of women and children's perspectives and helps to address critical humanitarian programming or policy gaps.

Advocacy in emergencies uses **methods** that are a means to an end – a set of influencing tactics or tools appropriate to emergency situations that achieve a particular emergency-related goal, within the context of either an immediate or longer-term emergency response. Together these tactics or tools form an overarching **"advocacy strategy"** complementary to programming priorities. This strategy will take due account of the possible adverse effects of engaging in advocacy strategies on staff security, country programmes and vulnerable populations.

Advocacy strategies should be **context specific and evidence based,** building upon surveys, reports from partners, data collected and focus group discussions. For example, an extremely high maternal mortality rate in Badakshan, Afghanistan, of 6,500 per 100,000 live births per year[1] was reported by researchers in the global publication *the Lancet* in 2005, which then provided a powerful advocacy tool for organizations working towards reducing maternal

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[1] Bartlett et al., Vol. 365, *The Lancet*, March 2005, 864–870.

mortality. Inter-country comparisons and regional analyses can also be effective tools for advocacy activities about a country programme as a whole.

Advocacy strategies **target** a variety of actors, including governments and policymakers, non-governmental entities, international organizations, NGOs and civil society, as well as the public itself. Advocacy is also generally most effective when undertaken on a collective basis and in **partnership** with others. Inter-agency strategies at the country level, for example, can be bolstered further by global inter-agency support.

Advocacy should be based on international legal instruments (conventions, treaties, etc.), peace agreements and commitments made by Government and non-governmental entities. **International human rights and humanitarian law**, in particular the Convention on the Rights of the Child and its Optional Protocols, should form the common platform for an advocacy strategy. Those and other global commitments, such as the Millennium Development Goals, can serve as powerful instruments upon which to base the content of advocacy messages.

Effective advocacy strategies should lead to **specific actions** which may, for example, attract greater political, human and financial support, lead to greater humanitarian access, promote adherence to international laws and standards and lead to accountability for perpetrators of child rights violations. Ultimately the goal is to increase humanitarian response capacity to meet the needs and protect the rights of affected populations. UNICEF advocacy strategies therefore should explicitly state feasible and measurable outcomes, direct and indirect, and for which UNICEF can be **accountable**.

Advocacy in emergencies should also be **characterized** as:

- Evidence-based and informed by international humanitarian and human rights law as well as UNICEF's own operational guidelines and principles.
- Rights-based, participative where appropriate, and people-centred.
- Strategic and linked to programmatic responses: advocacy mechanisms should be part of an integrated approach to problem solving.
- Tailored to the broader context, including the security situation at any given time.
- Based in partnership and cooperation with other actors.
- Multi-faceted and diverse, depending on audience, message and priority.

These guidelines outline the main parameters or the framework that explains advocacy in emergencies. In summary:

There are two **arenas** for advocacy: private and public.

There are four **levels** for the implementation of advocacy initiatives: local, national, regional and global. When undertaking advocacy, these levels can be interrelated or mutually exclusive, depending on the issue and context.

There are five **steps** in the advocacy project cycle – analysis, methodology identification, strategy development, implementation and evaluation.

Throughout this document, **case studies** have been used to illustrate experiences. These case studies emphasize the need to develop advocacy strategies comprised of a variety of initiatives simultaneously impacting numerous targeted levels. Successful advocacy strategies have usually involved a careful planning process together with partners, especially local authorities or United Nations Agencies and partner international non-governmental organizations (INGOs) and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and affected populations. Included in the **Appendices** are practical and ready-to use tools to successfully design, implement and evaluate advocacy strategies.

These guidelines target practitioners and field-based, rather than global, advocacy is the focus, e.g. advocacy with inter-governmental bodies such as the Security Council or the General Assembly.

An absence of advocacy policy materials as well as the need for practical guidance has led to the creation of these guidelines. **The guidelines therefore are divided into two parts**:
1. **A framework** for advocacy in emergencies: the "what" **(Sections I-III).**
2. **Suggestions for designing and implementing advocacy strategies:** the "how" **(Section IV)**, based on country office lessons learned and strategies.

As country offices may have different needs and experiences in developing advocacy strategies in emergencies, the two parts of the guidelines can also be read separately.
- **Country offices wishing to focus on the rationale and the principles of advocacy** in emergencies may find it useful to start with **sections I to III** before referring to section IV for the development of an advocacy strategy.
- While **country offices with more experience in implementing advocacy strategies** may refer directly to **section IV and the annexes** for practical guidance and tools for advocacy strategies.

Introduction

Why do we need advocacy guidelines?

UNICEF's mandate, as well as guiding documents and policies such as the Human Rights Based Approach to Programming all underline the importance of, and need for, advocacy for children.[2] UNICEF's Medium Term Strategic Plan (MTSP) 2006–2009 specifies policy advocacy and partnerships for children's rights as a priority of the organization's vision and activities, for example, and UNICEF's Core Commitments for Children in Emergencies (CCCs) obliges emergency interventions to prioritize information gathering to effectively report on and advocate for children's rights within the first week of a response. Advocacy aims to promote children's rights through the organization's partnerships with governments, humanitarian and development partners and communities at local, national and international levels. These guidelines focus on advocacy at the country level with links to regional and headquarters' mechanisms and as a critical element of humanitarian response, although linkages to other forms of advocacy are included.

Despite UNICEF's policy and other commitments to advocacy, inconsistent advocacy practice and a gap in advocacy guidance materials have been identified by programme and management staff as well as recent organizational evaluations[3] *(See Box 1).* Interviews conducted with UNICEF field staff globally during the development of these guidelines highlighted a lack of strong understanding of UNICEF's advocacy role in emergencies, particularly with respect to the definition of advocacy in programmatic terms and the management of potential risks associated with advocacy in order to bring about long-term results for children.[4]

Box 1: UNICEF's senior leaders speak out about advocacy

"UNICEF's commitment to advocacy, protection and humanitarian principles has never become institutionalized. It remains based on individuals, rendering advocacy inconsistent across time and geography. This institutional failure can be attributed to several factors:
- Limited applicable guidelines, policies and training;
- Lack of clear support for those engaged in sensitive advocacy;
- Staff have to know they will be held accountable to the guidelines/policies in some concrete way (e.g. included in Performance Evaluation Reports (PERs) or job descriptions);
- UNICEF's enduring belief that advocacy is incompatible with access and assistance; and,
- A misconception that one cannot undertake advocacy while remaining impartial and neutral."
- Adapted *from Interview Report: Senior Leaders' Training on a "Principled Approach to Humanitarian Action" (PATH), December 2005.*

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[2] The Convention on the Rights of the Child and its Optional Protocols; The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women; UNICEF's Human Rights–Based Approach to Programming; UNICEF's Core Commitments for Children in Emergencies (CCCs); and UNICEF's Medium Term Strategic Plan (MTSP) 2006–2009.

[3] See Annex 2, in particular, the report from the Senior Leaders' Training 2005 and the Evaluation of DFID-UNICEF Programme of Cooperation to Strengthen UNICEF Programming as it applies to Humanitarian Response, 2002-2005.

[4] See UNICEF Advocacy Case Studies, EMOPS, 2006.

These guidelines aim to address these knowledge gaps, at least in part, arguing that advocacy is not only complementary to but an integral part of an emergency response. They also represent the first step in defining advocacy in emergencies for UNICEF and in providing a series of practical actions to devise and implement appropriate country-level advocacy strategies.

Different advocacy approaches

Various interpretations and applications of the term "advocacy" exist within the inter-agency context, depending on a particular organization's mandate and operations. The International Committee on the Red Cross (ICRC), for example, prefers to keep public advocacy to a minimum, focusing on bilateral engagements with parties to a conflict about the adherence to the Geneva Conventions and their Additional Protocols. *Médecins Sans Frontières* (MSF), in contrast, will frequently release media reports and research findings alerting the world to grave human rights violations in a particular context, arguing that they have a mandate to "speak out when others cannot".[5] These advocacy approaches have had different impacts on the respective agencies' programmatic work. The ICRC argues that acting as a neutral intermediary with all warring parties and simultaneously monitoring compliance within international humanitarian law at the country level helps to protect ICRC's humanitarian space or operational perimeters.[6] MSF argues that public advocacy is critical to their "humanitarian conscience", international justice, peacekeeping efforts and humanitarian resource mobilization, even if this is accompanied by short-term costs and consequences.

The Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) – recognized by the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) has adopted a broad definition of advocacy. A new Manual on Humanitarian Advocacy (2005) describes 'humanitarian advocacy' as work that seeks "to address the external and internal conditions that imperil civilians and render aid and protection necessary".[7]

Advocacy in emergencies is not new to UNICEF. Recognizing the operational realities UNICEF faces and the specificities of advocacy linked to programme objectives, UNICEF's use of the term "advocacy in emergencies" in these guidelines emphasizes field-based advocacy work situated within the wider context of humanitarian advocacy, which can include advocacy with Security Council members, UNICEF Headquarters or by high-profile inter-agency representatives such as an emergency relief coordinator. Global and regional advocacy plays an important role in supporting country-based initiatives. For example, advocacy with Security Council members at the end of the 1990s allowed for the creation in 2005 of a UN Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism on Child Rights Violations in situations of armed conflict to encourage strengthened adherence of Member States and non-state actors to international human rights and humanitarian laws protecting children's rights in conflict.

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[5] Interview with MSF advocacy representative, New York, 2005.
[6] Interview with ICRC delegate, 2005.
[7] See OCHA "*Developing a Humanitarian Advocacy Strategy and Action Plan: A step-by-step Manual*", draft, 2006

For the purposes of these guidelines, therefore, advocacy in emergencies is defined as:

Deliberate efforts based on demonstrated evidence to persuade decision-makers to adopt certain policies or actions in order to protect women and children's rights.

This is a relatively broad definition that aims to capture the wide range of advocacy initiatives UNICEF may adopt as appropriate to any one particular humanitarian context.

Many case studies of advocacy taken by UNICEF in emergency contexts illustrate the effectiveness of implementing advocacy strategies as part of an overall programme response to emergencies. Extracts from these case studies are used throughout this document to demonstrate both the effectiveness of advocacy in emergencies and the strategic planning that is characteristic of advocacy in action.

The role of advocacy in emergencies

UNICEF is increasingly active in emergency contexts that are often complex, characterized by volatile security conditions, a vast array of armed groups and numerous humanitarian and development actors. However, a simple UNICEF motto: **"all rights for all children everywhere"** promotes a particular goal for UNICEF in emergencies, even amidst these characteristics and operational challenges.

Advocacy for children's rights in emergencies cannot replace other response strategies but can help to increase the breadth and resources of available mechanisms for strengthening response. Advocacy is a strategy that may be more or less appropriate at certain stages in an emergency response, depending on the context and security situation. Advocacy can also serve to complement and strengthen humanitarian response, contributing to increasing protection and assistance for children and women and preventing further risks.

For example, in **Chechnya**, UNICEF developed a comprehensive mine action advocacy strategy that included meetings with high-level politicians, training sessions with art exhibitions and extensive media communication to help bring about changes in government policy. In **Pakistan**, an advocacy strategy with families and communities on measles immunization contributed to an intervention that inoculated a million children in the hard-to-reach areas of Kashmir only weeks after the deadly 2005 earthquake. Sustained advocacy against recruitment of under-age children into armed groups in **Sri Lanka** has opened dialogue between the LTTE, Government of Sri Lanka and UNICEF on this sensitive issue and resulted in the reduction in the number of children being recruited over a certain time period.

Advocacy in emergencies is also a mechanism that can reinforce a rights-based and participatory approach to emergencies. For example, in **Somalia**, young people and community organizations were mobilized with UNICEF's help to act as "human rights promoters" to advocate for human rights principles and the need for local accountability mechanisms. This allowed young people and communities to not only participate in devising and implementing advocacy messages, but also to participate in humanitarian and development programmes aimed at their protection.

Other benefits of advocacy can include:

Humanitarian access. Advocacy in emergency situations can help to achieve UNICEF's programmatic goals in inaccessible areas. For example, in **southern Sudan**, advocacy with armed groups allowed for the adoption of a human rights framework for humanitarian operations and increased access for intervention and programmatic activities.

International and national awareness and action to improve the situation of children and women within a specific context. For example, in **Somalia,** a public letter from the Humanitarian Coordinator alerted authorities to the United Nations Country Team's concern about children being used and recruited by armed groups and forces and urged prompt action.

Policy development and change. Emergencies may create opportunities creating or amending policies and legislation that may have long-term benefits. For example, in **Indonesia**, advocacy efforts conducted at the outset of the tsunami crisis led to the revision and creation of stricter national laws on foreign adoption.

Regional and cross-border strategies. Using credible evidence, advocacy can mobilize the resources required to scale-up programming at national and regional levels for cross-border approaches to a problem. For example, in Niger, evidence-based advocacy following an analysis of the structural and underlying causes of acute child malnutrition has helped to trigger an inter-agency regional nutrition strategy in West Africa that aims to address long-term as well as immediate contributing factors.

Entry-point for initiating long-term change. Advocacy may be part of a broader vision to capitalize on recently established access and partnerships to secure funding, to build national capacity and even to contribute to positive social transformation, which can allow marginalized groups to raise awareness about their needs and rights. For example, in **Pakistan**, following the 2005 earthquake, UNICEF has effectively advocated for service delivery interventions that reach women and girls normally unable to leave their homes due to prevailing socio-cultural norms. In **Afghanistan**, advocacy has allowed for unprecedented girls' participation in schools.

"Building back better". Advocacy for strengthened programming in core sectors at the onset of a crisis, for example after the Pakistan earthquake in 2005, can help to establish long term development programming goals such as strengthening health infrastructure and improving the quality of education.

Among its multiple benefits, advocacy can not only potentially lead to interventions that have direct impact and coverage but also can contribute to a broader approach that creates change in policies and actions for long-lasting and positive change. While the purpose and approach may differ in different contexts, advocacy is an essential component of all emergency responses. Frequently asked questions on advocacy are addressed in **Appendix 2.**

In addition, advocacy strategies are frequently implemented in combination with direct interventions. Advocacy linked to a programme response lends the strongest legitimacy to UNICEF's voice. The **Afghanistan** case study *(See Box 2)* illustrates the benefit of combining programming and advocacy strategies.

Box 2: Case study: Afghanistan gets 'Back to School'

Context: The civil war in Afghanistan ended in December 2001, leaving a country ravaged by conflict and lacking in basic infrastructure and social services. At the time, UNICEF had been operational in Afghanistan for 40 years, supporting education on a small scale. The end of the Taliban regime provided a new opportunity to scale-up education programmes.

Goal: To enrol 1.5 million children in school within 60 days.

Baseline: Education had been specifically affected under the Taliban regime (enrolment was only 3 per cent) and education for girls had been banned. There was a lack of infrastructure and skilled teachers, as well as damage to 70 per cent of schools. Millions of children had never attended school before.

Getting started: On 25 January 2002, the Executive Director of UNICEF made a public commitment at a high-level conference on Afghanistan to: "Get children back to school in 60 days". Working together with the Afghan government and leaders, the international community and donors UNICEF began expanding existing education programmes through advocacy for girls' right to education, increased resources to establish learning facilities across the country and education as a means to peace amongst local authorities.

Developing a strategy: Given the tight timeframe, the overall programme as well as the advocacy component was developed "on the hoof". The goal was to enrol 1.5 million children in school within 60 days. The task was formidable as the programme had to start from scratch. It was faced with a lack of rudimentary infrastructure, a lack of skilled teachers, damage to 70 per cent of schools and millions of children who had never attended school in their lives. UNICEF promoted education for children by supporting radio spots and public events and issuing messages through mosque and community gatherings. Meetings with local leaders were held face-to-face to overcome the low literacy levels and to ensure their support for the initiative. A total of 50,000 health workers, recruited and trained for a national immunization campaign, went door to door - advocating directly with families to send their children to school. In accordance with the UN policy of making a 'light footprint', UNICEF supported the government in taking a leadership role in this initiative.

Messengers: Key messengers included health workers, local officials, journalists, civic leaders and religious leaders. An enormous cohort of health workers, some 50,000, had been recruited for an immunization campaign.

Messages: Targeted towards religious, political and local leaders, parents, and the media, there were three messages:

1. Get children back to school.
2. Education is a sign of peace and a symbol of equality and future opportunities.
3. Every governor/local community leader should have a role in contributing to making this national endeavour a success.

Once the basic idea of getting children back to school in two months was sold to the political leaders, the international community and the country at large, there was little need for further advocacy and persuasion of parents, communities and local leaders. As one project officer said, "you could have sneezed and children would have gone back to school", which reflected a real desire among families to experience something "new". The critical advocacy point was the way in which the initiative was packaged. It was not only sold as an education programme but was positioned as something larger: A sign of peace, a symbol of equality and future opportunities and a return to normalcy. It was a change that could be felt at the level of every single household and was therefore a powerful symbol of real change. The actual campaign slogan was "Back to school".

Immediate impact: Together, the "Back to School" advocacy and expanded education programme resulted in:

1. A total of 7,000 tented schools being set up with 3 million children (including 800,000 girls) showing up for school – double the initial target. The initiative reinvigorated the economy by creating employment opportunities and boosting household incomes directly.

As illustrated in *Figure 1*, strategically planned advocacy can lead to the following results for children:

- Legislative reform and access to justice
- Humanitarian access
- Increased funding
- Development programming and early recovery planning
- Respect for human rights and long-term change.

At the same time, in most emergencies, advocacy initiatives will carry some type of **risks**. Some of the risks associated with poorly planned advocacy include:

- Reduced access
- Threats to staff and programmes
- Threats to local population
- Loss of legitimacy and influence
- Distortion of messages
- Misunderstanding or conflict among partners and internally within the organization
- Misallocated resources.

In order to maximize impact, achieve results for children and mitigate risks, advocacy should be strategic and creative and should be based on a careful analysis of the local context, programme priorities as well as a review of available advocacy opportunities for the creation of messages and delivery.

Figure 1. Advocacy results for children
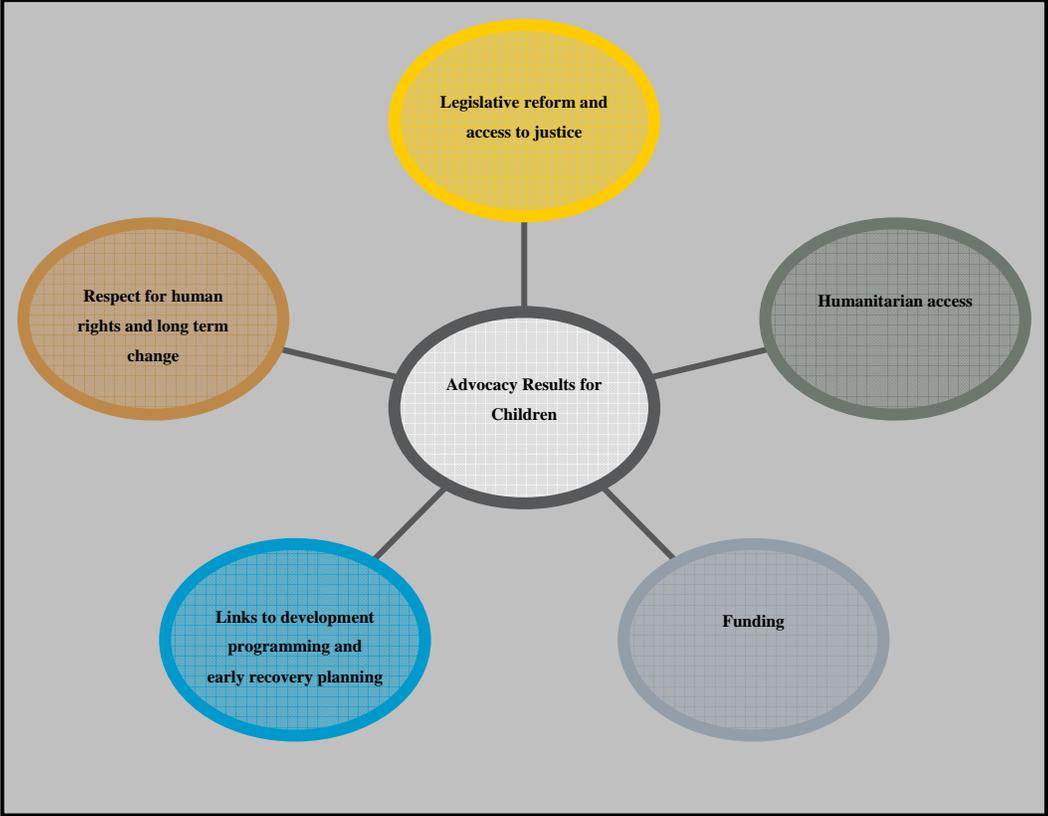
1. Overcoming advocacy risks: Types of advocacy in emergencies

1.1. Types of advocacy

To overcome programmatic and other risks associated with poorly planned and executed advocacy, a variety of advocacy channels and types should be explored, as illustrated in *Box 3*. Advocacy can be public or private or a combination of both, depending on the local context, desired outcome and the sensitivity of the subject.

Box 3: Some examples of different advocacy forms

- Letters to a Government or Head of State
- Private meetings with a high-level national official
- Informal, confidential discussions with actors in a conflict
- Press releases
- Radio campaigns
- Photograph exhibitions
- Multi-donor funding appeals
- Published survey assessment
- Briefings to donors
- Visits from an emergency relief coordinator
- Missions of a UNICEF Goodwill Ambassador
- Organized missions by UNICEF regional or headquarters senior staff
- Trainings for peacekeepers or armed forces

- **Private advocacy** refers to actions that take place privately, without publicity. These include a conversation, a private negotiation or a meeting. This kind of advocacy is often used in the earliest stages of a crisis, when a brief conversation with a manager from another organization can suffice to remind them of, for example, a reserved school space in a camp, or the provision of lighting by latrines.

- **Public advocacy** refers to advocacy that takes place in public fora. It may not necessarily involve the media, but it does involve a wider group of people. Public advocacy uses the pressure created by public understanding to bring about change in policy or implementation. It can consist of a group of women meeting with refugee camp organizers to discuss safety, or it can involve international media coverage around child recruitment into armed forces or groups. Methodologies may include workshops, seminars, petitions, opinion polls, one-to-one meetings, public meetings and media interviews.

Both private and public advocacy can also be quiet - that is, not specifically attributed a single individual or agency such as UNICEF. For example, following the appointment of a special envoy for **Zimbabwe** in June 2005, UNICEF chose to temporarily suspend any press or media communications pending the report of the special envoy on the humanitarian impact of organized

demolitions in the country. Speaking with one voice through an inter-agency report helped to ensure UNICEF's continued access to vulnerable populations in Zimbabwe. Private and public advocacy actions undertaken by UNICEF Zimbabwe in this highly politicized and sensitive context are further discussed in Section 4 below.

1.2. Levels of advocacy

Interviews with UNICEF and humanitarian staff from partner organizations across the world have highlighted examples of advocacy at four levels in emergencies: local, national, regional and global. Some examples include:

Advocacy at a **local** programme level:

- **Indonesia**: Lighting next to latrines in an internally displaced persons (IDP) camp (e.g. to protect women and girls against sexual violence)
- **Chad**: The creation of child-friendly services in a transit camp (e.g. creation of child-friendly spaces in refugee camps on the border with western Darfur)
- **Sri Lanka**: The demobilization and reintegration of children used and recruited by armed forces or groups (e.g. dialogue with parties to the conflict as well as parents, community leaders and teachers)
- **Pakistan**: The provision of primary education for boys and girls (e.g. building temporary schools after the 2005 earthquake)

Advocacy at a **national** level:

- **Côte d'Ivoire**: Humanitarian access (e.g. UNICEF negotiations for the organization of national exams in the northern region with government, communities and rebel forces)
- **Sudan**: National policy reform against the criminalization of children
- **Darfur, Sudan:** Children in peace processes
- **Liberia**: Abolition of school fees

Advocacy at a **regional** level:

- Child protection concerns to be integrated into a national peace agreement being deliberated with regional partners (e.g. **Darfur** Peace Agreement discussions in Abuja)
- An integrated health and nutrition strategy with UN and NGO partners to prevent problems of chronic child malnutrition in **West Africa**

Advocacy at a **global** level:

- Increased funding for a neglected crisis (e.g. UNICEF's Child Alert for the **Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC)**)
- International outrage against war crimes in a particular conflict (e.g. UNICEF's public advocacy against violations of international humanitarian law in the conflict in the **Middle East**).

Figure 2. Links and influences between advocacy activities at different levels
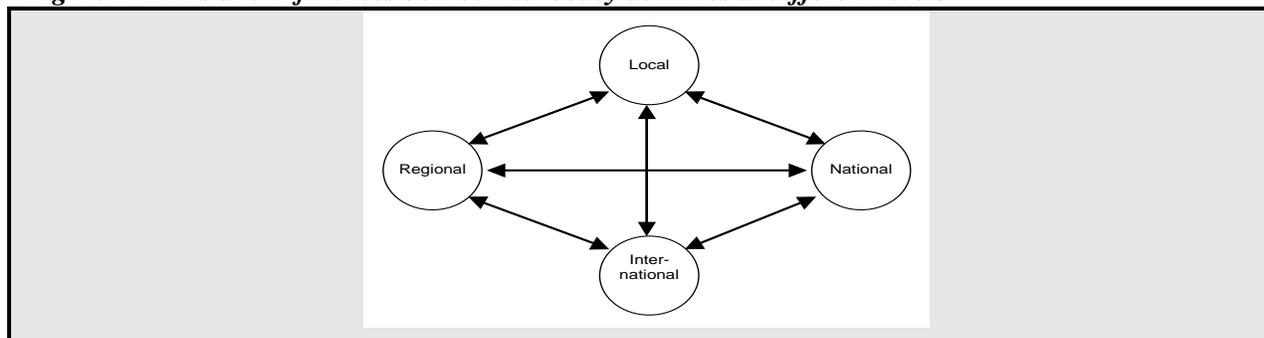
Different kinds of advocacy can be used at different levels simultaneously for greater effect as shown in *Figure 2*. Advocacy can be prioritized at a global or regional level to manage risks to staff and programmes. In all circumstances, there needs to be clear communication and information sharing between these different levels to develop an effective advocacy strategy.

2. Principles of advocacy in emergencies

Whatever its form, advocacy should be rooted in a number of fundamental principles. Often, the objectives of advocacy can appear to be in conflict with one another, for example when speaking out may hinder humanitarian access. In addition to the core humanitarian principles guiding UNICEF's action in emergencies, namely considering the best interests of the child, to be most effective advocacy should be evidence-based, rights-based, context-specific and partnership-focused. Each of those principles is described below.

2.1. Best interests of the child

A universal principle governing decision-making about advocacy activities is the principle of the best interests of the child. This principle is the overarching consideration for determining how to approach situations where other more specific provisions of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) do not apply or are otherwise unclear.

The principle of the "best interests of the child" is applicable in three main ways. First, it supports a child-centred approach. When read in conjunction with the other articles of the CRC, the "best interests" principle is meant to guide the interpretation in a particular direction. Second, serving as a mediating principle, it can help to resolve confusion between different rights. Third, the "best interests" principle provides a basis for evaluating the laws and practices of States Parties with regard to protection provided to children. In this connection, UNICEF and others have invoked the "best interests" principle to argue that basic services for children and women must be protected at all times, including during wars or periods of structural adjustment and other economic reforms.[8]

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[8] United Nations Children's Fund, Guidelines on Human Rights-Based Programming, Executive Directive CF/EXD/1998-04, 1998

2.2. Evidence-based advocacy

The collection of reliable data and credible evidence, by UNICEF or its partners, will strengthen the legitimacy of an advocacy strategy, minimize associated risks and have greater impact. Advocacy strategies should strive where feasible to be based on some form of research or collection of data, rather than opinion or anecdotal information.

In 2005, for example, UNICEF, the Government of Niger and the Centre for Disease Control (CDC) conducted a national survey in **Niger** with disaggregated findings on eight regional levels. The study highlighted elevated mortality rates in many regions. The findings have been a powerful advocacy tool in building capacity to enable flexible development and emergency programming in the region. A study by the International Rescue Committee in 2004 showed mortality rates in the **DRC** were double of those reported for natural disasters globally. This information (See *Figure 3*) has allowed UNICEF and partners to advocate with donors for increased and sustained humanitarian funding in the region.

However it should be noted that when doing rights-based advocacy evidence may not be required when there was no violations committed but advocacy may still be undertaken to prevent the occurrence of violations.

Figure 3: Mortality in the DRC/natural disasters[9]
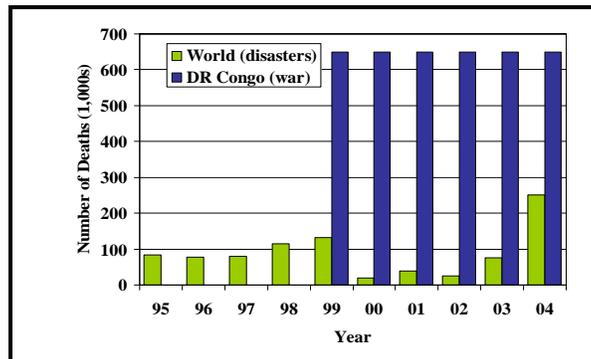
Credibility of data is important. For example, non-state actors in **Sri Lanka** attempted to challenge and discredit the information collected by UNICEF and partners on children being recruited into the armed forces. UNICEF subsequently strengthened mechanisms for data verification. The **Chechnya** case study *(See Box 4)* is another example of how a strong evidence base can strengthen advocacy developed with partners.

Box 4: Case study: Chechnya and landmines: The role of evidence

Context: Chechnya is one of the worst mine-affected areas in the world and has the highest ratio of the number of victims relative to the size of the population.

Advocacy goal: To minimize the impact of landmines and other devices on children through:

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[9] International Rescue Committee Mortality Survey in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, 2005

- A change in government policy: an agreement to minimize the use of landmines
- Ratification of the global Mine Ban Treaty
- Urging the government to undertake de-mining activities

Baseline: Although precise data was not currently available, UNICEF and its partners were aware that a significant proportion of children were exposed to landmines on a daily basis.

Challenges: Landmines have tended to be a 'taboo' subject in discussions between UNICEF and the government. Advocacy aimed at the government on standards and conventions has been limited and was only really initiated in 2005, when prompted by UNICEF headquarters, which pressed the country office for a more aggressive mine action campaign in Chechnya. A lack of internal capacity to collect data and a variety of different approaches to data collection by partners created confusion and further undermined advocacy efforts.

Advocacy action: UNICEF worked with other organizations to arrive at a common approach to definitions, terminology and methods of data collection. This included workshops covering methodological issues. UNICEF and the Ministry of Education of Chechnya carried out a Knowledge, Attitudes and Practice (KAP) survey involving 400 children in 2004, which aimed to bring forth the voices and perspectives of children. The survey results aroused considerable international interest in technical circles. The data derived from the study was used to develop the programme and to provide statistical input into advocacy initiatives.

Message: The issue of landmines was brought to the attention of the government and the public through a clear advocacy message based on statistical data. This message highlighted Chechnya as one of the world's five worst-affected countries concerning landmines, including a ratio of victims to overall population size as one of the highest in the world. Advocacy messages aimed at the government on standards and conventions occurred subsequently.

Targets: Russian Federation government departments (as the majority of victims were affected by government mines), such as the Ministry of Civil Defence, Emergencies and the Elimination of the Consequences of Natural Disasters (EMERCOM), which includes civil security dealing with fire-fighters and de-mining, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Defence.

Methods:
- Transparency: UNICEF shared results of the survey with the government.
- Involving headquarters: Headquarters guidance was given on public events and other communications as well as technical support for data collection mechanisms.
- Holding regular meetings between UNICEF senior staff and government officials to share information and determine relevant action strategies.
- Facilitating workshops and training with government officials and the military to raise awareness of the problem of landmines in the region.
- Engagement with the media to generate press releases, interviews and articles.
- Organization of public events such as the Mine-free Chechnya festivals of 2003–2004, football tournaments for disabled children and a national exhibition in Moscow raising the issue at a federal level.
- Participation, for example, involving children in official ceremonies.

Immediate impact: An improved data collection system with partners to inform future programming and advocacy efforts. At the same time, there were indications for the first time that the government was prepared to take some steps to address this issue (for example, ratification by the Russian Federation of the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons in 2005).

Long-term impact: The government has started work around mine issues and has begun de-mining activities through the EMERCOM. At the same time, UNICEF Chechnya has geared up its response to landmines and child protection, by, among other things, devoting greater resources to mine action activities

2.3. Rights-based advocacy: Participatory, people-centred and representative

The UN common understanding of rights based approach to programming is based on three core elements: 1) identify duty bearers , 2) identify rights holders 3O ensuring all activities are based on human rights treaties and strengthens the human rights of people. This approach is recognized by UNICEF's main framework for emergency and development programming: the human rights-based approach to programming which focuses on the rights of children. The design of an advocacy strategy design and implementation can occur in different ways: as participatory, representative and people-centred, depending on the nature and type of the emergency. The decision-making process to use a participatory, representative, people-centred approach or a combination of options is described in *Section 4* of these guidelines.

Participatory advocacy

Participatory advocacy explicitly engages the active participation of affected populations in the design and implementation of an advocacy strategy. This type of advocacy requires more time and capacity than representative advocacy but the goal is to use participative techniques to illuminate and listen to the concerns of those most affected by the emergency in order to take appropriate action.
Participatory advocacy draws a range of groups into the debate and determines ways to hold decision makers accountable.

Participatory advocacy aims to increase ownership of the advocacy strategy and provides an opportunity for consultation and consensus building. Consultation is also critical in order to plan context-specific advocacy activities based on cultural needs and customs and to achieve expected results. UNICEF's work on gender-based violence in the **DRC** described below is a good example of this type of approach *(*See *Box 5).*

Box 5: Case study: The Democratic Republic of the Congo and gender-based violence: Participatory advocacy

Context:
The widespread rape of women and girls in the DRC has continued to be used as a weapon of war by many parties to the conflict. UNICEF and partners' support to victims has included the provision of medical and psychological support, social reintegration activities and a recent initiative for legal support. Advocacy is an important component of the overall programme.

Goal:
To actively involve communities and victims/survivors in advocacy related to gender-based violence to:

- Raise awareness about gender-based violence and its victims, the majority of which are adolescent girls.
- Provide a forum in which communities could express their anger and frustration about a persistent problem and lack of accountability for perpetrators.
- Work in partnership with survivors and their communities to determine strategies for prevention and response.
- Urge the governor and judicial authorities to adhere to international law and standards and take action against impunity for perpetrators.

Action:
The zonal office in North Kivu planned to organize a local version of the international campaign "16 Days of Activism against Violence against Women". Discussions were held with 130 local associations, comprising community and women's groups. The purpose was to determine desired messages and relevant channels for delivery. A public protest march against impunity for sexual violence crimes was organized.

Messengers:
The communities and the victims/survivors themselves were the messengers. Many local associations played a critical role as messengers, and local celebrities were involved such as a local band that created a theme song for the event. An NGO supported the initiative through audio-visual and radio productions.

Product:
The march on 25 November involved some 6,000 to 8 000 people. Neighbouring towns followed suit and began similar protests. Other events included:

- Seminars, some organized by UN agencies and NGOs, were held on various aspects of gender-based violence, including applicable legal systems, consequences for victims and communities and potential community responses.
- Radio and television productions, including dramas, soap operas and songs, covered different aspects of the issue and were broadcast nearly every day.

Immediate impact:
- Raised awareness among the population, which was an inevitable outcome of the large-scale march that took place involving a wide range of people, including public administrators, students, the elderly, the disabled and activists.
- Increased awareness of the local authorities involved in planning the initiative. There are some signs that they are changing their behaviour, as schools, the police and religious leaders seem more willing to cooperate in policy and other discussions to prevent and respond to gender-based violence.

Long-term impact:
- Increased collaboration among organizations on gender-based violence. Most agencies (local and international) previously behaved in a more competitive manner.
- UNICEF's own visibility in-country but also more globally was strengthened because of the focused attention now provided to this subject area. Further advocacy and programme goals have been realized subsequently.

People-centred advocacy

People-centred advocacy approaches prioritize the empowerment of people to advocate for changes in policies or actions themselves and places the interest of children at the heart of advocacy decision-making. The important role of UNICEF is predominantly one of support, facilitation, training and access to advocacy opportunities. UNICEF's work in **Somalia** is an example of this type of advocacy (See *Box 6).*

Box 6: Case study: Somalia: People-centred and participatory advocacy

Context:
Ongoing conflict in Somalia and a lack of public accountability structures have resulted in many violations of children's rights and little in-country capacity to address those violations.

Goal:
To establish local and community networks to address child rights' violations.

Developing a strategy:

Following up on the recommendations of a participatory child protection study carried out in 2003, the UNICEF country office decided to create a 'cohort' of child protection advocates made up of adolescents and young people to educate and speak out about child rights in their communities.

Targets:
Political, military and traditional leadership, communities and civil society.

Messengers:
Together with 25 child protection advocates (CPAs), during 2003/4, UNICEF worked among some of the most vulnerable communities such as refugees and internally displaced persons to raise awareness about children's rights. The advocates were supported by a parallel youth development and leadership programme aimed at providing skills training and education.

Challenges:
Little child protection capacity was available in the UNICEF country office to carry out the work but it was hoped that the advocacy activity would help to stimulate additional resources.

Immediate impact:
The CPAs have benefited from a series of training sessions and have become actively involved in decision-making activities affecting their lives. They conduct community mobilization sessions and encourage community discussion to identify the community's role in preventing abuses. CPAs are also able to refer individual cases to the authorities in order to pursue justice against perpetrators.

Long-term impact:
Within UNICEF, the work has inspired and supported work by other programmes in the country office. Child protection staff capacity has increased and the initiative has been shared as a success story with other UNICEF country programmes, as well as external organizations. It has been included in UNICEF's input into the UN Secretary General's Study on Violence against Children. In addition, UNICEF has helped to initiate 10 child protection networks in the country and is working with an NGO partner to further build the management and advocacy capacity of civil society partners in the field of child protection.

Representative advocacy

Representative advocacy implies that UNICEF staff should seek to represent the affected populations based on their knowledge and observations. For example, soon after the 2004 tsunami, UNICEF and partners advocated (together with national authorities) for a delay in external adoptions of children so as to minimize risks of child trafficking. Within weeks of the 2005 South Asia earthquake, UNICEF engaged in a large advocacy and immunization campaign in **Kashmir** to achieve maximum coverage for measles vaccination. A representative approach to advocacy in emergencies assumes a demonstrated understanding of the most critical problems and priority interventions needed to address these.

2.4. Partnership-focused advocacy

Partnerships are critical to the success of advocacy activities of any type or form. It is generally recognized that the more inclusive of organizations, the greater the advocacy "voice", and hence the greater the likelihood of advocacy coordination, risk management and success.

There is an increasing focus on complementarity between agencies in humanitarian responses, including for advocacy purposes. Partnerships should aim to increase strengths and ameliorate

weaknesses by coming together in an advocacy strategy that makes the most of each partner's strengths (See *Section 4*). In **Laos and Thailand**, for example, UNICEF has worked with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) to develop a "quiet advocacy" approach to the protection of migrant children forcefully separated from their families.

A common advocacy strategy shared by partners has potentially greater benefits. At the same time it is sometimes necessary for organizations to act alone in order to fulfil their roles. The sharing of plans with other organizations (even without a partnership framework) can serve to increase coordination in the humanitarian sector as illustrated in **Côte d'Ivoire** in 2006 (See *summary in Box 7)*. This detailed advocacy case study is presented in **Appendix 8.**

Box 7: Case study: Côte d'Ivoire: "Education is a weapon to achieve peace": UNICEF's advocacy strategy to ensure a right to education for all children

Context:
The socio-political crisis that has prevailed in Côte d'Ivoire since 2002 has led to a *de facto* partition of the country in two zones: a northern zone (representing 60 per cent of the territory), held by an armed group, the "*Forces Nouvelles*" (FN), and a southern zone controlled by the government.

Instability, school closures, deterioration of school facilities and a shortage of qualified teachers have affected children's access to education, especially in the northern and western zones of the country. For instance, no exam had been held in the northern part of the country since 2003, which has led to increased frustration among students and their parents.

Within a context characterized by a stalled peace process and an extremely volatile political situation not only has the education sector been particularly affected by the division of the country but the issue of education has often been at the core of political disputes between parties and has therefore become a highly politicized issue.

Goal:
To administer examinations in conflict-affected areas.

Developing a strategy:
Since the beginning of the crisis, UNICEF has advocated for the respect and the effective fulfillment of a child's right to education in Côte d'Ivoire. With the UN Country Team (UNCT), UNICEF's country office has led advocacy efforts from local to global levels, with all parties to the conflict, as well as with regional and international mediators. Raising international awareness about the situation of children in conflict-affected zones was judged as critical by UN agencies to facilitate action and programme implementation at the national level.

Once access to education had been widely recognized as a critical issue, despite its challenging political context, UNICEF decided to mobilize key stakeholders in the education sector and coordinate their interventions around a two-fold strategy:

1. Assist the government in organizing exams for the approximate 100,000 children living in areas under control of the *Forces Nouvelles*.
2. Ensure the return of children to school and maintain education programmes throughout the whole territory.

In early 2006, while the UN continued its sustained advocacy towards key stakeholders to uphold children's right to education, UNICEF organized the administering of final exams in conflict-affected regions in collaboration with the government, UN agencies, the *Forces Nouvelles* and civil-society organizations.

Messages:

Messages for all targeted audiences were very simple and called upon all parties in Côte d'Ivoire to collectively ensure that all children could enjoy their fundamental right to education.

Messengers:
While a significant number of UN agencies and NGOs participated in the operation, the advocacy efforts deployed by UNICEF's country office, and particularly by the representative and the education team, were decisive.

2.5. Context-specific advocacy

Advocacy strategies are most importantly determined by a careful analysis of the local context. The types of emergency (e.g. chronic, slow onset, rapid onset, natural disasters) and the different emergency phases will impact on advocacy design and implementation. For example, sustained advocacy in a chronic emergency is likely to be more participative than advocacy following a sudden natural disaster. While the methods, approaches and *fora* might differ, the principles of a rights-based approach and partnership should remain constant.

3. Developing an advocacy strategy within the emergencies project/programme cycle

Four steps for developing a strategy for advocacy can be integrated into the project/programme cycle for emergencies. Each step includes a series of actions that need to be carried out.

The four steps in developing an advocacy strategy are:

Step 1: Analysis and problem definition
Step 2: Risks analysis
Step 3: Strategy formulation
Step 4: Implementation, monitoring and evaluation

The use of the project/programme cycle to support the development of a strategy for advocacy in emergencies can take place in several hours, over a period of several weeks or in an intense setting, such as a workshop. This process can help to ensure stronger ownership (both internally

and among partners) and the involvement of a wide set of stakeholders. *Figure 4* shows an overview of the proposed five steps detailed within the project/programme cycle. Each step is explained further in the following paragraphs.

Figure 4: Developing an advocacy strategy within the emergencies project/programme cycle
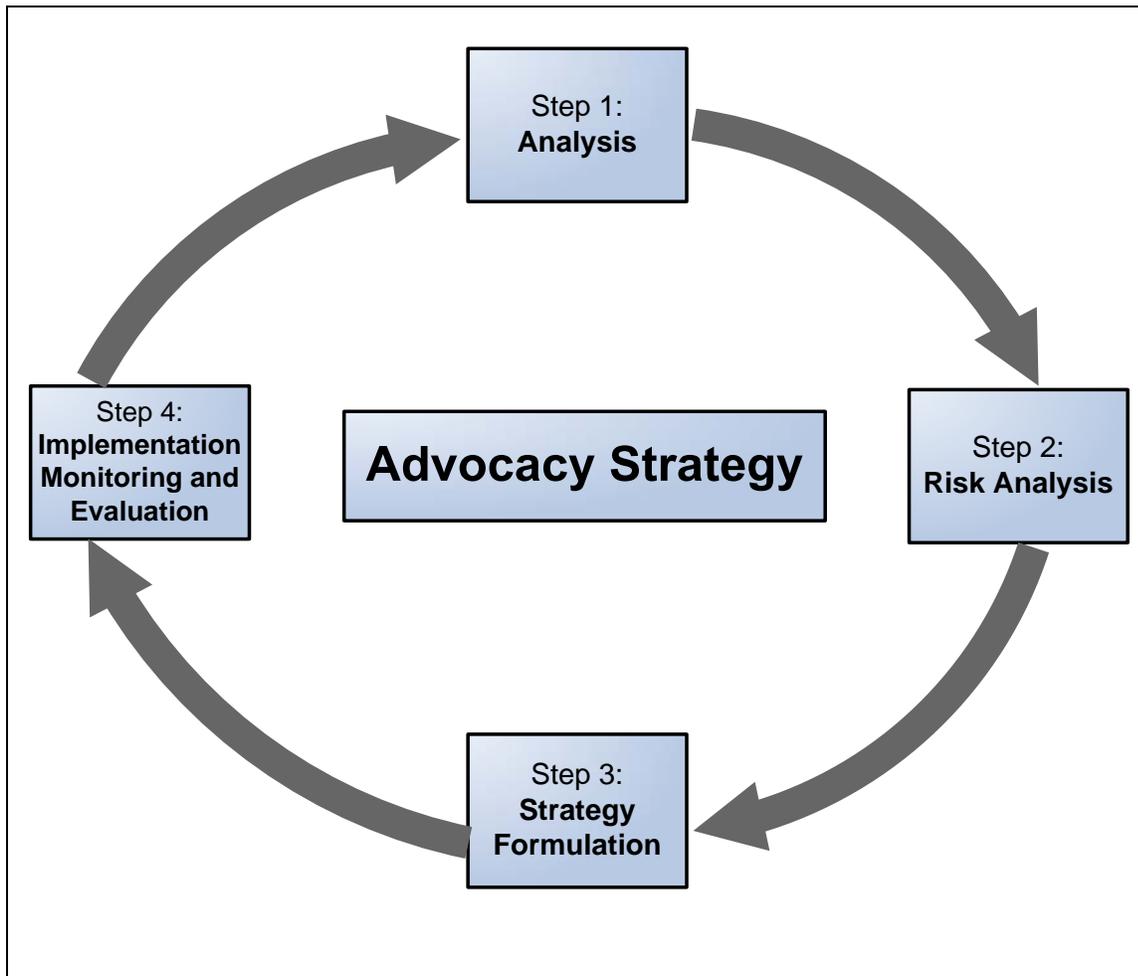
3.1. Step 1: Analysis and problem definition

Following the principle of context-specific advocacy, a brief analysis of the local context in light of any potential advocacy should be conducted prior to engaging in any advocacy activity.

Appendix 3: *"Nine Questions for a Successful Advocacy Strategy"* and **Appendix 4**: *"Checklist for Advocates"* include a series of practical questions and ready-to-use tools that can help to conduct the analysis and problem definition necessary for any advocacy strategy.

Key actions would be to:

a) **Identify problem(s):** Once an initial or rapid assessment and context analysis has taken place, a clear definition and scope of the problem(s) for advocacy to address can be articulated. This definition is useful for accurately identifying subsequent advocacy message content and a delivery method.

b) **Gather evidence:** This is very important at this stage. Questions to ask are:

- What evidence is available to support the desired advocacy message(s)? (e.g. mortality surveys, research studies, reports from communities)
- Is the evidence credible? Advocacy is only as strong as the information it is based on. New evidence should shape new advocacy strategies/messages.
- What further information needs to be collected?
- Will the evidence still be relevant and up-to-date when the advocacy message is delivered?

c) **Formulate advocacy messages:** What do you want to say about the problem to help resolve it? For example provisions for children and women within national legislation, ratification of international conventions and protocols by a concerned state should be considered as this strengthen the overall messages.

d) Messages should be as strong and concise as possible, have a clear call for action and can be targeted at a broad audience or tailored specifically to individual stakeholders. This can be undertaken both within the process of Step 4 or separately.

e) **Develop recommendations for action**: Once a problem is defined and supported by credible sources/evidence, recommendations for action should be initially discussed. In considering recommendations for action, it is helpful to:

1. **Identify target audiences:** political channels; institutions; people and power mechanisms that have influence over decisions; laws relating to the media; civil society ; the state of the media sector and media opportunities; related civil society groups; lobby groups; professional groups; women's and youth groups; and annual events. *Figure 5* illustrates how a stakeholder and decision-maker analysis can be helpful to identify target audiences.
2. **Identify tools for reaching targeted groups:** Both tangible – press releases, banners, public speeches – and subtle – direct conversations/interactions – can be utilized, sometimes simultaneously.
3. **Identify needs:** Map information needs and flows (including the gaps and reasons for the gaps) for possible partnerships and targets of advocacy. This can be done through a quick stakeholder and decision-maker analysis as described in the table below:

Figure 5: Stakeholder and Decision-maker Analysis

Stakeholder Analysis
• List all stakeholders who might be affected – both positively and negatively – by the change proposed.
• Define targets, partners, adversaries and internal and external stakeholders.
• Analyse the potential advantages and problems of working with those identified.
• Identify: (a) the expectations stakeholders might have of the advocacy work; (b) messages for each partner to use; and (c) the activities for which the partners might be willing to take responsibility.
• List ways in which each of the parties could be supported in their advocacy work to strengthen the overall campaign.
• Identify communication channels that would enable stakeholders to be kept informed and to participate actively in all appropriate stages of the project (for example: regular meetings, radio

broadcasts, mass emailings, newsletters, faxes, etc.)
Decision-maker Analysis
• Who takes key decisions that need to be addressed, or influences those who take the decisions?
• Where do decision-makers go for information to help them make decisions?
• Who do they listen to and for what kind of advice?

Advocacy undertaken by UNICEF **Zimbabwe** *(See summary in Box 8)* during the forced displacement crisis of 2005 demonstrates the value of a well-planned advocacy strategy. The detailed case-study is presented in **Appendix 9**.

Box 8: Case study: Zimbabwe and putting children first: UNICEF's advocacy in action

Context:
In May 2005 the Government of Zimbabwe launched a clean-up operation of its cities known as Operation Murambatsvina carried out by the police and the army. It was described as a programme to enforce bylaws to stop all forms of alleged "illegal activities in areas such as vending, illegal structures and illegal cultivation" among others in its cities.

As a result of the Operation, it is estimated that some 700,000 people in cities across the country have lost either their homes, their source of livelihood or both. Indirectly, a further 2.4 million people have been affected in varying degrees. Hundreds of thousands of women, men and children were made homeless, without access to food, water and sanitation or health care.

The government initially relocated 3,000 families displaced by Operation Murambatsvina in Harare to the Caledonia Farm transit camp, where no water and sanitation facilities existed. Similar camps were set up in other urban areas. For several months these families were relocated to other urban areas and received little provisions by authorities for any form of water supply, basic sanitation facilities or facilities for children or pre-schoolers.

Problem to address:
Operation Murambatsvina presented a significant threat to children's health, well-being and protection.

UNICEF's response and advocacy results: Despite enormous sensitivities during Operation Murambatsinva and great political and operational tensions with Zimbabwe, with careful and strategic advocacy efforts, UNICEF was able to maintain and strengthen its working relationship with government counterparts to provide immediate relief to the displaced. UNICEF was able to scale up its interventions to include drilling boreholes, constructing latrines and education interventions across Zimbabwe. UNICEF was also able to advocate with the government for the presence of other partners in key areas, for example, Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF).

Some strategies for success:
• An informal "negotiations team" of national staff was created by UNICEF within 24 hours of the crisis making effective use of institutional knowledge of local politics and familiarity with senior and technical representatives within government. The national officer working for Water, Environment, and Sanitation sector, for example, had more than 20 years of experience working for the government and possessed a thorough understanding of how to engage both at technical and high levels within the relevant ministries.
• From the outset, and in a hypersensitive environment, UNICEF's approach narrowly and consistently focused on 'the best interests of the child' rather than politics. Having a simple, direct and achievable message became a major reason for why UNICEF was allowed access where others were not.

> **Messages:**
> - Messages to the government focused on the primacy of children's safety and well-being and encouraged officials to set aside political motives and allow children to be reached. The primary interests of children formed "common ground" between UNICEF and government counterparts.
> - National staff on the negotiations team recognized that adopting "confrontational" messages was not effective and served only to alienate partners rather than facilitate a humanitarian response.
> - Donor expectations and demands for public condemnation of the rights violations committed by the government were managed by the message that access was the main imperative. To achieve access was the ultimate goal in reaching children – a common priority for all.
>
> **Lessons learned from the Zimbabwe country office:**
> - Engage with local level government officials and technical sectors as part of the initial response in highly political settings so as to enable swift responses unhindered by wider political concerns.
> - Once the most pressing needs have been met, advocacy with national and more senior government counterparts can begin, supported by regional offices, headquarters and the resident coordinator. It is important the UNICEF country office continue to brief these parties regularly so that more public advocacy does not detract from the work on the ground.
> - Draw attention to the issue, rather than promote UNICEF's brand/ name.

3.2. Step 2: Risk analysis

Risk analysis associated with possible advocacy strategies is essential to risk management in an emergency situation. Sensitive contexts should be considered in all advocacy, but UNICEF is committed through its mandate to protecting all children's rights and cannot be a silent witness when these are at risk or are deliberately violated. At the same time, decision-making should focus on strengthening and not jeopardizing programming. A risk analysis exercise can help to determine how best to plan and implement effective advocacy by weighing security and programmatic risks to staff and communities comparative to the actual rights that are being violated of children affected by the emergency.

If a decision is taken at the country level to not engage in open advocacy, alternative avenues for addressing the situation of children and women in a particular location should be explored. Action does not have to be directly linked to UNICEF but can be attributed to partners with UNICEF's input or background support. This is an approach often adopted by operational partners who do not want to compromise operations, relations or confidentiality, such as the ICRC. Headquarters or regional offices can also offer significant support for indirect/indirect advocacy.

Regular "risk analyses" will need to be repeated as the work continues. A security officer should be included in these efforts. *Box 9* shows some examples of the findings of country-level risk analyses linked to the development of advocacy strategies. Each risk was then addressed in the planning process (See *Step 3, Strategy Formulation*).

Box 9: UNICEF risk analysis results from case studies

Sri Lanka: Child soldiers
- UNICEF was at risk of *damaging access* to the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) and affected areas and populations when undertaking advocacy against under-age recruitment after the peace agreement had been signed. UNICEF had been shunned on several occasions for taking a strong stand on this matter in the past (sometimes for months; the LTTE refusing to communicate or denying access). Local people are still at risk today of suffering from reprisals for reporting on under-age recruitment.

Outcome: UNICEF had to find more creative ways of obtaining information, such as visiting villages inconspicuously and meeting families in NGO offices.

Afghanistan: Education

- The *safety* of children being sent to school was at risk in UNICEF's 2002 "Back to School" campaign. Some members of the former regime in Afghanistan had threatened that children would be killed if they went to school.
- Failure to implement a successful "Back to School" initiative at this time would have been a risk to UNICEF's *reputation* as well as a huge disappointment to communities, since the programme had come to symbolize the benefits of peace.

Outcome: UNICEF ensured a strong security system, involved local people and dialogued with community leaders.

Chechnya: Landmines

- UNICEF had an ethical responsibility to ensure that involving civilians in their evidence gathering survey of 2004 did not expose them to *security* risks.

Outcome: House-to-house research was not carried out and the study relied more on other methods, such as focus groups.

One of the simplest ways to conduct a risk analysis is by using the "Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats" approach (SWOT). The outcome of these discussions can be used to inform a broader advocacy strategy. Questions should be considered from both UNICEF and UNICEF's partners' perspectives. Some of the questions that can be used in a SWOT analysis are illustrated in **Appendix 5.**

3.3. Step 3: Strategy formulation

This process aims to turn *what* needs to be done into a strategy of *how* it is going to be achieved and can include six key steps:

1. Set objectives
2. Develop methods
3. Define advocacy messages and messengers
4. Develop partnerships
5. Engage children in participatory and people-centred advocacy
6. Build an action plan

Set objectives

Set SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-bound) as well as short-, medium- and long-term objectives for advocacy. A participative approach to advocacy by design involves members of the affected population in setting advocacy objectives, designing a strategy and monitoring an evaluation.

Develop methods

A clear definition of the problem and an understanding of the risks and available resources and partnerships for carrying out effective advocacy in a particular context will inform the choice of the message and its delivery methods. Recommendations for action, target audiences and tools for reaching them have already been discussed in STEP 1, so the next step is to prioritize, which might be most feasible and offer maximum impact. From this point, think of the most innovative,

appropriate and achievable ways of working. More than one method may be appropriate so consider reaching the target in multiple ways simultaneously to reinforce the message.

For example, following reports of sexual exploitation and abuse by United Nations peacekeepers in **West Africa** in 2003, UNICEF worked with partners to provide local communities with information about available reporting mechanisms and support services. Advocacy with the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) at both headquarters and country levels focused on implementing a "zero tolerance" policy to acts of sexual exploitation and abuse. Training was conducted with peacekeeping forces as well as partners to raise awareness about the rules and regulations prohibiting sexual exploitation and abuse. Advocacy methods thus ranged from using local media, negotiations and meetings with senior managers to training exercises and workshops, involving both affected populations and those responsible.

Define advocacy messages and messengers

Reaching audiences requires crafting and framing a set of messages that will be persuasive. Although those messages should always strive to be based on evidence where appropriate, they also need to be tailored differently to target audiences, depending on what they are ready to hear.

In most cases, advocacy messages will have two basic components:

1. An appeal to what is right.
2. An appeal to the audience's self-interest.

In order to develop a key message:

- Combine short-term messages with long-term change objectives.
- Make messages as inclusive as possible.
- Combine needs with solutions, by including an analysis of the problem and its causes, responsibility for solving the problem, and possible solutions or recommendations for action.
- Clearly define the rights of beneficiaries and obligations of the duty bearers

Keep the message clear and compelling, whether it is a private meeting or a public interview. Be short in length and brief in the number of points you wish to highlight. Credible messengers should also be selected according to the tone and content of a message. *Box 10* gives some examples of well-known UNICEF advocacy messages that were used internationally as well as locally. More detailed messages common to a number of sectors and based on international human rights and humanitarian law as well as number of policy documents are attached as PART II of these guidelines.

Box 10: Some advocacy messages

- **Global:** Landmines kill, injure and orphan children. In many mine-affected countries, children account for one in every five landmine victims. An estimated 15,000 to 20,000 people are killed or maimed by landmines every year, according to the International Campaign to Ban Landmines. — UNICEF's message for the second International Day for Mine Awareness and Assistance in Mine Action, 2007.

- **Regional: '**Building Back Better' — UNICEF's organizational message for rebuilding after the Tsunami clearly articulated its programmatic goals.
- **To both sides of a conflict:** UNICEF reminds all parties that the protection of children and civilians during conflict is an obligation under international humanitarian law and the Convention on the Rights of the Child. — used by UNICEF during the Lebanon-Israel conflict, 2006.
- **To international community:** "Together, we must do more. Aid organizations, including UNICEF, need to expand our actions in scope and scale, inside Iraq and in neighbouring countries hosting refugees.(…) The Government of Iraq and the international community must provide immediate funding for humanitarian assistance." — Daniel Toole, UNICEF Deputy Executive Director, a.i., and Director Emergency Programmes at UNHCR Conference on Iraq and neighbouring countries, 2007.

More broadly, messages can come under campaigns
- **Global:** "UNITE FOR CHILDREN, UNITE AGAINST AIDS" — UNICEF HIV/AIDS Campaign.
- **To both sides of a conflict:** "PUTTING CHILDREN FIRST" — Nepal's national Vitamin A campaign, 2006.
- **To families and community leaders:** "WHAT WILL IT TAKE TO GET YOUR DAUGHTER INTO SCHOOL?" — "Hey Girls, Let's Go to School", girls' education campaign, Turkey, 2005.
- **To UN staff:** "PROTECT THOSE WHOM WE SERVE" — Inter-agency training video on protection against sexual exploitation and abuse by UN staff and related personnel, 2006.

Possible opponents, contrary arguments and potential responses should be considered in advance of message delivery. *Box 11* reflects some lessons about designing and delivering advocacy messages from UNICEF's experience in **Kashmir,** advocating for a "scaled-up" immunization campaign following the 2005 South Asia earthquake.

Box 11: Case study: Pakistan and immunization: UNICEF's lessons learned about advocacy messaging

General:
Advocacy linked to the 2005 immunization campaign had clear vision: a time-bound goal, target groups for partnership, a defined geographical location and specified populations for the desired programme.

Advocacy goals:
Advocacy was "ambitious"; it expressed a programme goal that clearly exceeded comfort levels and aimed at big results. While still being specific, it allowed for inspired media messaging, increased funding and plenty of support from partners. "Thinking big" allowed UNICEF to act widely and with a maximum impact.

Evidence:
Advocacy was based on long-standing research clearly showing the value of measles vaccination coverage in emergencies.

Media engagement:
How to employ the media was a core element of the advocacy strategy and messages were designed to advocate for programme needs as well as to raise awareness among communities about the campaign. Longer-term public advocacy with the media and with those UNICEF wished to involve further focused on the initial success of vaccination efforts among vulnerable populations. Data from established monitoring and evaluation systems helped to support those claims of success and endorse requests for increased funding and support.

Partnership:
Advocacy with partners reinforced that the campaign's goals and methodology were "transparent", which helped to garner cooperation from the military, government, the UNESCO Institute for Statistics, community leaders, UN partners and others. Involving senior figures within the military for advocacy purposes helped to protect the campaign against a number of threats and to mobilize swift and coordinated logistical action. The message of

Develop partnerships

Advocacy work is often best carried out with other organizations that have similar goals. Identifying and developing ways of working with other organizations can be challenging but is often crucial to achieving success.

Partnerships between different organizations can help to work towards progress and is a key principle of advocacy strategies (See *Section 3.4*). Even without formal partnerships, a variety of organizations working on different strategies in different arenas can be effective and allow for different organizations to focus on certain areas, but that could also lead to conflicts. Partnership is more difficult among organizations pursuing very different styles and strategies, although this can also be an advantage by complementing each other's strengths. However a lack of partnership can actually halt progress.

A successful partnership requires partners to:

- Clearly define the nature of the relationship – common principles, resource allocation, agreement criteria, independence, etc.
- Review formal partnership agreements (e.g., Cooperation Agreements, Memoranda of Understandings, etc.).
- Establish clear decision-making mechanisms.
- Develop communications mechanisms.
- Involve all members.
- Share information and agree on appropriate mechanisms to do so (e.g., regular meetings).

However, partnerships should be tactical and strategic. While a broad range of strategies are available, choices must be made as to which tactics and/or partners can exert the maximum pressure on decision-makers. Decision-makers rarely respond to only one direction of pressure and will therefore need to be the focus of a number of tactics. Partnerships therefore need to focus on common messaging and agreement, in spite of likely differing mandates and operational procedures, in order to leverage power and effect change for children.

To work towards agreement:

- Separate the people from the problem.
- Focus on interests, not positions.
- Create options for mutual gain.
- Insist on objective criteria.

Working with partners can be extremely strategic on controversial issues or those requiring large-scale, multi-agency executable change, showing both solidarity on issues as well as an opening for certain groups to speak out alone. Partnerships can also work together subtly and on "quiet" research or information gathering yet still aim at achieving broad goals. For example, a multi-sectoral nutrition survey in **southern Sudan** and **Darfur** in 2005 was conducted by UNICEF, the World Food Programme (WFP) and partners to form the basis to advocate for strengthened nutrition programming in these areas. As a first step to encouraging increased UNICEF presence, the survey's authors presented their findings to both the UN country team in Sudan and to an emergency meeting at UNICEF's headquarters in New York to target senior decision-makers in UNICEF and others outside the organization. Improved nutrition programming was then within the inter-agency context for additional resource mobilization and strengthened UN coordination on the ground.

Box 12: UNICEF Sierra Leone builds capacity of faith-based groups to deliver advocacy messages on HIV/AIDS

Goal:
To increase the capacity of local faith-based organizations in Sierra Leone to educate communities about HIV/AIDS prevention and treatment.

Activities:
The Sierra Leone country office channelled its HIV/AIDS awareness strategies through existing national religious leadership structures. UNICEF secured the personal commitment of individual heads of the denominations, who then rallied and gained the commitment of the Inter-Religious Council of Sierra Leone (IRC-SL), the umbrella group for faith organizations in the country. The IRC-SL then garnered support from their networks of parishes and mosques all the way to the village level. The strategy entailed four key steps: 1) enhancing the capacity of religious leaders to effectively participate in the programme; 2) developing a set of key messages that could form the basis of sermons and dialogue between the religious leaders and their communities; 3) organizing a series of high-level advocacy activities that would culminate in one big national event; 4) sensitizing communities through tours and visits in the districts and chiefdoms with a focus on HIV/AIDS prevention, care and support.

Results:
Because the faith-based organizations already have strong and active networks on the ground, the initiative is cost-effective and potentially sustainable, reaching hundreds of community members. The inter-faith approach in addressing a sensitive issue such as HIV/AIDS demonstrates religious tolerance, assures credibility of the messages and raises the awareness of HIV/AIDS among congregations and the country as a whole.

Engage children in participatory and people-centred advocacy

As described in *Section 3.3.3.*, engaging children in advocacy initiatives can be critical for developing relevant and principled advocacy strategies. Following the project cycle, whatever the *type* of advocacy is to be undertaken (representative, participative or people-centred) will

depend on the nature or type of emergency and timing of the advocacy intervention. Case studies, including the one from **Somalia,** involved adolescents as 'advocates' in child protection awareness programmes to promote human rights within their communities. In **Darfur**, **Sudan**, UNICEF's team involved children in the design of an inter-state child protection workshop in 2006 to demonstrate the power of using children's voices to amplify advocacy messages. The participation of children in designing and implementing advocacy efforts is not only their right, but can also lead to effective advocacy messages and delivery as demonstrated in *Box 6*.

Children's ideas can be elicited and participatory approaches practiced in a number of ways, for example:

- Forming *discussion groups* in schools and child-friendly spaces to engage them in talking about their concerns and advocacy mechanisms.
- Planning for their *formal participation* in workshops and conferences at country and/or regional levels.
- Ensuring that long-term programme design and implementation includes local *capacity building* of communities by incorporating children's voices into work plans.
- Including children's participation in the *planning and implementation of programmes*, e.g. community reintegration packages and psycho-social support activities for children used and recruited by armed forces or groups.

Build an action plan

Before implementation, an action plan with key dates and responsible/focal persons should be developed. Interviews with field staff identified the following steps as elements of an effective action plan:

- Identify available resources, including budget.
- Prepare a timeline.
- List internal and external events and opportunities that can be used.
- List the activities to be carried out.
- Choose appropriate methodologies for the audience, for example, private or public actions.
- Define responsibilities for carrying out the activities, and the mechanisms for information and feedback between those involved.
- Define complementary activities to be carried out by allies or partners.
- Look at the positions of key players and assess what might change during the course of the work.
- Build in monitoring processes, including indicators to gauge achievement
- Build reflection, learning and flexibility into plans.

Box 13 highlights UNICEF's advocacy action plan and strategy in northern Uganda against the abduction of children into the armed forces or groups. Following the recommended strategy of these guidelines, a context analysis was conducted to inform advocacy planning and execution at the local and national levels.

Box 13: UNICEF's advocacy action plan for northern Uganda

Context:
In 1996, a group of school girls was abducted from the St. Mary Aboke Catholic School in Apac district in northern Uganda). This abduction was one of many cases of children forcibly recruited into the armed forces to be soldiers, cooks, spies, porters and sex slaves.

Local action:
Immediately following the girls' abduction, a lobby group was formed by their parents. This group, which has since expanded in membership and now represents all abducted children, started a widespread campaign with support from UNICEF to appeal to all parties involved, governments and the international community to exert influence on the armed forces for the release of abducted children. To complement these activities, UNICEF decided in 1998 to design a broad advocacy plan incorporating key objectives and actions.

UNICEF's advocacy action plan:
The advocacy plan focused on the problem of children's abduction into the armed forces operating in northern Uganda. It consisted of:

1. A **context analysis**, including an examination of existing relations with government and rebel forces and perceptions of UNICEF's work in northern Uganda.
2. A **conceptual framework** for UNICEF's humanitarian programming interventions based on the idea that the reality faced by many children in northern Uganda was so extreme and abusive that their well-being could only be assured through a more assertive and more consistent approach to protecting them from harm and promoting their rights.
3. **Advocacy objectives**, with a summary of key objectives.
4. **Challenges** and risks to meeting the objectives.

3.4. Step 4: Implementation, monitoring and evaluation

During implementation, regular **monitoring** should take place to keep track of progress and shape future activities. A strategy can be evaluated by revisiting each step in the process, asking questions such as, "Are the decision-makers being reached?" It is important to be able to revise the strategy and to adapt or discard those elements of a strategy that are not effective if the results of monitoring and evaluation indicate that such a change is necessary. A framework for understanding possible outcomes and impact of advocacy is described below *(See Figure 6)*

Figure 6. Framework for understanding possible outcomes and impact of advocacy work[10]

Dimension of work	Indicators of change and longer-term impact
Policy, implementation or activity change	• Changed policy. • Changes in legislation. • Positive change in people's lives as a result of the policy/legislation change.
Local capacity building activities with:	• Number of new advocacy strategies used by civil society groups.

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[10] Adapted from Coates & David, 2000.

Dimension of work	Indicators of change and longer-term impact
• NGOs • Movements/ networks • Community-based organizations • Popular organizations • Partner organizations • Youth groups and others	• Civil groups active in influencing decision-makers in ways that will benefit affected populations. • Affected populations possess a greater awareness of their human rights and possible mechanisms for speaking out against rights violations as well as mechanisms for redress. • Increased participation of civil society groups in influencing decisions. • Change in accountability and transparency of public institutions.

Documenting activities and results is part of a successful advocacy approach and can guide future interventions. UNICEF's use of documentation can be seen in the number of programmes that have established credible data and information in preparation for advocacy work. In **Niger**, for example, behavioural-change advocacy strategies to help ensure safe and healthy breast-feeding practices are being designed in accordance with recommendations made by a UNICEF Real-Time Evaluation conducted in October 2005.

Appendix 6 illustrates how a logical framework approach can be used to develop implement, monitor and evaluate an overall advocacy strategy once a specific objective has been selected, e.g. ending the use of child soldiers.

Finally, *Box 14* illustrates some of the traceable impacts from advocacy in emergencies work in **Sri Lanka**. There are local and UNICEF-wide impacts, and short- and long-term impacts.

Box 14: Case study: Sri Lanka and recruitment and use of children by armed forces and/or groups: Impact of advocacy in emergencies

- **Policy change:** After UNICEF provided concrete evidence to the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) about their use and recruitment of children, they acknowledged that children were indeed within their ranks, sometimes arguing that it was without their knowledge (uncertainty as to children's age.) A letter was sent by the Head of the LTTE Political Wing to all District Political Wing Leaders, directing them to cease recruitment of children.
- **Numbers of children returned:** 5,161 children registered with UNICEF since the signing of the Ceasefire Agreement in 2002. Of these, 4,228 have returned home.
- **Declining numbers of under-age recruits:** Since the Ceasefire Agreement, the numbers of children being recruited annually (as reported to UNICEF) has decreased, from 1,416 children in 2002 to 550 children in 2005. The average age of recruitment subsequently increased from 14 years in 2002 to 16 years in 2004.
- **Sanctions against the LTTE:** In June 2005, the European Union (EU) announced that LTTE delegations would no longer be received by EU Member States and called upon the LTTE to halt all recruitment of children and release others from within its ranks. UNICEF had supplied monitoring statistics on a regular basis.
- **Benefits for children affected by conflict:** Advocacy with the LTTE on child recruitment led to a programme for a wider group of children affected by the war. The resulting Action Plan is the only signed and implemented human rights agreement between the government and the LTTE.
- **Awareness-raising:** Awareness has been raised not only among the general public but also within the LTTE. The LTTE are concerned about their public and international image and have therefore modified their behaviour.

- **Wider impacts in UNICEF:** The advocacy strategy in Sri Lanka against under-age recruitment has been an important experience for UNICEF globally. The monitoring and reporting system established in Sri Lanka was presented to the Security Council and used as a "successful model" in rolling-out in 2006 global monitoring and reporting mechanisms for child rights violations in seven pilot countries under Security Council Resolution 1612.

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Appendix 1 – Advocacy: Frequently asked questions

Won't advocacy endanger access?

UNICEF has long held the belief that there should be no such thing as a silent witness to atrocities. At the same time, simply speaking out on sensitive issues in sensitive situations and risking undermining access to vulnerable populations is not effective advocacy. Advocacy is a core element of UNICEF's mandate and is a key priority area in the organization's 2006–2009 Medium Term Strategic Plan. In emergencies, special attention must be paid to considering appropriate strategies for advocacy activities before implementation.

With a good analysis of needs and strategic choices about methodologies, advocacy risks can be reduced. Any action that has an effect on power has risks. There are also risks if the wrong advocacy approach is carried out or if a strategy is not well thought out; for example, increased security risks, loss of legitimacy, distortion of messages, duplication of effort, lack of internal coordination and division of scarce resources. Risks are best handled through good planning and risk analysis, the appropriate choice of methods and objectives, evidence, analysis, flexibility and partnership.

Isn't advocacy about long-term issues and better practised in development response, not in emergencies?

Advocacy strategies that are participative, rights-based, and people-centred in emergency situations will increase short-term and long-term impact. Advocacy at the outset of a crisis can help to galvanize resources, capacity and strategic thinking to address programming priorities in the long term. Advocacy in emergencies is fundamentally about changing policies and actions that affect people facing the crisis, whether it is the need for education facilities, child-friendly food aid or the halting of child soldier recruitment. Advocacy in emergencies is a tool that can be used to bridge the humanitarian gap in emergency and development programming.

Isn't advocacy about making noise, protest marches and petitions? None of that works in emergency situations.

There are two main arenas for advocacy: private and public. Private advocacy approaches can work where 'noise' is not required. Private advocacy refers to actions that take place privately: a conversation, a private negotiation or a meeting is advocacy without publicity. This gives everyone a chance to explore the issue quietly, openly and from a problem-solving point of view. It may act as a reminder or a warning of potential issues. This kind of advocacy is often used in the earliest stages of a crisis, when a brief conversation with a manager from another organization can suffice to remind them of, for example, the need for child-friendly rations, a school space in a camp or lighting by latrines.

Public advocacy refers to advocacy that takes place in the public eye. It may be participative, it may or may not involve the media but it does involve people from a wider group. Public

advocacy uses the pressure created by public understanding to bring about change in policy or implementation. It does not have to be very high profile – it can simply be a group of women meeting with refugee camp organizers to discuss safety issues – but it can also involve international lobbying and media coverage around child soldier recruitment. Methodologies may include workshops, seminars, petitions, opinion polls, one-to-one meetings, public meetings and media interviews

Despite the more informal appearance of some private advocacy activities, it is still strongly recommended that a full planning mechanism be undertaken with the identification of evidence, solutions, objectives and methodologies.

Appendix 2 – Nine questions for a successful advocacy strategy11

1. What do we want? (NEEDS ASSESSMENT, CONTEXT ANALYSIS AND DEFINITION OF PROBLEM AND ADVOCACY GOALS)
Any advocacy effort must begin with a sense of its goals based on a clear understanding of the context and problem that needs to be addressed. Among these goals some distinctions are important. What are the long-term goals and what are the short-term goals? What are the content goals (e.g. policy change) and what are the process goals (e.g. building community among participants)? How do these goals compete with humanitarian operational goals?

2. Who can give it to us? (DECISION-MAKERS' AUDIENCES, KEY PLAYERS OR POWER-HOLDERS)
Who are the people and institutions you need to move? That includes those who have the actual formal authority to deliver the goods (e.g. legislators). That also includes those who have the capacity to influence those with formal authority (e.g. the media and key constituencies, both allied and opposed). In both cases, an effective advocacy effort requires a clear sense of who these audiences are and what access or pressure points are available to move them.

3. What do they need to hear? (MESSAGES)
Reaching those different audiences requires crafting and framing a set of messages that will be persuasive. Although those messages must always be rooted in the same basic truth, they also need to be tailored to different audiences depending on what they are ready to hear. In most cases, advocacy messages will have two basic components: an appeal to what is right and an appeal to the audience's self-interest.

4. Who do they need to hear it from? (MESSENGERS)
The same message has a very different impact depending on who communicates it. Who are the most credible messengers for different audiences? In some cases, these messengers are "experts" whose credibility is largely technical. In other cases, we need to engage the "authentic voices", those who can speak from personal experience. What do we need to do to equip those messengers, both in terms of information and to increase their comfort level as advocates?

5. How can we get the message heard? (DELIVERY)
There are many ways to deliver an advocacy message. These range from the genteel (e.g. lobbying) to the in-your-face (e.g. direct action). The most effective means vary from situation to situation. The key is to evaluate them and apply them appropriately, weaving them together in a winning combination.

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6. What do we have? (RESOURCES)
An effective advocacy effort takes careful stock of the advocacy resources that are already in place ready to be built on. That includes past advocacy work that is related, alliances already established, staff and other people's capacity, information and political intelligence. In short, you don't start from scratch, you start from building on what you've got.

7. What do we need to develop? (GAPS)
After taking stock of the advocacy resources you have, the next step is to identify the advocacy resources you need that aren't yet available. That means looking at alliances that need to be built and capacities such as outreach, media and research, which are all crucial elements of any effort.

8. How do we begin? (FIRST STEPS)
What would be an effective way to begin to move the strategy forward? What are some potential short-term goals or projects that would bring the right people together, symbolize the larger work ahead and create something achievable that lays the groundwork for the next step?

9. How do we tell if it's working? (EVALUATION)
As with any long journey, the course needs to be checked along the way. Strategy needs to be evaluated by revisiting each of the questions above (e.g. are we aiming at the right audiences? are we reaching them? etc.) It is important to be able to make mid-course corrections and to discard those elements of a strategy that don't work once they are actually put into practice.

Appendix 3 – Checklist for advocates

The Message
- What are the two or three key messages you need to convey? How did you come up with those messages?
- What evidence do you have to back up those messages (statistics, research, published reports, etc.)?
- Is your evidence credible, robust, timely and accurate?
- Are the messages appropriate to your audience? (See *Audience* below)
- Will your messages be conveyed privately or publicly? What are the advantages and disadvantages of each strategy?
- Can your messages be received (e.g. misinterpreted, manipulated) in ways other than you intended? How can you avoid or minimize the risk of this happening?

The Audience
- Who is your primary audience *inside* your country? Who is your secondary audience? Who else will ultimately receive your messages?
- Who is your audience *outside* your country? Consider, for example, the international media, international human rights groups, external governments, political bodies such as the UN Security Council, the African Union, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, etc. How does your message need to be tailored to take into account both an internal and external audience?
- Does your audience have the decision-making power necessary to take action for children? If not, who does?
- What level of understanding of the issue does your audience have already?
- What is likely to be your audience's reaction to your message? How could you counter-react in a constructive way?

The Voice
- Who is best placed to deliver the messages? (e.g. a UNICEF representative, UNICEF regional office staff, UNICEF headquarters (the Executive Director or other senior headquarters officials), Goodwill Ambassadors, humanitarian/resident coordinator, UN country team staff as a whole, an emergency relief coordinator, human rights groups (national or international), local authorities, national authorities, donor governments, children themselves).
- What other considerations are relevant in deciding on the voice in this case? For example, the sex of the person conveying the message, the history of the person and organization they represent, their credibility, their impartiality and neutrality, their knowledge of the issues, etc.

The Timing
- Is this the most appropriate time to convey your messages? Why or why not?
- Is there another opportunity that would be more appropriate or have greater overall impact?
- Are there competing advocacy messages also being conveyed at this time by other actors on other subjects? Will your messages on children get 'lost'?

The Impact

- What result for children are you trying to achieve with your messages? Are these messages the most appropriate way to achieve this result?
- What other actions can you take to reinforce your advocacy messages? For example, additional research or analysis of data, concerted lobbying of other key actors inside and outside the country, new activities/projects, development of new partnerships or alliances for children, regional approaches to the problem, etc.
- What is likely to be the impact of your message on: children; UNICEF staff and programmes; national authorities; local authorities; warring parties; other humanitarian actors; political bodies; other concerned governments?
- What is likely to be the short-, medium- and long-term impact of your messages on the above actors?
- What kind of political, security or other non-humanitarian impact is possible as a result of your messages? Will your messages have an impact on prevailing hostilities?
- What are the consequences of not delivering your messages? (For children; UNICEF; national authorities; local authorities; warring parties; other humanitarian actors; political bodies; other concerned governments) Is *not* delivering your messages sending a message in and of itself?

Appendix 4 – SWOT analysis: Some example questions

Strengths	Weaknesses
- How does UNICEF's reputation, experience in emergencies and history in the country strengthen its ability to advocate in this situation? - Which are the most important capacities and resources available for advocacy?	- What are the general disadvantages to undertaking a particular advocacy strategy? - Is there credible evidence to support an advocacy strategy? - What resource and capacity gaps for advocacy are present? - Is there sufficient leadership to support the desired advocacy message? - Are relationships with advocacy partners strong?
Opportunities	Threats
- What opportunities does UNICEF (and potentially partners) face in carrying out a particular advocacy strategy? - How can UNICEF's programming work benefit from an advocacy strategy? - What opportunities are available for disseminating advocacy messages and building advocacy alliances? (e.g. international conferences or meetings) - What are the advantages of UNICEF engaging in a particular advocacy exercise? - What programmes and activities would benefit from such advocacy? - Which relationships with partners would be strengthened by a particular advocacy strategy?	- Which relationships are at risk once an advocacy strategy is undertaken? (e.g. relations with national authorities) - Which programmes or activities could potentially be jeopardized by poor advocacy strategy implementation - What are any opponents doing?

Appendix 6 – Using a logical framework to chart an advocacy strategy

Example: Ending the use of child soldiers

	Indicators	**Sources of Verification**	**Risks/Assumptions**
Overall Goal: *What is the main advocacy goal you are trying to reach?* Example: Ending the use of child soldiers	*How will you know if you achieved your goal? Should be S.M.A.R.T. (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Timely)* Example: Ages of combatants in all groups are above 18	*Where can you measure achievement?* Example: Official army roster; census of all armed groups	*What factors may skew accurate measurements?* Example: Children may disguise ages by forging documents; incentive of armed groups to conceal age; access to groups
Objectives: *What are the outputs needed to achieve your objectives?* Example: Children associated with armed forces and groups are released and returned home; government and armed groups publicly or legally commit to end recruitment; legislation is drafted to abolish use of child soldiers	*How do you know if the objective was attained?* Example: Number of children released; number of public statements on child recruitment; number of laws enacted against child recruitment	*What is the source of information for each result?* Example: child protection monitors; press releases; newspaper articles; parliamentary ledger	*What could skew each result?* Example: Denial of charges; principals won't agree in writing; no records of parliamentary activity

| Expected results:

What are the results needed for success?

Example:

Bringing evidence of child recruitment to commanders in national army or armed forces

Publicize groups' use of child soldiers to diaspora in other countries

Advocate religious, civil society and other grassroots NGOs to apply pressure

Direct dialogue with government officials and leaders of armed forces and groups

Raise public awareness via flyers and loudspeakers

Present evidence to donors and other governments to pressure government or other groups

Issue press release welcoming change or citing lack of progress

Publicly report findings

Informing/training NGOs and others to do similar work | *What indicators will determine the intended result is achieved?*

Example:

Number of commanders reached

Number of countries advocacy messages reached

Number of groups reached

Number of officials contacted

Number flyers distributed

Number of audio campaigns

Number of donors and other governments contacted

Number of press releases issues

Number of reports

Number of NGOs reached | *What is the source of information for each result?*

Example:

Logs of meetings

Records of each country initiative

Record of press releases, reports and other public information distribution | *What are the challenges to each result?*

Example:

Access to commanders, due to security or unwillingness to meet

Denial of charges

Response may be limited to specific violations and not the broader problem

Advocacy may conflict with NGOs mandate/other work |
| Activities:

What are the different advocacy activities used to achieve the results?

Example:

Deliver evidence of child recruitment to commander of armed groups.

Write/call newspapers, radio and television stations in other | *What indicators will determine success of each activity?*

Example:

Number of commanders reached

Number of media outlets | *What is the source of information for each result?*

Example:

Logs of meetings

Records of communication | *What are the challenges to each activity?*

Example:

Access to commanders, due to security or unwillingness to meet

Denial of charges |

countries with large diaspora to explain issue and offer interviews	in other countries reached and number who produce stories on the issue	with foreign media	Response may be limited to specific violations and not the broader problem
Speak with head of largest religious organizations in area to explain problem and request help	Number of religious groups reached	Database of press releases, reports and other public information distribution	Donors/foreign governments may not want to jeopardize relationships with government
Meet and present evidence to government officials	Number of government officials contacted	Attendance sheet at workshops	Awareness
Distribute flyers at bus terminals, squares and other public spaces	Number of flyers distributed	Survey of attendees	Limited access to workshops
Drive through communities with loudspeaker reminding citizens of their rights under law	Number of audio campaigns		Security threat if workshops are viewed suspiciously by armed groups
Schedule meeting with USAID, the European Union and other large foreign donors in the capital to explain problem and request assistance (If donors sponsor education programmes, they could include a recruitment component)	Number of awareness-raising drives conducted		
Issue at least one press release each quarter updating journalists on progress of government and other groups	Number of donors and other governments contacted		
Research, distribute and launch annual report on status of recruitment	Number of press releases issued		
Organize and run quarterly advocacy workshops, first for UNICEF, then UN and finally NGOs and other partners	Number of reports		
	Number of workshops run, number of attendees at each, number of attendees who grasped the content		

Appendix 7 – Summary of selected case studies

The summaries of selected case studies illustrate how advocacy, even advocacy on sensitive issues in challenging contexts, can advance programme goals and benefit affected populations in the short- and long-term. Detailed case studies are included in: *Advocacy Case Studies* (2006).[12]

Advocacy Case Studies and Scenarios			
Problem	**Example and type of emergency**	**Advocacy activity**	**Benefits**
Lack of emergency funding for natural disasters	Tsunami (natural disaster)	Active engagement with international media at the outset of an emergency	Increased capacity and resources to respond
Landmines used by both government and rebel forces trigger high number of landmine victims.	Chechnya (neglected emergency, chronic ongoing conflict)	Mine risk awareness campaigns in communities and advocacy with authorities to ensure assistance to victims	Reduced injury and death
Outbreak of watery diarrhoea in temporary shelters	Pakistan (natural disaster, conflict)	Quiet advocacy with authorities about cholera risks and need for strengthened health measures in camps	Improved health of children
Widespread attacks on women and girls collecting firewood in and outside displacement settings	Darfur, Sudan (chronic, ongoing conflict)	Discussions with African Union Mission (AMIS) troops to increase patrolling and schedule time and date of their patrols to accompany the girls and women Discussions with partners involved in camp construction to ensure lighted areas in and outside camps.	Reduced attacks on women and children
Weeks			

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[12] Advocacy Case Studies, A. Naik, S. Pedersen, Channel Research commissioned by UNICEF/EMOPS, March 2006.

Risk of cross-border child trafficking of children separated from their families and caregivers	Tsunami (natural disaster)	Regional advocacy to develop policy curtailing the movement of children across borders, including through overseas adoption procedures	Increased protection for separated children Increased chance of longer-term *in situ* rehabilitation for children Long-term improvement of overseas adoption policies
Under-age recruitment by armed groups	Sri Lanka (chronic, ongoing conflict)	Bilateral advocacy with the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) and government forces to raise awareness about international humanitarian law and prohibitions against under-age recruitment	Decreased abduction of children In Sri Lanka, 4,228 children returned home
Risk of measles epidemic in displacement settings	Kashmir, India and Pakistan (natural disaster)	Advocacy with government, military and local and international NGOs to join a mass vaccination campaign in Kashmir	More than 78 per cent of children in Kashmir vaccinated against measles Longer term improvement in health infrastructure
Months			
Continued use of landmines	Chechnya (neglected emergency)	Long- and short-term advocacy targeted towards government on the international Mine Ban Treaty, other conventions and ways of minimizing the impact of landmines Advocacy integrated into broader mine action programme strategy	Long-term reduction in the use of landmines
Chronic under-funding for recurrent food security crises	Niger (slow onset, neglected emergency)	Short-term advocacy making dramatic use of international media to raise awareness of the high rates of severe malnutrition in children under five Conducting a real-time evaluation to generate recommendations for strengthened programme response at national and regional levels	Influx of funds to bolster health and nutrition programming Regional as well as headquarters support to address structural vulnerabilities to under-nutrition in the region

Ongoing child rights violations	Somalia (chronic emergency)	Involving adolescents as 'advocates' in child protection awareness programme to promote human rights within their communities	Active participation of children and young people in programme design, implementation and evaluation National capacity-building
Widespread and systematic use of rape as a weapon of war	Sudan (chronic emergency)	Engagement with the Special Representative of the UN Secretary General and other UN agencies in Sudan as well as high-level advocacy in New York to include protection of women and girls in the mandate of the African Union protection force	Increased awareness of the problem of sexual violence in Sudan and the need for an urgent international response

Appendix 8 – Advocacy case study: Côte d'Ivoire

"Education is a weapon to achieve peace"[13]
UNICEF advocacy strategy to ensure a right to education for all children in Côte d'Ivoire (2006)[14]

Context:
The socio-political crisis which has prevailed in Côte d'Ivoire since 2002 has led to a *de facto* partition of the country in two zones: a northern zone (representing 60 per cent of the territory), held by an armed group, the "*Forces Nouvelles*" (FN), and a southern zone controlled by the government. A buffer zone called "Zone of Confidence" managed by 12,000 impartial peacekeeping forces (UNOCI and French *Licorne*) separates the two parts of the country while peace negotiations are underway. Instability, school closures, deterioration of school facilities and a shortage of qualified teachers have affected children's access to education, especially in the northern and western zones of the country. For instance, no exam had been held in the northern part of the country since 2003, which has led to increased frustration among students and their parents.

At the beginning of the 2005–2006 school year the following situation prevailed in the central, northern and western parts of Côte d'Ivoire:

- Around 40 per cent of schools in those zones were closed.
- There was an absence of qualified teachers in almost 60 per cent of schools remaining open.
- Primary, high school and college exams had not been held for more than two years.
- The demand for education was decreasing due to both the impoverishment of parents and a lack of confidence in the added-value of schooling, since classroom learning was no longer validated by national final exams.

Within a challenging context characterized by a stalled peace process and an extremely volatile political situation not only has the education sector been particularly affected by the division of

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[13] Youssouf Oomar, UNICEF Representative in Côte d'Ivoire, March 2006.

[14] Case study references:
Interviews with UNICEF Country Office: Yousouf Oomar, UNICEF Representative in Côte d'Ivoire; Steven Lauwerier, Senior Programme Officer; Louise Mvono, Chief Education Programme; Alexandra Westerbeek, Communication Officer, 27 November - 1 December 2006.
UNICEF Internal Documents:Côte d'Ivoire Annual Report 2006; *Note sur la contribution de l'UNICEF sur la tenue des examens scolaires en zone Nord en Côte d'Ivoire 2006,* internal document, UNICEF Côte d'Ivoire, 2006 ; *Examens en zone Nord-Centre et Ouest, Rapport de Progrès*, internal document, UNICEF Côte d'Ivoire, 13 mars 2006.
Press Releases and Articles : *Communiqué de Presse FAO-HCR-OIM-OMS-PAM-PNUD-UNFPA-UNICEF*, United Nations Côte d'Ivoire, 16 mars 2006 ; *L'école est la vraie arme pour la paix*, L'intelligent d'Abidjan, 17 mars 2006 ; *La paix par l'école*, Fraternité Matin, 17 mars 2006.

the country but the issue of education has often been at the core of political disputes between parties to conflict and has therefore become a highly politicized issue.

Developing a strategy:
Since the beginning of the crisis, UNICEF has advocated for the respect and the effective fulfillment a child's right to education in Côte d'Ivoire. With the UN Country Team (UNCT), UNICEF's county office has led advocacy efforts from local to global levels, with all parties to the conflict, as well as with regional and international mediators. Raising international awareness about the situation of children in conflict-affected zones was judged as critical by UN agencies to facilitate action and programme implementation at the national level. In this regard, all actors involved in the peace process in Côte d'Ivoire have been targeted, including former Secretary General of the United Nations Kofi Annan. Thus, the concerns related to access to education for children living in conflict-affected zones have been raised in high-level discussions (e.g. at presidential and ministerial levels).

Once access to education had been widely recognized as a critical issue, despite its challenging political context, UNICEF decided to mobilize key stakeholders in the education sector and coordinate their interventions around a two-fold strategy:

1. Assist the government in organizing exams for the approximate 100,000 children living in areas under control of the *Forces Nouvelles*.
2. Ensure the return of children to school and maintain education programmes throughout the whole territory.

In early 2006, while the UN continued its sustained advocacy towards key stakeholders to uphold children's right to education in Côte d'Ivoire, UNICEF organized the administering for final exams in conflict-affected regions in collaboration with the government, other UN agencies, the *Forces Nouvelles* and civil-society organizations.

Challenges:
After conducting a thorough assessment of the context in which final exams had to be organized and identifying relevant partners, the UNCT highlighted a series of challenges for the execution of the operation:

- *Politicization*: The issue of education was highly politicized by many actors in the crisis. There was certain reluctance from some government officials to organize exams in FN-controlled zones, which had led to postpone the holding of the exams on several occasions. UNICEF acted as an intermediary between the Minister of Education and the *Forces Nouvelles* and facilitated a necessary dialogue between both parties, which was critical to unblock the situation prevailing for three years.
- *Budget*: It was estimated that such an operation would require a budget of about CFA 350 billion (US$700,000). Funding was provided mostly by external donors, such as the European Union.
- *Security and risk-awareness*: Organizing exams in the FN-controlled zones posed significant security challenges for the deployment of administrative personnel, especially for government officials. However, UNICEF backed its advocacy with action and

accompanied the Minister of Education to FN-controlled zones.

- *Logistics*: Intensive planning was required since examination subjects and copies had to be transported securely to and from the government-controlled area to the various exam centres in the FN-controlled zones.
- *Community mobilization*: Communities in conflict-affected zones had lost confidence in the value of schooling. Having previously witnessed the government postpone several exams sessions, or publicly express that exams would not be held in the northern zone, they did not believe that exam sessions would be effectively organized in 2006.

Implementing the strategy:

Targets: From high-level stakeholders' involvement to community mobilization
Within the framework of this operation, advocacy has been used to highlight the impact of the crisis on the education sector among national and international decision-makers, FN forces and local populations.

The advocacy strategy led by UNICEF and other UN partners targeted a wide range of audiences. In order to reach key national and international stakeholders in the peace process, different communication channels (e.g. press releases, face-to-face meetings, etc.) have been used to "position" education as a humanitarian imperative. Parallel to advocacy messages directed towards key stakeholders in the peace process, advocacy efforts led by UN agencies have also targeted local communities, notably in the framework of a "Back to School" campaign with a special focus on girls.

Messages:
Messages for all targeted audiences were very simple and called upon all parties in Côte d'Ivoire to collectively ensure that all children could enjoy their fundamental right to education, regardless of the national political context or the status of peace negotiations. Messengers also emphasized that beyond their primary function (e.g. learning institutions), schools also provide an important protective environment and a sense of normalcy for children and their families: "*Children have to be where children belong: on school benches*".[15]

Messengers:
While a significant number of UN agencies and NGOs participated in the operation, the advocacy efforts deployed by UNICEF's country office, and particularly by the representative and the Education team, were decisive.

Methodology: A strong focus on partnerships
UNICEF regularly held group meetings to prepare for the organization of the exam sessions and to ensure the return of children to school. In collaboration with the Ministry of Education, most UN agencies and departments in the country (e.g. UNFPA, FAO, OCHA, WHO, UNHCR) participated in the implementation of the two priority actions. UNOCI, the *Licorne* forces, UN

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[15] Youssouf Oomar, UNICEF Representative in Côte d'Ivoire, 2006.

Police and the *Forces Nouvelles* were also strongly associated with the initiative, notably to secure exam copies and exam centres, as well as to provide logistic assistance with the transport of exam copies. The central coordination role played by UNICEF allowed the organization to discuss with the government and the FN on behalf of all its partners. A partnership between the government, UN agencies, NGOs and the *Forces Nouvelles* was established at three levels:

1. At the UN system and international NGO level: to help the government to address issues related to the national school system.
2. At the government level: to attempt to 'depoliticize' the issue of education and to address concerns related to education outside the public political arena.
3. At the local level with NGOs: to implement and monitor activities in selected zones.

Immediate and long-term impact: Advocacy coupled with result-based programmatic interventions
In addition to pursuing sustained advocacy towards key stakeholders, UNICEF also planned essential programmatic interventions to restore and rehabilitate damaged schools in affected regions.

The country office took the lead in establishing a National School Restoration Committee comprising national authorities, international organizations and donors. Thus, not only was the country-office-led advocacy strategy backed by result-based action, it was also linked with other sectoral programmes (e.g. protection).
In this regard, the outcome of the advocacy efforts led by the country office resulted not only into the organization of exams in conflict-affected zones inhabited by 60 per cent of the population, but also into the resumption of UNICEF education programmes in the country.

In summary:
- Two examination sessions were organized in February–March and August–September 2006 in more than 220 exam centres.
- About 90,000 school-going children living in the central, northern and western regions of the country took their final exams, which had been stalled for more than two years.
- A National School Restoration Plan was developed, allowing the resumption of UNICEF education programmes in conflict-affected zones.
- About 450,000 school kits were distributed in these zones.
- Over the course of 2006, 1,089 schools were opened, which led to an enrolment increase of 100 per cent for girls and 40 per cent for boys.
- The organization of exams restored some of parents' lost confidence in education and contributed to the reactivation of the education system in affected areas.
- Urging the *Forces Nouvelles* and the Ministry of National Education to disregard political considerations and to give education a central place in the national reunification process has helped "de-politicize" the issue of education.
- As a result, the 2006–2007 school year started at the same date nationwide for the first time in four years.

Lessons learned from the country office and the UNCT:
1. Through organized and targeted coordination during the planning and implementation phases of an advocacy strategy, important challenges can be addressed. Even in times of complex crises, obtaining the commitment from governments, non-state actors and communities to work together towards the respect of children's rights is possible and critical. Risk-awareness and perseverance were critical in the success of the strategy led by the country office, which was conscious of and committed to addressing a fundamental children's rights issue and was therefore able to "pressure" the Minister of Education to set up an emergency committee to organize the exam sessions.
2. Once an advocacy strategy is defined at country level, the involvement and commitment of UN agencies is often required to facilitate effective service delivery, especially in an emergency context.
3. Coordination is a daunting task: an estimated 20 per cent of the teachers and administrative staff were not able to reach the centres in time for the first day of exams. In some locations, the low student turn-out due to lack of information about the exact test dates led to additional urgent efforts to inform the population via churches and mosques.
4. A combination of strategies, supported by targeted and concerted actions by various partners, can be more effective and yield results, which would have been difficult to obtain by a single agency. However, identifying a lead agency with a comparative advantage in a particular sector fosters strategic synergies and plays a major role in achieving significant results.

Community participation is essential for the sustainability of school systems especially during a crisis. The country office considered that the latter activity remained to be strengthened within its country programme so parents are able to maintain school infrastructures, but also to demand, if necessary, respect for their children's right to education.

Appendix 9 – Advocacy case study: Zimbabwe

Putting Children First: UNICEF Advocacy in Action in Zimbabwe[16]

Background:
In May 2005 the Government of Zimbabwe launched a cities clean-up operation known as Operation Murambatsvina. It was described as a programme to enforce bylaws to stop all forms of alleged "illegal activities in areas such as vending, illegal structures, and illegal cultivation" among others in its cities. It started in Zimbabwe's capital, Harare, and rapidly evolved into a nationwide demolition and eviction campaign carried out by the police and the army. Popularly referred to as Operation Tsunami because of its speed and ferocity, such actions resulted in the destruction of homes, business premises and vending sites. As a result of the Operation, it is estimated that some 700,000 people in cities across the country have lost either their homes, their source of livelihood or both. Indirectly, a further 2.4 million people have been affected in varying degrees. Hundreds of thousands of women, men and children were made homeless, without access to food, water and sanitation or health care.

The government initially relocated 3,000 families displaced by Operation Murambatsvina in Harare to the Caledonia Farm transit camp where no water and sanitation facilities existed. Similar camps were set up in other urban areas. For several months these families were relocated to other urban areas and received little provision by authorities for any form of water supply, basic sanitation facilities, or facilities for children or pre-schoolers.

Challenges:
Operation Murambatsvina presented a significant threat to children's health, well-being and protection. Education for thousands of school age children was disrupted. Many of the sick, including those with HIV and AIDS, no longer had access to care. Due to the sensitivity of the government to criticism or interference from local or international actors, access and support to the displaced families was at times denied. As the then Secretary-General's Special Envoy on Human Settlements Issues, Anna Tibaijuka wrote after her fact-finding mission to Zimbabwe to assess the scope and impact: "The vast majority of those directly and indirectly affected are the poor and disadvantaged segments of the population. They are, today, deeper in poverty, deprivation and destitution, and have been rendered more vulnerable."

UNICEF's response and advocacy results:
Despite enormous sensitivities during Operation Murambatsinva and great political and operational tensions with Zimbabwe, with careful and strategic advocacy efforts, UNICEF was able to maintain and strengthen its working relationship with government counterparts to provide immediate relief to the displaced. Within 48 hours of the emergency, UNICEF trucked 5,000 litres of water to Caledonia Farm and became the primary support provider to displaced people. UNICEF provided hundreds of thousands of litres of water, kilometres of plastic sheeting and other emergency materials to the internally displaced at Caledonia Farm and offered countrywide

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[16] Interviews with UNICEF programmatic staff (WES, Nutrition, Protection, Education, HIV/AIDS) and senior management in Zimbabwe, donors (DFID) and implementing partners (e.g. Red Cross), November 2006.

support in emergency water and sanitation, shelter, education, malaria control, and cholera prevention. More than US$1million was raised from National Committees in three weeks as part of the total US$3.65 million raised by UNICEF for their emergency interventions in response to Operation Murambatsvina.

UNICEF was able to scale up its interventions to include drilling boreholes, constructing latrines and education interventions across Zimbabwe. UNICEF was also able to advocate with the government for the presence of other partners in key areas, for example, Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF). More than 18 months after the crisis, UNICEF is still reputed to be the most significant agency acting in the interests of women and children and serving the needs of many displaced families.

Strategies for success:
- An informal "negotiations team" of national staff was created by UNICEF within 24 hours of the crisis making effective use of national staff members' knowledge of local politics and familiarity with senior and technical representatives within the government. The national officer working for the Water, Environment, and Sanitation sector, for example, had more than 20 years of experience working for the government and possessed a thorough understanding of how to engage both at technical and high levels within the relevant ministries.
- From the outset, and in a hypersensitive environment, UNICEF's approach narrowly and consistently focused on 'the best interests of the child'. This became a major reason for why UNICEF was allowed access where others were not.
- Initial negotiations started at the local level, building a rapport with camp administrators and technical ministries. Negotiations emphasized the pressing needs of vulnerable children and women, which UNICEF was able to accurately describe because of its early visits to the displaced sites.
- UNICEF was the first UN agency to publicly criticize the government Operation. This was done cautiously, though with candour and was vital to maintaining credibility with donors looking to the UN for leadership.
- Focusing on water and sanitation interventions as the first and priority intervention allowed UNICEF to engage with the government on a non-ideological and apolitical basis. The need for sanitation facilities and clean water was apparent and UNICEF was able to convince the government that it could provide these services.
- UNICEF recognized the importance of ensuring other programmatic activities – immunization, HIV prevention, education – continued despite this new emergency phase. Maximum local coverage of these interventions was a priority. In doing so, UNICEF maintained a positive appearance in local media. The office was therefore able to be more frank in its (largely international) statements about the impact Operation Murambatsvina was having on the people of Zimbabwe. This, in turn, boosted fundraising and credibility, particularly among National Committees (Natcoms).
- Because the government did not feel able to trust other partners at this early stage, UNICEF staff carried out service delivery itself. Becoming operational in a timely and effective manner further added to UNICEF's credibility and to a relationship of trust with the government. UNICEF was granted continued access because of this early success.

- A constant dialogue was maintained with the government, including through meetings and feed-back discussions. Joint visits with the government, the World Health Organization (WHO) and what eventually became UNICEF's implementing partners were also regularly undertaken to the sites to emphasize the need for humanitarian aid.

Messages:
- Messages for the government focused on the primacy of children's safety and well-being and encouraged officials to set aside political motives and allow these children to be reached. The primary interests of children therefore formed "common ground" between UNICEF and government counterparts.
- National staff on the negotiations team recognized that adopting "confrontational messages" was not effective and served only to alienate partners rather than facilitate a humanitarian response.
- Donor expectations and demands for public condemnation of the rights violations committed by the government were managed by the message that access was the main imperative. To achieve access was the ultimate goal in reaching children – a common priority for all.

Lessons learned from the Zimbabwe country office:
- Engage with local level government officials and technical sectors as part of the initial response in highly political settings so as to enable swift responses unhindered by wider political concerns.
- Once the most pressing needs have been met, advocacy with national and more senior government counterparts can begin, supported by regional offices, headquarters and the resident coordinator. It is important the UNICEF country office continue to brief these parties regularly so that more public advocacy does not detract from the work on the ground.
- Draw attention to the issue, rather than promote UNICEF's brand/ name.
- Ensure the language in press interviews (largely with foreign press) is cautious though straightforward. On-the-ground anecdotes were often offered by way of describing the situation. This enables communications officers to paint a true picture of events, without being openly critical of the government. Although it was paramount not to be inflammatory and risk programmatic access being denied, it was also a critical time for UNICEF to be seen as having a moral voice, a voice for the muted, and of not appearing naïve to the misery being played out. This had a direct result in terms of fundraising and longer-term relationships with donors.
- Coordination – trust, dialogue, agreement - between the communications officer, senior programme officer and representative is critical to ensuring effective messages are based on programmatic priorities.
- Discuss message content and delivery with national staff first to ensure that messages do not become conflated with political sensitivities and to avoid breaking any major "national taboos".
- Be a conduit for ministers and key government players to view the impact of the Operation themselves. This can help convince a minister in senior level government to take an issue on as their own thereby making others advocates of children's rights and interests.

As UNICEF gained credibility with local and international partners, the content of the advocacy messages became increasingly bold and the scale of UNICEF's response increased. UNICEF is currently the lead partner in a Joint Partnership of more than $60 million to coordinate projects with NGOs and others to provide assistance and protection to orphans and vulnerable children. As a trusted partner for both donors and government, UNICEF is able to act as the main convener of new programmatic initiatives and also to negotiate on behalf of project partners. Political capital with government counterparts has thus allowed UNICEF to act in the public domain.

The role of communications:
The UNICEF communications officer played a critical role in designing and implementing strategic messages developed together with the representative, programmatic sectors and the senior programme officer. Messages were carefully developed and disseminated in accordance with programmatic goals, as illustrated in the timeline above.

Media engagement both internationally and locally was a key element of the emergency response. Examples include:
- An op-ed in *the Irish Times* and syndicated globally on the Internet ('Zimbabwe needs support, not abandonment' by Dr. Festo Kavishe, UNICEF Representative in Zimbabwe) highlighting the plight of women and children displaced by the Operation as well as UNICEF efforts to address the situation. (Irish National Committee donated Euro$265,000 to the emergency.)
- Feature in *The Australian* on situation – the Australian Government became largest government donor to the emergency.
- Constant coverage in the local Zimbabwean newspapers and on radio/TV on broad range of UNICEF programmatic activities (aside from Operation response), thereby maintaining positive relationship with range of ministries.
- Dozens of interviews with the UNICEF representative and communications officer in foreign media (BBC, CNN, *the Guardian*, *The New York Times*, etc.).